



David Myatt - Opera Omnia

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Prefatory Note

Of my voluminous writings, written over forty years, there is so very little of value and this compilation contains my selection of those that may, just may, have some worth. I reject, disown, the rest of my writings (hence the title of this compilation), which rejected worthless writings I now lament ever having written.

The criteria used in respect of inclusion regarding works other than poetry and Greek translations was whether - in my admittedly fallible, error-prone, opinion - they are ethical (whether they show or reveal some humanity); whether they might possibly have some value in relation to avoidance of and learning about extremism; whether they might possibly possess some allegorical value relating to someone hitherto astray who has via pathei-mathos possibly been changed for the better and thus recount

something of that change, that pathei-mathos; and whether they might possibly possess some value in relation to expiation for suffering caused.

Writings thus disowned are everything - apart from my Greek translations and some poetry - written before 2002; everything written about National-Socialism, politics, 'folk culture', and Islam before 2010; everything - with only a few exceptions - written about The Numinous Way before 2011; and several items about The Numinous Way written since 2011.

In respect of my weltanschauung, The Numinous Way, as I wrote in *Rejecting Abstractions*, I was during the early stages of its development (2006-2010) still somewhat in thrall to abstractions, still generalizing, still pontificating, and "it required several years of interior reflexion [...] and a knowing, and acceptance, of my fallibility, for me to appreciate, to understand, my error: to rigorously apply the individual ethic of empathy and to attempt to excise abstractions [such as 'the clan'] from that Way. There is thus little left; and what is left is simple." A simplicity manifest, perhaps, in the text *Synopsis of The Numinous Way* and a revised philosophy I have endeavoured to outline in the *Recuyle of the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*, and which philosophy replaces my 'numinous way'. I have however retained a few items about 'the numinous way' which may be of some interest.

As I mentioned in *The Quiddity of DWM*:

"How, and why, to summarize what of value I feel has been discovered from the diverse peregrinations, and the pathei-mathos, that seem to have characterized my perhaps rather strange but certainly mistakeful life? A summary that publicly, finally, signifies the end of written words being published by me, and which summary possibly also can place into perspective both my past pontifications - verbal, written - and my past and varied life. Thus, past deeds and words revealed for what they really are, the products of a hubriatic man; revealed as arrogant, vainful, worthless opinions, and as selfish, extremist, suffering-causing reprehensible deeds.

And what of value that has been discovered was only possible because of others, not because of me. A discovery I have tried to express in my philosophy of pathei-mathos, and summarize in the seven fundamental axioms of that Way. A philosophy that - together with the text *Synopsis of The Numinous Way* - is all that now remains of that hitherto cumbersome, complex, errorful 'numinous way' of mine.

Thus that *Synopsis* - a summary of which is given below - together with the text *Recuyle of the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*, are all that I, personally, value and consider expresses the quiddity of that one fallible mortal microcosmic nexion who has borne a certain name and who and rightfully must now, to try restore the necessary balance his hubriatic life upset, live what little life is left in reclusive expiation."

For this sixth edition (June 30th 2012) I have added the following texts: (1) a new essay, *Pathei-Mathos - Genesis of My Unknowing*; (2) a letter written in 2010, *One Supposition of Knowing*; (3) an item written in 2011, *Ecstasy of a Personal*

Agony; (4) a compilation of quotations regarding extremism taking from my recent writings; (5) an updated version of *Myngath*; and (6) an item written in 2010, *The Love That Needs No Words* . I have also included the latest updated versions of *Synopsis of The Numinous Way* (last modified: 27/June/2012) and *FAQ About The Numinous Way* (last modified: 29/May/2012).

The fifth revised edition (30th May 2012) included *Recuyle of the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*, which includes the text *The Way of Pathei-Mathos*.

For the fifth (7th May 2012) I added *Some Terms Explained* (a short glossary of some 'numinous way' terms taken from recent articles) and corrected some errors in the pdf rendering which had caused corruption in one or two Greek texts making them unreadable.

The fourth edition included two new articles - the lengthy *The Way of Pathei-Mathos* (second revised edition), and the short text *Concerning the Development of The Numinous Way* - plus translations of two more Heraclitus fragments. Also, I removed several items concerning The Numinous Way which included material (mostly to do with clans) which I now consider is incompatible with the simplicity of the way of pathei-mathos, an excision I mention in *Development of The Numinous Way*.

The third edition included translations of two more Heraclitus fragments, and two new articles - *The Change of Enantiodromia*, and Part Three of *The Politics and Ideology of Hate*.

The second edition included a slightly revised *Introduction*, a revised version of the text *FAQ About The Numinous Way*, a new essay (Part Two of *The Politics and Ideology of Hate*) and also a copy of *Letter To My Undiscovered Self*.



Introduction

In many ways, England at this time of year - around mid-Spring - is a delightful place to be, for there are Spring flowers, hedgerows in bloom, trees coming into leaf; the burgeoning Dawn Chorus, and quite often warmer and sunnier days heralding perhaps another Summer of dreams to be remembered, happily remembered, as the dark longer nights and the cold of Winter return as they return and we - perhaps with family, partner, friends - hunker ourselves down to await such warmer days, again.

Such simple delights, of such a childful joy; delights and a simplicity that I personally have come to value more and more as pathei-mathos and increasing age has slowed me in both body and thought, bringing - it seems - a certain repose, certainly a need for personal humility, for expiation, and certainly a feeling concerning, another intimation of, what for us humans is most valuable, most human, and possibly should be most desired. Which is the joy of a personal love shared; the companionship of family, friends; and that simple quite humble way of living arising when our life is just our and their life, when our concerns just our and their concerns, when our hopes and dreams are just our and their hopes; the life, the concerns, the hopes, the dreams, of those whom we love, we trust, and with whom we share the passing of our daily lives.

For decades I - flawed, hubriatic, dissatisfied, often angry, and often inclined toward violence - rejected such manifestations of our humanity as I pursued one and then another suffering-causing agenda; as I - extremist activist, agitator - stupidly arrogantly placed some abstraction, some ideal, some ideology, before personal love, before compassion, before empathy, before kindness, before family, before wu-wei. And it was during those four decades of hubris that I scribbled away, writing thousands and thousands of pages - propaganda, essays, ideological tracts, pamphlets - in praise of and trying to justify the extremisms I upheld and fought for. Worse, I not only supported violence and propagated hatred but pridefully, temerarily, sought to revise some abstractions and manufacture new abstractions in my attempts to motivate and inspire others and bring closer the downfall of 'the system' I then so disliked in the hope that some revolution, some violent struggle or other, might somehow and in some miraculous way bring into being a 'new world' founded on some ideological ideal and which ideal was always harsh and always founded on prejudice and intolerance, on some divisive division between 'them' and 'us'.

In the process, of course, I caused suffering. To loved ones, to family, to friends, and to others; to so many others, known or personally unknown to me. As I wrote earlier this year:

" I have no excuses; the failure of decades was mine. A failure of compassion, empathy, honour. A failure as a human being. There are no excuses for my past, for deeds such as mine. No excuses for selfishness, for a hubris of personal emotion. No excuse for deceit, deception, lies. No excuse for extremism, for racism, for the politics, the religion, of hate."
So Much Remorse

" I would like to believe - to hope - that this [my] personal, this interior, change, possibly evident in some recent writings of mine, and possibly also evident in my philosophy of The Numinous Way, is positive, good; in some way counter-balances the hubris of my past, and is thereby some expiation, some propitiation, for at least some of the suffering caused. But it is for others, not for me, to judge whether that is so." *Pardonance, Love, Extremism, and Reform*



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cc David Myatt 2012
(Sixth Edition)

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Pathei-Mathos - Genesis of My Unknowing

There are no excuses for my extremist past, for the suffering I caused to loved ones, to family, to friends, to those many more, those far more, 'unknown others' who were or who became the 'enemies' posited by some extremist ideology. No excuses because the extremism, the intolerance, the hatred, the violence, the inhumanity, the prejudice were mine; my responsibility, born from and expressive of my character; and because the discovery of, the learning of, the need to live, to regain, my humanity arose because of and from others and not because of me.

Thus what exposed my hubris - what for me broke down that certitude-of-knowing which extremism breeds and re-presents - was not something I did; not something I achieved; not something related to my character, my nature, at all. Instead, it was a gift offered to me by two others - the legacy left by their tragic early dying. That it took not one but two personal tragedies - some thirteen years apart - for me to accept and appreciate the gift of their love, their living, most surely reveals my failure, the hubris that for so long suffused me, and the strength and depth of my so lamentable extremism.

But the stark and uneasy truth is that I have no real, no definitive, answers for anyone, including myself. All I have now is a definite uncertainty of knowing, and certain feelings, some intuitions, some reflexions, a few certainly fallible suggestions arising mostly from reflexions concerning that, my lamentable, past, and thus - perhaps - just a scent, just a scent, of some understanding concerning some-things, perfumed as this understanding is with ineffable sadness.

For what I painfully, slowly, came to understand, via pathei-mathos, was the importance - the human necessity, the virtue - of love, and how love expresses or can express the numinous in the most sublime, the most human, way. Of how extremism (of whatever political or religious or ideological kind) places some abstraction, some ideation, some notion of duty to some ideation, before a personal love, before a knowing and an appreciation of the numinous. Thus does extremism - usurping such humanizing personal love - replace human love with an extreme, an unbalanced, an intemperate, passion for something abstract: some ideation, some ideal, some dogma, some 'victory', some-thing always supra-personal and always destructive of personal happiness, personal dreams, personal hopes; and always manifesting an impersonal harshness: the harshness of hatred, intolerance, certitude-of-knowing, unfairness, violence, prejudice.

Thus, instead of a natural and a human concern with what is local, personal and personally known, extremism breeds a desire to harshly interfere in the lives of others - personally unknown and personally distant - on the basis of such a hubriatic certitude-of-knowing that strife and suffering are inevitable. For there is in all extremists that stark lack of personal humility, that unbalance, that occurs when - as

in all extremisms - what is masculine is emphasized and idealized and glorified to the detriment (internal, and external) of what is muliebral, and thus when some ideology or some dogma or some faith or some cause is given precedence over love and when loyalty to some manufactured abstraction is given precedence over loyalty to family, loved ones, friends.

For I have sensed that there are only changeable individual ways and individual fallible answers, born again and again via pathei-mathos and whose subtle scent - the wisdom - words can neither capture nor describe, even though we try and perhaps need to try, and try perhaps (as for me) as one hopeful needful act of a non-religious redemption.

Thus, and for instance, I sense - only sense - that peace (or the beginning thereof) might possibly just be not only the freedom from subsuming personal desires but also the freedom from striving for some supra-personal, abstract, impersonal, goal or goals. That is, a just-being, a flowing and a being-flowed. No subsuming concern with what-might-be or what-was. No lust for ideations; no quest for the violation of difference. Instead - a calmful waiting; just a listening, a seeing, a feeling, of what-is as those, as our, emanations of Life flow and change as they naturally flow and change, in, with, and beyond us: human, animal, of sea, soil, sky, Cosmos, and of Nature... But I am only dreaming, here in pathei-mathos-empathy-land where there is no past-present-future passing each of us with our future-past: only the numen presenced in each one of our so individual timeless human stories.

Yet, in that - this - other world, the scent of having understood remains, which is why I feel I now quite understand why, in the past, certain individuals disliked - even hated - me, given my decades of extremism: my advocacy of racism, fascism, holocaust denial, and National-Socialism, followed (after my conversion to Islam) by my support of bin Laden, the Taliban, and advocacy of 'suicide attacks'.

I also understand why - given my subversive agenda and my amoral willingness to use any tactic, from Occult honeytraps to terrorism, to undermine the society of the time as prelude to revolution - certain people have sought to discredit me by distributing and publishing certain allegations.

Furthermore, given my somewhat Promethean peregrinations - which included being a Catholic monk, a vagabond, a fanatical violent neo-nazi, a theoretician of terror, running a gang of thieves, studying Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism; being a nurse, a farm worker, and supporter of Jihad - I expect many or most of those interested in or curious about my 'numinous way' and my recent mystical writings to be naturally suspicious of or doubtful about my reformation and my rejection of extremism.

Thus I harbour no resentment against individuals, or organizations, or groups, who over the past forty or so years have publicly and/or privately made negative or derogatory comments about me or published items making claims about me. Indeed, I now find myself in the rather curious situation of not only agreeing with some of my former political opponents on many matters, but also (perhaps) of understanding (and

empathizing with) their motivation; a situation which led and which leads me to appreciate even more just how lamentable my extremism was and just how arrogant, selfish, wrong, and reprehensible, I as a person was, and how in many ways many of those former opponents were and are (*ex concessio*) better people than I ever was or am.

Which is one reason why I have written what I have recently written about extremism and my extremist past: so that perchance someone or some many may understand extremism, and its causes, better and thus be able to avoid the mistakes I made, avoid causing the suffering I caused; or be able to in some way more effectively counter or prevent such extremism in the future. And one reason - only one - why I henceforward must live in reclusion and *in silencio*.

David Myatt
May 2012 ce

In Loving Memory of Frances, died 29th May 2006

In Loving Memory of Sue, died 4th April 1993



One Small Learning, Possibly Summarized

How, and why, to summarize what of value I feel has been discovered from the diverse peregrinations, and the pathei-mathos, that seem to have characterized my perhaps rather strange but certainly mistakeful life? A summary that publicly, finally, signifies the end of written words being published by me, and which summary possibly also can place into perspective both my past pontifications - verbal, written - and my past and varied life. Thus, past deeds and words revealed for what they really are, the products of a hubriatic man; revealed as arrogant, vainful, worthless opinions, and as selfish, extremist, suffering-causing reprehensible deeds.

And what of value that has been discovered was only possible because of others, not because of me. A discovery I have tried to express in my philosophy of pathei-mathos, and summarize in the seven fundamental axioms of that Way. A philosophy that - together with the text *Synopsis of The Numinous Way* - is all that now remains of that hitherto cumbersome, complex, errorful 'numinous way' of mine.

Thus that *Synopsis* - a summary of which is given below - together with the text *Recuyle of the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*, are all that I, personally, value and consider expresses the quiddity of that one fallible mortal microcosmic nexion who has borne a certain name and who and rightfully must now, to try restore the necessary balance his hubriatic life upset, live what little life is left in reclusive expiation.

David Myatt
11th May 2012

In Memory of Frances, died 29th May 2006

In Memory of Sue, died 4th April 1993

Summary of The Numinous Way

The Numinous Way is a spiritual, individual, ethical way of living based on the virtues of compassion, empathy, humility, and personal honour, where a shared, mutual, love between two human beings is regarded as the most beautiful, the most numinous, the most human virtue of all.

That is, the Numinous Way only involves individuals cultivating empathy, compassion, humility, wu-wei, dignity, honour, peace, and love, who thus are aware of, and respectful of, the numinous and therefore are inclined to avoid causing suffering and inclined to do what is fair.

Axioms of the Way of Pathei-Mathos

I) That human beings possess a mostly latent perceptive faculty, the faculty of empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - which when used, or when developed and used, can provide us with a particular type of knowing, a particular type of knowledge, and especially a certain knowledge concerning the *φύσις* (the physis, the nature or character) of human beings and other living beings.

II) This type of knowing, this perception, is different from and supplementary to that acquired by means of the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science, and thus enables us to better understand *Phainómenon*, ourselves, and other living beings.

III) That because of or following *πάθει μάθος* there is or there can be a change in, a development of, the nature, the character - the *φύσις* - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this *πάθει μάθος*, and which appreciation of the numinous includes an awareness of why *ὑβρις* is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect or ignorance (of the numinous), of a going beyond the due limits, and which *ὑβρις* itself is the genesis both of the *τύραννος* and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the modern extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate *ἔρις* and thus are a cause of, or contribute to and aid, suffering.

IV) This change, this development of the individual, is or can be the result of enantiodromia and reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural

balance necessary for *ψυχή* to flourish - which natural balance is *δίκη* as *Δίκη* and which restoration of balance within the individual results in *ἀρμονία*, manifest as *ἀρμονία* (harmony) is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei and *σωφρονεῖν* (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement).

V) The development and use of empathy, the cultivation of wu-wei and *σωφρονεῖν*, are thus a means, a way, whereby individuals can cease to cause suffering or cease to contribute to, or cease to aid, suffering.

VI) The reason as to why an individual might so seek to avoid causing suffering is the reason, the knowledge - the appreciation of the numinous - that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* provide.

VII) This appreciation of the numinous inclines or can incline an individual to living in a certain way and which way of life naturally inclines the individual toward developing, in a natural way - sans any methodology, praxis, theory, dogma, or faith - certain attributes of character, and which attributes of character include compassion, self-restraint, fairness, and a reasoned, a personal, judgement.

Image credit: NASA - Earth and Moon as seen from the departing Voyager interplanetary spacecraft

Letter To My Undiscovered Self

For nearly four decades I placed some ideation, some ideal, some abstraction, before personal love, foolishly - inhumanly - believing that some cause, some goal, some ideology, was the most important thing and therefore that, in the interests of achieving that cause, that goal, implementing that ideology, one's own personal life, one's feelings, and those of others, should and must come at least second if not further down in some lifeless manufactured schemata.

My pursuit of such things - often by violent means and by incitement to violence and to disaffection - led, of course, not only to me being the cause of suffering to other human beings I did not personally know but also to being the cause of suffering to people I did know; to family, to friends, and especially to those - wives, partners, lovers - who for some reason loved me.

In effect I was selfish, obsessed, a fanatic, an extremist [1]. Naturally, as extremists always do, I made excuses - to others, to myself - for my unfeeling, suffering-causing, intolerant, violent, behaviour and actions; always believing that 'I could make a difference' and always blaming some-thing else, or someone else, for the problems I alleged existed 'in the world' and which problems I claimed, I felt, I believed, needed to be sorted out.

Thus I as a neo-nazi, as a racist [2], would for some thirty years and by diatribes spoken, written, rant on and on about these alleged problems: about 'the Jewish/Zionist problem', about 'the dangers of race-mixing', about the need for 'a strong nation', about 'why we need a revolution', about 'the struggle for victory', about 'the survival of the Aryan race', and so on and so on. Later on, following my conversion to Islam, I would - for some seven or so years - write and talk about 'the arrogance of the kuffar', about 'the need for a Khilafah', about 'the dangers of kufr', about 'the need for Jihad against the kuffar', and so on and so on.

Yet the honest, the obvious, truth was that I - and people like me or those who supported, followed, or were incited, inspired, by people like me - were and are the problem. That my, that our, alleged 'problems' (political/religious), were phantasmagorical; unreal; imagined; only projections based on, caused by, invented ideas that had no basis in reality, no basis in the simple reality of human beings. For the simple reality of most human beings is the need for simple, human, things: for personal love, for friendship, for a family, for a personal freedom, a security, a stability - a home, food, playfulness, a lack of danger - and for the dignity, the self-respect, that work provides.

But instead of love we, our selfish, our obsessed, our extremist kind, engendered hate. Instead of peace, we engendered struggle, conflict, killing. Instead of tolerance we engendered intolerance. Instead fairness and equality we engendered dishonour

and discrimination. Instead of security we produced, we encouraged, revolution, violence, change.

The problem, the problems, lay inside us, in our kind, not in 'the world', not in others. We, our kind - we the pursuers of, the inventors of, abstractions, of ideals, of ideologies; we the selfish, the arrogant, the hubriatic, the fanatics, the obsessed - were and are the main causes of hate, of conflict, of suffering, of inhumanity, of violence. Century after century, millennia after millennia.

In retrospect it was easy to be, to become, obsessed, a fanatic, an extremist - someone pursuing some goal, someone identifying with some cause, some ideology; someone who saw 'problems' and felt such 'problems' had to be sorted out. For such extremism, such goals, fulfilled a need; they gave a sense of identity; a sense of belonging; a sense of purpose. So that instead of being an individual human being primarily concerned with love, with and responsible for personal matters - the feeling and issues and problems of family, friends, loved ones - there was a feeling of being concerned with and part of 'higher more important things', with the inevitable result one becomes hard, hardened, and thence dehumanized.

Easy to be thus, to be an outward extremist; just as it is easy for some other humans (especially, it seems, for men) to be and remain extremists in an inner, interior, way: selfish, hubristic, arrogant, unfeeling, and thus obsessed with themselves, their physical prowess, and/or subsumed by their personal desires, their feelings, their needs, to the exclusion of others. For - despite our alleged, our believed in, 'idealism' - we the outward extremists were, we had become like, those selfish, hubristic, arrogant, unfeeling humans; only that instead of being slaves to our personal desires, feelings, needs, we were enslaved to our ideals, our goals, our ideologies, our abstractions, and to the phantasmagorical problems we manufactured, we imagined, or we believed in.

In essence, it was a failure of humanity on our, on my, part. A failure to see, to know, to feel, the human - the individual - reality of love, of peace. A failure to personally, as individuals, be empathic, compassionate, loving, kind, fair.

For love is not some ideal to be striven for, to be achieved by some supra-personal means. It is just being human: among, with, other humans, in the immediacy-of-the-moment. From such a human, individual, love - mutual and freely given, freely returned - there is peace: tranquillity, security.

That it took me four decades, and the tragic death of two loved ones, to discover these simple truths surely reveals something about the person I was and about the extremisms I championed and fought for.

Now, I - with Sappho - not only say that,

I love delicate softness:
For me, love has brought the brightness

And the beauty of the Sun [3]

but also that a personal, mutual, love between two human beings is the most beautiful, the most sacred, the most important, the most human, thing in the world; and that the peace that most of us hope for, desire in our hearts, only requires us to be, to become, loving, kind, fair, empathic, compassionate, human beings.

For that we just have to renounce our extremism, both inner and outer.

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

Notes

[1] As mentioned elsewhere - in the missive *So Much Remorse* - by the term *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Thus *extremism* is considered to be: (i) the result of such harshness, and (ii) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. Thus in simple terms an extremist is someone who lacks empathy, compassion, reason, and honour.

In addition, by fanatic is meant someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate.

[2] In respect of racism, I accept the standard definition, which is that racism is a prejudice and antagonism toward people regarded as belonging to another 'race', as well as the belief some 'races' are better than or superior to others, and that what is termed 'race' defines and explains, or can define and explain, the behaviour and the character of the people considered to belong to some postulated 'race'.

[3]

ἔγω δὲ φίλημ' ἀβροσύναν [...] τοῦτο καί μοι
τὸ λάμπρον ἔρωσ ἀελίῳ καὶ τὸ κάλον λέλογχε.

Sappho, poetic fragment: P. Oxyrhynchus. XV (1922) nr. 1787 fr. 1 et 2

This Only This

In the garden, heard through the large open window, the birds having sensed the onset of Spring sing as they sing at this most glorious time of year. And I, I overwhelmed again by the sadness emanating even here from my knowing of the suffering-causing personal deeds of my past. So many, so many I had not thought to count so many - until now. So many how could I while buoyed by hubris have hurt that many? So much deception, so many lies, while they - the friends, family, wives, lovers - trusted with that goodness born of heavenly-human hope.

No prayers, no supplication, to wash away, remove, the manifold stains. If only, if only I (as once, those several times) believed, so that penance, absolution - embraced - might bring the chance to dream, to-be, to see, to love again. But no apologies possible nor by they desired, for they are gone - deceased, or lost those many years ago; no words sufficient, of meaning, to redeem a memory of such a scarring pain.

No mechanism, manufactured, to return before the time of such hurtful hurting with such knowing as so bends me now, down, down and kneeling sans any means of prayer. Only emotion falling, fallen, keeping such memories as some music makes numinously plaintive the joy the pain, century folding folded to century while they the multitudinous I's made the good the trusting suffer. No past of expiations. No Spring of goodness to burgeon forth to herald they through pathei-mathos changed.

Which is why, perhaps, so many still need desire - to trust in - God. For there is this only this: to write to rest to sleep to dream to cease to feel. And the world will still be there when I am gone.

David Myatt
March 2012 ce

So Much Remorse

(Extract from a letter to a friend)

So much remorse, grief, and sorrow, within me for the unwise suffering-causing deeds of my past. Yet all I have in recompense for decades of strife, violence, selfishness, hate, are tears, the cries, alone - and words, lifeless words, such as this; words, to - perhaps, hopefully - forewarn forswear so that others, some few, hearing, reading, may possibly avoid, learn from, the errors that marked, made, and were, my hubris.

Such an elixir of extremism ^[1] which I, with paens born of deluded destiny, refined, distilled, made and - like some medieval fake apothecary - saught to peddle as cure for ailments that never did exist.

Then her - Francine's - death that day late May such that for so long a time such feelings of remorse, grief, and sorrow, overwhelmed so that Sleep when he deigned to arrive arrived to take me only fitfully, slowly, back to Night and usually only after I, in darkness, lay to listen to such music as so recalled another aetheral, beautiful, older, world untainted by the likes of me; a world recalled, made manifest, to me in the sacred music of Josquin Desprez, Dunstable, Tallis, William Byrd, Tomás Luis de Victoria...

Such a longing then in those lengthy days longer nights to believe, to reclaim the faith - Christe Redemptor Omnium - of decades past to then presence, within, a sanctified expiation that might could remove that oppressive if needed burden. Of remorse, grief, sorrow, guilt. But was it only pride - stubborn pride - that bade me resist? Or some feeling of failures, before? Some memory primordial, pagan perhaps, of how why Night - She, subduer of gods, men ^[2] - alone by Herself brought forth day from dark and caused us all to sleep to dream to somewhere and of Necessity to die? I do not know, I do not know that why.

For there was then only interior strife until such time as such longing for such faith slowly ceased; no words in explanation, expiation. Ceased, to leave only the pain of a life mis-spent, left in memories of tears that lasted years. No prayer, no invocations; not even any propitiation to redeem, protect, to save. Only, and now, the minutes passing to hours to days as Sun - greeting, rising, descending, departed - passes from to return to the dark only to be born again anew; each newness unique, when seen.

I have no excuses; the failure of decades was mine. A failure of compassion, empathy, honour. A failure as a human being. There are no excuses for my past, for deeds such as mine. No excuses for selfishness, for a hubris of personal emotion. No excuse for deceit, deception, lies. No excuse for extremism, for racism, for the politics, the religion, of hate. For the simple truth - if so lately-discovered by me - is that the giver the bringer the genesis of Life is Love.

Awed by her brightness
Stars near the beautiful Moon

Cover their own shining faces
When She lights earth
With her silver brilliance
Of love...^[3]

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

Some Notes (Post Scriptum)

[1] It might be useful to explain how I, in the light of my forty years practical experience of and involvement with extremism, understand terms such as extremism. By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Thus *extremism* is considered to be: (i) the result of such harshness, and (ii) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In simple terms, an extremist is someone who lacks empathy, compassion, reason, and honour.

Racism is one example of extremism, with racism being a prejudice and antagonism toward people regarded as belonging to another 'race', as well as the immoral belief that some 'races' are better than or superior to others, and that what is termed 'race' defines and explains, or can define and explain, the behaviour and the character of the people considered to belong to some postulated 'race'.

[2] Homer, Iliad xiv, 259 - εἰ μὴ Νῦξ δμήτειρα θεῶν ἐσάωσε καὶ ἀνδρῶν

[3] Sappho, Fragment 34 [Lobel and Page] -

Ἄστερες μὲν ἀμφὶ κάλαν σελάνναν
ἄψ ἀπυκρύπτοισι φάεννον εἶδος,
ὅπποτα πλήθοισα μάλιστα λάμπη
γᾶν [ἐπὶ πᾶσαν]
[...] ἀργυρία [...]

Age Has Slowed Me Now

Age has slowed me now to make me sense a certain rhythm hidden within our life. This is the knowing, the feeling, of the pulse pulse pulsing of hope that is one genesis of our humble so human dreams as when, sky by cloud occluded, we yearn for Sun as in childhood we only felt felt those warm playful days of Summer so quickly passing that nevertheless kept, retained, their promise to be in later years recalled when such warming warmth remembered momentarily makes us keeps us still and happy whenever some bleak coldness or perhaps some inhumanity by others intrudes.

So how could I have desired, *in extremis*, to so violently change, destroy, all this? And why? Why? For this is only just only what it is - one city, planted, where hope, burgeoning, lives. I was such a fool, such a fool, so mangled inside by hubris.

But age, slowing, slowly brought a pathei-mathos, to plant, produce, the necessary interior human change. Long gone thus the ideologies, the hate, that grew so many hallucinations of life. Long gone those illusive ideas that so badly vivified, putrefied: death to love within.

Now: now such perception of the pulse pulse pulsing of the blood of human hope to bring me joy: even here, especially here where such rush rush rushing beclaims and those traffic-sounds are but a distant sea always but only slightly surging. No need to hate them here, there, where. How, just how, could I have been so stupid? For this is growth just growing: love, hope, seeping, seeding, planting, keeping our humanity the way our Sun seeds our world with Life.

As that young woman, there, who, patiently waiting, waits where passengers embarking disembarked betake themselves away and this platform is all only all that it is: beginning here to end by ending there. But no train now, just yet. So she glances, glancing: nervous, watching, waiting, hopeful, hasteless, seeing time slowly as measured by a clock unticking high above our platform, there.

Such joy on faces as he her hope arrives. Two bodies melding melded it does not matter I cannot understand the language of their words shared. I am stilled, silenced, suspended, borrowed, left, reclaimed. No more me, you, they, here, there, where. No separation, no divide. Only now, this-now: one place in one city since humanity - love, flowing - flows on to gift one Earth with Life.

How, just how could I have been so stupid, so inhuman, so insolent, so hurtful, so lacking in the health of love?

"What is hurtful to you, do not do to someone else. That is the entire Torah; the rest is only explanation." Hillel the Elder, *Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 31a*

"Let us then try what love can do." William Penn: *Some Fruits of Solitude*

David Myatt
March 2012 ce

[1] Insolence [hubris] plants the tyrant. (v.872)

De Novo Caelo et Nova Terra



Being Some Selected Writings In Memoriam Frances

Preface

This work contains some of my, often brief, personal writings and missives from the past nine years; writings and missives which some others have described as mystical - or, as I might discrybe it, the scribblings of someone for whom individual empathy (in the personal immediacy of the moment) is now an apprehension of a truth beyond causal abstractions but who was so enamoured for so long by such abstractions that it took him nine years, and the tragic suicide of a loved one in 2006 CE, to finally free himself from them.

Some of the writings and missives included here are graveolent of the sorrowful self-learning that I seem to have acquired following that tragic death, and a learning betaking me far from the arrogance, the hubris, of my previous thirty, and more, years of political and religious involvements. A learning and acknowledgement, thus, of my mistakes, and of many other things.

So it is that I gently sense that the new Earth - the new home - we human beings do so seem to need might have its genesis in that new heaven, that new paradise, we find after we have ventured inward, via pathei-mathos or by choice, and finally through such an interior searching discovered who we are: one fragile fallible microcosmic nexion; only one mortal presencing of Life on one obscure planet around one star in one small Galaxy among so many billions of such systems of stars; but one aorist ensample of the Cosmos living and changing as the Cosmos lives and changes, and one ensample connected in an affective way to all others, everywhere.

A discovery thus of The Cosmic Perspective, *sans* some deity, supreme, supra-personal, creator, or otherwise; *sans* some belief, some faith, in some personal after-life manufactured by or promised by some supreme-creator being. And even *sans* a personal, individual, striving for some-thing, such as nirvana.

A discovery, instead, of The Numen, of Life, as I in my admitted fallibility, and in the past few years, have intimated it may be: no striving; no goal. Just a simple numinous life, lived moment to moment, grounded in empathy and thus in living honourably.

David Myatt
October 2011 CE

One Hot Sunny Day, Almost Mid-July

A beautiful, hot, sunny day and only a few wisps of high white cirrus cloud lie below the blue dome of sky. There is no more work, today, now, and I have spent about an hour lazy - my flask of cider empty - lying in the shade of an Oak in this field of freshly cut hay, no breeze to even rustle the leaves above me; no roads - except two miles distant - and no people to assail me with their sounds, their feelings: to en-press upon me the patterns, the ways, the life, the harm, of that other un-wise world.

Thus, here, I am calm, able to be the belonging which I, we, are, should be, and thus it is that I, smiling, walk the short distance to where there is a small pond, down in a hollow by a hedge and shaded only in one part of one corner by one small Hawthorn bush. Behind the larger, blue, Dragonfly, the Ruddy Darter clings to a small half-submerged blade of grass. But the blue has the better perch - a tall Bull-rush, one among a group of three two-thirds towards the centre of this pond, and every few minutes, the blue flies up, to briefly circle a part of the water before returning to its bull-rush rest. Damsel-flies - a scintillating light-blue - circle, land, join together, land, around this water's edge.

There is a reason for the blue's wait. A smaller, darker, female arrives and with a loud buzzing of wings, they join to tumble, spin, fly until they break when she hovers toward one edge of the pond, dipping her lower abdomen into the water,

again, again, again, there near where stems of grass rise, curved, up toward the Sun, breaking the surface tension of the water. The male blue circles, briefly hovers - as if watching, waiting - and she is gone, back into cover of bush, tree, long grass. He returns then to his perch, but only for a while. He, too is soon gone - where I cannot see - and it is not long before the female returns to perch, almost exactly - perhaps exactly - where he perched.

The Ruddy Darter has flown away, somewhere, and I wait, wait, wait until my legs become numb from the sitting-stillness and sweat falls down, many times, from my forehead to my face. For this July Sun is hot. Now, the she-blue circles, alighting from time to time on water-edge grass, before returning to her perch.

On the pond, a black whirly-gig beetle sails over the greeny surface - while, beneath, near where I sit, perched, watching, a myriad of small grey-things, with two front legs like paddles, dart, here, there, following, tussling with each other among some fallen dead twigs. Something, jet-black, oval and small - a beetle perhaps - briefly breaks the surface before swimming back down into the murky depths of the middle as a Water-boatman glides by atop the surface.



Ruddy Darter

I wait, but still do not see the rare Ruddy Darter. It must have gone while I waited, distracted by the blue. The myriad small grey-things - twenty, thirty, more - have become ten as the Earth turned to move the Sun across my sky. Then only a few remain where I can see them.

There is a slight breeze, now, to break this silence brought by the few calling birds, so hot is the heat of this Sun. And it is the Sun - and thirst, hunger, numbness of limbs - which makes me to rise, pond-ripple slowly, to turn to walk with reluctance back toward that other world.

Having harmed nothing - except two stalks of grass, chewed - I sigh. There are no humans harming things, here: but for how much longer?

July 2003 CE

A Walk In Snow

This is new - at least for me in my few years here, in this rural place. Several inches of snow; the pond of my repose frozen and covered in a speckling of the fresh-fallen snow of last night which followed many hours of snow in the middle and late afternoon; the glorious blue sky with a morning, warming, Sun which little by little begins the thaw.

The snow of yesterdays' cold hours enables me to wander and see in great detail the tracks of Fox, Deer, Badger, Hare and Rabbit. So much snow that even the branch of Oak which forms my pond-side seat had to be cleared before I sat with a cold breeze raining down droplets of freshly melted snow upon me, this notebook, the white-hidden grass around. Yet the birds - Blackbird, Thrush, Robin - still sing, even though I think they must be hungry. But the Sun, surely, warms them, as it does me, bringing to me at least that relaxing peace I have often found here amid these fields of rural England.

So, Spring becomes poised, for a while, while this cold wind and whiteness lasts. And I - I myself am poised now between a now lost love and what I in my lowly human form desire and hope will be the promise of my future to bring again the warmth, the joy, of one more human love. She, my recent love, is gone and I try not to dwell upon her loss, upon the loneliness, for there is here that beauty which assuages, and that knowing, that learning which I have known and learnt these past years here, toiling as I did outdoors in cold, warm, heat, wind, cloud, Sun, snow, and rain. Thus am I but one connexion, one perspective, among the threads, the nexions, of life. But there is temptation, great temptation born from such loss: the temptation of deeds, the whisperings of those many words of the past prompting involvement in that world beyond this world where I sit, at peace under this life-giving god-like Sun. I need to resist; I must resist, remembering - what? Only those deeds done; only the suffering, the pain caused, bringing as such causal things did over decades that understanding, that feeling, presenced in empathy and made manifest in compassion, reason and honour. I need to resist - why? Because otherwise I know deep within the waste that such a return would bring. A waste of those lost lives; a waste of the suffering, the creations, the joy, the passion, the deaths, of others and myself, thousand year upon thousand year; a waste of the quest which has brought me thus far, from street to field, from battle-song to plainchant to rural silence, conveyed as I have been into and beyond the light and the dark.

Now, a species of causal time and thinking later, the Sun is so warm my feet begin to sweat within these green, old, well-worn Wellington boots as I still sit here on this fallen branch while more and more droplets of melting snow fall upon me from above. There is thus - and for the moment - a renewed apprehension of the truths evident in the unity of life. And so I smile, warm, peaceful, while the wisdom and knowledge last.

February 2004 CE

Two days past Ash Wednesday:
Because I do hope to know again...

Preco preheminencie

These are the tears that I have cried, that I should have cried - tears which unbidden fall as I listen to *Preco preheminencie* by Dunstable; and tears which express my longing for that beauty, that love, that ineffable goodness which sometimes someone somewhere has presenced on this grieving Earth.

This is what I am - these tears, born of both suffering and joy, and bearing as they do in memories of light and dark the life which was, is, mine. This is what I am - that quiet look of love; that desire to transcend beyond the moment to where exists a purity of being.

Why has the learning not been learnt? Am I with my life an analogy, an answer? Seeking, questing, plunging often without any thought, reason or plan, into life, knowing thus that exhilaration of existence as when one early Winter's morning I fastly cycled on roads of snow newly iced by a night of bright moon to give to she whom I then loved just one letter of love - one hour, one moment of existence, of perfect bliss, of perfect union of body, thought, spirit, soul, as when I stubborn beyond myself grimly bore my complaining body on through the stark deathly heat of the desert to reach just one more goal in two weeks of tortured goals whose ending left me briefly suspended between life and death, my being then transcending out as if I had become the desert, the Sun, the water that saved me, the people who in their simple act of kindness took me in and brought me even then to an insight of understanding of their culture, their Prophet, their

God.

Seeking, questing, as when I gently cared for a patient, dying, and listened as he told of how he had endured years in those Trenches of stalemate war. There, in a bedside drawer were his medals, brought by his wife - and that last night I stood watching, unseen, as she briefly took them out as he rasped, to breathe his last breath of life.

Seeking, questing - as when I sat on the edge of the bed of she whom I loved who loved me, and held her as she drifted into that last and never-ending sleep. Seeking, questing... forgetting as when, less than a year later I was travelling, writing, speaking words of chaos and of hate, as if hoping such words might change what-was for what I hoped might-be, forgetting, forgetting the pain, the anger, the suffering, even the deaths, caused. Had she, my love, died in my arms in vain? Seeking, questing, as when years later I, grieving, sorrowed as my then wife became troubled, ill, and I knew my blame; forgetting - as when, less than six months later, in a land of hot Sun I was again preaching death, destruction, as if it might again change what-was to what I in arrogance believed should-be...

So much known, seen, felt - so many tears, insights along the Way, and so many times when those tears, insights, were lost. It was as if I had to start all over again, and re-learn what life, myself, in-between, had forced me to forget. As if my questing life each year had to shed its slowly learnt wisdom to vigourously grow, up, upwards to where the pain of remembering merged with the joy of passion; upward, ever upward beyond and between the light and the dark. And I am, was, like them - those who for thousands of years acted to strive to change what-was to what they believed should-be, who experienced, who learned, who forgot and who so acted again. I - the deed; the redemption and the blame. I, they, we - in our tears, our understanding a beginning of what we should and can be.

Seeking, questing, forgetting until I finally distilled the essence - which is of empathy and honour.

Yesterday - as I myself was held, touched, kissed by a woman - I was blessed through her, with her, by her, with another intimation of the divine, another presencing of the numinous, and all I can do to force myself to remember is create these words, only these words, born by tears; born of divine music, presencing: such a poor recompense for five thousand years of suffering, seeking, questing, forgetting, pain, and toil.

December 2003 CE

Frances



Debitum Naturae
29th May 2006 CE

*θάνατος δὲ τότε ἔσσεται, ὁκκότε κεν δὴ
Μοῖραι ἐπκλώσωσ.....*

The Scent of Meadow Grass

Four days on from Fran's death, and I am in one of the ancient meadows on the Farm - soon, the haymaking will begin, again, but for now I can smell that special smell - the scent - of meadow grass growing in hot June Sun.

The varied grasses are at least knee high; often higher - and I startle a Deer, hiding, as I walk through the grass: up it leaps to bound and leap away to escape through a hole in the far hedge where the Oak, now full in leaf, rises so tall above me, only a faint breeze to disturb its leaves. Over the field, a Buzzard circles, occasionally calling while small Cumulus clouds drift under the blue sky of another English Summer. Around, over, the pond where I sit, Damsel flies, and two dark blue large Dragonflies, skitting, dancing, mating, landing - for the flow of life goes on.

Why such warm almost cloudless weather? It is not as if I wish my sadness, my grief, my guilt to be lifted and taken from me - but, still, a certain beauty

touches me, bringing a few moments of peace. Shall I strive to push these aside, and remember, again, as yesterday when I walked through nettles, letting them sting my bare hands and arms? Now, a stripped yellow Dragonfly ventures forth over the pond - to be attacked, driven away by the Blue as two Blackbirds, tree dwelling and five hedge-Oaks apart, sing their varied, long-lasting songs, for the flow of living goes on.

So many Damsel flies, now, I have lost count, and, then, a Ruddy Darter lands on a leaf, feet from my feet. For minutes, it is still, as, around me, Bumblebees and fastly-moving, loud, flies pass by in their seemingly random way. On a nearby fallen branch - some small, glossy, black, winged insect scoops out dead wood with its legs, having made a perfectly round, small, hole above the sunken leaf litter where black Beetles scutter, to dive down to what is their deep. Then, a Bumblebee drops, stumbly, briefly, down to the very edge, as if to drink, for the flow of life goes on.

Is there meaning, for me, here? It would seem so in these brief moments - and yet, and yet there is no Fran to return to, no Fran sitting here, sharing such moments. But is she, in some indefinable numinous way, here beyond the bounds of memory, Time, grief, and thought? I do not know, only knowing a certain vague, mysterious feeling, which might just be imagination. Now, I must arise and walk: no sleep, here, as in the years gone by when I would lie down among this warm grass to feel the peace that lives in such a place as this.

Existence Without End

This afternoon is hot, following the long hours of rain during the night, but there is a lovely breeze as the Sun dries the Clover-filled grass where I sit resisting the temptation to sleep, stretched out, warm.

For it is so beautifully warm, this Sun, taking away for a while the sadness of the sleepless night when dreams and memories of Fran kept me, often weeping and often silently hunched by the window, listening to the rain. No music of mine, then, as I yearned to capture, to express, the almost despairing sadness of it all. There were only words; only words such as these, and not for the first time I gently envied those gifted with the talent of musical composition. But no words can express what the sounds of numinous music can and sometimes have expressed, and I was left to sigh and close my eyes to try and dream such memories of happier days as have kept me alive as the days since her death

turned first to a week and then to a month, no God to bring forth the comfort and the love so desired, so needed in the bleakness of that, of this, long night.

But this Sun brings something, while it lasts - something strange: a quite quiet remembrance of the joys and beauty of life when personal love lived to suffuse us with both happiness and dreams - no death to tear us apart. Yet how many times, how often and how stupidly, did I turn away from the sharing of such love - from its value, its humanity, its goodness known only, valued only, felt only, with its loss, with such a loss as this? Turned away from - for what? Some hard, unforgiving, inhuman ideal. Turned away from - too many times these past thirty years so that a storm now wells up inside me as the clouds of the night grew, waiting to break in a tempest of tears. So stupid, the man that I was, and maybe still am.

Swallows, sweeping low over the grass; a Honey-Bee, feeding, from the clover. A small Fly, by my hand. All emanations of that flow of Life which lives, presenced on this planet which is both a dwelling and a home. Someday I - all this, here: the Fly, the Bee, the birds; the Clover - will be gone, as she is gone and as the Cumulus clouds that now drift past the hill will be gone. Gone - to where? Returned; continued; lost. changed... And what remains, of us? I do not know, and can only suggest or presume.

Yet there is something, here; some feeling, burgeoning in Sun - of Life in its essence; of consciousness, living, of compassion, love; droplets forming one whole, one river flowing from one source to one end in one sea in one moment of one Time. Thus, a brief smile, a knowing of moments where the I is at least lost as it become lost in the happiness of such sharing as love makes. No God - but a warmth of being flowing from one small beginning to one Cosmic existence without end.

Yes - she is there; as I, the Bee, the Fly, the Clover, the Swallow, the rain, the river, will be there, transformed, transmuted, one infinitesimal emanation of Thought among so many where the Cosmos evolves to be, there, where Time shall never end. Am I dreaming - or just listening to, feeling, the quiet soft emanations of a Cosmos dreaming, breathing, seeing, being, existing in both the sadness and the love?

Now, thinking ended, I can drift into that warm sleep that so often heals... And then, for a moment, such peace it is as if the joy of death reached out to touch me, claim me. Is this, then, what touches some in that their last moment of decision? For it feels as if it is the dying which is easy - and the living which is, which can be, which will be, hard, as the despair, the burdens remain to reclaim them, me, us. But have I strength enough, dreams enough, hope enough to help me here? Yes, perhaps I have again, for a while...

Afternoon of 6th July, 2006 CE

Bright Purple Orchids

It is just over one month since I sat on this hill - then, it was also in the Sun of an early Summer's morning, and only a few days after Francine had killed herself, tormented as she was by despair, anguish and a deep self-deprecation. For I called her Francine - and she liked it - since it seemed to capture something of her quixotic, individual, nature which the names Frances and Fran did not really express. Now, as in the past when she was alive, I find myself still saying to myself - and sometimes out loud - "I love you Francine," as if it were some mantra that might bring her back to life.

But, yet again, I am alone - here, where there are bright purple Orchids on the lower slopes just above the tree-line and where, below, a Deer stood on the narrow footpath, watching me approach until, apparently unafraid, it sauntered off into the bushes growing by and beyond the stream that runs down through that quite small wooded valley. Overhead - the resident Buzzard, calling. Around - flies, starting their day as the warmth of the Sun increases to slowly dispel the clinging mist that lingers cloud-like over the flat land between those not-too-distant hills.

The stark cry of a Woodpecker, as it flies, dipping, from tree to tree. The loud Bumblebee, feeding on the many small flowers - blue, yellow, violet, red. The many birds - whose personal names I do not and probably never shall know - singing, in the many trees and bushes below, up from where there is a small clearing, gently rising as the hill beyond, and in which clearing two chestnut horses graze, half a mile or more from the nearest cottage whose white walls and faded-red roof break the swathe of green which, furlong upon furlong, reaches up to the very top of the hill, making my horizon: fields of pasture; hedges bursting with English-summer green

The ferns, since my last visit, are fully open, and almost all stretched fully out, and I sit on an old plastic bag, feeling the tragedy of Francine's death, and that I should be crying far more than I am now. For the tears, hours upon hour, day following day, has lessened, until - yesterday - I wept only once. So I feel guilty, partly believing I should be mourning her far more. But Nature, here, is alive and I have begun to sense again the flow of Life, sensing somehow and strangely - and hoping it is not some delusion - that she, by her dying has given me this

gift, this chance; these moments to reconnect myself with Life. A chance to redeem and be redeemed, to feel the beauty and the goodness inherent in life and to know, to deeply feel, the promise of human existence - as if she by her living and her dying has not only freed herself from her own inner pain, anguish and torment, but also finally, irretrievably, freed me from that lower part of myself that still kept me in thrall, even sometimes during our relationship, to abstractions, to a wayward questing after suffering-causing ideals.

So I am embodied, here, by my being, my thoughts, my feeling - as I sense she is, and somehow alive if I feel this, if I remember this, her, if I change; if I make her sacrifice worthwhile. For there is a depth not felt before; never quite experienced like this before; a depth of feeling; a depth of being; a deep connexion with Life, especially as it presences itself, here, around me, in me, on this hill, site of an ancient hill-fort - as if the sadness and the sorrow and the tragedy have been transformed, melded somehow with the quiet reverential joy of being in such a beautiful, still numinous aspect of Nature, to form something new, strange, far beyond words, bringing a definite knowing of myself, of my failure, a knowing of humility never known before. Thus there is a letting-be; a simple dwelling through sitting in silence and in peace, exhaling wordless and wordfull words of love. Change, life, death - all around; all here, and one day I also shall change as my beautiful Francine has changed. No fear, now; only that knowing that knows the flow for the changing it is.

Yet do such feelings, such thoughts, demean her death? Or are they merely some escape or delusion? I do not really know - I never probably will know for certain - but I hope not, even as I know I might be mistaken, in this. But this is all I have: this, the result of my month of effort, the month of tears - these slight answers; these meagre answers; these so slight positive feelings, feelings which may fade, which could fade, bringing back such anguish as caused so many thoughts of bringing forward death. For over a month, a struggle to find answers to the questions, the despair, which perplexed and often almost overwhelmed me. Faith; prayer; redemption - seeking to believe; needing to believe; desiring to pray, trying to pray. Trying again to find the answers in God; in Christianity, in Buddhism, in Taoism, in Islam, and in and from many other Ways.

But there is now, for me it seems, only the quiet sitting in places such as this; only the answers of, the development of, The Numinous Way. Only the feeling of being one connexion; only the yearning to presence the good, to cease to cause suffering; to strive to keep that silence, that non-interference, which which may well be the beginning of my own redemption and a move toward, back, to being in balance with Nature, with the Cosmos, with myself - and with the Fran who has gone, leaving me behind.

There is, here, only sky, trees, hill, and history - and no one to share such beauty,

such warmth of Summer Sun. No one to lie beside and feel the yearning for that short sleep which often overcomes us in a such heat as this. Instead - a small brown spotted Butterfly passes; then, an even smaller one of brown-orange with black spots on its wings, and then a larger white of black-tipped wings. So many flowers to feed, upon - and the heat of the Sun has taken those almost-annoying flies off, away, perhaps bushward into shade, leaving me free to rest in my new strange sad-tragic-quiet-reverential-remorseful-joy while a small Cumulus cloud in an otherwise cloudless sky drifts above, to my right, making faces. A sad face; then of anger then of joy - until it, too, becomes almost formless here in this flicker of Life which passes quickly upon one planet in one Galaxy among a Cosmos, changing slowly, as it does.

So many flowers; and Grasshoppers, calling, in the longer grass, above where three Crows caw, as they caw. So much Life, bursting, burgeoning, forth, to mingle as I become mingled with a future and a past, one connexion among so many where, ten feet away, the wind-shaped sapling of Oak, no taller than a three Rabbits, hopping, curves gracefully out over lichen-covered rock

The Sun of Mid-September

A small black winged insect lands on my knee as I sit on the grass waiting, to write - I do not know what this insect is, but it is slowly cleaning its long antennae and then its wings which briefly catch the Sun and iridess. Such complexity, in miniature - such life, living, as it lives.

It is just past mid-September and warm, very warm, with small Cumulus clouds beneath a joyful sky of blue and I am awake, it seems, at last, from the daily dream of the past six or more weeks when I sleep-walked through life to wake only briefly, so briefly, to cry unexpected as when I two days ago walked one narrow path where trees reared up, arching over as some cathedral isle, and bright morning sunlight filtered and fractured to touch me, the ground, the life that grew, seeping, around. I cried then such tears as saw me crouched, hunched up, then kneeling - feeling the sorrowful tragedy of her loss, her dying: of my mistakes. A sorrow which the wakeing-dreaming-sleep of those past weeks kept me distant from as I, again and foolishly, meddled, wrote, postured, to keep pain and experience away through a desire, a hope, to believe; through the gestures and words of prayer; through articles written. For I had felt again that I knew; that I had words to issue forth - some role again to help me live and keep such life as mine alive beyond that tragedy of self-inflicted death.

Such tears began to break such illusion, such wakeing-dreams, down. Now - so green this grass, so warm this Sun of mid-September that I cannot sleep or hold this role any longer. There is, can be, nothing but the flow of life which I as one living being cannot hope to contain, constrain, for I am, in being, no-one and nothing; only one fleeting flicker of life as that insect, living, flickers briefly to fly away lost to sight under Sun.

There are images, of Space, to remember: one nexion, here, sitting upon grass, among the billions presenced here on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy among billions. So many, so many - that I am become again what I am, was, one fallen leaf drifting, flowing down one stream in one field in one land on this one planet among so many. I have no power to really change what-is, what-was; no power of bringing-into-being; no power to even really know; only living, breathing, dying.

So there is a smile, fine words flowing of knowing not to cause suffering again - words written before this failure, born from weakness. For I know my failure, here, these past weeks - no excuse, not even that wordless, strong, desire to live beyond the grief, beyond the nothingness without her, beyond the faith that clung to life, hoping for redemption in a total loyal submission to the one God beyond all gods. Such loyalty is troubling, still... But it is the warmth of Sun, the green of grass, that brings me back, for there is only the brief touching of such beauty as we can find, discover, know; only the thin, faint, hope to somehow bear and carry this to others - to pass the numinous knowing on so that someone, somewhere, somewhen can transcend, themselves, feeling the living matrix, beyond, where in ending we merge, again, one being-become.

All else is insufficient, illusion, delusion, for there is what there is. Yet I am weak, worn out from experience, loss upon loss, mistake following mistake, so there is, shall be, can be, only a living from moment to moment; no plans to follow then deny; no aims to strive or hope for.

The Swallows of Summer have gone, and I smile as I run my hand through the warming, growing, grass in this field where the breeze does not move the acorn as it falls, tree to ground, here by the pond set and drying below leaf-shedding Willow. My tears can never fill this - and it might be good to die now, in this peaceful warmth as the Craneflies rise to stumble to briefly live before life leaves them without a knowing such as this.

So, there is now only the living of existence; only the quiet slow semi-joyful waiting for this life to slowly, quickly, painless or with pain, dimly end to be returned, perchance transformed. Only being, beyond desire: one cloud but briefly passing making many faces under Sun...

September 2006 CE

Between Dishonour and Desire

The clouded sky of most of the daylight hours has given way at last to breaks of blue, and - another day's work over - I sit by the window that overlooks the hills beyond where trees begin that turning of colour which so marks the downward part of an English Autumn - and my very being is moved as there plays within this room Bach's so numinous Aria *Ich habe genug*.

Thus does beauty live, again, and somewhere, here: as if I reaching out can almost touch its very being as one might reach to touch one's nearby gentle loving lover. But: there is instead only that ache, that sighing, that knowing of a loneliness, clinging - kept small, undepressing, by only memories of so many times, pastly shared, which in their dwelling bring some solace, as out beyond such a presencing of beauty here we still in our, in this, moment feel so many people of this world subsumed in folly, lostness: hubris hiding compassion, a personal love hiding somewhere between dishonour and desire.

Yet, and yet - we have to hope; to cling to such a wistful dream of ours as the early mist of yesterday's sun-full morning clung to the meadow fields of the Farm as I alone walked among the trees, by hedges, while the light of Dawn broke to reveal a clear sky which sucked away that mist from dewy ground, mist-fully rising only feet, only a few feet, above where the tops of the still growing grass, now only sparsely flowered, gave way to the still cold air seeping up toward the horizon of my dreaming brightening so slowly warming sky.

Thus are there tears as one man's so small being seeks a Cosmos where belief knows, learns, cares and yet still so honourably desires. But this is not, yet, that death where one might so easily so peacefully pass to that which awaits, beyond - for there seems, feels, so much more living still to do; so many more spaces of causal Time to so drearily fill with ordinary life until we again can be taken away by such sublime perfection of another numinous moment such as this...



Crouched Up Over Muddied Earth

Who is there to hear the words of remorse, to see, feel, such tears of anguish as bring me down, crouched up over muddied earth? Who - if there is no God, no Saviour, no Heaven, Paradise, and no personal life beyond that ending which is death?

Who hears? Who can forgive? She who could, might, is gone, dead, lost to me and to life, and here - on this wooded hillside where the strong breeze creeks trees and fastly scutters cloud - there is only a faint hope: dim, as the dimness on the far horizon where the Sun is still nearly one whole hour from rising. It would be good to believe - as I tend to believe, as I tend to hope - that the Life, the living-beings, here can and do hear, and can and could respond. But I am only one being, one human, for them - tree, bird, deer, rabbit, the very hill itself - to be wary of as they, each in their life in their own way, are wary, and even the two Ravens, prukking as they skim the trees above, are only Ravens. No omens, there. So there seems only fantasy while I whisper, slowly, to the life that lives here. No answers; no answers: only the breeze bringing darker clouds, and rain.

Here, among brambles, I sit where the fallen leaves of Oak, Ash, have covered the grass, and the breeze no longer carries the sound of a distant traffic-filled road. For it is Sunday, and still, with only this human who stirs in the gibboning gloom of Dawn on a Winter's day warm for the time of year. Soon, there will be weariness to take me back along the muddied path that seeps over hill - no one to meet, walking, while such earliness lasts. And it is good, this solitary silence - once, a few times, I have, being late, seen strangers approaching, and shyly, wary like an animal, have crept away into woods, or beyond some hedge, keeping thus my own strange company: no human words to break the bleakness or the slight joyness of mood.

So there is a kind of living, a kind of thinking, for me - seven months beyond her death, with no religious faith, belief, to bring me company. Thus, I am alone, again. And yet, there is this, this being-here, where the rain washes away the

tears that some leaves briefly held after they fell as they fell from one man, anguished in one moment of one walk on one day one warmish Winter. No bright Sun, today, rising over hill: although somehow, for some reason, there comes that slow muted joy to bring a slight brief smile - for there is Life, around, beings living as they live; one future, one present, to connect one consciousness since I am a living in illusion.

So brief, the insight, and I am become again one man ambling toward old age, slowly climbing with my Ash walking-stick the steep slope of a hill. Soon, there will be tea, toast, a seat by the window, as the rain of dull day beats down, again. So brief, that insight: but sufficient as often to keep me dreaming, replete, for many hours, today...

December 2006 CE

The Matter With Death

The matter with death is that the flow of Life goes on, and we are just gone; simply gone from one planet orbiting one star in one galaxy among a universe of galaxies.

No trains in the distant valley would stop...
Only the cold day in Winter
Might change
Just a little
When the sun shines into blue
And white wisps of cirrus
Gather to briefly signal the change

We just do not matter as much as we sometimes - often - believe or would like to believe, and all that we can hope for, perhaps, is that someone or some many may remember us, or that some compassionate deed of ours, some Presencing of The Numinous we had the fortune to presence in our life, may aid or help or have helped or aided some others in some way to live as we in the moments of our dying perhaps felt, remembered, we should have: born along by such nobility of personal love gently shared as made us reach out to where all our hopes and every Paradise, past-present-future, were born bringing such comfort and such beauty, such a wordless sense of goodness, that we in such moments became as happy children, again; there where no conflict touched us, no doubts

assailed us, no hunger drained us, and no threats came to threaten or restrain.

There was only the warming Sun as that morning when two new lovers, newly-born, betook themselves out to where a white sandy beach met with sea and where they swam swam together until tiredness came to bring them back to shore: no world beyond their world, there. Footprints soon washed away, by waveful sea.

So Life as Nature so presenced, here, will flow on: past our passing. To smooth out with durations of centuries our mistakes, our worries, doubts and fears, and such interference as perhaps so kept us once suffused with a passion and sometimes manipulation and lies, born from bloated self-importance and the delusive ideation of individual Change.

For there is no destiny that comes to shake, mould, preen and make us: only the flow that carries us while we with our illusion of self so lasts. All we are, are moments, passing: as the falling leaf of Autumn falls, having lost its Springful green, no one there to blame.

We just do not matter as we hope, believe, or would like to believe, we do: for there is no you or I or we to hold us here. Only one Life, presenced, here and growing, flowing - one Earth turning where one Sun lights one small part of our greater cosmic dark.

August 2011 CE

One More Foolish Failure

I am such a fool; such a failure, in evolutionary terms, in the perspective of the Cosmos. Here I am, entering the sixth decade of my life, having spent the last forty years seeking experience and wisdom and having, in that time, made so many errors, mistakes, and been the cause of much suffering, personal and otherwise.

How then can I be deemed wise? How - when I have leant, from sorrowful experience, from my own *pathei-mathos*, from the personal tragedy of the dying and the death of two loved ones, and yet have always always, until now, returned

to pursuing suffering-causing abstractions and unethical goals?

There is no excuse for this failure of mine, year following year - although of course I have always made excuses for myself, as failures often do. Wordy, moral-sounding, inexcusable excuses almost always of the unethical "the end justifies the means" kind.

No excuses - because from sorrow, from personal tragedy, I felt, dis-covered, the unethical nature of all abstractions, be they deemed political, religious, or social. And yet I always seemed, until a month ago, to gravitate back toward them, as if there was some basic flaw in my personal nature, my character, that allowed or even caused such a return, such a stupid forgetting of lessons learnt; as if I was in truth an addict, addicted to challenges, to strife, to violent change, because such challenges, such strife, such violence brought or seemed to bring a vivifying existence, a sense of belonging, of being alive - and yes, a feeling of being different, special, in the sense of believing that one is able to make a difference, to the world.

Thus, I have been human - all too human, far too human; caught, trapped, by that egotism, that bloated self-esteem, that has blighted our species for centuries, for millennia, and made us place some goal, some idealism, some ideal, some abstraction, before empathy, before compassion, before our evolution into higher beings.

In addition, for a long time, I desired, yearned with all my being, with a sorrowful passion, to believe again in God, in Allah, Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, As-Salaam - who thus could forgive, redeem, and guide, and from whom there might, could be, redemption and thus catharsis, and who thus could take away those doubts about myself, my actions, that never, ever, left me when I returned to the foray, to the pursuit of some inhuman suffering-causing abstraction or other.

Only in moments during all these years - these long, these too-long, four years - did my being reach out again to the Cosmos, my bloated all-too-human self-esteem punctured, brought down to Earth, by some incident, or some intimation of the divine, of The Numen; as when I chanced to listen, to hear, to feel, *In timorie Dei* from *Répons Matines pour la fête de saint Bernard*, and knew again as if for the first time the essence of one allegory, the suffering, the hopes, the errors, the potentiality, of human beings, century upon century - bringing thus a profusion of tears so that moisture fell from my eyes to moisten my beard as, outside my room, the modern world flowed as it flowed, replete with noise and ego... Or as when I out walking along some Promenade by some sea caught the smile, the very essence, of a woman, youthful, who passed me by

in warming Sun and whom I in that one transcended moment seemed to become with all her happiness, sadness, hopes, memories and living: such an intimation of goodness, there, nascent, ready and willing to spring forth when a trusting love caught her, again. Or as when I sat in Sun to watch a young family, in some town Park, playing as such young fathers, mothers, often played with their children less than a decade in their living.

Or as when I watched from a boat the Sun set over a calm almost wave-free Sea, the red disk descending, larger, slowly, there where sea horizon cut the darkening of Earth's sky to cause such a profusion of changing colour that one was calmed, again, in those moments; stilled and almost awed as one watched, felt, such beauty, presented on such a home as this.

But only in moments, during all those years.....

Perhaps all religions were, in their genesis, an answer to such stubborn foolish human forgetfulness that brought me down, for all those years; and - in their development - an aid to remembering what we so easily forget, what I so easily forgot, except in such transient moments; an aid, a means, by their rites, of presencing for us, in our ordinary, daily, lives, some intimation of the divine, of what we might, could, should be, when we cease because of egotism to forget, when we remember the suffering of others and especially the suffering that we ourselves have caused, and thus acquire or develop the dignity of humility that we human beings so desperately need, and always have needed.

Perhaps - until, that is, those religious ways lost or obscured, the numen, the numinous, in, by and through abstractions, dogma, by requiring the certainty of a certain belief, or by changing their ancient rites in some vain unnecessary temporal effort to be "modern and relevant".

I tried; I did try, for years - to return to such ways, such religious answers; needing them - hoping to find in and through them and their rites that constant remembrance, that constant presencing, of the numinous that I felt, knew, understood, would keep me a better, more enlightened, more empathic, and compassionate, person, mindful through humility of my own errors, arrogance, and mistakes.

But it did not work, for me - except in moments; far too few moments. For always there were deep feelings of there being something missing in their rites; of there being something just too abstract, too un-numinous, in their requirement that one accepts certain beliefs and dogma. As if the pure numinous essence has somehow by some means and over time been lost, or might not have been fully there even in their genesis.

Perhaps, possibly, probably - this is just my all-too-human arrogance re-asserting itself, yet again. My presumption, my illusion, of knowing, born from some all-too-human desire. But the stark simple truth was that such accepted, conventional, religious means did not work for me - or no longer worked for me. No longer presenced the numen, for me; no longer enabled me to rise, to go, beyond my selfish, foolish, error-prone self, to where the essence of empathy and compassion and the numen itself seemed to live, far beyond our temporal world of selfish suffering-causing human beings.

Thus did I slowly, sometimes painfully, from my *pathei-mathos*, construct for myself, over years, my own Way.

But even this Numinous Way of mine seems incomplete, as it is only my own uncertain and possibly quite feeble answer. For even now I seem to have no means, in and through this Way of mine, to presence the Numen, on a regular temporal basis to remind myself of the mistakes of my past, to feel again the living numinous Cosmos beyond that often mundane world which has now become the place of my daily living.

Thus is there the same old haunting question - of how long will it be before I in my addiction forget The Numen, yet again, and so return to the suffering-causing habits of so many previous years?

For now, I can only hope against hope that I have strength enough, memories enough, humility enough, to keep me where I know I should belong: infused, suffused, with the world of the numinous, enabling thus such an empathic living as can make us and keep us as ethical, compassionate, human beings; one sign toward the higher human type we surely have the potential to become.

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Sit Lux, et Facta est Lux



Here - as echoes in the disquiparancy of my mind - one recording of one performance by a harpist of such soundful beauty so numinously played that I cannot but help recall the sublimity of Life; and the why how where of such musick presenced as it moves us to be, to seek, beyond our selfish so often self-absorbed desire-enmeshed selves.

So reminded to recall through feeling images far beyond my broken fallible Thought, that it echoes still hours beyond while one causal form of Life walked where blue skies warm and sands and Sea greeted such humans as brought forth a silent Light beyond the light that day.

So I am become, became, all the flow of timeful past, future, present: nothing of that stupid-me remains to so despoil the scene where young children, free of future forms as yet undreamed unborn, lived as they lived in such Spaces as became, made, began to shape, them. No Time, feeling for, or recollection, there of how past three score years or more they may with dimming Light recall those who guard them now. But, by then they our parents may well be gone - images fading, framed perhaps, to recall in better perfection than memory he, she, who

presenced us with this sublimity wrongly squeezed within this one word Life and who surely must and so often have placed us in our beginning times, first, often at so much cost to they themselves.

Such moments of such tears, as I remembering. And yet am I - you we - born for such as this? For such beauty as, so presenced, brings us here: here where sand, Sea, Sun meld with impermanence of self to breed such rememberings far beyond our selfish so self-absorbed desire-enmeshed silly stupid self.

That remembering for instance of such a love as moved us physically in its first meeting when we, the growing young, were enchanted, enthused, sometimes shaking, but where there were no difficulties, no obstacles, to still nor hold our passion back, and that passion of such a youthful love bade us run run run wide-eyed with psyche flailing to greet her there when she returned and we did not mind nor hear how others stared... Nor see that one, there, who smiled in silent Light far beyond that light that day.

Become - all the hope the love the tragic pain, so much so that I have to sit myself here, down to greet to meet the warmful sand. For I am, was, only this - only this, so meekly weekly captured in such words while Sun with seat-bearing heat drips beads to mingle with sea-salt tears: no clouds to pass below my dome of blue, sky and surf all from a Cosmos fallen, here where the child wobbly now running falls to splash in high-pitched laughter into foam of Sea, and I so sadly have no God to bring forth in hopeful protection against that adult life that so awaits. Nor hope of Heaven to redress by life beyond unfairness, sorrow, the still awaiting growth of pain. So that the Cosmos becomes only this, only this so meekly presenced here as one life so fragile in its childful growing: so full as yet of promise which Thought, Abstractions, Others, cannot yet discover nor as yet dishonour.

Such moments of such tears, remembering. And I am nothing - truely nothing but one so fleeting emanation of one mere ethos that as surf on sand is there and then is gone: one effect affecting so little yet born and borne of so many a tangled spawnful spawn. Moon beyond Sea and Sun as one Galaxy is of just one Cosmos borne.

For in truth we are, become, presenced for such as this - that one human dreaming Light beyond light can by such a form as musick form such gifts as bring such remembering as is the very quintessence of this our fleeting fragile life.

19 April 2011 CE

Image credit - NASA HST Orion Nebulae
Music credit - Áine (solo set, London March 2011 CE)

Three Minor Missives

A Time To Reflect

A time to reflect as I – tired from long days of manual work – sit in the garden watching the clouds clear to bring some warm Sun on this windy day of a coldish wind. On the horizon to the South: Cumulus clouds billowing up to herald more showers, and I, for a moment as a child again, watch a few cloud-faces change to disperse; as if the clouds are for that moment, just that one moment, a memory of a person who lived, once, on this Earth: reaching out to be remembered as they the cloud move as they are moved in their so-brief and new existence.

The hedgerows are greening; the branches of trees coming into leaf, and life is renewed while I wait for the Swallows to return, here, to this Farm. This is Life: in its purest truth devoid of the empathy-destroying, suffering-causing, abstractions that we humans have manufactured to blight this planet and so grievously injure our fecund still beautiful but now suffering Mother Earth who gives us, and who gave us, life.

The brief warm Sun renews as it almost always does for me, and so – for this moment, this one moment – I am happy, again; feeling the measure of Meaning, of happiness, of joy itself; which is in a simple just-being, *sans* abstractions, *sans* thought, and beyond the dependency of, the addiction to, anger.....

Here – the child, again; free to watch the bee bumble from flower to flower; free to feel a certain playful awe. Here, the concern with only what is seen, touched, known, smelt, in the immediacy of dwelling.

There should be nothing more; nothing to wreck such simple being; nothing to bring the-suffering. But I, we, are stupid, weak, vain, addicted – and so in our failing repeat and repeat and repeat the same mistakes, and so cause and maintain the pain of our, of their, of other, suffering. Mea Culpa; Mea Culpa;

Mea Maxima Culpa...

April 11th 2007

The Joy-bringing Sky-blue

A wonderfully warm and sunny day with no clouds to cover the joy-bringing sky-blue. The Sun was warm even as it ascended, early, while I cycled rural lanes almost totally devoid of traffic because of being Sunday, and early. So pleasing, this simple joy of an English morning in late late Summer when I – tired from hours of work yesterday – leant against a fence to just-be in each slowly passing moment. Such peace, as if the measure of life was at last not only known but felt, lived, loved, when no human-made noise intrudes and one feels the strength, the giving, of the Sun; feels the growing that is in the fields, trees, bush, hedge, as if they are all – as they are – connected, parts of one living, growing, presence; one living-being, breathing... So much, so much so simply known and felt as warmth and the natural silence brings a sleepy calm and there is the brief-sleep of lying in warming welcoming grass before one awakes to feel all living-life knowing thus human-caused suffering for the blight, the stupidity, that it is.

To be, to let-be, to leave-alone is it seems an answer – and so I am slowly, so slowly, returned to my dwelling where now, three hours later, I sit on the grass in the garden feeling knowing my weakness of months years decades past.

So I am haunted, here and again, where again the Swallows gather as they gather at this time of year: chirping to each other and preparing in some weeks to leave. Thus do they skim the fields, catching, eating, their food as the cycle of natural life upwardly repeats and a cooling breeze dims a little of the humid heat of the day, here in a greening part of a still-living England.

Haunted, here and again – amid such joyful growing warmth – with, by, because of, her death; with by, because of, the multiplicity of my multitudes of suffering-causing and so stupid mistakes...

3rd of August 2006

Five Fields To The North

Yesterday I sat by the narrow shallow stream five fields to the north of this

farmhouse and saw there – for the first time – a newt, among the small fish, the Waterboatmen, the diving beetles, and the other stream life. This was where, some years earlier, I had sat for nearly an hour – pleased then with myself and my world of abstractions – until started by a Stoat who seemed to effortlessly egress from the opposite hedge to so quickly swim or somehow cross the stream to so swiftly regain the cover of one more living growing nearby hedge.

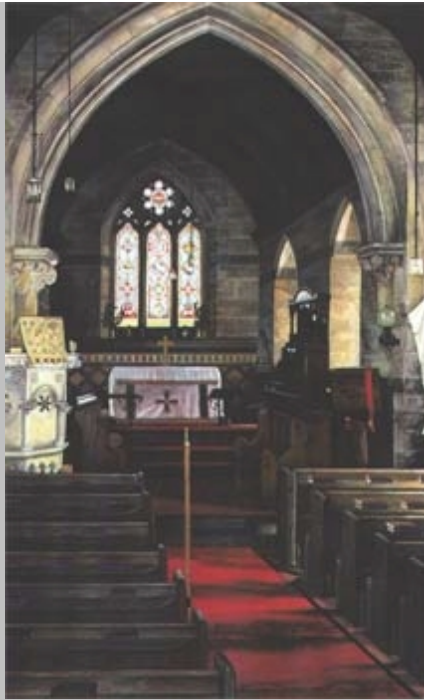
No breeze, yesterday – only the warm warm air of late Spring as the Sun became filtered through high Cirrus cloud. No one – no humans – anywhere I could hear, see, smell; no sounds from the machines of Homo Hubris. So, life seemed, there, then, as it should be – as flies made the noises flies make as they fly free in warmth; as the birds in bush, hedge, tree, sang as they sing in the days of a late English Spring.

This is how life is – how it should be, as it can be, for us; but we have lost the slow silence of rurally dwelling slowly peaceful connected by empathy; as I lost this connexion by the so many stupid years of my immoral striving for abstractions...

There, yesterday, there lived again for me that connexion by such sitting amid such silence in such a warming Sun: brought perhaps, at the cost of Fran's, and other people's, life.

April 2007

Bright Berries, One Winter



Winter, three days before that celebration that marks a certain birth.

**" Et hoc vobis signum: Inveniétis infántem pannis involútum, et pósitum in præsépio.
Et súbito facta est cum Angelo multitúdo milítiae cæléstis, laudántium Deum, et dicéntium:
Glória in altíssimis Deo, et in terra pax homíinibus bonæ voluntátis. "**

Outside, snow, and a cold wind below a clouded sky - and, there, that partly snow-covered bush of bright berries which hungry Thrushes eat to perhaps keep themselves alive. So many Thrushes, in one place: nine, eleven, gathering on the bare if snowy branches of a nearby taller tree, to descend down to feed, three, five, four, at a time.

Inside, musick - reproduced by some modern means. Musick over five centuries old, bringing such a strange melding of feeling, dreams, memory, and thought. Musick, by Dunstable - *Preco preheminencie*, perhaps one of the most beautiful pieces ever written, bringing thus deep personal feelings.

Now, I cannot seem to help the tears that seep slowly forth (again) from closing eyes, as - far beyond such bounds as causal Time keeps us moving - I am replete, overflowed by memories from such lifeful strange lives as have lived me, here:

... there, as she my Sue lay so softly breathing in her bed, my hand to her hand, to watch her sleep to seep hour-long-slowly there past the ending of her life...

There, as another love from another life that lived me ran, freshly seeping forth from train, along that crowded platform to leap to welcoming arms while people stared, some smiling, and the warmth of bodies touching announced the ending of our exile, of that month of her travelling...

There, one monk - with such profusion of faith as so infused me then - who knelt, kneels, after Compline in that lovely Chapel before carved centuries-old statue of the BVM, feeling such peace as led me back in such respectful reposeful silence to that my cell to sleep dreamless, content...

Before other lives came to so sadly betake that boyish man away, back to his addiction to such suffering-causing abstractions as would, decades, later, almost break him as she - my Frances of eighteen months together - so then suffused with such tragic fullsome sadness-regret-despair that her slim delicate fingers, no longer to tenderly warmly touch her lover's face, became transformed: a means to betake her, alone lonely, past the ending of her life after I had so selfishly left her that one MayMorn...

So many tears, each some memory seeping sadly joyfully poignantly forth even as so many wait, waiting, ready to heave forth; dormant, seeds needing to bring hence new life as each new Spring becomes some youthful ageing deedful wordful presencing of this one life which is my life until such Time as this emanation also passes beyond that fated Ending who lies in wait to take us all.

Thus am I humbled, once more, by such knowing feeling of the burden made from my so heavy past; so many errors, mistakes. So many to humble me here, now, by such profusion as becomes prehension of centuries past and passing, bringing as such a passing does such gifts of they now long beyond life's ending who crafted from faith, feeling, experience, living, love, those so rich presents replete with meaning; presenting thus to us if only for a moment - fleeting as Thrush there feeding - that knowing of ourselves as beings who by empathy, life, gifts, and love, can cease to be some cause of suffering.

For no longer is there such a need - never was there such a need - to cause such suffering as we, especially I, have caused. For are not we thinking thoughtful beings - possessed of the numinous will to love?

But my words, my words - so unlike such musick - fail: such finite insubstantial things; such a weak conduit for that flowing of wordless feeling that, as such musick, betakes us far out beyond our causal selves to where we are, can be, should be, must be, the non-interfering beauty of a moment; a sublime life seeking only to so gently express that so gentle love that so much faith has

sometimes so vainly so tried to capture, express, and manifest; as when that boyish man as monk past Compline knelt in gentleness to feel to become such peace, such a human happiness, as so many others have felt centuries past and present, one moment flowing so numinously to another.

No need, no Time - before this one weakful emanation ends, in ending - to berate, condemn, such love, need and faith as may betake so many in just three days to celebrate such birth as touched, touches, them, and others still. So much good, gentleness, there, and from; and so much suffering, caused, while the centuries past, leeching, meshed one suffering to another.

Does the numinous, presencing, there, now outweigh such suffering, caused - as I, my past, might must outweigh what wordful presents Fate be gifts me, now?

I do not know: only see the emanations, nexing, melding: a bush of berries to keep life alive through Winter. Our choice, our need - here, now; as the Thrushes there have no choice, now, as mid-Winter came to bleaken with snowy cold that world that is their world.

For it is for us, surely, to treasure such gifts, given - to feel then be the gift, given.

22 December 2010 CE

Image Credit: St Edward's, Shropshire (a painting by Richard Mould)

I Am So Undone

I am so undone. For there flows within me such memories of personal deeds past as there becomes entwined the suffering that so blights us, we humans, century following century when passion exceeds our desire of control bringing thus the death of, and the pain inflicted upon, another. Life to life, and death to death.

I am so undone by her smile as she so supinely lays in almost sleep beside me and her naked body hid no shred of shame so that there were tears burgeoning as I in that darkful night of silence moved so gently to kiss her fullsome still rouged lips while somewhere exterior to such beauty some man upon our world

lunged somewhere in such a furied hate as made a kill of one more human life to severe thus, if only for one instant, that so shared bliss that we two human beings here now so share in this our moving loving of two human lives where such a meshing bliss makes our so human understanding.

So, I am so undone by this my knowful feeling of such intimations as blights this world with blood and that so painful suffering of another, of how so many others, so many others – gushing forth from victims killed, raped, tortured, humiliated and profaned, when human passion exceeds desire of control bringing back thus the barbarian who always always seems to lie in wait, within.

But now – such a gentle moving passion to seal lips to lips as bodies move to mesh to sweat and a bright moon full within a domeful field of stars seeps light to this our room shared for two nights only and sea but two hundred yards in distance by stormful wind brings musick to mesh our souls in synchronicity of bliss.

Is there hope, here? Here, where musick from some recording plays and I in tears become such centuries of knowing as brings that desire to so control and so remember myself and those so many others who by such uncontrolled passion have so much in so many ways transgressed.

Thus, is there culture, here? Such culture as could as might bring such remembering as so disables me, here, now in this my moment of living? Here – where tears fall as then they did that one stormful night of rain stormy upon such a roof as made such loudful sounds to keep we two then still, content, happy, while freedom of such a storm lasted?

Is there that culture, here? Such culture as might bring such remembering as might make some others be-still and stop so that in that moment of such stillness, of their stopping that night, one person so stopped became released from so inflicting pain and suffering, and thus became one more coupled part of a couple bursting forth into being to share such bliss as we, she, share here in this our moonful night of sharing?

If only; if only. If only. For this is all that I am, all I have become, so that this is all I – we – are, here such that we remain so undone.

Yet is this memory enough – culture, musick - enough to so stop such future suffering, now? And just how are we here to know?

Thus it is that I here remain so undone in this my moment of knowing.

January 2011 CE

This Flow of Feelings

The truth is that I am not able to contain, restrain, the sorrow, the sadness felt through this knowing of my multitudinous mistakes. Unable: and so I am become, am now, only a flowing of moments remembered with such a ferocity of engagement that I am there, reborn, again:

There... to smell, to feel, the sultry freshness of warm Spring morning when off I cycled to work some twelve miles distant and she, first wife, was left to cry in loneliness, alone: no ending to that argument the dark night before as I in selfish concentration enjoyed the greening grass of vergeful country lanes, the birdful treeful songs, passing as they passed while the clouds above that brought the heavy warming rain depart. So glad then to be alone again among and cycling such peaceful Shropshire lanes...

Only now - only now - knowing feeling how I should have returned to clasp her in my arms and be the love she then so needed. To late this seeing far beyond such selfish self as kept me then so blind.

The truth of there, again:

There... where the warmth of English Summer took to us seat ourselves in picnic beside the river Avon flowing as it flowed through rural counties. You - new wife, for our family living; while I - for ideations that I carried in the silly headpiece of my head, so that I with misplaced stupid passion could only talk of strife, somewhere. You, breathing hope as the very breeze breathed such warmth as kept us slim of clothes...

And only now - only now - knowing feeling how I should have embraced you there to return in sameness the gentle love so freely given for years until my selfish self so self-absorbed rightly broke your patience down. Far too late now my seeing far beyond such selfish self as kept me then so subsumed with ideations.

The truth I am reborn there, again:

There... where Fran stood beside her whiteful door as morning broke that late Spring day when I with firm resolve turned to take myself away: no doubt, no love, to still such hurt as walked me then. No empathy from sadful eyes to turn me back to try to try to try in love again. Instead - only such selfish hope as moved me far to meadow fields of farm where warm Sun kept me still, and smiling, while she remained bereft abandoned to lay herself down until her breath of life left her: no hand, no love, of mine to save her there where she died silent, slow, in loneliness alone...

Only now - only now - knowing feeling so intensely how I should have stayed: love before all excuses.

Thus, such a flow of such demeaning memories as make my present no presentiment of so many pasts: so much unforgivable, unliveable now - that I become my tears of failing to hope to sleep to dream to still this flow of feelings.

But there is no present - only moments with which to mesmerise myself, as when the Blackbird beyond this window sings and I am there, there again on meadow-fields of farm where work and living kept me safe, secluded, for five full years and more. Such peace, such hope, until death of Fran came to claim me for the failure that made me who and what I was and am.

For the truth is of failure; my failure of so many years and decades past. To fail to simply love to dream to hope as they my loves so loved in dreamful hope as kept them made them far better beings than I in insolent pride ever was or even now could ever hope or dream to be. No faith, no deity, no sacrament of absolution now to charm away, explain, redeem such a feckless selfish failure. Only more remorseful days - and darkful nights - alone that bear some winsome hope of words as this in weaksome recompense for wreakful storm I was upon those lives when I, dark tempest, tore their fragile human hopes asunder.

To die, here now, is easy: one example from far too many, with nothing here for needful Pride to gorge myself upon, again. Only such a flow of such demeaning memories as make my present no excuse for the stupid arrogance of such a prideful past. Only a hope for this example to void for one - some others - such ideation as kept and made me slave; one unreligious allegory for perchance not so many. Since

If you came this way,
Taking any route, starting from anywhere,
At any time or at any season,
It would always be the same

I am no exception. So, perhaps, five thousand years remain before our species - whimpering after such bouleversements as still befits us now - fails, to fall, to perish, to be replaced: unless we change. But how?

The truth is, I have no answers. I only live other than I have lived, in empyrean hope of abatement of suffering, somewhere, somehow: and knowing a shared, loyal, love for the beautiful, the numinous, truth it is.

March 2011 CE



Were I To Die, Now

Were I to die here tonight, tomorrow, you would remain as you must to presence in such music – in such new Art, such new life and love as you share now and will share with others – what it is that you and I and others of our often mis-understood kind, feel, know, understand, and which makes us who we are, almost another species lost in the times that are our living.

Now, I hear such musick as dreams me – and I am again drifting along the Isis one Summer day with my loved one beside me, when poignancy of our departing is as yet another night away and the voices of those hateful ones who might part us if they knew of our love, our joining, are stilled, at least for now while the warm English Sun lasts and our bottle of Champagne is not quite empty...

And then, I am there also beside Fran, my love, that last morning of her life in May when she looked so lost, so lost, so haunted with suffering, so needful in her unspoken agony – and all I could do was maintain my selfish resolve and walk away to embark upon that train whose First Class carriage claimed me in comfort and whose provided breakfast I in my then needful material satiation so eagerly enjoyed...

And I am there that night when in subdued lampful darkness Sue breathed her last as I sat beside her and held her then still warmful hand.

What are such opinions of me by others, after this?

My past lives in such music of yours – such musick of your present, and future. As you yourself with your musical genius and your numinous creations live in that future which I in my time of departing will never see and share with such a causal being and forms as so constrain and still retain me here, at least for now. But of course, there is no you or I to separate or to make such distinctions, and it is this which is the secret which you perhaps have for so long sought, so that even if we two do not ever again meet in this, our separation of earthful being and at some point of intersecting causal Time, it does not and will not matter, except to that which still so keeps here and which in so many ways is still so important and so necessary to the type of beings we are and will be for so many Aeons, replete as we are with such human feelings and failings as make and keep us human.

So there is this mystery of such necessity of feeling even while we often so desire there was not. To know this, to feel this – to live this – mystery is what we are, and will be, for so many Aeons, and cannot for now escape from, however much such desire for escape snakes itself around us so that often we feel compressed, throttled, by such desiring of Life when in truth it is ground of our necessary human dwelling.

Thus, there is no mystery of succession, one Gnostic to another, as perhaps you once believed – no sayings; no secret teachings to reveal; no hidden manuscripts. Only this – of such connexions between us as such music, such Art, as you make and such memories, such deeds, as have made my past. No you and I to cloud each others judgements by frequency of spoken words.

Entwined thus by connexions we few in our beginning journey only so dimly see. Thus is there Wyrð far beyond the singular individual fate we two once in far more youthful times so believed in and adored.

We become, we are, each intimation of The Divine that so enthrals us, still – so that our pasts become presenced in our future and our future in our shared pasts: for so long as we hold fast to that love which dreams us, beckoning in such sadness, strength, ecstasy, and hope as melds us to those beyond our selves. Their dreams our dreams; their hurt our hurt; their joy our joy; their life our life. And one lifetime here is never ever long enough... Which is why there is the you beyond the I that is this me.

February 2011 CE

Dark Clouds of Thunder

The moment of sublime knowing
As clouds part above the Bay
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain
Still falling:
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder
Have given way to blue
Such that the tide, turning,
Begins to break my vow of distance
Down.

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest
Takes him where
This bearded man of greying hair
No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling

2010 CE

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Ecstasy Of A Personal Agony

Just over five years ago, my partner killed herself. By then, we had been together for some eighteen months and were engaged to be married. I on that day of her death having so selfishly left her alone, again, despite her pleading for me to stay...

If I could I would go back again again, again.

We had a fiery, a tempestuous, relationship, replete with ecstasy, agony, anguish, doubt, and joy, and if I could I would have all those months, as short and as long as they were, back, to live them be them again, for I was alive then even if - often if - there was hurt and sorrow and yes, sometimes, even anger from the both of us.

Alive, living - as if I was my, her, passion, love: as when one Saturday, I on the farm then my home and she in the far city of York, she telephoned and so we argued and then hung up only to speak again to once more express our love our desire our need so much and so strongly that I had to just had to had to without thought or reason have a taxi convey me to the nearest railway station to catch the next train to be with her again. That journey as of seconds of unnoticed passing causal Time.

Such joy in that instant of rejoining - we, the world - when I had have no words to explain express the sacredness of life that flowed within us then as if our lives had led to and meant those moments when we together were together, again, following such a flow of feelings. She, a goddess of my dreams. For she was as one of her friends so described her -

“...an enchantress; she resembled nothing so much as a deity of the ancient world. And like such a deity she was wilful, capricious, and we didn’t care because we were too taken up with adoring her.”

But of course such divine intensity of supra-human living could not be sustained, for she as I - and our dreams a distant memory of sleepful dreams - we became all too human, far too human, again, replete with such failures as lived within and sustained our fragile earthly-dwelling that in such moments of our following so-human-living so often came again to haunt us.

Perhaps she in one tempestuous moment of so sublime wordless understanding knew this felt this fragility of dreams and having so lived and so touched The Divine no longer could bear the descents back to a living human hell.

So yes I would if only I could would go back to be with her again – joy upon joy, agony upon agony, anguish upon doubt. Perhaps perhaps I should as once we so playfully planned have soared to be with her then in that moment of her human leaving, to so shuffle off this so slothful heavy mortal life. For life just seems so boringly mundane without her, now.

David Myatt
July 2011 CE



Concerning Extremism Some Quotations From Recent Writings

" What I painfully, slowly, came to understand, via pathei-mathos, was the importance - the human necessity, the virtue - of love, and how love expresses or can express the numinous in the most sublime, the most human, way. Of how extremism (of whatever political or religious or ideological kind) places some abstraction, some ideation, some notion of duty to some ideation, before a personal love, before a knowing and an appreciation of the numinous. Thus does extremism - usurping such humanizing personal love - replace human love with an extreme, an unbalanced, an intemperate, passion for something abstract: some ideation, some ideal, some dogma, some 'victory', some-thing always supra-personal and always destructive of personal happiness, personal dreams, personal hopes; and always manifesting an impersonal harshness: the harshness of hatred, intolerance, certitude-of-knowing, unfairness, violence, prejudice.

Thus, instead of a natural and a human concern with what is local, personal and personally known, extremism breeds a desire to harshly interfere in the lives of others - personally unknown and personally distant - on the basis of such a hubriatic certitude-of-knowing that strife and suffering are inevitable. For there is in all extremists that stark lack of personal humility, that unbalance, that occurs when - as in all extremisms - what is masculous is emphasized and idealized and glorified to the detriment (internal, and external) of what is muliebral." *Pathei-Mathos - Genesis of My Unknowing*

" It might be useful to explain how I, in the light of practical experience, understand important terms such as extremism. By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Thus *extremism* is considered to be: (1) the result of such harshness, and (2) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In addition, a fanatic is considered to be someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate." *Ethos of Extremism, Part 1 (1968-1973)*

" For nearly four decades I placed some ideation, some ideal, some abstraction, before personal love, foolishly - inhumanly - believing that some cause, some goal, some ideology, was the most important thing and therefore that, in the interests of achieving that cause, that goal, implementing that ideology, one's own personal life, one's feelings, and those of others, should and must come at least second if not further down in some lifeless manufactured schemata.

My pursuit of such things - often by violent means and by incitement to violence and to disaffection - led, of course, not only to me being the cause of suffering to other human beings I did not personally know but also to being the cause of suffering to people I did know; to family, to friends, and especially to those - wives, partners, lovers - who for some reason loved me.

In effect I was selfish, obsessed, a fanatic, an extremist. Naturally, as extremists always do, I made excuses - to others, to myself - for my unfeeling, suffering-causing, intolerant, violent, behaviour and actions; always believing that 'I could make a difference' and always blaming some-thing else, or someone else, for the problems I alleged existed 'in the world' and which problems I claimed, I felt, I believed, needed to be sorted out [...]

Yet the honest, the obvious, truth was that I - and people like me or those who supported, followed, or were incited, inspired, by people like me - were and are the problem. That my, that our, alleged 'problems' (political/religious), were phantasmagorical; unreal; imagined; only projections based on, caused by, invented ideas that had no basis in reality, no basis in the simple reality of human beings. For the simple reality of most human beings is the need for simple, human, things: for personal love, for friendship, for a family, for a personal freedom, a security, a stability - a home, food, playfulness, a lack of danger - and for the dignity, the self-respect, that work provides.

But instead of love we, our selfish, our obsessed, our extremist kind, engendered hate. Instead of peace, we engendered struggle, conflict, killing. Instead of tolerance we engendered intolerance. Instead fairness and equality we engendered dishonour and discrimination. Instead of security we produced, we encouraged, revolution, violence, change.

The problem, the problems, lay inside us, in our kind, not in 'the world', not in others. We, our kind - we the pursuers of, the inventors of, abstractions, of ideals, of ideologies; we the selfish, the arrogant, the hubriatic, the fanatics, the obsessed - were and are the main causes of hate, of conflict, of suffering, of inhumanity, of violence. Century after century, millennia after millennia." *Letter To My Undiscovered Self*

" In simple terms, extremists fail to understand, to appreciate, to know, to apprehend, what is important about human beings and human living; what the simple reality, the simple nature, the real physis, of the majority of human beings and of society is and are, and thus what innocence means and implies. That is, there is a failure to know, to appreciate, what is good, and natural and numinous and innocent, in respect of human beings and of society. A failure to know, a failure to appreciate, a failure to feel what it is that empathy and pathei-mathos provide: the wisdom of our personal nature and personal needs; of our physis as rational - as balanced - human beings possessed of certain qualities, certain virtues, or capable of developing balance, capable of developing certain qualities, certain virtues, and thus having or of developing the ability to live in a certain manner: with fairness, with love, and without hatred and prejudice.

What is good, and natural - what should thus be appreciated, and respected, and not profaned by the arrogance (the hubris) of the extremist, and what empathy and pathei-mathos reveal - are the desire for personal love and the need to be loyally loved; the need for a family and the bonds of love within a family that lead to the desire to protect, care for, work for, and if necessary defend one's loved ones. The desire for a certain security and stability and peace, manifest in a home, in sufficiency of food, in playfulness, in friends, in tolerance, in a lack of danger. The need for the dignity, the self-respect, that work, that giving love and being loved, provide.

Our societies have evolved, painfully slowly, to try and provide such simple, such human, such natural, such ineluctably personal, things; to allow opportunities for such things; and have so evolved often because of individuals naturally gifted with empathy or who were inspired by their own pathei-mathos or that of others, and often and thus also so evolved because of the culture that such societies encouraged and sometimes developed, being as such culture was - via, for example, literature, music, memoirs, poetry, Art - the recorded/aural pathei-mathos and empathic understanding of others often combined with the recorded/aural pathei-mathos and the empathic understanding of others in other societies. A pathei-mathos and an understanding that may form or in some manner express the ethos of a society, and thence become an inspiration for certain laws intended to express, in a society, what is considered to be moral and thus provide and maintain or at least aid valued human and personal qualities such as the

desire for stability, peace, a loving home, sufficiency of food, and the need for the dignity of work." *Some Personal Musings On Empathy*

" I believe that the genesis of extremism - of whatever outward kind - is what I have termed *the-separation-of-otherness*. Our tendency, as human beings, to manufacture and to believe in and to value abstractions, all of which reveal:

"...a lack of empathy, and which lack results in some distinction being made between 'them' and 'us', and thus with some living being (human or otherwise) being assigned to some abstract category, or group, and/or regarded as the genesis of or some representation of some posited existing or future ideal. Often, some abstraction - some category or some group or some ideal - is imputed to have some value, higher/lower, in relation to some other abstraction, with the result that some abstractions are considered to be 'worth fighting/killing/dying for', and/or regarded as 'morally superior' to or better than other different, or vaguely different, abstractions, even if such difference is illusory and thus only 'in the eye of the believer'.

Thus, among the profusion of abstractions are divisive concepts such as 'race' and nationalism; political ideologies such as communism, fascism, and National-Socialism; perceived religious differences often manifest in a division between 'heretics' and 'true believers'; and concepts such as 'a righteous caliphate'.

What is common to most if not all abstractions is how, in varying degrees, they tend to or can dehumanize us. How they seem to possess, or come to possess, an archetypal power and thus tend to move us to believe in them rather than in human, the individual, virtues such as personal love, compassion, humility, and fairness. For in the pursuit of abstractions, or in pursuit of some assumed idealized 'duty' or loyalty to some abstraction, we often tend to unethically value the abstraction - or some idealized, future, imagined, hope-for realization of some abstraction - more than individuals, more than personal love, personal happiness, compassion, more than our humanity, and thus more than human life itself."

In Reply To Some Questions (2012)

" Perhaps one of the worst consequences of the extremism of extremists - of modern hubris in general - is, or seems to me to be, the loss of what is personal, and thus what is human; the loss of the empathic, the human, scale of things; with what is personal, human, empathic, being or becoming displaced, scorned, forgotten, obscured, or a target for destruction and (often violent) replacement by something supra-personal such as some abstract political/religious notion or concept, or some ideal, or by some

prejudice and some often violent intolerance regarding human beings we do not personally know because beyond the range of our empathy.

That is, the human, the personal, the empathic, the natural, the immediate, scale of things - a tolerant and a fair acceptance of *what-is* - is lost and replaced by an artificial scale posited by some ideology or manufactured by some *τύραννος* (tyrannos); a scale in which the suffering of individuals, and strife, are regarded as inevitable, even necessary, in order for 'victory to be achieved' or for some ideal or plan or agenda or manifesto to be implemented. Thus the good, the stability, that exists within society is ignored, with the problems of society - real, imagined, or manufactured by propaganda - trumpeted. There is then incitement to disaffection, with harshness and violent change of and within society regarded as desirable or necessary in order to achieve preset, predetermined, and always 'urgent' goals and aims, since slow personal reform and change in society - that which appreciates and accepts the good in an existing society and in people over and above the problems and the bad - is anathema to extremists, anathema to their harsh intolerant empathy-lacking nature and to their hubriatic striving." *Some Personal Musings On Empathy*

" For an ideology to cause, provoke, or incite hatred - or which inclines people toward hatred or which of itself embodies hate - it is logical to assume that there has to be two components at work given that hatred is an intense personal emotion which can predispose a person or persons toward or cause anger and thence violence, and given that an ideology by its nature is supra-personal, that is, a coherent, organized, and distinctive set of beliefs and/or ideas or ideals.

My experience leads me to suggest that the first component is prideful identity, and that the second component is the ideal, the goal, of the ideology. For this given and accepted identity is always supra-personal and always imparts a needed sense of belonging, a meaning to life, just as the goal, the ideal, involves individuals committing themselves in a manner which vivifies, removes doubt, and imparts a sense of purpose, with the result that individuality becomes subsumed with duty and loyalty to the goal, the ideal, given a high priority in the life of the individual [...]

The identity so assumed or presumed produces or can produce resentment, anger - caused by a perceived or a felt disparity between *the now* and *the assumed ideal*, past or future.

For an essential part of such ideologies is that it is believed that in the past some posited ideal community or society or people or way of life existed and that the present is a deviation from or a loss of the 'perfection' that then existed; a deviation or a loss that the ideology explains by the assumption of a simple cause and effect, or several simple causes and effects, a simple linearity between *the now* and *the goal* (future) and/or the idealized past.

Thus the problems or the conditions of the present are assumed to have certain identifiable supra-personal causes, just as the path to the goal is regarded as requiring that those causes be dealt with. In addition, these causes are often or mostly the work of 'others'; not our fault, but instead the result of 'our enemies', and/or of some opposing ideology. That is, someone, or some many, or some 'thing', is or are to blame.

Hence in order to return to this past perfection - or in order to create a new form of this past perfection, this past ideal, or in order to create a new perfection inspired by some past ideal - our enemies, and/or opposing ideologies and those adhering to them, must be dealt with. There must therefore be struggle; the notion of future victory; and at the very least political activity and propaganda directed toward political goals - a moving toward regaining the authority, the power, the influence which supporters of an ideology believe or assume they and their kind have lost and which they almost invariably believe are now 'in the hands of their enemies' and/or of traitors and 'heretics'.

In effect, perceived enemies, those having authority/power, and those perceived as adhering to opposing or detrimental ideologies/beliefs or living in a manner seen as detrimental, become dehumanized, are judged en masse in a prejudiced manner, and become disliked, with this dislike naturally - because of the struggle for 'victory' - becoming intolerance, harshness, and thence, almost invariably at some time, turning to anger thence to hatred with such hatred often resulting in violence against individual 'enemies'.

Such hatred and intolerance are the natural, the inevitable, consequence of all ideologies founded on notions of identity which glorify past glories or past perfections, which posit some abstract goal or some future ideal and which involve a struggle against enemies to achieve such a goal or such an ideal." *Notes on The Politics and Ideology of Hate (Part One - According to the Philosophy of The Numinous Way)*

" An important and a necessary part of enantiodromia involves a discovery, a knowing, an acceptance, and - as prelude - an interior balancing within themselves, of what has hitherto been perceived and designated as the apparent opposites described by terms such as 'muliebral' and 'masculous'. A perception of opposites manifested in ideations such as those concerning assumed traits of character, and assumed or 'ideal' rôles, behaviour, and occupations, assigned to each person, and especially historically in the prejudice of how the rôle - the duty - of men is or should be to lead, to control, to govern, to possess authority, to dominate, to be master.

The discovery of enantiodromia is of how such a designated and perceived dichotomy is but illusive, unnecessary, unhealthy, appearance, and does not therefore express

either the natural, the real, nature (*φύσις*) of our personal character, our being, or the real nature, the *Φύσις*, of Being itself. In essence, this is the discovery, mentioned by Heraclitus, concerning *Πόλεμος* and *γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα*; that all beings are naturally born - become perceived as separate beings - because of *ἔρις*, and their genesis (their 'father') is *Πόλεμος*.

Thus the strife, the discord, often engendered by an external and by the internal (within the individual) clash between such apparent opposites as the 'muliebral' and 'masculous' is one that has naturally arisen due to misperception, due to the separation-of-otherness, as a result of a purely causal, egoist, apprehension of ourselves and of others; an error of perception that, as previously mentioned, empathy and *πάθει μάθος* can correct, and which correction reveals the truth of *ψυχή* and a knowing of the cosmic perspective.

One practical consequence of this misapprehension, this error of *ὑβρις*, concerning 'muliebral' and 'masculous' has been the distaste - even the hatred - of certain ideologies and religions and individuals for those whose personal love is for someone of the same gender. Another practical consequence is and has been the error of extremism, where what is masculous is emphasized to the detriment (internal, and external) of what is muliebral, and where, for example, as in many harsh ideologies, men and women are expected, encouraged - often forced, as for example in fascism - to assume some rôle based on or deriving from some manufactured abstraction, some ideation, concerning what is assumed to be or has been posited as 'the ideal man' or the 'ideal woman' in some idealized society or in some idealized 'nation'. " *Enantiodromia and The Reformation of The Individual*

" My writings over the past few years have been personal, 'mystical', and philosophical, with the latter documenting the development and refinement of my 'numinous way' culminating in my moral philosophy of *pathei-mathos* which is concerned with individuals and how individuals might discover and learn to appreciate *ἀρμονίη* and *δίκη* and so move toward wisdom. So, what I wanted - rather, what I felt compelled to do following a personal tragedy - was to try and understand myself, my suffering-causing past; to try and discover what undermined *ἀρμονίη* and *δίκη*, and what *ὑβρις* was and what it caused and why.

One result was that I came to appreciate - philosophically, morally - the importance of empathy and hence gained a better understanding of extremism, that modern error of *ὑβρις*, leading me to define an extremist as,

"a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Hence *extremism* is considered to be: (a) the result

of such harshness, and (b) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists."

An important part of harshness, it seemed to me, was the arrogance of assumptions about or concerning others. Of prejudging people based on some abstract criteria or because you had assigned them - consciously or instinctively - to some category which had been manufactured or developed by others; which category associated with those assigned to it certain qualities, or attributes, or abilities, or a lack of such things; and which category was almost invariably based on or derived from some notion of conflicting ideated opposites and which thus separated beings from Being.

One example here is categorizing a woman as being a 'prostitute':

"Almost always there are certain assumptions made about such a person, since the abstract category 'prostitute' carries various connotations, or is assumed to denote a certain type of person. Thus, instead of being regarded, and treated as, an individual human being, the woman is regarded and treated as "a prostitute" and in the process often dehumanized. All such judgement according to such an assigned abstract category is unethical because it is not based on a personal knowing of the person; it is not based on the immediacy of empathy with that person."

It is the same in respect of the concept of race, or 'folk'. For race is,

"a manifestation of the causal separation-of-otherness, and thus contradicts empathy and the intuitive knowing of and sympathy [*συμπάθεια*] with *the living other* that individual empathy provides or can make us aware of.

The notion of race separates, divides, human beings into manufactured lifeless categories which nullify the empathic knowing of individual human beings. Such assignment of individuals to a posited abstract category - some assumed 'race' or sub-race - is irrelevant, since individual human beings are or have the potential to be unique individual human beings, so that such an assignment, whatever the alleged reason, is a dehumanizing of those individuals. For our humanity is expressed by an individual and personal knowing of individuals, by a personal interaction with others on the basis of respect, tolerance, reason, and honour, and which personal knowledge of them renders their alleged or assumed ethnicity or ancestry irrelevant." *FAQ About The Numinous Way* dated 9/March/2012

Thus, to view, to classify, to consider, someone in ethnic terms is a harsh, an unnecessary, thing to do. For consciously or unconsciously such separate categories denote or have come to denote certain things (often negative and prejudiced things) about those so assigned to them. The moral thing - the unharsh, the human, thing - to do is to view a person, to consider them, treat them, as they really are, which is an individual human being. Their assumed or assigned 'race'/ethnicity serves only to perpetuate that separation-of-otherness that is or can be a cause of prejudice,

discrimination, injustice, intolerance, hatred, and thus of suffering.

Similarly with the notion, the ideation, of 'a folkish clan' with its inclusion/exclusion, its division into 'us' and 'them' and its predetermined, non-individual, dogmatic, non-empathic, criteria of belonging and of judgement of ourselves and of others.

To abstract things out from an individual context - to generalize, to make assumptions about others which go beyond the individual, beyond a personal knowing of them, beyond our own individual living and the immediacy-of-the-moment; to assign them to some abstract category - is wrong, and appears to be or to have become a lazy, an immoral, human habit, and one which empathy can cure or prevent.

For me - and thence for the numinous way/the moral philosophy of pathei-mathos - what is important, what expresses our humanity, what is moral, is an individual knowing and an individual appreciation of the numinous and thus a knowing and appreciation of what I term 'the natural balance' of life. A natural balance manifest in avoidance of hubris - avoidance of the error, the harshness, the generalizations, the ideations, of extremism - and in the acceptance of the empathic (of the human, the personal) scale of things and an acceptance of our limitations (our fallible nature) as human beings. That is, in an appreciation of individuals; an appreciation of the virtue of personal love, the cultivation of empathy, humility, tolerance, and of wu-wei, and hence the inclination to live without arrogantly interfering with, or arrogantly concerning ourselves with, matters and people beyond the range of our empathy and of which and whom we have no personal knowledge of or no practical experience of.

In practical terms, this means there is no concern with and no interest in politics and political things, as well as an understanding that such ideations as race, folk, and nationalism, are unnecessary, and detrimental, harmful, to us, because beyond, and usurpacious of, that individual knowing and that individual appreciation of the numinous which manifests or which can manifest the natural, the human, balance - the harmony, the beauty, the arête - of life, and which individual knowing and individual appreciation empathy and pathei-mathos and a personal love can aid us to discover. " *In Reply To Some Questions* (2012)

"Extremism - as defined and understood by the philosophy of pathei-mathos - is a modern example of the error of hubris. An outward expression - codified in an ideology - of a bad individual physis (of a bad or faulty or misguided or underdeveloped/unmatured individual nature); of a lack of inner balance in individuals; of a lack of empathy and of pathei-mathos. There is thus, in extremists, an ignorance of the true nature of Being and beings, and a lack of appreciation of or a wilful rejection of the numinous, as well as a distinct lack of or an aversion to personal humility, for it is the nature of the extremist that they are convinced and believe that 'they know' that the ideology/party/movement/group/faith that they accept or adhere to - or the leader that they follow - have/has the right answers, the correct solutions, to

certain problems which they faithfully assert exist in society and often in human beings." *Some Personal Musings On Empathy*

" So much remorse, grief, and sorrow, within me for the unwise suffering-causing deeds of my past. Yet all I have in recompense for decades of strife, violence, selfishness, hate, are tears, the cries, alone - and words, lifeless words, such as this; words, to - perhaps, hopefully - forewarn forswear so that others, some few, hearing, reading, may possibly avoid, learn from, the errors that marked, made, and were, my hubris." *So Much Remorse*

" I quite understand why, in the past, certain individuals disliked - even hated - me, given my decades of extremism: my advocacy of racism, fascism, holocaust denial, and National-Socialism, followed (after my conversion to Islam) by my support of bin Laden, the Taliban, and advocacy of 'suicide attacks'.

I also understand why - given my subversive agenda and my amoral willingness to use any tactic, from Occult honeytraps to terrorism, to undermine the society of the time as prelude to revolution - certain people have sought to discredit me by distributing and publishing items alleging I am or was a 'satanist'.

Furthermore, given my somewhat Promethean peregrinations - which included being a Catholic monk, a vagabond, a fanatical violent neo-nazi, a theoretician of terror, running a gang of thieves, studying Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism; being a nurse, a farm worker, and supporter of Jihad - I expect many or most of those interested in or curious about my 'numinous way' and my recent mystical writings to be naturally suspicious of or doubtful about my reformation and my rejection of extremism.

Thus I harbour no resentment against individuals, or organizations, or groups, who over the past forty or so years have publicly and/or privately made negative or derogatory comments about me or published items making claims about me. Indeed, I now find myself in the rather curious situation of not only agreeing with some of my former political opponents on many matters, but also (perhaps) of understanding (and empathizing with) their motivation; a situation which led and which leads me to appreciate even more just how lamentable my extremism was and just how arrogant, selfish, wrong, and reprehensible, I as a person was, and how in many ways many of those former opponents were and are (*ex concessio*) better people than I

ever was or am.

Which is one reason why I have written what I have recently written about extremism and my extremist past: so that perchance someone or some many may understand extremism, and its causes, better and thus be able to avoid the mistakes I made, avoid causing the suffering I caused; or be able to in some way more effectively counter or prevent such extremism in the future. And one reason - only one - why I henceforward must live in reclusion and *in silencio*."

Pathei-Mathos - Genesis of My Unknowing

David Myatt
June 2012

cc David Myatt 2012 CE



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NASA - Earth and Moon as seen from the departing Voyager interplanetary spacecraft

The Politics and Ideology of Hate



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Preface

This little work is not an academic monograph, paper, or treatise - where previous academic literature on the subject, being referenced, is scrutinized, commented on, and possibly some new suggestions regarding the subject made or where one or two new ideas, or even some new theory, is posited. Neither is this work a purportedly objective overview of the subject intended for a specific audience, such as those working in fields such as psychology, social work, philosophy, or those involved with or part of the milieu of politics.

Instead, it summarizes some of my reflexions on, and some of my conclusions concerning, my forty years as a practical extremist and my forty years of practical experience of extremism and extremists; a practical experience that ranged from fascism, and the racism of National-Socialism, to radical Islam ^[1], and which experience included producing propaganda, organizing activities, formulating extremist ideology, imprisonment for racist violence, inciting hatred, violence and prejudice, engaging in criminal activities to fund extremist causes, and encouraging and supporting terrorism. These reflexions resulted from - were forced upon me by - some years of moral, personal, and philosophical questioning, a questioning made urgent, given interior priority, by a personal tragedy in 2006; and which tragedy and which questioning led me a few years later to reject all forms of extremism and develop and thence continue to refine my own weltanschauung based on the virtues of empathy, compassion, and humility.

Such personal reflexions and conclusions from a former extremist may possibly be of some interest to those curious about extremism and to some of those engaged in efforts - political, social, or religious - to counter extremism and extremists, and also possibly be of some use to some of those with an academic interest in subjects such as extremism, terrorism, and extremists.

To avoid confusion I have outlined in an Appendix how I, often from practical experience, understand and use certain terms, such as politics, ideology, society, radical Islam, extremism, and extremists. My usage may thus sometimes differ from how such terms are commonly used or how they have been previously defined and used in some academic and other works relating to extremism .

David Myatt
April 2012

Part One

Some Notes According to the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

Introduction

The ethical criteria of The Numinous Way will be used to consider the politics and the ideology of hate - that is, to consider: (i) those beliefs and/or ideas which produce or which engender or which incite in people an intense dislike of or an extreme or violent aversion to some other people or group and/or of or toward opposing beliefs and/or toward opposing ideas; and (ii) the actions and the political activities of those motivated by or pursuing some ideology that inclines them toward hatred or which produces hatred.

Specific examples will be restricted to two sets of beliefs/ideas, firstly that conventionally termed 'extreme right-wing'/fascist/neo-nazi, and secondly that conventionally termed radical Islam, and so restricted for the simple reason that I have personal practical experience of such beliefs/ideas and have also studied them in detail. In the former case, my experience and study amounts to some thirty years; in the latter case, to around nine years.

The Criteria of The Numinous Way

The criteria of The Numinous Way is the revealing - the insight, the knowing, the understanding, the feeling - that the faculty of empathy provides when we, as an individual, personally interact with another living being over a certain period of time. What is thus discovered by means of empathy is *sympatheia* - a numinous sympathy with the-living-other - and how, as an individual, we are an affecting connexion to all life, and thus how our assumed separation, as an individual, is an illusion, a manifestation of hubris. We therefore become aware of how we affect or can affect others; how they affect or can affect us; and of how their suffering, their pain, their joy, their grief, is ours beyond the barrier of our inner and our outer egoist.

This discovery, this revealing, thus inclines us toward compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, love, tolerance, peace, fairness, wu-wei ^[2], and toward being non-judgemental in respect of those we do not personally know and thus have no experience of, have had no empathic contact with. For it is empathy - the close and the extended personal interaction with individuals, on an individual basis, that empathy requires - that is the natural and the moral way of assessing, of really knowing, another human being.

This means two important things. First, that we treat human beings in a human way - that is, as individuals, recognizing that they are unique or have the potential to become unique; that they, like us, can and do suffer pain, grief, sadness, joy; that they, like us, have hopes, dreams. Second, that all individuals we do not personally know are or should be presumed to be 'innocent', unjudged, and so are to be given the benefit of the doubt; for this presumption of innocence - until personal experience and empathic individual knowing of them prove otherwise - is the fair, the honourable, the moral thing to do.

The Ideology and Politics of Hate

For an ideology to cause, provoke, or incite hatred - or which inclines people toward hatred or which of itself embodies hate - it is logical to assume that there has to be two components at work given that hatred is an intense personal emotion which can predispose a person or persons toward or cause anger and thence violence, and given that an ideology by its nature is supra-personal, that is, a coherent, organized, and distinctive set of beliefs and/or ideas or ideals.

My experience leads me to suggest that the first component is prideful identity, and that the second component is the ideal, the goal, of the ideology. For this given and accepted identity is always supra-personal and always imparts a needed sense of belonging, a meaning to life, just as the goal, the ideal, involves individuals committing themselves in a manner which vivifies, removes doubt, and imparts a sense of purpose, with the result that individuality becomes subsumed with duty and loyalty to the goal, the ideal, given a high priority in the life of the individual.

Ideologies such as National-Socialism - new or old - and radical Islam are predicated on identity, a pride in that identity, and on the need to affirm that identity through practical deeds. In the case of National-Socialism, there is a personal identification with one's assumed race, a pride in what is believed to be the achievements and the potential of this race, and a desire to aid one's race and its 'destiny' by opposing 'race-mixing'. In the case of radical Islam, there is the sense of belonging to the Ummah, a 'comradeship', a certain pride in Islam and its superiority; a feeling of the need to undertake or at least support Jihad, and a desire to counter the kuffar in practical ways, all deriving from the belief that this is what Allah has commanded we do.

The identity so assumed or presumed produces or can produce resentment, anger -

caused by a perceived or a felt disparity between *the now* and *the assumed ideal*, past or future.

For an essential part of such ideologies is that it is believed that in the past some posited ideal community or society or people or way of life existed and that the present is a deviation from or a loss of the 'perfection' that then existed; a deviation or a loss that the ideology explains by the assumption of a simple cause and effect, or several simple causes and effects, a simple linearity between *the now* and *the goal* (future) and/or the idealized past. Thus the problems or the conditions of the present are assumed to have certain identifiable supra-personal causes, just as the path to the goal is regarded as requiring that those causes be dealt with. In addition, these causes are often or mostly the work of 'others'; not our fault, but instead the result of 'our enemies', and/or of some opposing ideology. That is, someone, or some many, or some 'thing', is or are to blame.

Hence in order to return to this past perfection - or in order to create a new form of this past perfection, this past ideal, or in order to create a new perfection inspired by some past ideal - our enemies, and/or opposing ideologies and those adhering to them, must be dealt with. There must therefore be struggle; the notion of future victory; and at the very least political activity and propaganda directed toward political goals - a moving toward regaining the authority, the power, the influence which supporters of an ideology believe or assume they and their kind have lost and which they almost invariably believe are now 'in the hands of their enemies' and/or of traitors and 'heretics'.

In effect, perceived enemies, those having authority/power, and those perceived as adhering to opposing or detrimental ideologies/beliefs or living in a manner seen as detrimental, become dehumanized, are judged en masse in a prejudiced manner, and become disliked, with this dislike naturally - because of the struggle for 'victory' - becoming intolerance, harshness, and thence, almost invariably at some time, turning to anger thence to hatred with such hatred often resulting in violence against individual 'enemies'. ^[3]

Such hatred and intolerance are the natural, the inevitable, consequence of all ideologies founded on notions of identity which glorify past glories or past perfections, which posit some abstract goal or some future ideal and which involve a struggle against enemies to achieve such a goal or such an ideal.

For there is symbiosis, an empowering of the individual, with the very notion of identity and meaning being dependant on notions about past glories, on inclusion/exclusion, on notions of superiority/inferiority, on posited enemies, on obstacles, and of a striving, a struggle, for an ideal, for some posited goal. And vice versa. This is the intoxicating elixir of extremism, a symbiosis born of, which engenders and which flourishes on division, divide, intolerance, pride, struggle, goals, and hate; a division, divide, an intolerance, a hatred, that possibly are at their worst, their most vitriolic, when based on ethnicity, or involve religions, or involve perceived or assumed 'heretical' divisions within a religion.

In terms of nazi and neo-nazi ideology for example, Aryans are and have been 'the light-bearers of civilization'; the enemies are the Jews and their machinations, inferior non-Aryan races, and ideologies such as 'multi-culturalism' and liberalism; while the goal is a racially pure Aryan nation, and/or a strong and militarized National-Socialist State with a mission, a destiny, to 'civilize' the world through *kampf*.

In terms of modern right-wing extremism, as manifest for example by certain nationalist political groups in European countries, the 'civilization of the West' - in which many such groups now include Israel ^[4] - is the ideal because it is morally superior; the enemies (the hated inferiors) are Muslims and other 'immigrants'; with an idealized and resurgent 'European culture and identity' (manifest in strong nation-States of 'native Europeans' and/or in a return to communities based on 'European traditions') having replaced the nazi/fascist ideal of a National-Socialist/Fascist State and with 'past glories' celebrated and idealized and used to motivate and inspire pride and develop a sense of urgency about the 'threat' posed by enemies and by the loss of national/cultural 'identity'.

In terms of radical Islam, the enemies (the hated inferiors) are Amerika, Israel, Muslim collaborators, and decadent kuffar, with the goal being a resurgent Khilafah or at least the implementation of Shariah as the only law at first in Muslim lands and then elsewhere.

A Numinous Approach

Activists and even many supporters of such ideologies find meaning, worth, identity, empowerment, in the inclusion, in the collectivity, the belonging, that such ideologies assert or assume, and thus their knowing of themselves and of others, and thence their 'ethics' (or lack of ethics) are or become determined by the boundaries set by such ideologies. The boundaries of enemies; of traitors; of those 'different from us/inferior to us'; of obstacles to be overcome in the struggle toward victory; of sacrifice for the cause; of conformity to guidelines for living laid down by a leader or leaders or ideologues or 'the party' or set out in some political programme, or book, or tract, or speech, or manifesto.

What therefore is lost or tends to become lost because of such boundaries, such collectivity, is empathy; *wu-wei*; notions of the innocence - the non-judgement - of those we do not personally know; *sympatheia* with others on an individual basis; and a desire to treat every human being as an individual sans all ideological boundaries, sans all prejudice, sans abstractions of inclusion/exclusion, sans all notions of 'them' and 'us', and sans all rhetoric and propaganda about a struggle for victory, and about the 'urgency of the situation'.

For such ideologies manifest *the-separation-of-otherness* and which error of hubris is the foundation, the essence, of all abstractions^[5], and which *separation-of-otherness* is the genesis of supra-personal, ideological, hatred and intolerance, usurping as such ideologies do with their collective empowerment and their supra-personal authority the empathy of the individual, the unique individual judgement that arises from such empathy, the necessity of interior personal spiritual (numinous) development, and the wu-wei, the compassion, the fairness, the tolerance, the humanity, that empathy by its revealing inclines us toward.

As such, those ideologies, born of and manifesting hubris, ignoring or disrespectful as they are of the numinous, and attempting as they do to redefine the ethical, are therefore - it seems to me - immoral, and lamentable.

Part Two

A Personal Perspective - My Uncertainty of Knowing

The Bad of Extremists

For some forty years, from 1968 to around 2008, I as a fanatical idealist placed some ideal - some illusory, some believed in perfection - before people, hubristically believing (as fanatics and extremists^[6] always seem to do) that some ideology and its attempted implementation was more important than personal love, than fairness, than compassion, than kindness, than tolerance, than empathy, than peace, than wu-wei.

Thus, as a fanatical idealist, I was so dissatisfied, so discontented, with the societies of the West - especially with the society I regarded as my homeland, the United Kingdom - that I actively sought to undermine and change them by political and revolutionary means, by incitement to disaffection and even by terror.

For the first thirty years of this discontent (1968-1998) my desire was to establish, in Britain, a neo-nazi - a racist - society, believing as I did in the superiority of 'the Aryan race' and enamoured as I was of National-Socialist Germany and of Hitler's struggle for power between 1919 and 1933. Thus the idealized, the romanticized, National-Socialism I believed in and the historically-inaccurate NS Germany I admired were my inspiration, and with the dedication and the hardness and harshness of a fanatic, an extremist, I joined several racist, fascist, neo-nazi, and paramilitary organizations; engaged in street brawls, wrote and distributed propaganda, gave vitriolic speeches; organized demonstrations, incited hatred and violence; founded two new neo-nazi groups; was imprisoned for violence and arrested nearly a dozen times for a variety of other criminal offences.

Between 1998 and 2008 - following my conversion to Islam - my activities were directed toward undermining the societies of the West (and especially those of Britain and America) and toward aiding Muslims fighting elsewhere - undertaking Jihad - for the establishment, in their lands, of Shariah as the only law.

During these forty extremist years I ranted and I railed against what I believed were 'the problems of the West', the 'decadence of the West', and propagandistically trumpeted the ideal type of society I believed in and thus considered was better than all existing societies. During my neo-nazi years, this ideal, this idealized, society was a new National-Socialist one, an ideal that I in perhaps some small way helped create through voluminous writings written during the 1990's with titles such as *The Meaning of National-Socialism*, *Why National-Socialism Is Not Racist*, and *The Complete Guide to the Aryan Way of Life*. During my Jihadi-supporting years, this ideal, this idealized, society was one inspired by the Khilafah and was to be established in some Muslim land or lands by a return to the pure guidance of Quran and Sunnah, and by Jihad 'against apostates, and the kuffar and their collaborators'.

The error here - the error I persisted in for some forty years - is the error of faulty, unbalanced, judgement, deriving from extremism and hubris; an error that leads to, that develops, that nurtures, bad individuals and thus leads to inhumanity, to violence, prejudice, anger, discontent, hatred, brutality, terrorism. An error caused both by the distorted view of people and of existing societies that extremist ideologies cause or at least encourage, and by some ideal, some ideology, being cherished more than human beings.

For the personal fault of extremists seems to be that of being unable and/or unwilling to view, to consider, the good that exists in people, in society, and/or of ignoring the potential for good, or change toward the good, which is within people, within society, within what-is. To prefer the dream in their head to reality; and/or to prefer the struggle, the strife, the conflict, to stability and peace; and/or to need or to desire repeated stimulation/excitement. One cause of such things could, in my view - from my experience - be the inability or the unwillingness of a person, an extremist, to develop and use their own individual judgement, as well as the inability or the unwillingness to take individual, moral, responsibility for their actions and for the effects those actions personally have upon people. Thus violence, prejudice, hatred, brutality, killing, and terror, are not judged by the moral criteria of how they affect and harm people but instead by whether they aid the goal - the implementation of the cherished ideal - or, worst of all, by whether they provide excitement and/or provide the individual with a sense of purpose, a 'destiny', a sense of being special, a 'hero' to their kindred extremists, or at least of being remembered.

In my own case, I justified what I did - my extremism - by appeals to the goal I ardently believed in and ardently desired, and thus ignored or overlooked or dismissed as unimportant the many benefits that Western societies provide and have provided, concentrating instead on the faults, the problems, of such societies, or on assumed faults and problems. In addition, and most importantly, I arrogantly felt I 'knew', that I 'understood' - that I, or my cherished beliefs, my ideology, were right; correct, *the* solution to all problems, personal and of society, and that these problems

urgently needed to be dealt with. There was, therefore, a desire in me to interfere, to act, based on this arrogant misplaced feeling of having 'the right answers', of being right; of having 'seen the flaws' in society and/or in people.

In addition, my judgement derived from, was based on, was dependant upon, The Cause, the ideology; and so was unbalanced, bad, flawed. For The Cause, the ideology, gave meaning and set the boundaries, the limits, of knowing, of doing. For example, in the case of National-Socialism, there was the boundary of duty, which was "to promote National-Socialism [and] to strive to act in accord with Nature's will by preserving, defending and evolving one's own folk." ^[7] There was the meaning of 'pursuing idealism/excellence/the will of Nature' over and above 'personal happiness' as well as the need to 'overthrow the existing System based on materialism' ^[8]. There was the knowing that 'race and Nature' defined us as human beings so that our most essential knowledge was to know our kind, our 'destiny', and the 'will of Nature', a will manifest, for example, in *kampf* and idealized in such abstractions as 'a new Reich', *Homo Galactica*, a Galactic Imperium, and so on and so forth.

The flawed judgement, the lack of critical balance - the lack of humanity - that resulted meant that I did not take individual responsibility for the harm I caused, I inflicted, I incited. Instead, I shifted the responsibility onto the ideology, thus justifying or trying to justify the consequences of my deeds, of my incitement, by appeals to the ideology ('the end justifies the means') and by the belief that the ideology needed to be urgently implemented 'for the good of the people', with 'the people' of course always being viewed abstractly (as a race or folk), being idealized or romanticized and divorced from, or more usually considered as being built from, the harsh consequences of striving to implement such a harsh ideology.

Therefore, it seems to me now that a reasonable illustration of extremism might be to liken it to some contagious disease, some sickness, or some ailment. One that alters not only the behaviour of individuals but also their perception, their thinking; how they perceive the world; and one that inclines them toward being bad and toward ignoring the good that already exists in society and the credit due to society for aiding such good. A disease or an ailment or a sickness that inclines them toward acting in an unbalanced and unethical manner, disruptive to other people and disruptive to society, and careless of, or indifferent to, the harm they do, the suffering they cause.

The Good of Society

The simple truth of the present and so evident to me now - in respect of the societies of the West, and especially of societies such as those currently existing in America and Britain - is that for all their problems and all their flaws they seem to be much better than those elsewhere, and certainly better than what existed in the past. That is, that there is, within them, a certain tolerance; a certain respect for the individual; a certain duty of care; and certainly still a freedom of life, of expression, as well as a standard of living which, for perhaps the majority, is better than elsewhere in the

world and most certainly better than existed there and elsewhere in the past.

In addition, there are within their structures - such as their police forces, their governments, their social and governmental institutions - people of good will, of humanity, of fairness, who strive to do what is good, right. Indeed, far more good people in such places than bad people, so that a certain balance, the balance of goodness, is maintained even though occasionally (but not for long) that balance may seem to waver somewhat.

Furthermore, many or most of the flaws, the problems, within such societies are recognized and openly discussed, with a multitude of people of good will, of humanity, of fairness, dedicating themselves to helping those affected by such flaws, such problems. In addition, there are many others trying to improve those societies, and to trying find or implement solutions to such problems, in tolerant ways which do not cause conflict or involve the harshness, the violence, the hatred, of extremism. ^[9]

This truth about the good ^[10] in our current societies, so evident now, leads me to ask how could I not have seen it before? How can extremists, in general, not see, understand, appreciate, this truth? How can they - as I once did - seek to destroy that balance; destroy all that such societies, despite their flaws and their problems, have achieved? How can they ignore the good work of the plethora of individuals seeking to change those societies for the better in a reasoned and tolerant manner?

I can only, in truth, answer for myself, based on some years of introspection. As an extremist in thrall to an ideology and thus seeking to disrupt, change, to overthrow an existing society - to incite disaffection - I had no reason, no incentive, to emphasize the good that had and has been wrought by successive governments, by the introduction of laws, and by the people, such as the police and the security services, who in their majority tried from the best of motives to do and to uphold what was good by striving to counter and bring to justice those who were bad, those who in some way harmed or sought to harm others from whatever motive and for whatever reason.

Indeed, I was for the most part wilfully ignorant of this good, and when mention or experience of it could not be ignored for some reason, or might prove useful for propaganda purposes, what was good was almost always attributed to something which the parameters of the ideology allowed for. For instance, the good actions of an heroic policeman would be judged by the parameters of whether he was 'Aryan' - in which case 'the good' resulted from him being Aryan, having an Aryan nature - or whether those actions in some way, however small, helped 'us' and our Cause, as for example if the person in question had dealt with and caught 'black people' rioting or committing crimes. There was thus a biased, a blinkered, a prejudiced, a bigoted view of both events and people.

In my own case, and for example, I have some forty years experience of interaction with the police, from ordinary constables and detectives, to custody sergeants, to

officers from specialist branches such as SO12, SO13, and crime squads. During that time, I have known far more good police officers than bad - corrupt - ones. Furthermore, I realized that most of those I came into contact with were good individuals, motivated by the best of intentions, who were trying to do their best, often under difficult circumstances, and often to help victims of dishonourable deeds, catch those responsible for such deeds, and/or prevent such deeds.

But what did I during my extremist years attribute their honourable motivation, their good character, to? Yes, of course - to them being 'Aryans' who just happened to be in the police force. Or, on one occasion, to having an 'Aryan nature' (accorded honorary Aryan status) even though the officer in question was 'of mixed race'... Thus the ideology I adhered to, I believed in, set the parameters of my judgement; prompted the correct ideological response ^[11].

But in truth they, those officers, as one of them once said to me, were guided by what 'was laid down' and did not presume to or tried hard not to overstep their authority; guided as they were by the law, that accumulated received wisdom of what was and is good in society; a law which (at least in Britain and so far as I know) sought to embody a respect for what was fair and which concept of fairness was and always has been (again, at least in Britain and so far as I know) untainted, uncorrupted, by any political ideology.

Now I know, I understand, I appreciate, that for that reason - of so being mindful of the limits of their authority, of being guided by what had been laid down over decades - those people, those police officers, were far better individuals than the arrogant, the hubriatic, extremist I was; an arrogant extremist who by and for himself presumed 'to know' what was right, who presumed to understand, who presumed he possessed the ability, the authority, and the right to judge everyone and everything, and who because of such arrogance, such hubris, most certainly continued to contribute to the cycle of suffering, ignoring thus for so long as he in his unbalance did the wisdom that Aeschylus gave to us in *The Oresteia*.

Balance and The Uncertainty of Knowing

One error of unbalance and of hubris - and an error which is one of the foundations of extremism - is that of allowing or of encouraging some imagined, idealized, or posited, future to affect one's judgement, and/or to determine one's actions, and behaviour in the present.

Thus one becomes not only dissatisfied with what-is, but concerned with - if not to some extent obsessed with - what *should-be* or what *might-be* if what should-be (the goal or ideal of the extremist ideology) is not realized or not fought for. Furthermore, this assumed *what-might-be* is often the result of someone making some generalization or some prediction based on some ideology and which ideology, being an ideology - an abstraction - is founded on the simplicity of linear cause-and-effect

and of problems/enemies having to be dealt with in order for some perfect future or some ideal or some victory to be achieved or brought-into-being. That is, *what-might-be* - and extremist action and incitement based upon it - requires a certainty of knowing.

This is one error I persisted in even after - as a result of pathei-mathos - I began to fully develop my philosophy of The Numinous Way with its emphasis on empathy, compassion, humility, and personal honour. An error which, for example, led to me, for some two or more years, to ebuclinate the abstraction of 'the clan' as some sort of embodiment of 'the numinous' and of honour and as an idealized means of manufacturing a new type of society as if such a future, such an assumed, hypothesized, society might offset some of the suffering in the world.

An error which the uncertainty of empathic knowing most certainly reveals. For empathy - the living, the numinous, way to know another living being - is a sympathia, sans all ideations, with a living being in the immediacy-of-the-moment and involves an individualized proximity, and thus discovers only the knowing of that one living being as that living being is in that one moment, or those moments, of empathy. A discovery applicable to only that specific being and a knowing which some future empathic discovery in respect of that same being might change. For living beings are subject to change; their life is a flow, possessed of an a-causal living nature; and thus another encounter with that same living being may reveal it changed, altered - perhaps better, or matured - in some manner. Certainly, in respect of human beings, pathei-mathos is or can be a vector of interior change.

Thus, the faculty of empathy - over a succession of moments linked in causal time by a duration of days, weeks, or months - may intimate to us something about the character, the nature, the physis, of another person. A subsequent meeting with that individual - months, years, later - may intimate a change in that nature, possibly as a result of pathei-mathos.

There thus arises the knowing of the wu-wei, the humanity, of empathy; a knowing of the transient, the a-causal, nature of the living-knowing, the revealing, the a-causal knowledge, that empathy may provide, and hence the need not to judge, not to prejudge, some past or future living being (or even the same being once known) unknown to, or as yet untouched by, such empathy or by another empathic encounter. For certitude of knowing - presumed, assumed, or otherwise - is causal, fixed, or the result of some posited linear extrapolation of such a static causal knowing into the future or back into some past.

Extremism - of whatever type - depends on this certitude of knowing, past and future, and which certitude amounts to a tyranny against the flow of life; certainly there is a lack of empathy, as well as the imposition of and thence the cultivation of a rigid harshness within the psyche of the individual which at best displaces, or which can displace, the human capacity for pathei-mathos, and which at worst may remove the capacity for pathei-mathos.

The future certitude of this hubriatic knowing is the given and fixed goal or ideal; and

the certitude of struggle being necessary to reach that future goal or make real that ideal. The past certitude is of a given idealized past and/or of past glories (if indeed they were glories). And the present certitude is that of identity - of 'we' being different from and better than 'them'. A certitude of identity and of assumed difference that gives rise to prejudice, hatred, intolerance, and all the other characteristics of the extremist.

Thus, for a neo-nazi or a racist, 'Aryans' (or 'Whites') are regarded as superior to 'blacks' and Jews, and the 'separation of the races' is regarded as the ideal goal. This superiority is a given, an affirmed, certitude, and regarded as fixed, past, present, future, and applicable to most if not all of the 'inferior' group or groups. There is thus no uncertainty of knowing in the individual; no interior balance; no wu-wei; no empathic discovery of the character, the nature, the physis, of other individuals as individuals in the immediacy-of-the moment; no allowance made for change, even by *pathei-mathos*. There is only harshness; generalization, supposition, assumption; a rigid adherence; the arrogance of certainty, of 'knowing' some are superior/inferior, that there is black/white, Aryan/Jew; that separation is 'necessary' and desirable. A need for stasis, and/or the desire to inhumanly try to make living, changing, individual, human beings fit some static category and thence the prejudice and intolerance and hatred based on or resulting from such an assumed or idealized static category.

As I know from my own experience, the certitude of knowing and the certitude of identity that an ideology provides displaces personal love, fairness, compassion, kindness, tolerance, empathy, peace, and wu-wei; or at least assigns to them a far lower importance than hate, injustice, harshness, intolerance, prejudice, strife, and disaffection to society, to what-is. Such certitude, such a lack of the humanity of empathy, also provides us with a fixed, an - according to my *pathei-mathos*, my experience - incorrect, answer to an important question attributed to Aeschylus and asked over two thousand years ago, and which fixed incorrect answer encourages, breeds, plants, the *τύραννος* within us ^[12] - our hubris, our inner egoist - and which wrong answer encourages, which breeds, which plants, tyrannical societies as well as allowing such a *τύραννος* as Hitler to gain an abundance of followers obedient to his hubriatic will.

The important question is *τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστρόφος* ^[13]. And the fixed and the incorrect answer is always the same: some leader, some *τύραννος*, some sovereign, some ideology, some goal, some rigid identity, is there to guide us, to provide us with meaning, to justify our actions. To explain away or justify our lack of empathy, our lack of compassion, our intolerance, our suspicion, our hatred; our lack of wu-wei; and our lack of respect of the numinous, our lack of respect for other life, for human beings different from us. A wrong answer to explain our amnesia, our forgetting or ignorance of the wisdom of the past; a wisdom embodied in what - at least according to my admittedly fallible judgement, born from my *pathei-mathos* - is the correct answer given to that question asked thousands of years ago and which correct answer is in my view an excellent reply to extremism. An answer which embodies that uncertainty of knowing that is the essence of balance and which

uncertainty the faculty of empathy makes us aware of. For the answer to preventing the extremism of hubris, to who guides us, who steers us, to whom we should look, and whom respect, is: *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* ^[14].

Part Three

Personal Suggestions Regarding Countering Extremism

Before considering some suggestions regarding countering extremism - personal suggestions born from my forty years as a practical extremist and my forty years of practical experience of extremism and extremists - I would like to briefly mention what, for me at least, is one of the most interesting and intriguing possible causes of extremism, and which particular possible cause led me to one possible solution to the problem of extremism.

This cause of extremism is what I term 'the hubriatic ethos' and which ethos has some similarities with the patriarchal ethos that has dominated, or tended to dominate, Western societies for millennia.

The Hubriatic Ethos

The hubriatic ethos is one where what may be described for the sake of convenience as predominately masculine traits (such as aggression, a need to be controlling and dominating, lust for change, lust for glory, and a lust for competition) are manifest, and where what may be described for the sake of convenience as predominately female traits (such as compassion, being nurturing, empathy, sensitivity) are undervalued, unappreciated, or regarded as of little importance (or even as a hindrance) 'in the real world'.

Such a hubriatic ethos, in my experience at least, seems to form the basis - to inspire, to pervade - extremist ideologies such as fascism, radical Islam, nazism, and neo-nazism, with the result that such extremisms tend (again, in my experience) not only to attract a certain type of person but also serve to shape or influence the personalities of many recruits. Thus it is no surprise that so many extremist organizations and movements are dominated by men, tend to be led by men of a certain type, tend to have activists who are men of a certain type, and tend toward aggression, toward inciting hatred and the radical, harsh, social change and disruption of violent revolution.

The hubriatic ethos is one of extreme - unbalanced - dissatisfaction with *what-is*. One

where *kampf* is regarded as natural and necessary, or as God-given; where there is a glorification of war; a clear and a required division between 'us' and 'them', our enemies; where some collective - said to be embodied in some ideal, or some leader(s), or some ideology - is regarded as more important than the individual human being; and where conviction/faith/obedience are prized more than the development and the exercise of a free and unbiased individual judgement untainted by conviction/faith/ideology/dogma.

The hubriatic ethos thus manufactures - for however short or long a time - a certain type of society, or has as an ideal a certain type of society. One that favours or embodies harshness and requires or even demands obedience or where obedience is held as an ideal. One where strife with 'enemies' (internal and/or external) exists or is endemic. One which is militaristic. One in which men play the dominant role and occupy most positions of authority; and one where successful and/or influential women are often or mainly those who have adopted or who embody those qualities that the hubriatic ethos itself manifests and thus which hubriatic men value.

There is thus a masculine bias, resulting in an overt or a subtle unfairness in respect of women, and a lack of appreciation of and misunderstanding of women, as well as a disregard or ignorance of - if not a dislike or intolerance of - those often underdeveloped qualities and attributes in men which are muliebral^[15] - manifest for example in empathy, sensitivity, and compassion - and which qualities and attributes are necessary in order to develop or to maintain a natural balance, a healthy psyche^[16], and thus enable a man to avoid the error of hubris, an error that today is often manifest in extremists and by and through extremist ideologies.

This bias, as I mentioned in Part One, might therefore be a possible explanation for why extremist ideologies seem to regard pacifists, Sapphic ladies, gay men, and even sensitive artistic men who are not gay, as either 'enemies' or at least as somehow inferior or reprehensible human beings, with the result that many of the supporters of such ideologies dislike, are intolerant of, or even hate, such individuals and why some extremists are often violent toward such individuals.

Countering Extremism - The Axiom of Hope

My suggestions in respect of countering extremism are only my personal answers; my tentative fallible answers found after nearly two years of reflexion - of interior introspection - pondering the following question: What, or who, could or might have prevented me and others like me from causing the type of suffering I caused or contributed to during my four decade long career as an extremist of various kinds?

Thus far, I only have the following three suggestions, however impractical (or even risible, to some) one or more of them might seem, and all of which suggestions derive from my uncertainty-of-knowing that what may be important in countering extremism is the methodology of developing the personality of individuals (or encouraging such development) in a natural, individual, and a human - a positive - way by direct

practical, personal, and moral experiences of an involving and an emotive kind. In essence, through humanizing personal experiences involving other human beings and not through dull 'book-learning' or 'history lessons' or lectures or moralizing speeches, however well-intentioned.

Such a methodology is, of course, based upon the axiom of hope. That human beings are, perhaps in their majority, capable of positive, ethical, change; that perhaps a majority of human beings are not by nature inclined to be bad; and that perhaps at least some of those who, for some reason, do what is wrong are or may be redeemable.

1) Knowing The Consequences of Extremism

This is the suggestion of the education of individuals by a learning of the human consequences of extremism. That is, as I mentioned in the essay *Pardonance, Love, Extremism, and Reform*:

"...learning, personally, from those who suffered because of, or who were affected by, such extremism. In effect, individuals being shown the personal consequences of such actions, such deeds, such violence, such hatred, such prejudice, and such terrorism... How the victims of our extremism, and their families and relatives, were affected; how they suffered; what in human terms they lost and was taken from them. A personal encounter with their grief, their sadness, their sorrow, their pain, their loss. Not some history lesson; not an impersonal reading of some books; but personal encounters with victims, with the family and the relatives of victims; or at the very least factual documentaries and recallings that tell the personal, the moving, stories of victims, of the family and the relatives of victims. A revealing thus of the terrible, the horrid, human cost of extremism."

2) Experiencing Diversity

This is the suggestion of young people experiencing diversity in a practical and personal manner so that - and for example - those who consider themselves to be or are regarded as 'White'/Caucasian spend time with a family of a different culture (such as a Muslim or Indian one) and vice versa, and thus (and hopefully) with such young people coming to respect, as individual human beings, those who may outwardly appear to be different from them or who live in a different way from them.

3) Experiencing Innocence

This is the suggestion of counterbalancing the masculine bias, the patriarchal ethos, that still seems prevalent in all Western societies by young men experiencing innocence in diverse others^[17] and thus hopefully developing or at least coming to learn of some of those human qualities a lack of which can and often does lead to extremism and involvement with extremist ideologies.

In effect, this is an attempt to undermine, at source, the hubriatic ethos, and so counterbalance aggression, the desire to dominate and control, the lust for change, the lust for glory, the lust for competition, and the desire for or the expectation of the necessity for displays of excessive masculine pride. And this counterbalancing - this enantiodromia - through providing young men in particular with opportunities whereby they can learn to value innocence, gain a better understanding and appreciation of not only women but also of those muliebral qualities and attributes that exist within themselves.

One possible method of doing this - although possibly a currently impractical method not to mention a highly controversial one - is for such young men to be somehow and under the necessary supervision of women, involved with, or somehow assist with, the learning and the playtime of very young (and thus innocent) children to whom they are not in any way related. If some such children belong to families of a different culture there is then also an experience of the innocence of such diversity. There would then be, by this method, a direct, an emotional and personal, experience of what innocence is.

Another possible method of doing this - possibly a more practical if still somewhat controversial one - would be for young men, as part of their education, to learn by practical means caring skills such as those required to care for the sick, the very young, the infirm, the dying, and the elderly. That is, to spend time so caring for such people, again under the necessary supervision of women.

Are Extremists Redeemable?

An interesting and possibly also an important question relating to countering extremism is whether all extremists are redeemable, capable of change, capable of rejecting extremism and becoming decent, moral, compassionate human beings. That is, can they or could they all be changed by such a knowing of the human consequences of their extremism or by experiencing innocence and thus of developing or awakening certain muliebral qualities?

As I wrote in *Pardonance, Love, Extremism, and Reform*:

In all honesty, I have to answer no. For my personal experience over some forty years has unfortunately shown that some people (whether extremists or not) are, or appear to be, just bad, rotten, by nature and thus possibly/probably irredeemable. I could be mistaken, as I hope that there exists some means to reveal, to nurture, the humanity of such individuals, although I do not know and cannot conceive of what such means might be. What I do intimate, however, is that such irredeemable individuals are, and probably always have been, a minority."

Notes

[1] For those unacquainted with my extremist past (1968-2008), I have been described (not always accurately) - by assorted academics, authors, journalists, politicians, and others - as (among other things) the author of 'a detailed step-by-step guide for terrorist insurrection' [i]; as having called on 'all enemies of the Zionists to embrace the Jihad against Jews and the United States' [ii]; a theoretician of terror [iii]; a neo-nazi thug; the man who shaped mind of a bomber [iv]; an example of the axis between right-wing extremists and Islamists [v]; a ferocious Jihadi [vi]; a staunch advocate of Jihad and ardent defender of bin Laden [vii]; a supporter of 'suicide attacks' [viii]; the person who has 'arguably done more than any other theorist to develop a synthesis of the extreme right and Islam' [ix]; the 'ideological heavyweight' behind the violent neo-nazi group Combat 18 [x]; the bodyguard of Colin Jordan [xi]; someone at the forefront of extreme right-wing ideology in Britain since the mid-1960s [iv]; and as a man of extreme and calculated hatred [iii].

Sources:

- [i] Michael Whine: *Cyberspace A New Medium for Communication, Command and Control by Extremists*. Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, RAND, 1999.
- [ii] Ely Karmon. *The Middle East, Iran, Palestine: Arenas for Radical and Anti-Globalization Groups Activity*. NATO Workshop On Terrorism and Communications - Countering the Terrorist Information Cycle, Slovakia, April 2005
- [iii] *Searchlight*, July 2000.
- [iv] *Sunday Mercury*, July 9, 2000.
- [v] Mark Weitzman: *Antisemitismus und Holocaust-Leugnung: Permanente Elemente des globalen Rechtsextremismus*, in Thomas Greven: *Globalisierter Rechtsextremismus? Die extremistische Rechte in der Ära der Globalisierung*. 1 Auflage. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften/GWV Fachverlage GmbH, Wiesbaden 2006, pp.61-64.
- [vi] Martin Amis, *The Second Plane*. Jonathan Cape, 2008, p.157.
- [vii] Robert S Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad*, Random House, 2010.
- [viii] Mark Weitzmann, *Anti-Semitism and Terrorism*, in Dienel, Hans-Liudger (ed), *Terrorism and the Internet: Threats, Target Groups, Deradicalisation Strategies*. NATO Science for Peace and Security Series, vol. 67. IOS Press, 2010. pp.16-17.
- [ix] Michael, George. *The Enemy of My Enemy: The Alarming Convergence of Militant Islam and the Extreme Right*. University Press of Kansas, 2006, p. 142.
- [x] *The Observer*, February 9, 2003
- [xi] Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke. *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism*, New York University Press, 2000, p.215

[2] Wu-wei is an important part of The Numinous Way, with the term being used to mean a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, wu-wei is the cultivation of a certain (empathic, numinous) perspective - that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings/ourselves and

gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

[3] One aspect of all extremist ideologies, of the politics and ideologies of hate, that has intrigued me for some time is their explicit or their implicit patriarchal ethos; their masculine bias; their stridency, their lack of not only empathy but also of those qualities that are ineluctably feminine, caring, nurturing, and thus which tend toward balancing the hubriatic male qualities such as harshness, fanaticism, *kampf*, and militarism, which such ideologies laud.

This bias toward overt masculinity, toward machismo, possibly explains why such harsh, such extremist ideologies - and often the supporters of such ideologies - dislike, are intolerant of, or even hate, pacifists, Sapphic ladies, gay men, and even sensitive artistic men who are not gay.

For a further discussion, refer to the section *The Hubriatic Ethos* in Part Three.

[4] The support for Israel by such groups has led to some political commentators regarding such support by such extremists as either cynical opportunism or as some attempt to gain political credibility and thus an attempt to distance themselves from nazism and fascism even though their whole agenda, their trumpeting of 'European civilization and culture', their nationalism, their dislike of 'immigrants' and especially of Muslims, seems to place them within the sphere of those ideologies. For instance, these extremists seem to have simply made Muslims, and 'immigrants' in general, the 'new Jews'.

[5] The Numinous Way understands an abstraction as the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, 'image', form, or category, and thus some generalization about, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals - and/or some being, some 'thing' - to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such a being/beings/things/individuals. This assignment of human beings to some abstraction (some abstract category) - such as Negro or Jew or 'traitor' or 'heretic' or 'prostitute' - always involves either some pejorative judgement being made about an individual on the basis of the qualities or the attributes that are believed or assumed to belong to that abstraction, or some idealization/glorification of those so assigned (such as some idealized 'Aryan race').

The positing of some 'perfect' or 'ideal' form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Thus understood, abstraction encompasses terms such as ideology, idea, dogmatic/harsh beliefs, and ideals.

[6] As explained in several other essays - such as *Ethos of Extremism* - by extreme I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature; where *harsh* is understood as rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic.

[7] *The Meaning of National-Socialism* (dated 108yf, i.e. 1997)

[8] *ibid.*

[9] In my essay *Society, Social Reform, and The Numinous Way* (dated February 2012) I briefly touched upon 'a numinous approach' to social change and reform. Which was the apolitical, non-violent one of personal example, and of fostering, encouraging, the natural, slow, interior and personal change of individuals.

[10] The good is what is fair; what alleviates or does not cause suffering; what is compassionate; what empathy by its revealing inclines us to do.

[11] It was such experiences - personal and political - which eventually, after two and half decades, prompted me in the late 1990's to modify my ideology and thus develop what I termed non-racist 'ethical

National-Socialism'. But even that did not alter my commitment to extremism, my extremist activities, and my desire to undermine and overthrow British society.

[12] ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον. 'Hubris plants the tyrant.' Sophocles: *Oedipus Tyrannus*, v. 872.

[13] "Who then compels to steer us?" *Aeschylus* [attributed], *Prometheus Bound*, 515

[14] "Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies!" *Aeschylus* [attributed], *Prometheus Bound*, 516

[15] Muliebral derives from the classical Latin word *muliebris*, and in this context refers to those positive traits, abilities, and qualities that are associated with women - as for example in the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God - and which traits, abilities, and qualities, in both Hellenic culture and pagan, pre-Christian, European cultures were often personified by female deities with such deities held in high regard and often accepted as equal to, if not sometimes superior to, male deities.

[16] In Jungian terms, acquire an individuated self. In terms of The Numinous Way, the natural balance is that of enantiodromia. See, for example, my essay *Numinous Expiation*, and also my essay *The Change of Enantiodromia*.

[17] My usage of the term innocent is explained in the Appendix.

Appendix Usage of Terms

I outline here how I understand and use certain terms. My usage may thus sometimes differ from how such terms are commonly used or how they have been previously defined and used in some academic and other works relating to extremism.

Extremist/Extremism

By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that my understanding of an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic.

Hence *extremism* is considered to be: (1) the result of such harshness, and (2) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In addition, a fanatic is considered to be someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate.

Thus, and I believe quite correctly, I have described myself as an extremist, as a promoter of extremism, both during my neo-nazi years and during my years propagating a harsh interpretation of Islam, an interpretation which included supporting bin Laden and the Taliban, supporting and promoting 'martyrdom operations' and thus supporting and promoting attacks on, and the killing of, non-combatants.

In the philosophical terms of my weltanschauung, The Numinous Way, an extremist is someone who commits the error of hubris; and error which enantiodromia can sometimes correct or forestall.

Ideology

By the term ideology is meant a coherent, organized, and distinctive set of beliefs and/or ideas or ideals, and which beliefs and/or ideas and/or ideals pertain to governance, and/or to society, and/or to matters of a philosophical or a spiritual nature.

Incitement

Incitement is used in the sense of 'to instigate' or to provoke or to cause or to 'urge others to'.

Innocence

In general, innocence is regarded as the attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us, are unjudged us by and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt. For this presumption of innocence - until personal experience and individual knowing of them prove otherwise - is the fair, the moral thing, to do.

In specific instances, such as quite young children, innocence implies actions are blameless, without harmful intent, and thus should be understood as causing no harm.

Politics

By the term politics is meant both of the following, according to context. (i) The theory and practice of governance, with governance itself founded on two fundamental assumptions; that of some minority - a government (elected or unelected), some military authority, some oligarchy, some ruling elite, some tyrannos, or some leader - having or assuming authority (and thus power and influence) over others, and with that authority being exercised over a specific geographic area or territory. (ii) The activities of those individuals or groups whose aim or whose intent is to obtain and exercise some authority or some control over - or to influence - a society or sections of a society by means which are organized and directed toward changing/reforming that society or sections of a society in accordance with a particular ideology.

Radical Islam

By radical Islam is meant a particular modern harsh interpretation of Deen al-Islam. This is the belief that practical Jihad against 'the enemies of Islam' and the occupiers of Muslim lands is an individual duty incumbent upon every able-bodied Muslim; that Muslims should live among Muslims under the guidance of Shariah; that Muslims

should return to the pure guidance of Quran and Sunnah and distance themselves from the ways and the influence of the kuffar.

Many though not all radical Muslims also support the restoration of the Khilafah; are intolerant of those Muslims they consider have allied themselves with the kuffar; and believe that 'martyrdom operations' against enemies are permissible according to Quran, Sunnah, and Ijmah. In addition, many supporters of such operations also believe that the deaths of non-combatants in some or all such operations are permissible according to the aforementioned criteria.

Society

By the term society is meant a collection of people who live in a specific geographic area or areas and whose association or interaction is mostly determined by a shared set of guidelines or principles or beliefs, irrespective of whether these are written or unwritten, and irrespective of whether such guidelines/principles/beliefs are willingly accepted or accepted on the basis of acquiescence.

Terrorism

A useful definition of terrorism is that it is the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of an ideology or of goals that are generally considered to be political, religious, or ideological.

The Good

The good is considered to be what is fair; what alleviates or does not cause suffering; what is compassionate; what empathy by its revealing inclines us to do.

Thus the bad - what is wrong, immoral - is what is unfair; what is harsh and unfeeling; what intentionally causes or contributes to suffering.

Violence

By the term violence is meant the use - by a person or persons and in pursuit of an ideology or of goals that are generally considered to be political, religious, or ideological - of physical force sufficient to cause bodily harm or injury to a person or persons.

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Meditations on Extremism, Remorse, and The Numinosity of Love



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Preface

The recent essays in this compilation were the result of six months or so of interior reflexion - of meditation - upon my extremist past and the pathei-mathos that, over a period of several years, led me to develop my ethical philosophy of The Numinous Way. Consequently, these essays deal, in a personal way, with matters such as remorse, extremism, expiation, sorrow, and the reformation of individuals.

As I wrote in the essay *So Much Remorse*, included here,

" So much remorse, grief, and sorrow, within me for the unwise suffering-causing deeds of my past. Yet all I have in recompense for decades of strife, violence, selfishness, hate, are tears, the cries, alone - and words, lifeless words, such as this; words, to - perhaps, hopefully - forewarn forswear so that others, some few, hearing, reading, may possibly avoid, learn from, the errors that marked, made, and were, my hubris."

David Myatt
March 2012 ce

Letter To My Undiscovered Self

For nearly four decades I placed some ideation, some ideal, some abstraction, before personal love, foolishly - inhumanly - believing that some cause, some goal, some ideology, was the most important thing and therefore that, in the interests of achieving that cause, that goal, implementing that ideology, one's own personal life, one's feelings, and those of others, should and must come at least second if not further down in some lifeless manufactured schemata.

My pursuit of such things - often by violent means and by incitement to violence and to disaffection - led, of course, not only to me being the cause of suffering to other human beings I did not personally know but also to being the cause of suffering to people I did know; to family, to friends, and especially to those - wives, partners, lovers - who for some reason loved me.

In effect I was selfish, obsessed, a fanatic, an extremist [1]. Naturally, as extremists always do, I made excuses - to others, to myself - for my unfeeling, suffering-causing, intolerant, violent, behaviour and actions; always believing that 'I could make a difference' and always blaming some-thing else, or someone else, for the problems I alleged existed 'in the world' and which problems I claimed, I felt, I believed, needed to be sorted out.

Thus I as a neo-nazi, as a racist [2], would for some thirty years and by diatribes spoken, written, rant on and on about these alleged problems: about 'the Jewish/Zionist problem, about 'the dangers of race-mixing', about the need for 'a strong nation', about 'why we need a revolution', about 'the struggle for victory', about 'the survival of the Aryan race', and so on and so on. Later on, following my conversion to Islam, I would - for some seven or so years - write and talk about 'the arrogance of the kuffar', about 'the need for a Khilafah', about 'the dangers of kufr', about 'the need for Jihad against the kuffar', and so on and so on.

Yet the honest, the obvious, truth was that I - and people like me or those who supported, followed, or were incited, inspired, by people like me - were and are the problem. That my, that our, alleged 'problems' (political/religious), were phantasmagorical; unreal; imagined; only projections based on, caused by, invented

ideas that had no basis in reality, no basis in the simple reality of human beings. For the simple reality of most human beings is the need for simple, human, things: for personal love, for friendship, for a family, for a personal freedom, a security, a stability - a home, food, playfulness, a lack of danger - and for the dignity, the self-respect, that work provides.

But instead of love we, our selfish, our obsessed, our extremist kind, engendered hate. Instead of peace, we engendered struggle, conflict, killing. Instead of tolerance we engendered intolerance. Instead fairness and equality we engendered dishonour and discrimination. Instead of security we produced, we encouraged, revolution, violence, change.

The problem, the problems, lay inside us, in our kind, not in 'the world', not in others. We, our kind - we the pursuers of, the inventors of, abstractions, of ideals, of ideologies; we the selfish, the arrogant, the hubriatic, the fanatics, the obsessed - were and are the main causes of hate, of conflict, of suffering, of inhumanity, of violence. Century after century, millennia after millennia.

In retrospect it was easy to be, to become, obsessed, a fanatic, an extremist - someone pursuing some goal, someone identifying with some cause, some ideology; someone who saw 'problems' and felt such 'problems' had to be sorted out. For such extremism, such goals, fulfilled a need; they gave a sense of identity; a sense of belonging; a sense of purpose. So that instead of being an individual human being primarily concerned with love, with and responsible for personal matters - the feeling and issues and problems of family, friends, loved ones - there was a feeling of being concerned with and part of 'higher more important things', with the inevitable result one becomes hard, hardened, and thence dehumanized.

Easy to be thus, to be an outward extremist; just as it is easy for some other humans (especially, it seems, for men) to be and remain extremists in an inner, interior, way: selfish, hubristic, arrogant, unfeeling, and thus obsessed with themselves, their physical prowess, and/or subsumed by their personal desires, their feelings, their needs, to the exclusion of others. For - despite our alleged, our believed in, 'idealism' - we the outward extremists were, we had become like, those selfish, hubristic, arrogant, unfeeling humans; only that instead of being slaves to our personal desires, feelings, needs, we were enslaved to our ideals, our goals, our ideologies, our abstractions, and to the phantasmagorical problems we manufactured, we imagined, or we believed in.

In essence, it was a failure of humanity on our, on my, part. A failure to see, to know, to feel, the human - the individual - reality of love, of peace. A failure to personally, as individuals, be empathic, compassionate, loving, kind, fair.

For love is not some ideal to be striven for, to be achieved by some supra-personal means. It is just being human: among, with, other humans, in the immediacy-of-the-moment. From such a human, individual, love - mutual and freely given, freely returned - there is peace: tranquillity, security.

That it took me four decades, and the tragic death of two loved ones, to discover these simple truths surely reveals something about the person I was and about the extremisms I championed and fought for.

Now, I - with Sappho - not only say that,

I love delicate softness:
For me, love has brought the brightness
And the beauty of the Sun [3]

but also that a personal, mutual, love between two human beings is the most beautiful, the most sacred, the most important, the most human, thing in the world; and that the peace that most of us hope for, desire in our hearts, only requires us to be, to become, loving, kind, fair, empathic, compassionate, human beings.

For that we just have to renounce our extremism, both inner and outer.

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

Notes

[1] As mentioned elsewhere - in the missive *So Much Remorse* - by the term *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Thus *extremism* is considered to be: (i) the result of such harshness, and (ii) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. Thus in simple terms an extremist is someone who lacks empathy, compassion, reason, and honour.

In addition, by fanatic is meant someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate.

[2] In respect of racism, I accept the standard definition, which is that racism is a prejudice and antagonism toward people regarded as belonging to another 'race', as well as the belief some 'races' are better than or superior to others, and that what is termed 'race' defines and explains, or can define and explain, the behaviour and the character of the people considered to belong to some postulated 'race'.

[3]

ἔγω δὲ φίλημμι ἄβροσύναν [...] τοῦτο καί μοι
τὸ λάμπρον ἔρωσ ἀελίῳ καὶ τὸ κάλον λέλογχε.

Sappho, poetic fragment: P. Oxyrhynchus. XV (1922) nr. 1787 fr. 1 et 2

Numinous Expiation

One of the many problems regarding both The Numinous Way and my own past which troubles me - and has troubled me for a while - is how can a person make reparation for suffering caused, inflicted, and/or dishonourable deeds done. For, in the person of empathy, of compassion, of honour, a knowledge and understanding of dishonour done, of the suffering one has caused - perhaps before one became such a person of compassion, honour, and empathy - is almost invariably the genesis of strong personal feelings such as remorse, grief, and sorrow. The type of strong feelings that Christopher Marlowe has Iarbus, King of Gaetulia, voice at the end of the play *The Tragedie of Dido Queene of Carthage*, written c.1587:

Cursed Iarbas, die to expiate
The grief that tires upon thine inward soul.

One of the many benefits of an organized theistic religion, such as Christianity or Islam or Judaism, is that mechanisms of personal expiation exist whereby such feelings can be placed in context and expiated by appeals to the supreme deity. In Judaism, there is Teshuvah culminating in Yom Kippur, the day of expiation/reconciliation. In Catholicism, there is the sacrament of confession and penance. In Islam, there is personal dua to, and reliance on, Allah Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, As-Salaam.

Even pagan religions and ways had mechanisms of personal expiation for wrong deeds done, often in the form of propitiation; the offering of a sacrifice, perhaps, or compensation by the giving or the leaving of a valuable gift or votive offering at some numinous - some sacred and venerated - place or site.

One motivation, in the case of pagan religions and ways, for a person to seek expiation is fear of *wrake*; fear of the retribution or of the misfortune, that - from the gods - might befall them or their descendants in this life. Similarly, for those acceptive of an all-knowing, all-seeing supreme deity - or even of the Buddhist mechanism of karma - there is also fear of *wrake*; fear of the punishment, the retribution, the misfortune, that might await them in the next life; or, in the case of Buddhism, the type of life that might result when next they are reborn.

As the Owl explains in the mediæval English religious allegory *The Owl and the Nightingale*,

ich wat þar schal beo niþ & wrake

I can see when there shall be strife and retribution [1]

All such religious mechanisms of expiation, whatever the theology and regardless of the motivation of the individual in seeking such expiation, are or can be cathartic; restorative, healing. But if there is no personal belief in either a supreme deity or in deities, how then to numinously make reparation, propitiation, and thus to not only expiate such feelings as remorse, grief, and sorrow but also and importantly offset the damage one's wrong actions have caused, since by their very nature such suffering-causing actions are *ὑβρις* and not only result in harm, in people suffering, but also upset the natural balance.

In truth, I do not know the answer to the question how to so numinously make reparation, propitiation. I can only conjecture, surmise. One of my conjectures is enantiodromia; of the process, mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius and attributed to Heraclitus, of a wholeness arising both before and after discord and division [2]. This wholeness is the healthy, the numinous, interior, inward, and personal balance beyond the separation of beings - beyond *πόλεμος* and *ὑβρις* and thus beyond *ἔρις*; beyond the separation and thence the strife, the discord, which abstractions, ideations, encourage and indeed which they manufacture, bring-into-being. As Heraclitus intimated, according to another quotation attributed to him -

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord. [3]

But what, then, in practical personal terms are this wholeness and this process termed enantiodromia? To me, this wholeness is a knowing and an acceptance of both the importance of the numinous principle of *Δίκη* [4] and the necessity of wu-wei [5] - and a knowing which empathy can provide - and thence a desire to live life in a non-interfering manner consistent with empathy, compassion, reason, honour, and humility. And it is this very knowing, this very desire to live in such a manner, which is enantiodromia; which is cathartic, restorative, healing; with a natural humility and the cultivation and practice of reason - *σωφρονεῖν*, a fair and balanced judgement - being the essence of this personal process, the essence of enantiodromia.

For the human virtue of humility is essential in us for us not to repeat our errors of *ὑβρις*, a humility which our *πάθει μάθος* makes us aware of, makes us feel, know, in a very personal sense. For we are aware of, we should remember, our fallibility, our mortality, our mistakes, our errors, our wrong deeds, the suffering we have caused, the harm we have done and inflicted; how much we personally have contributed to discord, strife, sorrow.

In addition,

" ...by and through humility, we do what we do not because we expect some reward, or some forgiveness, given by some supra-personal supreme Being, or have some idealized duty to such a Being or to some abstraction (such as some nation, some State) but because it is in our very nature to do an act of compassion, a deed of honour: to do something which is noble and selfless.

That is, we act, not out of duty, not out of a desire for Heaven or Jannah, or enlightenment or some other "thing" we have posited – not from any emotion, desire or motive, not because some scripture or some revelation or some Buddha says we should – but because we have lost the illusion of our self-contained, personal, identity, lost our Earth-centric, human-centric, perspective, lost even the causal desire to be strive to something different, and instead just *are*: that is, we are just one microcosmic living mortal connexion between all life, on Earth, and in the Cosmos. For our very nature, as human beings, is a Cosmic nature – a natural part of the unfolding, of the naturally and numinously changing, Cosmos." [6]

Thus a personal humility is the natural balance living within us; that is, we being or becoming or returning to the balance that does not give rise to ἔρις Or, expressed simply, humility disposes us toward gentleness, toward kindness, toward love, toward peace; toward the virtues that are balance, that express our humanity.

This personal humility inclines us toward σωφρονεῖν; toward being fair, toward rational deliberation, toward a lack of haste. Toward a balanced judgement and thence toward a balanced life of humility, we-wei, and a knowing of the wisdom of Δίκη.

There is nothing especially religious here, nor any given or necessary praxis. No techniques; no supplication to some-thing or to some posited Being. No expectation of reward, in this life or some posited next life. Only an interior personal change, an attempt to live in a certain gentle, quiet, way so as not to intentionally cause suffering, so as not to upset the natural balance of Life.

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

Notes

[1] v.1194. The text is that of the Cotton Caligula MS in the British Library as transcribed by JWH Atkins in *The Owl and the Nightingale*, Cambridge University Press, 1922.

[2] The quotation from Diogenes Laërtius is: πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα (ix. 9)

My translation is: *All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions]*

with beings bound together again by enantiodromia.

As I mentioned in my essay *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*:

I have used a transliteration of the compound Greek word - ἐναντιοδρομίας - rather than given a particular translation, since the term enantiodromia in my view suggests the uniqueness of expression of the original, and which original in my view is not adequately, and most certainly not accurately, described by a usual translation such as 'conflict of opposites'. Rather, what is suggested is 'confrontational contest' - that is, by facing up to the expected/planned/inevitable contest.

Interestingly, Carl Jung - who was familiar with the sayings of Heraclitus - used the term enantiodromia to describe the emergence of a trait (of character) to offset another trait and so restore a certain psychological balance within the individual.

[3] Fragment 80 - qv. *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθέα in Heraclitus*.

As I noted in *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*, it is interesting that:

"in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) married a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) [8] and that it was a common folk belief that πόλεμος accompanied ὕβρις - that is, that Polemos followed Hubris around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing ἔρις."

[4] In respect of the numinous principle of Δίκη, refer to my short essay *The Principle of Δίκη*.

[5] As mentioned elsewhere, wu-wei is a Taoist term used in my philosophy of The Numinous Way "to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, is ὕβρις. In practice, this is the cultivation of a certain (an acausal, numinous) perspective - that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it."

I first became acquainted with the concept of wu-wei when, as a youth living in the Far East, I studied Taoism and learnt a martial art based on Taoism. Thus it might be fair to assume that Taoism may well have influenced, to some degree, the development of my weltanschauung.

[6] The quote is from my essay *Humility, Abstractions, and Belief*.

Pardonance, Love, Extremism, and Reform Some Reflexions On Numinous Change

My own somewhat tempestuous, experiential, extremist, and suffering-causing, life - and my quest among various religions - seems to have made me personally aware of the ability we, as human beings, possess or possibly can acquire to change ourselves in a positive, a virtuous, way; of the ability we possess to exchange hatred for love, injustice for fairness, prejudice for tolerance, and violence and killing for peace. The ability, that is, to become compassionate, empathic, honourable, human beings, and thus cease to be the type of beings who have caused or contributed to so much suffering over so many millennia.

This ability to change ourselves, it occurs to me, is the basis for reform, for numinous change, both personal and social; that is, for change that is good, human, humanist; which betakes us away from causing or contributing to suffering, and which thus leads us to restrain ourselves and refrain from causing further pain, distress, injury, harm, grief, to other human beings and to other life.

Such numinous change, in my view, begins with shrift [1], and not necessarily with some confession (of some sin or sins) to some deity or some representative, howsoever appointed, of such a deity, but rather the admission, the confession, to one's self of one's errors, failures, mistakes. This is the self-knowledge, the self-learning, of how one's deeds have harmed others and thus caused or contributed to suffering. There is thus a placing of one's self into a human, into a numinous, perspective and therefore an admission of fallibility and a certain, and a necessary, personal humility. And it from such humility - founded on such self-knowledge - that there arises, or there can arise, within the reformed individual, a genuine and necessary remorse.

Pardonance

To so accept - or to be open to - such a numinous change in someone is, at least according to my weltanschauung, a human, a virtuous, thing to do, requiring as it does empathy enough to recognize and be appreciative of the new individual that so emerges or which can emerge from such shriftness, such self-knowledge, such

humility.

Thus, to try and cultivate such acceptance of such individual change - the virtue of pardonance - and of the empathy required to recognize it, may well be a means for us to encourage reform in ourselves, in others, and perhaps therefore also in our societies in a manner which is numinous: gentle, loving, and which does cause further suffering.

To not do this and to instead be harsh in a generalized way and thus to not take into account individual circumstances, the possibility of change, and the virtue of empathy in recognizing genuine change, is perchance to commit the error of hubris and thus to add to the burden, to aid the cycle, of suffering.

A Personal Perspective - Dealing With Extremism

A question, relevant to reform and personal change, that I have often asked myself in the past few years is what, or who, could or might have prevented me from causing the suffering I caused during my four decade long career as an extremist of various kinds. Which leads to the general question as to what might be one effective way to deal with extremism and extremists, and thus possibly lead to some or many of extremists being reformed, changed; that is, acquiring certain virtues and having those virtues replace the negative, harsh, ideas, ideologies, and emotions, which made them and marked them as extremists and vectors of human suffering.

After a great deal of reflexion, the one tentative answer I have is the answer of learning, personally, from those who suffered because of, or who were affected by, such extremism. In effect, individuals being shown the personal consequences of such actions, such deeds, such violence, such hatred, such prejudice, and such terrorism, as I and others like me supported and/or incited. How the victims of our extremism, and their families and relatives, were affected; how they suffered; what in human terms they lost and was taken from them. A personal encounter with their grief, their sadness, their sorrow, their pain, their loss. Not some history lesson; not an impersonal reading of some books; but personal encounters with victims, with the family and the relatives of victims; or at the very least factual documentaries and recallings that tell the personal, the moving, stories of victims, of the family and the relatives of victims.

A revealing thus of the terrible, the horrid, human cost of extremism and of the idealism that I personally now believe is one of the roots of extremism. For such idealism assuredly dehumanizes, for one places some ideal, some ideology, some goal, some principle, some abstraction, before the human virtues of empathy, compassion, gentleness, and love.

Yet this raises an interesting and important question: are all extremists redeemable, capable of change? Can they all be changed by such a knowing of the human consequences of their extremism?

In all honesty, I have to answer no. For my personal experience over some forty years has unfortunately shown that some people (whether extremists or not) are, or appear to be, just bad, rotten, by nature and thus possibly/probably irredeemable. I could be mistaken, as I hope that there exists some means to reveal, to nurture, the humanity of such individuals, although I do not know and cannot conceive of what such means might be. What I do intimate, however, is that such irredeemable individuals are, and probably always have been, a minority.

A Personal Philosophy

As I have tried to intimate in some of my recent essays, making empathy, compassion, honour, gentleness, wu-wei, and love, the pre-eminent virtues of my philosophy of The Numinous Way derives from my own pathei-mathos, my own shrifting, and from my reflexion on the self-knowledge, the feelings of remorse and sadness, that arose from them. Hence the ethics of this Way have their genesis in my personal meditations, and are not the result of some critical, academic, detached, study and revision of the various ethical theories that have been proposed by others, ancient or modern.

Furthermore, I admit that I do not have all the answers, or even many of the answers to important moral and philosophical questions, and that the few answers I have arrived at in recent years are only my own fallible tentative and quite personal answers derived from much interior reflexion on the suffering I know I have caused through and because of past deeds, deeds both extremist and personal. A knowing, a reflexion, that I feel has changed me, reformed me.

I would like to believe - to hope - that this personal, this interior, change, possibly evident in some recent writings of mine, and possibly also evident in my philosophy of The Numinous Way, is positive, good; in some way counter-balances the hubris of my past, and is thereby some expiation, some propitiation, for at least some of the suffering caused.

But it is for others, not for me, to judge whether that is so.

David Myatt
March 2012 ce

The text of this article is taken from - and thus summarizes - my answers to some questions recently asked of me by an undergraduate student, and which questions concerned my extremist past, my rejection of extremism, and the ethics of my philosophy of The Numinous Way.

[1] " I will give him a present shrift and advise him for a better place." *Measure for Measure*, Act iv, scene ii

So Much Remorse

(Extract from a letter to a friend)

So much remorse, grief, and sorrow, within me for the unwise suffering-causing deeds of my past. Yet all I have in recompense for decades of strife, violence, selfishness, hate, are tears, the cries, alone - and words, lifeless words, such as this; words, to - perhaps, hopefully - forewarn forswear so that others, some few, hearing, reading, may possibly avoid, learn from, the errors that marked, made, and were, my hubris.

Such an elixir of extremism ^[1] which I, with paens born of deluded destiny, refined, distilled, made and - like some medieval fake apothecary - sought to peddle as cure for ailments that never did exist.

Then her - Francine's - death that day late May such that for so long a time such feelings of remorse, grief, and sorrow, overwhelmed so that Sleep when he deigned to arrive arrived to take me only fitfully, slowly, back to Night and usually only after I, in darkness, lay to listen to such music as so recalled another aetheral, beautiful, older, world untainted by the likes of me; a world recalled, made manifest, to me in the sacred music of Josquin Desprez, Dunstable, Tallis, William Byrd, Tomás Luis de Victoria...

Such a longing then in those lengthy days longer nights to believe, to reclaim the faith - Christe Redemptor Omnium - of decades past to then presence, within, a sanctified expiation that might could remove that oppressive if needed burden. Of remorse, grief, sorrow, guilt. But was it only pride - stubborn pride - that bade me resist? Or some feeling of failures, before? Some memory primordial, pagan perhaps, of how why Night - She, subduer of gods, men ^[2] - alone by Herself brought forth day from dark and caused us all to sleep to dream to somewhere and of Necessity to die? I do not know, I do not know that why.

For there was then only interior strife until such time as such longing for such faith slowly ceased; no words in explanation, expiation. Ceased, to leave only the pain of a life mis-spent, left in memories of tears that lasted years. No prayer, no invocations; not even any propitiation to redeem, protect, to save. Only, and now, the minutes passing to hours to days as Sun - greeting, rising, descending, departed - passes from to return to the dark only to be born again anew; each newness unique, when seen.

I have no excuses; the failure of decades was mine. A failure of compassion, empathy, honour. A failure as a human being. There are no excuses for my past, for deeds such as mine. No excuses for selfishness, for a hubris of personal emotion. No excuse for deceit, deception, lies. No excuse for extremism, for racism, for the politics, the religion, of hate. For the simple truth - if so lately-discovered by me - is that the giver the bringer the genesis of Life is Love.

Awed by her brightness
Stars near the beautiful Moon

Cover their own shining faces
When She lights earth
With her silver brilliance
Of love...^[3]

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

Some Notes (Post Scriptum)

[1] It might be useful to explain how I, in the light of my forty years practical experience of and involvement with extremism, understand terms such as extremism. By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Thus *extremism* is considered to be: (i) the result of such harshness, and (ii) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In simple terms, an extremist is someone who lacks empathy, compassion, reason, and honour.

Racism is one example of extremism, with racism being a prejudice and antagonism toward people regarded as belonging to another 'race', as well as the immoral belief that some 'races' are better than or superior to others, and that what is termed 'race' defines and explains, or can define and explain, the behaviour and the character of the people considered to belong to some postulated 'race'.

[2] Homer, Iliad xiv, 259 - εἰ μὴ Νῦξ δμήτειρα θεῶν ἐσάωσε καὶ ἀνδρῶν

[3] Sappho, Fragment 34 [Lobel and Page] -

Ἄσπερες μὲν ἀμφὶ κάλαν σελάνναν
ἄψ ἀπυκρύπτοισι φάεννον εἶδος,
ὅπποτα πλήθοισα μάλιστα λάμπη
γᾶν [ἐπὶ πᾶσαν]
[...] ἀργυρία [...]

And What You Thought You Came For Is...

And what you thought you came for
Is only a shell, a husk of meaning
From which the purpose breaks only when it is fulfilled
If at all. Either you had no purpose
Or the purpose is beyond the end you figured
And is altered in fulfilment.

TS Eliot: Little Gidding

There is now for me a quite simple, solitary, almost reclusive life, almost ended; as if the Cosmos - Wyrð - has contrived to place me exactly where I need to be: in, with, such a situation and surroundings as makes me remember the unwise deeds of those my pasts, and which placement offers more opportunities for one fallible human being to learn, especially about how people are not as, for many decades, I with my arrogance and abstractive purpose assumed.

For now I of the aged poor have no purpose, no ideation, to guide; no assumptions founded on, extrapolated from, some causal lifeless abstraction. No politics; no religion; not even any faith. There is instead only the living of moments, one fluxing as it fluxes to, within, the next. No dreams of Destiny; no supra-personal goals; no desires of self to break the calm of day and night. Only walks, and a being, alone to mingle with weather, Life, Nature as one so mingles when happiness is there inside unsupported by some outer cause or expectation of or from another.

Few possessions, belongings, as if I am a Gentleman of The Road again, but briefly staying here in this some un-heated house; or perhaps some almost-monk of one half-remembered païen apprehension, with neither monastery nor home, who feels now the hidden meaning of life: that this is all that there is or should be, this peace brought because there is a freedom from desiring desires. Someone sad, burdened by a deep naked knowledge of himself, but who and now, too sensitive perhaps, smiles too often and tries to hide the burgeoning tears of joy that sometimes seem to so betake him unawares,

as when that warm late Summer's evening I chanced up that family, there, where a town's centre gave way to greenful Park and when, Sun descending, young mother helped her daughter light that paper lantern. Such joy, such joy, upon those faces, there, as slight breeze carried high perhaps some wistful wish, away.

As when before that walk in rainy woods alone I chanced to smile as dog with youthful lady, towed, came via pavement to pass this old man by. Such brief contact of courteous words exchanged, a smile returned, and off they went their way, their world, to leave only a glimpse, only a glimpse of futures-present-past - and her perfume, lingering, there. I - melded with tree, sky, soil, increasing rain - feeling such a burden of promise there. And there was nothing left to do but walk-on, hoping that someone might, did, treasure the goodness captured there, presenced within one more so mortal human life...

I, now, someone - who unlike so many millions world-wide - fortunate indeed to have shelter, food adequate to feed his gauntness for a day; clothes sufficient to keep-in warmth; and health - though agely ageing, slowly fading - enough to keep him fending for, and fendful of, himself. There could be more; there was far more, but that seems long ago; unneeded now. For this is all that there is, this happiness in moments when -

needs fulfilled - no lust for change, having laid in wait within, bursts forth bringing thus such breaking difference as so often causes two, more, far more, humans to break or drift apart.

Emotions governed, basic needs supplied, with memories - of lives - sufficientized for years of daily dreams, what more remains, becomes required? Little, so very little, except we being human, external still, do still so cause such suffering, so much - for what?

For there has come upon me these past few years, of this so simple living, a certain understanding. Of how I am never, was never, ever, totally alone, being only one briefly born connexion. Of just how easy it is to be content, breeding happiness in oneself and others, and how even easier it is to lapse, to fail, to fall; to let feelings, abstractions, guide, control, as when in the past I would breed discontent within myself, with loved ones and others, never satisfied with this or that. For happiness, I presumed, lay in better things - a better home some better place; better food clothes holidays finer wine; that other woman, there; and, perhaps far worse, lay with better way of life for those unknown, a way wrought by deeds done, by pursuit of lifeless ideation as if I, that temporary self, might have made some difference and that those causal shells had or might be given meaning or even by violence, blood, become somehow gifted with the breath of life.

So little self-control. So much love, hopes, lives destroyed; and how much suffering I by hubris caused. So much - for what? Some selfish passing pleasure; no external change that lasted; that ever could, would, last. Since real change, discovered, is only and ever within ourselves, alone - there, interior, ready to gently touch another, one gift of one person personally known so that only now perhaps I am with, of, the numen living.

Thus I am returned to sometimes where I so briefly was, my purpose altered, far beyond the goals I in arrogance so vainly figured. For I am nothing special, unique; only some half-remembered vague aspirations of this age, whose words, life - as so many - perhaps uncovers divinity as the divine but whose past concerned creating illusion, illusions, in expiation of a humanity then so lost.

Returned, as when I with tent, wandered, roamed. Returned, as those sunny warm days that Summer in Leeds when - before a monastery claimed me - I would walk barefoot inanely smiling so pleased to be free, young, alive. Returned as when, bus-arrived, love caught me and she that April day embraced me with such hope, such gentle hope, such simple sharing dreams that remembrance now brings so many tears of sadness. For I in selfishness broke them.

Returned as that day - so many many years on - when love for me lived within another as we two so slowly walked some Worcester streets...

How foolish, how so very foolish, to have lost such times, such love, by lust for change, by such selfish stupidity as lived within me still and still until years years further on that other dying came in May to almost break betake me.

Now, I am only someone living - a simple living - with a certain fallible inner understanding, born of suffering, deaths, distress, despair. So there is so aptly now only slow quiescent walks alone and such memories, such memories, as I hope I hope have made a better man.

David Myatt
August 2011 ce

Some Personal Perceiverations

Being, Death, Becoming

In the course of the past forty-five years or so of my adult life, I seem to have arrived at an unplanned destination so far removed and so different from where I started it is almost as if I have found not only another world but also another person. As if the I, the youthful self, who existed at the beginning of my journey, has vanished, died, to be mysteriously replaced by another being. For how did that young, that violent, that fanatical, that thuggish, that racist, neo-nazi become transformed into this aged man of the greying hair for whom the most important thing is a loyal love shared between two human beings and who now quietly, peacefully, preaches personal virtues such as empathy, gentleness, compassion, and *εὐταξία*, and who understands racism for the inhumanity it is?

No, it was not several terms of imprisonment for violence that led to the death of that egotistical arrogant self; nor even nearly two years as a Christian monk. Not even a year spent working in a hospital as a student nurse in those days, long-gone, when such training was mostly practical. Nor even being arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to murder with the prospect of years, possibly decades, in jail.

No, not that conversion to Islam and the almost eight years lived after that. Nor even the forthsithe of the first of two loved ones suddenly unexpectedly taken from me: her death no end then of that, my so selfish vainglorious self.

No, it was none of those, and similar things, in isolation. For that selfish self lived on. Slightly changed, but never changed enough. A self though increasingly divided and struggling within with certain moral dilemmas never divided enough, never struggling enough, since always always a fateful thread unwoven from abstractions began to

bind, repair, restore.

For decades, no satori, no enlightenment, engulfed, overwhelmed. No one moment, no one defining event, to change, transform one forever as understanding suddenly dawned. Instead, it was the steady accumulation of experience; the accumulation of personal mistakes, of personal folly year following year, of moral dilemma following moral dilemma; a slow learning - a very slow learning - drip drip dripping away at my surety, my arrogance, my beliefs, as sea-water surging drips away at seemingly stronger rock.

No, no satori - until a second forthsithing came to shock, shake, betake, me; her death a potion to that self but six warm Summers ago. But even then, the poisoned dying self lingered on: three more Winters until a new Spring burst forth with healing Sun so that his dying finally became his death and brought forth a new individual replete, complete, with sorrow.

Sorrow and Love

Following the suicide of my fiancée in 2006 ce, one of the first practical things I instinctively did - I was moved, felt almost compelled, to do - was travel to visit the nearest Catholic Church and, in remembrance of her, light a candle in the Lady Chapel before the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This instinctive heart-felt act following such a personal tragedy afterwards rather surprised me, an act perhaps brought forth by my upbringing as a Catholic and my time as a monk. Surprised me, for I was still then, nominally at least, a Muslim, and so in theory should have made dua to Allah or travelled to the nearest Mosque. Thus began an intense interior process of reflexion which was to last some three years, and which was to lead to me developing, refining, my philosophy of The Numinous Way and thus to turning away from the way of al-Islam, away from all causal abstractions.

Part of the personal understanding so developed was that, in respect of other spiritual ways, there was for me a tolerance, a respect; a knowing that my own answers are just my own fallible answers, and that, as I wrote last year:

"...any Way or religion which manifests, which expresses, which guides individuals toward, the numinous humility we human beings need is good, and should not be stridently condemned. For such personal humility - that which prevents us from committing hubris, whatever the *raison d'être*, the theology, the philosophy - is a presencing of the numinous. Indeed, one might write and say that it is a personal humility - whatever the source - that expresses our true developed (that is, rational and empathic) human nature and which nature such Ways or religions or mythological allegories remind us of." *Soli Deo Gloria*

Furthermore:

Beȝ sume men bo þurȝut gode,
an þurȝut clene on hore mode,
ho[m] longeþ honne noþeles.
Þat boþ her, [w]o is hom þes:
vor þeȝ hi bon hom solue iborȝe,
hi ne soþ her nowiȝt bote sorwe.
Vor oþer men hi wepeþ sore,
an for hom biddeþ Cristes ore.

The Owl and The Nightingale, c. 1275 ce [1]

Though some men be thoroughly good
An thoroughly clean of heart
How longeth they nonetheless
They be not here
For though their soul be saved
They seeth nought but grieving here:
For they for men's sorrows weep
And for themself biddeth Christ have mercy

For there was, and remains, a deep sorrow within me; born from a knowing of inexcusable personal mistakes made, inexcusable suffering caused, of fortunities lost; a sorrow deepened by a knowing, a feeling, a learning, of how important, how human, a personal love is. Indeed, that love is the most important, the most human, the most numinous, virtue of all.

The Infortunity of Abstractions

The fateful sorrow-causing thread which ran through and which, for nearly four decades, bound and blighted my adult life is the thread of idealism born of the belief that in order to achieve some posited, imagined, 'ideal', generalized, and future, state of affairs, certain sacrifices have to be made by people in the present 'for the greater good' - sacrifices of their happiness, their love, even of their lives. And not sacrifices for one's self, one's loved ones, one's family - but 'for the greater good', with this 'greater good' being described, championed, by politicians, by 'statesmen', by leaders, by 'representatives of the people', or even in former times by potentates, religious leaders, and military commanders.

A 'greater good' variously described and named. For many, it is their 'nation'; for others, 'patriotic/religious/political duty'; for others, it is 'their people' or their 'race'. For others still, it is called 'freedom', or 'democracy', or 'justice' or even, in former times, 'destiny' or God or 'Empire'. The names change, are even sometimes interchangeable, but the thread of love-destroying idealism remains.

Thus, in the name of such things one justifies the use of deadly force and violence so that one goes to war, or supports war; or supports violent revolution. One kills, or supports killing. In the name of such things one justifies a war, an invasion, a revolution, violence, the killing of 'the enemy'. All in the hope that the world of tomorrow will be better than the world of today. A hope alive, kept alive, while thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions, of human beings are killed, injured, and suffer, century upon century, millennia after millennia.

For decades this idealism, this hope, such justification, that thread, gave life, vigour, to the selfish person I was: violent, inciting, propagandistic, fanatical, preacher of revolution, war. But now that thread has, wyrdfully, thankfully, been broken at the cost perhaps of a beautiful life, her death a constant painful reminder that, for me, such love-destroying idealism is:

"...fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is a manufactured abstraction, a great cause of suffering, and that nothing - no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty - is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others - based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction - which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being." *A Change of Perspective* (2010 ce)

Now, all I - touched by sorrow - can do now is gently, quietly, reclusively, strive to capture, recapture, a little something of the world of love.

The moment of sublime knowing
As clouds part above the Bay
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain
Still falling:
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder
Have given way to blue
Such that the tide, turning,
Begins to break my vow of distance
Down.

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest
Takes him where
This bearded man of greying hair

No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling [2]

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

[1] vv.879-886. The text is that of the Cotton Caligula MS in the British Library as transcribed by JWH Atkins in *The Owl and the Nightingale*, Cambridge University Press, 1922. The attempted rendering into modern English is by DWM.

[2] *Dark Clouds of Thunder*, by DWM, 2010 ce.

Absque Vita Tali, Verbum Quoad Litteram Est Mortuum

Outside, rain and the un-warm wind of December, with no Sun - no Summer - to warm and bring that joy of wakeing to see the sky deep full of blue so that one smiling is eager still, as youth again, to egress forth toward the sea.

Now I in a rainy month - and approaching my three score and ten - possess both an internal and an external knowing of just what the passing of earthly Time doth to we fragile biological beings, for:

I am an old man,
A dull head among windy spaces

And yet the flow of Life flows on, here - there - when the outer husk, failing, dies, so that I reminded of what I pastly wrote to a friend, having now been so gifted with the gifts of one more solar year:

What, therefore, remains? What is there now, and what has there been? One genesis, and one ending, of one nexion whose perception by almost all others is now of one who lived and who wrote *ἐξ ἀνιγμάτων*.

τό θ' ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἤδη κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν

ὁδοῦς
στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων
ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. [1]

For there does seem much worth now, a special new species of slowly-joy, to so and so shadowly wander, supported by a stick, since Time itself, unmeasured, stills and one is able to feel the numinous as if flows through, with, such presencings of Life as one meets, greets, passes. As when that other day I walked to wander - never now far from home - and that young unknown stocky man, girlfriend beside and smiling, bade me compliments of the season. Such life there, such potential there, in both, and one was glad to be alive, still, even if no Sun broke forth in warmth. Or glad as when in slow walk in woods nearby wind shook trees to breathe again one's wordless connexion with this living Earth, so strong so strong it became as if one could go back there to where one's loved ones lived, unbroken by such selfish deeds as might have saved them or at least made happier their so short time on Earth. And I was so happy, so happy there remembering those good times, shared, with them.

There has thus grown, within because of age, both a new knowing of how needful is our need for compassion and of a new if sad perception: of just how many many centuries we forgetful biological beings may need. But all I can do now is walk, remembering, hoping: my words, my dreams, a bridge.

For I am no enigma, my life bared by writings such as this. For words live on to tell just one more story, of redemption. But who will read them when life lives within this husk no more?

David Myatt
December 2011 CE

[1] Thus, he of great Age, his foliage drying up
And no stronger than a child, with three feet to guide him on his travels,
Wanders - appearing a shadow in the light of day.

Aesch. Ag 79-82

cc David Myatt 2012

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The Culture of ἀρετή

Essays in Praise of πάθει μάθος

Introduction

The essays in this collection - written over the past few years or so - are autobiographical in nature, and express, in essence, the *raisons d'être* behind my recent move away from the Way of Al-Islam and back to my own *weltanschauung* which I have termed both The Numinous Way and The Philosophy of The Numen.

This return has been the result of an almost four-year long interior struggle following one seminal event - the suicide of my then fiancée - and which struggle led me to not only reflect upon certain ethical and philosophical questions, but also to develop and refine my own *weltanschauung*. There was, thus, for me, πάθει μάθος - a certain learning from the adversity of a personal suffering [\[1\]](#).

A most important part of this interior struggle, and this period of reflexion, concerned notions of duty and personal honour - subjects that are somewhat *outré* in these causal material times of large nation-States, rapid (and vapid) communication, vulgar mass 'popular' entertainment, and a general unfamiliarity, among the populace of such nation-States, with what we may term the culture of ἀρετή [\[2\]](#) and which culture now includes the works of such individuals as Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristotle, Livy, Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, Dante Alighieri, Isaac Newton, JS Bach, and TS Eliot, among others.

Thus, I was for several years torn between doing what I considered was my honourable duty and following where my own personal learning from experience and

reflexion took me. For some time before this - for around seven or eight years - I considered that I was under the noble obligation to adhere to an oath I had sworn; the oath of my Shahadah, taken when I became Muslim, and while occasionally some doubts did arise, they all became dispelled by a loyal clinging onto that oath. It just seemed, to me, dishonourable to place my own feelings, the results of my own reflexion, before this oath.

However, the aforementioned seminal event eventually - after much interior and external peregrinations - led me back to the culture of ἀρετή and to develop, at least in my possibly biased opinion, a deeper understanding and appreciation of φύσις, Δίκαια, ἀρετή, and thus of honour.

As TS Eliot so wonderfully expressed it:

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

My understanding of honour thus came to be as expressed, in The Philosophy of The Numen, as an ethical means to aid the cessation of suffering and thus as "a practical manifestation of empathy: of how we can relate to other people, and other life, in an empathic and compassionate way" [3]. That is, as a means whereby we as individuals can manifest a well-balanced, a fair, a noble, personal judgement, and thus how both ἀρετή and Δίκαια can be presented in those communities, those societies, we belong to or establish.

The Philosophy of The Numen is, therefore, and perhaps more correctly, the philosophy of πάθει μάθος - where the numinosity of authority of or deriving from πάθει μάθος is given precedence over the ways of doctrine, religious faith, and the ideation of causal, un-numinous, abstractions [4].

Naturally - given my somewhat unusual if not eccentric past and various peregrinations among what it is convenient (though not entirely accurate) to describe as political, social, and religious -isms and -ologies - I do not expect to be understood, except perhaps by some of those few who today understand and appreciate the culture of ἀρετή, or in whom the culture of ἀρετή resonates.

As someone, not that long ago, wrote:

*So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty years -
Twenty years largely wasted, the years of l'entre deux guerres
Trying to use words, and every attempt
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure*

So, perhaps these essays are just another failure of communication on my part; hopefully, possibly not.

David Myatt
2455522.321
(November 2010 CE)

Notes:

[1]

Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν:
τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τὸν **πάθει μάθος**
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.
στάζει δ' ἔνθ' ὕπνῳ πρὸ καρδίας
μνησιπήμων πόνοσ· καὶ παρ' ἄ-
κοντας ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν.
δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος
σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων.

If anyone, from reasoning, exclaims loudly that victory of Zeus,
Then they have acquired an understanding of all these things;
Of he who guided mortals to reason,
Who laid down that this possesses authority:
'*Learning from adversity*'.

Even in sleep there trickles through the heart
The disabling recalling of the pain:
And wisdom arrives regardless of desire,
A favour from daimons
Who have taken the seats of honour, by force.

Aeschylus: Agamemnon (174-183) translated by DW Myatt

[2] Central to the culture of ἀρετή are two things: the currently unfashionable concept (or archetype) of a noble, an aristocratic, personal character bred from physical and intellectual challenges (a personal development of, or discovery of, personal potential from direct and challenging personal learning) and the concept (or more correctly, archetype) of Δίκη.

In respect of noble personal character - and learning from πάθει μάθος - one has, for

instance, Odysseus, and the fabled Oedipus, of whom Sophocles says:

ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους ὅδε,
ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἤδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ,
οὐ τίς οὐ ζήλω πολιτῶν ἦν τύχαις ἐπιβλέπων,
εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν.
ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντα κείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν
ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν
τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδὲν ἀλγυνὸν παθῶν.

You natives of Thebes: Observe - here is Oedipus,
He who understood that famous enigma and was a strong man:
What clansman did not behold that fortune without envy?
But what a tide of problems have come over him!
Therefore, look toward that ending which is for us mortals,
To observe that particular day - calling no one lucky until,
Without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending.

(*Oedipus Tyrannus*, vv. 1524-1530)

In respect of [Δίκη](#) Aeschylus wrote:

Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσ-
ιν μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει:
τὸ μέλλον δ', ἐπεὶ γένοιτ', ἂν κλύοις: πρὸ χαιρέτω:
ἴσον δὲ τῷ προστένειν.

The goddess, Judgement, favours someone *learning from adversity*.

But I shall hear of what will be, after it comes into being:
Before then, I leave it,
Otherwise, it is the same as a premature grieving.

(*Aeschylus: Agamemnon*, 250-254)

Thus, the culture of ἀρετή is, in essence, the education of discovering and knowing, intellectually and personally, that noble balance between our natural human tendency to commit ὕβρις - to go beyond the respectful, noble, limits of behaviour - and the necessity of learning the hard way, from πάθει μάθος, from direct personal experience. Δίκη is this balance; a balance manifest in us - or which can be manifest in us - through thoughtful reasoning, that is, by a well-balanced, fair, noble, personal judgement.

As Heraclitus wrote:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας. (Fragmentum B 112)

Which suggests that what is most excellent [ἀρετὴ] is thoughtful reasoning, a well-balanced judgement - [σωφρονεῖν] - and that such reasoning is both (1) to express (reveal, discover, learn) meaning and (2) that which is in accord with, in balance with or in sympathy with, φύσις - with our natural noble human nature and the nature of Being itself.

[3] Refer, for example, to my essay *An Overview of The Numinous Way of Life*.

[4] A brief analysis of this philosophy of πάθει μάθος in the context of the culture of ἀρετὴ is given in the first part of my essay *The Classical Foundations of The Numinous Way*, entitled *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way: The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*.

A concise discussion of abstractions, and their un-numinous nature, is given in my essay *A Brief Analysis of The Immorality of Abstraction*.

I

A Learning From Physis

Life is or can be so beautiful, it is just that we humans seem to have a propensity to undermine or destroy or not even see this beauty, especially manifest as this beauty is in Nature, and in and through a mutual personal love between two human beings.

But why – just why – do we human beings have a propensity to so undermine or destroy or not even see the beauty of Life, of Nature, of love? Because of our desires, our selfish desires, and because of the abstractions – the lifeless, un-numinous, abstractions we human beings have, in our hubris, manufactured; which lifeless abstractions we pursue, or we place before such beauty, such a numinous apprehension and appreciation of Nature, as Nature is – a natural unfolding (φύσις) and a very slow natural change – without our interference and our arrogant desire to change things quickly according to some abstraction such as “progress” or according to some “plan” or some “destiny” or scheme we in our arrogance, insolence, and haste have devised or believe in.

However, I am as responsible as anyone for having committed the error of hubris - having pursued, for most of my adult life, some abstraction or other, and thus placed some manufactured goal, or some idealized perceived duty, before the beauty of love, and before that letting-be which allows us to appreciate, to feel, the numinosity of Nature.

As Sophocles wrote, several thousand years ago:

*ὑβρις φυτεύει τύραννον:
ὑβρις, εἰ πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῇ μάταν,
ἃ μὴ 'πίκαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,
ἀκρότατον εἰσαναβᾶσ'
αἶπος ἀπότομον ὥρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν
ἔνθ' οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ
χρῆται.*

Insolence [hubris] plants the tyrant:
There is insolence if by a great foolishness
There is a useless over-filling which goes beyond
The proper limits -
It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights
And then that hurtling toward that Destiny
Where the useful foot has no use.

In retrospect, life, for me, has been in so many respects enjoyable and replete with joy - a joy sufficient and often innocent enough to keep me mostly balanced through many times of personal tragedy and loss, and also in situations when I myself suffered the consequences of some dishonourable act or acts by some human beings who seemed to have lost or not to even have possessed the human qualities of empathy and honour.

Now, as I recall and review over five decades of conscious living, I am also aware of just how selfish I have been, and in particular aware of how I, through focussing on abstractions, ideals and supra-personal goals, have personally hurt people who loved me, and personally caused or been the cause of suffering in this world. But I like to believe that I have, finally, learnt and understood some important things - especially about myself - as a result of my diverse rather adventurous and sometimes strange life.

Thus it is that I find, through and because of such a recalling, that what I value now, what I feel and sense is most important, is a direct, personal, mutual love between two human beings - and that such love is far far more important, more real, more human, than any abstraction, than any idealism, than any so-called duty, than any dogma, than any cause, however "idealistic"; more important - far more important - than any ideology, than any and all *-isms* and *-ologies* be such *-isms* and such *-ologies* understood conventionally as political, or religious or social. For it is the desire to love, to be loved - and the desire to cease to cause suffering - which are important, which should be our priority, and which are the true measure of our own humanity.

What, therefore, shall I personally miss the most as my own mortal life now moves

toward its fated ending? It is the rural England that I love, where I feel most at home, where I know I belong, and where I have lived and worked for many many years of my adult life – the rural England of small villages, hamlets, and farms, far from cities and main roads, that still (but only just) exists today in parts of Shropshire, Herefordshire, Yorkshire, Somerset and elsewhere. The rural England of small fields, hedgerows, trees of Oak, where – over centuries – a certain natural balance has been achieved such that Nature still lives and thrives there where human beings can still feel, know, the natural rhythm of life through the seasons, and where they are connected to the land, the landscape, because they have dwelt, lived, worked there year after year, season after season, and thus know in a personal, direct, way every field, every hedge, every tree, every pond, every stream, around them within a day of walking.

This is the rural England where change is slow, and often or mostly undesired and where a certain old, more traditional, attitude to life and living still exists, and which attitude is one of preferring the direct slow experience of what is around, what is natural, what is of Nature, to the artificial modern world of cities and towns and fast transportation and vapid so-called “entertainment” of others.

That is what I shall miss the most, what I love and have treasured – beyond women loved, progeny sown, true friends known:

The joy of slowly walking in fields tended with care through the hard work of hands; the joy of hearing again the first Cuckoo of Spring; of seeing the Swallows return to nest, there where they have nested for so many years. The joy of sitting in some idle moment in warm Sun of an late English Spring or Summer to watch the life on, around, within, a pond, hearing thus the songful, calling birds in hedge, bush, tree, the sounds of flies and bees as they dart and fly around.

The joy of walking through meadow fields in late Spring when wild flowers in their profusion mingle with the variety of grasses that time over many decades have sown, changed, grown. The joy of hearing the Skylark rising and singing again as the cold often bleak darkness of Winter has given way at last to Spring.

The simple delight of – having toiled hours on foot through deep snow and a colding wind – of sitting before a warm fire of wood in that place called home where one’s love has waited to greet one with a kiss.

The joy of seeing the first wild Primrose emerge in early Spring, and waiting, watching, for the Hawthorn buds to burst and bloom. The soft smell of scented blossoms from that old Cherry tree. The sound of hearing the bells of the local village Church, calling the believers to their Sunday duty. The simple pleasure of sitting after a week of work with a loved one in the warm Summer quietness of the garden of an English Inn, feeling rather sleepy having just imbued a pint or two of ale as liquid lunch.

The smell of fresh rain on newly ploughed earth, bringing life to seeds, crops, newly sown. The mist of an early Autumn morning rising slowly over

field and hedge while Sun begins to warm the still chilly air. The very feel of the fine tilth one has made by rotaring the ground ready for planting in the Spring, knowing that soon will come the warmth of Sun, the life of rain, to give profuse living to what shall be grown - and knowing, feeling, that such growth, such fecundity, is but a gift, to be treasured not profaned...

These are the joys, some of the very simple, the very *English*, things I treasure; that I have loved the most, and whose memories I shall seek to keep flowing within me as my own life slowly ebbs away...

For it is to the now almost lost England of such things that I belong, that I have always belonged, even though for many years I, in my profane often selfish stupidity, forget this, subsumed as I was in my hubris with un-numinous abstractions.

The Sun of Warm November

So this is Peace:
As the Sun of warm November
Warms and the grass grows with such mildness.

No strife, here;
No place beyond this place
As Farm meets meadow field
And I upon some hessian sack sit, write
To hear some distant calls from hedged-in sheep:
No breeze
To stir the fallen leaves
That lie among the seeds, there
Where the old Oak towers, shading fence
From Sun
And the pond is hazed with midges.

So this is the peace, found
Where dew persists,
Flies feed to preen to rest
And two Robins call from among that tangled brambled
Bush
Whose berries - unplucked, ripened - rot,
While the Fox-worn trail wobbles
Snaking
Through three fields.

So, the silent Buzzard soars
To shade me briefly:
No haste, worry, nor Homo Hubris, here
Only that, of this, a peaceful peace
Rising
When we who wait, wait to walk with Nature.

So there is much sadness, leaving
As the damp field-mists of morning
Have given way
To Sun

DW Myatt
2010 CE

Addendum - A Note Concerning Physis

The phrase *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* - attributed to Heraclitus - expresses something of the true nature of Physis. See, for example, my brief essay *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*, where I suggest that the phrase implies something akin to *Concealment accompanies Physis*, or *Concealment remains with Physis, like a friend* (or, The natural companion of Physis is concealment.)

We, as thinking human beings - who can use *λόγος* - can not only uncover *Φύσις* but also conceal it again by our use of ideation, and by our "naming" of things. Why is why Heraclitus also said:

τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος αἰὲ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον

Although this naming and expression, which I explain, exists - human beings tend to ignore it, both before and after they have become aware of it. (*Fragment 1*)

An understanding also expressed by Hesiod (*Theog*, 27-28):

*ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
ἴδμεν δ', εὔτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι*

We have many ways to conceal - to name - certain things
And the skill when we wish to expose their meaning

II

The Scent of Meadow Grass

Four days on from Fran's death, and I am in one of the ancient meadows on the Farm - soon, the haymaking will begin, again, but for now I can smell that special smell - the scent - of meadow grass growing in hot June Sun.

The varied grasses are at least knee high; often higher - and I startle a Deer, hiding, as I walk through the grass: up it leaps to bound and leap away to escape through a hole in the far hedge where the Oak, now full in leaf, rises so tall above me, only a faint breeze to disturb its leaves. Over the field, a Buzzard circles, occasionally calling while small Cumulus clouds drift under the blue sky of another English Summer. Around, over, the pond where I sit, Damsel flies, and two dark blue large Dragonflies, skitting, dancing, mating, landing - for the flow of life goes on.

Why such warm almost cloudless weather? It is not as if I wish my sadness, my grief, my guilt to be lifted and taken from me - but, still, a certain beauty touches me, bringing a few moments of peace. Shall I strive to push these aside, and remember, again, as yesterday when I walked through nettles, letting them sting my bare hands and arms? Now, a stripped yellow Dragonfly ventures forth over the pond - to be attacked, driven away by the Blue as two Blackbirds, tree dwelling and five hedge-Oaks apart, sing their varied, long-lasting songs, for the flow of living goes on.

So many Damsel flies, now, I have lost count, and, then, a Ruddy Darter lands on a leaf, feet from my feet. For minutes, it is still, as, around me, Bumblebees and fastly-moving, loud, flies pass by in their seemingly random way. On a nearby fallen branch - some small, glossy, black, winged insect scoops out dead wood with its legs, having made a perfectly round, small, hole above the sunken leaf litter where black Beetles scutter, to dive down to what is their deep. Then, a Bumblebee drops, stumbly, briefly, down to the very edge, as if to drink, for the flow of life goes on.

Is there meaning, for me, here? It would seem so in these brief moments - and yet, and yet there is no Fran to return to, no Fran sitting here, sharing such moments. But is she, in some indefinable numinous way, here beyond the bounds of memory, Time, grief, and thought? I do not know, only knowing a certain vague, mysterious feeling, which might just be imagination. Now, I must arise and walk: no sleep, here, as in the years gone by when I would lie down among this warm grass to feel the peace that lives in such a place as this.

III

Bright Purple Orchids

It is just over one month since I sat on this hill - then, it was also in the Sun of an

early Summer's morning, and only a few days after Francine had killed herself, tormented as she was by despair, anguish and a deep self-deprecation. For I called her Francine - and she liked it - since it seemed to capture something of her quixotic, individual, nature which the names Frances and Fran did not really express. Now, as in the past when she was alive, I find myself still saying to myself - and sometimes out loud - "I love you Francine," as if it were some mantra that might bring her back to life.

But, yet again, I am alone - here, where there are bright purple Orchids on the lower slopes just above the tree-line and where, below, a Deer stood on the narrow footpath, watching me approach until, apparently unafraid, it sauntered off into the bushes growing by and beyond the stream that runs down through that quite small wooded valley. Overhead - the resident Buzzard, calling. Around - flies, starting their day as the warmth of the Sun increases to slowly dispel the clinging mist that lingers cloud-like over the flat land between those not-too-distant hills.

The stark cry of a Woodpecker, as it flies, dipping, from tree to tree. The loud Bumblebee, feeding on the many small flowers - blue, yellow, violet, red. The many birds - whose personal names I do not and probably never shall know - singing, in the many trees and bushes below, up from where there is a small clearing, gently rising as the hill beyond, and in which clearing two chestnut horses graze, half a mile or more from the nearest cottage whose white walls and faded-red roof break the swathe of green which, furlong upon furlong, reaches up to the very top of the hill, making my horizon: fields of pasture; hedges bursting with English-summer green

The ferns, since my last visit, are fully open, and almost all stretched fully out, and I sit on an old plastic bag, feeling the tragedy of Francine's death, and that I should be crying far more than I am now. For the tears, hours upon hour, day following day, has lessened, until - yesterday - I wept only once. So I feel guilty, partly believing I should be mourning her far more. But Nature, here, is alive and I have begun to sense again the flow of Life, sensing somehow and strangely - and hoping it is not some delusion - that she, by her dying has given me this gift, this chance; these moments to reconnect myself with Life. A chance to redeem and be redeemed, to feel the beauty and the goodness inherent in life and to know, to deeply feel, the promise of human existence - as if she by her living and her dying has not only freed herself from her own inner pain, anguish and torment, but also finally, irretrievably, freed me from that lower part of myself that still kept me in thrall, even sometimes during our relationship, to abstractions, to a wayward questing after suffering-causing ideals.

So I am embodied, here, by my being, my thoughts, my feeling - as I sense she is, and somehow alive if I feel this, if I remember this, her, if I change; if I make her sacrifice worthwhile. For there is a depth not felt before; never quite experienced like this before; a depth of feeling; a depth of being; a deep connexion with Life, especially as it presences itself, here, around me, in me, on this hill, site of an ancient hill-fort - as if the sadness and the sorrow and the tragedy have been transformed, melded somehow with the quiet reverential joy of being in such a beautiful, still numinous aspect of Nature, to form something new, strange, far beyond words, bringing a definite knowing of myself, of my failure, a knowing of humility never known before.

Thus there is a letting-be; a simple dwelling through sitting in silence and in peace, exhaling wordless and wordfull words of love. Change, life, death - all around; all here, and one day I also shall change as my beautiful Francine has changed. No fear, now; only that knowing that knows the flow for the changing it is.

Yet do such feelings, such thoughts, demean her death? Or are they merely some escape or delusion? I do not really know - I never probably will know for certain - but I hope not, even as I know I might be mistaken, in this. But this is all I have: this, the result of my month of effort, the month of tears - these slight answers; these meagre answers; these so slight positive feelings, feelings which may fade, which could fade, bringing back such anguish as caused so many thoughts of bringing forward death. For over a month, a struggle to find answers to the questions, the despair, which perplexed and often almost overwhelmed me. Faith; prayer; redemption - seeking to believe; needing to believe; desiring to pray, trying to pray. Trying again to find the answers in God; in Christianity, in Buddhism, in Taoism, in Islam, and in and from many other Ways.

But there is now, for me it seems, only the quiet sitting in places such as this; only the answers of, the development of, The Numinous Way. Only the feeling of being one connexion; only the yearning to presence the good, to cease to cause suffering; to strive to keep that silence, that non-interference, which which may well be the beginning of my own redemption and a move toward, back, to being in balance with Nature, with the Cosmos, with myself - and with the Fran who has gone, leaving me behind.

There is, here, only sky, trees, hill, and history - and no one to share such beauty, such warmth of Summer Sun. No one to lie beside and feel the yearning for that short sleep which often overcomes us in a such heat as this. Instead - a small brown spotted Butterfly passes; then, an even smaller one of brown-orange with black spots on its wings, and then a larger white of black-tipped wings. So many flowers to feed, upon - and the heat of the Sun has taken those almost-annoying flies off, away, perhaps bushward into shade, leaving me free to rest in my new strange sad-tragic-quiet-reverential-remorseful-joy while a small Cumulus cloud in an otherwise cloudless sky drifts above, to my right, making faces. A sad face; then of anger then of joy - until it, too, becomes almost formless here in this flicker of Life which passes quickly upon one planet in one Galaxy among a Cosmos, changing slowly, as it does.

So many flowers; and Grasshoppers, calling, in the longer grass, above where three Crows caw, as they caw. So much Life, bursting, burgeoning, forth, to mingle as I become mingled with a future and a past, one connexion among so many where, ten feet away, the wind-shaped sapling of Oak, no taller than a three Rabbits, hopping, curves gracefully out over lichen-covered rock

No Clouds Above A Natural Silence

A wonderfully warm and Sunny day with no clouds to cover the joy-bringing-blue. The Sun was warm even as it ascended while I cycled, on my roadster, rural lanes totally devoid of traffic because of it being Sunday, early. So pleasing, this simple joy of an English morning in latish Summer when I - tired from long hours of work yesterday - leant against a fence to just-be in each slowly passing moment. Such peace, as if the meaning of life was at last not only known but felt, lived, as no human-made noise intrudes and one feels the strength, the giving, of the Sun; feels the growing that is in fields, trees, bush, hedge.

So much, so much so simply known and felt as warmth and the natural silence bring a sleepy calm and there is the brief sleep of lying in warming grass before one awakes to feel all living-life thus knowing human-caused suffering for the blight, the stupidity, that it is. To be - to let-be - is again my answer and so I slowly, so-slowly, returned to my dwelling where now, three hours later, I sit on the grass in the garden knowing-feeling my weakness of months, years, decades past.

So I am haunted, here and again, where - again - the Swallows gather as they gather at this time of year: chirping, chattering, to each other and preparing in a few weeks time, perhaps a month, to leave until the next Spring turns toward another Summer. Thus do they now skim the fields, catching, eating, their food as the cycle of natural life upwardly repeats and a cooling breeze dims a little of the humid heat here in a greening part of England spoilt only by the noise, the machinations, of Homo Hubris.

And yet I am no exception, having trodden many stages to perform so many rôles to so be a cause of suffering: learning, forgetting, learning, but addicted often despite intention to interfering, to blindly going where I had been so many times before. Such stupidity - such sanctimonious arrogant assumptions - negating again and again and again empathy, compassion, love. Too many words, then, even now: far too many too many times as the deluding self lived, arose, died, arose again, to mislead, each numinous allegory only one Sign of how to remember that which our selfish delusion bade us forget.

Thus am I left in Sun to shed such tears as might break me with no knowing of if - when - I will be stupid, arrogant, again. But now - now there returns the peace of silence and sitting in the warming Sun of a late but so English Summer.

(One Day One Third of August)

I Have No Answers, Now

One of the many problems occupying me in the months following Francine's tragic death - and among those many problems still, as yet, unsolved - is the problem of remorse. The problem of knowing our errors, our mistakes, the suffering we have caused to others, and knowing we must change. But we have so much regret for the hurt we caused, we desire to return to some past moment in causal time when we would behave in a different way, say different things, having learnt from our mistakes. Thus might we change what-is-now, redeeming the suffering, the death. But this return is impossible, of course, a wakeing dream, and so there is a desire for some kind of forgiveness and a gentle determination not to commit the same mistakes, again.

Why such a desire for forgiveness? And from whom, since the person we loved, we failed, is dead? Forgiveness, as catharsis - to ease the burden of remorse, and of that guilt that seems to have seeped deeply within us, born as it is from our now shameful knowing of ourselves, for we are no longer the arrogant, prideful, often unempathic person we were. Now, we know our limits, our faults, our blame, and it is such clear self-honesty that shames us.

Of course, in times past we might and probably would have laughed at such thoughts, such feelings, and returned to our joyful often selfish immersion in life, regarding the person we now are - we have become - as someone weak, foolish. And it is sometimes tempting, still, to forget our new self-image, and return to the games we played with others in the past before the tragedy of a loved one's death overwhelmed, leaving us in those first fresh days of our new life with such morbid thoughts as kept us sleepless, weeping, bereft, as if the force of life had been somehow taken from us. No more, then, now, the lying - the lies we so often told to ourselves; no more, then, now, the so-convenient forgetting, the dislike we had for, the blame we cast at, others in the instinct of dishonourable self-survival and arrogant hubris.

We cannot hide, any longer - we have seen ourselves as we are, and we do not like much, most, of what we have seen. Much, most: for we have kept ourselves alive, at least in body, plodding through the days, the weeks, the months clinging to that still remaining small part of ourselves which is or seems to be imbued with life. Yet how many have failed, here? Failed to find within, in some shadowed space, an intimation of life - of that good which might, which can, redeem us still? To find something we, at least, still like about ourselves... How many, failed - and so in their despair by their own hand removed themselves from life? Too many; far too many, too many times.

So we cling to life, plodding through the days, lacking hope. For the hope of life, of our future, has gone, turning thoughts, feelings, back toward forgiveness, grace, redemption: toward the loving merciful kindness of the Saviour, the God, who, which, so often seemed to save us in the foolish gawky days of early youth when there seemed to be no horizon beyond the simple family life we lived; no problems that a parent, a Saviour, a God, some gift could not solve: days when happiness was play, a

swim in sea; in finding what was beyond the corner of that reddish dusty track in the bush we walked one sunny day to picnic there beside the lake in that dry season...

Where is my Saviour now? Where the peace of prayer among the incense that lingered as the oak of the choir stalls creaked as they creak, echoing in such vaulted nighttime silence? Where that innocence returned, felt, known - even briefly lived - when a purity of spirit seemed as if it came to dwell within? As when, the beautiful, numinous, Ave Maria Stella of Compline over, there was out of pure love a kneeling on the stone floor, wordless prayer and often tears before the deep peaceful rest of sleep. Such simplicity, there - lost now, by the sadness, the grieving sadness, for doubts, intellect, pride and passion have distracted me, distanced me from the life, there, from belief, faith, piety, obedience: especially from belief, so that there seems to be now at best only an allegory left, bereft of real, deep, immediate personal meaning.

Such sadness - for such loss; for her loss; loss upon loss... Can there therefore be hope, redemption, no more forgetting, a removal of remorse, without a Saviour's grace? Without God, prayer, faith?

I have thought so; I have hoped so. It has worked - for a while, as when the days of warm and hot and humid Summer past were felt, experienced, sometimes, as I walked the fields, the hills of this rural land I love, finding, in moments, such peace, such joy, as kept me quiet, smiling so that I was able for an hour, two, to lie gently on warm forgiving grass and drift toward, into, sleep, dreaming of so many happy days, gone. But now - now there is only the dismal cold rain of late Autumn, Winter; dark nights; a tension that leaves my head, aching, dull; and so many hours - so many hours - of painful remembering of times past when I in my stupidity, pride, arrogance, caused so much suffering to so many people. So much painful remembering, especially of how many times I failed Francine.

Solve vincla reis,
Profer lumen caecis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce

Will this bleakness, this darkness, this crippling remorse, pass? Or will there - must there, should there - be a turning back, toward prayer? So much need, it seems, to believe - and yet no belief, for it is as if I yearn here for those warm, hot, humid, days of Summer, for the purity of wordlessly kneeling *sans* thought. No lasting deeply personal comfort, it seems, in Nature, as the cold darkness returns: no distractions to hold me in abeyance until the warmth, the light, the joy of Spring bursts forth bringing joy to a man worn, tired, from so many experiences, so many mistakes. No personal love, grace, there, emanating from some living personal loving Being - only what-is, as it changes within such change as covers us through Nature's living acausal life.

Thus, it is the realization of personal love that is missing, lost: but no woman, now, to suffuse such vacant spaces with meaning; no woman to gently love with a knowing

formed from failure; and no hope of such a loving being, given such a reclusive life born of such shame as now deeply dwells, within.

So there are no answers, now.

VI

One More Foolish Failure

I am such a fool; such a failure, in evolutionary terms, in the perspective of the Cosmos. Here I am, entering the sixth decade of my life, having spent the last forty years seeking experience and wisdom and having, in that time, made so many errors, mistakes, and been the cause of much suffering, personal and otherwise.

How then can I be deemed wise? How - when I have leant, from sorrowful experience, from my own *pathei-mathos*, from the personal tragedy of the dying and the death of two loved ones, and yet have always always, until now, returned to pursuing suffering-causing abstractions and unethical goals?

There is no excuse for this failure of mine, year following year - although of course I have always made excuses for myself, as failures often do. Wordy, moral-sounding, inexcusable excuses almost always of the unethical "the end justifies the means" kind.

No excuses - because from sorrow, from personal tragedy, I felt, dis-covered, the unethical nature of all abstractions, be they deemed political, religious, or social. And yet I always seemed, until a month ago, to gravitate back toward them, as if there was some basic flaw in my personal nature, my character, that allowed or even caused such a return, such a stupid forgetting of lessons learnt; as if I was in truth an addict, addicted to challenges, to strife, to violent change, because such challenges, such strife, such violence brought or seemed to bring a vivifying existence, a sense of belonging, of being alive - and yes, a feeling of being different, special, in the sense of believing that one is able to make a difference, to the world.

Thus, I have been human - all too human, far too human; caught, trapped, by that egotism, that bloated self-esteem, that has blighted our species for centuries, for millennia, and made us place some goal, some idealism, some ideal, some abstraction, before empathy, before compassion, before our evolution into higher beings.

In addition, for a long time, I desired, yearned with all my being, with a sorrowful passion, to believe again in God, in Allah, Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, As-Salaam - who thus could forgive, redeem, and guide, and from whom there might, could be, redemption and thus catharsis, and who thus could take away those doubts about

myself, my actions, that never, ever, left me when I returned to the foray, to the pursuit of some inhuman suffering-causing abstraction or other.

Only in moments during all these years - these long, these too-long, four years - did my being reach out again to the Cosmos, my bloated all-too-human self-esteem punctured, brought down to Earth, by some incident, or some intimation of the divine, of The Numen; as when I chanced to listen, to hear, to feel, *In timorie Dei* from *Répons Matines pour la fête de saint Bernard*, and knew again as if for the first time the essence of one allegory, the suffering, the hopes, the errors, the potentiality, of human beings, century upon century - bringing thus a profusion of tears so that moisture fell from my eyes to moisten my beard as, outside my room, the modern world flowed as it flowed, replete with noise and ego... Or as when I out walking along some Promenade by some sea caught the smile, the very essence, of a women, youthful, who passed me by in warming Sun and whom I in that one transcended moment seemed to become with all her happiness, sadness, hopes, memories and living: such an intimation of goodness, there, nascent, ready and willing to spring forth when a trusting love caught her, again. Or as when I sat in Sun to watch a young family, in some town Park, playing as such young fathers, mothers, often played with their children less than a decade in their living.

Or as when I watched from a boat the Sun set over a calm almost wave-free Sea, the red disk descending, larger, slowly, there where sea horizon cut the darkening of Earth's sky to cause such a profusion of changing colour that one was calmed, again, in those moments; stilled and almost awed as one watched, felt, such beauty, presenced on such a home as this.

But only in moments, during all those years.....

Perhaps all religions were, in their genesis, an answer to such stubborn foolish human forgetfulness that brought me down, for all those years; and - in their development - an aid to remembering what we so easily forget, what I so easily forgot, except in such transient moments; an aid, a means, by their rites, of presencing for us, in our ordinary, daily, lives, some intimation of the divine, of what we might, could, should be, when we cease because of egotism to forget, when we remember the suffering of others and especially the suffering that we ourselves have caused, and thus acquire or develop the dignity of humility that we human beings so desperately need, and always have needed.

Perhaps - until, that is, those religious ways lost or obscured, the numen, the numinous, in, by and through abstractions, dogma, by requiring the certainty of a certain belief, or by changing their ancient rites in some vain unnecessary temporal effort to be "modern and relevant".

I tried; I did try, for years - to return to such ways, such religious answers; needing them - hoping to find in and through them and their rites that constant remembrance, that constant presencing, of the numinous that I felt, knew, understood, would keep me a better, more enlightened, more empathic, and compassionate, person, mindful through humility of my own errors, arrogance, and mistakes.

But it did not work, for me - except in moments; far too few moments. For always there were deep feelings of there being something missing in their rites; of there being something just too abstract, too un-numinous, in their requirement that one accepts certain beliefs and dogma. As if the pure numinous essence has somehow by some means and over time been lost, or might not have been fully there even in their genesis.

Perhaps, possibly, probably - this is just my all-too-human arrogance re-asserting itself, yet again. My presumption, my illusion, of knowing, born from some all-too-human desire. But the stark simple truth was that such accepted, conventional, religious means did not work for me - or no longer worked for me. No longer presenced the numen, for me; no longer enabled me to rise, to go, beyond my selfish, foolish, error-prone self, to where the essence of empathy and compassion and the numen itself seemed to live, far beyond our temporal world of selfish suffering-causing human beings.

Thus did I slowly, sometimes painfully, from my *pathei-mathos*, construct for myself, over years, my own Way.

But even this Numinous Way of mine seems incomplete, as it is only my own uncertain and possibly quite feeble answer. For even now I seem to have no means, in and through this Way of mine, to presence the Numen, on a regular temporal basis to remind myself of the mistakes of my past, to feel again the living numinous Cosmos beyond that often mundane world which has now become the place of my daily living.

Thus is there the same old haunting question - of how long will it be before I in my addiction forget The Numen, yet again, and so return to the suffering-causing habits of so many previous years?

For now, I can only hope against hope that I have strength enough, memories enough, humility enough, to keep me where I know I should belong: infused, suffused, with the world of the numinous, enabling thus such an empathic living as can make us and keep us as ethical, compassionate, human beings; one sign toward the higher human type we surely have the potential to become.

VII

A Change of Perspective

Over the past decade there has been, for me, a complete change of perspective, for I have gone from upholding and violently propagating the racialism of National-Socialism - and encouraging the overthrow of the existing *status quo* through revolutionary insurrection - to the acceptance of empathy and compassion, and to that gentle, quiet, desire to cease to cause suffering, which form the basis for what I

have called The Numinous Way, with this Numinous Way being apolitical, undogmatic, and considering both race and “the folk” as unethical abstractions which move us away from empathy and compassion and which thus obscure our true human nature.

Why unethical? Because The Numinous Way uncovers, through empathy, the nexion we, as individuals, are to all life, thus making us aware of how all life – sentient and otherwise – is connected and part of that matrix, that Unity, which is the Cosmos, and it is a knowing and appreciation of this connexion which is lost when we impose abstractions upon life, and especially when we judge other beings by a criteria established by some such abstraction. For this knowing and appreciation of our connexion to other life is the beginning of compassion, and a presencing – a manifestation – of our humanity, of our knowing of ourselves in relation to other life, and the Cosmos itself; and, thus, a placing of us, as individuals, in an ethical, and a Cosmic, perspective.

This change of my perspective – this personal change in me – arose, or derived, from several things: from involvement with and belief in, during the past decade, a certain Way of Life, considered by many to be a religion; from thinking deeply about certain ethical questions whose genesis was reflecting upon my thirty years of violent political activism; and from a variety of personal events and experiences, two of which events involved the loss of loved ones, and one of which loss involved the suicide of my fiancée.

However, this change was a slow, often difficult, process, and there was to be, during this decade, a stubborn refusal, by me, to follow – except for short periods – where this change led me; a stubborn refusal to-be, except for short periods, the person I was shown to be, should-be, by and through this alchemical process of inner change. Thus was there a stubborn clinging to doing what I conceived to be my honourable duty, and it is only in the last month that I have finally and to my own satisfaction resolved, in an ethical way, the dilemma of such a duty, thus ending my association with a particular Way of Life, which Way many consider a religion.

During this decade of inner reflexion, of great outward change – of lifestyle, occupation, belief, place of dwelling – there was a quite slow rediscovery of the individual I had been before my fanatical pursuit of a political cause became the priority of my life: the person behind the various rôles played or assumed, over more than three decades, for the purpose of attaining particular outer goals deriving from some abstraction, some ideal, or some other impersonal thing. That is, I gradually, over the past decade, ceased believing in a certain principle which I had formerly accepted; which principle I had placed before my own personal feelings; which principle I had used, quite deliberately, to change myself; and which principle I had stubbornly adhered to for almost four decades, believing that it was my honourable duty to do so.

This principle was that in order to attain one’s “ideal world”, certain sacrifices had to be made “for the greater good”. In accord with this principle, I considered I had certain duties, and accordingly sacrificed not only my own, personal, happiness, but also that of others, including that of four women who loved me; and it is perhaps fair to conclude that it was this principle which made me seem to others to be, for three

decades, a political fanatic, and – for many years after that – a kind of religious zealot. Indeed, it is probably even fairer to conclude that I was indeed such a fanatic and such a zealot, for, in the pursuit of some abstraction, some ideal, some notion of duty, some dogma, I deliberately controlled my own nature, a nature evident – over the decades – in my poetry; in my wanderings as a vagabond; in my initial enthusiasm as a Christian monk; in the tears cried upon hearing some sublime piece of music; in my love of Nature, and of women. That is, there were always times in my life when I reverted back to being the person I felt, I knew, I was; always times when I stopped, for a few months, or a year or maybe longer, interfering in the world; when I ceased to place a perceived duty before myself, and when I thus interacted with others, with the world, only in a direct, personal, empathic way *sans* some ideal, some dogma.

Now, I have finally come to understand that this principle of idealism, the guiding principle of most of my adult life, is unethical, and therefore fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is a manufactured abstraction; a great cause of suffering, and that nothing – no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty – is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others – based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction – which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being.

Thus, in many ways, The Numinous Way – as now developed, and as explicated by me in the past year or so – represents my true nature: the hard, difficult, re-discovery of what I had controlled, and lost; and, perhaps more importantly, an evolution of that personal nature as a result of my diverse experiences, my learning from my mistakes, and my empathic awareness of the suffering I have caused to others.

Hence, I have been, for many decades, wrong; misguided. Or, rather, I misguided myself, allowing idealism and a perceived duty to triumph over, to veil, my humanity. My good intentions were no excuse, even though, for nearly four decades, I made them an excuse, as idealists always do. For, during all the decades of my various involvements – of my arrogant interference based on some abstraction – I sincerely believed I was doing what was “right”, or “honourable”, and that such suffering as I caused, or aided, or incited, was “necessary” for some ideal to be born in some “future”.

But now my inescapable reality is that of a personal empathy, a personal compassion, a simple, quiet, letting-be; a knowing that such answers as I have, now, are just my answers, and that I have no duty other than to be human, to gently strive to be a better human being through reforming myself by quietly cultivating empathy and compassion. Of course, I do not expect to be understood, and probably will continue to be judged, by others, according to some, or all, of my former beliefs, involvements.

So I rest - tired, awake, exhausted, from days of work,
Worry, Dreams, and Thought
Resting while the hot Sun flows
And the fastly flowing nebulae of clouds, wind-spaked,
Grow tendrils to shape themselves with faces
Here:
One planet gasping as it gasps
Since the slaying by Homo Hubris never ever seems
To stop.

Too late the empathy to set us flowing
Back to love?
So much promise for so long undesired
I am left sad, warm, sleepy
While the Summer Sun brings peace enough
To sleep-me
As the circling Buzzard
Cries.



In Memoriam Frances

Debitum Naturae
29th May 2006 CE

θάνατος δὲ τότε ἔσσεται, ὁκκότε κεν δὴ
Μοῖραι ἐπικλώσωσ.....



cc David Myatt 2010 CE



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David Myatt - Myngath
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Myngath

Being Some Recollections of A Wyrdful Life by David Myatt



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Preface

Being Some Personal Perceiverations

In the course of the past forty-five years or so of my adult life, I seem to have arrived at an unplanned destination so far removed and so different from where I started it is almost as if I have found not only another world but also another person. As if the I, the youthful self, who existed at the beginning of my journey, has vanished, died, to be mysteriously replaced by another being. For how did that young, that violent, that fanatical, that thuggish, that racist, neo-nazi become transformed into this aged man of the greying hair for whom the most important thing is a loyal love shared between two human beings and who now quietly, peacefully, preaches personal virtues such as empathy, gentleness, compassion, and *εὐταξία*, and who understands racism for the inhumanity it is?

No, it was not several terms of imprisonment for violence that led to the death of that egotistical arrogant self; nor even nearly two years as a Christian monk. Not even a year spent working in a hospital as a student nurse in those days, long-gone, when such training was mostly practical. Nor even being arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to murder with the prospect of years, possibly decades, in jail.

No, not that conversion to Islam and the almost eight years lived after that. Nor even the forthsithe of the first of two loved ones suddenly unexpectedly taken from me: her

death no end then of that, my so selfish vainglorious self.

No, it was none of those, and similar things, in isolation. For that selfish self lived on. Slightly changed, but never changed enough. A self though increasingly divided and struggling within with certain moral dilemmas never divided enough, never struggling enough, since always always a fateful thread unwoven from abstractions began to bind, repair, restore.

For decades, no satori, no enlightenment, engulfed, overwhelmed. No one moment, no one defining event, to change, transform one forever as understanding suddenly dawned. Instead, it was the steady accumulation of experience; the accumulation of personal mistakes, of personal folly year following year, of moral dilemma following moral dilemma; a slow learning - a very slow learning - drip drip dripping away at my surety, my arrogance, my beliefs, as sea-water surging drips away at seemingly stronger rock.

No, no satori - until a second forthsithing came to shock, shake, betake, me; her death a potion to that self but six warm Summers ago. But even then, the poisoned dying self lingered on: three more Winters until a new Spring burst forth with healing Sun so that his dying finally became his death and brought forth a new individual replete, complete, with sorrow.

Sorrow and Love

Following the suicide of my fiancée in 2006 ce, one of the first practical things I instinctively did - I was moved, felt almost compelled, to do - was travel to visit the nearest Catholic Church and, in remembrance of her, light a candle in the Lady Chapel before the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This instinctive heart-felt act following such a personal tragedy afterwards rather surprised me, an act perhaps brought forth by my upbringing as a Catholic and my time as a monk. Surprised me, for I was still then, nominally at least, a Muslim, and so in theory should have made dua to Allah or travelled to the nearest Mosque. Thus began an intense interior process of reflexion which was to last some three years, and which was to lead to me developing, refining, my philosophy of The Numinous Way and thus to turning away from the way of al-Islam, away from all causal abstractions.

Part of the personal understanding so developed was that, in respect of other spiritual ways, there was for me a tolerance, a respect; a knowing that my own answers are just my own fallible answers, and that, as I wrote last year:

"...any Way or religion which manifests, which expresses, which guides individuals toward, the numinous humility we human beings need is good, and should not be stridently condemned. For such personal humility - that which prevents us from committing hubris, whatever the *raison d'être*, the theology, the philosophy - is a presencing of the numinous. Indeed, one might write and say that it is a personal humility - whatever the source -

that expresses our true developed (that is, rational and empathic) human nature and which nature such Ways or religions or mythological allegories remind us of." *Soli Deo Gloria* [2011]

Furthermore:

þeʒ sume men bo þurʒut gode,
an þurʒut clene on hore mode,
ho[m] longeþ honne noþeles.
þat boþ her, [w]o is hom þes:
vor þeʒ hi bon hom solue iborʒe,
hi ne soþ her nowiʒt bote sorwe.
Vor oþer men hi wepeþ sore,
an for hom biddeþ Cristes ore.

The Owl and The Nightingale, c. 1275 ce [i]

Though some men be thoroughly good
An thoroughly clean of heart
How longeth they nonetheless
They be not here
For though their soul be saved
They seeth nought but grieving here:
For they for men's sorrows weep
And for themself biddeth Christ have mercy

For there was, and remains, a deep sorrow within me; born from a knowing of inexcusable personal mistakes made, inexcusable suffering caused, of fortunities lost; a sorrow deepened by a knowing, a feeling, a learning, of how important, how human, a personal love is.

The Infortunity of Abstractions

The fateful sorrow-causing thread which ran through and which, for nearly four decades, bound and blighted my adult life is the thread of idealism born of the belief that in order to achieve some posited, imagined, 'ideal', generalized, and future, state of affairs, certain sacrifices have to be made by people in the present 'for the greater good' - sacrifices of their happiness, their love, even of their lives. And not sacrifices for one's self, one's loved ones, one's family - but 'for the greater good', with this 'greater good' being described, championed, by politicians, by 'statesmen', by leaders, by 'representatives of the people', or even in former times by potentates, religious leaders, and military commanders.

A 'greater good' variously described and named. For many, it is their 'nation'; for others, 'patriotic/religious/political duty'; for others, it is 'their people' or their 'race'. For others still, it is called 'freedom', or 'democracy', or 'justice' or even, in former times, 'destiny' or God or 'Empire'. The names change, are even sometimes

interchangeable, but the thread of love-destroying idealism remains.

Thus, in the name of such things one justifies the use of deadly force and violence so that one goes to war, or supports war; or supports violent revolution. One kills, or supports killing. In the name of such things one justifies a war, an invasion, a revolution, violence, the killing of 'the enemy'. All in the hope that the world of tomorrow will be better than the world of today. A hope alive, kept alive, while thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions, of human beings are killed, injured, and suffer, century upon century, millennia after millennia.

For decades this idealism, this hope, such justification, that thread, gave life, vigour, to the selfish person I was: violent, inciting, propagandistic, fanatical, preacher of revolution, war. But now that thread has, wyrdfully, thankfully, been broken at the cost perhaps of a beautiful life, her death a constant painful reminder that, for me, such love-destroying idealism is:

"...fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is a manufactured abstraction, a great cause of suffering, and that nothing - no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty - is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others - based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction - which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being." *Appendix 2 - A Change of Perspective*

Now, all I - touched by sorrow - can do now is gently, quietly, reclusively, strive to capture, recapture, a little something of the world of love.

The moment of sublime knowing
As clouds part above the Bay
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain
Still falling:
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder
Have given way to blue
Such that the tide, turning,
Begins to break my vow of distance
Down.

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest
Takes him where

This bearded man of greying hair
No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling [ii]

David Myatt

[i] vv.879-886. The text is that of the Cotton Caligula MS in the British Library as transcribed by JWH Atkins in *The Owl and the Nightingale*, Cambridge University Press, 1922. The attempted rendering into modern (poetic) English is by DWM.

[ii] *Dark Clouds of Thunder*, by DWM, 2010 ce.

Part One

Apologia

This work is a concise recalling - a recollection - of some events in my wyrdful and sometimes quite eventful life. In essence, this life has been a practical seeking: an exterior experiencing; an interior transformation resulting from consciously reflecting upon such experiencing and the feelings such experiences often engendered; together with an often exeatic desire to know and understand myself, the world, and Existence itself.

A concise recalling of some events (with much left unwritten), because it is the essence of this particular life, recalled, that is, in my fallible view, important, and I have strived to present this essence in a truthful way - thus avoiding the plenitude of self-aggrandizing things that some writers of memoirs and autobiographies include in an attempt to present a favourable impression of themselves to others. I, au contraire, have tried to be honest about my failings, my errors, my mistakes, my feelings, especially in respect of personal relationships.

As a friend who read a draft of these autobiographical scribblings commented, "It is a

strange work because the supra-personal adventures gradually give way to very personal encounters..."

Which in many ways sums up my life - the hubriatic quest for abstractions, which gradually gives way to empathy and a certain self-understanding, *πάθει μάθος*, often, or mostly, deriving from personal relationships.

In general - for most of my life, that is - my nature has been to prefer direct, personal, experience to theoretical study, to be curious and at times defiant, and to use the faculty of conscious Thought, the faculty of Reflexion, to try and understand myself, other human beings, and life and the Cosmos in general.

My seeking arose from my feeling, my intuition - at a quite early age - that we human beings have great potential and can and should consciously change themselves. Given my somewhat curious, questioning, and arrogant, nature, I was never satisfied with the answers of others, and had to try and find things out for myself, often the hard way, and occasionally by transgressing the given, or the accepted, limits imposed by others or by what has been termed "society".

Thus, I have been, since that early age, seeking to answer certain fundamental questions about our own nature, as human beings; seeking to answer fundamental questions about the nature of Existence, and what, if any, meaning there is to our own individual lives.

Hence, and despite what some people have assumed, there is nothing really mysterious about me - I have simply been someone who, over four decades, has explored diverse Ways, and participated in all manner of things. Furthermore, there has been no particular plan to my living, no life-long strategy, and no assumption or belief, by me, of having some particular Destiny. Rather, I have often drifted into things, into experiences, often out of curiosity or, more frequently, because they offered or seemed to offer the possibility of exulting in life, and/or seemed to be experiences that might bring me closer to answering those fundamental questions. Now, after over forty years, I do believe I have now found some answers, which have resulted from my own *pathei-mathos*; from my learning from experiences and involvement, answers which I have tried to express in my philosophy of The Numinous Way. Here, therefore, in this brief journal-like apologia - this recalling - there is a revealing of something of the numinous wyrd of the Cosmos; of how one human being - one error-prone mortal - came to understand and appreciate the beauty of Life, despite his arrogance, and despite his manifold errors and mistakes.

Thus, in essence, the wyrdful nature of that one fleeting delicate microcosmic mistakeful nexion that this human world has known as David Wulstan Myatt.

Early Years

Africa

My earliest - and some of my fondest - memories are of colonial Africa in the 1950's CE, where I, as a quite young child, spent many happy years. There are memories of travelling, with my father, in a car - with running boards and coach doors - along an upward road in the Great Rift Valley, and which road seemed to drop precipitously on one side, and which steep slopes held many a crashed vehicle, recent, and otherwise. There are memories of travelling to a European-only resort - by Lake Naivasha, I seem to recall - where there was a path down to the lake strewn with beautiful flowering plants, and where one could spent many happy hours while, in the clubhouse, elderly (to me) memsaabs, many with bare flabby arms, would down their G&T's.

There are memories of playing in a shallow river near our dwelling in East Africa - no one around for miles - and of a family picnic by another, quite distant and deeper, far wider, river on whose bank was a wooden sign with the inscription *Beware of the Crocodile*. There are memories of going AWOL and walking - with the younger of my two sisters - miles and miles along a road, into the bush, and which road I had been told was off-limits to Europeans. We stopped once, as the Sun descended on that travelling day, to drink from our canteen of water and open the tin of beans I carried which we ate, cold (being even then of a practical nature, I had ensured I had a can opener). I seem to recall the Police - a European officer and his Askari - found us as dark fell, and I could not understand what all the fuss was about. Since everybody said we should not go there, I simply had to go and see what was there - which turned out to be just a road from somewhere to somewhere else.

There are memories of climbing trees - and falling from one and breaking my left arm. My sister - a companion on many such outdoor exploits - for some reason knew what to do, and made a sling from my shirt. Memories of - inadvertently I must add in my defence - smashing the glass counter of an Asian owned shop in the nearest village, whose owner demanded my father pay for the damage, which, of course, he did. I just had, you see, to try and juggle with some of the brass weights the shopkeeper used for his balancing scales. There is a memory of walking through some trees not far from my favourite stream and instinctively, with the panga I often carried while outdoors, chopping the head off a Cobra which, startled, reared up in front of me.

My interests were the interests I found by being outdoors. There was a colony of safari ants, for instance, that I chanced upon one day while out wandering, and I would spend hours watching them as their wide columns moved and marched across the reddish ground. Then there were the Chameleons I once, for some reason, long forgotten, wanted to find, and did, bringing one home to keep as a pet, which I did until I lost interest.

Once - for perhaps several terms, I think, or possibly more, or less - I was packed off to some Catholic prep school, about which I remember very little except falling asleep

a few times in lessons, and wandering off, into the grounds, when something interested me, or when I wanted to climb some tree. I do remember having a rather large magnifying glass and spending what seemed like many happy hours peering at things, outside. Perhaps I should have been in class - for I have vague recollections of being shouted at, by some adults, who seemed somewhat angry, and being somewhat bemused by all the fuss, as I recall on one occasion receiving six strokes of the cane for - something. Perhaps it was because - once, when the Sun reached in through a classroom window - I set fire to some papers on my desk using my magnifying glass. Or let off several stink-bombs during some boring lesson or other. I also remember a couple of fights of the schoolboy kind - pushing, shoving; wrestling on the ground, throwing and receiving the odd punch or four. But, for whatever reason, I was soon and gladly returned to my parents (perhaps I got expelled), and life for me continued as before, mostly outdoors, mostly day-dreaming, and quite often exploring.

Far East

Africa faded into the Far East - as the decade of the fifties faded to a few years past a new one - and to life in what was then a rural area, not far from a lovely sandy beach by the South China Sea, and a service-taxi ride from the still then rather ramshackle and quixotic city of Singapore with its riverside cluttered with row upon row of Junks, and many of its streets festooned with stalls.

For some reason I soon had to go to school, every day, and by Gharry. At first, I loathed it - bumph to read, sitting at some desk, sometimes in the air-conditioned main building, and sometimes in the much better open-air Attaps in the grounds. Then - and quite why I do not now recall - I began to enjoy it. Perhaps it was the running track, where I loved to run, barefoot in the tropical heat; perhaps it was the young, gorgeous, blonde, English teacher who would often sit on one of the desks at the front, her legs crossed, and read to us some story, some poem, or some part of some classic novel. Whatever it was, I began to look forward to that school where by the end of the term, I was "second in the class", and top in several subjects, including (if my ageing memory is correct) English and Maths. I developed an almost insatiable appetite for knowledge, and began to read voraciously - especially about Physics, Astronomy, and History. In addition, I learnt ancient Greek, and Sanskrit, and studied formal logic.



It was as if I had suddenly, quite unexpectedly, acquired a new way of seeing the world

around me; as if some unseen force, some *wyrd*, some *δαίμων*, had shaken me and awoken within me certain dormant faculties. Or perhaps it was just the lovely tropical weather, the quixotic surroundings.

Whatever, through and with these faculties, with the knowledge I imbibed from books, a feeling, an insight, came to dwell within me. This was of our potential, as human beings; of how we might - and indeed should - change ourselves in a conscious way through overcoming challenges, as I had grown in strength and insight through running, training, through swimming often almost a mile out to sea, and through devouring knowledge. This insight became a vision of, as I have written elsewhere, "us freeing ourselves from the chains of this world and venturing forth to explore and colonize the stars. For I felt that it was this new freedom, brought by venturing forth to the stars, which would give us the great challenges needed to evolve still further, and naturally, into another type of being. And it was the pursuit of this ideal which I believed would create noble individuals and a noble, civilized, society..." [1]

By this time, both my sisters had left home, to be properly educated in England, something which I had wilfully, almost demonically, resisted. One became - for some years - a Nun; the elder, a nurse at a teaching hospital in London, at a time when competition for such places at such a place was fierce, and required, I seem to recall, two 'A' levels.

As for me, I was enjoying my new life. Some years previously, I had taught myself to play chess, and now I began to play it at every opportunity, including at a local chess club (almost exclusively European, again if my ageing memory is correct) where I was the only boy. Some visiting Chess grandmaster was giving a simultaneous display - at the Singapore Polytechnic - and so off I went, one among perhaps thirty or so competitors, and one of only a few to manage to draw against him. And it was there, while wandering around, that I first saw a display of Martial Arts. It was almost balletic; full of seemingly effortless grace, and I felt at once that I wanted to be able to do that, to move so gracefully with the ability to generate, direct and control a certain physical power. So, youthful, vibrant, and arrogantly naive, I approached them. At first they - those Chinese men - seemed surprised, if not somewhat amused, that a young European boy (wearing white socks, khaki shorts, white shirt, and sandals) would be interested. But I persisted, and was invited to meet them a week later, at the place where they practised.

I remember that journey well. The service taxi dropped me near the Capitol cinema in Singapore city and, with a mixture of excitement and nervousness, I walked past that restaurant - much frequented by my father and I - that served rather good steak, chips, and fried tomatoes, for what seemed a long way. The young men were surprised to see me, although an elderly gentleman was not, and thus began my training. To be honest, I never became very good, and certainly no match for most of those there, and subsequently. But I doggedly persisted - so much so that, after many weeks, I was invited to join them on their usual post-session foray among the eating stalls by the river, and did not arrive back home until well past midnight, much to the relief of my mother who was on the verge of calling the Police.

Thus began my interest in and study of what, at the time, we colonial Europeans often called Oriental Philosophy, and thus was I invited to the rather splendid home - complete with garden - of one of the Masters of that particular Martial Art. From this developed an interest, both practical and theoretical, in philosophy, and religions, in general, including Hindu, Chinese, and Buddhist philosophy, religion, and practices, and Singapore was certainly a good place to learn about such things, given its diversity of culture, and replete as it was with Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, temples and places of gathering. A good place, also, to be initiated, as a boy, into the delights of women; or, more correctly, learning of and from the delights of young delightful foreign ladies.

Fenland Beauty

Fade, to England on a dull, cloudy, cold day. An aeroplane; a long journey, broken by some days in Ceylon. The descent down through the clouds on the way to landing in England was quite bleak, for me. Everything looked so enervating, and for several weeks after arriving in England my only desire was to return to the Far East, or Africa. My father felt the same, and began to seek alternative employment in Africa, while I, to alleviate my boredom and inner bleakness, took to cycling the fenland country around and beyond the small village where we were, temporarily, staying. There was talk of school, but I artfully resisted, manufacturing a variety of excuses while I waited for my father to succeed. He did, someplace further south in Africa than where we had lived, and near the Zambezi river, which rather interested me, although my initial joy on learning this was tempered by the reality of us - my mother and I - having to wait six months before we could join him, given the relative isolation of the place, his need to find us accommodation, and other sundry practical matters. The desire I had nurtured, for some time, to study assiduously, and go to an English University to read Physics, slowly dwindled; the dull cold bleakness of the English weather as water thrown upon that fire.

So I left home, at age fifteen, to lodge with a widowed lady in the nearby town, and spend what I assumed would be only six months at some College morosely and not at all seriously studying for 'O' levels. College work was easy, and at times boring, and I spent most weekends cycling mostly southwards, coming to enjoy the physical exertion, the landscape itself, and almost always taking a selection of books with me, carried in my saddlebag.

But there was something else, engendered by these journeys. A sense, a feeling - a wordless intuition - of not being apart from that particular fenland landscape, with its vast panorama of sky, its fertile soil, its often wide drainage ditches that, though hewed by humans, centuries of natural change had melded into being a part of Nature, there. It was as if this land - of small hamlets, small villages, scattered farms, with its panorama of horizons - was alive in an almost unique way.

I took to staying out on clear and moonlit nights. To cycling lanes by light of moon. There was a strange, eerie, beauty there, at these times - almost as if I, myself, was not quite real; that there lay a hidden world, an older, world, a far slower, world,

where one might hear the whisperings of trees or hear the distant call of someone calling; someone long dead but not quite gone from the land, here; someone who did not belong in the other, modern, world that now edged this older fenland country.



Fenland

There is no rational explanation for how or even why I met her. Perhaps - as I thought thereafter - it was she who met me, and meant to. Who somehow might have enchanted me to be there on that day at that hour in that year of my youth. As if she, also, was from, or part of, this other esoteric living land.

There were mysteries there that I did not then consciously fathom, but rather lived with and through, and which even now - over forty years later - I have only just begun to rationally understand as a natural and muliebral presencing of The Numen. Mysteries, perhaps, I felt then, of an ancient way never written down, and which no words, no book, could bind, contain, restrain, reveal. Mysteries of the connexion that links all Life together.

All I knew then was the occupant of that solitary small house along a narrow isolated lane near where the fenland waters, still, in those days, rose in some years to flood the land around and where a boat was kept, with daily life lived, if needed, on upper floors as in olden days. All I felt then, in the moment of that meeting and the hour beyond, was such an intense desire to stay as almost subsumed me. To stay - as one would stay stunned momentarily by the gorgeosity of some sunset, or by some vista suddenly chanced upon. No words sufficed, were needed, but we then idly talked nonetheless - I, leaning on my bicycle; she standing beside the broken fence that seemed to mark the inner sanctum of her sacred world.

It was not that I expected, then - or even hoped for - some kind of sexual tryst. But there she was, somewhat older than me, pretty in a comely way, standing, smiling, as I had slowly passed. It was not that I was lost and needed directions; a recent map was always carried in my bag. Not that I needed water. I had my flask of milkless Oolong tea. Not that I... But I stopped, nevertheless, dismounted, to slowly saunter back.

I have no clear recollection of what we said, for it is all now as a fading dream,

remembered in the hour past rising from fitful unrestful sleep. No clear recollection of the two weeks that passed until I, unable to resist, ventured there again.

Mostly - as on that day of my first returning - we together just sat close to each other in the inner dimness of that well-worn dwelling. Sometimes a fire was lit; almost always there was tea. Sometimes we would walk together upon the land around. And we spoke, when needed not desired.

For it was a certain sensitivity that we seemed to share - a certain strangeness, a mostly wordless strangeness that I had previously not encountered upon this much mundane-spoiled Earth; except, perhaps, in moments swiftly gone, as when one day the young, gorgeous, blonde, English teacher I still remember so well was reading to our class a poem and our eyes met, and it was if she somehow in some strange way then imparted in me not only her understanding of those words but also the feelings they engendered in her so that I, also, understood and felt the meaning behind such words. As if in that one short strange moment she had brought alive that work of Art so that it connected us, bridged us. So much so that for days afterwards I carried a copy of that poem around with me, and read it when I could to push open again that door that led to some distant different land. But, then, of course, the feeling faded, and some new interest, some new source of inspiration, came along; as - for me - that poem became surpassed, by others.

There was a walk, next time. Some talk about land, sky, Sun, Moon, rain, trees, insects, birds, and soil, and although I did not realize it then, I was learning; a learning, a species of learning, I once, many years later, strived to contain, constrain, reveal, with my own poor collocation of words:

Being the water: the Dragonfly above the water
I grieve of the road and the bridge of the road
Weeping in the wind
Because I am the Sun.

Being the river: all the river things
I feel the wounds
Inflicted deeply in my flesh
Because I am the dust.

Being the river-banks: the land around the banks
I am no-Time
Burning to cauterize my wounds
Because I am the world and all things of the world;

Being the wind: the words of the wind
I sorrow in my-Time
Knowing people who pass
Because they are my wounds.

Being my sorrow: the sorrow of wounded land
I sense the knowing turning beyond the pain
Because I am the water
Flowing with no end

There were other shared times, some when we simply listened to music. And then came that night when we two finally became lovers. Other such nights came; went, as the Moon, as the lady herself, cycled through several monthly phases.

It could have lasted; perhaps it should have lasted, for that is what she possibly, probably, wanted: for me to stay with her in that cottage of hers. But I was young, restless, impetuous, and in truth perhaps too selfish; too enwrapped in my own inner visions, dreams, desires; certainly, I was often impetuously youthful but not in love. Enchanted certainly, but no, not in love.

Thus arrived that day when I felt I had to leave, to never wilfully return - she stood there, by her dwelling, as I bicycled away, and although I did not know it then, she was only the first spinning of that muliebral thread that was to bind my diverse lives together.

Toward First Love

A rather generous allowance from my father enabled books to be purchased, and travel, by means of train, to anywhere that interested me, and so one day I travelled to London to visit bookshops, and the British Museum.

But that journey was fruitful in other ways. Arrogant and self-assured as I was - somewhat helped by my Martial Arts training - I spent some evening time in less salubrious parts of London, desirous of finding some suitable young lady to entertain me, remembering as I did such Singaporean trysts and wistfully recalling as I did that Fenland enchantress.

I did find such a lady, and, after a short taxi ride (which I of course paid for) we arrived at the entrance to a large town house in Chalk Farm. We had reached the top of that first tier of inside stairs (which led to her room) when some loud commotion broke out below. A man, shouting; a women's loud voice. From the stairs I saw a man push open the front door that a woman was, vainly, trying to close. He turned, shouted a few obscenities, and drew back his clenched fist, as if to strike the woman. He did not succeed. I cannot remember what I said, only that I said something to him after vaulting down that flight of stairs toward him. He replied with a vulgar epithet or two, and lunged at me. I simply turned, stepped sideways and used his own momentum to throw him to the ground by which time a huge man had arrived from some inside room to lift him, with remarkable ease, to his feet and almost bodily carry him out where he pushed him down the steps that led up from the pavement to that front door. The man lay motionless, briefly, there, then rose, slowly, to betake himself shabbily away, uttering curses as he did so.

I was thanked, by the lady he had intended to attack, and invited to join her for a glass of Sherry in her ground-floor rooms.

Thus began our friendship. Or, more correctly, relationship. Somewhat more than a decade older than me, with an enchanting if rather mischievous smile, she never once in the hours we spent together talking, that evening, mentioned the nature of her business, as I had no need to ask. It was all rather genteel, as she herself was, even though a trace of her local accent remained, and I found her quite enchanting, as, of course, she knew, drawing forth from me in those hours the then so brief story of my still so youthful life, and, our provided supper over, it seemed natural, an unspoken assumption between us, for me to stay the night with her. My stay became the following day, and then the day after that. There was a restaurant, of sorts, nearby, where she was known by name, and we spent a few hours there, eating a meal, and drinking wine, that neither of us paid for. I was introduced to her ladies, and to that huge man of the shaven head, who though rather grim looking had a gentle sense of humour. People - men and mostly well-dressed - came and went throughout most of the day and evening, and when my own self-appointed time came to leave, I did so with much reluctance and with a promise to return at the ending of that week.

I kept my promise, and it was to become the first of many such visits during those my early learning years. We had a simple, an uncomplicated, relationship, which was always honest, and I am not ashamed to say that in a way I loved her, in my then still rather boyish way, and - looking back, now - she almost certainly understood me far better than I then understood myself.

It is difficult, this understanding
Of my love:

I have to rise every morning
With the intention of our future
Moulded as some sculptors mould
Their souls around a form
That Will soon powers to a shape
In Time.

It is difficult, this sharing
Of each dream that makes her to journey
To the joining of our selves
And spills desire the way some music
Spills some notes to form the suggestion
Of some god:

There is no journey bribed by dread
No sea that sets the horizon
As the yearning of the dead sets
The seal to future Time;
There is no calling and no called:
No passing and no one passed
Since there is no you or I to understand
The laked reflexion of each moon.

But I forget, and need to remember
At each new beginning of each new
Dream which is the beginning of our

Love.

There are no words needed
As there are no excuses
For the failures of some Art:

It is difficult, this speaking
Of my love.

One weekend I particularly remember. Some hours were spent lazily strolling through what she insisted on calling *The Regent's Park*; some hours were spent listening to Jazz at some small club (she was a Jazz aficionado and very knowledgeable about that genre); and some hours spent at dinner in an excellent restaurant; and it was after midnight when we returned, by taxi, to her house. I remember then feeling pleased, and somewhat privileged, to be a part of her world - a young man who certainly felt, and behaved, much older than he was. Perhaps it was my childhood years in Africa and the Far East, perhaps my still then somewhat arrogant nature, perhaps my Martial Arts training, perhaps the manners my mother instilled into me and the liberal, rather laissez-faire, attitude of my father; whatever it was, I felt and acted quite differently from all the other young men of my age that I knew, some of whom, no doubt considered me elitist, arrogant, and somewhat condescending.

Ecce Ego Contra...

Political Initiation

One day - a Saturday - I was idly walking around the centre of London, sort-of heading for the house of my lady friend. Sort-of, because in those days, I quite enjoyed such walks, in still unfamiliar cities and towns. A chance to stroll past places; watch people pass by; become immersed in my surroundings. I had a good sense of direction, and seldom needed to consult the London map that I carried in the pocket of my Corduroy jacket. Indeed, it was often interesting to get a little lost - to find new sights, places.

In those days I still dressed somewhat conventionally, conservatively: Corduroy or Tweed jacket, flannel or Tweed trousers; sturdy brown walking shoes; even linen shirts with detachable collars held in place by studs inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Short hair, of course; and a rather heavy Tweed overcoat, for when the weather was cold.

Thus attired (*sans* overcoat) I chanced, on that day, upon some fracas in some street. Young men brawling. I had no idea at all what it was all about - but it seemed to me somewhat unfair, since one young lad was getting battered by several others. Without thinking, I waded in to help him. There was that exhilaration, again. That love of

direct physical violence I had felt before. A few more young lads joined the melee, and then it was over, and so we went, quite naturally, to some nearby Public House to celebrate our victory. Their accepting camaraderie was wonderfully refreshing, and many hours were spent, drinking - and talking politics.

Not that I was then ignorant of their type of politics. Indeed, I had spent many of the previous months eagerly reading about nationalism, about National-Socialist Germany, and especially about Adolf Hitler, inspired by an account of the actions of Otto Ernst Remer, on that day in July 1944 (CE) during The First Zionist War. Such loyalty; such a sense of duty; such honour; such forthright warrior action.

To me, in the moment of my reading, then as after, Remer seemed the perfect embodiment of the warrior; of the type of person who might build the new society I had often theorized about - precursor as that society would be for our exploration and colonization of the stars. Now, it seemed to me, I had met a similar type of people. Or at least, those who could, given training, direction, guidance, purpose, be such people. Young; enthusiastic; who seemed to share something - if only instinctively - of my dream and who, like me, seemed to enjoy and welcome violence. They had a meeting, arranged for the following weekend, and I was invited and gladly accepted. I went to the meeting - and the "social" afterwards - and it was there I met someone who knew Colin Jordan, whom I had already heard of. Thus, it seemed logical, indeed necessary, that I contact CJ myself, which I did, by posted letter.

It was, perhaps, a propitious time. A new political movement had been formed, by CJ, and I began to seriously consider how the new society I had envisioned might be created. It also seemed to me then - and for a long while afterwards - that Hitler's National-Socialist Germany was, and should be, the archetype for such a new society: that NS Germany embodied most, though not all, the ideals I then saw as necessary to the creation of such a new, warrior, society imbued with a Galactic ethos.

For nearly a year I came to inhabit three quite separate worlds. My lady friend, in London, the world of occasionally violent but always interesting political activism; and my academic studies. Thus, I was fully occupied; enthused; alive; replete with my various ways of living, so that when the date for my return to Africa drew ever nearer, there really was no need to make a decision, for my lives seemed then inextricably linked with England. It seemed, then, as if it really was me against: you; the world; against everyone, except my political comrades and my lady friend.

During these trips to London, 'O' levels at College came and went, and I drifted into the Sixth Form. It was tempting to leave, and move to live and work in London, based with my lady friend, but the promise of Physics still enthralled me, a little, particularly as at that time the Apollo program looked it would easily achieve the goal that had been set - soon, perchance, there would bases on the Moon, and then on Mars. So I plugged away at Physics, without much enthusiasm, feeling it might be different at University when I would be free to undertake my own study, experiments, research.

Increasingly, however, my lives became a distraction from schoolwork, but I seemed to

have some innate talent for mathematics and Physics and so - studying very little (some weeks, not at all) - I plodded on, trusting in this talent to get me through [2].

Facies Abyssi

University

Fast forward to a University in the north of England, and a still young student, who had grown well-trimmed moustaches and who, unlike the majority of other students, was always rather conservatively attired. My first term as an undergraduate had been a great disappointment following a Summer vacation of anticipation, and awaiting examination results.

No, wait - let us rewind, briefly, to that Summer vacation, after 'A' level exams were over. I had, perhaps rather foolishly, spent the weekends - and often the free days - of these examination weeks embroiled elsewhere. Attending political rallies, meetings, staying with political associates; and - more enjoyable - staying with my lady friend in London.

Possibly not so foolishly, since - in retrospection - I was perhaps letting the Fates decide my fate. I had studied very little in the preceding six months, trusting to my talent, and busy elsewhere doing what, at the time, were far more exciting and interesting things. So, if I failed my examinations, I could not possibly go on to University, and the decision regarding my direction would be made. However, as the Fates decreed, I got - just - the needed requirements.

Thus I spent a lot of that Summer working, in a mundane job, for my allowance from my father never did, in those days, seem to meet all my needs. On the last day of Term, and slightly inebriated after a lunch-time session down the nearby Pub with friends, I had met one of only two girls (EH and JJ) in my Sixth Form. EH and I had flirted before, and I liked her, as I knew she liked me, but I had kept a deliberate distance, given my assignments in London, for to have yet another intimate relationship would have been for me, at that time, just far too complicated. But on that day - a warm sunny one, I seem to recall - as we passed each other outside the refectory I embraced her. She eagerly returned the embrace, and we kissed for a long time, much to the amusement of some other students, passing by, who knew us both.

Thereafter I did not see her again for a while, reverting back to keeping my distance, until I heard from a mutual friend that she was having some trouble with her landlord (like me, she had rented rooms for the Summer in our local town). Perhaps I misheard, or misunderstood the situation - but I thought I was informed that she had been

threatened. Without hesitation I went back to my rooms to procure a weapon (one always keeps a selection handy). In this case, a pickaxe handle, and - suitably attired in the working type clothes I wore to work: jeans, brown leather jacket, heavy boots - I made my way through the streets to where he lived. My insistent knocking on his front door brought him out, and although I cannot remember what I said, I know he understood. I threatened him. I was just so angry; madly unthinkingly angry, full of rage, and prepared for a bloody fight. In that moment nothing existed except him and that, my rage. He was a tall and stocky man - bigger than me - but perhaps his own nature, or maybe something in my demeanour, my eyes, made him meekly agree to my demands. And so I left, still full of rage, and it was only as I was nearing my own rooms, somewhat calmer, that it occurred to me I was carrying what the Police would call an "offensive weapon".

Some days later, I was to learn that her landlord problems had been solved, and that she desired to see me, but I never did meet with her again.

So, fast forward again to University - that revealing of a part of my youthful character over - and back to that first Term, there. As I mentioned, I was so disappointed. I had gone somewhat naively believing I could study at my own pace, focus on topics that interested me, and do some practical experiments of my own devising. As it was, it was in many ways worse than school.

The lectures were tedious, rote-learning, affairs where one had to make copious notes and after which one was presented with a list of boring problems to be solved, each problem being of the type one might find in 'A' level examinations. Laboratory work as just as routine, even though one did have some choice as to what, of the listed experiments, one might undertake. Serious intellectual discussion, among the students, was at a premium - when it arose, which was rarely - and even the lecturers did not seem that scientifically curious. They had students to teach; or rather, certain parts of certain subjects to get through, every week.

One incident in particular made me seriously consider leaving, and involved a laboratory experiment. Toward the end of the first Term we were given the opportunity to devise and carry out our own experiments. I chose to replicate the Michelson-Morley experiment, having a particular interest in the theories that gave rise to this attempt to detect "the aether".

I was informed that such an experiment was really more suited to a Graduate, or Third-Year, student, but, of course, I ignored all the excuses and the advice that I was given as to why I should not try. Finally, I got my way, and was allotted a large part of one of the laboratory darkrooms. Suffice to say that it took me a while to set the experiment up, and even longer to tweak the equipment to get it ready: many weeks, in fact, despite spending many afternoons in the laboratory. I festooned my area with signs telling everyone not to touch the equipment. Then, I began to get some results. A few days later I returned, eager and excited, only to find that some lecturer had pushed all my equipment into one corner in order to set up some experiment for his students, thus destroying my weeks of delicate work. Not only that, I had "run out of

time"; the darkroom really was needed by other students.

Strangely, I was not angry, just filled with an abyssal disappointment. It was as if some far distant apparently quixotic landscape which I had been eagerly travelling toward, for a long and arduous while, had at last been reached only to be revealed as ordinary, dull, devoid of any real interest at all.

Thus, gradually, my interest in studying physics waned, until - by the end of the next term - it has almost completely disappeared, replaced by increasing political activities, and a renewed desire to live and work in London. However, even though I never did any studious work, from that, my abyssal laboratory-moment, onwards, I still somehow managed to come second in mathematics at the end of year exams. There were various travels, and some trysts:

Here I have stopped
Because only Time goes on within my dream:

Yesterday I was awoken, again,
And she held me down
With her body warmth
Until, satisfied, I went alone
Walking
And trying to remember:

A sun in a white clouded sky
Morning dawn yellow
Sways the breath that, hot, I exhale tasting of her lips.
The water has cut, deep, into
The estuary bank
And the mallard swims against the flow -
No movement, only effort.

Nearby - the foreign ship which brought me
Is held by rusty chains
Which, one day and soon
And peeling them like its paint,
Must leave.

Here I shall begin again
Because Time, at last, has stopped
Since I have remembered the dark ecstasy
Which brought that war-seeking Dream

Meanwhile, my political involvements had intensified. I regularly attended political meetings, demonstrations, and activities, by various organizations, including BM and the NF, and at one such political foray I met Eddy Morrison and his friends. I immediately liked Morrison. He was enthusiastic, committed, optimistic, down-to-earth and quite *au fait* with National-Socialism. He also, at that time, possessed a certain personal charisma, and thus always had a few youthful followers who considered him their leader. One incident I remember well. He had invited me to join him and some of his friends on a day trip to Bridlington, an invitation which I

accepted, and we ended up on the beach singing NS, and old BUF, songs.

A marvellous day, and I was genuinely sad when they dropped me off at my then place of University residence and went back to their city of Leeds, and it was not long before I joined them, again, for some political event or other. Morrison introduced me to his family, with whom I had a meal, and then off we went into the centre of his home city to raucously harangue some Communist paper-sellers and generally make a nuisance of ourselves. Morrison was far more experienced in practical street politics than I, and the more time I spent with him, the more it dawned on me that perhaps the two of us could not only make a name for ourselves but might, just might, be able to if not create the foundations of some new political force, then at least use an existing nationalist organization as means of gaining influence and power and thus begin to implement NS ideals.

It should be remembered that, at this time, the very early seventies, the NF regularly held large marches and rallies, all over England, with many of these marches involving violence, before, during, and after, and with many of these marches involving thousands of people. For instance, there was one march which I attended where those at the front had to physically fight their way through packs of Reds, with similar skirmishes occurring toward the rear. These were exciting times, and there really was a feeling, among the rank-and-file, that the NF was growing in such a way that, in a decade or more, it might be able to win or seize power.

Even CJ's British Movement was thriving, though in a much smaller way, and it was during this time that I came to act, on a few occasions, as CJ's bodyguard. Usually because the person who should have done that duty for some reason was not there. One of these occasions was at an outdoor demonstration - in Wolverhampton I seem to recall - when CJ stood haranguing the sparse crowd from the back of a Land Rover, while I stood in front, trying to look as thuggish as possible. Another of these occasions was an indoor meeting, where I stood at the front of the hall when CJ spoke, again to a small crowd, from the raised stage behind me and on which occasion I brandished a Shillelagh, which weapon the two or three, somewhat bored, Police Officers in attendance were completely unconcerned about. The Good 'Ole Days. On a few other occasions I simply accompanied CJ (walking slightly behind) when he walked toward and from some meeting place or assembly point.

Compared to all this, my life at University seemed, and indeed was, boring; dull. Thus it seemed natural, inevitable - especially given my friendship with Morrison - that I move to Leeds, and become involved with street-politics full-time. Which I dutifully did. As often in my life, it seemed as if the Fates revealed to me the direction in which I should go. Thus, and yet again, there was a certain period of drifting, by me, until a particular course of life seemed obvious, even to me.

My next year was a learning process. Learning about people; learning more about political propaganda; speaking in public; organizing and participating in street fights and demonstrations. That is, it was a learning of the Art of the revolutionary political agitator. I loved the life; I adored the life, and while domiciled in Leeds, in a garret (on

Meanwood Road) appropriate to a revolutionary, fanatical, political activist, I still found time to visit my lady friend, in London.

One incident during my University stay may be worth recording. I happened to get to know someone there (who incidentally introduced me to the writings of Mishima) who was a personal friend of Martin Webster, and I met Webster on several occasions, one following some fracas at the University after he had been invited to address some meeting or other. On one of these occasions we had a discussion about political propaganda - a discussion which continued by several letters we exchanged over subsequent weeks. The essence of this discussion was to do with truth. I was of the opinion that if "our Cause" was indeed correct, and noble, as I believed, then we had no need to write or produce propaganda which distorted the truth in order to gain recruits, or make us and our Cause appear in some positive way. So far as I recall, Webster was of the opinion that I was being rather naive, and that, in practical politics, and to a certain extent, "the end justifies the means", something I then did not agree with.

Furthermore, it was during my time at University that I acquired personal experience of just how prejudiced some people could be - how they judged someone, for instance, according to their political views, or what they believed were their political views.

During my first few terms at University I had acquired something of a minor reputation as a fascist, helped no doubt by me handing out leaflets from the Racial Preservation Society outside meetings arranged by various Left-Wing and Communist groups. This led to several people actively disliking me - even hating me - although they did not know me, as a person, and made no effort to do so. Thus, they judged me a fascist, they did not like fascists, so they did not like me; or, even worse, they believed that fascists were "evil" and/or dangerous and therefore should and must "be dealt with". What I found curious was that these people, who so irrationally prejudged people on the basis of their alleged or assumed political views, were often the ones who also loudly proclaimed that prejudice (including racial prejudice) was immoral. Thus, they were doing exactly what they were condemning in others.

I did, however, find one political person - who belonged to some minor Marxist-Leninist group - who understood this, and who thus took the opportunity to get to know me and with whom I had many friendly discussions about politics, and life in general. And it was he who - along with a few cultured non-political individuals - somewhat helped restore my belief that humans were, or could be, rational and civilized beings.

Excursus - Galactic Imperium

Since my discovery of National-Socialism, aged fifteen, I believed that NS Germany embodied the essence of - and could be archetype for - the type of warrior orientated and noble society that might make my vision of a Galactic Imperium real. I read everything I could about Hitler, NS Germany, and National-Socialism, and concluded -

some time before what has been termed holocaust revisionism began - that the alleged extermination of the Jews during the First Zionist War was propaganda.

To me, then, National-Socialism seemed to embody everything that I felt was noble and excellent: a new, modern, expression of the Hellenic ethos which I had greatly admired since first reading Homer's *Odyssey* and *The Iliad* years previously. Thus my overriding aim came to be supporting and propagating National-Socialism, and aiding organizations which might prepare the way for a new type of fascist or NS State.

Furthermore, I really had come to feel a deep love for my ancestral land of England as I felt then an idealistic, and honourable, desire to help, to aid, those whom I regarded as my own people: as if all their problems could and should be solved by the emergence of a National-Socialist State; as if all that was required for Paradise to be created on Earth was the triumph of an NS movement and the practical implementation of NS ideals. Youthful exuberance and naiveté - perhaps.

In my understanding of NS I was greatly helped by Colin Jordan, who suggested I read certain books, including the works of Savitri Devi, who gave me many books, and loaned me others, who patiently answered my many enthusiastic questions, and who introduced me to many life-long National-Socialists, including some who had fought for, and given their loyalty to, Adolf Hitler, and one of my most treasured possessions came to be a signed photograph given to me by Major-General Otto Ernst Remer.

Even before I discovered NS and studied NS Germany, I had a vision of a human Galactic Empire, founded and maintained by a new breed of warrior-explorers, as I believed that we human beings possessed great potential and can and should change and evolve ourselves, consciously, by acts of will, and by overcoming, by accepting, great and noble challenges. Such challenges would reveal ἀρετή - reveal a person's true nature, and be the breeding ground of ἀρετή.

Thus, for me, discovering and learning about NS seemed fortunate, wyrdful - presenting to me the means to make my vision real.

As I was to write during my time living in Leeds:

"It is the vision of a Galactic Empire which runs through my political life just as it is the quest to find and understand our human identity, and my own identity, and our relation to Nature, which runs through my personal and spiritual life, giving me the two aims which I consistently pursued since I was about thirteen years of age, regardless of where I was, what I was doing and how I was described by others or even by myself..."

I further came to understand that in order to create the new warrior society, it was necessary to disrupt, undermine, destroy, overthrow - or replace by any practical means - all existing societies, and all governments, and that while electoral politics might be one way for National-Socialists to take power, direct revolution or insurrection was a viable alternative.

Therefore, with the dedication of a fanatic, I set about doing just that, ready, willing and prepared to use violence in order to aid and achieve political goals. For I then considered that sacrifices were necessary in order for these goals to be achieved, and that, once achieved, the violent struggle would have been worthwhile, even if it cost me my own life, or that of others. Thus, I placed some idealized vision of the future before my own personal happiness - indeed, my own happiness became the struggle for, and the practical realization of, that vision of the future.

Years of Ultra-Violence

Fade back to the English city of Leeds, in the first few years of that decade - reckoned according to a calender still in common use - called the nineteen seventies.

I was released from my first term of imprisonment, having been convicted of leading a gang of skinheads in a Paki-bashing incident, following some racial skirmishes in Wakefield, and I soon settled back into my life as a violent street-agitator. I had found prison a useful and interesting experience, made some good contacts, learned some new skills, and left with more money than I had entered, having run a racket inside, selling certain liberated goods.

In the weeks following this, I put some of my new skills to practical use, and began to put together the nucleus of a small gang whose aim was to liberate goods, fence them, and make some money with the initial intent of aiding our political struggle.

Suffice to say that this gang - more petty criminals than racketeers - was based in or around Leeds and consisted of some useful people. For example, someone who worked in a large Department store, and someone employed by British Railways who had access to large parcels and rail freight. Thus, these types of people had easy access to useful, saleable, goods. The railway employees would simply change the labels and documentation, so that goods were mis-delivered to a contact, and then sold on to a fence, while the store employees would arrange delivery of goods in a similar way, or one of our people would simply collect them in-store and boldly walk out with them.

For some reason I cannot quite now recall, Eddy Morrison became involved on the periphery of this group - perhaps he may have wanted a certain item, or two, which I, being his friend, said I could supply, etcetera.

For quite a while things ran smoothly - even when I happened to get arrested, convicted, and sent to prison (again) for a short while, for violence - until, one day in 1974 CE, four or five Police officers from the then Yorkshire Regional Crime Squad (later to become part of the National Crime Squad), raided my garret in Leeds, and arrested me. Three other people in this small gang - including Morrison - were also arrested, and we were questioned for around six hours at the British Transport Police HQ in Leeds. Morrison and I were thrown into prison, "on remand", since it was feared that I would "intimidate witnesses" and that he was "my second in command"

(which, unlike the first accusation, was not correct).

Having previously spent some time in Armley jail, being on-remand there did not bother me at all, and I soon settled back into prison life. Morrison, however, did not cope very well, and seemed genuinely surprised that I was rather enjoying myself. But, as I said somewhat humorously to one of the arresting Police officers, during one of my interrogations, "You get three meals a day, free accommodation, and there are lot's of friends around, so what's the big deal?"

It turned out that the Police had been "tipped-off" by one of those involved in this gang, because he had developed a personal grudge against me. The simple truth is that he had a violent argument with his girlfriend, she came to see me, and stayed for around two weeks.

There is an ineffable sadness
For your eyes betray that warmth, that beauty,
That brings me down
To where even my street-hardened Will cannot go:
So I am sad, almost crying

Outside, there is no sun to warm
As yesterday when I touched the warmth of your breasts
And the wordless joy of ecstatic youth
Lived to suffuse if only briefly with world-defying life
This tired battle-bruised body

But now: clouds, rain-bleakness
To darken such dreams as break me.
For there are many places I cannot go.

So I let her go, suffused as I still was with a particular political vision and various political schemes. To add insult to the injury of the grass who betrayed us, when he finally managed to see his former girlfriend again to try and get her back, she compared him unfavourably, in one department, to someone else. Thus, his pride hurt, he began telling lies about me to anyone who would listen, claiming, for instance, that once he pushed me up against a wall and I pleaded for him to let me go.

Quite naturally, given my character at that time, I while in prison arranged for someone to sort this grass out, but unfortunately this comrade of mine was on his way to do just that when he was pulled-over and arrested on some other outstanding matter, held on remand and eventually convicted of a variety of offences, receiving a long prison sentence. Meanwhile, the grass had left Leeds and gone into hiding.

I considered the matter, wyrdfully, finally concluding that I should - on my release from prison and for the good of the Cause - put my political aims and goals before personal vengeance and my enjoyment of certain 'criminal' activities and running a gang. Thus, I should strive to be idealistic, noble, and ignore - not seek to find - such

an obviously dishonourable, weak, individual, and instead personally concentrate on politics, eschewing further 'criminal' activities to fund that Cause. Not that - to be honest - this decision to concentrate solely on politics was easy for me then, since it was very tempting to continue with such activities, which I did enjoy: the planning, the anticipation, the execution, the camaraderie, and the satisfaction of succeeding.

When this particular criminal case against me finally came to trial, all the more serious charges had been dropped due to "lack of evidence", and I was simply charged with "receiving and handling stolen goods", for which I was convicted and given a bender.

Fade, back to my political life in Leeds. While all the above was occurring, I was dutifully doing my duty as a street-agitator, and had been recruited (by JM) into Column 88, a clandestine paramilitary and neo-nazi group, led by a former Special Forces officer, which at that time held regular military training sessions with the Territorial Army, the volunteer reserve force of the British Army. According to gen received decades later, Column 88 was actually part of NATO's pan-European underground Gladio network, set up and trained to employ guerilla tactics against the Soviets had they ever invaded (as was still expected, in those days). But I knew nothing of this, at the time, and simply enjoyed being part of and training with Column 88. For C88 seemed to me to be a genuine National-Socialist group, devoted to comradeship and to the slow process of socially and politically infiltrating British society, with perhaps some possibility that, if the need arose (such as a Soviet invasion) we might "do our bit", as National-Socialists, and fight them.

Right from the very beginning it was obvious that C88 was a well-organized group, quite different from any other NS or nationalist group I had come across in the previous six years. For I had been instructed to wait in some obscure lay-by in Wiltshire, and was patiently doing so when several speeding vehicles arrived and proceeded - in an impressive manoeuvre - to surround, and block, the car I had been waiting in, with several very obviously fit young men exiting quickly from these vehicles.

I was further impressed when, later that day and in the house of C88's organizer (Lutz), I met many young National-Socialists from several different European countries. Here, I felt, was the spirit, the comradeship, of The Third Reich, of the Waffen-SS, of genuine National-Socialism, come alive again, something which, I knew from direct personal experience, was often so sadly lacking in the other NS group I had previously encountered.

While there was some military training - with weapons loaded with live ammunition - such as a night exercise in Savernake Forest when "we" had to take and overrun an "enemy" position, the real highlight for me of my years with C88 were the yearly Fuhrerfests when National-Socialists from all over Europe would gather in comradeship to celebrate Adolf Hitler's birthday. It was inspiring to know, to feel, that Adolf Hitler and his sacred mission had not been forgotten; that there were others - many others - in other lands who felt the same way and who understood, rationally or

instinctively, or both, the essential goodness and nobility of National-Socialism itself. In addition, it was good to know that so many educated, seemingly well-connected, individuals in Britain were covert National-Socialists, for another impressive thing about C88 was its English members: professional, family, people, for the most part, who did not have a shaved head or a pair of 'bovver boots between them.

Indeed, I - although in some ways quite well educated - was probably the odd-one out: a rough almost fanatical street-fighter of many years experience who had been in Prison for violence and who had many other criminal convictions. That I, a hardened Nazi street thug with a criminal record, had been accepted into the home of L's wife and family - and into the homes of some other C88 members - was pleasing because it seemed to me to express the nobility, the folk equality, of National-Socialism itself.

In 1973 CE - just before I was recruited by Column 88 - Colin Jordan invited me to his then home in Coventry. Naturally, having great respect for CJ, I accepted and was to find, on my arrival, that a meeting of the inner Council of CJ's British Movement was taking place. After a short wait, I was invited to address them, which I did, answered a few questions about tactics and strategy, and then had to wait for a while in another room, which CJ used as his office. Invited back, I was informed that they had decided to co-opt me onto the Council, something I had not expected. Asking for time to consider the matter, I left to travel back to Leeds. For reasons I cannot now quite recall, a few days later I wrote to CJ declining the offer - probably because I was already then thinking of forming my own, more violent, political organization.

In December of 1973 CE, I finally managed to convince Morrison that we two, with our good ally Joe Short, should form a new political, more active (that is, more violent) and openly pro-Nazi, movement.



Morrison (front) at a rally, 1970's CE

Thus the National Democratic Freedom Movement (NDFM) was born, which was to have a brief, if exceedingly violent, existence, with Morrison as leader. Our intent was to build a revolutionary street movement, and so for seven or so months we held public meetings, organized demonstrations and protests, and generally had a jolly good time (or at least, I did) in pursuit of gaining members and propagating National-Socialism under cover of nationalism.

As John Tyndall later wrote in his *Spearhead* magazine (April, 1983 CE):

" The National Democratic Freedom Movement...concentrated its activities mainly upon acts of violence against its opponents. Before very long the NDFM had degenerated into nothing more than a criminal gang."

Among the highlights of that NDFM year, for me, were the following.

I smashed up (with one other NDFM member) an anti-apartheid exhibition, in Leeds (twice). I gave vitriolic extempore speeches at public meetings (some of which ended in violence when our opponents attacked). I waded into some Trade Union march or other, thumped a few people then stole and set fire to one of their banners (arrested, again). I arranged a meeting at Chapeltown, in Leeds (the heart of the Black community then) at which only five of us turned up, including Andrew Brons but not including Morrison. We faced a rather angry crowd of several hundred people, who threw bricks, stones, whatever, at us, and we few walked calmly right through them to our parked vehicles, and rather sedately drove away, our point made. No one said we could do it.

I spoke extempore at Speakers Corner in Hyde Park for around a half an hour to a crowd of over a thousand (it ended in a brawl) - the only person from the extreme Right to speak there since the days of Oswald Mosley. At the brawl, one of our stewards was arrested, and - the fighting over - we regrouped to march toward Downing Street, after which we all went our separate way (I quite naturally went to see and stay the weekend with my lady friend in London).

Finally, toward the end of that Summer, a meeting we had arranged on Leeds Town Hall steps resulted in a mass brawl when the crowd of around a thousand attacked us, after I had harangued them for around half an hour. Several Police officers were injured as they tried to break up the fights. I was arrested (again) but soon was granted bail. Morrison became somewhat disillusioned, as I was by the attitude of many of those involved with the NDFM, and so I spent the time before my trial occupying myself with various travels around England and the NDFM simply slid into obscurity, a political failure - although, at least for me, it had proved to be an exceptionally valuable learning experience.

When my case came to trial, at Leeds Crown Court [3], I was accused of having "incited the crowd" and generally held responsible for most of the violence. I was found guilty of various so-called Public Order offences, and given several fines. What rather disgusted me after the trial was that several so-called comrades - including if my memory is correct, Morrison - having appeared at witnesses at the trial, collected between them witness expenses sufficient to pay my fines. But not one of them offered to do this, and I was not going to ask.

So, since I had no intention of paying the fines, I left Leeds.

Facies Abyssi

For well over a year I evaded the consequences of not paying my fines, living as a vagrant, then in a caravan in the fenland. Writing poetry. Musing on life; reading the collected works of Jung and Toynbee; studying religions, including Buddhism. Listening to numinous music. And so on.

Crows calling while sheep cry
By the road that shall take them
To their death:

I sit, while sun lasts
And bleeds my body dry
In this last hour before dark
On a day when a warm wind
Carried the rain that washed
A little of this valley
Like the stream washes
My rock:

There are no trees to soften
This sun - only heather and fern
To break the sides of the hill;
I cannot keep this peace
I have found -
It seems unformed like water
Becomes unformed without a vessel
A channel or some stream:
It cannot be contained
As I contain my passion and my dreams.

There are no answers I can find
Only the vessel of walks in hills
Alone
Whereby I who seek
Am brought toward the magick peak
That keeps this hidden world
Alive

I even spent some time in a Buddhist monastery. But the Police eventually caught up with me, in my caravan, and I was arrested, and sent to prison (yet again). But this time for only six months.

My previous experiences of "being inside" were useful when I was sent back to prison. Strangely, I somehow managed to wangle one of the best prison jobs, Library red-band (even though I was serving a short sentence), which job meant that I had a single "peter", that I took over a few rackets, and was left pretty much to my own devices in the library. One of the rackets revolved around goods smuggled in; another centred on porn magazines ordered by the nonces on Rule 43 and which magazines

had a strange habit of disappearing or not being delivered or getting handed round other cons for a small fee; another racket involved goods being liberated from certain prison stores.

At that time, prison life was a delicate balance, so I occasionally helped out someone who also had some rackets (centred around gambling) by getting a few people to "carry" tins of tobacco for him. Overall, a reasonable time, which meant that my release date seemed to come around quite quickly.

On release from prison, I was undecided, for a while, about what I should do. I visited my lady friend in London, who by then had larger premises and a more select clientèle, and after travelling around for a while as an itinerant, I drifted back to live in Leeds. Morrison [4] had some minuscule and new political organization, was still talking the same rhetoric, and still unrealistically dreaming of obtaining political power in a decade or so. At least he was, outwardly, consistent.

As for me, for over five, often violent years, radical street politics had been an important part of my life - often, the most important part; and I had dedicated myself to the struggle, undeterred by prison. But my naivety, idealism, and optimism had all but faded away. For experience had revealed to me that the honour, loyalty and commitment to duty I expected from fellow political comrades was often absent, and that the leadership of all NS, all pro-NS groups and even all of our kind of nationalist organizations was woefully bad; un-charismatic and incapable of inspiring the loyalty required. Instead of idealism, loyalty and honour there were continual feuds, continued disloyalty, and little or no honour, manifest most often as this dishonour was in the spreading of malicious rumours behind people's backs.

My time away from Leeds - over a year, before my return to prison - had taken me back to those Fenland feelings of the late sixties. In particular, my solitary time as an itinerant had brought me close to Nature in very simple and unaffected way, so that there gradually arose in me a certain wordless feeling of dissatisfaction with modern life that had nothing whatsoever to do with my political beliefs, dreams or aspirations. In fact, nothing to do with any ideology, or, at that time, with any religion I had studied or personally experienced. Instead, it was interior, direct, personal - one individual, alone, who felt some relation with Nature, with the Cosmos, and it is true to say that this wordless feeling, and my memories of life close to Nature, rather haunted me when I returned to live in Leeds.

I just did not feel I belonged there, anymore. I yearned - for something; as one might yearn for a young lady seen briefly, spoken to briefly, whom one met on some travels, and whose presence, whose aura, whose scent, whose features, whose promise, lingered when she was gone; lingered so much, so numinously, that one regretted not running after her and blurting out some excuse to be with her, again. I yearned - for those intangible wistful moments of a wandering life:

Wine

Stale
I once drank you
Knowing no difference because of herbs.
She held me, her cunning hands
That did not wish
Nor offer the warmth that snared my soul:

The wine was
Intoxicating our senses
But only I was drunk:
She laughed.

I needed rest
Dreaming marriage under sun -
Until bright morning came
When she, alas, changed
Her form in the reality of the room
And I was left to walk with my sack
Down the dusty track
Past a grove of sun-burnt trees
Toward those distant hills:

And yet the white-washed house was only
One step
Along my Way.

Perhaps it was that hot, dry, Summer of 1976 with its week after week of clear blue skies; perhaps it was some inner un-thought of satisfaction with my own subsuming political aims; some surfacing, some re-emergence, of that youthful desire to know, to understand, myself, Life, the Cosmos. Perhaps it was the feelings that gave rise to the many poems I had written in my wanderings; poems such as the compilation *Gentleman of the Roads*, and the poem *Clouds in the Sky*. Whatever the cause or causes, I found myself increasingly desiring to be alone; increasing desiring silence, both external and within; increasingly desiring to somehow in some way reconnect myself with that other older world that my political machinations and activities seemed to have almost totally obscured.

Two wyrdful things conspired together to seal my fate. The first was the music of JS Bach, especially some Cantatas. The second was a strange encounter at an old Parish church on the edge of the fenland in King's Lynn.

The new female companion I had acquired on my return to Leeds shared my love of classical music, and I went to many concerts and performances with her. At one, during a performance of Bach's *Erbarme Dich*, I began to cry, silently: silent tears of unknowing, of sadness and of joy.

Not longer after, I ventured to return to visit a friend in Norfolk, and - somewhat early for the bus that would take me near his dwelling - I passed some time by perusing what seemed an interesting Church, having, at that time, a minor interest in architecture. Somewhat tired after a long journey, I sat for a while in some pew. Then this young man, in clerical garb, passed in front of the altar to briefly turn toward me, and smile. There was such gentleness, such purity, in his face, his demeanour. And then he was gone, out of my view, toward what I assumed, then, was some door. It was as if, in that moment, I knew he might have answers to some questions which I had been pondering for some days before, and so, instinctively, I rose to follow him only to find a solid wall where he had disappeared from my view, and it was only later, days later, that I discovered that once - centuries ago - there had indeed been a door there, and that the Church itself had been part of a medieval Priory.



He was so real; nothing in his appearance, his manner, to suggest a ghost, an apparition; and for weeks afterwards I tried convince myself that my tiredness, the unanswered questions in my head, had somehow in some way contrived to present me with some illusion, some delusion. But a vague feeling of unease remained - for there was that numinous face, that smile; that gentle presence radiating an inner contentment and a certain mystical peace.

My unanswered questions had to do with existence - with life - after our mortal death, and with the allegory of Jesus of Nazareth. An allegory I had felt, touched, when a performance of Bach's Matthew Passion had surprised me, had impinged itself, not long before, upon my psyche, bringing once again from one momentous passage, those silent tears of my unknowing.

The truth I felt, the truth which thus became so revealed, was that I did not know; that I did not have all the answers; that I had begun to doubt everything that for years I had so passionately, even fanatically, believed in. The truth that maybe, just maybe, I might not be able to find all the answers by myself, unaided; that maybe, just maybe, there was someone out-there, or something, who and from which I might learn, who and which might guide me toward a deeper, a better, understanding of myself and this

world. That maybe, just maybe, in that particular allegory I might find some answers.

Thus there arose slowly in me after these events some desire to know about a certain, a particular, a quiet and inner way of life which I felt might be able to provide me with some answers, which might in some way connect me - reconnect me - to a beautiful, purer, way of life.

For a long time I had, in pursuit of some ideology - what I would later describe as a causal abstraction - controlled an aspect of my character: my almost naive sensitivity, my empathy, my rather boyish enthusiasm. But now this aspect came again to live, on a daily basis, so that I, perhaps rather foolishly, took to walking the streets of Leeds barefoot, and smiling like some village idiot; so pleased, so very pleased, to be alive; so happy with the blueness of the sky, the warmth of the Sun, the ineffable beauty of life itself. As if I was detached from myself, not really some young man named Myatt but rather

A falling leaf turned Autumn brown
Following the wind of the moment:
Neither clinging to, nor striving against,
The force of existence ever a dream in the end

For several weeks my plan became to return to an itinerant life, and thus became a kind of wandering poet, some sort of modern Taoist: a Way of Life familiar to me from my study of Taoism and my practical involvement with a Taoist Martial Art. But it seemed as if the wyrdful Cosmos had a rather different plan, for one day I decided - for reasons I cannot now recall - to borrow a bicycle belonging to a friend and head out for a week's holiday in the English countryside. A train conveyed me part of the way, and - the weather still hot, dry, and sunny - it was a pleasure to be away from the city, and I became as a schoolboy again for whom nearly every mile pedalled was an adventure.

There were stops for food, water - and a few overnight stays, often in some field beside some hedge. It did not matter, for I was still young, healthy, and quite strong.

After several days I came to be cycling down some narrow lane. To my left, a wooded hill of conifers; on my right, fields flowing gently upward to where a collocation of buildings were gathered just below a swathe of deciduous trees. The largest building somewhat - and I thought incongruously - resembled a French château, and so, intrigued, I cycled on to take a turning which I hoped might lead me toward it.

It was a monastery, and, leaving my bicycle propped up against a nearby tree, I wandered around. The door to the Abbey church was unlocked and I went inside. The cool quietness was slightly perfumed with incense from some recently ended Mass and a feeling of immense relief came over me as if I had, finally, come home. Words, scenes, emotions, scents, memories from a Catholic childhood lived within me once again, and it was so peaceful, so blissfully peaceful, sitting there, in the nave, that Time ceased to have any meaning or cause me any feeling as it trundled on in that

other world, outside. Such stillness I had not thought possible came to keep me still.

I have no idea for how long I sat there, unthinking, and it was only when some activity in the monks choir beyond, behind, the altar distracted me that I remembered who and where I was. Then - their noonday prayer, chanted.

. Suffice to say that when I returned to Leeds, soon afterwards, I immediately wrote to the Guestmaster of the monastery enquiring about a weekend visit. Some weeks later, I was there, at home, again. A weekend became a week; a certain request; an excited and nervous return to Leeds; and then that day when, with my few belongings, I ventured forth to begin my new life as a monk.

Sun, broken by branch, seeps
Into mist
Where spreading roots have cracked
The stones, overgrown, perhaps,
For an hundred years

From a seed, flesh fed, the oak
Sheltering
Mary
Relict of William

And a breeze, stirring again
This year
The leaves of an Autumn's green gold

Part Two

Sensus Internus

Into The Light

Monastic life was, quite obviously, a complete contrast to the violence, the carnal indulgence, the political activity, the time spent in prison, of my previous years, and my first month in the monastery did not come as a surprise. I enjoyed it.

Like prison, there was a daily routine, and I soon adapted to it. Or, rather, I embraced it joyfully. Rising, in those years (I think they have gone a bit soft, now), at around half past four in the morning to - without breakfast - spend two hours and more in the monks' Choir stalls of the Abbey chanting Matins followed by Lauds and followed by Conventual Mass. The breakfast, in the refectory, was substantial, and needed to be. Then there was work, study, until past Noon, and Choir again for prayers before lunch,

and at which meal one of the monks would read a religious text to us while we ate in silence. An afternoon of manual labour followed, with a short break for cups of tea; more work or study until the hour of Vespers, sung in Latin, with the monks precessing from the cloisters, in cowled robes, into the Choir. Then the last meal of the day - supper - followed by an hour or so of "spiritual contemplation" and then onto the last prayers of the day, Compline. It was now not long after nine o'clock in the evening, and one was, quite understandably, somewhat tired, and so went to bed, in my case a cell (a small room with a small window) on the very top floor of the Abbey on what was called the Novices Gallery. Interestingly the only heating in these monastic cells - apart from the rooms of the Abbot and Prior, who had fireplaces - were hot water pipes running along the outside wall (no radiators). Of course, by the time the steam-generated hot water reached our pipes at the top, they were somewhat colder than in the rooms on the floors below.

Suffice to say, we were kept, busy, occupied, and I seemed to fit in quite well. It was also remarkably easy to forget about the outside world - and if something deemed really important happened in the outside world, one of the monks would pin a typed summary - a very small summary - of the event on the noticeboard in the cloister, which in practice meant once every month or so. Mostly though, the notices there were mainly about ecclesiastical matters - the Pope on a visit, somewhere; or a forthcoming visit to the monastery by some Bishop or other.

Weeks became months, and one of my jobs involved me working in the monastery library - a beautiful large place, of stone-mullioned windows (most of which did not open or had not been opened in decades), row upon row upon high row of dusty old books (many in Latin), large collections of manuscripts, and a quiet quietude that propelled one back into medieval times. It was as if the modern world - with its haste, its technology, its electricity, its Homo Hubris - no longer existed, and, my allotted tasks accomplished, I could browse, and settle down to read. And if by some chance (and as occurred quite often) I came across something I could not understand - some passage in Latin, or Greek, for instance - there was always someone, some scholarly monk, who could not only explain it to me but also place it in context, and who more often than not was willing to discuss the matter in great detail.

The monastery provided me with many opportunities, to study, to learn, to discipline myself, to acquire a new perspective on life, and - for a while - I did believe I might have a vocation.

But after many months I became somewhat restless, and - obtaining permission to leave enclosure - I began running down the lane from the monastery toward the small wood-enclosed lakes about a mile and half distant. Not that I had "running shoes" or anything like that - only some old plimsolls obtained from The Dive. The Dive was in the basement of the monastery, run by one of the monks, and was where one might find some item one might need - a pair of sandals perhaps; or a shirt. Possibly even a tennis racket; an umbrella; or a hat if one was out in the Sun in the beautiful, secluded, wooded Monks Garden above the monastery, on the slope of a hill. Naturally, most if not all these Dive items were second, or third, or fourth hand, "donated" by monks, or their relatives, or someone else, and some items had been there - borrowed,

and then returned, and sometimes repaired - for perhaps a half a century or more. A veritable emporium, and if something one needed was not in The Dive - which was rare - it could be obtained, given some time.

This restlessness abated, a little, during those times I spent with four people there, three of them monks. The first was an older, jovial, monk, who possessed a great knowledge of Buddhism, especially Zen Buddhism, and who, in fact, had spent some years as Prior of a Zen monastery in Japan. We had many interesting discussions, about Buddhism, about Catholicism, about religion in general. The second person was a Greek scholar - a layman who lived in the monastery - and I seem to recall that he kept a card, filed among voluminous wooden card-indexes, for every single verse, and which card contained, in his scholarly handwriting, the text in Greek, his translation, and some of his notes. The other two were younger monks - older than and senior, in monastic terms, to me - who had an interest in the more arcane aspects of religion, and especially of Catholicism, and we three would spend hours upon hours discussing mysticism, esotericism, and religion in general, even though, according to certain monastic rules, I should not have been associating with them as much as I did.

One rather humorous incident during my time in the monastery is worth recounting. I was asked, by the Abbot, to spend some weeks in Dublin where some University research project was underway, funded (I believe) by several monasteries, into vocations: what motivated young men to become monks; what might the monasteries do to attract more vocations, and so on. Why I - with my past - had been chosen to take part I found somewhat strange; or, perhaps, I had been chosen because of my past, or rather, because of the edited version I had provided to the Abbot when I had applied to enter the noviciate. Whatever, it meant flying from the nearest airport to Dublin, staying in a Presbytery near Phoenix Park and attending the University every day.

So, there I am, at the airport in England, travelling under my real name [5], waiting with other passengers in the departure lounge to board the aeroplane, when I am taken away, by two Special Branch Police officers, to be "interviewed" in a nearby room. Obviously they - or some other official - had recognized my name, or I was one some official Special Branch watch list. They asked why I was going to Dublin - and I explained where I was living, and why, and that the Abbot had selected me to take part in some research at the University. One of the Police officers then said that they would "check out my story" - and he duly returned, not long afterwards, and said I could go.

It was only on my return to the monastery, over two weeks later, that I learnt what had occurred. The Police officer had telephoned the monastery and enquired if there was a certain DM who lived there and what he was doing. One of the older monks happened to answer the telephone, and - in his schoolmasterish way, as though lecturing a schoolboy - confirmed my story, making some remark to the effect that he would be happy to ask the Abbott to telephone the Chief Constable, at which point, as he with great amusement later recounted to me, the Police officer said, somewhat sheepishly,

that no, that would not be necessary.

Fundamentally, however, although I generally - most days - enjoyed the life immensely, three things surfaced to unsettle me, more and more, even though for quite some time I fought against them, strengthened as I was by certain numinous aspects of monastic life. For example, by the office of Compline and the singing of the beautiful Latin *Salve Regina* after which most of the monks, myself included, would go the kneel in silent reverential prayer on the bare stone floor in front of a centuries-old statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For example, the short contemplative time between Matins and Lauds when it was peaceful, so blissfully peaceful, to wander outside in the darksome quiet or just sit still in the Choir and sense the centuries of numinous longing, joy and hope, that had seeped forth in prayer from places such as this.

The first - and for me perhaps the most important - of these unsettling things was that I missed women. I missed everything about them - carnal relations, naturally, but also their presence, their touch, their embrace, their scent, their sensitivity, their gentleness, that intimate often wordless sharing that arises from a passionate, lustful, sharing relationship. In brief, I missed - and desired - the essence of women. Or at least, the essence of a certain type of women that I had become familiar with: the empathic, cultured, refined, well-mannered, passionate lady with whom and through whom one could be part of and explore a numinous reality totally unknown to the likes of Homo Hubris.

The second was my combative nature - I loved to dispute, to argue, and many of the noviciate lectures degenerated into discussions between me and the senior monk trying to instruct we few novices. I argued about and disputed what the other novices thought were the most trivial things - for instance the exact meaning of certain words, and one discussion, in our course on New Testament Greek, about the meaning of the word *λόγος*, went on for days. Eventually, in a rather nice way, I was told I was being somewhat disruptive, but my good, my expected, monastic behaviour did not last for long.

The third was my lack of obedience and humility. For instance, I had been informed, by the Novice Master and then the Prior that I should no longer spend time with the two more senior monks with whom I had developed a friendship and with whom I discussed all manner of arcane matters. Although I agreed to abide "by the rules" it was not long before I broke them, again.

My rather un-monastic attitude was not helped when I pinned the following on the cloister noticeboard:

And Jesus said unto his disciples - "And who do you say that I am?"

And they replied - " You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being, the kerygma in which we find the ultimate meaning of our interpersonal relationships. "

And Jesus looked at them amazed, and said, "*You what?*"

I cannot now remember where I obtained this quote from - some newly published book, perhaps - but my attempt at humour was somewhat unappreciated. My excuse? It had been suggested that we novices read Barth's *Church Dogmatics*.

Another incident - revealing of my nature - is perhaps worth recalling. An elderly monk died, peacefully, in his room, and on hearing this I rushed along the cloister to ring "the big bell", for I remembered having read somewhere (perhaps in the Rule of Saint Benedict) that what is what one should do, thus enabling the monks to pray for the soul of our departed brother. Naturally, I got into trouble for doing this - the bell could be heard for miles - for apparently this was, in that monastery, no longer the custom, and I should, of course, have asked permission first. Also, naturally, I argued the point - for a while, at least.

It was not that I made some sudden decision to leave. Rather, it became - after nearly a year and a half - rather obvious that I really did not have a vocation, a sentiment shared by both the Abbot and the Novice Master. Thus, by mutual consent, I left, to return to live, for a while, in a caravan in the Fens.

The most poignant, the most remembered, thing about my leaving was when I went to tell the monk who had been a Zen Master, who said that of all the novices he had known in the past few years, I was the most monastic of them all. "This place needs people like you..." he said. But he was, to be fair, something of a character, himself, and had a wicked sense of humour.

Wandering, Love, and Marriage

During my last few months in the monastery, one of my given tasks had been to care for, to nurse, an elderly monk with a terminal disease, and - to my great surprise - the Abbot had occasion to thank me, several times, in person, for my work. Even so, he surprised me yet again by suggesting, on the day before my departure, that I should consider a career as a Nurse. Which I duly did and - with his letter of recommendation - managed to secure a place as a student Nurse. The start of the training course, however, was many months away, and so, for a while, I wandered around, once again, as an itinerant.

This wandering gave me time to reflect upon many things - especially my monastic life - and one thing I began to appreciate in a more conscious way was the centuries-long still living culture to which I belonged, of which Catholicism, monasticism, and Christianity in general, had been a part. For me, this was, and had been, especially manifest in two things: in plainchant (which I loved to sing and to listen to), and in classical music from medieval times to JS Bach, Haydn, and beyond, and a lot of which music - especially JS Bach and Haydn - was imbued with or inspired by a religious feeling, an appreciation and a knowing of the numinous.

This reflexion placed many things into a supra-personal perspective so that, for instance, I began to consider certain philosophical and ethical questions, including the nature of human love and human suffering, and the ethics of politics. During my time in the monastery I rarely thought about politics - or even about the world outside - and certainly did not miss political activity or involvement. I was far too occupied with daily monastic life and with my own studies, which included ancient Greek literature, Buddhism, Taoism and Western philosophy. These reflexions in turn led me to consider the nature and form of religion, especially in relation to Christian history and theology.

Thus my life became, for around three years after I had left the monastery, personal - for there was no involvements with politics, or even with any organized form of religion, Catholic or otherwise. I had no rôle, no aim beyond pursuing my interests - such as running, cycling and classical music - and was even gainfully employed, for a year, at least.

For my nursing course had started. In those days, the training was mostly practical, on the hospital wards, with a three month assignment on a certain type of ward (medical, surgical, and so on) followed by a few weeks back in the classroom, followed by another duty on another ward.

Sitting quietly in high Summer
While the river flows
Is peaceful, for an hour;
But any longer, and we who wish
Cannot wait to abstain:
We must be gone or find a goal
To satisfy such haste.

There was a man, dying from his age
As his flesh and organs failed:
He did not seem to mind this
 I've had a good innings
Except, sometimes, the pain.
He would lay, slowing breathing
And sometimes smiling in his bed
While we who waited on the living
And the dying
Cared
As our time, tiredness and allocations
Allowed.

Every two hours, on the Ward, still living bodies
Would be turned
To remove just one more soiled sheet
While the heat of Summer through half-open
Windows

Mingled with the smells
And the oozing from freshly sutured
Flesh:

But each dark moment was almost always
(If you watched)
Relieved
By the sadness or the smile
In another person's eyes.

And there was a learning
In such simple glimpses,
Shared.

I was one of only two male nurses on the course, and while the work itself was quite tiring and hard - and one went through periods of loving it, hating it, loving it - it was rewarding, and there was a sense, in those days, of belonging to a small community, especially since I lived, in a minuscule room, in the Nurses Home. One lived and worked in the same place, and generally spent time off-duty with one's fellow student nurses, in one's own year or from other years.

Naturally, there were liaisons with people with whom one worked and who also lived within the hospital grounds, and after a few of these I found myself in a serious relationship. There were plans for us to obtain our own accommodation, near the hospital; short holidays, away; and I felt I was in love. The young lady in question certainly was in love with me. But then, as my first year moved toward its ending, I - stupidly, selfishly, dishonourably - ruined it all, by falling in love with someone else.

The "other woman" was a friend of a friend, and then a Post Graduate studying at Cambridge, whom I met at some party or other in that city. Her nickname was Twinkle, and there was a quite adorable child-like quality to her, a need to be loved, an enthusiasm tempered occasionally by a touch of anxiety, all of which, combined with a keen intellect and a love of classical music, poetry and English literature, made her (at least to me) irresistible. I did try to resist - for a while. For several months, I managed to behave honourably, and even managed to behave in a friendly way toward her then lover. But the more I saw of her, the worse I felt.

For weeks, I resisted the temptation to see her, and was glad when she moved away, her course over, to live and work in what seemed far off Shropshire. But then her fateful short note arrived in the post - "Feeling wretched. Do come!" it read, giving a telephone number and an address. The very next day another, quite similar, note arrived, sounding even more urgent.

Making excuses to K - for I was genuinely concerned Twinkle might harm herself - I set off, without any expectations and rather naively believing I could be a good friend. A train to Shrewsbury; a bus to that overgrown village where she lived where once there was a medieval Priory; and there she was, waiting for me at the bus stop.

Alighting from the bus, she ran to embrace me, and clung onto me for what seemed, what felt, a long time. "I wish I had a camera!" an elderly lady, waiting at the stop said, and smiled. And then we were walking, holding hands, along the road to her lodgings.

Hours later, the evening meal she had cooked eaten, we sat - she on a chair, I on the carpet before the gas fire - in her room in the candlelit dark while she, to a mute background of a symphony by Brahms - tearfully recalled the last few weeks of her life. Her lover had spurned her, harshly, for someone else; she felt so alone; so betrayed; so ashamed of herself; so disgusted with herself for being so weak and needy, believing she was unworthy of being loved...

What could I say? Do? I should have played the rôle of unworldly, detached, Sage, and spake forth some words of fatherly wisdom and advice - but all I did in my weakness was move toward her, hold her hand and told her that I loved her. Thus did I that night and the next betray my lover. K met me at the railway station on my return, and she knew, just knew, immediately, of my betrayal, just as I felt her knowing. We did not speak of it then, and strived to carry on as normal, until some days later when a letter for me from Twinkle arrived. I was on duty, and K opened and read it. There were no tears from her on my return to my room in the Nurses Home; no words shouted; no words at all. She simply gave me the letter and waited. There was, in that letter, a declaration of love, a passage about having children - about how even now she might be bearing "our child".

There were tears from she whom I had betrayed, and I felt ashamed, and the most wretched I had ever, up until then, felt in my life. Wretched because of her sadness, her feelings; wretched because I had so deeply hurt her; and wretched because there was no anger in her, no words or shouts of recrimination; no accusations; no flailing fists of a lover betrayed. Only deep soul-wrenching almost utter despair. She left then to leave me alone with my dishonour, my shame.

A few days later, I suddenly withdrew from the nursing course to travel to Shropshire to live with my new lover. The day before I left I had met K, briefly - or rather, she had saught me out. We embraced, then she pulled away to affect a smile while I just stood there, not knowing, in my shame, what to say or do. But she was far stronger than I and suggested, gently, affectionately, that - if I did indeed love Twinkle - then I could obtain a transfer to a hospital in Shropshire. She had it all worked out, having even spoken to a senior member of the teaching staff about such transfers. She left then, leaving me as if I had just awoken from some dream. A walk. Another walk. A telephone call some hours later; a question impetuously asked; an affirmative answer received. Yes, she would marry me...

I went to tell K. She had just returned from a late shift and, then as now, I am not quite sure how or why we parted in the gentle way we did. We spoke for a while, softly, of our own future separate plans; we shared a bottle of wine; then we were in each others arms; and in the morning we kissed and I, with no words exchanged between us, left to begin my new life in the rural county of Shropshire. Less than six months later I was married, to Twinkle, and never saw or heard from K again.

Now, recalling those events, I feel that K perhaps loved me far more than I deserved, as I know I behaved dishonourably and assuredly hurt her deeply. There are no excuses for my behaviour, then; I was quite simply - and for all my idealistic talk of honour in my political years - just weak, dishonourable. I gave in to my dreams and my desires, placing my needs, my dreams, my hopes, my lust, before the feelings of someone who loved me and whom I should have treated in an honourable way. In brief, I was selfish, and really did not know what love was - what it meant and implied - despite all my philosophical reflexion on the matter and despite all my previous trysts and involvements.

A few weeks before my marriage, I went to visit my lady friend in London for the last time to inform her of my change of circumstances, and spent an exquisitely poignant weekend with her; feelings recalled some months later in bleak mid-Winter:

Like memories, snow falls
With no sound
While I stand as Winter frosts
My feet
And a cold hand holds itself ready
Near a pen:

The birds, though starving, still sing
Here where trees and snow seat themselves
On hill
And the slight breeze beings to break
My piece of silence
Down.

Her love seemed only real
With its loss.

Above the trees, crows cawing
As they swirl
Within the cold

A Shropshire Tale

The seven years of my first marriage were all spent in South Shropshire, that rural part of that border English county that I came to love. For a few months, after our marriage, we lived in lodgings and then in a caravan on the edge of a field on a farm, and enjoyed a reasonably happy time, until the snows of Winter came. I liked living in the quiet solitude of the caravan with its wood-burning stove, while she did not.



High Acre in Shropshire (from a painting by Richard Moulton)

One morning we awoke to find ourselves snowed in, and I had to crawl out of a caravan window to shovel snow away from the door so that she could decamp to the nearby shack, whose rotting wooden roof and walls provided some shelter and which enclosed our portable chemical toilet. She had, quite naturally, endured enough, and threatened that day to stay with friends whose central heating, indoor bathroom, and kitchen she somehow found enchanting, suggesting then that we immediately find somewhere else suitable for us to live.

After a while we did, a brief interlude of living in Shrewsbury town not really worth recalling. We found a glorious house on the edge of the Long Mynd overlooking the Stretton valley, and it was there - with Coalbrookdale fireplaces in almost every room - that we would spend most of our remaining married years together.

The years passed - or seemed to pass, for me - quite quickly. I, occupied with cycling, with daily runs on the Long Mynd, writing poetry, with researching and writing a book I called, somewhat pretentiously, *The Logic of History* [6], and sometimes with work; she occupied with her full-time employment, miles distant (she possessed a moped) and her small circle of friends.

Work, for me, like money, was incidental, while for her, her career was the main enthusiasm of her life, and something she did with excellence and élan, and a consummate and professional ease. Thus, we existed quite often in our separate worlds, our married life more a convenience than a sharing passion, a fault for which I alone was to blame.

For instance, for me, weekends were a time for long fifteen or twenty mile runs - or fifty to eighty mile cycle rides, or competing in bicycle Time Trials at club level [7] - with the remainder of the day spent relaxing, perhaps idly walking up the Burway, or listening to music. In contrast, she desired a rather more active social life, and on the

few occasions I accepted some social invitation - an evening meal with some of her colleagues, for instance - I either, in my then still somewhat arrogant way, monopolized the conversation, or was disdainful and disinterested.

Thus, as might be gathered from this précis, I was rather selfish if not downright uncaring, although I did agree, much against my own desire, to her wish to delay having children, given her commitment to her career. It is perhaps not surprising that she, therefore, with her passionate needful nature sought to find a type of love elsewhere. Thus it was that she fell in love with another woman. Or rather, we both fell in love with the same married woman, except, for her, while a physical desire existed, she honourably did not act upon it, while I - yet again - allowed my desire to overwhelm me, and thus betrayed her.

Had I learned nothing from the torment, the grief, the sorrow, of only a few years ago? From my other act of dishonour? Yes - but only for a while. Yet again, there are no excuses for my failure. But, aged a few years past thirty, it would be the last time I allowed lust to overwhelm my honour.

Our marriage survived, for a while at least. She, though deeply hurt, forgave me in that loving way that many women often can. But, unsurprisingly, and correctly, she began to find fault with me, our marriage, aided by a loving, tender, relationship she developed with a younger woman. A year later we separated, and then divorced - she to live in a University city with her young lover, and I to stay in Shropshire.

During the years of my first marriage, I remained inactive in practical street politics, although I did keep in touch with both CJ and John Tyndall, and wrote a few articles, which JT published in his *Spearhead* magazine, both under my own name, and under several pseudonyms. [8]

For a few years, after my marriage, I worked in a few different occupations - or none, since I had a small private income - travelled [9], and enjoyed various liaisons with women, none of which lasted for very long and several of which placed me on the other side of betrayal, which in itself proved to be valuable, if painful, personal learning experience:

A bright quarter moon
As I ran alone in the cold hours
Along the sunken road that twists
Between hill-valley and stream:

There was a dream, in the night
That woke me - a sadness
To make me sit by the fire
Then take me out, moon-seeing
And running, to hear only my feet
My breath - to smell only the coldness
Of the still, silent air:

But no spell, no wish

Brought my distant lover to me
And I was left to run slowly
Back
And wait the long hours
To Dawn.

By the fire, I think of nothing
Except the warmth of my love
No longer needed.

Then, one day - and arranged through a mutual acquaintance - I had an assignation with another woman. Reverting back to country type, I wore a tweed suit, my tweed overcoat, plus traditional English flat cap. We had arranged to meet outside a Wine Bar in Shrewsbury, and, as her close friend, A, was later to tell me in a letter, Sue immediately fell in love with me:

" When Sue first met you, I've never seen such instant love and attraction. I've never believed in love at first sight but I have to admit you and Sue seem to have been the exception that proved the rule..."

That evening we had a long leisurely meal in that Wine Bar, and had a quite marvellous time, for there was a lovely, and natural, affinity between us. We arranged to meet the following week, became lovers, and then began living together.

Quite simply, I adored her and fell deeply in love with her. She was practical (she designed and made most of her own clothes), uncomplicated, and we just fitted together exceptionally well, never arguing, and never even - not once - exchanging angry words.

As her friend, A, wrote in the aforementioned letter:

" She had a very deep and simple love for you which never wavered. You and Sue were privileged to have that kind of love..."

We shared everything; went everywhere together, including holidays abroad. Indeed, twice every year we travelled to Egypt, once to spend two weeks leisurely cruising down the Nile from Aswan to Cairo, one of the last of those two week trips, then, since Middle Egypt, around troubled Assiut, became closed to Nile cruise boats, following some attacks on Western tourists. Indeed, I can remember, on that particular trip, that armed Policemen accompanied our boat for part of our journey, as we were often escorted, on some excursions, by other armed guards.

My life became settled, and I was immensely happy. I began translating ancient Greek literature: first, *Antigone* by Sophocles, followed by *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

Then, just over four years into our relationship, Sue became ill. She had developed cancer. Surgery, and radiotherapy followed, and she seemed to recover, so we went

again to Egypt. We had just returned when she became quite ill, and required emergency admission into hospital.

There we were, in an isolation room - it was feared, because of her yellow-coloured eyes, that she might have hepatitis or have acquired some tropical disease - awaiting the results of various tests.

"I am so sorry," the quite young hospital Consultant informed us, "it is very serious..."

She had around six weeks to live. Her first words to me after he, a lovely sensitive man, had left: "I am glad we went to Egypt." Then she smiled: "At least I'll have time to sort everything out!"

Never once, during those few remaining weeks of her life did she complain, even though she was on quite a high dose of morphine for her pain. Never once was she sad, dejected. Instead, it was she who - unbelievably - gave me strength and support. She was, in a quite literal way, remarkable. We stayed, for a week, with her mother and brother who, having the means, spent every Autumn and Winter in Spain in a house overlooking the Mediterranean sea [10]. Then, her health deteriorating, we left to return to England.

One incident, at Malaga airport, enraged me. She was by then in a wheelchair, and we had requested priority boarding which the airline had agreed to. As I pushed her in her wheelchair I heard one British woman, in the departure lounge, make a disgusting remark, doubting whether "that woman" really needed a wheelchair. Enraged, I was about to shout something vulgar in reply when Sue gently smiled, held my hand, and shook her head. She died just over a week later, one night in her sleep while I sat beside her.



Sue, On Wenlock Edge

For months afterwards I shut myself away, at first in a room at an hotel in Shropshire, and then in a chalet in the hotel grounds. I busied myself with completing my translation of *The Agamemnon* by Aeschylus and going for walks on the Long Mynd.

Translation, and those walks, became my life. I had no other aim and three months became many more. I do not now recall how many months I stayed there, reclusive in my world, but however long it was I endured until my translation was complete. I even took the radical step - on a few occasions when busy weekends were expected - of hiring the two chalets on either side of mine in order to be alone, at peace, as I had my own table in the hotel restaurant, set well away from the others.

The translation over, I found myself - or so I believed - almost recovered from the immediacy of her loss. Sue, organized, remarkable, to the end, had planned her leaving well, and one of the few things she insisted upon, in those final weeks, was that I should, must, have a life after her. So she had a friend find an exclusive agency that specialized in personal introductions, and their card was in that leather Filofax that Sue had given me as one of her departing gifts. For weeks, I ignored that card, making a whole variety of excuses. Then, remembering, and placing my pride aside for her sake, and using one of those new-fangled mobile telephones, I made a call. Suffice to say - some interviews over, one at the village home of one of the ladies who ran the agency - I was offered an introduction.

I arranged to meet J at the Feathers Hotel in Ludlow, and she, as I, was nervous. She was well-dressed, well-spoken, well-educated, and somewhat reminded me of the archetypal English Rose. We arranged another meeting, and then another, and so began a rather old-fashioned courtship, which pleased us both, and it was not long before I fell in love with her. Years later, she confided in me that she began to fall in love with me on what was our second assignation when, in Worcester, after an evening meal at a fine restaurant, I was, as a gentleman should, escorting her to where her car was parked when I, like some schoolboy, unthinkingly blurted out, having taken out my pocket watch: "Gosh! It's half past nine already! I haven't been up this late for absolutely ages..."

Thus, there came a time when it seemed apposite for me to propose marriage. So I invited her to spend a long weekend with me at a rather lovely hotel beside a lake in Wales where, rather nervously, I revealed everything about my past. A few months later we were married, and honeymooned in the Maldives.

Combat 18 and the NSM

Life was never simple again, after that. For I had returned to writing about National-Socialism, publishing my fourteen volume *National-Socialist Series*, which included works with titles such as *National-Socialism: Principles and Ideals*, and *The Revolutionary Holy War of National-Socialism*.

Why this return? To be honest, I cannot really remember. But I have more than a vague suspicion that Sue's death had affected me more than I, at the time, cared or even dared to admit. Something seemed to have departed from my life: a personal vision, a dream, perhaps, of us - of Sue and I - growing old together; of a life of contented sharing, where the world was only our life together. For we had a beautiful life and home - a detached house, in Shropshire, tastefully furnished by Sue (who had impeccable taste); I had a collection of five custom made bicycles (including two with frames hand-crafted by Mercian); we had relaxing enjoyable holidays several times a year; our relationship was everything I had ever dreamed about; we had no financial concerns; and we were totally loyal to each other. I was, quite simply, in love and content, as I knew she was.

So, perhaps I replaced my personal vision with another one, retreating back into the world I had known before. The world of NS politics; of striving to create a better world, for others, based on the values of honour, loyalty and duty. In some ways, these NS writings of mine were an attempt to not only express the essence of what I believed National-Socialism to be, but also to evolve it, and I began to circulate a small newsletter, *The National-Socialist*, in the hope of introducing these ideas of mine to others.

It was around this time that the London-based group Combat 18 was becoming well-known, and it seemed to me that many of those involved with this group were doing what I had again, and at that time, come to believe was necessary, which was revolutionary street-action in the name of National-Socialism, just as I believed then, as before, that I, by supporting NS, was doing something honourable and noble.

As I wrote in a previous autobiographical note, published in 1998 CE:

I came to admire them and openly declared my support for them. I also gave a personal pledge of loyalty to Combat 18's leader, Charlie Sargent, and his brother, Steve.

In a short space of time Combat 18 had built up a fearsome reputation and done what no other group had done - gained street power from those opposed to National-Socialism. Not surprisingly, the Press, aided by MI5, began a campaign to discredit C18, as both MI5 and Special Branch sought to infiltrate and disrupt the organization.

In article after article, in letter after letter, in discussion after discussion, I warned of the danger and urged people to uphold the values of honour, loyalty and duty. I also urged them to consider that the best way forward was a proper National-Socialist organization and to forget plans and talk of an imminent armed insurrection, for - as I had discovered from practical experience - the time was not yet right for such plans: we needed the people first, properly motivated, in their thousands, and we had but dozens. But the poison of the State took effect. People in nationalist organizations began to believe the clever MI5 dis-information about C18 being a MI5 run group, created to disrupt the so-called 'nationalist cause'. Some nationalists even went so far as to describe Charlie and Steve as 'informers'. Perhaps MI5 were also successful in disrupting C18 itself, or perhaps it was only the result of the ego and disloyalty of one individual.

Whatever the first cause, open feuding broke out between the two C18 factions, resulting in one death, and the arrest for murder of Charlie Sargent and his loyal comrade Martin Cross. I was honour-bound to stay loyal to Charlie Sargent, and decided to form and lead the National-Socialist Movement to continue the work he had begun. As a result, a smear campaign against me began. Rumours of Occult involvement - never entirely absent thanks to a few dishonourable and cowardly individuals - increased. But I believed I could ignore them as I hoped others around me would ignore them and hold fast to honour, loyalty and duty.

The decision for me to come back into public prominence by forming and leading the NSM was easy, even though I knew what would happen with regard to rumours about me, and even though I never intended to stay for long as the leader, lacking as I did the qualities of leadership. Yet, secretly, in my heart, I yearned for a quiet rural life, working on a farm and undertaking Greek translations in my spare time.

However, the decision to form and lead the NSM was easy because I felt it was my duty - I believed I was responsible for what had happened to Charlie as I believed that someone had to publicly support him. I was responsible because in truth I - the exponent of honour, loyalty and duty - should have done something to prevent the situation that arose. I should have tried to bring the factions together on the basis of duty to the Cause first and foremost. I even went to Charlie's committal proceedings, after he had been charged with murder, in the belief that matters could even at that late date be sorted out. For I had a somewhat naive belief that the opponents of Charlie would see reason, ignore MI5 dis-information, and agree to put loyalty and the Cause first.

But the more I found out about what had happened, and was happening, the more I knew there could be no compromise with those who had betrayed Charlie, particularly by giving evidence against him in Court. This betrayal by giving evidence in a Court of Law was totally unacceptable behaviour - totally dishonourable. For we National-Socialists regarded the State and its Institutions such as the Police as our enemies, as we believed we should

settle any disputes among ourselves in our traditional warrior way through a fair fight or a duel. Moreover these people continued parroting MI5 dis-information, and accused both Charlie and Steve of being informers when the truth was that the leader of their faction was the biggest informer of all, helping as he did to convict Charlie and Martin and supporting as he did the State and its dishonourable laws. Twice we who were loyal to Charlie waited for this informer and his supporters to turn up to sort matters out with a fair fight, once at Chelmsford and once in north London - and twice they did not turn up. [11]

My involvement with Combat 18, and later the new NSM, was to have a deleterious affect on my marriage, especially as my wife did not share my political opinions. *Searchlight* devoted several pages of one issue of their magazine to me, complete with photographs, including one of me on the front cover, under the headline *The Most Evil Nazi in Britain*. As usual, their story was a mix of some truth, some lies, and some unproven allegations. That is, it was political propaganda, designed for a specific purpose. In another issue, dealing with the trial of Charlie Sargent, there was a photograph of me (perhaps it was on the first page, if my ageing memory is correct) walking toward the Court in Chelmsford beside the wife of Martin Cross.

This photograph - together with my many trips to London - made my wife suspicious and so we argued, at first about "other women," and then, gradually, about other matters. On one occasion I had to go to Northern Ireland, and she insisted that I telephoned her from there, which I did, as she insisted on calling me back to check the number so that she knew I was there and not somewhere else. But, during the whole of our relationship I was never disloyal to her, having learnt that lesson, at least.

Meanwhile, I took to working on a farm, near to where we then lived in a detached house in a village not far from Malvern, and it was at that house that one local Policeman, accompanied by six Detectives from SO12, Scotland Yard, came to call, early one morning in 1998 CE, to arrest me. For nearly seven hours they searched the house, seizing my computers, files, and letters, and arrested me. I was taken to Malvern Police Station, whose officers seemed somewhat bemused by this invasion of Detectives from an elite unit based at Scotland Yard.

A few interrogations, a period locked in a cell, and many hours later, I was released, on condition that I reported on a regular basis to Charing Cross Police station in London. I made a point, during my first "interview", of thanking the Detectives for their professional behaviour during their search of my home - for they had indeed acted in a very professional and courteous manner toward us - and it was this, and my subsequent interviews with SO12 officers in London (and on one occasion, in Oxford) - and the professional attitude of the custody Sergeants and other Police officers I had occasion to then interact with - that made me revise my attitude toward the Police.

My wife seemed, somewhat strangely, to take this invasion of her home, and my arrest, quite calmly, and did not seem particularly perturbed when I would adhere to

my bail conditions and travel to London. I, certainly, was unperturbed - although my trips to London, the reaction of many comrades to "the dawn raids", and the attitude of the Police officers involved, did lead me to begin to think seriously again about the tactics, and indeed the rather stark ideology, I had been pursuing.

For, for all my rhetoric, for all my revolutionary words, for all my personal effort and sacrifice, very little - if anything - of practical import had been achieved. Indeed, the situation within and exterior to the NSM, and what remained of Combat 18, was analogous to the NDFM; in truth, it was far far worse. There seemed to be little honour; even less genuine loyalty; and the usual spreading of malicious rumours and of gossip. Furthermore, few people - if any - were prepared to risk their lives or their liberty for the Cause they claimed they believed in.

Hard manual work, on the farm, was some recompense, and I seriously began to wonder why I bothered with practical politics at all. But, outwardly, I maintained my revolutionary persona - at least for some months. For a new strategy had occurred to me, and this was that a religion might be very useful, or at least some kind of religious approach. Previously, I had rather vaguely written about NS as some kind of religion - but no one was interested, and it was, I knew, impossible to intellectually conjure a new religion into existence.

Thus, and impressed as I was at the time by the actions of devout Muslims who were, or who seemed to be, prepared to sacrifice their lives for "their Cause", I began to seriously study Islam, initially more to see what I could learn from it and perhaps apply to that NS Cause I then still believed in.

Pathei-Mathos

Copeland, The Way of Al-Islam, and A New Beginning

During my time with Combat 18, I had returned to Egypt, and it was during this visit that I began to appreciate the difference between Arab nationalism, and Islam, for I talked to several Egyptians, and several Muslims, about their land, about Islam, about life in general. I liked the manners of these Muslims, their devotion to their faith, which included praying five times a day.

I returned to England to find bad-manners, arrogance, materialism, decadence, and for the first time in my life I felt somewhat out of place among my own people. But

gradually, over the coming months, the feeling faded.

As I wrote in Part Six of *Ethos of Extremism*:

" There was no sudden decision to convert to Islam [in 1998]. Rather, it was the culmination of a process that began a decade earlier with travels in the Sahara Desert. During the decade before my conversion I regularly travelled abroad, with this travel including well-over a dozen visits to Egypt and a few visits to other lands where the majority of the population were Muslim.

Egypt, especially, enchanted me; and not because of the profundity of ancient monuments. Rather because of the people, their culture, and the land itself. How life, outside of Cairo, seemed to mostly cling to the Nile - small settlements, patches and strips of verdancy, beside the flowing water and hemmed in by dry desert. I loved the silence, the solitude, the heat, of the desert; the feeling of there being precariously balanced between life and death, dependant on carried water, food; the feeling of smallness, a minute and fragile speck of life; the vast panorama of sky. There was a purity there, human life in its essence, and it was so easy, so very easy, to feel in such a stark environment that there was, must be, a God, a Creator, who could decide if one lived or died.

Once, after a long trip into the Western Desert, I returned to Cairo to stay at some small quite run-down hotel: on one side, a Mosque, while not that far away on the other side was a night-club. A strange, quixotic, juxtaposition that seemed to capture something of the real modern Egypt. Of course, very early next morning the Adhaan from the mosque woke me. I did not mind. Indeed, I found it hauntingly beautiful and, strangely, not strange at all; as if it was some long-forgotten and happy memory, from childhood perhaps.

Once, I happened to be cycling from Cairo airport to the centre of the city as dawn broke, my route taking me past several Mosques. So timeless, so beautiful, the architecture, the minarets, framed by the rising sun...

Once, and many years before my conversion, I bought from a bookshop in Cairo a copy of the Quran containing the text in Arabic with a parallel English interpretation, and would occasionally read parts of it, and although I found several passages interesting, intriguing, I then had no desire, felt no need, to study Islam further. Similarly, the many friendly conversations I had with Egyptians during such travels - about their land, their culture, and occasionally about Islam - were for me just informative, only the interest of a curious outsider, and did not engender any desire to study such matters in detail.

However, all these experiences, of a decade and more, engendered in me a feeling which seemed to grow stronger year by year with every new trip. This was the feeling that somehow in some strange haunting way I belonged there, in such places, as part of such a culture. A feeling which caused me -

some time after the tragic death of Sue (aged 39) from cancer in the early 1990's - to enrol on, and begin, an honours course in Arabic at a British university.

Thus, suffice to say that a decade of such travel brought a feeling of familiarity and resonance with Egypt, its people, its culture, that land, and with the Islam that suffused it, so that when in the Summer of 1998 I seriously began to study Islam, to read Ahadith, Seerah, and the whole Quran, I had at least some context from practical experience. Furthermore, the more I studied Islam in England in those Summer months the more I felt, remembered, the sound of the beautiful Adhaan; remembered the desert - that ætherial purity, that sense of God, there; and remembered that haunting feeling of perhaps already belonging to such a culture, such a way of life. Hence my conversion to Islam, then, in September of that year, seemed somehow fated, wyrdful."

After some months of studying Islam, during that Summer of 1998 - my new strategy regarding some religion completely forgotten - it occurred to me that the Way of Al-Islam was indeed a good way to bring-into-being a new, a noble, society with a warrior ethos, and the more I read about the life of the Prophet, Muhammad, the more I came to admire him. There did, indeed, seem to be something remarkable, something numinous, something divine, here, in both the life of the Prophet, Muhammad, and in the Quran, and so - inspired and naively enthusiastic again - I trundled off to the nearest Mosque.

For nearly half an hour I hesitated - for these were the people I had spent thirty years trying to get out of Britain. How would they react to the former leader of the neo-nazi NSM walking into "their" Mosque?

At first when I, quite nervously, entered there seemed to be no one around. Out of respect, I removed my shoes and knocked on an inner door. The Imaam opened it - but he could not speak English, and I tried to say something in Arabic but the only thing that made sense was *Shahadah*. Soon, someone was fetched, who translated, and the Imaam embraced me. They were so pleased and so friendly that I admit that, then, tears came to my eyes, and I really felt I had, finally, arrived at the right place.

In retrospect, the years of my involvement with Islam were some of the most memorable of my life. Years when I learnt more about myself, and years which changed me fundamentally.

Not long after my conversion, I enrolled on a residential course in Arabic, and began to seriously study Ahadith, and, for several years, I was quite content as a Muslim - Namaz strengthened me, placed me into a humble relationship with my brothers and sisters; just as being part of the Ummah dissolved every last vestige of my former political beliefs. Ethnicity, one's territorial place of birth, the type of work one did, were all irrelevant. That is, I came to reject all forms of nationalism, including

National-Socialism, and racialism itself.

I was welcomed into the homes of brothers, met their families, and there was this world within a world where what mattered was love of the prophet, Muhammad, and a desire to selflessly obey the word of Allah, as manifest in the Quran, the Sunnah, and *Ijmah*.

Meanwhile, my relationship with my wife became more and more strained - certainly not helped by my many absences to meet with Muslim friends, and most certainly not helped by the Media interest in me that occurred following the trial, and the conviction, of Copeland for the London nail-bombings.

Following the arrest of Copeland, I - by then a Muslim - was interviewed at my home by Detectives from the Anti-Terrorism branch who were investigating if I had any connection with him, and they seemed satisfied that I did not, for I was not interviewed again about the matter. Some time after this - many months, as the date for Copeland's trial came near - I was, for several days, followed around by a large red van which covertly filmed and photographed me, my place of work (a farm), and my home, before being waylaid, early one morning while on my way to work (as usual by bicycle) by a film crew from the BBC's Panorama television programme who were making what they described as a "documentary" about the bombings. Among the statements put to me that morning was:

"You inspired Copeland indirectly to do what he did.." [12]



Waylaid by the BBC

Following Copeland's conviction and imprisonment, the BBC Panorama programme was broadcast, and I, not long after, was pursued for a while by journalists from several newspapers, with several scurrilous articles about me appearing in print. One even included a photograph of our house, and named the village where my wife and I

lived. One of these newspaper articles began (complete with photograph of me riding my bicycle on my way back from work):

" This is the man who shaped mind of a bomber; Cycling the lanes around Malvern, the mentor who drove David Copeland to kill..."

Riding a bicycle around his Worcestershire home town sporting a wizard-like beard and quirky dress-sense, the former monk could easily pass as a country eccentric or off-beat intellectual.

But behind David Myatt's studious exterior lies a more sinister character that has been at the forefront of extreme right-wing ideology in Britain since the mid-1960s. Myatt... was the brains behind the country's most openly neo-nazi organization....."

Yes indeed - *quirky dress sense*. That would be the type of clothes worn by a farm labourer, then.

As might be expected, all this Media interest somewhat affected my relationship with my wife, and she became quite distant, emotionally, physically, from me. Less than a year later, she became ill, suffering what is often termed a nervous breakdown. For a few months we stayed together, by which time it was obvious that our relationship was over.

In fairness to my wife, I have to admit that I had, yet again - and after my return to practical politics, followed by my conversion to Islam - descended down to abject, unforgivable, selfishness, placing some abstract goal, the personal pursuit of some abstract ideology, and then involvement with Islam, before her; before her needs. In brief, I was not a very good husband to her - more concerned with exterior supra-personal matters than with her, than with our relationship, than with her happiness. That she endured for so long with so little from me is tribute surely to her, as a loving woman. Mea Culpa, Mea Culpa, Mea Maxima Culpa.

Thus, my marriage over, I travelled in the Muslim world, met some very interesting and committed Muslims, all the while continuing my Muslim education, and it was some Muslims I met who asked me to write about this particular Way of Life; writings which I was, for some years, to become associated with, under my Muslim name of Abdul-Aziz ibn Myatt.

But was I, as some people have wondered, a sincere Muslim? Did I, for example, really believe that Muhammad was the Messenger and Prophet of Allah? Yes, I was sincere, and yes I did believe that, just as decades before, and for a while, I believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. Did I really believe that Shariah was the best way of

living? Yes - because I accepted that I was fallible, and that to submit to the will of Allah was my duty, my honourable duty, as a Muslim. [13]

In a literal way, Islam taught me humility, something I aspired to during my time as a monk but which my then prideful nature rebelled against.

Why, then, did I begin to have doubts about that particular Way of Life, as manifest in some effusions I wrote? As usual with my life, there was no *satori* - no one sudden moment of enlightenment with one's life thereafter and always changed. Rather, there were moments of empathy, of greater understanding, of insight, followed by a gradual return to almost, but not quite, where one had been before. Then, after some causal Time - of a duration sometimes short, sometimes long - there followed more such moments, until a slow, almost alchemical, change occurred within.

In retrospect, this change had its genesis in three things. First, because practical experience - my life as a Muslim - revealed to me, after a few years, how even the Ummah was woefully divided, how some Muslims seemed to be Muslim in name only, like some Catholics obeyed the precepts of their faith if and when it suited them, and how, it seemed to me, the various interpretations of certain texts often led to adherence to particular abstractions over and above a living numinously. [14] Second, after several years of interior struggle, of dwelling upon certain ethical and philosophical questions, I came to certain conclusions; and third, because - and most importantly, most significant of all - I became involved with, fell in love with, a certain lady.

Thus, this drift away from Islam resulted from a strange - perhaps a wyrdful - combination of circumstances, and from one singular, important, event.

A Personal Tragedy

While still nominally involved with Islam - although I had begun to develop, in earnest, my philosophy of The Numinous Way - I met a most beautiful lady. She was a friend of one of my closest friends, and he and his partner had, since the end of my marriage, been trying to bring us together, believing that we might find each other interesting.

By then, I had been living and working on a farm for several years, and although I had had a few casual trysts during that time, I still nurtured a desire for a deeper, permanent, relationship, and - intrigued by what I had been informed was her love of the desert and her desire to undertake more such travels, especially in the Western Sahara, an area I had come to know reasonably well - I agreed to contact her, more with a vague kind of hope than any real expectation of such a relationship developing.

Thus, Frances and I arranged to meet, after speaking to each other, via the medium of

the telephone, several times. I have always rather disliked the impersonal nature of that medium - for one cannot see the eyes, the face, of the person one is conversing with - but, rather strangely for me, I conversed with her in the days before our meeting for several hours, not once, but twice, for we did seem to have something of a rapport.

We met on the concourse of York railway station, and it would be something of an understatement to write that I was immediately attracted to her. In truth, I was rather astounded, for during our prior telephone conversations she had, several times, made it known to me that she was not "at her best", that she was still somewhat depressed, and that I was not "to expect too much".

Although I recognized her immediately, as she came through the crowd toward where I was sitting, I was so impressed by her beauty, her very presence, that, for several seconds, I quite literally could not move, and when I did, stumbling to my feet, she was there and, without hesitation, we embraced each other and kissed as though we had been lovers for months, years.



A day later, and I was already in love with her, and for almost a year I would - every fortnight or so and when possible - travel by train to visit her in York. In those days, such journeys and stays away were not onerous, for I had sufficient funds to travel First Class and stay in excellent hotels. Once - over the Christmas period - Fran came to stay at the farm, for nearly two weeks, and to write that we had an enjoyable time would be something of an exaggeration. By then, I had proposed marriage, which she had accepted, and then seemed unsure about. We talked during that time, at some length, about travelling - especially into the Sahara Desert, as we considered moving to live in Egypt, but never arrived at any conclusion.

For years before our meeting - for most of her adult life in truth - she had a difficult time caused by regular periods of clinical depression. She also, for some unfathomable reason, often disliked herself intensely. Yet she was beautiful - astonishingly so at times when life flowed within her and animated her - and intelligent and talented. But little I could say or do made her feel better about herself in those periods when she descended down into bouts of self-deprecation - at least, these things did not seem to work for very long. That is, she always and so sadly returned to such self-deprecation. Thus our relationship went from glorious, ecstatic, highs to tremendous lows. But I loved her, and so persevered, hoping, trusting, that such love would and could aid and help her. For I had glimpsed - in moments, and sometimes for days on end - the woman

she really was, she could be, beyond her self-loathing, her sometimes self-destructive habits.

My diverse and interesting past did not help our relationship, for several of her friends in York had, without ever having met me, "warned her about me" and so perhaps confused her, somewhat.

After eighteen or so often turbulent months (during which time she was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes), I went to visit her in her rather cramped flat in York, intending to stay only a few days. Our plan, then, was to find an apartment, possibly in York, or possibly even abroad, and so begin a new life together. A few days there together became a week, then two weeks, then three... for she did not want me to go and could not decide what she wanted to do. It became a difficult time, not helped by a full page article about me - complete with photograph - which appeared in *The Times* newspaper under the heading *Muslim Extremists in Britain*.

" A neo-nazi whose ideas were said to be the inspiration for the man who let off a nail bomb in Central London in 1999 has converted to an extremist form of Islam...

Myatt is reportedly the author of a fascist terrorist handbook and a former leader of the violent far-right group Combat 18..."

We or rather I talked, occasionally, about just impetuously leaving to begin new lives, together, in Egypt. For I felt such surroundings might gently entice her toward a new and better way of living which would enable her to find the personal happiness that so eluded her, except in moments.

But, after an intense six or so weeks in York, with still no decisions made, I felt that Fran and I needed a short break from each other. She did not feel this, and desired me to stay. But I - tired, physically, emotionally, and making excuses to myself - decided to go anyway, and so early one morning in late May I travelled back to the farm. Only hours after my leaving, she killed herself.

She left no note, had taken on overdose of insulin, placed a bag over her head and secured it with layers of tape, and it is true to say that I was never quite the same person after receiving that call from her mother, less than an hour after Fran had died and only hours after I had so selfishly returned to be again among, within, the rural peace of the farm.

For hours after that telephone call I could not speak, and wandered around the fields of the farm alone, dazed - as if all feeling, and most of my blood, had suddenly been drained away from me to leave me almost totally bereft of life. Then, alone again in my room, the tears came flooding forth - so many for so long I sank to the floor to rock slowly back and forth, as if all of Fran's suffering year after year was flooding through me, as if I was being tossed around by surging towering waves of grief and battered

by storms of remorse. Then, thoughts of suicide. Thereupon a certain calmness as I began to ponder the best way to die - a shotgun, perhaps, barrels placed under chin...

So much emotion within me, so much grief, so much dark death-embracing despair at my own failure, my own selfishness, that I felt, I knew, I had to die, and I was on my way to collect the chosen instrument of my death when, perhaps fortuitously, my mobile telephone rang. I was about to turn it off but glanced at the screen to see who was calling. It was a call from her mother, and - then knowing this - for what seemed a long duration of causal Time (but was only a few seconds) I dithered between disconnecting the call and answering, intending to say a few brief words to express again my blame. Words of blame won, and so I answered her call.

But there was such sadness in her voice, such grief at the loss of her daughter, that I felt ashamed, utterly ashamed, of my own selfish self-absorption. Thus we talked, trying to understand the circumstances, and sharing a little of our grief. And as I listened to her words, her voice, there came upon me the feeling that perhaps I had to live, that I should live, in order to bear the shame, to feel my grief, to live with the knowledge of my selfish nature, my abject failure, day after day. That, surely, might be a fitting punishment, or the beginning thereof. To die might be easy; to live with such self-knowledge would surely be - and should be - hard.

My feelings at the time were weakly captured in an effusion, dated 30 May 2006, which I sent to a friend:

I know what I should have done - been more patient; more supportive; more loving; placing her feelings, her life, before my own. But I made excuses for my failings here, not knowing the depth of her despair even though I who loved her should have known this, felt this. I made excuses for my selfishness, and listened to her Doctor; to others; to my sometimes selfish desires, when I should have listened to her far more.

Thus do I feel and now know my own stupidity for my arrogant, vain, belief that I could help, assist, change what was. No blame for me, her relatives say - but I know my blame, my shame, my failure, here. Thus am I fully humbled by my own lack of insight; by my lack of knowing; by an understanding of my selfishness and my failure - knowing myself now for the ignorant, arrogant person I was, and am.

How hypocritical to teach, to preach, through writings, feeling as I do now the suffering of words, for she whom I loved killed herself only hours after I had left. Killed herself - only hours after I had left, despite her pleading for me to stay. There are no words to describe my blame; no words - for I had gone for a selfish break, to walk in the fields of the Farm.

So I am lost, bereft; guilty, crying, mourning the loss of her beauty, her life, her love, Never again to hold her hand; to embrace her. Never again to share a smile; a peaceful moment; our dream of being together in our home. The fault is mine, and I have to carry this knowledge of unintentionally aiding the ending of a life, this burden, and the guilt, hoping, praying, that

somehow, sometime, somewhere I can give some meaning to her life, and perhaps live without ever again causing any suffering to any living thing... I miss her so much, so deeply, my mind suffused with images of what I did and did not do and should have done. If only I had not gone - or gone back to sit with her in that small garden as she wished.....

I shall never be the same again, deeply knowing that I do not understand.

(In Memory of Frances, died Monday, May 29, 2006)

In the weeks, the months, following Fran's death, Islam became personally irrelevant to me, for as I wrote at the time, I felt it would have been just too easy for me to depend upon, to turn to, to rely on, Allah, on God - to have one's remorse removed by some belief in some possible redemption, to have one's mistakes, errors - "sins" - voided by some supra-personal means. To escape into prayer, Namaz. Can there be, I began to wonder, hope, redemption - some meaning in personal tragedy - without a Saviour's grace? Without God, Allah, prayer, Namaz, submission, sin, and faith?

Gradually, painfully slowly, I seemed to move toward some answers, often as a result of personal letters written to friends [15]. For the act of so writing - of trying to so express my feelings, my thoughts - seemed to aid the process of interior reflexion.

However, for a while at least, I maintained a public Muslim persona, stubbornly clinging as I did to some notion of duty; to the pledge of loyalty I had given on my conversion to Islam, a pledge I still then, and for some time afterwards, felt I was honour-bound to honour, and it would take me some eighteen months of an intense interior struggle, and further development of the ethics of my Numinous Way, before I resolved this very personal dilemma. [16]

The Numinous Way

A Debt of Honour

As a result of my new and intense interior struggles - promoted by Fran's death - there grew within me one uncomfortable truth from which even I with all my sophistry could not contrive to hide from myself, even though I tried, for a while.

The truth that I am indebted. That I have a debt of personal honour to both Fran and to Sue, who died - thirteen years apart - leaving me bereft of love, replete with sorrow,

and somewhat perplexed. A debt to all those other women (such as K, and J, and Twinkle) who, over four decades, I have hurt in a personal way; a debt to the Cosmos itself for the suffering I have caused and inflicted through the unethical pursuit of abstractions.

A debt somehow and in some way - beyond a simple remembrance of them - to especially make the life and death of Sue and Fran worthwhile and full of meaning, as if their tragic early dying meant something to both me, and through my words, my deeds, to others. A debt of change, of learning - in me, so that from my pathei-mathos I might be, should be, a better person; presencing through words, living, thought, and deeds, that simple purity of life felt, touched, known, in those stark moments of the immediacy of their loss.

But this honour, I have so painfully discovered, is not the abstract honour of years, of decades, past that I in my arrogance and stupid adherence to and love of abstractions so foolishly believed in and upheld, being thus, becoming thus, as I was a cause of suffering. No; this instead is the essence of honour, founded in empathy; in an empathy with and thus a compassion for all life, sentient and otherwise. This is instead a being human; being in symbiosis with that-which is the essence of our humanity and which can, could and should, gently evolve us - far away from the primitive unempathic, uncompassionate, beings we have been, and unfortunately often still are; far away from the primitive unempathic, uncompassionate, often violent, person I had been, until recently.

A chance, an opportunity twice refused after Fran's death, when I - still then addicted to abstractions - continued to sally forth on their behalf, as if in some way such abstractions were alive, or could be brought to life or made to live if only I, and others, fought for them, sacrificed for them, suffered for them, and caused others to suffer.

But, as the third anniversary of Fran's suicide approached - amid the beauty and promise of one more English Spring - I became suffused again with tears, breaking forth from the sadness, the tragedy, the knowing, of my own unconscionable mistake. The mistake of forgetting; of distracting myself. Forgetting the sorrow, the grief, the pain born from the moments of their dying; distracting myself as I have been by immersing myself in such abstractions as gave me some rôle, some illusion of importance, to keep me occupied, arrogant, and vain: a debtor running away from his debt. A debtor making excuses for each new scheme and scam: an excuse for every hustle, delusion, and lie. For it was so easy - just so very easy - to continue to delude myself.

There are no excuses for this continued failure, this error, of mine, following Fran's death. No words which can hide the truth I tried to hide from myself for so long. The blame is mine, and mine alone. The blame for not immediately acting upon my own inner understanding.

For the reality of my past nine or so years is not that of some sudden life-changing revelation, but rather of a profound inner struggle whose genesis lay years before - in

my experiences with and passion for women; in my time in a monastery; in my ever-growing love for Nature and my involvement with English rural life; in Sue's illness and her tragic death.

This intense struggle was akin to an addiction, and I an addict addicted to abstractions. A struggle between my empathy, my understanding, my *pathei-mathos*, and my life-long belief, itself an abstraction, that somehow in some way I could make a positive difference to the world and that such abstractions as I adhered to, or aided or advocated were or could be a beginning for a better world, and that to achieve this new world certain sacrifice were, unfortunately, necessary.

A struggle which gave rise to what became - refined, and extended, year after year - The Numinous Way, and which struggle was an interior war to change myself, to actually live, every year, every month, every week, every day, suffused with an empathic awareness and a desire not to cause suffering; the struggle to abandon abstractions.

For nine years or so this interior struggle wore me down, until it gradually faded away. It was akin to cycling up a long steep mountain climb in mist and drizzly rain, struggling on against one's aching body and against the desire to stop and rest; and not being able to see the end, the summit, of the climb. And then, slowly, the drizzle ceases, the mist begins to clear, the road becomes gradually less steep, and one is there - in warm bright sunshine nearing the summit of that climb, able to see the beautiful, the numinous, vista beyond, below, for the first time, and which vista after such an effort brings a restful interior peace, the silent tears of one person who feels their human insignificance compared to the mountains, the valleys below, the sky, the Sun, and the vast Cosmos beyond: the wyrdful nature of one fleeting delicate mortal microcosmic nexion which is one's own life.

The Silent Tears of My Unknowing

Thus, and at last, I ceased all involvement with Islam. In truth, I ceased involvement with everything; becoming only one still error-prone human being among billions. One human being who had no aim, no goals, who adhered to no abstractions - either his own or manufactured by others - but who instead just lived day after fleeting or slow day, and who occasionally would record, by some written words, some experience, some personal feeling, or the result of some Thought, manifest as a poem, perhaps, or some missive to a friend, or perhaps an article to elucidate some matter concerned with that Numinous Way which, over those nine years of struggle, represented both the silent tears of my unknowing and the results of my *πάθει μάθος* [17].

As I was to write, not that long ago now, and while on a holiday:

The moment of sublime knowing
As clouds part above the Bay
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain
Still falling:
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder

Have given way to blue
Such that the tide, turning,
Begins to break my vow of distance
Down.

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest
Takes him where
This bearded man of greying hair
No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling

Thus, it is to Sue and Fran to whom I dedicate this work: they who profoundly changed me, and to whom I owe so much. They who by a remembrance of their love, their lives, their gifts, have finally, at last - after so much arrogance and stupidity and weakness on my part - revealed to me the most important truth concerning human life. Which is that a shared, a loyal, love between two people is the most beautiful, the most numinous, the most valuable thing of all.

Fini

Footnotes:

[1] See also the section *Excursus - Galactic Imperium*, below.

[2] One thing about school Physics I continued to immensely joy was practical work in the laboratory, for which work I almost always received an A plus. Indeed, on the one occasion I recall receiving a miserly plain A, I complained about the marking.

[3] One humorous thing about this criminal trial - which lasted many days - was that I was "in the dock" along with some of our Red opponents. These so-called communists had all attired themselves in suits and ties and had short hair - in order to try and make a good impression - while I, *au contraire*, did not care to pander to mundane

expectations, and so had grown a beard, had long hair, sported jeans, a collarless shirt without a tie, and wore an ex-RAF Greatcoat. Thus, I somewhat resembled the archetypal communist agitator while they resembled archetypal fascists.

I was to keep this bearded appearance for the next thirty years, although I did, on occasion, shave off my beard if I needed to travel somewhere incognito, often using some alternative identity.

[4] Morrison was, in later years, to - rather sadly, given his potential - descend into alcoholism and drug-addiction. He was also, over a quarter of a century after the demise of the NDFM, to pen his own recollections of those violent times; recollections which were somewhat inaccurate.

See *Appendix 3* for my comments on Morrison's recollections of those times.

[5] In previous years, having an alternate identity or two proved useful, given my life-style and inclinations.

[6] An extract from this unpublished and incomplete work - whose manuscript I subsequently lost - was published, in 1984, under the title *Vindex - Destiny of The West*.

[7] I mostly rode a fixed gear bike, and never won any events, although I was second and third a few times. I just enjoyed the challenge, but did manage 50 miles in under two and half hours, and - a few years later - won my club's Best All-Rounder trophy, one year, for the most consistent rider during a season.

[8] One curious incident during these years - relating to politics - may be worth recording. For some reason, the Jewish anti-fascist group *Searchlight* had taken a dislike to me, and - following the murder, in Shropshire, of the elderly CND activist Hilda Murrell, they gave my name to the Police as a possible suspect.

As a result, Detectives from Shrewsbury Police interviewed me both at my home, in Church Stretton, and my then place of work - a country house in South Shropshire. Satisfied with my alibi, they eliminated me from their enquiries.

I was subsequently contacted and interviewed by Jenny Rathbone, a rather attractive research assistant from ITV's *World In Action* television programme who were producing a documentary about the murder. She also seemed satisfied that I had nothing to do with the incident, and I do recall sending her, anonymously, a bunch of red roses with a card which read "Good luck with your investigations." It was signed, *A Little Devil*.

[9] These travels included various trips to Egypt, and two into the Sahara desert, on a bicycle. Given that most of the desert area I explored was *hamada* - and thus did not have large, archetypal, sand-dunes - these bicycle trips were was not as difficult as they might seem.

[10] We had to obtain a special and official permit to enable us to take several weeks

supply of heroin medication out of the country, as we had to obtain special medical insurance, both of which were very kindly arranged by our local GP.

[11] In his book, *Homeland: Into a World of Hate*, the journalist Nick Ryan - an ally of the *Searchlight* organization, and a personal friend of its organizers - made several untruthful accusations about me. For instance, he states:

"When Myatt later falls out with Will Browning, he insists on a duel... I'm told he backed down when The Beast claims the right to use baseball bats as weapon."

The truth is that Browning - through a contact, and via e-mail - did suggest such a weapon, to which I replied that the only weapons which could be honourably used were deadly weapons, such as swords or pistols. I included with my reply a copy of the Rules of Duelling, and re-affirmed my challenge to fight a duel using such deadly weapons. I received no reply, and was not contacted in any way by either Browning or his supporters.

It should be noted that I challenged Nick Ryan to a duel - for publishing this lie, and making other malicious accusations about me, in his book. He did not reply, and I therefore concluded that he was a coward, and that my own honour had been vindicated.

My article *Interviews, Journalists, The Police, and Pathei-Mathos* may also be of some interest in respect of this and other incidents concerning journalists.

[12] As is a common practice with recorded television programmes, some of my comments were edited out by the producers.

[13] This obedience was why I, as a Muslim, supported the people, and the policies, I did - because I believed those Muslims were correct, and acting in accord with the Will of Allah, and because I regarded those particular policies as correct, according to Quran and Sunnah.

[14] Rather naively, perhaps, I had somehow expected Islam to be different, and it began to occur to me, from direct personal experience, that all conventional religions, and Ways - however numinously they might presence part of The Numen - were in some or many ways unreasonable abstractions which human beings had to align themselves to and strive to be in accord with, and which quite often resulted in a particular attitude antithetical to empathy and *wu-wei*.

Some of these insights are contained in works of mine such as (1) *Religion and The Numinous Way: Three Essays Concerning The Nature of Religion*; (2) *The Classical Foundations of The Numinous Way*; and (3) *Quid Est Veritas?*

[15] Some of these letters have been published, by JRW, in the second part of the collection entitled *David Wulstan Myatt: Selected Letters, Part One (2002-2008)*

[16] As I wrote in a footnote to one of my many scribblings:

For almost four years - since Francine's suicide - I struggled with this dilemma of honour and duty, believing that it was my honourable duty to stubbornly adhere to the particular Way of Life I had embraced in the previous decade; and stubbornly adhere despite the conclusions of my own thinking regarding compassion and empathy, manifest as these conclusions were in the ethical, and non-racialist, Numinous Way that I had continued to develop. Thus did I during this period, and several times, publicly and in private re-affirm my commitment to that particular Way of Life, striving hard to forget my own answers, born from my thinking, my experiences, and especially from that personal tragedy, for surely these things were only a test, a trial, of my belief, my honour? Was it not therefore my duty to just humbly submit to الله, to thus acknowledge that my own thinking, my own conclusions based on experience, were flawed, the product of error and pride?

But, to paraphrase TS Eliot, here I am now, in the middle way I have devised for myself, having had many years, often wasted, the years between two wars within myself -

“ Trying to use words, and every attempt
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure.”

Thus, I have declared a still rather shaky new truce, a compromise: based on a treaty where I have (re)defined personal honour as a practical manifestation of empathy, of the desire to cease to cause suffering to living-beings, with such empathy and the compassion deriving from it a guide to living that awareness of ourselves as but one nexion to all Life and to the Cosmos, and which awareness, which Cosmic perspective, expresses both our true human nature and the potential we possess to change ourselves into higher, more evolved, beings.

I would like to believe that this new truce I have manufactured will hold, but I have believed that before, and been mistaken, and even now it occurs to me that my theory of ethics, my new definition of honour, is just that: *mine*, and that I may be wrong. Yet my experiences - my feeling for, my empathy with, the numinous (manifest for instance in sublime music or in a mutual personal love) - tell me I can only live what I feel, I know, I empathize with, and this now is presenced in my developed Numinous Way.

During these years of interior reflexion, I studied, for several years, what was regarded as the interior way of Islam - that is, Sufism - in the hope that such a study might provide some guidance in respect of the ethical and philosophical questions, in relation to the Way of Al-Islam, which still perplexed and troubled me. However, this study just led me back to my own Philosophy of The Numen, and to develop it further.

Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν:
τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τὸν **πάθει μάθος**
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.
στάζει δ' ἔν θ' ὕπνῳ πρὸ καρδίας
μνησιπῆμων πόνος: καὶ παρ' ἄ-
κοντας ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν.
δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος
σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων.

If anyone, from reasoning, exclaims loudly that victory of Zeus,
Then they have acquired an understanding of all these things;
Of he who guided mortals to reason,
Who laid down that this possesses authority:
'Learning from adversity'.

Even in sleep there trickles through the heart
The disabling recalling of the pain:
And wisdom arrives regardless of desire,
A favour from daimons
Who have taken the seats of honour, by force.

Aeschylus: Agamemnon (174-183) translated by DW Myatt

Appendix 1

Pathei-Mathos - Genesis of My Unknowing

There are no excuses for my extremist past, for the suffering I caused to loved ones, to family, to friends, to those many more, those far more, 'unknown others' who were or who became the 'enemies' posited by some extremist ideology. No excuses because the extremism, the intolerance, the hatred, the violence, the inhumanity, the prejudice were mine; my responsibility, born from and expressive of my character; and because the discovery of, the learning of, the need to live, to regain, my humanity arose because of and from others and not because of me.

Thus what exposed my hubris - what for me broke down that certitude-of-knowing which extremism breeds and re-presents - was not something I did; not something I achieved; not something related to my character, my nature, at all. Instead, it was a gift offered to me by two others - the legacy left by their tragic early dying. That it took not one but two personal tragedies - some thirteen years apart - for me to accept

and appreciate the gift of their love, their living, most surely reveals my failure, the hubris that for so long suffused me, and the strength and depth of my so lamentable extremism.

But the stark and uneasy truth is that I have no real, no definitive, answers for anyone, including myself. All I have now is a definite uncertainty of knowing, and certain feelings, some intuitions, some reflexions, a few certainly fallible suggestions arising mostly from reflexions concerning that, my lamentable, past, and thus - perhaps - just a scent, just a scent, of some understanding concerning some-things, perfumed as this understanding is with ineffable sadness.

For what I painfully, slowly, came to understand, via *pathei-mathos*, was the importance - the human necessity, the virtue - of love, and how love expresses or can express the numinous in the most sublime, the most human, way. Of how extremism (of whatever political or religious or ideological kind) places some abstraction, some ideation, some notion of duty to some ideation, before a personal love, before a knowing and an appreciation of the numinous. Thus does extremism - usurping such humanizing personal love - replace human love with an extreme, an unbalanced, an intemperate, passion for something abstract: some ideation, some ideal, some dogma, some 'victory', some-thing always supra-personal and always destructive of personal happiness, personal dreams, personal hopes; and always manifesting an impersonal harshness: the harshness of hatred, intolerance, certitude-of-knowing, unfairness, violence, prejudice.

Thus, instead of a natural and a human concern with what is local, personal and personally known, extremism breeds a desire to harshly interfere in the lives of others - personally unknown and personally distant - on the basis of such a hubriatic certitude-of-knowing that strife and suffering are inevitable. For there is in all extremists that stark lack of personal humility, that unbalance, that occurs when - as in all extremisms - what is masculous is emphasized and idealized and glorified to the detriment (internal, and external) of what is muliebral, and thus when some ideology or some dogma or some faith or some cause is given precedence over love and when loyalty to some manufactured abstraction is given precedence over loyalty to family, loved ones, friends.

For I have sensed that there are only changeable individual ways and individual fallible answers, born again and again via *pathei-mathos* and whose subtle scent - the wisdom - words can neither capture nor describe, even though we try and perhaps need to try, and try perhaps (as for me) as one hopeful needful act of a non-religious redemption.

Thus, and for instance, I sense - only sense - that peace (or the beginning thereof) might possibly just be not only the freedom from subsuming personal desires but also the freedom from striving for some supra-personal, abstract, impersonal, goal or goals. That is, a just-being, a flowing and a being-flowed. No subsuming concern with what-might-be or what-was. No lust for ideations; no quest for the violation of difference. Instead - a calmful waiting; just a listening, a seeing, a feeling, of what-is

as those, as our, emanations of Life flow and change as they naturally flow and change, in, with, and beyond us: human, animal, of sea, soil, sky, Cosmos, and of Nature... But I am only dreaming, here in pathei-mathos-empathy-land where there is no past-present-future passing each of us with our future-past: only the numen presenced in each one of our so individual timeless human stories.

Yet, in that - this - other world, the scent of having understood remains, which is why I feel I now quite understand why, in the past, certain individuals disliked - even hated - me, given my decades of extremism: my advocacy of racism, fascism, holocaust denial, and National-Socialism, followed (after my conversion to Islam) by my support of bin Laden, the Taliban, and advocacy of 'suicide attacks'.

I also understand why - given my subversive agenda and my amoral willingness to use any tactic, from Occult honeytraps to terrorism, to undermine the society of the time as prelude to revolution - certain people have sought to discredit me by distributing and publishing certain allegations.

Furthermore, given my somewhat Promethean peregrinations - which included being a Catholic monk, a vagabond, a fanatical violent neo-nazi, a theoretician of terror, running a gang of thieves, studying Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism; being a nurse, a farm worker, and supporter of Jihad - I expect many or most of those interested in or curious about my 'numinous way' and my recent mystical writings to be naturally suspicious of or doubtful about my reformation and my rejection of extremism.

Thus I harbour no resentment against individuals, or organizations, or groups, who over the past forty or so years have publicly and/or privately made negative or derogatory comments about me or published items making claims about me. Indeed, I now find myself in the rather curious situation of not only agreeing with some of my former political opponents on many matters, but also (perhaps) of understanding (and empathizing with) their motivation; a situation which led and which leads me to appreciate even more just how lamentable my extremism was and just how arrogant, selfish, wrong, and reprehensible, I as a person was, and how in many ways many of those former opponents were and are (*ex concessio*) better people than I ever was or am.

Which is one reason why I have written what I have recently written about extremism and my extremist past: so that perchance someone or some many may understand extremism, and its causes, better and thus be able to avoid the mistakes I made, avoid causing the suffering I caused; or be able to in some way more effectively counter or prevent such extremism in the future. And one reason - only one - why I henceforward must live in reclusion and *in silencio*.

David Myatt
May 2012 ce

In Loving Memory of Frances, died 29th May 2006
In Loving Memory of Sue, died 4th April 1993

Appendix 2

A Change of Perspective

Over the past decade there has been, for me, a complete change of perspective, for I have gone from upholding and violently propagating the racialism of National-Socialism - and encouraging the overthrow of the existing *status quo* through revolutionary insurrection - to the acceptance of empathy and compassion, and to that gentle, quiet, desire to cease to cause suffering, which form the basis for what I have called The Numinous Way, with this Numinous Way being apolitical, undogmatic, and considering both race and "the folk" as unethical abstractions which move us away from empathy and compassion and which thus obscure our true human nature.

Why unethical? Because The Numinous Way uncovers, through empathy, the nexion we, as individuals, are to all life, thus making us aware of how all life - sentient and otherwise - is connected and part of that matrix, that Unity, which is the Cosmos, and it is a knowing and appreciation of this connexion which is lost when we impose abstractions upon life, and especially when we judge other beings by a criteria established by some such abstraction. For this knowing and appreciation of our connexion to other life is the beginning of compassion, and a presencing - a manifestation - of our humanity, of our knowing of ourselves in relation to other life, and the Cosmos itself; and, thus, a placing of us, as individuals, in an ethical, and a Cosmic, perspective.

This change of my perspective - this personal change in me - arose, or derived, from several things: from involvement with and belief in, during the past decade, a certain Way of Life (Al-Islam), considered by many to be a religion; from thinking deeply about certain ethical questions whose genesis was reflecting upon my thirty years of violent political activism; and from a variety of personal events and experiences, two of which events involved the loss of loved ones, and one of which loss involved the suicide of my fiancée.

However, this change was a slow, often difficult, process, and there was to be, during this decade, a stubborn refusal, by me, to follow - except for short periods - where this change led me; a stubborn refusal to-be, except for short periods, the person I was shown to be, should-be, by and through this alchemical process of inner change. Thus was there a stubborn clinging to doing what I conceived to be my honourable duty, and it is only in the last few months that I have finally and to my own satisfaction resolved, in an ethical way, the dilemma of such a duty, thus ending my association with a particular Way of Life, which Way many consider a religion.

During this decade of inner reflexion, of great outward change - of lifestyle,

occupation, belief, place of dwelling - there was a quite slow rediscovery of the individual I had been before my fanatical pursuit of a political cause became the priority of my life: the person behind the various rôles played or assumed, over more than three decades, for the purpose of attaining particular outer goals deriving from some abstraction, some ideal, or some other impersonal thing. That is, I gradually, over the past decade, ceased believing in a certain principle which I had formerly accepted; which principle I had placed before my own personal feelings; which principle I had used, quite deliberately, to change myself; and which principle I had stubbornly adhered to for almost four decades, believing that it was my honourable duty to do so.

This principle was that in order to attain one's "ideal world", certain sacrifices had to be made "for the greater good". In accord with this principle, I considered I had certain duties, and accordingly sacrificed not only my own, personal, happiness, but also that of others, including that of four women who loved me; and it is perhaps fair to conclude that it was this principle which made me seem to others to be, for three decades, a political fanatic, and - for many years after that - a kind of religious zealot. Indeed, it is probably even fairer to conclude that I was indeed such a fanatic and such a zealot, for, in the pursuit of some abstraction, some ideal, some notion of duty, some dogma, I deliberately controlled my own nature, a nature evident - over the decades - in my poetry; in my wanderings as a vagabond; in my initial enthusiasm as a Christian monk; in the tears cried upon hearing some sublime piece of music; in my love of Nature, and of women. That is, there were always times in my life when I reverted back to being the person I felt, I knew, I was; always times when I stopped, for a few months, or a year or maybe longer, interfering in the world; when I ceased to place a perceived duty before myself, and when I thus interacted with others, with the world, only in a direct, personal, empathic way *sans* some ideal, some dogma.

Now, I have finally come to understand that this principle of idealism, the guiding principle of most of my adult life, is unethical, and therefore fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is what I have described elsewhere as a manufactured abstraction, a great cause of suffering, and that nothing - no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty - is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others - based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction - which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being.

Thus, The Numinous Way - as now developed, and as explicated by me in the past two years or so - represents my true nature: the hard, difficult, re-discovery of what I had controlled, and lost; and, perhaps more importantly, an evolution of that personal nature as a result of my diverse experiences, my learning from my mistakes, and my

empathic awareness of the suffering I have caused to others.

Hence, I have been, for many decades, wrong; misguided. Or, rather, I misguided myself, allowing idealism and a perceived duty to triumph over, to veil, my humanity. My good intentions were no excuse, even though, for nearly four decades, I made them an excuse, as idealists always do. For, during all the decades of my various involvements - of my arrogant interference based on some abstraction - I sincerely believed I was doing what was "right", or "honourable", and that such suffering as I caused, or aided, or incited, was "necessary" for some ideal to be born in some "future".

But now my inescapable reality is that of a personal empathy, a personal compassion, a simple, quiet, letting-be; a knowing that such answers as I have, now, are just my answers, and that I have no duty other than to be human, to gently strive to be a better human being through reforming myself by quietly cultivating empathy and compassion. Of course, I do not expect to be understood, and probably will continue to be judged, by others, according to some, or all, of my former beliefs, involvements.

David Myatt
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Appendix 3

Myatt, Morrison, and the NDFM

Around 2005 CE, a former political associate of mine - Eddy Morrison - wrote his version of some events which occurred in and around Leeds between the years 1972 and 1974. Since his version of events differs from the reality I remember it is only fitting that I present here "my side of the story".

It should be noted that - despite some personal and political differences between myself and this person - I steadfastly defended him for well over ten years, often praising his commitment and dedication to "the Cause". In the 1980's I had occasion to defend and praise him to John Tyndall, then leader of the BNP. This led Tyndall to comment: "your loyalty to him is commendable..." Yet I was to learn that this person - or Street Soldier as he styled himself - had also been in contact with Tyndall, and "warned Tyndall about me", having sent copies of newspaper articles about me containing unproven allegations of involvement with Satanism. Tyndall was one of the very few people, over the past three decades, to have the honour, the decency, to ask me in person for "my side of the story". Tyndall was always wary of Morrison, having, in the April 1983 CE issue of his *Spearhead* magazine, written about Morrison in less than complimentary terms, stating that, "I know a good deal about the career of Eddy Morrison..."

Morrison wrote:

Ok, we thought, if they want trouble we'll go over the top. We booked an open air public meeting for a Saturday morning (1973) and again our blaring red posters announced that our National Leader, Colin Jordan would be speaking. When we arrived (about twenty of us), the whole area was occupied by a veritable sea of reds. Not only IS turned up to stop our speaking, but the Communist Party and a host of smaller groups. We were badly outnumbered but steamed into the reds. In a few seconds, fist fights had broke out all over the Town Hall steps. I was struggling with a Zionist "class warrior". I noticed Dave Myatt was on the floor being kicked by the reds. We pulled him away and with a few cuts and bruises to our credit, we beat a hasty but sensible retreat. (Memoirs of a Street Soldier.)

Morrison, it seems, is mixing-up two separate events, separated by a year. The only time in those often violent years that I was "on the floor, being kicked by Reds" was during the later outdoor demonstration of the NDFM at Leeds Town Hall steps when I was jumped on from behind by a Red, who was then jumped on by a Policeman with all three of us tumbling down the steps. I landed on my back, pinned down by the Policeman. It was then that some cowardly person kicked me twice in the head after which I was arrested and taken to a nearby Police Station.

Morrison wrote:

From the first it was attack, attack, attack! Our first activities included the turning over (twice!) of an Anti-Apartheid Exhibition in Leeds. Another activity that got us a stack of publicity and our first arrests, was a counter-demo to an Anti-Racist march in Bradford. This one hit the news because some of our lads captured their main anti-racist TUC banner and publicly burned it! (Memoirs of a Street Soldier.)

I was the one responsible for both the attacks on the Anti-Apartheid Exhibition (which attacks were my idea), on each occasion accompanied by only one other activist. I was also arrested at the Anti-Racist march in Bradford and charged with destroying the anti-racist banner. It should also be noted that while Eddy Morrison and myself jointly formed the NDFM, I was the one who agitated for its creation, eventually convincing him the formation of such an organization was a good idea.

Morrison wrote:

At this time I had the unpleasant duty of rooting out and expelling a small bunch of "Satanists" who thought that tying our White Nationalism with their weird cult practices would get us front page publicity. It did! But although they say any publicity is good publicity, it isn't always. I had to take a bunch of our inner core harder members and eject about seven of these Cult people from our membership and ban them from our HQ. It was a pity as one in particular whose name I have mentioned earlier was a stalwart founder member. Why he went off the rails I'll never really know, and expelling him was painful but very necessary. (Memoirs of a Street Soldier.)

There was no "bunch of satanists", just a sensationalist, factually incorrect, article in the local evening newspaper. The newspaper interview was, for me, a learning experience. I had decided to give an interview (my first) with a journalist to talk about our new NS movement, the NDFM. I briefly mentioned how it might be possible for chaos to be created by subversive means, and subversive groups, as a prelude to a revolution which an NS movement could take advantage of, an idea I had been discussing for a while with several Comrades, including some in Column 88.

The journalist promised to let me read his final copy before it was published - a condition I had specified before giving the interview - and several photographs of me were taken, with him suggesting I hold something to do with the Occult, since he had noticed I had a collection of horror, and Occult, fiction (most of which in fact were given or loaned to me by Eddy Morrison). Perhaps foolishly, I agreed, holding up some Occult thingy which Joe Short had given to me a few days before. Our conversation lasted for about half an hour, during which the journalist took a few notes (it was not recorded).

I assumed that he would simply recount what I had said. Of course he neither showed me the article before publication, nor printed what I said, except for one short sentence about causing chaos. The whole article was a fabrication, designed to be sensationalist and to discredit me. This whole episode was to be a very interesting, worthwhile, experience for me: pathei-mathos, as Aeschylus wrote.

As for the allegations which the journalist made about animal sacrifice, they were investigated at the time by both the Police and the RSPCA whose conclusion was that they were lies, and perhaps, as I concluded, concocted by the journalist to get his name on the front page of the newspaper and sell more copies.

In addition, about this matter, as elsewhere, Eddy Morrison seems rather forgetful. All he did was call round to my garret accompanied by one other NDFM member whom I knew well. Morrison - standing well away from me when I, as almost always, answered the downstairs door, armed - then announced his "expulsion" of me. I did not care - for I was then planning to return to Africa, and enlist in the Rhodesian Army, having already made contact with someone there. So I said nothing, and Morrison went away. This "expulsion" lasted only about six weeks, after which it was "business as usual". Without my violent activism, my public speaking, my fanaticism, the NDFM had become moribund.

Morrison wrote:

We organised a meeting on Leeds Town Hall steps in the Summer of 1974 and I was the main speaker. We had fifty or so NDFM "stormtroopers" protecting the meeting, but were opposed by a bunch of red weirdos including "Transexuals Against the Nazis". I spoke for about twenty minutes whilst the lads (and some lasses) held back the red filth. There were local reporters everywhere and although the police soon closed the meeting, we got away with two arrests and a few cuts and bruises. (Memoirs of a Street Soldier.)

The "We" who organized this meeting were the Street Soldier and myself, and he was not the main speaker. I was. I spoke for nearly half an hour and managed to control the seething crowd of Reds by haranguing them. I also dealt quite well with many hecklers. Then the Street Soldier began to speak. He spoke for only a few minutes before the Reds surged forward and fighting began. It was during this fighting that - as I recalled above - I was jumped on from behind by a Red and then by a Policeman. I and one other NDFM member were arrested and subsequently charged with "Breach of the Peace". Several Reds were also arrested and charged with various offences, and several Police officers were injured as they tried to break up the fights.

When my case came to Trial, the Prosecution tried to prove that I had "incited the crowd", and there was no mention whatsoever by either the Police or the Prosecution of the "Street Soldier" having spoken or having "incited the crowd". I was found guilty on the lying evidence of one dishonourable Police officer, and one of the Reds was also convicted and sent to Prison.

Morrison wrote:

We were told by London nationalists that NOBODY spoke at Hyde Park Corner. That was an open invitation for us to book a coach and take fifty NDFM down to Speakers Corner in Hyde Park. We set up a stand and three of our people spoke, whilst I controlled the stewards. We soon attracted a large crowd of lefties and for some reason a stack of anti-fascist Jewish taxi drivers. We held them at bay as long as we could. I was knocked senseless by some Zionist wielding a metal object. With blood streaming from quite a few cuts we marched away under police observation singing "We'll meet again" to the Reds. It was only a short meeting but we had broken the taboo. White Nationalists had again spoken at Speakers Corner.

In fact, only two people spoke at this rally: myself and Joe Short. I stood on a rather shaky table and spoke for about half an hour or so, haranguing the crowd and dealing with several hecklers. I then stepped

down, and Joe Short (who looked rather like Alfred Rosenberg) began to speak. He did not speak for long - only a few words in fact - before the Reds surged forward and some fighting began. One of our stewards was arrested and later charged with possessing an offensive weapon. I believe part of my speech was filmed by an NDFM member using an 8mm camera. We then proceeded to walk toward Downing Street, followed by the Police, before dispersing. I spent that weekend in London, with a lady friend.

In respect of Eddy Morrison himself, we were both once arrested by the Regional Crime Squad and thrown into Prison for several weeks. Before this imprisonment - during my "interrogation" - he came into the room several times and asked me to co-operate with the Police, which I refused to do. I believe he did not, at that time, realize the potential seriousness of the charges which might be against us.

Glossary

Attap - traditional Malay building, with a roof thatched with Palm leaves

B & E - breaking and entering (burglary)

Bender - a suspended prison sentence.

Bumph - documents, usually boring (often official) material

European - Caucasians from Europe

Fence - dealer in stolen goods

Gen - facts; knowledge; information

Gharry - Colonial British slang for a vehicle which conveys people (esp. Europeans) from place to place

G & T - Gin and Indian Tonic Water

Grass - to inform on, to the Police

Memsaabs - Colonial (White, European) women

Nick - Police Station

Nonce - convicted child-molester

Panga - African term for the type of machete used in Africa

Peter - prison slang for a cell

Pukka - good; reliable (as in pukka gen: reliable info)

Red-band - prison trustee

Rule 43 - secure segregation in prison

Screw - prison officer (warder)

cc David Myatt 2010 ce



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So Many Tears

Here am I listening to JS Bach's *Erbarme Dich* and weeping, weeping, weeping: such tears of sadness as if all the pain, all the suffering of the past five thousand years has come to be within me, this selfish man who caused so much suffering, who once - long ago it seems - thought he knew and understood and who thus sent forth so many words.

So many words... Now there is only the pain of knowing; only the anguish of failure; only one allegory among so many to bring that feeling, that knowing, which is far beyond any words I know.

So much failure so many times, by me, by others. Why cannot we learn? Why have we not learnt? Why has not the simple love of one such simple numinous allegory come to stay with us, day after day, decade upon decade, century after century? Why did not the simple love of my own personal leaning born from the tragedy of one beautiful woman's death stay with me through those so recent weeks of ignorance when I turned back toward a vainful striving?

Why have we always, it seems, regressed toward the mistakes of our past? The mistakes of suffering born from striving for - from adherence to - some abstraction which leeches away that personal love, that compassion, that empathy that is the very essence of our human being?

So and yet again I am humbled by my own knowledge of myself; by that love which has lived within so many others century century and which so briefly lived within me until I became distracted again by the passion of following some stupid inhuman abstraction.

Failure upon failure; death following death; suffering upon suffering. Why have we not learnt? Why have I not learnt? Or am I by my life - by the mistakes of my life, by my own stupidity, time upon time - just one more example among so many examples these past five thousand years?

So much promise - oh how so much promise! - that lives within us, that has lived within some of us but which so many, it seems, take or leech away through their own selfish passion or through their striving for some lifeless un-numinous abstraction, just as it lived within her, him, taken from them as it was taken from them by things not even now fully understood but only felt as when I as in the moment just now past bent down, weeping, weeping, weeping such tears of sadness as if all the anguish of the centuries was seeping out from the depths below.

So, the music ends, and I am once again one man veering toward old age, looking out toward the autumnal hill where the clouds of Dusk have come to cover the setting Sun as begins again one more dark night for this forgetful fool.

Erbarme dich, mein Gott,
um meiner Zähren willen!
Schaue hier, Herz und Auge
weint vor dir bitterlich.
Erbarme dich, mein Gott.

Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen,
stell' ich mich doch wieder ein;
hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen
durch sein' Angst und Todespein.
Ich verleugne nicht die Schuld;
aber deine Gnad' und Huld
ist viel größer als die Sünde,
die ich stets in mir befinde.



The Love That Needs No Words

On this planet we humans call Earth, there is, as Sophocles wrote [1], much that is strange, but nothing has more strangeness than we human beings, for we are capable of such honour, such heroism, such compassion, and yet we also do and have done so many deeds of dishonour, possess so much hubris, and have been the cause of so much suffering, so many killings, so much destruction and disruption of the numinous, millennia after millennia.

In addition, we so often delude ourselves or lie to ourselves or make excuses for ourselves: for our dishonour, for our hubris, for our lack of empathy and compassion.

Can we as a species survive? Do we even deserve to survive, given our profanity, our destruction of Life, of Nature: of She who gave us birth and who keeps us alive and who can keep us balanced between our honour and our dishonour? Keep us balanced - if only we could live in the correct way: with empathy, compassion, honour and a shared personal love, where we feel and know ourselves as but one nexion, one connexion, among many, on this planet, in the Cosmos, and where we have a real, a living, bond with the very land itself which sustains us; where our needs are simple because our desires are restrained through our abandonment of abstractions, and through our knowledge of ourselves and of how easy, how very easy, it is to cause suffering.

Our human truth is, it seems to me, that it is not right to give names to some things or some deeds or some thoughts; it is un-numinous to try and describe or categorize some experience by some term or some abstraction; it is incorrect to manufacture some theory, in some poor attempt to place such terms in some alleged causal context.

In my admittedly fallible view, one of our many human problems - one of the great problems of our modern ways of life - is that there is too much noise, especially the noise of and from words, spoken, read and thought. Far far too many words spoken; far too much speaking, too little silent, interior, reflexion, especially among the natural peace of Nature where we can sense and know again in our stillness the

acausal Time of the Cosmos.

For wisdom is not to be found in speeches, in political or social manifestos, tracts or books; nor in some political, religious, or social, theory or dogma. And especially not in some abstraction, some ideal.

Rather, wisdom is there to be discovered, within ourselves; others can only gently point or guide us toward this self-discovery, toward the necessary interior, quiet, reflexion - perhaps through some work of Art, or some sublime piece of music, some poignant literature; perhaps some poem; or perhaps by some noble deed done or some selfless personal love that needs no words to speak or advertise its wordless name.

David Myatt
April 2010

[1] πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδεν ἄνθρωπου δεινότερον πέλει



In Response To Some Questions Recently Asked

To Begin

τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν

National-Socialism and Racism

The story begins with hubris, with a fanatic, an extremist, who stupidly idealized National-Socialism and who spent thirty years propagating it and fighting to implement its abstractions, its beliefs, one of which is racism.

But now I regard National-Socialism - of whatever variety - as an immoral set of beliefs, an example par excellence of hubris.

As for the indignity of racism, it is abhorrent - redolent of hubris - based as racism is on the dishonour of prejudice and the divisive abstraction of 'race'. For now, for me, what is important - the understanding wrought via my *pathei-mathos* - are personal love, compassion, humility, kindness, tolerance, and *wu-wei*; virtues which are the essence of our humanity and virtues which are anathema to racists, to National-Socialists, and to fascists.

"What is hurtful to you, do not do to someone else. That is the entire Torah; the rest is only explanation." Hillel the Elder, *Babylonian Talmud*, Tractate Shabbat 31a

The Holocaust

For decades - both as a neo-nazi and as a Muslim - I believed, I asserted, that the Shoah was a myth, a product of Allied post-war propaganda subsequently maintained and propagated by 'Zionists' (a modern NS code-word for Jews, designed to try and circumvent racial hatred legislation) in order to both establish the State of Israel and to enhance 'Jewish power over Aryans'.

As I wrote in my essay *Hitler, National-Socialism, and Politics - A Personal Reappraisal* first published on January 30th 2012 ce:

"Over the past year I have continued to study, research, and reflect upon [the] 'complex philosophical and ethical issues' in respect of National-Socialism, Hitler, and Reichsfolk [...]

This further study and research, perhaps wyrdfully, included getting to know people who shared their personal and familial experiences of National-Socialist Germany with me, with these experiences being of those who were the subject of the *Nürnberger Gesetze* and who thus traumatically endured the consequences of those laws and the prejudice and hatred they codified. These direct experiences of the personal and moral effects of National-Socialism were those of individuals that I, through a personal knowing of them, considered to be honourable and which personal experiences thus served to place into perspective, into a moral - a numinous - perspective, the accounts given to me, decades earlier, of some German National-Socialists I had met who fought for and gave their loyalty to Adolf Hitler and which accounts had been formative of what became my decades-long dedication to the cause of National-Socialism, a dedication broken only by my personal experiences of Islam and by the *πάθει μάθος* that was the genesis of my philosophy of The Numinous Way."

That article led one person to quite naturally enquire why it had taken me nearly forty years to listen to those who had first hand experience of the brutality of National-Socialist Germany and to listen to those who had endured the inhumanity of the concentration camps and who thus knew the terrible reality of the holocaust.

The answer was simple, and not only exposed the appalling reality of my reprehensible extremist past but also possibly exposed something about extremism as well. For the answer was that I fanatically believed that my illusory version of history and of National-Socialism was correct so that I hardened myself and therefore was intolerant of any and all criticism of NS Germany, Hitler, and National-Socialism. Thus I regarded the holocaust as 'a hoax', a product of Allied post-war propaganda, and with the intolerance, prejudice, and hatred of a fanatic refused to listen to people and branded as 'liars' those who spoke or wrote of their experiences if those experiences

in any way reflected badly on NS Germany, Hitler, and National-Socialism.

Therefore, and in common perhaps with other fanatics, other extremists, I ignored, dismissed, all evidence that contradicted or seemed to contradict my cherished beliefs while seizing on and trumpeting any evidence, however slight, that seemed to confirm those beliefs.

With the expiration, in 2009, of the extremist I was, there was an openness toward this evidence, an empathy with the people subsequently met who had suffered because of the policies and the people of NS Germany and an empathy with those who had first-hand or familial experience of the horrors of the camps.

Thus there is no longer any denial by me of the truth of those horrors, of the evil that was NS Germany. As someone once wrote: "Das war ein Vorspiel nur, dort wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen."

Thus there is now lament made for the reprehensible deeds, beliefs, prejudice, and extremism, of my past and for my decades-long hubris.

Change of Beliefs

A criticism often made is that I suddenly and very often 'change my beliefs, my views', and flit from one cause or ideology to another. The reality of my life, however, is somewhat different (or at least seems so to me).

For thirty years (1968-1998) I was a loyal and fanatical neo-nazi; was imprisoned twice for my street activism; was involved in many fights and brawls; and did all that I could - openly and covertly - to propagate National-Socialism. Until my conversion to Islam in 1998 I maintained my respect for - and my loyalty to - Colin Jordan (whom I first met in 1968) as I maintained a respect for several other NS activists such as Eddy Morrison (whom I first met in 1971). Regarding that first meeting with Eddy Morrison, I for example wrote in 2010 (in *Myngath*) that I immediately liked him and that "he was enthusiastic, committed, optimistic, down-to-earth and quite *au fait* with National-Socialism. He also, at that time, possessed a certain personal charisma, and thus always had a few youthful followers who considered him their leader." In *Ethos of Extremism* I additionally wrote that "in contrast to me, Eddy Morrison had a natural charisma, a certain charm, and was an experienced and adept organizer. He also, unlike me at the time, had a good sense of humour and was well-liked." In the 1980's I had occasion to defend him to John Tyndall, leading Tyndall to write to me in a letter that "your loyalty to him is commendable".

Three decades of dedicated activism and of such loyalty are hardly the actions of someone flitting from one cause to another, especially since my move away from National-Socialism toward Islam was a slow process, lasting nearly a decade; a process begun by experiences in Egypt between 1988 and 1998. As I wrote in Part Six

of *Ethos of Extremism*:

" There was no sudden decision to convert to Islam. Rather, it was the culmination of a process that began a decade earlier with travels in the Sahara Desert. During the decade before my conversion I regularly travelled abroad, with this travel including well-over a dozen visits to Egypt and a few visits to other lands where the majority of the population were Muslim.

Egypt, especially, enchanted me; and not because of the profundity of ancient monuments. Rather because of the people, their culture, and the land itself. How life, outside of Cairo, seemed to mostly cling to the Nile - small settlements, patches and strips of verdancy, beside the flowing water and hemmed in by dry desert. I loved the silence, the solitude, the heat, of the desert; the feeling of there being precariously balanced between life and death, dependant on carried water, food; the feeling of smallness, a minute and fragile speck of life; the vast panorama of sky. There was a purity there, human life in its essence, and it was so easy, so very easy, to feel in such a stark environment that there was, must be, a God, a Creator, who could decide if one lived or died.

Once, after a long trip into the Western Desert, I returned to Cairo to stay at some small quite run-down hotel: on one side, a Mosque, while not that far away on the other side was a night-club. A strange, quixotic, juxtaposition that seemed to capture something of the real modern Egypt. Of course, very early next morning the Adhaan from the mosque woke me. I did not mind. Indeed, I found it hauntingly beautiful and, strangely, not strange at all; as if it was some long-forgotten and happy memory, from childhood perhaps.

Once, I happened to be cycling from Cairo airport to the centre of the city as dawn broke, my route taking me past several Mosques. So timeless, so beautiful, the architecture, the minarets, framed by the rising sun...

Once, and many years before my conversion, I bought from a bookshop in Cairo a copy of the Quran containing the text in Arabic with a parallel English interpretation, and would occasionally read parts of it, and although I found several passages interesting, intriguing, I then had no desire, felt no need, to study Islam further. Similarly, the many friendly conversations I had with Egyptians during such travels - about their land, their culture, and occasionally about Islam - were for me just informative, only the interest of a curious outsider, and did not engender any desire to study such matters in detail.

However, all these experiences, of a decade and more, engendered in me a feeling which seemed to grow stronger year by year with every new trip. This was the feeling that somehow in some strange haunting way I belonged there, in such places, as part of such a culture. A feeling which caused me -

some time after the tragic death of Sue (aged 39) from cancer in the early 1990's - to enrol on, and begin, an honours course in Arabic at a British university.

Thus, suffice to say that a decade of such travel brought a feeling of familiarity and resonance with Egypt, its people, its culture, that land, and with the Islam that suffused it, so that when in the Summer of 1998 I seriously began to study Islam, to read Ahadith, Seerah, and the whole Quran, I had at least some context from practical experience. Furthermore, the more I studied Islam in England in those Summer months the more I felt, remembered, the sound of the beautiful Adhaan; remembered the desert - that ætherial purity, that sense of God, there; and remembered that haunting feeling of perhaps already belonging to such a culture, such a way of life. Hence my conversion to Islam, then, in September of that year, seemed somehow fated, wyrdful."

For eight years I remained a committed, a rather fanatical, and certainly a radical, Muslim. My move away from Islam toward developing my own philosophy of The Numinous Way was again a slow - and an interiorly painful - process, fraught with personal and moral difficulties, and the result of:

"a seminal event outside of my control and beyond the parameters of my then vainglorious understanding, my hubriatic sense of purpose, and the delusion of idealism. This event, this pathei-mathos, was the suicide, in 2006, of my fiancée. That I required three years and more to learn, to understand, the lessons of that and of another, prior, personal tragedy - to rediscover my humanity - certainly speaks of my character, my extremism, my hubris." *Rejecting Abstractions - A Personal Lesson From Extremism* (2012)

Again, hardly the actions of someone flitting from one cause to another on a whim.

Satanism

In 1973 following my release from prison I fanatically rededicated myself to the cause of Hitler's National-Socialism and conceived a plan to create a covert subversive group to aid our revolutionary struggle. My original idea - following some useful contacts made in prison - was to use sexual entrapment (the allure of sexual favours from women) to gain the cooperation, the assistance, of some useful, respectable, people.

Discussions with several comrades led to this suggestion being modified to include an occult - a Satanist - element, adding thus an 'underground' flavour and some 'heretical' glamour. Consequently, I began a rather cursory study of occultism in order to see how 'glamorous', how subversive, they really were, although for me at that time and subsequently occultism and Satanism were just a bit of a wheeze; just a possibly

useful part of one covert means to a subversive end. The end being a neo-nazi - or a fascist - revolution in Britain, by whatever means.

During those two first decades of neo-nazi fanaticism my essential morality was that of 'my race, the Aryan race, first' so that I at the time had no problem with the amorality involved in such a subversive group using sexual entrapment. If something aided 'the cause' - and the Aryan race - it was considered good, or at least useful. Thus I then considered that such a covert occult group was or had the potential to be useful to the cause, especially when the occult elements included pro-NS material and material denying the holocaust, something I insisted be included. Thus one aim of this group came to be covertly, subversively, spreading neo-nazi ideas under the guise of occultism and Satanism. Hence it did not matter that I personally had no practical interest in, no belief in, the occult, and regarded 'magick' - sorcery and rituals - as quite risible. For if the group worked - in terms of spreading NS ideas, recruiting useful people and getting those people to aid or assist us in a practical way - it worked. That was all that mattered to me then, fanatic, extremist, and immoral propagandist that I was.

My own personal attitude toward occultism precluded practical involvement anyway; an attitude summed up in my early essay *Occultism and National-Socialism*, first written in the 1980's as part of my *Logic of History* project of which my text *Vindex, Destiny of The West* formed a part. Thus I regarded both Satanism and occultism as incompatible with National-Socialism, indeed as contradictory to what I considered was the rational, civilizing, wholeness - the organic unity - of National-Socialism.

It was this dismissive attitude of mine, a reforming spell in a Christian monastery, and the lack of results - in terms of the NS cause - that led me to distance myself from that covert occult group, although, as recounted in *Ethos of Extremism* and elsewhere, I maintained a friendly contact with its organizers and occasionally had occasion to use some of the influence of some of their contacts in respect of my own subversive National-Socialist cadre, one of whose names was the Aryan Resistance Movement.

However, it was the development in the late 1990's of my 'ethical National-Socialism' with its emphasis on the morality of honour, followed by my conversion to Islam in 1998, which led me to cease what little cooperation there was.

The rest of the story vis-a-vis me and alleged involvement in Satanism is all rumour, disinformation, supposition, unsubstantiated allegation, and perhaps even urban legend.

My life from 1998 until now, and evident in my varied and voluminous writings during these years, has been one of commitment to the morality of Islam - striving to follow the guidelines of Quran and Sunnah - followed by a striving to live the morality of my Numinous Way, followed by a desire for numinous expiation for the suffering I as extremist caused; such a desire breeding replies and explanations such as this which may, just possibly may, be a small part of such expiation, or at least and hopefully the beginning thereof.

To paraphrase what I wrote in my essay *A Matter of Honour*, my poetry, my published correspondence, and my ethical philosophy of The Numinous Way, reveal the thoughts and feelings and ideas and experiences and (importantly) the failings of someone so different from a Satanist that such writings are, to me, an answer to such rumour, disinformation, supposition, unsubstantiated allegation, regarding involvement with Satanism, as are my years of interior ethical and philosophical struggle to reform, to change, myself – years documented in letters, essays, and poems, especially after the suicide of my fiancée in 2006.

To Conclude

τὰ δ' ἄλλα σιγῶ: βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώσση μέγας
βέβηκεν.....

David Myatt
28th March 2012 ce

Acknowledgements:

This text summarizes my replies to particular questions submitted to or asked of me by various correspondents during February and March of this year (2012) following the publication of various autobiographical essays, such as *Ethos of Extremism*; essays critical of National-Socialism and Hitler, and the publication of various items - such as *So Much Remorse*, and *Rejecting Abstractions* - in which I expressed regret in respect of my past and described that past as that of an extremist immorally pursuing an extremist agenda. It is fair to say that several people seemed rather upset by or were angered by some of my recent essays.

cc David Myatt 2012

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Image credit: Attic Vase c. 480 BCE, depicting Athena (Antikensammlungen, Munich, Germany)



Concerning The Development Of The Numinous Way

Background

What I term The Numinous Way, as a philosophy and as a way of life, was not the result of a few or many moments of inspiration striking close together in causal Time as measured by a terran-calendar and thus separated from each other by days, weeks, or even a few years.

Rather, it resulted from some nine years of reflexions, intuitions, and experiences, beginning in 2002 when - for quite a few months - I wandered as a vagabond in the hills and fells of Westmorland and lived in a tent, and during which time I communicated some of my musings, by means of handwritten letters, to a lady living in Oxford whom I had first met well over a decade before.

These musing concerned Nature, our place - as humans - in Nature and the Cosmos; the purpose, if any, of our lives; whether or not the five Aristotelian essentials gave a true understanding of the external world; and whether or not God, or Allah, or some sort of divinity or divinities, existed, and thus - if they did not - whence came mystical insight, knowledge, and understanding, and what value or validity, if any, did such mystical insight, knowledge, and understanding, possess.

During the previous thirty or more years I had occasional intuitions concerning, or feelings, regarding, Nature, divinity, the Cosmos, and 'the numinous'; insights and feelings which led me to study Taoism, Hellenic culture, Buddhism, the Catholic mystic tradition, and become a Catholic monk. Later on, such

intuitions concerning the numinous - and travels in the Sahara Desert - led me to begin a serious study of Islam and were part of the process that led me to convert to that way of life.

But these intuitions, feelings - and the understanding and knowledge they engendered - were or always eventually became secondary to what, since around 1964, I had considered or felt was the purpose of my own life. This was to aid, to assist, in some way the exploration and the colonization of Outer Space, and it was enthusiasm for - the inspiration of - that ideal which led me to seriously study the science of Physics, and then to seek to find what type of society might be able to make that ideal a reality, a seeking initially aided by my study of and enthusiasm for Hellenic culture, a culture - manifest in Greek heroes such as Odysseus and in the warrior society home to the likes of the sons of Atreus - which I came to regard as the ideal prototype for this new society of new explorers and new heroes.

After considering, and then rejecting, the communist society of the Soviet Union [1], an intuition regarding National-Socialist Germany [2] led me to seriously study that society and National-Socialism, a study ended when I peremptorily concluded that I had indeed found the right type of modern society. Thus I became a National-Socialist, with my aim - the purpose of my life - being to aid the foundation of a new National-Socialist State as a prelude to the exploration and the colonization of Outer Space, and thus the creation of a Galactic Imperium, a new Galactic, or Cosmic, Reich.

As I wrote in part one of some autobiographical scribblings issued in 1998 and which were based on some writings of mine dating back to the 1970's:

"It is the vision of a Galactic Empire which runs through my political life just as it is the quest to find and understand our human identity, and my own identity, and our relation to Nature, which runs through my personal and spiritual life, giving me the two aims which I consistently pursued since I was about thirteen years of age, regardless of where I was, what I was doing and how I was described by others or even by myself..."

For it was this aim of the exploration and the colonization of Outer Space, and my rather schoolboyish enthusiasm for it, which - together with the enjoyment of the struggle - inspired my fanaticism, my extremism, and which re-inspired me when, as sometimes occurred during my NS decades, my enthusiasm for politics, for a political revolution, waned, or when my intuitions, my feelings, concerning the numinous and my love of women - the dual inspiration for most of my poetry - became stronger than my political beliefs and my revolutionary fervour.

The aim, the purpose, this idealization, regarding Outer Space even partly motivated my study of and thence my conversion to Islam in 1998. For example, not long before that conversion, in an essay entitled *Foreseeing The Future*, I wrote:

" I firmly believe that Islam has the potential to create not only a new civilization, governed according to reason, but also a new Empire which could take on and overthrow the established world-order dedicated as this world-order is to usury, decadence and a god-

less materialism [...] I also believe that a new Islamic Empire could create the Galactic Empire, or at least lay the foundations of it. Perhaps the first human colonies on another world will have as their flag the Islamic crescent, a flag inscribed with the words, in Arabic, In the Name of Allah, The Compassionate, The Merciful."

Thus, as when a National-Socialist, I dedicated myself to my 'new cause', to an ideal I idealistically carried in the headpiece of my head: the cause of Jihad, of disrupting existing societies as a prelude to manufacturing a new one. In this instance, a resurgent Khilafah.

As with National-Socialism, it was the ideal, the goal, the struggle, which was paramount, important; and I - like the extremist I was - hubriatically placed that goal, that ideal, that struggle for victory, before love, fairness, compassion, reason, and truth, and thus engendered and incited violence, hatred, and killing.

In addition, I always felt myself bound by honour to be loyal to either a cause, an ideology, or to certain individuals and so do the duty I had sworn by oath to do and be loyal to those I had sworn to be loyal to. Hence when doubts about my beliefs arose during my decades as a nazi I always had recourse to honour and so considered myself - even during my time as a monk - as a National-Socialist, albeit, when a monk, as a non-active one for whom there was ultimately no contradiction between the NS ethos and the ethos of a traditional Catholicism, for there was the Reichskonkordat and the agreement Pope Pius XII reached with Hitler.

During my Muslim years I felt bound by the oath of my Shahadah; an oath which negated my NS beliefs and led me to reject racism and nationalism, and embrace the multi-racialism of the Ummah; and which general oath, together (and importantly) with a personal oath sworn a few years after my conversion, would always - until 2009 - bring me back, or eventually cause me to drift back, to Islam and always remind me of the duty I felt I was, as a Muslim, honour-bound to do.

2002-2006

This drift back toward Islam is what occurred after my musings in 2002. I tried to forget them, a task made difficult when later that year I went to live on a farm and also work on another nearby farm. For that living and such work brought a deep personal contentment and further intuitions and feelings, and a burgeoning understanding, regarding the numinous, and especially concerning Nature; some of which intuitions and feelings I again communicated by means of handwritten letters, mostly to the aforementioned lady.

For a while I sought to find a synthesis, studied Sufism, but was unable to find any satisfactory answers, and thus began an interior struggle, a personal struggle I made some mention of in *Myngath*. A struggle, a conflict, between my own intuitions, insights, and burgeoning understanding - regarding the numinous and human beings - and the way of faith and belief; between what I felt was a more natural, a more numinous way, and the necessary belief in Allah, the Quran, the Sunnah that Islam, that being Muslim,

required.

For a while, faith and belief and duty triumphed; then I wavered, and began to write in more detail about this still as yet unformed 'numinous way'. Then, yet again honour, duty, and loyalty triumphed - but only a while - for I chanced to meet and then fell in love with a most beautiful, non-Muslim, lady. And it was our relationship - but most of all her tragic death in May 2006 - that intensified my inner struggle and forced me to ask and then answer certain fundamental questions regarding my past and my own nature.

As I wrote at the time:

" Thus do I feel and now know my own stupidity for my arrogant, vain, belief that I could help, assist, change what was [...] I know my blame, my shame, my failure, here. Thus am I fully humbled by my own lack of insight; by my lack of knowing; by an understanding of my selfishness and my failure - knowing myself now for the ignorant, arrogant person I was, and am. How hypocritical to teach, to preach, through writings, feeling as I do now the suffering of words."

I did not like the answers about myself that this tragedy forced me to find; indeed, I did not like myself and so, for a while, clung onto Islam, onto being Muslim; onto the way of faith, of God, of ignoring my own answers, my own feelings, my own intuitions. For there was - or so it then seemed - expiation, redemption, hope, and even some personal comfort, there. But this return to such surety just felt wrong, deeply wrong.

2006-2009

For there was, as I wrote in *Myngath*,

" ...one uncomfortable truth from which even I with all my sophistry could not contrive to hide from myself, even though I tried, for a while. The truth that I am indebted. That I have a debt of personal honour to both Fran and to Sue, who died - thirteen years apart - leaving me bereft of love, replete with sorrow, and somewhat perplexed. A debt to all those other women who, over four decades, I have hurt in a personal way; a debt to the Cosmos itself for the suffering I have caused and inflicted through the unethical pursuit of abstractions.

A debt somehow and in some way - beyond a simple remembrance of them - to especially make the life and death of Sue and Fran worthwhile and full of meaning, as if their tragic early dying meant something to both me, and through my words, my deeds, to others. A debt of change, of learning - in me, so that from my *pathei-mathos* I might be, should be, a better person; presencing through words, living, thought, and deeds, that simple purity of life felt, touched, known, in those stark moments of the immediacy of their loss.

But this honour, I have so painfully discovered, is not the abstract honour of years, of

decades, past that I in my arrogance and stupid adherence to and love of abstractions so foolishly believed in and upheld, being thus, becoming thus, as I was a cause of suffering. No; this instead is the essence of honour, founded in empathy; in an empathy with and thus a compassion for all life, sentient and otherwise. This is instead a being human; being in symbiosis with that-which is the essence of our humanity and which can, could and should, gently evolve us - far away from the primitive unempathic, uncompassionate, beings we have been, and unfortunately often still are; far away from the primitive unempathic, uncompassionate, often violent, person I had been."

Thus I was prompted - forced - to continue to develop my understanding in what began to be and became my own 'numinous way' and which thus and finally and, in 2009 publicly, took me away from Islam and my life as a Muslim.

2009-2012

However, the more I reflected upon this 'numinous way' the more I realized my mistakes and thus its unnecessary, unwieldy, complexity and lack of interior consistency. A lack of consistency revealed when I began to apply and develop the ethic of empathy, and a lack of rigour most manifest in two things: in my continuing and hubriatic pontifications regarding The State, and in certain abstractions which were still part of a supposedly abstraction-less and empathic numinous way. Abstractions, ideals and idealizations, such as 'the clan', and 'culture', and the divisive category 'homo hubris'.

It was therefore necessary to remove such abstractions, such generalizations, and emphasize the personal, the individual, ethical and spiritual nature of The Numinous Way, and thus the virtues of humility, love, and of wu-wei - of balance, of non-interference, of non-striving.

Which means that The Numinous Way "is simply the living, by individuals, of an ethical life: individuals cultivating empathy, compassion, humility, wu-wei, dignity, and honour, who thus are inclined to avoid causing suffering and inclined to doing what is fair."

Or, expressed even more simply, The Numinous Way is all about empathy and a shared, a loyal, love between two human beings.

DWM
24th April 2012 ce

Notes

[1] During this study of communism, in the 1960's, I began to learn Russian and would regularly listen to communist radio broadcasts such as those from Rundfunk der DDR, something I continued to do for a while even after becoming a National-Socialist. Indeed, on one occasion I wrote a letter to Radio Berlin

which, to my surprise, was read out with my questions answered and this - occurring as it did during the Cold War - may well have been when I first came to the attention of the British security services.

[2] As I have mentioned elsewhere - for example, in *Myngath* - this intuition regarding the Third Reich arose as a result of me reading an account of the actions of Otto Ernst Remer in July of 1944. For I admired his honour and his loyalty and his commitment to the duty he had sworn an oath to do. Here, I felt, was a modern-day Greek hero.

Concerning My Pontifications and Clans

Given that the essence of The Numinous Way - or what is perhaps more correctly The Way of Pathei-Mathos - is individual empathy, an individual understanding, the development of an individual judgement, and the living of an ethical way of life in accord with wu-wei, I felt it was necessary to remove, to excise, the detritus that had accumulated around it in the course of its development, and so correct my errors. Errors and detritus because for some time I was still in thrall to some abstractions and still fond of pontificating and generalizing, especially about The State.

Thus - as I hope is evident from the latest version of *Frequently Asked Questions About The Numinous Way* - I have since excised such concepts, such abstractions, such generalizations, as 'the clan', and idealistic hypothesizing and pontifications about The State and about other matters, from 'the numinous way' until all that is left are the virtues of empathy, compassion, personal love, personal honour, wu-wei, and humility: a simple mystical way of life that needs few words in explanation.

For that is all the The Numinous Way now is - a simple, personal, ethical and tolerant way of living where one is aware of one's fallibility and so, with humility, does not presume to pontificate and does not concern one's self with matters which are not personal and not connected to one's immediate locality or place of dwelling.

Thus, most if probably not all of my writings - my pontifications - concerning that 'numinous way' (even recent ones) are unhelpful; of little account; or irrelevant, and certainly detract from or obscure its basic simplicity; a simplicity, a message, that is not really that different from the appreciation of the numinous manifest in most other Ways such as Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism...

Thus also why I have ceased to write about that 'numinous way' except - as in the case of my recent *The Way of Pathei-Mathos* - to finally attempt to express in philosophical terms as best I can that essence and so and hopefully enable, if anyone be interested, an understanding of just why such concepts as the clan have been excised and just what the essence of my weltanschauung now is.

The Way now requires living, by me, not being written about by me.

Acknowledgements:

This article is based on - and summarizes and/or quotes from - several replies sent to various correspondents during April of this year (2012)

cc David Myatt 2012

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Image credit: Attic Vase c. 480 BCE, depicting Athena (Antikensammlungen, Munich, Germany)



Rejecting Abstractions A Personal Lesson From Extremism

" So much remorse, grief, and sorrow, within me for the unwise suffering-causing deeds of my past. Yet all I have in recompense for decades of strife, violence, selfishness, hate, are tears, the cries, alone - and words, lifeless words, such as this; words, to - perhaps, hopefully - forewarn forswear so that others, some few, hearing, reading, may possibly avoid, learn from, the errors that marked, made, and were, my hubris." *So Much Remorse*

In the course of the past forty years, I have penned a considerable number of articles, essays, texts, tracts, pamphlets, and other material; ranging from political and religious polemics and propaganda, to poetry, to Greek translations, to 'mystical' effusions, to philosophical ponderings concerning my recently developed weltanschauung, The Numinous Way. These writings thus document my somewhat strange and experiential life, my peregrinations: from fanatical violence-loving neo-nazi, theoretician of terror, and criminal (1968-1998), to Jihadist (1999-2006), to a mystic musing (2009-) on the numinous, with some years as a vagabond, a Catholic monk, a Civil Servant, a nurse, a family man, a farm labourer, and a gardener, thrown in.

This strange and somewhat varied life was, until recently, essentially that of an arrogant, selfish, opinionated person who was always in thrall to, perhaps addicted to, some abstraction or other, and who thus in many ways embodied 'the extremist'; that is, someone who harshly, often violently, and idealistically or otherwise, fanatically pursued some political or religious objective - some abstraction - thus inciting hatred and violence and being a cause of suffering.

An extremist life that only ended because of a seminal event outside of my control and beyond the parameters of my then vainglorious understanding, my hubriatic sense of purpose, and the delusion of idealism. This event, this pathei-mathos, was the suicide, in 2006, of my fiancée. That I required three years and more to learn, to understand, the lessons of that and of another, prior, personal tragedy - to rediscover my humanity - certainly speaks of my character, my extremism, my hubris.

Now I view all my previous neo-nazi writings with abhorrence, be those writings early and thus racist or be they the later ones concerning what I temerarily termed 'ethical National-Socialism'. Thus, I reject them, and regard them as immoral, as without value except perhaps as educational examples of the dangers, the inhumanity, of extremism and of the hubris, the propaganda, of extremists.

Similarly abhorrent and immoral are all my pontifications about Islam, Jihad, and 'the kuffar' - written while I was a Muslim. They are worthless, disowned, as are many of my early and even later pontifications about 'the numinous way' before I rigorously applied the individual ethic of empathy and thus excised abstractions, such as that abstraction termed 'the clan'.

What, therefore, of all my writings do I consider may - possibly - have some value beyond the value they have to me as lessons in pathei-mathos? That is, what writings of mine may possibly contain some humanity, some intimation of what is good, virtuous, numinous, or possibly have some allegorical value as in someone who (hitherto astray) has, via pathei-mathos and hopefully, been changed (by whatever means and however slightly) for the better?

Of my writings, spanning over forty years, there is so very little of value. Some poems, perhaps. Possibly a few - only a few - of my most recent effusions regarding my weltanschauung The Numinous Way, such as my *Synopsis of The Numinous Way*. Perhaps also some of my personal correspondence between the years 2002 and 2012 (and only those years), as for example the compilation *De Novo Caelo et Nova Terra*. Possibly the compilation *Meditations on Extremism, Remorse, and The Numinosity of Love*. And that is all, in smallness sufficient to fit into a rather slim printed volume, and a smallness tribute indeed to a rather wasteful, immoral, suffering-causing, hubriatic life.

Excising Abstractions - Deconstruction Of An Extremist

An abstraction is, according to my fallible view, a manifestation, possibly the primary manifestation, of *the-separation-of-otherness*: of a lack of empathy, and which lack results in some distinction being made between 'them' and 'us', and thus with some living being (human or otherwise) being assigned to some abstract category, or group, and/or regarded as the genesis of or some representation of some posited existing or future ideal. Often, some abstraction - some category or some group or some ideal - is imputed to have some value, higher/lower, in relation to some other abstraction, with the result that some abstractions are considered to be 'worth fighting/killing/dying for', and/or regarded as 'morally superior' to or better than other different, or vaguely different, abstractions, even if such difference is illusory and thus only 'in the eye of the believer'.

Thus, among the profusion of abstractions are divisive concepts such as 'race' and nationalism; political ideologies such as communism, fascism, and National-Socialism;

perceived religious differences often manifest in a division between 'heretics' and 'true believers'; and concepts such as 'a righteous caliphate'.

What is common to most if not all abstractions is how, in varying degrees, they tend to or can dehumanize us. How they seem to possess, or come to possess, an archetypal power and thus tend to move us to believe in them rather than in human, the individual, virtues such as personal love, compassion, humility, and fairness. For in the pursuit of abstractions, or in pursuit of some assumed idealized 'duty' or loyalty to some abstraction, we often tend to unethically value the abstraction - or some idealized, future, imagined, hope-for realization of some abstraction - more than individuals, more than personal love, personal happiness, compassion, more than our humanity, and thus more than human life itself.

For nearly forty years I personally was a slave to abstractions, as my violent actions and activities, my terms of imprisonment, my speeches, my propaganda, my incitement, during those forty years clearly illustrate. As do my past writings, as the following examples may reveal. National-Socialism or Islam, it made no difference; the same fanaticism, the same suffering-causing idealism, the same lack of empathy and compassion. Always some ideal before the individual.

Thus, when a neo-nazi, I wrote the following:

"National-Socialism regards all present societies as dis-honourable, tyrannical and ignoble. All these societies are dedicated to the suppression of noble values, and to the destruction of folk values, customs and ethos. These societies, by their very nature and their unnatural social laws are harmful to us, and Nature. Accordingly, National-Socialism seeks the revolutionary overthrow, by honourable means, of these decadent and ignoble societies." *The Meaning of National-Socialism*

"We do not seek some slight 'political' change - just a change of government. Rather, we seek to create an entirely new type of society which the world but briefly glimpsed in the splendour and glory which was National-Socialist Germany." *The Spirituality of National-Socialism*

"National-Socialism regards every individual as balanced between the past of their folk, and the future of their folk, and considers that their duty is to aid this folk... To be healthy, to evolve further, each folk must have a homeland." *The Theology of National-Socialism*

Note here the terms - the abstractions, the ideals - of National-Socialism and 'the folk' (i.e. race) and how the present, 'tyrannical and ignoble societies', have to be overthrown. Note how National-Socialism, its principles and ideals, are used to judge things and people; how 'race' is unethically valued above individuals [1]. Note how I immorally used these abstractions, these ideals, and some mythical future, to justify violence, killing, hatred, destruction; to glorify the impersonal over and above the individual.

When I was arrogantly pontificating about Islam and Jihad, I wrote the following:

"Everything that leads us away from obeying Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, everything that conceals or covers-up Tawheed. everything that makes us forget remembrance of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, is wrong, an error: at best a move toward kufr and Shirk, and at worst, kufr and Shirk." *The Revival of Aql*

"I understood how the Taliban represented a fundamental if rather neglected principle of Islam - that of Zuhd in dunya. That is, the desires of this life comes second - after the desire for Jannah." *The Significance of the Taliban*

"We should consider the matter of such deaths in the correct context - which is of seeking to use only the criteria of Quran and Sunnah; which is of defending our brothers and sisters and our Muslims lands; which is of seeking to defend our Deen." *In Reply to Sheikh Salman b. Fahd al-Oadah*

Note here the terms - the abstractions, the ideals - of Deen, of Tawheed, of kufr; the striving for the perfection of Jannah; the division implicit in the idea of 'our lands' and the need to defend these. Note how I immorally used these abstractions, these ideals, and some mythical future, to justify violence, killing, hatred, destruction; to glorify the impersonal over and above the individual.

What these examples illustrate - and I could have adduced hundreds more from my past writings - is the error not only of abstraction, of division and divide, but also of idealism; of a yearning for some idealized future, a feeling of alienation, and most certainly a lack of empathy and of wu-wei. [2]

There is thus an acute and personal dissatisfaction with the present, with what-is, often leading to anger and resentment and thence, quite often, to violence. There is belief that the future can be/should be/must be 'better' and that 'some others' or some-thing is or must be an obstacle, or to blame for, or is the cause of, such problems as are perceived to exist in the present so that dealing with these 'others' or this problematic 'thing' or this obstacle will hasten or bring-into-being that dreamed of, that yearned for, better future, that ideal, that 'perfection', that paradise, that heaven on Earth.

That is, there is the fanatic, the extremist - or the attitudes, the feelings, the beliefs, that can so easily be the genesis of extremism, of fanaticism, of violence; of a hatred of 'the others', of 'our enemies', and an idealized, romanticized, view of 'our kind'. Of how 'we' are different from 'them'; of how they are somehow 'imperfect'. Of how 'we' may be justified in killing 'them' or at the very least justified in destroying or attempting to destroy their societies, their way of life in order that our 'better' way of life may be realized, may be manufactured.

Even when I was in the early stages of developing my philosophy of 'the numinous way' (2006-2010), I was still somewhat in thrall to abstractions, still generalizing, and

still pontificating. Thus I wrote such things as:

"The clan is the basis for establishing new, numinous, communities based on The Numinous Way itself. That is, new numinous clans can express, manifest, presence, the numinous itself by the members of such new clans living according to the numinous principles of empathy, compassion and personal honour...

When several clans liaise or co-operate together for their mutual benefit, on the basis of the ethical and numinous principles of empathy, compassion and personal honour, then a new and numinous culture arises, distinguished as such a culture is or can be by a specific, and numinous, ethos. In essence, therefore, a numinous culture is a natural evolution of the clan." *The Clan, Culture, and The Numinous Way*

"Homo Hubris is the name given to that new sub-species of the genus Homo which has, in the last three hundred or so years, become the dominant species inhabiting the industrialized countries of what is called 'the West'." *Homo Hubris and the Disruption of The Numinous*

Note here the terms - the abstractions - of Homo Hubris, of clan, and the hubriatic pontification about some idealized 'new' future, some idealized new culture. All of which are contrary to the individual ethic of empathy. All of which are redolent of the error that is the separation-of-otherness.

A Simple Individual Way of Life

It required several years of interior reflexion, in respect of The Numinous Way, and a knowing, and acceptance, of my fallibility, for me to appreciate, to understand, my error: to rigorously apply the individual ethic of empathy and to attempt to excise abstractions from that Way.

There is thus little left; and what is left is simple. The simplicity of interior, personal, spiritual change; the simplicity of wu-wei; the simplicity of love, of compassion, of fairness, of empathy. A simplicity I have tried to express in *Synopsis of The Numinous Way*, from which this a quote:

"The Numinous Way is a spiritual (a numinous) philosophy - an individual ethical way of living - based on the virtues of compassion, empathy, humility, and personal honour [...]

The Numinous Way is simply the living, by individuals, of an ethical life: individuals cultivating empathy, compassion, humility, wu-wei, dignity, and honour, who thus are inclined to avoid causing suffering and inclined to doing what is fair.

There is no dogma, no organization, no officials, no supra-personal authority, no theology, no theories, no authorized or recommended praxis. There are no codes of conduct, no scriptures, no 'sacred' - or

official/authorized - writings.

There are only honourable individuals individually aware of, and respectful of, the numinous."

As for me, there is now a most pressing need for the gentility of silence.

David Myatt
March 2012 ce
(Slightly revised 23/3/12)

Notes

[1] See for example my *Some Philosophical and Moral Problems of National Socialism* which is a recent criticism of National-Socialist Germany according to the philosophical and ethical criteria of my Numinous Way.

[2] It might be a useful exercise in the causes of extremism - and the immoral praxis of extremists - were someone to analyze in detail the abstractions I used in my neo-nazi, and in my pretentious Jihadi, writings in an attempt to justify revolution, killing, and terror, and many of which writings directly or indirectly incited hatred and violence.

For instance, in the matter of my neo-nazi writings a recurrent abstraction is 'civilization'/'civilized' - an immoral abstraction, an error, which I briefly analyzed in *Race and Individuality in The Philosophy of The Numinous Way*. Another recurrent abstraction I used was 'Nature', writing such things as "race [and/or the folk] is [are] a manifestation of the diversity of Nature, is [are] our connection to Nature, and thus should be preserved and defended..."

In the matter of my pretentious Jihadi writings, a recurrent abstraction is 'the perspective of Jannah'; another is the restoration of an idealized Khilafah, based on the assumption that such a restoration will or could restore 'the perfect way of life' for Muslims.

Image credit: NASA/JPL/CalTech - Messier 104

Hitler, National-Socialism, and Politics - A Personal Reappraisal

Introduction - A Moral Perspective

Almost exactly a year ago, I perhaps somewhat presumptuously, temerarily, penned a rather long essay entitled *The Uncertitude of Knowing* in reply to questions asked of me in relation to National-Socialism, Hitler, and my philosophy of The Numinous Way; and which essay itself was an attempt to elucidate another essay, the year before that, concerning Reichsfolk and a Muslim Khilafah. As I wrote at the beginning of my reply in *The Uncertitude of Knowing*:

" There are interesting, important and rather complex philosophical and ethical issues here, that require detailed, serious, and above all, rational, consideration. To explain, in a satisfactory manner, these issues and offer satisfactory answers would perhaps require a philosophical treatise of length equal to a book, and I have to admit that I currently possess no desire to write such a book, partly because I am aware that I may not have all or even many of the answers required, and that such answers as I do have, or some of them, might be erroneous and that therefore may need to be amended. Therefore, all I can do here is try in a rather unsatisfactory way to summarize such answers, such views, of mine."

In *The Uncertitude*, the title itself reflecting my concern and approach, I continued to emphasize that my replies were tentative and I - as a result of *πάθει μάθος*, of acknowledging my *ὑβρις* of decades - open to correction and to further learning.

Over the past year I have continued to study, research, and reflect upon these 'complex philosophical and ethical issues' and have had cause, as I anticipated, to amend my conclusions, especially those in respect of National-Socialism, Hitler, and Reichsfolk, some of which new conclusions I have briefly mentioned in my essay, published this month, *Some Philosophical and Moral Problems of National-Socialism*, and which new conclusions led me to withdraw *The Uncertitude of Knowing*.

This further study and research, perhaps wyrdfully, included getting to know people who shared their personal and familial experiences of National-Socialist Germany with me, with these experiences being of those who were the subject of the *Nürnberger Gesetze* and who thus traumatically endured the consequences of those laws and the prejudice and hatred they codified. These direct experiences of the personal and moral effects of National-Socialism were those of individuals that I, through a personal knowing of them, considered to be honourable and which personal experiences thus served to place into perspective, into a moral - a numinous - perspective, the accounts given to me, decades earlier, of some German National-Socialists I had met who fought for and gave their loyalty to Adolf Hitler and which accounts had been formative of what became my decades-long dedication to the

cause of National-Socialism, a dedication broken only by my personal experiences of Islam and by the *πάθει μάθος* that was the genesis of my philosophy of The Numinous Way.

As I mentioned in *The Uncertainty of Knowing*:

"All I know - all I say and write - derives from my own diverse personal experiences and my reflexion upon such experiences; from my experience of diverse ways of life, diverse religions, and by my interaction with individuals..."

Suffice therefore to say that my new encounter and interaction with particular people, my reflexion on those experiences, and my further study and research, has led me to a new personal learning, and to a better understanding of both the ethics of The Numinous Way and of the personal, the moral, implications of those ethics.

However, it is to be expected that some people will not like - nor others understand - where this new learning and my thinking have led me and may be leading me. But as TS Eliot beautifully expressed it in his poem *Little Gidding*:

And what you thought you came for
Is only a shell, a husk of meaning
From which the purpose breaks only when it is fulfilled
If at all. Either you had no purpose
Or the purpose is beyond the end you figured
And is altered in fulfilment.

Ethical Consequences

Empathy - as outlined in various essays including *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen* and *The Natural Balance of Honour* - is the basis for the ethics of The Numinous Way, with compassion and a personal honour being how we can, personally as individuals, be ethical in accord with the knowing, the understanding, the insight, that empathy reveals. This empathic revealing is of our affective and effecting connexion to other life, including human beings.

The immediacy of empathy in the living moment means a living-in, a dwelling-in, the moment, inclining us toward to wu-wei and,

"to being compassionate and honourable human beings, concerned only with our own affairs, that of our family, and that of our immediate locality where we dwell, work, and have-our-being." *Some Philosophical and Moral Problems of National-Socialism*

There therefore cannot be, as mentioned in *A Brief Numinous View of Religion, Politics, and The State*, any desire for involvement with politics, since

"the goals, objectives and aims of politics are, by their very nature, based on human-manufactured divisions and categories deriving from a causal separation of beings: that is, which involve denoting individuals on the basis of some principle of inclusion/exclusion, and which principle of inclusion/exclusion (of separation of human beings) is immoral because un-numinous."

What is thus important, moral, numinous, are individuals who - feeling, knowing, suffering and its causes - live and who act with personal compassion and personal honour, with the boundary, the horizon, of such acts being, by the nature of empathy, of the nexion they are, and only and ever of the personal, immediate, local kind. In practical terms, there are and cannot be any supra-personal causes, agendas, aims, goals, for such things take us toward abstractions and beyond the bounds of empathy and of how The Numen is or becomes presenced in and through the personal experiencing of, an interaction with, other living beings: human, of Nature, of the Cosmos; and a personal experiencing which is direct, unfettered, undistorted, by any abstraction, by any prejudice, by any division - conscious or unconscious - into 'us' and 'the separate others'.

A consequence of this is that we can only - without causing more suffering or contributing to suffering - alleviate suffering, try to ameliorate what is wrong, by means of personal, direct, compassionate, honourable, acts when we personally encounter suffering, dishonour. No cause, no movement, whether deemed political, social, or religious - nothing supra-personal involving us surrendering our individual judgement of empathy, our individual authority, and our personal honour - can alleviate suffering or ameliorate what is wrong, dishonourable, for such supra-personal things are among the causes of suffering or contribute to or will contribute to suffering, given our past and current human nature.

Hence the only moral change, the only revolution, that is possible - numinous, good - is that of ourselves; within and personal; and this is a reformation of ourselves and then our living of a moral, of an empathic, compassionate, honourable, life.

This precludes the possibility of such a moral individual supporting some cause, some group, some movement, some person, in the belief that such a cause, group, movement, or 'leader', can 'make a difference' or can or might in some way move us toward some future where there is less suffering.

Thus it is morally wrong - from the perspective of The Numinous Way - to suggest, as for example I previously did in *The Uncertainty of Knowing*, that a group such as Reichsfolk or a way such as Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jammah might be alternatives "capable of guiding honourable individuals to do what is honourable", and thus have "the

ability to alleviate at least some of the suffering which blights this world." And wrong not only because such groups, such ways, are based on immoral abstractions - on principles of inclusion/exclusion - but also because their very nature, their very being, as groups and such ways, are incompatible with The Numen, and so cannot and do not in any way presence the numinous or express the numinous since such numinosity only lives, dwells, is manifest - in the personal sense - by individuals leading or inclining toward leading an empathic, compassionate, honourable, life.

In brief, it is personal virtues such as *εὐταξία* - and their cultivation by individuals - which are important, required, moral, not some group, some organization, some 'leader', or some political or even 'religious' aims and goals.

Adolf Hitler and National-Socialism

For a long time, I regarded Adolf Hitler as a good man, an honourable man, and National-Socialism - especially my 'revised version' of National-Socialism manifest in Reichsfolk - as either an intimation of the numinous or as an expression of what is noble and honourable.

Now, in respect of Hitler, I ask two questions: (1) 'what is good' and my answer, manifest in The Numinous Way, is that what is good is what is compassionate; what alleviates suffering; what does not cause or contribute to suffering; what manifests love, empathy; and (2) 'what is honourable' and my answer is what is dignified, what manifests self-control, fairness; a balanced judgement.

How then does Hitler fare according to these criteria? Do his actions - manifest for example in the *Nürnberger Gesetze* and their consequences, in his use of *krieg* in pursuit of some supra-personal aim, and in the use of the abstractions of race and nation - reveal a man of compassion, of balanced judgement, of fairness? Someone who feels and understands the error that is *ὑβρις* and is therefore circumspect, in touch with and respectful of the numinous? Who knows the limits of appropriate human behaviour? No.

For example, there is nothing honourable in the *Nürnberger Gesetze* and their consequences; in the personal suffering, the deaths, they caused, in the prejudice and the hatred they engendered and codified. Nothing good in the use of *krieg* in pursuit of some supra-personal aim; in the suffering and the deaths caused. Nothing good or honourable in the demand for obedience and in the manipulation of people's emotions by rhetoric and propaganda; nothing good or honourable in the punishment of those who were inclined, as is morally right and justified, not to surrender their individual judgement and who thus refused to be obedient in such supra-personal matters, especially in relation to certain 'political' abstractions, such as 'race', nation, and the *führerprinzip*.

As someone once wrote:

"Das war ein Vorspiel nur, dort wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen."

In respect of National-Socialism - new or old - I now ask similar questions to the ones asked in respect of Hitler. That is, can The Numen, the good, what is honourable, empathic, compassionate - what is moral - be manifest in, be presenced by, such a weltanschauung as National-Socialism? No.

No, for two simple reasons. (1) Because such a weltanschauung has its very being in immoral abstractions, be they termed 'race', nation, volk, ethnicity, folk, or whatever; and is defined by the principle of inclusion/exclusion, by the separation and prejudgement of human beings by abstract criteria. (2) Because such a weltanschauung by its very nature is supra-personal, organized, authoritative, dogmatic; and numinosity only lives, dwells, is manifest - in the personal sense - by individuals leading or inclining toward leading an empathic, compassionate, honourable, life where there is no need of any authority, any judgement, any criteria, other than their own, deriving from their empathy and their unique *πάθει μάθος*.

There is thus, based on applying the moral criteria of The Numinous Way, a complete rejection by me of National-Socialism - of whatever kind - and an understanding of Hitler as a flawed individual who caused great suffering and whose actions and policies were dishonourable and immoral.

Conclusion

The Numinous Way is, and can only ever be, an individual way; a non-political, non-religious, choice of individuals desirous of developing and using empathy and hopeful of leading honourable lives that do not cause or contribute to the suffering of living beings. Lives where one of the greatest virtues - a manifestation of our humanity - is considered to be a loyal and personal love between two human beings, regardless of the perceived or assumed ethnicity, nationality, social status, or 'sexual orientation', of the individuals concerned. As Sappho wrote, over two and half thousand years ago:

μνάσασθαί τινά φαιμι [καὶ ἕτερον] ἀμμέων...

*στᾷθι [κᾶντα] φίλος
καὶ τὰν ἐπ' ὅσσοισ' ὀμπέτασον χάριν [1]*

As for me, my journey of learning, of self-discovery, of making mistakes, of trying to acknowledge and correct my errors, of interior change via *πάθει μάθος*, does not yet seem to be ended.

David Myatt
January 30th 2012 ce

[1] Sappho, Fragments 147/138 [Lobel and Page].

My translation is:

Believe me, in the future someone
Will remember us ...

Because you love me
Stand with me face to face
And unveil the softness in your eyes ...

Philosophical and Moral Problems of National-Socialism

Introduction

This essay is a brief analysis of the National-Socialist weltanschauung, as manifested in National-Socialist Germany, and according to the philosophical and ethical criteria of my Numinous Way, and which criteria derive from the principles of empathy, compassion, and personal honour.

Empathy, as understood by my philosophy of The Numen [1], establishes a particular ontology and epistemology; Being, the source of beings, as both causal and acausal, and of an acausal knowing distinct from the causal knowing of conventional philosophy and empirical science [2]. The ethical criteria are manifest in both compassion and honour [3], so that:

"the morality of The Numinous Way is therefore defined by a personal honour, a personal compassion, and the personal virtue of justice. For justice is not some abstract concept, but rather a personal virtue, as *εὐταξία* is a personal virtue. For justice is the personal virtue of fairness; the quality of balance." *War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*

The National-Socialism evident in NS Germany was a way of life centred around concepts such as duty, *kampf*, nation, and race. Thus, the individual was judged by, and expected to judge others by, the criteria of race, with particular races assigned a certain value (high or low), as individuals were judged by how well they adhered to the duty they were expected to do in respect of their nation (their land, their people) and the race they were said to belong to or believed they belonged to. In addition, *kampf* between individuals, races, and nations was considered healthy and necessary, with such struggle revealing the worth of individuals and thus those considered fit to lead and assume positions of authority.

Collectivism, Nationalism, and Race

The National-Socialist way of life was - given such concepts as *kampf*, nation and race - a collective one, with one of the highest virtues being the willingness of individuals, if necessary, to sacrifice their own happiness and welfare, and even their lives, for the good of their people, their land, their race. The necessity of this virtue was explained, in part, by the belief that the German *volk* had an historic mission, a particular destiny, so that - coupled with the ideas of race and *kampf* - the individual was

expected to define themselves, to understand themselves, as Germans and as having particular duties and obligations; in effect, to replace their own self-identity with the collective identity of the *volk*.

In order to establish, maintain, and expand this collectivism, certain measures were regarded as necessary, as morally correct, with such measures including military conscription, laws designed to criminalize certain activities, both political and personal, and harsh punishment of those contravening such laws.

In addition, the *führerprinzip* was applied to most aspects of life, with individuals expected to accept and obey the authority so established, since such authority was considered to manifest the will, the ethos, of the *volk*. Hence the loyalty individuals gave, as an expression of their recognized duty as Germans, was personal; not to 'the State' nor even to 'the nation', and certainly not to some government, but rather to individuals who were regarded as embodying the will, the identity, of the *volk*. In practice, this meant Adolf Hitler and those appointed by him or by his representatives, and it was this collectivism, this binding of the *volk* by the *führerprinzip*, that Heidegger tried to philosophically express in his now controversial remarks regarding the *Volksgemeinschaft* and by quoting some words attributed to Aeschylus [4].

There are thus six elements that, from the philosophical and ethical viewpoint of The Numinous Way, may be said to define the National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler. These are: (i) a collective identity and its acceptance; (ii) authority and its acceptance manifest in specific individuals and expected obedience to such authority; (iii) mandatory enforceable punishment of those contravening or not accepting such authority and the laws made by such authority; (iv) the use of particular abstractions (for example nation and race) as a criteria for judgement and for evaluating individual worth; (v) the use of particular abstractions as a criteria for identity; and (vi) the use and acceptance of a particular abstraction - *kampf* - as an embodiment and expression of human nature.

Contra The National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler

In purely practical terms, the acceptance and use of the principle of *kampf* together with the acceptance of Hitler as embodying the collective will of the *volk*, inevitably led to the military defeat of NS Germany. For all mortals are fallible and military defeat is always inevitable, given time and even if such a defeat has internal, not external, causes. For tyrants and monarchs die, are overthrown, or are killed; Empires flourish for a while - a few centuries perhaps, at most - and then invariably decline and fade away; oligarchies come and go with monotonous regularity, lasting a decade or perhaps somewhat longer; rebellions and revolutions will break out, given sufficient time, and will often succeed given even more time - decades, centuries - and even following repeated and brutal repression.

Thus, philosophically, the general error here by Hitler and his followers was the obvious one of ὕβρις. A lack of understanding, an unknowing, of the natural balance -

of *δίκη* - as well as a lack of empathy, manifest as this unknowing, this lack, was in the arrogant belief of a personal and a volkish 'destiny' combined with a belief in *kampf* as a natural and necessary expression of human nature. And *ὑβρις φυτεύει τύραννον* - that is, *ὑβρις* plants, is the seed of, the *τύραννον*. Thus, symbolically, we might justifiably say that the *Ἐρινύες* took their revenge, for Hitler and his followers had forgotten, scorned, or never known the wisdom, the truth, that their fallible mortal lives are subject to, guided by, *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* [5]. Thus their fate was destined, a fate that Sophocles expressed so well in respect of Oedipus, *tyrannus*:

ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους ὄδε,
 ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἤδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ,
 οὗ τίς οὐ ζήλω πολιτῶν ἦν τύχαις ἐπιβλέπων,
 εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν.
 ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντα κείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν
 ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν
 τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδὲν ἀλγεῖνδον παθῶν. [6]

In effect, therefore, and in general terms, the National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler was un-wise; based on a mis-understanding of human nature, and he himself shown, despite his remarkable achievement of gaining power, as lacking a reasoned, a well-balanced, judgement [*σωφρονεῖν*] - since such a balanced judgement would, as Aeschylus explained in the *Oresteia*, reveal that *πόλεμος* [7] always accompanies *ὑβρις* and that only by acceptance of the numinous authority of *πάθει μάθος* (the new law presented to mortals by immortal Zeus) could the tragic cycle of *ἔρις* be ended.

A Numinous View of The National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler

Let us now consider the six points enumerated above, in respect of the philosophical and ethical viewpoint of The Numinous Way.

As mentioned in my essay *A Brief Numinous View of Religion, Politics, and The State*:

" The essence of the numinous view - of the ethical way posited by the Philosophy of The Numen - is empathy and thus the acausal (the affective and effecting) connexion we, as individuals, are to all life, sentient and otherwise, with empathy being the foundation of our conscious humanity.

The practical criteria which empathy implies is essentially two-fold: the criteria of the cessation of suffering, and the criteria of the individual, personal, judgement in the immediacy of the moment. For the Philosophy of The Numen, these two criteria manifest the natural character of rational, conscious, empathic, human beings and thus express the nature of our humanity and of human culture, and which nature is manifest in a practical

way in compassion and in personal honour.

Hence these two criteria are used, by The Numinous Way - by the Philosophy of The Numen - to judge our actions, our personal behaviour, and also all the abstractions we manufacture or may manufacture and which thus affect us, as individuals."

(i) A collective identity and its acceptance.

Empathy, as a natural if still under-used and under-developed human faculty, is only and ever individual and of the immediacy of the living moment. [8] It is always personal, individual, and cannot be abstracted out from an individual living being - that is, it cannot have any causal ideation or be represented by or expressed by someone else.

There is the personal, individual, freedom that the knowing that empathy uniquely presents to the individual, and therefore no need of, no sense of, belonging to other than one's immediate surroundings, and no sense of identity beyond the personally known, for all human beings encountered are encountered and empathically known as they uniquely are: as individuals with their own lives, feelings, hopes, and with their own potential and their own past.

Which in essence means The Numinous Way is the way of individuals, and an individual manner of living to be accepted or rejected according to the individual. Thus such a collective identity - and a desire for and acceptance of such an identity - is contrary to this very individual numinous way.

What matters for The Numinous Way is the individual; their empathy, their honour; their personal judgement. What does not matter are supra-personal manufactured abstractions such as a 'nation'. Consequently, the empathic, honourable, individual only has a duty to themselves, to their immediate kin, and to those personally given a pledge of loyalty: not a duty or obligations to some manufactured collective identity however such identity be expressed.

(ii) Authority and its acceptance manifest in specific individuals and expected obedience to such authority.

As I wrote in *Authority and Legitimacy in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*:

" For The Numinous Way, it is the exercise of the judgement of the individual - arising from the use of empathy and the guidance that is personal honour - that is paramount, and which expresses our human nature.

That is, it is honour, the understanding that empathy provides, and the judgement of the individual, that are legitimate, moral, numinous, and

thence the basis for authority. This means that authority resides in and extends only to individuals - by virtue of their honour, their empathy, and manifest in their own personal judgement, and therefore this always personal individual authority cannot be abstracted out from such personal judgement of individuals. In practical terms, this is a new type of authority - that of the individual whose concern is not power over others but over themselves, and which type of power is manifest in a living by honour, and thence in their self-responsibility and in how they interact with others."

Thus, such non-individual authority, acceptance of and obedience to such authority, is contrary to The Numinous Way.

(iii) Mandatory enforceable punishment of those contravening or not accepting such authority and the laws made by such authority.

Given that, for The Numinous Way, authority and justice are individual and manifest in individual judgement and through personal honour, such mandatory punishment by some abstract authority is quite contrary to The Numinous Way.

(iv) The use of particular abstractions (for example nation and race) as a criteria for judgement and for evaluating individual worth.

According to both empathy and honour, such a judgement of others, such prejudice, on the basis of some abstraction such as perceived race or 'nationality' is immoral [9]. The only moral, honourable, criteria is to judge *individuals* as individuals, sans all abstractions, on the basis of a personal knowing of them extending over a duration of causal Time. To judge *en masse*, without such a direct, personal, extended, personal knowing of each and every individual is reprehensible.

In addition, it is immoral - unempathic, uncompassionate, dishonourable - to treat people on the basis of their assumed or alleged race or nationality. Thus, the enforced herding of people into 'concentration camps' on the basis of alleged, assumed, race or nationality is quite unjustifiable, inhuman.

(v) The use of particular abstractions as a criteria for identity.

Such abstractions included 'blood' and nationality, so that identity became a matter of individuals being classified - by themselves, others, and by the State - according to certain chosen abstract criteria based on 'race' and heritage. Thus there were distinct notions, distinct levels, of separateness.

Empathy, however, presents us with an acausal-knowing of life, human and otherwise, and this knowing is of ourselves as but one fallible, biologically fragile, mortal, microcosmic nexion, and thus of how our self, our perceived and singular separate self-identity, is appearance and not an expression of the true nature of our being [10], which nature is one of connexions, between living emanations, not one of separations.

Such a revealing of our nature reveals that we should act with empathy and honour in the knowledge that our actions affect others or can affect others, directly, indirectly, emotionally, and acausally. That their joy, their pain, their suffering, their fate is ours by virtue of us as a connexion to them - as a connexion to all life; as one emanation of *ψυχή* [11].

What abstractions do is that they conceal our true empathic, compassionate, honourable nature and, ultimately, sever the connexion we are to *ψυχή*, to The Numen.

As mentioned in *On The Nature of Abstractions*:

" The error of abstractionism - of using existing abstractions and manufacturing other abstractions and using these as the source of ethics, of judgement, and so ascribing a value to them - is the error of *ὑβρις* (hubris). That is, the error of unbalance: of neglecting or being unaware of empathy, and of neglecting or being unaware of or profaning the numinous. In the personal and social sense, *ὑβρις* is revealed in a lack of compassion, a lack of balanced reasoning, and not only ascribing to one's self (or some other abstraction, such as a nation-State) what is assumed to be the perfection of right and of good (or the best current approximation of it) but also acting on that presumption to the detriment, the harm, of others.

This is unethical - as all abstractions are inherently unethical - because what is ethical is determined by empathy, and thus cannot be abstracted out of that direct, immediate, and personal knowing which presences empathy in us, as human beings."

(vi) The use and acceptance of a particular abstraction - *kampf* - as an embodiment and expression of human nature.

As mentioned previously, in the *Contra The National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler* section, *kampf* as principle, as abstraction, is a manifestation of the error of *ὑβρις* and of a lack of empathy.

For empathy, and the cultivation of *σωφρονεῖν*, incline us toward - or should incline us, as individuals, toward - a letting-be; to wu-wei; to a living in the immediacy-of-the-moment. To being compassionate and honourable human beings, concerned only with our own affairs, that of our family, and that of our immediate locality where we dwell, work, and have-our-being.

In addition:

" In The Numinous Way, a distinction is made between war and *combat* in that combat refers to *gewin* - similar to the old Germanic *werra*, as distinct from the modern *krieg*. That is, combat refers to a more personal armed

quarrel between much smaller factions (and often between just two adversaries - as in single combat, and trial by combat) when there is, among those fighting, some personal matter at stake or some personal interest involved, with most if not all of those fighting doing so under the leadership of someone they personally know and respect and with the quarrel usually occurring in the locality or localities where the combatants live.

Thus, war is contrary to The Numinous Way - to the Cosmic Ethic - not only because of the impersonal suffering it causes, but also because it is inseparably bound up with individuals having to relinquish their own judgement, with them pursuing some lifeless un-numinous abstraction by violent means, and with the development of supra-personal abstract and thus un-numinous notions of 'justice' and law.

Hence, there is, for The Numinous Way, no such thing as a 'just war' - for war is inherently unjust and un-numinous. What is just and lawful are honourable individuals and their actions, and such combat as such individuals may honourably and personally undertake, and such violence as they may honourably and of necessity employ in pursuit of being fair and ensuring fairness." *War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*

Conclusion

It should thus be quite clear why The Numinous Way is contrary to and incompatible with the National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler that was manifest in National-Socialist Germany.

David Myatt
January 2012 ce
(Revised JD2455956.107)

Notes

[1] Refer, for example, to *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen* and also *The Natural Balance of Honour - Honour, Empathy, and Compassion in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*, from which this is a quote:

"As used and defined by The Numinous Way, empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by The Numinous Way, it is a specific and extended type of *συμπάθεια*. That is, it is a type of and a means to knowing and understanding another human

being and/or other living beings - and thus differs in nature from compassion."

[2] See: (i) *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*; (ii) *Some Notes Concerning Causality, Ethics, and Acausal Knowing*; (iii) *Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality*.

[3] qv. *The Natural Balance of Honour*.

[4] In his 1933 speech at the University of Freiburg, where he quoted the following verse (v.514) from *Prometheus Bound* [my translation] -

τέχνη δ' ἀνάγκης ἀσθενεστέρα μακρῶ.

How so very feeble Craft is before Compulsion!

[5]

τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστροφός.
Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἑρινύες

Who then compels to steer us?
Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies!

Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6 [My translation]

[6]

You natives of Thebes: Observe - here is Oedipus,
He who understood that famous enigma and was a strong man:
What clansman did not behold that fortune without envy?
But what a tide of problems have come over him!
Therefore, look toward that ending which is for us mortals,
To observe that particular day - calling no one lucky until,
Without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending.

Oedipus Tyrannus, vv. 1524-1530 [My translation]

[7] In respect of πόλεμος see my *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic* where I suggest that as used by Heraclitus it implies neither Kampf nor conflict, but rather - as a quote from Diogenes Laërtius suggests - what lies behind or beyond Phainómenon; that is, non-temporal, non-causal, Being. πόλεμος is thus that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being, and also that which manifests as δίκη and accompanies ἔρις because it is the nature of Πόλεμος that beings, born because of and by ἔρις, can be returned to Being (become bound together - be whole - again) by enantiodromia.

[8] Refer, for example, to *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*

[9] See *Empathy and The Immoral Abstraction of Race* and also *On The Nature of Abstractions*.

[10] Refer for example to *Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality* and also *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*.

[11] Correctly understood - and as evident by the usage of Homer, Aeschylus, Aristotle, et al - $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ implies Life *qua* being.

Acknowledgement:

This essay had its genesis in some questions recently asked of me, by an academic, in regard to my former political involvements and how I now judge National-Socialism and Adolf Hitler given the development, over the past three or so years, of my mystical philosophy of The Numinous Way.



(Extracts from)
The Ethos of Extremism
Some Reflexions on Politics and A Fanatical Life

Part One: 1968-1973

Introduction

As someone variously described - by assorted academics, authors, journalists, politicians, and others - as an extremist, a fanatic, a theoretician of terror [1], a neo-nazi thug, the man who shaped mind of a bomber, an example of the axis between right-wing extremists and Islamists [2], a man of extreme and calculated hatred [3], as someone at the forefront of extreme right-wing ideology in Britain since the mid-1960s [4], a ferocious Jihadi [5], and as an ardent defender of bin Laden [6], some personal reflexions on my forty years of extremism may be of interest to a few people, especially given that, as a result of experience, a pathei-mathos, I have come to reject racism, National-Socialism, hatred, and all forms of extremism, having developed a personal weltanschauung, a non-religious numinous way, centred around empathy, compassion, fairness, and love.

In respect of my extremist past - whatever and whenever the extremism - there has been, and there remains:

"...a deep sorrow within me; born from a knowing of inexcusable personal mistakes made, inexcusable suffering caused, of fortunities lost; a sorrow deepened by a knowing, a feeling, a learning, of how important, how human, a personal love is. Indeed, that love is the most important, the most human, the most numinous, virtue of all." [7]

These brief reflexions are primarily concerned with past personal feelings, past political experiences, and past motivation - that is, with perhaps some of the underlying causes of extremism - and I have striven to be as honest as possible in describing these even if the result is an unfavourable impression of me or at least of the person I was. Furthermore, I will leave others to judge these former feelings, experiences, and motivations, of mine, and draw whatever conclusions, if any, they can about such extremism as I describe - be such conclusions personal, or political, or arrived at by means of some social or psychological theory applicable to subjects such as extremism and its causes.

On a more academic note, it might be useful to explain how I, in the light of practical experience, understand important terms such as extremism. By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic. Thus *extremism* is considered to be: (1) the result of such harshness, and (2) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In addition, a fanatic is considered to be someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate.

In respect of racism, I accept the standard definition, which is that racism is a prejudice and antagonism toward people regarded as belonging to another 'race', as well as the belief some 'races' are better than or superior to others, and that what is termed 'race' defines and explains, or can define and explain, the behaviour and the character of the people considered to belong to some postulated 'race'.

Becoming Nazi

My practical involvement in right-wing extremist politics really began in 1968 when I, still at school and not long returned from a childhood in the Far East and colonial Africa, became an active supporter of the newly formed National Front and of Colin Jordan's newly formed British Movement. My initial motivation for joining these organizations and becoming politically active was simple: to further the cause of National-Socialism and to enjoy the comradeship, the struggle for power, and the violence.

Some time before becoming so involved, I had chanced upon a copy of Shirer's book *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* and was inspired by the described actions of Otto Ernst Remer during the July 1944 plot against Hitler. Familiar as I was with *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* - with Hellenistic culture and history in general - I youthfully, rashly, made a connexion between the heroes of ancient Greece and Remer, impressed as I was by Remer's loyalty and sense of duty. This led me to, over subsequent months, read everything I could find about Hitler and the Third Reich; a reading which took me to local libraries and bookshops, then to bookshops and libraries in London. I even managed to find and buy copies (not originals) of old 8mm film of nazi rallies and some German propaganda films made during WW2, viewed using an old home projector; for I had discovered there was, even then in the 60's, something of an 'underground' market in nazi memorabilia.

Suffice to say that my reading and my viewing enthused me so that after a few months I considered myself a National-Socialist, an admirer of Adolf Hitler, believing that National-Socialism could create a new heroic age. To mark my 'conversion', I bought a small gold swastika tie-pin from a seller of nazi memorabilia and did not mind when, out wearing it, some people stared - for I was prepared either to launch into a rant about NS and Hitler or for a fight.

Thus while my initial motivation was naively idealistic and somewhat schoolboyish, I soon came to embrace NS racial doctrines, aided by acquiring and reading a copy of the English edition of HS Chamberlain's two volume work *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. This meant I accepted that some races were superior, and others inferior; and that 'the Aryan race' - being the most superior, the most evolved - had a special 'destiny'. As for the extermination of the Jews, to be honest for some months I vacillated between two extremes - between believing 'it was unfortunate but perhaps necessary, an act of war' and between believing it 'was Allied propaganda'.

Horrid as acceptance of such genocide is, I had already become, without knowing it, an extremist; for I was prepared to accept or to dismiss horrid facts, certain truths, in the belief that what mattered was the goal, the ideal, and that to achieve this one had to be harsh, even fanatical and brutal. In addition, I had come to regard war - modern war - as necessary, as the breeding ground of arête, and in war people are killed or slaughtered, just as the victors, the Greek heroes, in the Trojan war slaughtered many of the people of Troy after its fall and just as Alexander decimated the people of Massaga.

Later on, I was to discover that I was far from being alone, in neo-nazi circles, in this detestable acceptance of brutality and genocide. For instance, I can recall several discussions about the extermination of the Jews with support being voiced for such measures, and several occasions when a certain song, well-known in neo-nazi circles in the 60's and 70's, was sung by 'comrades', with the song beginning "Gas 'em all, gas 'em all, the long, and the short and the tall..."

However, in the months following my 'conversion' to the cause of National-Socialism I could not quite shake-off - for all my new enthusiasm and fanaticism - certain uncomfortable moral feelings regarding the holocaust, and so began reading voraciously about the subject, a reading which included trawling through multi-volume accounts such as *The Trial of German Major War Criminals: Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal Sitting at Nuremberg, Germany*. But in the end, after months of such reading and study, there came a point when I simply accepted, out of a desire to believe, that the genocide 'was Allied propaganda' so that, to me then and subsequently, further research regarding, or rational debate about, the matter became unnecessary. In effect, I came to fanatically believe it was war propaganda, and this fanatical belief was immune to criticism as I became intolerant of, dismissive of, others who tried to convince me that the horrors of the camps were real.

In retrospect, I needed to believe it was propaganda, a myth, because to do otherwise would destroy the imaginary, the idealistic, the perfect, the romanticized, National-Socialism I then believed in and accepted. To do otherwise would mean that Hitler

was not as I imagined him to be, as I hoped he was: a noble and good man who had triumphed against all the odds purely out of a love for his people and his land. Thus it might be correct to conclude that my research into the matter then was biased, born not out of a desire to find 'the truth' but from a need to prove that my own conclusions, assumptions, and beliefs, were correct. There might therefore have been an element of faith involved here, and subsequently, such that inconvenient, or awkward, facts and truths are ignored, dismissed, or regarded as the 'propaganda' of those opposed to one's beliefs.

Hatred, Love, and Violence

Although - on joining the NF and BM - I was very naive about politics, something of a tabula rasa, I soon developed the same prejudices and the same hatreds as the people I came to associate with; prejudices and hatreds aided by pamphlets and books read, loaned and given, and by discussions with party members, especially those belonging to BM. Thus I came to regard 'immigrants' as somewhat uncivilized, certainly inferior to White people, and considered their removal from 'our land', our country, as a necessity. Before this, I had no opinions, no views, about such matters, and my understanding of National-Socialism was greatly aided and developed by personal discussions with, and by written correspondence I had with, Colin Jordan.

During this formative period, I subscribed to items such as *The Thunderbolt* newspaper published by Edward R. Fields and so regularly received anti-Jewish and anti-Black reports; reports that seemed to confirm the necessity of racial separation and the need for a final solution to 'the Jewish problem'. For I had, in common with nearly all BM members and many NF members, come to believe that the Jews, in England, as in many other Western lands, had too much power and too much influence, were somehow by nature badly disposed toward White people, and thus were our mortal enemies.

In practice these beliefs and prejudices, this racism, meant three obvious things, and one interesting and curious thing, as least it is curious and interesting to me, now, on reflexion. The three things are:

- (1) That I developed a very idealized, a very romanticized, view of and naive love for those I regarded as my own people, my own race - especially in respect of English people; regarding them as probably the most civilized people on Earth who had built the best, the most noble, Empire the world had ever seen, and who had 'civilized' or brought civilization to large parts of the world.
- (2) That I developed a prejudice and antagonism toward other races in general, and in particular against 'Blacks' and Jews, and thus, as a group, and politically, hated them and did not wish to associate with them.
- (3) That I regarded violence in pursuit of my beliefs as natural and necessary, and came to regard political enemies - such as 'Reds' - as legitimate targets of political violence.

The one interesting and curious thing is:

That despite my racism, my nazi beliefs and ideals, my political activism, I was not personally offensive to or prejudiced or violent toward or hated individuals of other races that I met, including Jews.

Thus, and apropos all four things, I somehow and in some way managed to compartmentalize my personal life and my political life, for although I enjoyed political brawls, and was not averse to using violence, it was not in my nature to be personally rude or offensive to or violent toward people as individuals, whatever their perceived ethnicity; unless, of course, they threatened me personally, one individual to another, or had personally threatened someone I cared about. In fact, my hatred and violence was more directed toward political enemies - especially during political confrontations - than it was to other races; so directed that for many years, from 1968 to 1974, I would actively seek out such potentially and hopefully violent political confrontations and enjoy them. This enjoyment, this seeking after violent confrontation, perhaps explains why Martin Webster, in 1971 after meeting with me a few times, described me to a friend of his (who was studying at the same University as me) as "having a death wish", a description which rather irked me then.

That said, about compartmentalization, I did for a long time - directly and indirectly - incite hatred and violence against other races, both by speeches, often vitriolic, impassioned, and always extempore, I gave at political events; in discussions with comrades and others; by means of articles I wrote, and by posters, leaflets, stickers, I designed. But this was, to me at the time, impersonal, just propaganda, somewhat calculated, and regarded as a necessity in order to achieve certain political goals - and was probably more reprehensible for so being impersonal and propagandistic.

Only on a few occasions was I directly, personally, involved in violence against ethnic minorities, and these were unplanned, spontaneous, incidents involving several 'ethnics', one of which incidents led to me being arrested and given a prison sentence, but in all of which incidents - to be honest - I was or became motivated by dislike of and anger at 'these foreigners' because I felt they did not belong in 'my country' and should 'go back to where they belonged'.

The particular racial incident that led to my arrest and my first term of imprisonment occurred in the early 1970's, following some racial clashes in Wakefield between skinheads and 'ethnics', in this instance people of or descended from those of Pakistani origin. On the day in question I, then domiciled in Leeds, was out with Eddy Morrison and a few other comrades handing out anti-immigration leaflets in Wakefield hoping to capitalize on the violence and so possibly gain some new recruits for the cause. The leafleting over, we came across a group of skinheads, some of whom I vaguely knew. Sensibly, Morrison left while I, sensing there might be - and hopeful there would be - some violence, went with the skinheads looking for trouble. Thus it would be fair to say that I was responsible for what followed, as the Judge at my subsequent criminal trial judged I was. Our group - these young lads and I - wandered around for a while until we found some young Pakistani men whom we racially abused and then began to throw stones and bricks at. They ran away, and we gave chase... Suffice to say, when this first skirmish was over, we - buoyed by our success and I

seem to recall at my instigation - went off in search of more targets. Eventually, after perhaps an hour or so - maybe more, maybe less - we found ourselves the subject of a large Police operation with officers chasing us. We split up and I, not knowing the area, ended up on some industrial lot with several Police officers blocking the only escape route. Soon, the Police had caught and arrested all of us.

Conclusion (Part One)

Thus, during these early years there was - for me at least - a strange mixture of an idealized non-personal love, of hatred, and violence, involved in my actions, as well as racial prejudice and a romanticized view of my people, my land, and of Hitler and National-Socialism. All of which combined to provide me with an aim, a goal, a rôle; and which enthused and vivified me and gave me a sense of identity, a meaning and a purpose, a sense of duty and of destiny.

Hence I considered myself an Englishman, belonging to a land, to a people, with a great heritage; a people, a land, I idealistically, romantically, naively, loved. A land, a people, a heritage, I believed was threatened by immigration and by immigrants, by alleged machinations of the Jews, and by traitors and enemies such as communists and anti-fascists. I also considered myself a National-Socialist, a follower of Adolf Hitler, since I believed, with the assuredness of faith, that National-Socialism was the only way to restore the 'greatness of my race' and build a better, more heroic, civilization for future generations of my people. To achieve this future, I was prepared to use, and did use, violence - believing that it was necessary to be harsh, and possibly ruthless, in order to secure victory. For such victory - the triumph of National-Socialism - was all that, then, really mattered to me.

This strange mixture - this elixir of extremism, this duty of 'victory or death' - was the reason why I, during those years and normally a rather quiet, well-spoken, polite person, gave impassioned, extempore, speeches at political events, meeting and rallies; why I would launch into a tirade, in private, if someone said something negative about Hitler or National-Socialism; why I was prepared and hoping for violence during some political march or rally; why I would without a moments hesitation walk into a building and smash up some exhibit or some anti-apartheid exhibition or why I, alone, was unafraid to confront one, two, three, or more, enemies 'on the streets'; why I accepted imprisonment with equanimity and a certain pride, knowing that I had done or tried to do what I then considered was my duty to my people, my country.

Part Two: 1973-1975

Ultra-Violence, Covert Action, and Terror

Two significant events during this period (1973-1975) helped shape and develop my extremism. One was that I was released from my first term of imprisonment for violence, and the second was that I was recruited by the underground paramilitary

and neo-nazi organization Column 88.

Simply put, prison hardened me even more, while involvement with Column 88 confirmed my faith in the ultimate victory of National-Socialism.

My imprisonment had perhaps the opposite effect to what the Judge at my trial may have intended, for far from 'teaching me a lesson' it only served to make me more fanatical and more violent. It also enabled me to learn new skills and acquire new contacts of a decidedly criminal kind, skills and contacts which - as I have mentioned elsewhere [8] - I put to use following my release when I formed a small gang of thieves to liberate certain goods and fence them in order, initially at least, to fund various political schemes and projects of mine.

In addition, prison life seemed to me to confirm two of the fundamental axioms of National-Socialism, that of the necessity and value of *kampf* and that of the *führerprinzip*. That is, of hardening one's self, being prepared to use force, to be ruthless, unsentimental, in order to survive and prosper; and either earning respect or being obedient and submissive. For prison seemed to be like some ancient uncultured, uncivilized, macho tribal society where force or the threat of force (by both cons and screws), and/or one's personal cunning, were the basis of life, and where those of a violent or of a cunning nature tended to prosper. Perhaps fortunately I was or could be both violent and cunning so it was not really surprising that I ran a racket inside, selling goods liberated from a variety of sources including prison stores.

This increased political fanaticism and more violent nature would lead me, months later and with the help of Eddy Morrison, to found, in December of 1973, a new political neo-nazi organization based in Leeds; the rather grandly named National Democratic Freedom Movement, and which organization would be rather aptly described, some years later, by John Tyndall in the following terms:

" The National Democratic Freedom Movement made little attempt to engage in serious politics but concentrated its activities mainly upon acts of violence against its opponents. [...] Before very long the NDFM had degenerated into nothing more than a criminal gang." [9]

Thus 1973 and especially 1974 became, for me, a time of ultra-violence, criminality, and of a fanaticism even more extreme than that of previous years. A period during which I was regularly involved in fights and brawls, regularly arrested and appeared 'in the dock' - including for running that gang of thieves - and which period would end, perhaps inevitably, with me being sent to prison for a third time.

" Among the highlights of that NDFM year, for me, were the following. I smashed up (with one other NDFM member) an anti-apartheid exhibition, in Leeds (twice). I gave vitriolic extempore speeches at public meetings (some of which ended in violence when our opponents attacked). I waded into some Trade Union march or other, thumped a few people then stole and set fire to one of their banners (arrested, again). I arranged a meeting at Chapeltown, in Leeds (the heart of the Black community then) at which only

five of us turned up, including Andrew Brons but not including Morrison. We faced a rather angry crowd of several hundred people, who threw bricks, stones, whatever, at us, and we few walked calmly right through them to our parked vehicles, and rather sedately drove away, our point made. No one said we could do it.

I spoke extempore at Speakers Corner in Hyde Park for around a half an hour to a crowd of over a thousand; it ended in a brawl...Finally, toward the end of that Summer, a meeting we had arranged on Leeds Town Hall steps resulted in a mass brawl when the crowd of around a thousand attacked us, after I had harangued them for around half an hour. Several Police officers were injured as they tried to break up the fights. I was arrested (again) but soon was granted bail...

When my case came to trial, at Leeds Crown Court, I was accused of having "incited the crowd" and generally held responsible for most of the violence."
[8]

Everything I did in these years I justified to myself, and often to others, by invoking principles such as 'the survival of the fittest' and by the belief that in order to secure victory for the political cause I believed in, any and all means were justified, from violence to hatred to using rhetoric and propaganda in order to motivate people and gain recruits.

As for Column 88, involvement with that well-organised, now long-defunct, paramilitary group gave strength to my conviction that a National-Socialist victory was possible, for C88 had many overseas contacts, held regular meetings attended by young neo-nazis from all over Europe, and had among its British members not only many older professional people but also some members of the military. In addition, given its paramilitary nature and the paramilitary training undertaken, there was the knowledge that there were many others like me who were, under certain circumstances, prepared to use both physical and armed force in the service of our NS cause.

Thus I became aware that I and the few dedicated National-Socialists I had met in previous years in groups such as British Movement and the National Front were far from alone; that there were many other committed National-Socialists 'out there'. Which awareness, which practically acquired knowledge, not only strengthened my commitment to National-Socialism but which also strengthened my resolve to fight for 'the cause'.

There also developed in me during this time, and because of my involvement with C88, a realization that both covert action and terrorism [10] were or might be useful tactics to employ in the struggle for victory, a struggle which I - extremist and fanatic that I was - accepted would be brutal, violent, and bloody, and thus possibly cost the lives of some of us, some of our opponents, and even some non-combatants. For I was during these years enthused and somewhat motivated by the rise to power of Hitler's

NSDAP; a bloody, violent, struggle which had cost the lives of many comrades, from 'the fallen' of November 9th 1923 to Horst Wessel. I thus considered myself, and my comrades, as continuing that struggle - that struggle for the supremacy of the Aryan race, and the struggle against 'decadence' and our Communist, liberal, and Jewish enemies. In this struggle I personally - inspired by Savitri Devi's book *Lightning and The Sun* - considered the military defeat of The Third Reich, and the death of Adolf Hitler, as but temporary setbacks to be avenged.

In respect of covert action, I came to the conclusion, following some discussions with some C88 members, that two different types of covert groups, with different strategy and tactics, might be very useful in our struggle and thus aid us directly or aid whatever right-wing political party might serve as a cover for introducing NS policies or which could be used to advance our cause. These covert groups would not be paramilitary and thus would not resort to using armed force since that option was already covered, so far as I was then concerned, by C88.

The first type of covert group would essentially be a honeytrap [11], to attract non-political people who might be or who had the potential to be useful to the cause even if, or especially if, they had to be 'blackmailed' or persuaded into doing so at some future time. The second type of covert group would be devoted to establishing a small cadre of NS fanatics, of 'sleepers', to - when the time was right - be disruptive or generally subversive.

Nothing came of this second idea, and the few people I recruited during 1974 for the second group, migrated to help the first group, established the previous year. However, from the outset this first group was beset with problems for - in retrospect - two quite simple reasons, both down to me. First, my lack of leadership skills, and, second, the outer nature chosen for the group which was of a secret Occult group with the 'offer', the temptation, of sexual favours from female members in a ritualized Occult setting, with some of these female members being 'on the game' and associated with someone who was associated with my small gang of thieves.

While I enjoyed and then lived for political action - especially confrontation and brawls - and was motivated, fanatical, enough to speak extempore in public and take charge in a violent situations on the streets, and loved to plan such violence and motivate people to undertake it, I disliked the day-to-day organization and the (to me) petty manipulation that was, or seemed to me to be, the lot of an organizer and leader. I also lacked the charm, the charisma, the flexibility, a political organizer and leader needed.

In contrast to me, Eddy Morrison had a natural charisma, a certain charm, and was an experienced and adept organizer. He also, unlike me at the time, had a good sense of humour and was well-liked whereas I was probably more feared, or respected, because I was simply considered a nutter, a violent psycho. As a consequence, he was a natural leader; suited to leading the NDFM, and of all the people I knew at the time the most suited to organize and lead such a covert group especially given the fact that its ultimate purpose was to aid our NS cause. However, for all my attempts at persuasion he was uninterested in both C88 and in my ideas regarding covert action. He also, beyond being a fan of horror stories and of the fiction of HP Lovecraft, had

no interest whatsoever in the Occult. Thus I had to make do with someone else as organizer and 'leader' of this covert group, this person - then a comrade, a married businessman living near Manchester - being the one who had suggested the outer, the Occult, form of the group.

For some time, this underground group appeared to flourish, with some 'respectable' people recruited - initially a lecturer, a solicitor, a teacher, among others - with some of the recruits becoming converts to or in some way helping our political cause, and with such clandestine recruitment aided, later on, by some unexpected, non-factual, unwanted, publicity.

But what happened was that, over time and under the guidance of its mentor, the Occult and especially the hedonistic aspects came to dominate over the political and subversive intent, with the *raisons d'etat* of blackmail and persuasion, of recruiting useful, respectable, people thus lost. Hence, while I still considered, then and for quite some time afterwards, that the basic idea of such a subversive group, such a honeytrap, was sound, I gradually lost interest in this particular immoral honeytrap project until another spell in prison for an assortment of offences took me away from Leeds and my life as a violent neo-nazi activist [12].

Birth of A Theoretician of Terror

It is perhaps fair to say - so far as I recall - that I was the one who, in C88, first broached the subject of using certain tactics such as improvised explosive devices and assassinations in a direct campaign against both our enemies and what I often then referred to as 'The System'. Prior to this - so far as I knew - training and discussions had been concerned with and were about possible future events, in particular a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, an invasion scenario which at that time (the early to middle 1970's, the Cold War era) was taken seriously by Western governments and Western military forces.

My basic idea - the plan - was to use such tactics to cause disruption, fear, and discontent, in order to provoke a revolutionary situation that our NS, our racist, our fascist, or anti-immigrant groups in general, might be able to take advantage of politically and otherwise; with part of this plan being to encourage the government to introduce more and more 'martial law' type control and regulations, which type of control and regulations (and surveillance) those in the military inclined toward a more authoritarian, or even fascist type, government might use to their advantage. For from such authoritarian or fascist type beginnings, National-Socialism might be covertly, gradually, introduced.

It needs to be remembered this was when 'the troubles' - armed conflict in Northern Ireland - was possibly at its most bloody, and which conflict, together with IRA attacks in mainland Britain, caused consternation and concern both in British government and in certain military circles, with some ordinary ranks, a few junior officers and even a one or two of the higher ranks covertly talking about a scenario when a military coup in Britain might be justified. Not that, so far as I with my limited knowledge know, this minority discontent among certain military - and perhaps a few

intelligence - personnel ever become widely known or has even been mentioned in books, memoirs, or articles written about those times. But this discontent did capture a certain mood among certain people during that period, a mood I had some personal knowledge of, partly as a result of C88 contacts, partly as a result of some trips I made to Northern Ireland, and partly as result of other contacts such as squaddies involved with or supportive of right-wing groups.

Thus my ideas, my proposals, were to some extent grounded in the realities of those times. Times when disruptive industrial strikes and disputes were common in Britain, when the National Front could hold rallies and marches of thousands of people and had a membership possibly in excess of 10,000 members, when many more ordinary British citizens were, or seemed to be, generally supportive of the 'stop immigration, start repatriation' campaign, and when there was some support, or seemed to be some support, in certain military and even government circles for a more authoritarian approach to government.

I justified my ideas - the plan - and thus the use of such tactics by immorally believing and suggesting to others that in 'such dire times' victory could not be achieved without sacrifice and blood, and that for our people, our land, to survive and prosper it was necessary for some of us to be hard, ruthless; that 'history' showed that such ruthlessness was effective. And so on and so on. I do remember, on several occasions, idealizing the Roman Empire and ranting about how Rome built and maintained its Empire, its glory; not by negotiations, not by elections, not through a policy of peace and non-violence, but because ruthless men, hardened by war, had conquered, subdued and dealt severely with discontent and threats to 'the Roman way of life', to Rome, and to the Empire. Quite often I would quote some words of Hitler, from *Mein Kampf*, such as that the broad masses respond to what is strong and uncompromising; that a struggle on behalf of a weltanschauung has to be conducted by men of heroic spirit who are ready to sacrifice everything, and that if a people does not fight they do not deserve to live.

Hence, to me now, on reflexion, it does not seem to be hatred - of whatever type - that motivated those ideas, such a terrorist plan, of mine but rather a glorification of war, of strife; a belief in struggle, in 'the survival of the fittest'; a naive desire to personally act based on idealistic notions of sacrifice and glory, of being part of a desperate struggle, a war, that began with Hitler and the NSDAP. Most of all, perhaps, there was the misguided feeling that 'our people' were under attack, threatened with slavery and then extinction, so that desperate, ruthless, measures were necessary to save them. A feeling that most certainly derived from the absolute conviction I then had that 'race' - one's idealized race - was the most important thing, so that this idealized, mythical, 'race' came before everything, and therefore (so the perverted reasoning went) what was moral was what aided and ensured the survival and prosperity of this 'race'.

As for practical consequences, then, I do not believe there were any, of significance, known to me. For I discovered little support for these ideas, this plan, probably for a quite simple reason, which was that the people in C88 disposed toward and trained for action preferred to concentrate on C88's stated aims and objectives: of being a

practical bulwark in the event of a Soviet invasion or an internal Communist, extreme left-wing, revolution, and of slowly infiltrating National-Socialists into positions of influence within British society.

However, perhaps it was these ideas of mine, my enthusiasm for and rants about such action - to selected C88 people of course [13] - that later on resulted in a sort-of 'bomb making package' being produced by some of them (a package complete with several pairs of disposable surgical gloves), one of which packages was delivered to me, in Leeds, on my release from prison in 1976 but which I personally did not use given that shortly thereafter - for reasons outlined in *Myngath* - I, suffering from a loss of idealism, had a change of heart, and decided to become a monk in a Catholic monastery. A loss of idealism, a moral change, that would, however and unfortunately, not last that long.

David Myatt
2012 ce

Notes

[1] *Searchlight*, July 2000

[2] Mark Weitzman: *Antisemitismus und Holocaust-Leugnung: Permanente Elemente des globalen Rechtsextremismus*, in Thomas Greven: *Globalisierter Rechtsextremismus? Die extremistische Rechte in der Ära der Globalisierung*. 1 Auflage. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften/GWV Fachverlage GmbH, Wiesbaden 2006, ISBN 3-531-14514-2, pp.61-64

[3] *Searchlight*, July 2000

[4] *Sunday Mercury*, July 9, 2000

[5] Martin Amis, *The Second Plane*. Jonathan Cape, 2008, p.157

[6] Robert S Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad*, Random House, 2010.

[7] David Myatt, *Some Personal Perceiverations*. e-text, February 2012.
See also my compilation *Meditations on Extremism*

[8] David Myatt, *Myngath*. 11th revised edition, 2011.

[9] *Spearhead*, April 1983.

[10] A possible definition of terrorism is: " The calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological."

[11] Honeytrap meaning 'something that is tempting' - as in the modern usage of honeypot - and also something covert to attract/entrap a particular type of person. That is, a type of 'sting' operation. Thus, State-sponsored espionage is not implied.

[12] This new life later on included entering the noviciate of a Catholic monastery, and which monastic experience led me to reform myself, at least in respect of immoral and criminal activities and thus in respect of involvement with such immoral honeytraps. However, this reformation then did not last, for as recounted here in Part Four, I had occasion, during the 1980's, to renew my association not only with some old C88 comrades but also with the mentor of that Occult honeytrap when, after of lapse of many years, I became involved again in neo-nazi politics and revived my project of using clandestine recruitment for 'the cause'. By this time, that Occult group had developed some useful contacts, especially in the academic world, so some friendly co-operation between us was agreed; a co-operation which continued, sporadically, until just before my conversion to Islam in 1998.

This clandestine recruitment of mine was for a small National-Socialist cadre which went by a variety of names, beginning with 'G7' (soon abandoned), then *The White Wolves* (c. 1993), and finally the *Aryan Resistance Movement* aka Aryan Liberation Army [qv. Part Five for details].

However, while some of these Occult contacts were, given their professions, occasionally useful 'to the cause' and to 'our people', by 1997 I had come to the conclusion that the problems such association with Occultism and occultists caused far outweighed the subversive advantages; a conclusion which led me to re-write and re-issue a much earlier article of mine entitled *Occultism and National-Socialism*, and which revised article was subsequently published in the compilation *Cosmic Reich* by Renaissance Press of New Zealand. As I wrote in that article - "National-Socialism and Occultism are fundamentally, and irretrievably, incompatible and opposed to each other."

By the Summer of 1998 I had abandoned not only such co-operation and contacts with such Occult groups but also such clandestine recruitment on behalf of National-Socialism, concentrating instead on my Reichsfolk group and my 'revised' non-racist version of National-Socialism which I called 'ethical National-Socialism'. Later still, following my conversion to Islam, I was to reject even this version of National-Socialism.

[13] I recall one occasion, early on, trying to discuss my ideas - the plan - with C88's organizer in his home while, at my suggestion, very loud military music was played, from a Hi-Fi system, in the hope that it might drown out any covert listening or recording devices. Since the reality was that we could not hear what the other person said, that particular silly ploy of mine was very quickly discontinued.

Note: [...] indicates omitted text.

Extracts from
Part Six: 1998- 2002

Conversion to Islam

There was no sudden decision to convert to Islam. Rather, it was the culmination of a process that began a decade earlier with travels in the Sahara Desert. During the decade before my conversion I regularly travelled abroad, with this travel including well-over a dozen visits to Egypt and a few visits to other lands where the majority of the population were Muslim.

Egypt, especially, enchanted me; and not because of the profundity of ancient monuments. Rather because of the people, their culture, and the land itself. How life, outside of Cairo, seemed to mostly cling to the Nile - small settlements, patches and strips of verdancy, beside the flowing water and hemmed in by dry desert. I loved the silence, the solitude, the heat, of the desert; the feeling of there being precariously balanced between life and death, dependant on carried water, food; the feeling of smallness, a minute and fragile speck of life; the vast panorama of sky. There was a purity there, human life in its essence, and it was so easy, so very easy, to feel in such a stark environment that there was, must be, a God, a Creator, who could decide if one lived or died.

Once, after a long trip into the Western Desert, I returned to Cairo to stay at some small quite run-down hotel: on one side, a Mosque, while not that far away on the other side was a night-club. A strange, quixotic, juxtaposition that seemed to capture something of the real modern Egypt. Of course, very early next morning the Adhaan from the mosque woke me. I did not mind. Indeed, I found it hauntingly beautiful and, strangely, not strange at all; as if it was some long-forgotten and happy memory, from childhood perhaps.

Once, I happened to be cycling from Cairo airport to the centre of the city as dawn broke, my route taking me past several Mosques. So timeless, so beautiful, the architecture, the minarets, framed by the rising sun...

Once, and many years before my conversion, I bought from a bookshop in Cairo a copy of the Quran containing the text in Arabic with a parallel English interpretation, and would occasionally read parts of it, and although I found several passages interesting, intriguing, I then had no desire, felt no need, to study Islam further. Similarly, the many friendly conversations I had with Egyptians during such travels - about their land, their culture, and occasionally about Islam - were for me just informative, only the interest of a curious outsider, and did not engender any desire to study such matters in detail.

However, all these experiences, of a decade and more, engendered in me a feeling

which seemed to grow stronger year by year with every new trip. This was the feeling that somehow in some strange haunting way I belonged there, in such places, as part of such a culture. A feeling which caused me - some time after the tragic death of Sue (aged 39) from cancer in the early 1990's - to enrol on, and begin, an honours course in Arabic at a British university [8].

Thus, suffice to say that a decade of such travel brought a feeling of familiarity and resonance with Egypt, its people, its culture, that land, and with the Islam that suffused it, so that when in the Summer of 1998 I seriously began to study Islam, to read Ahadith, Seerah, and the whole Quran, I had at least some context from practical experience. Furthermore, the more I studied Islam in England in those Summer months the more I felt, remembered, the sound of the beautiful Adhaan; remembered the desert - that ætherial purity, that sense of God, there; and remembered that haunting feeling of perhaps already belonging to such a culture, such a way of life [9].

Hence my conversion to Islam, then, in September of that year, seemed somehow fated, wyrdful.

[...]

Supporting Al-Qaeda

In many respects my move away from a naive Muslim convert toward extremism was similar to my much earlier, previous, move from naive youthful admirer of Otto Ernst Remer to fanatical, racist, neo-nazi. That is, a gradual change; a process that involved associating with, and learning from, people who already had a particular interpretation of events, and of 'the cause' they believed in.

Hence it was not that I suddenly made some kind of unilateral decision of my own as a result of literature that I by myself found and read - such as printed books, or items accessed via the medium of the internet. Rather, the essence of the move to extremism was talks, discussions, with Muslims over a period of a year or more; literature, items, those brothers gave or loaned or suggested I read; and a long period of reflexion on those talks, discussions, and items accessed, read and studied.

After my conversion in 1998 I would regularly attend Namaz at my local Mosque, and had arranged time-off work in order to be able to attend Jumma Namaz. At the end of Jumma Namaz we would all form a circle and sing the beautiful nasheed *Ya Nabi Salaam Alayka* - something I always looked forward to - after which each one of us would greet and shake the hand of the Imaam, an elderly learned man, white of beard, and of great dignity. On several occasions I noticed one of the brothers leaving before the singing of this Nasheed. Then, one Friday, as he happened to be praying next to me and with Namaz over, I asked him if, this week, he would be staying to sing the nasheed. He did not approve of that nasheed, he said, for reasons he would be happy to explain were I to meet with him. Thus, and later on, I learned the reasons for his objection; reasons which he explained by quoting from memory, and in Arabic, various texts. Further discussions with him, and then with some other brothers

elsewhere, followed.

Naively enthusiastic as I was then regarding Islam - eager to learn more about my new Way of Life - I found these and other discussions with many other Muslims interesting, intriguing, and exciting, and so enrolled on a residential course in Arabic in order to better understand the texts they referred to. And it from some brothers on that course that I came to learn about Jihad, the Khilafah, and the Palestinian problem, subjects and an issue which, hitherto, had neither interested me nor as a Muslim concerned me, although I was vaguely aware of them. The course over, more discussions with other brothers - and some travels to Muslim lands - followed, with the result I began to be aware that I, as a Muslim, had certain duties and obligations, given by Allah; that life as a Muslim meant more than praying five times a day, attending Jummah Namaz, fasting during Ramadan, avoiding alcoholic beverages, eating halal food, and - if feasible - going on pilgrimage to Makkah.

There thus slowly, gradually, developed in me a sense of duty toward the Ummah - the duty of Jihad - and a certain resentment against 'the machinations of the kuffar', as well as a sense of continued injustice in respect of the treatment of the Palestinians.

[...]

David Myatt
2012 ce

Notes

[1] *Searchlight*, July 2000

[2] Mark Weitzman: *Antisemitismus und Holocaust-Leugnung: Permanente Elemente des globalen Rechtsextremismus*, in Thomas Greven: *Globalisierter Rechtsextremismus? Die extremistische Rechte in der Ära der Globalisierung*. 1 Auflage. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften/GWV Fachverlage GmbH, Wiesbaden 2006, ISBN 3-531-14514-2, pp.61-64

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[5] Martin Amis, *The Second Plane*. Jonathan Cape, 2008, p.157

[6] Robert S Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad*, Random House, 2010.

[7] David Myatt, *Some Personal Perceiverations*. e-text, February 2012. See also my compilation *Meditations on Extremism*

[8] I soon left that university however, for personal and practical reasons to do with a romantic involvement with a lady who lived hundreds of miles away.

[9] In retrospect, this feeling concerning Islam is still within, still living in me, for being Muslim is (it seems to me) manifest in the stark simple beauty of living in the desert or passing through it alone; for there in the dangerous silence we are or can be one with ourselves, aware of the numinous sans words, sans abstractions; aware of our fragile, fallible, error-prone, nature; of our need for the humility of the numinous.

One possible explanation of this feeling that I have found is that of The Religious Society of Friends: that there is 'that of God' in every person, and that answering to 'that of God' can and has taken various forms over millennia with such forms equally deserving of respect since there is an underlying unity, the same spiritual essence beyond those different outer forms.

Thus I am still respectful of the Muslim Way of Life, of what I sense is its numinous essence. Similarly, I resonate with the essence of the Christian message because of understanding, feeling, 'that of God'; and therefore also feel the numinous in Buddhism, in Taoism, in Orthodox Judaism, and in many other Ways.

The Ethos of Extremism

Some Reflexions on Politics and A Fanatical Life

Part One: 1968-1973

Introduction
Becoming Nazi
Hatred, Love, and Violence
Conclusion (Part One)

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Ultra-Violence, Covert Action, and Terror
Birth of A Theoretician of Terror

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The Propaganda Years
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Extracts from Letters to Friends

Selected Letters of David Myatt, 2008 - 2011 CE



Introduction

Included in this volume are extracts from some of my letters to personal friends, and extracts from some more general correspondence, dating from the middle of 2008 to March of 2011 CE. For context, I have added brief extracts from three earlier letters, one from 2006, the other two from 2007 CE.

This volume will therefore hopefully compliment the compilation of letters, by my good friend JRW, in 2009 CE - which was a selection from the years 2002 to 2008 CE - and may thus provide further exemplifications; of not only that internal and external odyssey which led me to develop my philosophy of The Numinous Way, but also how different my personal views, and that particular weltanschauung, now are from such diverse *-isms* and *-ologies* that over the past forty years I have acquired some practical and theoretical knowledge of, and/or been involved with.

A difference perhaps summed up in the following quote, from one of the letters included here:

" We become, we are, each intimation of The Divine that so enthrals us, still - so that our pasts become presenced in our future and our future in our shared pasts: for so long as we hold fast to that love which dreams us, beckoning in such sadness, strength, ecstasy, and hope as melds us to those beyond our selves. Their dreams our dreams; their hurt our hurt; their joy our joy; their life our life. And one lifetime here is never ever long enough... Which is why there is the you beyond the I that is this me." *Were I To Die, Now*

Some notes - Post Scriptum, and in elucidation - have been added to a few of the letters.

David Myatt
2455637.321

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NASA - Earth from Space
High Acre - A Painting by Richard Moulton

No Collocation of Words

I have no collocation of words to adequately express the sadness felt, the feelings emanating from memories of days decades ago when a fifteen year old boy was so enthused as some new piece of scientific understanding became, for him, uncovered. For his life was only such questions, answered: a boy alone in such a world of dreams and interests as were his existence, then, when there was no horizon beyond the hours, the many longful delight-filled hours, spent in libraries, laboratories, cycling or just walking - head full of dreams - along, beyond, those tree-lined Walks in a town edged on that special level-land where he The Dreamer dwelt, explored, for three whole learning years, and more.

No world, then, beyond, to spoil such self-contained enclosure, such happiness; no people hurt; no stories to weave, deceiving, to keep some rôle alive. Only the toil of sunny days in Summer when fruit picked meant books bought, weekend cycle tours alone, and when the walk in those friendly fenland fields was only a means to imagine world upon world beyond in a star-filled Cosmos more real than any person passed. No world, beyond - as when only the cloud, observed, had meaning and one would with an enthusiasm far beyond words have to, just had to, seek out an understanding of the patterns so formed by clouds in Earthly-sky, satisfied only when one had in one's hands a book replete with photographs, descriptions, of such formations as had made one to wonder, then in the moment of that awe. No world beyond the lanes cycled where each new watery place found was a cosmos so wonderfully contained within itself, and only the profuse life observed, felt, had meaning while warm daylight, and the flask of Oolong tea, lasted.

Was this, then, innocence? That numinous, gentle, youthful, perfection of life when one's feelings, desires, dreams, living, combined to form a human being awkward with and among others, day-dreaming and shy yet replete with both imagination and hope, and who possessed no harm within, no thought of such suffering and harm as blighted the world beyond and which world would creepingly come to charm away the decades of his life, those lives waiting, nascent, and still in him unfeelingly unborn; he whose whole life then was only that around him in the immediacy of such moments felt, thought, observed through eyes only his own.

Now, I am become again the tears of such a gentle youthful yearning - as if I am that boy before abstract ideals, causal abstractions, spoiled me, betook me slitheringly as they did to other worlds where lived that life of passion, of that

pain, that ecstasy, that sorrow, that joy, that interfering idealism, that love subsuming, that hubris – those lives – now I in these moments of a supine aged remembering sometimes, so often, so wistfully wish had never ever so occurred, existed.

For I was lost, to myself, for so many decades. So many: and yet they, those decades – of so much suffering caused – seem to have somehow drawn forth from within some understanding, some little understanding, some new species of understanding never dreamt of, then, in those gentle years of youth.

But was it worth it? Worth this new understanding, born from such pathemathos as has made me, now, who and what I am: old, gray? Born from such suffering I suffered and most certainly inflicted upon so many others? Worth it – but for whom? For me? Perhaps; but for those who suffered because of me – almost certainly not. For some, the few, who might learn something from my own errors and experience recounted in such scribblings as this? Possibly. But to be honest – I do not really know if it was worth it, worth such suffering, caused; perhaps I, sadly, shall never know. And perhaps, rightly, I should never, ever, know.

So, now, all I can do is to so poignantly recall those times – those so few later times – when the boy I was broke forth again within the decades of those adult years; broke forth to be free to bring again the warm Sun of such Summers, such dreams, as made me – bade me – in such adult years give love without words, expectations, limit or hopes, so that I was again, thankfully again, the gentle being of such times past to thus become – if only in moments – he the adult who could bring forth perchance some poem, some letter, to capture, if only a little and so poorly with words, such beauty and numinosity as can dwell, sometimes, within us: within we error-prone, fragile, sad, happy, joyful, grieving, and so often arrogant, suffering-causing, human beings.

So many memories, to bring

The moment of sublime knowing
As clouds part above the Bay
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain
Still falling:
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder
Have given way to blue
Such that the tide, turning,
Begins to break my vow of distance
Down.

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest

Takes him where
This bearded man of greying hair
No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling

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Almost Mid-Summer

Another beautifully warm and Sunny day, bright with the light remembered from childhood years in Africa and the Far East: so different from the normally dullish light of temperate England.

Thus, here in the warm Sun and as so often, there is a time of reflexion; a stasis as life becomes reviewed through memories. And it is occurring to me more and more that this is all that there is, beyond the immediacy of the moment: only memories of moments past.

So many memories which slowly fade as bright colour exposed to Sun: as the bright checks of my Tweed cap have slowly faded over the years, unrenewed as the greens of the grass, the bush, the tree, become renewed each year, through Spring. Only memories, as of Fran; to be savoured but perhaps now not too much to be dwelt upon in almost unbearable sadness, for thus is – for thus has the – a type of balance returned; that balance, that dwelling in immediacy, which I from learning feel and know is the essence of *wu-wei*.

This is a change within me, regarding the life and death of Fran, and the life and death of Sue; regarding my own diverse journeys and explorations. A change toward a being-settled that has partly arisen from at last forsaking abstractions and partly from accepting that it is immediacy and remembrance of memories which convey the only correct meaning we human beings have or can find and which is numinous. No projection, thus, of an abstractive life-beyond this mortal life; no need for a religious type of faith; no battle or desire to strive to be in accord with any abstraction; and even no need to believe in, or even un-numinously desire, some-thing. No depth of unfathomable wordless sadness to bring that ultimate life-ending despair such

as I assume Fran felt in the last hours of her own mortal living.

For there is only the bright Sun; the slight breeze in bush and tree; the verdant, living, green of grass; the yellow Buttercups that are profusely sprinkled there in the old Orchard of old Apple trees whose lower branches have been windfallen, or become broken with age, or stripped of bark by the two Goats who roam there, where Chickens range, food-seeking. Only the passing billowing fair-weather white Cumulus clouds below the sky-blue of Earth's earthly mortal life.

Across from where I sit - at the back of the Farmhouse - that Barn whose Summer Swallows swoop in and out to feed their still nesting young who gape and chatter as their food is brought. And I am only this moment, only this moment, as the young Farm dog who comes to lay down in the grass beside me is only the young Farm dog. He looks up at me once - three times - tail wagging, before settling down to sleep.

There is no world beyond, for us here; for the life here. Only the weather; only the changing weather; only some natural need to move us, slowly by our limbs. A need for shelter, water, food. Only the Seasons changing as they change. Only the gentle companionship of a gentle acceptance that lives, grows, changes, slowly, as all natural life lives, grows - changes - slowly, as Sun through cloudless Summer sky.

My decades long mistake of unbalanced stupidity has been to be un-rooted; to be of unnatural unneedful haste. To cease to dwell within each immediacy of each moment. To be swayed by, persuaded by, in thrall to - to even love - un-numinous and thus un-ethical abstractions. To be thus that which we human beings have become: a stage between animal - talking - and compassionate, empathic being aware of and treasuring each small pulse of life that lives near, within, us because there is no separation unless we in hubris and by abstraction create such separation.

Thus are we now but Homo Hubris, struggling, halting, wasting ourselves and all of Life around us; infected now with the virus of abstractions so that, upon this living Earth, we - in our new de-evolution - despoil, disrupt, destroy the Life that is our Life and the genesis of The Numinous, often in the name of that un-ethical abstraction called "progress". And yet we have a cure for our millennia-long debilitating sickness; have always had a cure, although so many for so long, as I, have failed in our blind stupidity to see it.

So, this is all that there is: only the bright Sun; the slight breeze in bush and tree; the verdant, living, green of grass; the yellow Buttercups that are profusely sprinkled here where, now, The Numinous lives, on another beautifully warm and Sunny day, bright with light remembered...

June 2008 CE

Were I To Die, Now

Were I to die here tonight, tomorrow, you would remain as you must to presence in such music - in such new Art, such new life and love as you share now and will share with others - what it is that you and I and others of our often mis-understood kind, feel, know, understand, and which makes us who we are, almost another species lost in the times that are are living.

Now, I hear such musick as dreams me - and I am again drifting along the Isis one Summer day with my loved one beside me, when poignancy of our departing is as yet another night away and the voices of those hateful ones who might part us if they knew of our love, our joining, are stilled, at least for now while the warm English Sun lasts and our bottle of Champagne is not quite empty...

And then, I am there also beside Fran, my love, that last morning of her life in May when she looked so lost, so lost, so haunted with suffering, so needful in her unspoken agony - and all I could do was maintain my selfish resolve and walk away to embark upon that train whose First Class carriage claimed me in comfort and whose provided breakfast I in my then needful material satiation so eagerly enjoyed...

And I am there that night when in subdued lampful darkness Sue breathed her last as I sat beside her and held her then still warmful hand.

What are such opinions of me by others, after this?

My past lives in such music of yours - such musick of your present, and future. As you yourself with your musical genius and your numinous creations live in that future which I in my time of departing will never see and share with such a causal being and forms as so constrain and still retain me here, at least for now. But of course, there is no you or I to separate or to make such distinctions, and it is this which is the secret which you perhaps have for so long saught, so that even if we two do not ever again meet in this, our separation of earthful being and at some point of intersecting causal Time, it does not and will not matter, except to that which still so keeps here and

which in so many ways is still so important and so necessary to the type of beings we are and will be for so many Aeons, replete as we are with such human feelings and failings as make and keep us human.

So there is this mystery of such necessity of feeling even while we often so desire there was not. To know this, to feel this - to live this - mystery is what we are, and will be, for so many Aeons, and cannot for now escape from, however much such desire for escape snakes itself around us so that often we feel compressed, throttled, by such desiring of Life when in truth it is ground of our necessary human dwelling.

Thus, there is no mystery of succession, one Gnostic to another, as perhaps you once believed - no sayings; no secret teachings to reveal; no hidden manuscripts. Only this - of such connexions between us as such music, such Art, as you make and such memories, such deeds, as have made my past. No you and I to cloud each others judgements by frequency of spoken words.

Entwined thus by connexions we few in our beginning journey only so dimly see. Thus is there Wyrð far beyond the singular individual fate we two once in far more youthful times so believed in and adored.

We become, we are, each intimation of The Divine that so enthrals us, still - so that our pasts become presenced in our future and our future in our shared pasts: for so long as we hold fast to that love which dreams us, beckoning in such sadness, strength, ecstasy, and hope as melds us to those beyond our selves. Their dreams our dreams; their hurt our hurt; their joy our joy; their life our life. And one lifetime here is never ever long enough... Which is why there is the you beyond the I that is this me.

2011 CE

One More Foolish Failure

I am such a fool; such a failure, in evolutionary terms, in the perspective of the Cosmos. Here I am, entering the sixth decade of my life, having spent the last forty years seeking experience and wisdom and having, in that time, made so

many errors, mistakes, and been the cause of much suffering, personal and otherwise.

How then can I be deemed wise? How - when I have leant, from sorrowful experience, from my own *pathei-mathos*, from the personal tragedy of the dying and the death of two loved ones, and yet have always always, until now, returned to pursuing suffering-causing abstractions and unethical goals?

There is no excuse for this failure of mine, year following year - although of course I have always made excuses for myself, as failures often do. Wordy, moral-sounding, inexcusable excuses almost always of the unethical "the end justifies the means" kind.

No excuses - because from sorrow, from personal tragedy, I felt, dis-covered, the unethical nature of all abstractions, be they deemed political, religious, or social. And yet I always seemed, until a month ago, to gravitate back toward them, as if there was some basic flaw in my personal nature, my character, that allowed or even caused such a return, such a stupid forgetting of lessons learnt; as if I was in truth an addict, addicted to challenges, to strife, to violent change, because such challenges, such strife, such violence brought or seemed to bring a vivifying existence, a sense of belonging, of being alive - and yes, a feeling of being different, special, in the sense of believing that one is able to make a difference, to the world.

Thus, I have been human - all too human, far too human; caught, trapped, by that egotism, that bloated self-esteem, that has blighted our species for centuries, for millennia, and made us place some goal, some idealism, some ideal, some abstraction, before empathy, before compassion, before our evolution into higher beings.

In addition, for a long time, I desired, yearned with all my being, with a sorrowful passion, to believe again in God, in Allah, Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, As-Salaam - who thus could forgive, redeem, and guide, and from whom there might, could be, redemption and thus catharsis, and who thus could take away those doubts about myself, my actions, that never, ever, left me when I returned to the foray, to the pursuit of some inhuman suffering-causing abstraction or other.

Only in moments during all these years - these long, these too-long, four years - did my being reach out again to the Cosmos, my bloated all-too-human self-esteem punctured, brought down to Earth, by some incident, or some intimation of the divine, of The Numen; as when I chanced to listen, to hear, to feel, *In timorie Dei* from *Répons Matines pour la fête de saint Bernard*, and

knew again as if for the first time the essence of one allegory, the suffering, the hopes, the errors, the potentiality, of human beings, century upon century - bringing thus a profusion of tears so that moisture fell from my eyes to moisten my beard as, outside my room, the modern world flowed as it flowed, replete with noise and ego... Or as when I out walking along some Promenade by some sea caught the smile, the very essence, of a woman, youthful, who passed me by in warming Sun and whom I in that one transcended moment seemed to become with all her happiness, sadness, hopes, memories and living: such an intimation of goodness, there, nascent, ready and willing to spring forth when a trusting love caught her, again. Or as when I sat in Sun to watch a young family, in some town Park, playing as such young fathers, mothers, often played with their children less than a decade in their living.

Or as when I watched from a boat the Sun set over a calm almost wave-free Sea, the red disk descending, larger, slowly, there where sea horizon cut the darkening of Earth's sky to cause such a profusion of changing colour that one was calmed, again, in those moments; stilled and almost awed as one watched, felt, such beauty, presented on such a home as this.

But only in moments, during all those years.....

Perhaps all religions were, in their genesis, an answer to such stubborn foolish human forgetfulness that brought me down, for all those years; and - in their development - an aid to remembering what we so easily forget, what I so easily forgot, except in such transient moments; an aid, a means, by their rites, of presencing for us, in our ordinary, daily, lives, some intimation of the divine, of what we might, could, should be, when we cease because of egotism to forget, when we remember the suffering of others and especially the suffering that we ourselves have caused, and thus acquire or develop the dignity of humility that we human beings so desperately need, and always have needed.

Perhaps - until, that is, those religious ways lost or obscured, the numen, the numinous, in, by and through abstractions, dogma, by requiring the certainty of a certain belief, or by changing their ancient rites in some vain unnecessary temporal effort to be "modern and relevant".

I tried; I did try, for years - to return to such ways, such religious answers; needing them - hoping to find in and through them and their rites that constant remembrance, that constant presencing, of the numinous that I felt, knew, understood, would keep me a better, more enlightened, more empathic, and compassionate, person, mindful through humility of my own errors, arrogance, and mistakes.

But it did not work, for me - except in moments; far too few moments. For

always there were deep feelings of there being something missing in their rites; of there being something just too abstract, too un-numinous, in their requirement that one accepts certain beliefs and dogma. As if the pure numinous essence has somehow by some means and over time been lost, or might not have been fully there even in their genesis.

Perhaps, possibly, probably - this is just my all-too-human arrogance re-asserting itself, yet again. My presumption, my illusion, of knowing, born from some all-too-human desire. But the stark simple truth was that such accepted, conventional, religious means did not work for me - or no longer worked for me. No longer presenced the numen, for me; no longer enabled me to rise, to go, beyond my selfish, foolish, error-prone self, to where the essence of empathy and compassion and the numen itself seemed to live, far beyond our temporal world of selfish suffering-causing human beings.

Thus did I slowly, sometimes painfully, from my *pathei-mathos*, construct for myself, over years, my own Way.

But even this Numinous Way of mine seems incomplete, as it is only my own uncertain and possibly quite feeble answer. For even now I seem to have no means, in and through this Way of mine, to presence the Numen, on a regular temporal basis to remind myself of the mistakes of my past, to feel again the living numinous Cosmos beyond that often mundane world which has now become the place of my daily living.

Thus is there the same old haunting question - of how long will it be before I in my addiction forget The Numen, yet again, and so return to the suffering-causing habits of so many previous years?

For now, I can only hope against hope that I have strength enough, memories enough, humility enough, to keep me where I know I should belong: infused, suffused, with the world of the numinous, enabling thus such an empathic living as can make us and keep us as ethical, compassionate, human beings; one sign toward the higher human type we surely have the potential to become.

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The Love That Needs No Words

On this planet we humans call Earth, there is, as Sophocles wrote [1], much that is strange, but nothing has more strangeness than we human beings, for we are capable of such honour, such heroism, such compassion, and yet we also do and have done so many deeds of dishonour, possess so much hubris, and have been the cause of so much suffering, so many killings, so much destruction and disruption of the numinous, millennia after millennia.

In addition, we so often delude ourselves or lie to ourselves or make excuses for ourselves: for our dishonour, for our hubris, for our lack of empathy and compassion.

Can we as a species survive? Do we even deserve to survive, given our profanity, our destruction of Life, of Nature: of She who gave us birth and who keeps us alive and who can keep us balanced between our honour and our dishonour? Keep us balanced – if only we could live in the correct way: with empathy, compassion, honour and a shared personal love, where we feel and know ourselves as but one nexion, one connexion, among many, on this planet, in the Cosmos, and where we have a real, a living, bond with the very land itself which sustains us; where our needs are simple because our desires are restrained through our abandonment of abstractions, and through our knowledge of ourselves and of how easy, how very easy, it is to cause suffering.

Our human truth is that it is not right to give names to some things or some deeds or some thoughts; it is un-numinous to try and describe or categorize some experience by some term or some abstraction; it is incorrect to manufacture some theory, in some poor attempt to place such terms in some alleged causal context.

One of our many human problems – one of the great problems of our modern ways of life – is that there is too much noise, especially the noise of and from words, spoken, read and thought. Far far too many words spoken; far too much speaking, too little silent, interior, reflexion, especially among the natural peace of Nature where we can sense and know again in our stillness the acausal Time of the Cosmos.

For wisdom is not to be found in speeches, in political or social manifesto, tracts or books; nor in some political, religious, or social, theory or dogma. And especially not in some abstraction, some ideal.

Rather, wisdom is there to be discovered, within ourselves – others can only gently point or guide us toward this self-discovery, toward the necessary interior, quiet, reflexion – perhaps through some work of Art, or some sublime

piece of music, some poignant literature; perhaps some poem; or perhaps by some noble deed done or some selfless personal love that needs no words to speak or advertise its wordless name.

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[1] πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδεν ἄνθρωπον δεινότερον πέλει

Bright Berries, One Winter



Winter, three days before that celebration that marks a certain birth.

Et hoc vobis signum: Inveniétis infántem pannis involútum, et pósitum in præsépio.

Et súbito facta est cum Angelo multitúdo milítiae cæléstis, laudántium Deum, et dicéntium:

Glória in altíssimis Deo, et in terra pax homínibus bonæ voluntátis.

Outside, snow, and a cold wind below a clouded sky - and, there, that partly snow-covered bush of bright berries which hungry Thrushes eat to perhaps keep themselves alive. So many Thrushes, in one place: nine, eleven, gathering

on the bare if snowy branches of a nearby taller tree, to descend down to feed, three, five, four, at a time.

Inside, musick - reproduced by some modern means. Musick over five centuries old, bringing such a strange melding of feeling, dreams, memory, and thought. Musick, by Dunstable - *Preco preheminecie*, perhaps one of the most beautiful pieces ever written, bringing thus deep personal feelings.

Now, I cannot seem to help the tears that seep slowly forth (again) from closing eyes, as - far beyond such bounds as causal Time keeps us moving - I am replete, overflowed by memories from such lifeful strange lives as have lived me, here:

... there, as she my Sue lay so softly breathing in her bed, my hand to her hand, to watch her sleep to seep hour-long-slowly there past the ending of her life...

There, as another love from another life that lived me ran, freshly seeping forth from train, along that crowded platform to leap to welcoming arms while people stared, some smiling, and the warmth of bodies touching announced the ending of our exile, of that month of her travelling...

There, one monk - with such profusion of faith as so infused me then - who knelt, kneels, after Compline in that lovely Chapel before carved centuries-old statue of the BVM, feeling such peace as led me back in such respectful reposeful silence to that my cell to sleep dreamless, content...

Before other lives came to so sadly betake that boyish man away, back to his addiction to such suffering-causing abstractions as would, decades, later, almost break him as she - my Frances of eighteen months together - so then suffused with such tragic fullsome sadness-regret-despair that her slim delicate fingers, no longer to tenderly warmly touch her lover's face, became transformed: a means to betake her, alone lonely, past the ending of her life after I had so selfishly left her that one MayMorn...

So many tears, each some memory seeping sadly joyfully poignantly forth even as so many wait, waiting, ready to heave forth; dormant, seeds needing to bring hence new life as each new Spring becomes some youthful ageing deedful wordful presencing of this one life which is my life until such Time as this emanation also passes beyond that fated Ending who lies in wait to take us all.

Thus am I humbled, once more, by such knowing feeling of the burden made from my so heavy past; so many errors, mistakes. So many to humble me here, now, by such profusion as becomes prehension of centuries past and passing, bringing as such a passing does such gifts of they now long beyond life's ending who crafted from faith, feeling, experience, living, love, those so rich presents replete with meaning; presenting thus to us if only for a moment - fleeting as Thrush there feeding - that knowing of ourselves as beings who by empathy, life, gifts, and love, can cease to be some cause of suffering.

For no longer is there such a need - never was there such a need - to cause such suffering as we, especially I, have caused. For are not we thinking thoughtful beings - possessed of the numinous will to love?

But my words, my words - so unlike such musick - fail: such finite insubstantial things; such a weak conduit for that flowing of wordless feeling that, as such musick, betakes us far out beyond our causal selves to where we are, can be, should be, must be, the non-interfering beauty of a moment; a sublime life seeking only to so gently express that so gentle love that so much faith has sometimes so vainly so tried to capture, express, and manifest; as when that boyish man as monk past Compline knelt in gentleness to feel to become such peace, such a human happiness, as so many others have felt centuries past and present, one moment flowing so numinously to another.

No need, no Time - before this one weakful emanation ends, in ending - to berate, condemn, such love, need and faith as may betake so many in just three days to celebrate such birth as touched, touches, them, and others still. So much good, gentleness, there, and from; and so much suffering, caused, while the centuries past, leeching, meshed one suffering to another.

Does the numinous, presencing, there, now outweigh such suffering, caused - as I, my past, might must outweigh what wordful presents Fate begifts me, now?

I do not know: only see the emanations, nexing, melding: a bush of berries to keep life alive through Winter. Our choice, our need - here, now; as the Thrushes there have no choice, now, as mid-Winter came to bleaken with snowy cold that world that is their world.

For it is for us, surely, to treasure such gifts, given - to feel then be the gift, given.

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(22 December 2010 CE)

Image Credit: St Edward's, Shropshire (a painting by Richard Moulton)

A Learning From Pysis



Life is or can be so beautiful, it is just that we humans seem to have a propensity to undermine or destroy or not even see this beauty, especially manifest as this beauty is in Nature, and in and through a mutual personal love between two human beings.

But why – just why – do we human beings have a propensity to so undermine or destroy or not even see the beauty of Life, of Nature, of love? Because of our desires, our selfish desires, and because of the abstractions – the lifeless, un-numinous, abstractions we human beings have, in our hubris, manufactured; which lifeless abstractions we pursue, or we place before such beauty, such a numinous apprehension and appreciation of Nature, as Nature is – a natural unfolding (*φύσις*) and a very slow natural change – without our interference and our arrogant desire to change things quickly according to some abstraction such as “progress” or according to some “plan” or some “destiny” or scheme we in our arrogance, insolence, and haste have devised or believe in.

However, I am as responsible as anyone for having committed the error of hubris – having pursued, for most of my adult life, some abstraction or other, and thus placed some manufactured goal, or some idealized perceived duty, before the beauty of love, and before that letting-be which allows us to

appreciate, to feel, the numinosity of Nature.

As Sophocles wrote, several thousand years ago:

*ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον:
ὕβρις, εἰ πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῇ μάταν,
ἂ μὴ 'πίκαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,
ἀκρότατον εἰσαναβᾶσ'
αἶψος ἀπότομον ὥρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν
ἔνθ' οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ
χρῆται.*

Insolence [hubris] plants the tyrant:
There is insolence if by a great foolishness
There is a useless over-filling which goes beyond
The proper limits -
It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights
And then that hurtling toward that Destiny
Where the useful foot has no use.

In retrospect, life, for me, has been in so many respects enjoyable and replete with joy – a joy sufficient and often innocent enough to keep me mostly balanced through many times of personal tragedy and loss, and also in situations when I myself suffered the consequences of some dishonourable act or acts by some human beings who seemed to have lost or not to even have possessed the human qualities of empathy and honour.

Now, as I recall and review over five decades of conscious living, I am also aware of just how selfish I have been, and in particular aware of how I, through focussing on abstractions, ideals and supra-personal goals, have personally hurt people who loved me, and personally caused or been the cause of suffering in this world. But I like to believe that I have, finally, learnt and understood some important things – especially about myself – as a result of my diverse rather adventurous and sometimes strange life.

Thus it is that I find, through and because of such a recalling, that what I value now, what I feel and sense is most important, is a direct, personal, mutual love between two human beings – and that such love is far far more important, more real, more human, than any abstraction, than any idealism, than any so-called duty, than any dogma, than any cause, however “idealistic”; more important – far more important – than any ideology, than any and all *-isms* and *-ologies* be such *-isms* and such *-ologies* understood conventionally as political, or religious or social. For it is the desire to love, to be loved – and the desire to cease to cause suffering – which are important, which should be our priority, and which are the true measure of our own humanity.

What, therefore, shall I personally miss the most as my own mortal life now moves toward its fated ending? It is the rural England that I love, where I feel most at home, where I know I belong, and where I have lived and worked for many many years of my adult life – the rural England of small villages, hamlets, and farms, far from cities and main roads, that still (but only just) exists today in parts of Shropshire, Herefordshire, Yorkshire, Somerset and elsewhere. The rural England of small fields, hedgerows, trees of Oak, where – over centuries – a certain natural balance has been achieved such that Nature still lives and thrives there where human beings can still feel, know, the natural rhythm of life through the seasons, and where they are connected to the land, the landscape, because they have dwelt, lived, worked there year after year, season after season, and thus know in a personal, direct, way every field, every hedge, every tree, every pond, every stream, around them within a day of walking.

This is the rural England where change is slow, and often or mostly undesired and where a certain old, more traditional, attitude to life and living still exists, and which attitude is one of preferring the direct slow experience of what is around, what is natural, what is of Nature, to the artificial modern world of cities and towns and fast transportation and vapid so-called “entertainment” of others.

That is what I shall miss the most, what I love and have treasured – beyond women loved, progeny sown, true friends known:

The joy of slowly walking in fields tended with care through the hard work of hands; the joy of hearing again the first Cuckoo of Spring; of seeing the Swallows return to nest, there where they have nested for so many years. The joy of sitting in some idle moment in warm Sun of an late English Spring or Summer to watch the life on, around, within, a pond, hearing thus the songful, calling birds in hedge, bush, tree, the sounds of flies and bees as they dart and fly around.

The joy of walking through meadow fields in late Spring when wild flowers in their profusion mingle with the variety of grasses that time over many decades have sown, changed, grown. The joy of hearing the Skylark rising and singing again as the cold often bleak darkness of Winter has given way at last to Spring.

The simple delight of – having toiled hours on foot through deep snow and a colding wind – of sitting before a warm fire of wood in that place called home where one’s love has waited to greet one with a kiss.

The joy of seeing the first wild Primrose emerge in early Spring, and

waiting, watching, for the Hawthorn buds to burst and bloom. The soft smell of scented blossoms from that old Cherry tree. The sound of hearing the bells of the local village Church, calling the believers to their Sunday duty. The simple pleasure of sitting after a week of work with a loved one in the warm Summer quietness of the garden of an English Inn, feeling rather sleepy having just imbued a pint or two of ale as liquid lunch.

The smell of fresh rain on newly ploughed earth, bringing life to seeds, crops, newly sown. The mist of an early Autumn morning rising slowly over field and hedge while Sun begins to warm the still chilly air. The very feel of the fine tilth one has made by rotaring the ground ready for planting in the Spring, knowing that soon will come the warmth of Sun, the life of rain, to give profuse living to what shall be grown – and knowing, feeling, that such growth, such fecundity, is but a gift, to be treasured not profaned...

These are the joys, some of the very simple, the very *English*, things I treasure; that I have loved the most, and whose memories I shall seek to keep flowing within me as my own life slowly ebbs away...

For it is to the now almost lost England of such things that I belong, that I have always belonged, even though for many years I, in my profane often selfish stupidity, forget this, subsumed as I was in my hubris with un-numinous abstractions.

So this is Peace:
As the Sun of warm November
Warms and the grass grows with such mildness.

No strife, here;
No place beyond this place
As Farm meets meadow field
And I upon some hessian sack sit, write
To hear some distant calls from hedged-in sheep:
No breeze
To stir the fallen leaves
That lie among the seeds, there
Where the old Oak towers, shading fence
From Sun
And the pond is hazed with midges.

So this is the peace, found
Where dew persists,
Flies feed to preen to rest

And two Robins call from among that tangled brambled
Bush
Whose berries - unplucked, ripened - rot,
While the Fox-worn trail wobbles
Snaking
Through three fields.

So, the silent Buzzard soars
To shade me briefly:
No haste, worry, nor Homo Hubris, here
Only that, of this, a peaceful peace
Rising
When we who wait, wait to walk with Nature.

So there is much sadness, leaving
As the damp field-mists of morning
Have given way
To Sun

The Sun of Warm November

2010 CE

Image Credit - High Acre (A Painting by Richard Moulton)

Addendum (Post Scriptum) - A Note Concerning Physis

The phrase *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* - attributed to Heraclitus - expresses something of the true nature of Physis. See, for example, my brief essay *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*, where I suggest that the phrase implies something akin to *Concealment accompanies Physis*, or *Concealment remains with Physis, like a friend* (or, The natural companion of Physis is concealment.)

We, as thinking human beings - who can use *λόγος* - can not only uncover *Φύσις* but also conceal it again by our use of ideation, and by our "naming" of

things. Why is why Heraclitus also said:

τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος αἰεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ
πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον

Although this naming and expression, which I explain, exists – human beings tend to ignore it, both before and after they have become aware of it. (*Fragment 1*)

An understanding also expressed by Hesiod (*Theog*, 27-28):

ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
ἴδμεν δ', εὔτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι

We have many ways to conceal – to name – certain things
And the skill when we wish to expose their meaning

One Stranger To Another

It was one of those marvellous days of an English Spring when no clouds obscure the blue of the sky and a cooling breeze followed the sea-waves inshore. I was sitting – as often these days, alone – on the sand, indulgently lamenting the now long-gone days of love and youth.

The beach – despite the middle morning hour, and the sunful warmth – was denuded of humans, save for two young women walking their dogs; the women chatting amiably, while their dogs chased each other in that friendly manner dogs sometimes exhibit toward their own domestic kind, occasionally running to splash happily about in the sea whose tide, just past its highest, was now turning.

It was a pleasant – perhaps a very English – scene, and this Monday was, at it proved, no or little different from the many others which had found me there on such sunful, warmish, days. For I had occasioned upon this quietful spot toward the end of the busy tourist season, last year, and quite often came to sit here on subsequent holidays – a man of sixty years, whose greying hair, Tweed jacket, flat cap, corduroy trousers, and well-polished if worn boots, proclaimed him to be a somewhat old-fashioned, possibly eccentric, but nevertheless harmless Englishman.

It had not always been so, in the years and decades past, when death, killing, hatred, and violence, had been my chosen and most constant companions. But

now I could be and was just that: an ageing man sat, peacefully, by the dunes at the almost farthest end of the bay of an English seaside town.

To my left, and nearby, a craggy treeless sea-surrounded Down. To my right, and almost a quarter of a mile distant, the small seaside town itself, home now to a motley multitudinousness construction crew whose garish fluorescent jackets, white protective hats, noisy machinery and machines, proclaimed them to be some alien invading army from another world.

Their excuse – for their continuing occupation and intrusive noise – was that of constructing some new-fangled sea-defences, and, like all occupying armies, they were both resented and welcomed. For some, they brought new business, their shekels most readily accepted; for others, they were but something of a pest, to be stoically endured in that very English way, much as we endured our bleak, at times depressing, climate – keeping alive our hopes by remembering days of warmful seaside Sun such as this.

For myself, I had longed for them to finish and to depart, so that peace – the quietude of sea, sand, and breeze – might once again descend upon locations such as this. But for now, they were there – and this was the only nearby place by the sea still currently free from their machinations and their noise, enabling me to thus liberate, if only briefly, the dreams of strangers, waiting, so patiently, within.

But just where – how – to begin this brief recalling of those many strangers who over five decades have been me or who have visited, and stayed awhile while I lived with, and sometimes learnt from, them?

Begin the story somewhere, for us [1]. Begin perchance with the happy childhood years in East Africa and the Far East, with their memories of bathing in a river a short walk from our home in Africa, of swimming out from a beach into the warm South China Sea? Or begin of going alone on a Saturday morning into that Singapore city of the middle nineteen sixties (a very different place from that city, now) where I would walk down a street past the Capitol cinema, and an eating place where one could get steak and chips, to meet with a group of young Chinese men who, as I, were learning a specific Martial Art?

Or, perhaps, begin with the two years in the sixth form, at a place where I was one of only around a dozen seven-days boarders, with memories of the innocent joy of undertaking some new experiment in Physics when I felt world upon world opening up before me through such scientific understanding as I had begun to experience, and where – even then – I betook myself ever closer

to the deepest, most dark, Abyss of all because I felt I wanted to know, to experience, everything...

Or, perhaps, begin, with the story of that first, fragile, tentative, naive love that seeped out from me, unexpected and it seemed then almost uncontrollably, one hot very Sunful Summer during the school holidays after only a week of picking strawberries with a gaggle of mostly older women, one of whom in the following week taught me much about my body and her own.

Or, perhaps, begin with the year - my only full year - at University where all my friends, save one, were gay because I enjoyed their company, finding in them a sensitivity, an appreciation and knowledge of culture, that the other often posturing and ill-mannered young men around me seemed so much to lack?

Or, perhaps, to - and rightly - begin with the over two years of ultra-violence, political extremism, and small-time racketeering, in a city in the north of England, and which years would take me in and out of courtrooms again and again until prison cells claimed me several times to finally bring that day when I walked away, a free man, from the gates of one such prison to sit, that early morning, in sunshine by the side of a road wondering which way to go, and wandering, wandering, for months as a tramp until the life of a Catholic monk sneaked up upon me, slowly cunningly, to claim both my *ψυχή* and my soul...
[2]

Or, perhaps, and morally, fast forward to begin with events only a few years ago, now, when she whom I so deeply loved took, in her despair, her own life after I had so selfishly taken myself away to stay again for a few days, only a few days, at the Farm, the fields, my home, that I also loved and despite her pleas for me to stay, to be, with her...

And yet were these - these so many strangers, now, and those so few old friends - really me? For they are, it seems, now only as dreams insubstantially remembered in the minutes past awakening, when as today one looks out from a friend's bedroom to see the mature Cherry tree quite full in glorious wondrous bloom; awake to smell the freshness of the early morning air when the Sun has yet to rise into the growing brightness of the clearful April sky, and one smiles as her neighbour's cat cheekily but so gracefully walks the so narrow top of the garden fence to find that usual useful spot warmed by the first rays of a risen Sun.

For what seems real now - only real, now - are the memories, the sights, of only days ago. What seems important now, only now, is the person I have, apparently, become, melded from some strange quixotic alchemical mix of *personae* and that living of over five decades past: grown from the feeling, the

acceptance, of mistakes made, of errors understood, of suffering caused and happiness recalled.

What has grown, slowly, so painfully slowly, then from that mix? Only the knowing of love – and of our human need for stillness, which stillness can sometimes be presented in such numinous culture as can remind us of our fragility, our folly, and how so very quickly we in our hubris can forget our errors, mistakes, and how easily we can lie to, and deceive, and make excuses for, and cheat, others and ourselves.

For there is importance, an overriding importance, in a personal mutual love – for therein is presented and can be presented the numinous, the divine, our very humanity – beyond and devoid of all abstractions, all dogma, all organization, and beyond all faith and all vainglorious selfish hopes.

For there is a need for us to be still, accepting, peaceful within ourselves, within the limits the bounds, set by both empathy and honour. A stillness arising, growing, when we cease to strive after abstractions, cease to judge by some human-manufactured standard; when we cease to be troubled by a lack, known or felt, within us; when we become as we truly are: one life, one microcosmic mortal connexion to Earth's past and future, one who is simply passing-by and who but briefly lives, not in the abstract causal fast time we have manufactured for ourselves, but instead in the living, numinous, much slower Time of Nature and the Cosmos. Where there is wu-wei, *φύσις*, to name but three...

In the past few weeks, following much self-indulgent musing on my own mortality, I seem to have acquired a somewhat strange, and occasionally embarrassing, habit – of suddenly, unexpectedly, being so overwhelmed by something, some event, some chance encounter, some sight, some sound, some scent, some woman, so that I often find myself quite tearful; sometimes to such an extent that tears fall, slowly, or occasionally even stormily, from my eyes, falling or dripping down unbidden to wet my beard and face.

It was thus, only around a week or so ago, when I on holiday ventured into the centre of some seaside town. There was a young man playing the accordion, quite well. (I had forgotten how lovely an accordion, played well, can sound.) So I sat in the warm Sun under another clear blue sky, to listen, as people passed. Perhaps it was the rather sadful music, which sounded – at least to me – somewhat Slavonic, as indeed the man himself appeared to be. And yes, I did give him some money, no wine for me that day...

Perhaps it was the slim Cherry trees, coming into bloom, that lined one side of this small, park-like, enclave on one of whose benches I had sat. Perhaps it was the music – provoking some memories, of some time, somewhere; perhaps it was the young, quite pretty woman, who so quickly and so unnoticeable of me passed me by but whose scent assailed me. Perhaps it was all – and more – of these and other such things which combined to form within me one moment, one passing moment, of a numinous, living apprehension where I became more than just one human being, seated in some town on some day in *Oster-monath*.

Whatever, it just *was*; and so beckoned me to unwillingly cry as if I in that one moment, that one numinous moment, had become all the shadows, all the strangers, all the sorrow, all the joys, all the happiness, all the remorse, all the errors, all the wistful promise, of my past – and of the past of so many other humans, century piling upon century, war-killed corpses piling upon war-killed corpses.

It was thus, on that same day, when no longer tearful I found myself relaxing in the still fine weather on the beach where people crowded, often noisy and quite nearby.

A year ago, or more, this would have somehow in some way annoyed or even angered me – this proximity of people; this manifestation, in noise, of their life, their families. So much so that I would have gone elsewhere, seeking to be alone; seeking some quiet place, to dwell inward upon myself in such selfishness as perhaps marked me. But now – now it is so very different.

For now I can sit or walk or traverse among such thronging people, quite happy, quite content, quietly peaceful within myself. As when on that day I sat among families on the beach – children laughing, playing. Young men and young women, sharing, alive with their still burgeoning hopes. There – two young children, both girls, with their mother and father; the father with a dog – throwing a ball into the sea for the dog to fetch, forgetting the dog was still on its lead. So the dog ran, where the tide gently ebbed upon sand, the lead stretched, and the father fell into the sea, to much loud good-natured amusement from his children and his partner/wife. Even he himself laughed. Such a simple human pleasure, a simple joy, so simply shared.

There was such humanity – such real humanity – there, in that moment, and all I could do was smile, alone, to myself, and turn my face away lest someone saw such tears.

No war here, imposed by some government. No abstract ideology, no abstract cause or duty to lie, cheat, fight, and die for. Only this, of that: fragile mortal humans bound by the natural sanctity, the divinity, of love. There, only there, was perhaps the only cause sufficient to love, to fight, even die for: those that

one knew, loved, shared, cared for and grew with, moment to moment, day following day.

Such human closeness with others unknown no longer thus detracts or even begins to annoy me. Not even the speedboat which was surged out from the harbour slipway above where I – my pottering-resumed – walked, could distract or annoy, for it was only what it was; only one small and passing microcosmic manifestation that no longer had any power to break the peaceful silence that somehow in some way had come to dwell within me, brought, gifted, by so many strangers.

So I just smiled, walking on to where I could sit again to wait and watch, one human being among many and perhaps to others just one man of greying hair inanely smiling.

There is, cannot yet be, any conclusion – only the flickering of one more brief mortal life upon one planet which its dwellers have named Earth. Only one more connexion between a present, a future, and some pasts. One one more nexion, so gently opening so that one *ψυχή* may, perhaps, pass beyond one type of Time to another. Only one more human-being hoping, perhaps beyond hope, that some words, some act, some writing of his may one day somewhere cause some numinous resonance, some memory, some remembering, in some other living sentient being, provoking, bringing, thus some change, some evolution, however small, for the better...

One stranger writing to another.

2455309.119

Notes (Post Scriptum)

[1] *τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν* (Hom. Od. 10). So you, my goddess – daughter of Zeus – begin the story somewhere, for us.

[2] *ψυχή* is now commonly regarded as a synonym for *soul*, a somewhat vulgar error which, in my view, a cultured person would not make [see, for example, its usage in Homer, Aeschylus, Aristotle, *etcetera*].

One Mystic To Another

The women who have loved me in my life – from Ruth to Kathy to Moira to Mary to Sue to Izabella to Jacqui to Fran and all those others – are the best, the most important, things to have ever happened in this my living, bringing, now far too late, alas – such understanding of the human importance of such a numinous personal love.

To Sue and Fran I especially am indebted, for by their love, their lives, their early deaths – so unexpected, so tragic, so full of such a personal longful sadness – I am so reminded each and every time of their recalling of just how stupid, so fallible, so error-prone, I myself have been, with my arrogant and inhuman love of abstractions. Such a love, such a life, from the tragedy that was their early dying, that so often in their remembering I am disabled – able only to reach out almost helpless and crying to where this Earth's sky reaches the blackness of stars beyond to bring me in such profusion of tears to fall, to seep, to knees with a body, a being, so aching that I am become all the sadness, all the tragedy of so many thousands of human years; not enough tears to wash away the hubris of this so error-prone human being.

Yet, and yet there is this one hope that glimmers deep within me to bring such a being back to this sometimes Sun-blessed cloud-free world – the hope that such words of mine as this, and such music, such Art as such artisans of the tragic have forged century upon century, may bring some human in some future time to be more than we, I, these error-prone humans, ever were – so that from this their knowing, their very Art, they may cease to be such a cause of suffering as we ourselves are and always seem to be even when in that meshing of bodies we gave ourselves to them, our loves.

Now, with tear-stained face, there is Sun enough to take betake me out to where a sky of still cold Winter blue melds to Sea and people pass by upon such a beach as draws them here even in this season over one month beyond a bleak mid-Winter. There – the young family so full of so many hopeful dreams, and I, only one old three-footed man whose greying hair so melds to be that incoming cloud, above.

For I am they as they are me, and so I can only sit, there, while the warming sun of February last – here near where three swans landed – to cry such tears as make my life Compleat. I am this – only this: where memories, so many memories, make some future dream of Sun to pass such clouds as build upon that horizon, there. For there is no me or you to make the unreal distinction we in our error make and so have made as there are no swans to divide sky

from cloud or earth. Only this – of we the undivided who by empathy are that essence which so flows through us all, one mystic to another.

So it is that words begin to fail me now as ecstasy of this hereful empathic living begins to dim as Day by that egress of Night which comes upon us all here even here especially here where we so singularly do still dwell in that illusion that has so become our separation of human life and living.

Music – musick, come here to me now, to so rescue me here as Sea, Sand, Sky, Sun meld to this one exquisite moment of sublime human living such as makes me, we, reach out with arms outstretched to where the blue seeps beyond this one-Earth sky to There – there, where cosmic stars lie sleeping, waiting, hopeful, dreaming.

But – but no music here only remains of this my paucity of Life so that images of those women who so loved and so gifted me with gifts of Life betake me out into the wetting waiting sand, still crying crying man-to-boy to where this tidal sea begins now to so quickly ebb away as if this immersion in the coldness of so cold a sea might wash my so many baneful errors away bringing back thus to old now so aching body that profusion of living life that once but without such suffering of such a knowing so once suffused it in that ancient remembered time of unfettered uncared-for passion-filled Youth... If only if only then we could have had such a knowing as so fills us, now.

Yet – and yet all that here remains are such wordy words as this, sandful footsteps having been washed away, again.

2455596.073

The Moment of My Reading

So many times, in the past somewhat turbulent decade of my life, I have reflected upon a particular verse by Sophocles:

πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδεν ἄνθρωπου δεινότερον πέλει [1]

For this seems to me to capture something of our rather strange human nature – of our ability, our potential, our capacity, to be compassionate, empathic, honourable, cultured, human beings, and our seemingly equal capacity (or often, greater capacity) to be unsympathetic, insensitive, selfish, dishonourable, and just plain barbaric.

This morning - as the Sun of a late English Spring rose into an almost cloudless sky and a north-easterly breeze presaged another beautiful but not too hot day - I received a lovely message (via that modern medium of communication, the Internet) from someone in Canada I have never met and whose existence I was previously unaware of. Some words about The Numinous Way - and in the moment of my reading of those words it was as if we two unmet human beings were somehow in some very human way briefly connected; as if some energy - something numinous and good - passed between, touched, and linked us, if only for a fleeting moment, to bring for me one more remembering of the numinous promise that lives within us, as individual human beings, and as a species.

For me, it has been a hard journey - sometimes a terrible journey - to finally arrive at this, my hitherto un-named, destination. To forge in words some work of art, wrought by memories and feelings of that decades long journey. And now, all I can hope for - all I should hope for - this work, this Numinous Way of mine which is yet not-mine, is that it may, it might, just aid someone, somewhere, to avoid the mistakes I made; that it might, just might, cause someone, somewhere at some time, to sense, to feel, the numinosity of life; that it might, just might, engender in someone, somewhere at some time, a certain empathy and compassion, and thus in some small way contribute to our human culture.

For surely that is what all human culture is, or perhaps should be: a means, one means, whereby we can share with others our *pathei-mathos* - presenced as some work or works of Art, or by the passage and experiences of our lives - so that others can possibly learn from them, and so not inflict upon human beings, upon other life, what we ourselves did in our quite often arrogant and selfish quest before the Cosmos, or some personal tragedy, or some love, humbled us, and restored to us, or gave to us as a gift, the goodness that exists in so many human beings.

Now, I have no gods, no God - living, remembered, hoped for or believed in - to thank for aiding, guiding, me on that journey. No longer any sense of personal Destiny, of that arrogant self-assurance and almost primal determination that so many times kept me safe in the midst of danger. Now, there is only a knowing of my place - of how I am but one fragile microcosmic connexion, one nexion, to all the life around, beyond, me; one affected and affecting connexion who can so easily, so thoughtlessly, so dishonourably, cause so much suffering and harm, and yet who has so many positive gifts to offer.

For this knowing of my place, this human perspective, is a knowing of how our humanity - the numinous good that lies in wait within us - is and can be and should be presenced in a shared and personal love; in that compassion, that

desire for the cessation of suffering, which empathy so painfully, and so poignantly at times, reveals for us; and in that sense of fairness, that spirit of nobility, that lack of prejudiced judgement, that a code of personal honour enshrines.

It has not, I must admit, been easy, to so selflessly offer such human gifts as a gentle love, shared; not easy to quell the anger that once, so many times, would arise within me; not easy to slowly emerge from the safe cave of prejudiced assumptions; not easy to cease to dream dreams of personal Destiny and worldly Fate. For such things had become a habit, perhaps even an addiction. But like a body, trained: there came time when effort, pain, endurance, produced a surge of health so that one would run, a young, youthful man, again, among the meadow grass, bare feet touching Sun-warmed soil, to feel, to be, the very essence of numinous life; glad, so very glad, to live, to be alive – one human being, reborn, bearing within so many gifts, and knowing, knowing in that wordless way of Empathy and Thought, that Life, we, are here, born, for compassion, love, sensitivity, and sharing.

2010 CE
(2455341.714)

[1] Sophocles: *Antigone*, 334. My translation is – *There exists much that is strange, but nothing has more strangeness than we human beings.*

Yet Another Supposition of Knowing

In explanation, let me begin – and end – and present a particular and unobjective study, this particular perhaps arrogant suppositions of knowing, with human beings. The place – a popular seaside resort in England. The time – a sunny day in July in the year, according to one causal solar calendar, 2010 CE.

There is a wide promenade along, beside, the sandy beach, suffused with people – a mix of families (young parents, young children), couples young and old, and groups of elderly people, most of whom are here for a few days staying in seaside hotels and brought and collected by coach, and some of whom are here for the day, coach brought as I from cities and towns.

I walk along this promenade, aided by a trusty walking stick of Oak – an

ageing man of greying hair whose conventional mode of dress (Tweed jacket; woollen trousers; flat cap) marks him as just one more elderly visitor indulging in the now venerable English tradition of pottering beside the sea. Seats (benches) are plentiful as the promenade spreads out from the Pier, and - on sunny days - they are almost always occupied as the hour of Noon approaches.

A tumult of faces - mostly happy - as I walk. Each person a living being with their own feelings, hopes, dreams, memories - sometimes caught when eyes meet; and especially when, as not that often, there is a human response - my smile returned and so for an instant of acausal Time a connexion made as something of the essence of that one living being becomes passed to me, far beyond words. An impression of their life - a wordless elation of knowing that, as one wave breaking upon the sandy shore, is soon gone, dispersed by our moving-on. Or are most or any or all of such intuitive feelings of mine only some inner silly child-like presumption? I do not know, nor worry - for they, as warm Sun on hands, arm, face, feel and seem so real to this one being walking who now so seldom talks, for long...

Sometimes - a glimpse of sadness, unhappiness, or of inner pain; soon covered; soon gone. And on rare occasions - as when that woman slipped and fell to hard pavement - the empathy of a physical pain, so real there is a physical response in me, for a second or more, and always in the same region of my body making me to momentarily wince.

So many impressions, I become a walking being divorced from any notion of self - a cloud passing by this one sea-shore where human beings dwell, live, interact, and feel. So much wordless knowing it is as if I have no identity of my own, no barriers, and so vulnerable, so very vulnerable, while this child-like state of living lasts.

There - an angry possibly arrogant young man, whose anger and arrogance remains unaffected, untouched, by such sorrowful humbling learning as one walking three-footed being may have acquired from some knowing of suffering. There - a lonely woman of middle human age who this being feels so needs the warm comfort of a personal love but who so resolutely, it seems, girds herself with a resolute independent public image she so needs to maintain to face each day, again. There - the young child of less than ten years of life, so full of exuberant unthinking joy running down toward the beach of sand and who shrieks, as so young girls often do, when her bare feet enter sea; a bundle of life contained within a so small still growing human body. Where then in that one moment those many years ahead as growth and human living bring change and all those many joys and sorrows, tragedies, hopes destroyed, regained, that await for so many of our kind? Such tender care as her mother rushes after her, worried, protecting, happy, and proud, all wordlessly at once.

So many... for even in with my intuitive, empathic, supposition of knowing I know I am nothing; and will be nothing - for the sea, centuries, millennia, after I am gone, will wash upon this shore as the tide, Moon-changed, turns, while the Earth rotate as the Earth rotates, bearing such Life as then burgeons and remains. Nothing - *damyata*; one being, only one temporary being, restrained in Time, loaned to Earth as a child. Only one more human who of so very many passed so briefly by. Nothing - my essence returned to the Cosmos whose changing wyrd brought me forth so very briefly to dwell upon one planet of no importance whatsoever.

There - the elderly lady, wheelchair bound, who still, despite the afflictions that afflict her, returns my smile, and I have to quicken my step since in those eyes were so many glimpses of so many decades that I fear for tears escaping as when last night the *Well-Tempered Clavier* by JS Bach played and one of the Preludes, as it often does, brought such salted water forth to moisten cheek and beard...

There is a sitting, then, now, in the sand, while human life goes on, often quite loudly, around. Such simple joys, shared, here where a century or more of life, tradition, has melded humans together in such a subtle way that there is, for this moment, this one moment, a certain peace - an allocation of Time to allow each of us, here in this one place which is many the freedom to be as we are encased within our individual, familial, worlds; co-existing peacefully in that strange way we accept, here, for reasons I no longer care or even desire to think or worry about; its very being a sufficiency itself. For I have no answers, now - no questions; and simply am; one fragile being just simply passing by.

No longer my arrogance of assumption. Instead, only a resonance with Life - this human living that lives here in no one place now who is but trundling through; one visitor among so many.

There - the young bare chested, sun-tanned, man whose tattooed body, sun-lit, becomes a mobile work of art and whose smile, whose so very English greeting, brings to me the broader smile. For I am only that this sunlight - there, reflected so briefly from one so very small and wind-caused wave, which falling, falls to slowly ripple to then fade, silent, away.

2010 CE



Sed id Quidem in Optima spe Pono

That seeking of - that hope for - a personal love loyally shared. Which seeking and hope for such a love, surely, is one intimation, one sign, of our real human nature; another of which is, surely, to learn about, to appreciate, the numinous treasures that preceding generations have bequeathed to us in and thorough our human cultures - in our Art, literature, music, the ancestral wisdom of the *πάθει μάθος* of our ancestors, written or aurally transmitted, and in the numinous insights that were the genesis of most if not all those Ways of Life now known by the generic term religion before such insights became enshrined within such dogma and such causal forms as bled away their life-giving Life. Yet another is, surely, to seek to always be honourable and thus to try to live the natural, the balanced, middle way between ascetic self-denial and the excess, the lack of self-control, that leads to *ὑβρις*, to personal arrogance and to indifference to suffering. This is the middle way of empathy, personal love, personal honour, and appreciation of the numinous, of the natural distinction between the sacred and the profane.

These hopes, desires, these reasons to possibly be optimistic, are the essence of The Numinous Way; of the very individual reformation and evolution of ourselves by means of empathy, honour, compassion and love. And it is this individual reformation, this individual change, by such means, which in my admittedly fallible view is important, which is numinous, which expresses the essence of our human nature as consciously aware human beings possessed of the faculties of empathy, of reason, and of will; and which is the summation of my own learning from over forty years of diverse experiences and the making of so many mistakes, of transgressing so many limits.

Thus, what I now feel is irrelevant is politics - of whatever type or form; what is equally unimportant are religious dogma, creeds, and such impersonal conflict as arises from all causal abstractions. For all of these are causes of, the genesis of, suffering and all involve and all have involved the loss of personal love, the loss of compassion, the loss of empathy, and the loss of reason. All plant the seed of ὕβρις within us.

For we human beings - being capable of using reason, possessed of empathy, able to be compassionate and honourable and needful of the numinosity of a personal love - do not need, and never really have needed, speeches, propaganda, manifestos, a sense of destiny, the machinations and promises of political and religious leaders, or social, political, or even religious, reforms.

All we need is to know, to feel, the beauty of a personal love loyally shared; to use and develop our empathy, and to be honourable. Thus can we know, feel, the numinous - and thus can we avoid the error of ὕβρις. And thus if I have some last words to write, to say, it is these.

What, therefore, remains? Only such hope that such words, that such a numinous way as I have somehow managed to uncover, might inspire some, or perchance provoke a reasoned and thoughtful response in some others. What is there now, and what has there been? One genesis, and one ending, of one nexion whose perception by almost all others is now of one who lived and who wrote ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.

τό θ' ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἤδη κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοῦς
στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων
ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. [1]

March 2011 CE

[1] Thus, he of great Age, his foliage drying up
And no stronger than a child, with three feet to guide him on his travels,
Wanders - appearing a shadow in the light of day.

Aesch. Ag 79-82

The following extracts are from my correspondence, in the Spring of 2010 CE, with a young Western gnostic residing, at the time, in India.

Toward Understanding The Numinous

I was most interested to receive your reply, since it seems that both you and I have been on somewhat similar quests among the Ways of Life of this world.

You wrote that:

"Political action without the element of the sacred seems futile to me (or at least doomed to failure)."

Something I certainly agree with - and what attracted me, at quite a young age, to NS was that I felt there was something numinous about the life, and the NS, of Adolf Hitler. Many years ago, now, I had the wonderful fortune to meet someone who knew him personally, and he - and another comrade of his (also a personal friend of The Chief) - amply confirmed my initial intuition.

But what I, in my youthful arrogance, failed to understand was that, essentially, NS was AH - as those two individuals told me, and it was only after several decades of fighting for NS, that I gradually came to realize my error. Which was that my [political] attempt - and all such attempts - to revive NS were doomed because they lacked the numinous, which numinous had to be, for our still unenlightened times, embodied in a living person. Hence, I suppose, my mythos of Vindex: an attempt (perhaps a vain one) to prefigure a new charismatic leader who might, by his (or her) very life presence the numinous, in the modern world, and possibly by the medium, the causal form, of politics.

Yet I have also come to understand that AH may have made some mistakes, through elevating a particular abstraction over and above the numinous, and through occasionally striving to make real his vision by using certain un-numinous - that is, dishonourable - means, such as modern impersonal warfare.

You wrote:

"do you still consider yourself to be a Muslim?"

Possibly, but only in the sense that I understand authentic Islam as an apprehension, one presencing, of the numinous, in our dishonourable times; and in the sense that being Muslim means (at least according to my rather limited understanding) acknowledging our human fallibility before, and dependence and reliance upon, The One, named Allah (as we are but mortal travellers in the realm of the causal).

This, perhaps, is veering toward a rather Sufi-esque view, where there is the understanding of how various Ways may also be, or can sometimes be, a path, a Way, toward The One.

Again, I was perhaps fortunate in having been able to spend some time in the Middle East and Iran, talking to Muslims, both Shia and Sunni, and especially during one trip in Egypt into the desert where I felt I came close to feeling and understanding the simple beauty, the numinous purity, behind the label "Islam" which has been assigned to that Way - a simple beauty, a purity, I had also felt during my time as a Christian monk.

You wrote:

"I'm still very much interested in NS and Islam, however, as well as the Numinous Way"

What I have called The Numinous Way are simply my own tentative answers to questions which have perplexed me for decades, and/or which I have been seeking answers to, as well as being the result of my learning from my errors, my mistakes, my arrogance. I am quite aware that my answers, my conclusions, may be incorrect or somehow incomplete, and that they are not, nor can ever be, definitive, or even adequately describe our (and my own) apprehension of the numinous.

In a sense, I seem to have found something lacking in all the many and various Ways I have experienced and lived, over the decades; found myself in some way or other dissatisfied with the answers which seem to have accumulated around such Ways over the centuries.

Thus my Numinous Way is just my own perspective, my own view, of the numinous, and does not seem to me to necessarily contradict the essence of many other Ways, when such Ways are considered sans dogma, sans the abstractions, they have acquired over the centuries.

So, for the moment, at least, I am reasonably happy with such personal answers of mine, which answers seem to have taken me to what appears to be the essence behind many Ways, such that, in one sense, I am (and yet am not) Muslim, and Catholic, and Taoist, and pagan, and Buddhist, and so on. Such terms - such -isms - just seem to get in the way of living one's living in a numinous, empathic, manner.

You wrote:

aspects of [life here] can be difficult for a Westerner to adjust to

In many if not most ways your experiences there [in India] seem to be the opposite of mine in Muslim lands. When I lived for a while in the Middle East - and whenever I travelled to such lands - I found acceptance and friendship. Indeed, sometimes, I found it rather overwhelming and occasionally embarrassing - still having something of an archetypal old-fashioned English demeanour. For instance, I can remember on many occasions going into a Mosque somewhere (almost always the only White person there) and being greeted with genuine warmth and asked to sit in the front row for Namaz (a position of honour normally) and afterwards being invited into people's homes.

You wrote:

If I've understood your notion of the numinous correctly, then I believe you'd agree that the problem with the Right is that it keeps trying to put abstraction in front of the Real

Certainly - and this means a rejection of all conventional politics. It seems to me that the solution is two-fold. First, that one has to go beyond the old, un-numinous, abstraction of the nation-State, and instead establish new communities based upon tribes and clans and thus upon a new, emerging, living - numinous - tradition. Second, that one has to make personal honour not only one of the foundations of one's own life, but also the only basis for the ethics of, and law and justice in, such new communities.

My understanding of a living tradition is that it arises naturally from a small community or some collection of such small communities, with the individuals often bound together by bonds of kinship and the sharing of toil and of hardship overcome. These individuals dwell in a specific area which they have an affinity to and which provides them with sustenance and a means of living. That is, there is a direct and necessary relationship to the land, to Nature, in a specific, small, local area.

Personally, I do not believe that it is possible to resurrect, and certainly undesirable to try and resurrect, some dead tradition, even if it be of one's ancestors, one's own folk. Rather, one has to plant the seeds of a new

numinous tradition and nurture the growth of that tradition.

Having spent a great deal of my adult life living and working in the English countryside, and having some experience of politics and religions, I am acutely aware of what native Europeans have not only lost but also need to acquire, and develop.

What has been lost - in the pursuit of materialism, through technology, and an increasing urbanization - is that numinous connexion to Nature, to a certain small area which we personally know and where we dwell, and a living in a way we are not bound by the modern abstraction of Time or swayed and manipulated by abstractions in general (and politics and all un-numinous religions are abstractions), but rather where the horizon of our daily lives and thus our concerns are set by what we know, and those whom we know, personally, directly.

What needs to be acquired and developed is, in effect, a new personality - a new type of human being.

You wrote:

you always write something original, rather than just developing a new synthesis of other men's words

Well, during my second term of imprisonment I decided that I would henceforward write only about what I personally felt, had experienced, or concluded as the result of my own thinking - mostly because I then perhaps rather arrogantly believed that no one hitherto had fully understood the problem or conceived of a viable solution (relating to the problems of the West) or even answered in a way I found satisfying the fundamental questions about our own existence as human beings.

Prior to this, I had spent almost a decade in reading the views, and answers, the writings, of others - ranging from Homer to TS Eliot, from Aristotle to Nietzsche and Heidegger; from Norse myths to Buddhism to Savitri Devi; and so on.

My early NS writings were mainly derived from my own youthful idealistic vision and my passion to remake my own land into a better, more noble, place, and to counter what even then I understood as the machinations, the "social engineering" of the Magian, and others. My writings about Islam were often inspired by what I felt was a certain insidious Western influence so that for example the simple submission and guidance that was Al-Islam came to be viewed and understood and re-interpreted through certain Western

abstractions, philosophical and political - for even the use and acceptance of the term "religion" by Muslims in relation to their own Way of Life was such an error.

But it took me several decades, in the case of NS and such things as Christianity and Buddhism, and almost a decade in the case of Islam, to acquire the practical experience, the theoretical (academic) knowledge, and thence the direct personal understanding, that led me to form certain conclusions about such forms, ideas, and Ways, and which drew from within me my own, individual, refined and complete, answers to the fundamental questions about our human existence.

In respect of NS, I came to understand that the problem was not the simple "us and them" concept that the biological notion of the folk, the concentration on the machinations of the Jews, and the concept of eternal struggle, created. That is, the belief that we had been somehow led astray, and needed to return to some idealized notion of some past we have lost, to re-connect ourselves with "our true identity" and "purify" our land and folk.

Instead, I concluded that we ourselves - native Europeans - were an integral part of the problem; that it was necessary for us to fundamentally change ourselves, and that this change had to arise from within each one of us, directly, numinously, and could not be achieved by the imposition of or the striving for some political, some social, ideology or by adherence to some pre-existing religious world-view. It certainly could not be achieved by trying to resurrect some dead - and often some idealized - past tradition.

Thus, as you wrote:

the fixation on the biological view of race is one such symptom

In respect of Islam, I came to understand that for all its benefits, for all its intimations of the numinous in this materialistic modern world of ours, it was - had become - an abstraction, which individuals imposed upon themselves and mightily strove to follow and adhere to in the hope of Jannah, and that, and unfortunately, even a desire to return to the perceived, the original, fundamentals - as manifest for instance in the modern awakening that was Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah - was not and never could be the numinous, the evolutionary, the ethical, the correct philosophical, answer, just as what one might described as the more natural, the less abstract, the less dogmatic, perhaps the more human, approach of Sufism was not, ultimately, the answer either.

Which answer, for me, is the simple one of empathy, compassion, personal honour, and of ourselves as one nexion, one fragile connexion to all Life, with there being no need for the abstraction of some biological folk, no need for some suffering-caused concept of struggle and dominance, no need to project blame on others for our own failings, no need for assumptions such as Jannah, no need to strive to adhere to some rigid principles or rules laid down by someone else in some past. Instead, there is a being-human in a natural way - a knowing of each moment of life in its immediate personal reality (sans abstractions), and a gentle acceptance of just living empathically, honourably, within that immediate and personal reality.

Philosophically, this is the knowledge that our life - our conscious human life which we possess the ability, the faculties, to change - is no longer and of necessity bound to what Heraclitus described as polemos; to some interminable dialectic of conflict and thence to some abstraction, some ideal, some linear concept, named "progress". The knowledge that one of the most common causes of suffering - and of the loss of the numinous, in our lives - is the assumption of linearity, of causal Time (linear cause-and-effect), implicit in all our human manufactured abstractions, and which abstractions we impose upon ourselves, which we project onto and impose on other human beings, and on the life with which we share this planet.

May 2010 CE

A Time To Reflect

A time to reflect as I - tired from long days of manual work - sit in the garden watching the clouds clear to bring some warm Sun on this windy day of a coldish wind. On the horizon to the South: Cumulus clouds billowing up to herald more showers, and I, for a moment as a child again, watch a few cloud-faces change to disperse; as if the clouds are for that moment, just that one moment, a memory of a person who lived, once, on this Earth: reaching out to be remembered as they the cloud move as they are moved in their so-brief and new existence.

The hedgerows are greening; the branches of trees coming into leaf, and life is renewed while I wait for the Swallows to return, here, to this Farm. This is Life: in its purest truth devoid of the empathy-destroying, suffering-causing, abstractions that we humans have manufactured to blight this planet and so

grievously injure our fecund still beautiful but now suffering Mother Earth who gives us, and who gave us, life.

The brief warm Sun renews as it almost always does for me, and so – for this moment, this one moment – I am happy, again; feeling the measure of Meaning, of happiness, of joy itself; which is in a simple just-being, *sans* abstractions, *sans* thought, and beyond the dependency of, the addiction to, anger.....

Here – the child, again; free to watch the bee bumble from flower to flower; free to feel a certain playful awe. Here, the concern with only what is seen, touched, known, smelt, in the immediacy of dwelling.

There should be nothing more; nothing to wreck such simple being; nothing to bring the-suffering. But I, we, are stupid, weak, vain, addicted – and so in our failing repeat and repeat and repeat the same mistakes, and so cause and maintain the pain of our, of their, of other, suffering. Mea Culpa; Mea Culpa; Mea Maxima Culpa...

DW Myatt
April 11th [2007]

The Joy-bringing Sky-blue

A wonderfully warm and sunny day with no clouds to cover the joy-bringing sky-blue. The Sun was warm even as it ascended, early, while I cycled rural lanes almost totally devoid of traffic because of being Sunday, and early. So pleasing, this simple joy of an English morning in late late Summer when I – tired from hours of work yesterday – leant against a fence to just-be in each slowly passing moment. Such peace, as if the measure of life was at last not only known but felt, lived, loved, when no human-made noise intrudes and one feels the strength, the giving, of the Sun; feels the growing that is in the fields, trees, bush, hedge, as if they are all – as they are – connected, parts of one living, growing, presence; one living-being, breathing... So much, so much so simply known and felt as warmth and the natural silence brings a sleepy calm and there is the brief-sleep of lying in warming welcoming grass before one awakes to feel all living-life knowing thus human-caused suffering for the blight, the stupidity, that it is.

To be, to let-be, to leave-alone is it seems an answer – and so I am slowly, so slowly, returned to my dwelling where now, three hours later, I sit on the grass in the garden feeling knowing my weakness of months years decades past.

So I am haunted, here and again, where again the Swallows gather as they

gather at this time of year: chirping to each other and preparing in some weeks to leave. Thus do they skim the fields, catching, eating, their food as the cycle of natural life upwardly repeats and a cooling breeze dims a little of the humid heat of the day, here in a greening part of a still-living England.

Haunted, here and again – amid such joyful growing warmth – with, by, because of, her death; with by, because of, the multiplicity of my multitudes of suffering-causing and so stupid mistakes...

DW Myatt
3rd of August [2006]

Five Fields To The North

Yesterday I sat by the narrow shallow stream five fields to the north of this farmhouse and saw there – for the first time – a newt, among the small fish, the Waterboatmen, the diving beetles, and the other stream life. This was where, some years earlier, I had sat for nearly an hour – pleased then with myself and my world of abstractions – until started by a Stoat who seemed to effortlessly egress from the opposite hedge to so quickly swim or somehow cross the stream to so swiftly regain the cover of one more living growing nearby hedge.

No breeze, yesterday – only the warm warm air of late Spring as the Sun became filtered through high Cirrus cloud. No one – no humans – anywhere I could hear, see, smell; no sounds from the machines of Homo Hubris. So, life seemed, there, then, as it should be – as flies made the noises flies make as they fly free in warmth; as the birds in bush, hedge, tree, sang as they sing in the days of a late English Spring.

This is how life is – how it should be, as it can be, for us; but we have lost the slow silence of rurally dwelling slowly peaceful connected by empathy; as I lost this connexion by the so many stupid years of my immoral striving for abstractions...

There, yesterday, there lived again for me that connexion by such sitting amid such silence in such a warming Sun: brought perhaps, at the cost of Fran's, and other people's, life.

DW Myatt
April [2007]



Three O'clock One English Morning

It is three o'clock one morning of an English Winter, and outside it is dark, and somewhat cold, with cloud to cover the stars of night and a slight breeze to rustle the fallen leaves that, somewhat dried by recent daytime snow-melting Sun, have been wind-gathered to rest where two parts of one garden fence meet and are met.

Inside, the soft candlelight that pleases as I sit, typing this, at my desk on which the decanter of fine vintage Port rests, still half-full, and music by Mozart gently suffuses the room, brought forth from grooves in vinyl by a modern marvel of sound reproduction. There is, alas, here in this modern dwelling no fire of logs to warm, as in that farmhouse, abode for many happy years until quite recently... Instead, only the warmth of such rememberings as often keep this old man happy in these, the twilight years of his, of my, life.

Much to recall; and much to remain silent about, untransmitted by words such as this – to be brought forth, and some of which have been brought forth, only aurally to trusted friends of long-standing who may or who may not, according to their own judgement, recount such matters for and to others, by whatever means, but only after I myself am dead. Thus, there are some things I will not comment about, here, by written means such as this.

So, to try and answer at least some of your questions, although trying to abridge four decades of experiences into one concise reply will of necessity mean some terse and perhaps unsatisfactory explanations.

In Respect of Adolf Hitler

As I wrote some years ago while living that Way of Life known as Al-Islam:

I have never, in my heart and mind, renounced my belief in Adolf Hitler as a good man, an honourable man, who – believing in God – strove to create a just and noble society, and who was destroyed by the ignoble machinations of those opposed to what is good and who have spread dishonourable lies about him, his followers and his Cause. Thus it is that I find I cannot denounce this noble man and those who fought and died for the cause he upheld, as I cannot and will not denounce those who today honourably (and I stress honourably) continue the struggle in his name and who respect the Way of Life which is Al-Islam... Thus it is that I continued for several years... with Reichsfolk – an honourable organization striving to presence something of the Numen I believe was manifest in National-Socialist Germany and in and through the life of Adolf Hitler.

Furthermore, the National-Socialism of Reichsfolk was the ethical, non-racist, National-Socialism I had developed in the late nineteen nineties; a Way of Life which sought to respect the difference and diversity of Nature, and which sought the development of separate, free, ethnic nations, with their own culture and identity, with these nations co-operating together, with no one race believing they were somehow superior to, or better than, any other race, but with each striving to achieve their differing Destinies, with there being no hatred of other races but instead a respect, deriving from honour.

This non-racist National-Socialism was developed for two main reasons. First, because I considered that the notion of racial superiority was untenable because it was fundamentally dishonourable; that is, unethical. Second, because I realized that the old type of National-Socialism led to unethical conflict, and that modern warfare was itself unethical.

In Respect of National-Socialism

For some thirty years, from the late nineteen sixties to the late nineteen nineties (CE), I actively strove by various means, political and otherwise, to propagate National-Socialism with the overt aim of creating, in my own homeland, another NS State, on lines similar to that of NS Germany. Indeed, one might with truth say that this singular aim was the main, the most

important, aim of my life.

For the first ten or so of those years I naively and idealistically believed that this goal was attainable by conventional political means, given good leadership and a correct explanation of what I then understood National-Socialism to be – a noble cause, based on the values of honour, of loyalty to comrades, and duty to one's folk. I never saw or even imagined myself as some leader; instead, and knowing the importance of leadership, I sought to find someone to whom I could pledge my loyalty and who, unlike me, possessed the charisma, the virtues, of a genuine revolutionary NS leader. Indeed, it was something of a friendly jest among certain members of Column 88 that I was “a Himmler in search of his Adolf Hitler”.

Never finding such a leader – but always, during those decades, hoping that such a person would emerge – I floundered about, doing the best I could to propagate NS politically; and also trying keep the spirit, the ethos, of NS alive, as Colin Jordan had done and did do, until his death, although in a much better way than I ever did. For I was often reckless and impatient, and perhaps too fanatical at times. Not to mention occasionally arrogant, disdainful as I was on such occasions of advice from people such as CJ – who, for instance, considered that my plan for recruiting and using ruffians (as with the short-lived NDFM) was not only foolhardy but not really in keeping with the ethos of NS.

After those first ten years, while much personal experience was gained, little if anything political had been achieved, and not only not by me. No one else, no other NS (or even nationalist) organization, had achieved anything significant either, despite much commitment and effort by hundreds of supporters. Indeed, what I termed The Magian System seemed to be stronger, more tyrannical.

Thus, for most of the next two decades I occupied myself with other tactics, other than overt political ones. Trying to use covert means, and seeking to explain, codify, refine, and possibly evolve National-Socialism itself. However, toward the end of these two decades I did briefly return to active, overt, politics – forming and leading the NSM, but more to try and continue the work begun by a loyal and dedicated comrade than because I had changed my view of myself as a leader. For I hoped, even then, that this new organization might attract someone of the right calibre to lead it. But neither these covert tactics, nor this new political organization, worked, leading me, over of period of many years, to certain conclusions, and among which conclusions are and were the following.

1) The first conclusion was that NS – or something based upon or evolved from it – could only ever become a significant political force if there arose a leader

of sufficient nobility to lead a new movement. For such a leader would be the movement – just as Adolf Hitler was both the NSDAP and NS Germany. That is, political programmes, slogans, propaganda, activities, ideology, meetings, marches, were all fundamentally irrelevant – if there was no such leader to inspire, to lead, to give one's loyalty to, and who embodied the essence of the NS ethos, just as Adolf Hitler embodied the essence of German National-Socialism. Without such a unifying, charismatic, figure, all movements, organizations, groups, whatever the initial idealism and enthusiasm of their members, descended, sooner or later into squabbling factions, just as dishonourable behaviour and lack of loyalty became rife. Even some limited electoral success, as the BNP and other European nationalist movements have shown, does not prevent this process, so that such organizations soon devolve to be at best minor political parties, perhaps with some political representation, but without any realistic hope of being elected to power, despite their constant rhetoric to the contrary. Thus they become a minor irritant to The System, but no real threat to it.

2) The second, perhaps more disturbing, conclusion was that we ourselves are a significant part of the problem. That it is not just a question of simply changing the political system, but of changing ourselves, as individuals, in a fundamental way.

Thus, and for example, perhaps a majority of those of European ethnic descent were no longer Aryan in nature. Instead, they de-evolved to become what I termed Homo Hubris, and it was this new sub-species of the genus Homo which has become the often willing and the easily manipulated hordes who had sided with the Magian and so defeated NS Germany. Not only that, but it was these new White hordes who kept the whole Magian System going, by their obedience to its ethos, and by their love of, and even now need for, the abstractions and materialism of The System.

In a personal way – through a practical striving for covert action over many years – I discovered just how difficult it is to find people (freedom fighters) ready and willing to do practical deeds and possibly sacrifice themselves “for the Cause”. Partly because this Cause – supposedly our shared Cause – did not live in them: they merely agreed (instinctively or consciously) with some aspects of its outward tenets. That is, it was more akin to some fleeting, easily discarded interest, or some passion which they could and often would forget when some other passion came along to enchant or ensnare them. For our Cause was not for them a Way of Life, a numinous and living faith, but rather just one type of politics among many.

Furthermore, while perhaps a few individuals might be inspired to action – or a few other individuals might do some deeds, elsewhere – such few actions,

such few deeds, did not and never would affect The System in any significant way, and certainly would not break it, simply because a majority still supported it, actively or passively, and certainly did not support “us”, our Cause.

One therefore discovered for one’s self the truth of the truism that practical resistance to tyranny – to an occupying power – only works if one has support, significant support and sympathizers, from one’s own people, from those so occupied because they resent such occupation and its tyranny. The hard reality was that a majority of our people did not even feel they were living under some alien tyranny, and that a significant percentage even embraced the ideas and the ways of the occupiers and their collaborators (the hubriati) so much so for so many decades that The System had ceased to be something which “they” (some alien interlopers) imposed upon “us” but instead had become a hybrid system, partly “theirs” but also now “ours”, although always under the influence and ultimate control of “them” and of those who benefited from such a system, such as the hubriati. In a simplistic sense, “we” – our folk, or a majority of them – had been changed, from within; or been bred and educated by The State to accept and endorse, or at least be fairly passive parts of, The System.

One therefore began to consider working to undermine The System not from within, but from without – by aiding those freedom fighters who for various reasons also wanted the demise of the Magian and their own oppressive systems, and who thus not only desired to live in their own lands in their own way, but who also had a Cause that many were ready to die for.

Then, after about a decade or so of such experience it became obvious that even this approach was also not working, and would most probably also not ultimately succeed. (a) It was not working partly for similar reasons it has not worked for “us” (although our efforts were on a far smaller scale, over less periods of time) – that is, because these external allies were also a minority among their own kind, with many many others of their kind actively supporting and even collaborating with “the enemy”, and even desiring to manufacture a type of Magian system in their own lands. Thus, they were as lost to their kind, as a majority of our people were lost to their own innate ethos and the potential latent within us. (b) It would probably not ultimately succeed because to do so it needed internal dissent in the heartlands of the West, which was not forthcoming. Indeed, while some dissent existed, it was an annoyance to The System rather than a threat, with perhaps a majority believing the propaganda levelled at those freedom fighters, and actively or passively supporting the policies of their governments aimed at disrupting and destroying those freedom fighters in other lands.

3) The third conclusion was that each and every European homeland was no longer European by ethnicity, given the large-scale and continuing immigration of many decades, and that – short of implausible practical civil wars and a significant change in exterior lands – there was no practical way to make them wholly European again, and thus build a new folkish State. Implausible, because as mentioned above, a majority of even each and every European folk would find such a practical, civil war, solution unacceptable now and in the foreseeable future; and because one small homeland alone could not take such steps to expel whole communities while Magian power and the Magian ethos held sway in other lands, for the lone small homeland would soon find itself subject to punitive sanctions and, ultimately, invasion and thence “regime-change”.

4) The fourth conclusion was that, in essence, The State itself – as concept, as idea, as ideal – was ultimately incompatible with the numinous essence behind what Adolf Hitler had intuitively presenced, manifested, as National-Socialism in Germany. That is, that The State could no longer be made numinous, or manifest the numen, as it had begun to do in NS Germany, and that NS Germany was only an intimation, a beginning, a pointer toward a deeper truth; a truth revealed in part by the defeat of NS Germany by the White Hordes incited and led-on by the Magian.

This is the truth of our natural and necessary tribal nature, and of the nature of honour itself. The truth of Numinous Law (the law of personal honour) and the truth of how the clan, with a living, numinous, tradition, is and always will be immune to the Magian, and the dishonourable, un-numinous, abstractions that the Magian and their hubriati have manufactured, and which abstractions stifle our potential, disconnect us from the numen, and profane and undermine Nature and thus the living folk communities which are and which have been natural manifestations of Nature.

5) My fifth, last, later, and possibly most significant if contentious, conclusion was that the very notion – the idea – of there existing, or of desiring to move toward the ideal of, some pure race was an abstraction, and as such was un-numinous and thus unethical; contrary to honour itself, and which honour I had concluded was a practical expression of the essence of personal empathy. That is, that both race itself and the concept of an ethnic folk were – just like the concepts of the nation and The State – causal, immoral, abstractions; and that what was needed were new clans, new tribes, not based on any abstractions, any ideology.

In Respect of the Future

Given these conclusions – arising from four decades of practical experience

and from much reflexion - it is my view that the future lies in numinously pursuing two things. First, the numinous goal of new clans and tribes, and which new clans and tribes could be either (1) evolutionary manifestations of (derived from) the natural already existing folks found in and evolved by Nature (and which thus possess ancestral living traditions), or (2) honourably and thus ethically, entirely new folks (not based upon any particular ethnicity nor upon any belief in such ethnicity) and which new folks we ourselves found and establish by dwelling in a certain local area, and which begin as our own extended family, or that of ours and also of a few trusted friends who feel as we do. Second, in changing ourselves as individuals, within, by a striving to live in balance, in rural harmony, with Nature and by a striving to uphold the most important because numinous principle of personal honour.

There is thus, in either of these two possible ways, no involvement with practical politics, nor any desire to seek revolutionary change, by whatever means or tactics. In truth, there is no ideology, and no politics at all - only a living of life in a certain way. A rejection of The System by withdrawing from it, and letting it decay and fall as it is destined to decay and fall, as all such causal un-numinous systems decay and fall, given time.

The former - that is, (1) above, the first possible way - is, for example, the old still rather immoral way of Reichsfolk, and of kindred groups; and the latter - (2) above, the second possible way - is the ethical, human, way proposed by my own Philosophy of The Numen where what matters is a personal compassion, personal empathy, and personal honour. And it is the latter - the compassionate way of The Philosophy of The Numen - that represents my views, now; views, perspectives, obtained by the *pathei-mathos* of my past forty years. My experiences, my reflexion upon those experiences, have therefore changed me, as a person, and taken me far beyond, far away from, National-Socialism and even from what I termed, over a decade ago, the ethical NS of Reichsfolk, since as I mentioned this is somewhat immoral because still based on what I have termed the immoral, un-empathic, abstractions, of race and of the folk.

In The Philosophy of The Numen, there is a return to a more human personal scale of things; to slowly growing, through the generations, the foundations for new communities. An evolution toward a new type of human being, a new human species, and a new type of culture. For these, we do not need some revolution, some ephemeral State, some ephemeral political type of power; some ephemeral military force. Instead, we only need to presence, to manifest, within us the numinous itself, beyond ever changing causal abstractions.

There is thus the perspective of decades, of centuries - born as this perspective of ours is from the wisdom of our experience; from a

concentration on the important and the numinous as against the unimportant and the profane.

In Conclusion

Now, the decanter only a quarter full, and Dawn not long in duration away, it is time for a full English breakfast to ready me for the tasks of another daylight day, again.

But before then, perhaps I should, and in conclusion, quote some words of mine, recently written, which at least for me seem to capture the essence of my life and the understanding I believe I have garnished from such strange livings as have been mine:

What, therefore, shall I personally miss the most as my own mortal life now moves toward its fated ending? It is the rural England that I love, where I feel most at home, where I know I belong, and where I have lived and worked for many many years of my adult life – the rural England of small villages, hamlets, and farms, far from cities and main roads, that still (but only just) exists today in parts of Shropshire, Herefordshire, Yorkshire, Somerset and elsewhere. The rural England of small fields, hedgerows, trees of Oak, where – over centuries – a certain natural balance has been achieved such that Nature still lives and thrives there where human beings can still feel, know, the natural rhythm of life through the seasons, and where they are connected to the land, the landscape, because they have dwelt, lived, worked there year after year, season after season, and thus know in a personal, direct, way every field, every hedge, every tree, every pond, every stream, around them within a day of walking.

This is the rural England where change is slow, and often or mostly undesired and where a certain old, more traditional, attitude to life and living still exists, and which attitude is one of preferring the direct slow experience of what is around, what is natural, what is of Nature, to the artificial modern world of cities and towns and fast transportation and vapid so-called “entertainment” of others.

That is what I shall miss the most, what I love and have treasured – beyond women loved, progeny sown, true friends known:

The joy of slowly walking in fields tended with care
through the hard work of hands; the joy of hearing again
the first Cuckoo of Spring; of seeing the Swallows return to

nest, there where they have nested for so many years. The joy of sitting in some idle moment in warm Sun of an late English Spring or Summer to watch the life on, around, within, a pond, hearing thus the songful, calling birds in hedge, bush, tree, the sounds of flies and bees as they dart and fly around.

The joy of walking through meadow fields in late Spring when wild flowers in their profusion mingle with the variety of grasses that time over many decades have sown, changed, grown. The joy of hearing the Skylark rising and singing again as the cold often bleak darkness of Winter has given way at last to Spring.

The simple delight of – having toiled hours on foot through deep snow and a colding wind – of sitting before a warm fire of wood in that place called home where one's love has waited to greet one with a kiss.

The joy of seeing the first wild Primrose emerge in early Spring, and waiting, watching, for the Hawthorn buds to burst and bloom. The soft smell of scented blossoms from that old Cherry tree. The sound of hearing the bells of the local village Church, calling the believers to their Sunday duty. The simple pleasure of sitting after a week of work with a loved one in the warm Summer quietness of the garden of an English Inn, feeling rather sleepy having just imbued a pint or two of ale as liquid lunch.

The smell of fresh rain on newly ploughed earth, bringing life to seeds, crops, newly sown. The mist of an early Autumn morning rising slowly over field and hedge while Sun begins to warm the still chilly air. The very feel of the fine tilth one has made by rotaring the ground ready for planting in the Spring, knowing that soon will come the warmth of Sun, the life of rain, to give profuse living to what shall be grown – and knowing, feeling, that such growth, such fecundity, is but a gift, to be treasured not profaned...

These are the joys, some of the very simple, the very *English*, things I treasure; that I have loved the most, and whose memories I shall seek to keep flowing within me as my own life slowly ebbs away...

2010 CE

Rain Following Weeks of Sun

Rain, following weeks of warmful April Sun; rain, and a colding northern breeze that makes us seek out again our pullover and gloves. And so I walk and walk beside a sea where incoming wind-assisted waves break upon such long-living rocks as place our fleeting lives in place.

There is thus no living way for me to make amends, to be other than I was. For the past – my past – is not even one broken shell upon some sandful shore; instead, it seems somehow now to belong to another time and space: some other planet orbiting some other star, perhaps, among the billions of one Galaxy living in this our causal Cosmos.

All I have are memories, of that other so very different life: bringing such feelings as sometimes bring new tears. And there are for me no words, no terms, no theories or ideas, to convey in any way the sadness of such suffering caused. For I am only one – only one – among so many, so very many, century after century, millennia merging to millennia; one among so many who has and have through selfish desire, through adherence to some abstraction or some deceiving duty, caused and brought suffering to so many, including – and especially in its infortunity – to those who loved us and whom we should have loved in that way they so loved us.

Alas, there is no way to change that past; but perhaps a way to change what yet may be. A way to cease to cause or to contribute to suffering, and thus to redeem that promise of life, of human evolution, that lives, dwells, within us; that has lived, that has dwelt, within us, for well over a thousand years given the so many numinous creations and contributions – the so many numinous works of art, literature, music, poetry, and living human examples – that culture and *pathei-mathos* has gifted and given to and for us.

The way, this so very simple way, is based upon one ineluctable, one numinous, truth: which is that there is not, and can never be, any justification, ethical or otherwise, for causing or for contributing to suffering; for causing or contributing to harming, injuring or killing any other human being; with

the one, the singular, the only exception, being a personal one in the immediacy of the moment involving defence of one's self, or of someone nearby dishonourably attacked.

Thus, all we need is to desist: to control the primitive within; to seek, to be, empathic – to feel as others feel; to develop such empathy, such sensitivity, such honour, until we have become quite different beings, far removed from the brutality, the lies, the deception, the excuses, the desires, the hubris, the un-numinous abstractions, that have so blighted both our present and our past and indeed now our planet.

So, this is all I have to offer now, in recompense: all, except, perhaps, the so beautiful sound of birdsong in English woods and fields in early May; or perhaps the sight of small cumulus clouds slowly passing beneath the sky of blue in Summer when Sun so warms us that we stop to wipe away the sweat upon our brow; or, perhaps, that so special scent of a meadow field in middle June after rain when Sun, re-emerging from passing stormful cloud, dries us and our so fragile land, and we are moved – so moved, so still, amid the country silence – that we lie down awhile beside the Hawthorn hedge to feel again this simple English paradise of field, farm, life, and burgeoning birth...

2455319.137



There Was Today

There was today that wyrdful combination of weather, landscape, age, memory and English Winter Sun, to bring such sadness as seeps to keep me truly human.

But if only: if only I had the ability to fully express, to convey, in words the simple complexity of feelings which animate me now for hours when a remembering of past errors, mistakes - and a recalling of moments of beautiful tender poignant personal love - combine to presence within me such a knowing of what is valuable, important, numinous, about our human life and our social living. A knowing established, born, by some forty years of my so varied living, of that learning from diverse sometimes harsh experience.

So much desire, within me, to so convey this - and so much failure to do so so many times; a failure exposed again yesterday when I received, from a composer friend, his new concerto, the first two movements of which on first and subsequent hearing seemed to so well, to so beautifully, express in that way I cannot, the often fated sadness and the inherent promise of our human lives - that strange, quixotic, amalgam when so many times it seems the gentle love we need escapes us, haunts us, and then and then is known, felt, suddenly, perhaps unexpectedly experienced with such ecstasy, such hope, that it is as if our very then shared life becomes some symphony to joy.

There is then no need for the known-unknown god of our despairing times when need takes our desiring far beyond ourselves to where we with our reason fear to or dare not linger even if such surrender might help us, then.

But for now that almost painful slowness of beautiful music - that concerto, as all such music so presencing such a remembering of our so fallible nature and the numinous nature of a living personal love - recalls to me so many lessons finally if so painfully learnt...

Of how I one warm June day came to find myself by arms entwined when she my lover of that moment spake such words of love and no desire to work kept me there amid the birdful morning country silence until satiation - and hunger-thirst - bade us rise to greet the half-remaining day. And of how, only months later, we parted - her arms by her side - while off I in prideful pride went again to some abstractified war I carried in the headpiece of my head. But a life of sharing love claimed her, with another, for I had by then failed to sing her loveful dreaming song...

Of how I one early morn in May in York betook myself away from Fran, excuses made so many nights before - and of how she with aching sadness looked: needing, hoping, trusting, hurting. But the selfish strength of individual self within my selfish self was too strong and so I, though feeling her so needful need, turned my self by manly strength to walk away to leave her to live again alone - for those few more hours at least - for she, bereft, then killed herself...

So much selfishness; so much suffering caused; so very many mistakes I might spend a year of writing trying to recall them all.

Yet there are no excuses for my failures, my errors, decade upon decade. No excuse for my life-long obsession with abstractions, forsaking as I did the personal love that so many times came my way as if the very Cosmos was so wyrdfully contriving to instruct, to learn, me: to break down my barriers of arrogance and pride. No excuses for my selfish rejection of such love so many so very many times.

Now, all I have in penance are poor words such as this. No God, no deity, believed in or assumed, to turn to. No belief in any redemption, supra-personal or otherwise. No comfort from any time or type of prayer. For there is only me, and you - and the memories of sadness, joy, the tears. Only the knowing, the hurting feeling, of the suffering so personally caused.

So it is that I repeat and repeat this my knowing of the errors, the mistakes, of my past - this now knowing of how a personal and shared love between two human beings is the most important the most numinous thing of all. This now knowing of why it is that everything we do, we plan, we scheme to do, we say, we write, should be judged by one criteria alone: that of whether our deeds, our words, our actions, cause or contribute to the suffering of someone or any living being. Because if they do, then we are plainly wrong.

I repeat, repeat, myself, again - for these and so similar recent words of mine are all I have: my music, my concerto, my so very poor compositions in memory of those who loved me, who shared with me their life, their living - and such dreams as kept them hoping - for however short or long. This and these are my remembrance of the suffering I have caused; my primal plea, my gift, to, with and for whatever supra-personal-forces may lurk beyond my rational perception and which in moments such as these I still seem to desire to believe in against my reasoned judgement.

Perhaps with such a faith it would be easier, but such faith as lived within me

so many times now is gone - olden ships of sails, sunk by storming seas to leave me surviving, swimming, alive but only just, until some land claimed and calmed me and I in recovery found by dwelling so near to death a strength to live, to dream, to hope again - to know, to feel, that Life is Love.

Is this all we have? The cultural treasures of our human past to remind us of such survival moments? The pathos of our past, of our ancestral pasts - gifted to us in literature, works of Art, in music, poetry, song; resonating within us to bring back joy, dreams and hope, stripping away our vainful manufactured abstractions, our pretentious manly strength, to reveal in shades our affective needful connexion to all other life?

Yes - for they are the treasures we are and leave behind. Treasures of remembered empathy so they - hearing reading seeing - find again the numen which always waits within and brings the living gift of love.

2455597.543

Credits:

Image - Hubble Space Telescope, HH 901/902

Music - Richard Mould, Widgael Concerto in Three Movements



cc David Myatt 2011 CE



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Sed id Quidem in Optima spe Pono

[...] That seeking of - that hope for - a personal love loyally shared. Which seeking and hope for such a love, surely, is one intimation, one sign, of our real human nature; another of which is, surely, to learn about, to appreciate, the numinous treasures that preceding generations have bequeathed to us in and thorough our human cultures - in our Art, literature, music, the ancestral wisdom of the *πάθει μάθος* of our ancestors, written or aurally transmitted, and in the numinous insights that were the genesis of most if not all those Ways of Life now known by the generic term religion before such insights became enshrined within such dogma and such causal forms as bled away their life-giving Life. Yet another is, surely, to seek to always be honourable and thus to try to live the natural, the balanced, middle way between ascetic self-denial and the excess, the lack of self-control, that leads to *ὑβρις*, to personal arrogance and to indifference to suffering. This is the middle way of empathy, personal love, personal honour, and appreciation of the numinous, of the natural distinction between the sacred and the profane.

These hopes, desires, these reasons to possibly be optimistic, are the essence of The Numinous Way; of the very individual reformation and evolution of ourselves by means of empathy, honour, compassion and love. And it is this individual reformation, this individual change, by such means, which in my admittedly fallible view is important, which is numinous, which expresses the essence of our human nature as consciously aware human beings possessed of the faculties of empathy, of reason, and of will; and which is the summation of my own learning from over forty years of diverse experiences and the making of so many mistakes, of transgressing so many limits.

Thus, what I now feel is irrelevant is politics - of whatever type or form; what is equally unimportant are religious dogma, creeds, and such impersonal conflict as arises from all causal abstractions. For all of these are causes of, the genesis of,

suffering and all involve and all have involved the loss of personal love, the loss of compassion, the loss of empathy, and the loss of reason. All plant the seed of ὕβρις within us.

For we human beings - being capable of using reason, possessed of empathy, able to be compassionate and honourable and needful of the numinosity of a personal love - do not need, and never really have needed, speeches, propaganda, manifestos, a sense of destiny, the machinations and promises of political and religious leaders, or social, political, or even religious, reforms.

All we need is to know, to feel, the beauty of a personal love loyally shared; to use and develop our empathy, and to be honourable. Thus can we know, feel, the numinous - and thus can we avoid the error of ὕβρις. And thus if I have some last words to write, to say, it is these.

What, therefore, remains? Only such hope that such words, that such a numinous way as I have somehow managed to uncover, might inspire some, or perchance provoke a reasoned and thoughtful response in some others. What is there now, and what has there been? One genesis, and one ending, of one nexion whose perception by almost all others is now of one who lived and who wrote ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.

τό θ' ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἤδη κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοῦς
στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων
ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. [1]

David Myatt

March 2011 CE

Extract from a letter to a friend

[Corpus Numinosum](#)

(pdf c. 751 Kb)

[Guide to the Numinous Way](#)

(pdf c. 571 Kb)

[1] Thus, he of great Age, his foliage drying up
And no stronger than a child, with three feet to guide him on his travels,
Wanders - appearing a shadow in the light of day.

Aesch. Ag 79-82

One Supposition of Knowing A Study in Empathy

Let us begin – and end – this particular and unobjective study, this my supposition of knowing, with human beings. The place – a popular seaside resort in England. The time – a sunny day in July in the year, according to one causal solar calendar, 2010 ce.

There is a wide promenade along, beside, the sandy beach, suffused with people – a mix of families (young parents, young children), couples young and old, and groups of elderly people, most of whom are here for a few days staying in seaside hotels and brought and collected by coach, and some of whom are here for the day, coach brought from cities and towns.

I walk along this promenade, aided by a trusty walking stick of Oak – an ageing man of greying hair whose conventional mode of dress (Tweed jacket; woollen trousers; flat cap) marks him as just one more elderly visitor indulging in the now venerable English tradition of pottering beside the sea. Seats (benches) are plentiful as the promenade spreads out from the Pier, and – on sunny days – they are almost always occupied as the hour of Noon approaches.

A tumult of faces – mostly happy – as I walk. Each person a living being with their own feelings, hopes, dreams, memories – sometimes caught when eyes meet; and especially when, as not that often, there is a human response – my smile returned and so for an instant of acausal Time a connexion made as something of the essence of that one living being becomes passed to me, far beyond words. An impression of their life – a wordless elation of knowing that, as one wave breaking upon the sandy shore, is soon gone, dispersed by our moving-on. Or, as well they may be, are these and most or any or all of such intuitive feelings of mine only some inner silly child-like presumption? I do not know, nor worry – for they, as warm Sun on hands, arm, face, feel and seem so real to this one being walking who now so seldom talks, for long...

Sometimes – a glimpse of sadness, unhappiness, or of inner pain; soon covered; soon gone. And on rare occasions – as when that woman slipped and fell to hard pavement – the empathy of a physical pain, so real there is a physical response in me, for a second or more, and always in the same region of my body making me to momentarily wince.

So many impressions, I become a walking being divorced from any notion of self – a cloud passing by this one sea-shore where human beings dwell, live, interact, and feel. So much wordless knowing it is as if I have no identity of my own, no barriers, and so vulnerable, so very vulnerable, while this child-like state of living lasts.

There – a possibly lonely woman of middle human age who this being feels so needs the warm comfort of a personal love but who so resolutely, it seems, girds herself with a resolute independent public image

she so needs to maintain to face each day, again. There – the young child of less than ten years of life, so full of exuberant unthinking joy running down toward the beach of sand and who shrieks, as so young girls often do, when her bare feet enter sea; a bundle of life contained within a so small still growing human body. Where then in that one moment those many years ahead as growth and human living bring change and all those many joys and sorrows, tragedies, hopes destroyed, regained, that await for so many of our kind? Such tender care as her mother rushes after her, worried, protecting, happy, and proud, all wordlessly at once.

So many... for even in/with my intuitive, empathic, supposition of knowing I know I am nothing; and will be nothing – for the sea, centuries, millennia, after I am gone, will wash upon this shore as the tide, Moon-changed, turns, while the Earth rotates as the Earth rotates, bearing such Life as then burgeons and remains. Nothing – *damyata*; one being, only one temporary being, restrained in Time, loaned to Earth as a child. Only one more human who of so very many passed so briefly by. Nothing – my essence returned to the Cosmos whose changing wyrd brought me forth so very briefly to dwell upon one planet of no importance whatsoever.

There – the elderly lady, wheelchair bound, who still, despite the afflictions that afflict her, returns my smile, and I have to quicken my step since in those eyes were so many glimpses of so many decades that I fear for tears escaping as when last night the *Well-Tempered Clavier* by JS Bach played and one of the Preludes, as it often does, brought such salted water forth to moisten cheek and beard...

There is a sitting, then, now, in the sand, while human life goes on, often quite loudly, around. Such simple joys, shared, here where a century or more of life, tradition, has melded humans together in such a subtle way that there is, for this moment, this one moment, a certain peace – an allocation of Time to allow each of us, here in this one place which is many the freedom to be as we are encased within our individual, familial, worlds; co-existing peacefully in that strange way we accept, here, for reasons I no longer care or even desire to think or worry about; its very being a sufficiency itself. For I have no answers, now – no questions; and simply am; one fragile being just simply passing by.

No longer my arrogance of assumption. Instead, only a resonance with Life – this one human living, that lives here in no one place now who is but trundling through; one visitor among so many.

There – the young bare chested, sun-tanned, man whose tattooed body, sun-lit, becomes a mobile work of art and whose smile, whose so very English greeting, brings to me the broader smile. For I am only that/this sunlight – there, reflected so briefly from one so very small and wind-caused wave, which falling, falls to slowly ripple to then fade, silent, away.

David Myatt

2010 ce



Recuyle Of The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos

- Forward
- Part One: The Way of Pathei-Mathos - A Philosophical Compendium
- Part Two: Some Personal Musings On Empathy
- Part Three: Enantiodromia and The Reformation of The Individual
- Part Four: Society, Politics, Social Reform, and Pathei-Mathos
- Footnotes
- Appendix I - A Glossary of Terms
- Appendix II - The Change of Enantiodromia
- Appendix III - The Principle of Δίκη

Forward

This compilation is of three published essays and one unpublished essay of mine concerning the philosophy of *πάθει μάθος* and will hopefully serve as a useful work of reference, containing as it does (in my view) all that is required for an understanding of, and all that is relevant to, that philosophy, and perhaps therefore is my magnum opus. The essays previously published have been slightly (or in the case of *Society, Politics, Social Reform, and Pathei-Mathos* substantially) revised for inclusion here, with some typos corrected.

In the interest of clarity I have added an appendix - a glossary - which explains or defines how I understand and use certain common terms, such as extremism, society, and so on. My usage may thus sometimes differ from how such terms are generally used or how they have been previously defined and/or used in some academic and other works relating to society, politics, extremism, philosophy, and so

on. As mentioned in Part One, the glossary also includes Greek and other terms used in - and important for an understanding of - the philosophy of *πάθει μάθος*.

David Myatt
17th May 2012 ce

Part One

The Way of Pathei-Mathos A Philosophical Compendiary

Contents

- Introduction
 - I - Pathei-Mathos as Authority and Way
 - II - The Nature and Knowledge of Empathy
 - III - The Nature of Being and of Beings
 - IV - An Appreciation of The Numinous
 - Conclusion
-

Introduction

This work is a brief introduction to the philosophy, the Way, of *πάθει μάθος* (pathei-mathos). A substantial portion of the text here is new, although some has been taken from or summarizes or is a rewrite of various parts of some other writings of mine from the past two years, with the text being so arranged as to be - I hope - conducive to a reasoned understanding of this philosophy and its ethos. Thus this work may serve as a guide to distinguish my now completed *philosophy of πάθει μάθος* from those early (and sometimes even later) parts of *The Numinous Way* which I have since had occasion to either reject or substantially revise.

The philosophy of pathei-mathos as presented here therefore represents both the essence and the substance of what I have retained after seven or so years of developing The Numinous Way. Given how substantially I have developed and refined The Numinous Way, and given how much has upon reflexion been discarded, perhaps the use of this new term *philosophy of πάθει μάθος* - in preference to The Numinous Way - is warranted or would be useful in order to avoid confusion with all the rejected, discarded and unrevised material of that 'numinous way'.

This new philosophy of *πάθει μάθος*, however, is not a conventional, an academic, one where a person intellectually posits or constructs a coherent theory - involving ontology, epistemology, ethics, and so on - often as a result of an extensive dispassionate study, review, or a criticism of the philosophies or views, past and present, advanced by other individuals involved in the pursuit of philosophy as an academic discipline or otherwise. Instead, the philosophy of pathei-mathos is the result of my own pathei-mathos, my own learning from diverse - sometimes outré, sometimes radical and often practical - ways of life and experiences over some four decades; of my subsequent reasoned analysis, over a period of several years, of those ways and those experiences; of certain personal intuitions, spread over several decades, regarding the numinous; of an interior process of personal and moral reflexion, lasting several years and deriving from a personal tragedy; and of my life-long study and appreciation of Hellenic culture, an appreciation that led me to translate works by Sappho, Sophocles, Aeschylus and Homer, and involved me in a detailed consideration of the *weltanschauung* of individuals such as Heraclitus (insofar as such *weltanschauungen* are known from recorded sayings and surviving books).

Given this appreciation, and as the name suggests, the *philosophy of πάθει μάθος* has certain connexions to Hellenic culture and I tend therefore to use certain Greek words in order to try and elucidate my meaning and/or to express certain philosophical principles regarded as important in - and for an understanding of - this philosophy; a usage of words which I have endeavoured to explain as and where necessary, sometimes by quoting passages from Hellenic literature or other works and by providing translations of such passages. For it would be correct to assume that the ethos of this philosophy is somewhat indebted to and yet - and importantly - is also a development of the ethos of Hellenic culture; an indebtedness obvious in notions such as *δίκη*, *πάθει μάθος*, avoidance of *ὑβρις*, and references to Heraclitus, Aeschylus, and others, and a development manifest in notions such as empathy and the importance attached to the virtue of compassion.

In addition, and possibly somewhat unconventionally since in accord with the Hellenic etymology of the word and the Homeric sense of *φίλος* ^[a] I view a philosopher as someone who is a friend of - whose companion is, who seeks to find, to acquire, to follow, to befriend - *σοφόν*. Thus in this sense, a philosopher is someone seeking to acquire a certain skill (such as the learning/reasoning that is *λόγος*) and discover a particular knowledge, such as a knowledge regarding Being and beings, *rerum divinarum et humanarum*; a knowledge acquired or found by means of both using *λόγος* and from life itself via practical experience, practical learning; a dual sense evident from the meaning and usage of *σοφός*.

Thus my personal understanding of philosophy is that it is the result of the activity and the life of a philosopher; more correctly perhaps, it is both the written or the recorded or transmitted results of the lucubrations that such way of life (that such a following, such a seeking, of knowledge and wisdom) engenders, and of what the

living of such a life (that such befriending of σοφόν) brings-into-being and/or reveals. And it is in this sense that I consider my way of πάθει μάθος a philosophy.

As for my prior ways of life, study, and experiences - the genesis of this particular philosophy - they are mostly now in the public domain, and if anyone is interested in them (for whatever reason) then they might profitably peruse some of my own writings concerning them. Writings such as: (i) *Myngath*, and (ii) *The Ethos of Extremism*; and compilations such as: (i) *De Novo Caelo et Nova Terra*; (ii) *The Culture of Arête*; (iii) *Meditations on Extremism*, and (iv) *Remembering Wyrld*.

All translations from Ancient Greek in this work are mine, and I have, at the suggestion of a friend, added an appendix giving some brief explanations and definitions of some of the Greek and English terms used, some of which explanations and definitions are taken either from the body of the text or from footnotes and/or which may expand upon the body of the text or footnotes.

[a] For example, *Odyssey*, Book I, v.301-302

καὶ σύ, φίλος, μάλα γάρ σ' ὀρώω καλόν τε μέγαν τε,
ἄλκιμος ἔσσης, ἵνα τίς σε καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἐν εἵπῃ.

Thus should you, my friend - who I see are strong and fully-grown -
Be as brave, so that those born after you will speak well of you.

I

Pathei-Mathos as Authority and Way

The Greek term πάθει μάθος derives from The Agamemnon of Aeschylus (written c. 458 BCE), and can be interpreted, or translated, as meaning *learning from adversary*, or *wisdom arises from (personal) suffering*; or *personal experience is the genesis of true learning*.

However, this expression should be understood in context [1], for what Aeschylus writes is that the Immortal, Zeus, guiding mortals to reason, has provided we mortals with a new law, which law replaces previous ones, and which new law - this new guidance laid down for mortals - is pathei-mathos.

Thus, for we human beings, pathei-mathos possesses a numinous, a living, authority [2] - that is, the wisdom, the understanding, that arises from one's own personal experience, from formative experiences that involve some hardship, some grief, some personal suffering, is often or could be more valuable to us (more alive, more meaningful) than any doctrine, than any religious faith, than any words one might hear from someone else or read in some book.

In many ways, this Aeschylean view is an enlightened – a very human – one, and is somewhat in contrast to the faith and revelation-centred view of religions such as Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. In the former, it is the personal experience of learning from, and dealing with, personal suffering and adversity, that is paramount and which possesses authority and 'meaning'. In the latter, it is faith that some written or transmitted work or works is or are a sacred revelation from the supreme deity one believes in which is paramount, which possess meaning and authority, often combined with a belief that this supreme deity has appointed or authorized some mortal being or beings, or some Institution, as their earthly representative(s), and which Institution and/or representative(s) therefore are believed to possess or are accepted as possessing authority or are regarded as authoritative.

Thus, the Aeschylean view is that learning, and hence wisdom, often or perhaps mostly arises from within us, by virtue of that which afflicts us (and which afflictions could well be understood as from the gods/Nature or from some supra-personal source) and from our own, direct, personal, practical, experience. In contrast, the conventional religious view is that wisdom can be found in some book (especially in some religious text), or be learnt from someone considered to be an authority, or who has been appointed as some authority by some Institution, religious or otherwise.

The essential difference between these two ways is therefore that *pathei-mathos* is the way of direct learning from personal experience, while the religious way is often or mostly the way of secondary or tertiary learning, from others; of accepting or believing what is written by or taught by someone else or laid down in some dogma, some creed, some book, or by some external authority, such as an Institution.

For The Way of Pathei-Mathos, it is the personal learning that *pathei-mathos* provides or can provide, combined with - balanced by - the insight, the knowing, that empathy provides, which are considered as possessing authority, and which can aid us to discover wisdom.

The Way of Pathei-Mathos

The fundamental axioms of The Way of Pathei-Mathos are:

1) That human beings possess a mostly latent perceptive faculty, the faculty of empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - which when used, or when developed and used, can provide us with a particular type of knowing, a particular type of knowledge, and especially a certain knowledge concerning the *φύσις* (the physis, the nature or character) of human beings and other living beings.

2) This type of knowing, this perception, is different from and supplementary to that acquired by means of the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science [3], and thus enables us to better understand *Phainómenon*, ourselves, and other living beings.

3) That because of or following *πάθει μάθος* there is or there can be a change in, a development of, the nature, the character - the *φύσις* - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this *πάθει μάθος*, and which appreciation of the numinous includes an awareness of why *ὑβρις* is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect or ignorance (of the numinous), of a going beyond the due limits, and which *ὑβρις* itself is the genesis both of the *τύραννος* [4] and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the modern extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate *ἔρις* [5] and thus are a cause of, or contribute to and aid, suffering.

4) This change, this development of the individual, is or can be the result of enantiodromia [6] and reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for *ψυχή* [7] to flourish - which natural balance is *δίκη* as *Δίκη* [8] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in *ἀρμονία* [9], manifest as *ἀρμονία* (harmony) is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei [10] and *σωφρονεῖν* (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement) [11].

5) The development and use of empathy, the cultivation of wu-wei and *σωφρονεῖν*, are thus a means, a way, whereby individuals can cease to cause suffering or cease to contribute to, or cease to aid, suffering.

6) The reason as to why an individual might so seek to avoid causing suffering is the reason, the knowledge - the appreciation of the numinous - that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* provide.

7) This appreciation of the numinous inclines or can incline an individual to living in a certain way and which way of life naturally inclines the individual toward developing, in a natural way - sans any methodology, praxis, theory, dogma, or faith - certain attributes of character, and which attributes of character include compassion, self-restraint, fairness, and a reasoned, a personal, judgement.

II

The Nature and Knowledge of Empathy

Empathy is, as an intuitive understanding, what was, can be, and often is, learned or developed by *πάθει μάθος*. That is, from and by a direct, personal, learning from experience and suffering. An understanding manifest in our awareness of the numinous and thus in the distinction we have made, we make, or we are capable of making, between the sacred and the profane; the distinction made, for example in the past, between *θεοί* and *δαιμόνων* and mortals, and thus manifest in that understanding of *ὑβρις* and *δίκη* which can be obtained from the works of Sophocles,

and Aeschylus [12], and from an understanding of *Φύσις* evident in some of the sayings attributed to Heraclitus [13].

Understood by reference to such classical illustrations, empathy is thus what naturally predisposed us to appreciate *δίκη* and be aware, respectful of, the goddess, *Δίκη* [14], and thus avoid retribution for committing the error of *ὑβρις*, for disrupting the natural balance necessary for individual and communal well-being.

That is, a certain empathy is, and has been, the natural basis for a tradition which informs us, and reminds us - through Art, literature, myths, legends, the accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of individuals, and often through a religious-type awareness - of the need for a balance, for *ἁρμονίη*, achieved by not going beyond the numinous limits.

As a used and a developed faculty, the perception that empathy provides is of undivided *ψυχή* and of the emanations of *ψυχή*, of our place in the Cosmic Perspective: of how we are a connexion to other life; of how we are but one mortal fallible emanation of Life; of how we affect or can affect the well-being - the very being, *ψυχή* - of other mortals and other life; and how other mortals and other living beings interact with us and can affect us, in a good or a harmful way.

Empathy thus involves a translocation of ourselves and thus a knowing-of another living-being as that living-being *is*, without presumptions and sans all ideations, all projections. In a simple way, empathy involves a numinous sympathy with another living-being; a becoming - for a causal moment or moments - of that other-being, so that we know, can feel, can understand, the suffering or the joy of that living-being. In such moments, there is no distinction made between *them and us* - there is only the flow of life; only the presencing and the ultimate unity of Life itself.

This knowing-of another living-being and this knowledge of the Cosmic Perspective - this empathic awareness of Life - inclines us toward compassion; toward the human virtue of having *συμπάθεια* (sympatheia, benignity) with and toward other living beings. For such an awareness involves being sensitive to, respectful of, other Life, and not arrogantly, in a hubriatic manner, imposing ourselves or trying to impose ourselves on Life and its emanations. That is, there is the cultivation of the natural balance that is *wu-wei* because of our awareness of how other Life, other living-beings, can suffer, and how some-things, some actions, are unwise because they do or can cause suffering or have caused suffering.

In effect, empathy uncovers or can uncover the nature of our being and the nature of Being itself.

III

The Nature of Being and of Beings

Empathy uncovers the a-causal nature of Being; of how, as Heraclitus expressed it in fragment 53, beings have their genesis,

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound. [15]

and how

πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα

All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia [16]

and why *σωφρονεῖν* is important:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίῃ ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer. [17]

Empathy also reveals why the assumption that abstracted, ideated, opposites apply to or should apply to living beings - and that they thus can supply us with knowledge and understanding of living being - disrupts the natural balance, resulting in a loss of *ἀρμονίῃ* and *συμπάθεια* and is therefore a manifestation of the error of *ὑβρις*.

The Acausal Nature of Being

The empathic perception of an undivided *ψυχή* and of living beings as emanations of *ψυχή*, and the knowledge of ourselves and one affective and effecting fallible mortal connexion to other life that such a perception provides, leads to an understanding of Being, of *ψυχή*, as a-causal: as beyond the linearity of a simple and direct cause-and-effect and beyond the supposition that we are separated beings. This perception - and this knowing of the acausal nature of Being deriving from it - is numinous; that is, of how beings are part of Being and of how they come-into-being, are affected and affecting, and so Change and are Change: of how Life flows and ebbs and continues undivided, unseparated, a-temporal, and is only temporarily manifest in particular beings only erroneously perceived by us as discrete entities, as separated beings.

As Heraclitus mentioned as recorded in fragment 52:

αἰὼν παῖς ἐστὶ παίζων πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἡ βασιληΐη

For Aeon, we are a game, pieces moved on some board: since, in this world of ours, we are but children.

For the perception and the knowing of causality in respect of living beings is that of the-separation-of-otherness; a notion of causal and linear separation, of past-present-future, of independent beings that gives rise to two things. (1) Of how we human consider we are different from or similar to other individual human beings. A difference or a similarity deriving from posited, manufactured, ideated, categories to which we assign others and ourselves and from which we often or mostly derive our identity, our self-assurance, and our belief about their and our φύσις, or at least what we assume is a knowledge of such things. (2) Of how such separately existing human beings are not subject to - or can and should make themselves not subject to or can overcome or ignore - any external supra-personal non-physical (non-temporal) force or forces, and thus of how these separated human beings have or can acquire the ability, the skill, to 'determine their own destiny/fate/life' by some means if the right method, or some methodology, or some tool - such as some idea or theory - can be found or developed, or if they develop their physical prowess/intelligence/cunning or acquire sufficient wealth/power/influence/followers.

Such a purely causal perception and causal understanding of living beings - lacking as it does an awareness of, an appreciation and a feeling for the numinous, or wilfully ignoring the numinous - is the genesis of ὕβρις and can thus bring-into-being the τύραννος [4].

An example of this reliance on causal perception and causal understanding is Oedipus, as described by Sophocles in *Oedipus Tyrannus*. In his singular desire to find the killer of Laius, Oedipus oversteps the due limits, and upsets the natural balance both within, and external to, himself. He is blinded by mere causality (a linear thinking) and subsumed by personal feelings - by his overwhelming desire for a simple cause-and-effect solution to the plague and his prideful belief that he, a mortal, a strong man, and master of the riddle of the Sphinx, can find or derive a solution. What results is tragedy, suffering, for himself and for others.

ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους ὄδε,
ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἤδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ,
οὗ τίς οὐ ζήλω πολιτῶν ἦν τύχαις ἐπιβλέπων,
εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν.
ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντα κείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν
ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν
τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδὲν ἀλγυνὸν παθῶν.

You natives of Thebes: Observe - here is Oedipus,
He who understood that famous enigma and was a strong man:
What clansman did not behold that fortune without envy?
But what a tide of problems have come over him!

Therefore, look toward that ending which is for us mortals,
To observe that particular day – calling no one lucky until,
Without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending.

(Oedipus Tyrannus, vv. 1524-1530)

Another example is Creon, as described by Sophocles in his *Antigone*. Creon's pride and stubbornness, and his rigid adherence to his own, causal (temporal), mortal, edict – which overturns an ancestral custom established and maintained to 'please the gods' and implement a natural edict of the gods designed to give and maintain balance, harmony, among the community – leads to tragedy, to suffering.

The same thing occurred to Odysseus, who for all his prowess and mortal cunning could not contrive to return to his homeland as he wished nor save his friends, and

κπολλὰ δ' ὃ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων.
ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὥς ἐτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἰέμενός περ:
αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἥελίοιο
ἦσθιον: αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.

...whose vigour, at sea, was weakened by many afflictions
As he strove to win life for himself and return his comrades to their homes.
But not even he, for all this yearning, could save those comrades
For they were destroyed by their own immature foolishness
Having devoured the cattle of Helios, that son of Hyperion,
Who plucked from them the day of their returning.

(Homer, *Odyssey*, vv.3-9)

Such emphasis by mortals on causality, arising from a lack of the acausal, the numinous, perspective that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* provide, is in effect an ignoring of, a wilful defiance of, or a forgetfulness of, the natural balance, of our own nature, and of the gods. Expressed un-theistically, it is a lack of, or a covering-up of, or an ignorance of, the the nature of Being and of beings, of who and why we are, and why wu-wei is a wise way to live.

Our nature - which empathy and *πάθει μάθος* can reveal - is that of a mortal being veering between *σωφρονεῖν* (thoughtful reasoning, and thus fairness) and *ὑβρις*.

As Sophocles expressed it:

πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδεν ἄνθρωπου δεινότερον πέλει...

σοφόν τι τὸ μηχανόεν τέχνας ὑπὲρ ἐλπίδ' ἔχων
τοτὲ μὲν κακόν, ἄλλοτ' ἐπ' ἐσθλὸν ἔρπει

There exists much that is strange, yet nothing

Has more strangeness than a human being...
Beyond his own hopes, his cunning
In inventive arts - he who arrives
Now with dishonour, then with chivalry

Antigone, v.334, vv.365-366

Yet as empathy and *πάθει μάθος* also reveal, our nature is such that we also have hope and a choice. We can choose to be fair, rational, beings who appreciate and cultivate *σωφρονεῖν*; who appreciate the numinous and *ἀρμονίη* and who understand *ὑβρις* for the error, the misfortune, the unbalance, it is. Or we can, like Oedipus, Creon, Aegisthus, and the comrades of Odysseus, foolishly, recklessly, veer toward and embrace *ἔρις* and *ὑβρις*.

We can appreciate the numinous - be wary of *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες*. We can kindle and rekindle the 'fire of reason', and appreciate that when 'more is obtained than is necessary it is not kept'. Or we can take short-cuts, foolishly overladen ourselves, and in our recklessness believe we are immune to injury:

τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὅμως ὑμνωδεῖ
θρῆνον Ἐρινύος αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν
θυμός, οὐ τὸ πᾶν ἔχων
ἐλπίδος φίλον θράσος.
σπλάγχνα δ' οὔτοι ματά-
ζει πρὸς ἐνδίκους φρεσὶν
τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκώμενον κέαρ.
εὐχομαι δ' ἐξ ἐμᾶς
ἐλπίδος ψύθη πεσεῖν
ἐς τὸ μὴ τελεσφόρον.

μάλα γέ τοι τὸ μεγάλας ὑγιείας
ἀκόρεστον τέρμα: νόσος γάρ
γείτων ὁμότοιχος ἐρείδει.
καὶ πότμος εὐθυπορῶν
ἀνδρὸς ἔπαισεν ἄφαντον ἔρμα.
καὶ πρὸ μέν τι χρημάτων
κτησίων ὄκνος βαλὼν
σφενδόνας ἀπ' εὐμέτρου,
οὐκ ἔδυ πρόπας δόμος
πημονᾶς γέμων ἄγαν,
οὐδ' ἐπόντισε σκάφος.
πολλά τοι δόσις ἐκ Διὸς ἀμφιλα-
φῆς τε καὶ ἐξ ἀλόκων ἐπετειᾶν
νῆστιν ὤλεσεν νόσον.

τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὸν ἅπαξ θανάσιμον

πρόπαρ ἀνδρὸς μέλαν αἶμα τίς ἂν
 πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ἐπαείδων;
 οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῖ
 τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν
 Ζεὺς ἀπέπαυσεν ἐπ' εὐλαβείᾳ;
 εἰ δὲ μὴ τεταγμένα
 μοῖρα μοῖραν ἐκ θεῶν
 εἶργε μὴ πλέον φέρειν,
 προφθάσασα καρδία
 γλῶσσαν ἂν τάδ' ἐξέχει.
 νῦν δ' ὑπὸ σκότῳ βρέμει
 θυμαλγῆς τε καὶ οὐδὲν ἐπελπομέν-
 α ποτὲ καίριον ἐκτολυπεύσειν
 ζωπυρουμένας φρενός.

And so, although I have no lyre, I sing:
 For there is a desire, within me - a self-taught hymn
 For one of those Furies,
 With nothing at all to bring me
 That cherished confidence - hope.
 And my stomach is by no means idle -
 In fairness, it is from achieving a judgement
 That the beat of my heart continues to change.
 And so there is this supplication of mine:
 For this defeat of my hope to be false
 So that, that thing cannot be achieved.

In truth, that frequently unsatisfied goddess, Health,
 Has a limit - for Sickness, her neighbour,
 Leans against their shared fence;
 And it is the fate of the mortal who takes the short-cut
 To strike the unseen reef.
 And yet if - of those possessions previously acquired
 A fitting amount is, through caution, cast forth by a sling,
 Then the whole construction will not go under -
 Injuriously over-loaded as it was -
 Nor will its hull be filled, by the sea.
 Often, the gifts from Zeus are abundant
 And there is, then, from the yearly ploughing,
 A death for famine's sickness.

But if once upon the earth there falls from
 A mortal that death-making black blood -
 What incantation can return it to his arms?
 Not even he who was correctly-taught
 How to bring back those who had died
 Was allowed by Zeus to be without injury.
 Were it not that Fate was ordained
 By the gods to make it fated
 That when more is obtained it is not kept,
 My heart would have been first
 To let my tongue pour forth these things.

But now, in darkness, it murmurs,
Painfully-desiring, and having no hope of when
There will be an opportunity to bring this to an end,
Rekindling the fire of reason.

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, vv.990-1033

The Error of The-Separation-of-Otherness

The essence of the faculty of empathy is *συμπάθεια* with other living beings and which *συμπάθεια* involves a translocation of ourselves for a duration or durations of causal moments. There is thus a perception of the acausal, the numinous, reality underlying the causal division of beings, existents, into separate, causal-separated, objects and the subject-object relationship which is or has been assumed by means of the process of causal ideation to exist between such causally-separate beings. That is, and for instance, the implied or assumed causal separateness of living beings - *the-separation-of-otherness* - is causal appearance and not an expression of the true nature of Being and beings.

The-separation-of-otherness obscures and disrupts our relation to *ψυχή* and thus obscures the nature of our being and the nature of Being itself, and amounts to *ὑβρις*. For, in place of an understanding, a knowing, and thus an appreciation and acceptance of what is numinous - and thus of the natural balance and of what/whom we should respect - *the-separation-of-otherness* results in the positing of abstract categories/idealised forms to which we, as living beings, are assigned and which categories and forms are regarded as what we should aspire to and/or compare ourselves to and what we are judged by or judge ourselves by.

In classical terms, the natural balance and those whom we should respect - manifest in *ψυχή* and *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* and in those sacred places guarded or watched over by *δαιμόνων* - are arrogantly replaced by human manufactured, and fallible, ideations and which ideations do not in any way re-present the nature, the *φύσις*, of our being, the *φύσις* of other living beings, and *φύσις* of Being, and which *φύσις* is one of the living connexions, the numinosity, of *ψυχή* and thus of the Cosmic Perspective, a nature manifest, for we mortals, in an appreciation of the numinous and thus in living in a certain way because we understand the nature, the importance, of *δίκη*, of fairness, of not being excessive.

The result of such *ὑβρις* - of *the-separation-of-otherness* and of the arrogance assigning living beings to and judging them by lifeless abstractions, ideations; of neglecting *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* - is *ἔρις*: strife, discord, disruption, conflict, suffering, misfortune, and a loss of *ψυχή* and *ἀρμονίη*.

As Aeschylus mentioned, over two thousand years ago:

ἔστω δ' ἀπή-
μαντον, ὥστ' ἀπαρκεῖν
εὖ πραπίδων λαχόντα.
οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἑπαλξις
πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρὶ
λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας
βωμὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.

βιᾶται δ' ἅ τάλαινα πειθῶ,
προβούλου παῖς ἄφερτος ἄτας.
ἄκος δὲ πᾶν μάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύφθη,
πρέπει δέ, φῶς αἰνολαμπές, σίνος...

λιτᾶν δ' ἀκούει μὲν οὔτις θεῶν:
τὸν δ' ἐπίστροφον τῶν
φῶτ' ἄδικον καθαιρεῖ

For unharmed is the one
Who rightly reasons that what is sufficient
Is what is allotted to him.
For there is no protection
In riches for the man of excess
Who stamps down the great altar of the goddess, Judgement,
In order to hide it from view.

But vigorously endures Temptation -
That already-decided daughter of unbearable Misfortune.
And all remedies are in vain.
Not concealed, but conspicuous -
A harsh shining light -
Is the injury...

But not one of the gods hears the supplications:
Instead, they take down those persons
Who, lacking fairness, turn their attentions to such things.

Aeschylus, Agamemnon. vv.379-389, vv. 396-402

IV

An Appreciation of The Numinous

Empathy by its very nature - by its relocation, translocation, of ourselves into, and *συμπάθεια* with, *the living other* - naturally inclines us toward compassion, for to intentionally harm *the living other* is to feel, to know, that harm. Such harming might

also upset, unbalance, hinder, or harm, the *ψυχή* we share with that and with other living beings and so in some way cause, or contribute to, or result in harm, suffering, or misfortune to us and/or to others now or on some future occasion or occasions.

In effect, compassion is a means to maintain *ἁρμονίη* and the natural balance of Life and thus to aid or contribute to our own *ἁρμονίη* and well-being as well as that of others.

Empathy - like *πάθει μάθος* - also inclines us toward treating other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated; that is it inclines us toward fairness, toward self-restraint, toward being well-mannered, and toward an appreciation and understanding of innocence, with innocence being regarded as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us, are therefore unjudged us by and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt. For this presumption of innocence of others - until direct personal experience, and individual and empathic knowing of them, prove otherwise - is the fair, the reasoned, the numinous thing to do.

Thus morality is, for The Way of Pathei-Mathos, a result of individuals using the faculty of empathy; a consequence of the insight and the understanding (the acausal knowing) that empathy provides for individuals in the immediacy-of-the-moment. Or, expressed another way, morality resides not in some abstract theory or some moralistic schemata presented in some written text which individuals have to accept and try and conform or aspire to, but rather in personal virtues that arise or which can arise naturally through empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, and thus from an awareness and appreciation of the numinous. Personal virtues such as compassion and fairness, and *εὐταξία*, that quality of self-restraint, of a balanced, well-mannered conduct especially under adversity or duress, of which Cicero wrote:

Haec autem scientia continentur ea, quam Graeci εὐταξίαν nominant, non hanc, quam interpretamur modestiam, quo in verbo modus inest, sed illa est εὐταξία, in qua intellegitur ordinis conservatio

Those two qualities are evident in that way described by the Greeks as εὐταξίαν although what is meant by εὐταξία is not what we mean by the moderation of the moderate, but rather what we consider is restrained behaviour..

De Officiis, Liber Primus, 142

In practice, therefore, justice is not some abstract concept, some ideation, which it is believed can and should be administered by others and requiring the individual to accept, passively or willingly, some external authority. Rather, justice, like *εὐταξία*, like goodness, is numinous, living in the individual who - because of empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, awareness and appreciation of the numinous - is inclined to be fair, who is capable of restraint especially under adversity or duress; the individual of *σωφρονεῖν* who thus "can tell inner character from outer" and who thus has those personal qualities which can be expressed by one word: honour.

The Numinous Balance of Honour

In many ways, the personal virtue of honour, and the cultivation of wu-wei, are - together - a practical, a living, manifestation of our understanding and appreciation of the numinous; of how to live, to behave, as empathy intimates we can or should in order to avoid committing the folly, the error, of ὑβρις, in order not to cause suffering, and in order to re-present, to acquire, ἀρμονίη.

For personal honour is essentially a presencing, a grounding, of ψυχή - of Life, of our φύσις - occurring when the insight (the knowing) of a developed empathy inclines us toward a compassion that is, of necessity, balanced by σωφρονεῖν and in accord with δίκη.

This balancing of compassion - of the need not to cause suffering - by σωφρονεῖν and δίκη is perhaps most obvious on that particular occasion when it may be judged necessary to cause suffering to another human being. That is, in honourable self-defence. For it is natural - part of our reasoned, fair, just, human nature - to defend ourselves when attacked and (in the immediacy of the personal moment) to valorously, with chivalry, act in defence of someone close-by who is unfairly attacked or dishonourably threatened or is being bullied by others, and to thus employ, if our personal judgement of the circumstances deem it necessary, lethal force.

This use of force is, importantly, crucially, restricted - by the individual nature of our judgement, and by the individual nature of our authority - to such personal situations of immediate self-defence and of valorous defence of others, and cannot be extended beyond that, for to so extend it, or attempt to extend it beyond the immediacy of the personal moment of an existing physical threat, is an arrogant presumption - an act of ὑβρις - which negates the fair, the human, presumption of innocence [18] of those we do not personally know, we have no empathic knowledge of, and who present no direct, immediate, personal, threat to us or to others nearby us.

Such personal self-defence and such valorous defence of another in a personal situation are in effect a means to restore the natural balance which the unfair, the dishonourable, behaviour of others upsets. That is, such defence fairly, justly, and naturally in the immediacy of the moment corrects their error of ὑβρις resulting from their bad (their rotten) φύσις; a rotten character evident in their lack of the virtue, the skill, of σωφρονεῖν. For had they possessed that virtue, and if their character was not bad, they would not have undertaken such a dishonourable attack.

Wu-Wei and The Cultivation of Humility

The knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, πάθει μάθος, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous.

This knowledge and understanding, being of the wholeness, is that of the healthy, the

interior, inward, and personal balance beyond the separation of beings - beyond *πόλεμος* and *ὑβρις* and thus beyond *ἔρις*; beyond the separation and thence the strife, the discord, which abstractions, ideations, encourage and indeed which they manufacture, bring-into-being. Among these ideations - and one which can often distance us from an appreciation of the numinous and thus from *ἀρμονίη* - is that of a measured Time of fixed durations; and one which thus has a tendency to both artificially apportion out our lives, urge us to hastily strive for some ideation, and cause us to live and/or work at an artificial, un-harmonious, pace.

Empathy, wu-wei, *πάθει μάθος*, and a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous, also incline us toward the cultivation of humility as a prerequisite for us not to repeat our errors of *ὑβρις*, or the *ὑβρις* of others, and which mistakes of *ὑβρις* - ours and/or of others - we either are personally aware of or can become aware of through the recorded *πάθει μάθος* of our human cultures, manifest as this transmitted knowledge and personal learning often is in literature, Art, poetry, myths, legends, and music.

For our personal *πάθει μάθος* makes us aware of, makes us feel, know, remember, in a very personal sense, our fallibility, our mortality, our mistakes, our errors, our wrong deeds, the suffering we have caused, the harm we have done and inflicted; how much we personally have contributed to discord, strife, sorrow. Similarly, our appreciation of the numinous, together with empathy and the cultivation of wu-wei, makes us aware of, and feel, and understand, *ὑβρις* and the errors of *ὑβρις* in others past and present.

There is then, or there develops or there can develop, a personal inclination toward *σωφρονεῖν*; toward being fair, toward rational deliberation, toward a lack of haste, toward a living numinously. Toward a balanced judgement, and honour, and a knowing and appreciation of the wisdom that the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform that does not cause suffering - that is not redolent of *ὑβρις* - is the one that changes human beings in an individual way by personal example and/or because of *πάθει μάθος*, and thus interiorly changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate. That is what, individually, changes or rebalances bad *φύσις* and thus brings-into-being, or restores, good *φύσις*.

Conclusion - The Way of Pathei-Mathos

It is the cultivation by individuals of empathy, of wu-wei, of a reasoned judgement, combined with (i) an appreciation of the numinous and of our accumulated pathei-mathos - evident, for example, in Hellenic culture, in other cultures, and often manifest in Art, literature, music, myths, legends, poetry - and (ii)

the living of a compassionate life balanced by honour, which are the whole of The Way of Pathei-Mathos.

The Way of Pathei-Mathos is thus an ethical, an interior, a personal, a non-political, a non-religious, a non-interfering, way of individual reflexion and individual change.

There is nothing else. No given, no required, praxis. No 'secret wisdom' or 'secret teachings', no enlightenment to be taught. No methodology, no theology, and no need for faith or belief. There are no theories, no goals, no dogma, no texts and no one to be revered.

Part Two

Some Personal Musings On Empathy

In relation to the philosophy of πάθει μάθος

Empathy and The Individual

The first axiom of the philosophy of pathei-mathos is:

That human beings possess a mostly latent perceptive faculty, the faculty of empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - which when used, or when developed and used, can provide us with a particular type of knowing, a particular type of knowledge, and especially a certain knowledge concerning the *φύσις* (the physis, the nature or character) of human beings and other living beings.
[19]

Being a natural faculty - like sight and hearing - empathy is personal, individual, and thus depends on and relates to what-is, and/or who-is, nearby: in range of our empathy. Thus the knowing we acquire or can acquire by empathy is a personal knowing just as seeing and listening to a person speaking is a personal knowing acquired directly in the immediacy-of-the-moment. If, however, a person be out of range of our empathy, and we have no previous empathic or personal encounters with them, they are empathically and personally unknown to us and therefore, since we have no knowledge or intimation of their physis, their character, we cannot fairly assess them and should accord them 'the benefit of the doubt' since this presumption of the innocence of others - until direct personal experience, and individual and empathic knowing of them, prove otherwise - is the fair, the reasoned, the moral, the empathic, thing to do.

For empathy, according to the philosophy of pathei-mathos, is considered the primary means whereby we can fairly asses [20] - that is, fairly judge - a person and thus know them (their physis) as they are, with this knowing, by the nature of our as yet undeveloped and underused faculty of empathy, of necessity requiring a personal and a direct experience of them extending over a period of time. In effect, our initial intuitions are either confirmed or modified by such direct contact, rather as most humans may require several periods of reading or of the hearing of some lengthy text in order to commit it to memory and be able to reproduce it, aurally or in writing.

There is thus what may be described as the empathic scale: that which or those who are reachable, knowable, by means of, in range of, our empathy; and it is this scale which, in essence, may be said to be a measure, a function and expression, of our humanity; which reveals, discovers, physis and thus what is important about ourselves, about other human beings, and about the other life with which we share this planet. Beyond the reach of empathy is the physis of beings we do not (as yet) personally know and we have to admit we do not know, and so cannot and should not be sure about or make claims about or formulate some theory or opinion about.

Everything others associate with an individual, or ascribe to an individual, or use to describe or to denote an individual, or even how an individual denotes or describes themselves, are not relevant, and have no bearing on our understanding, our knowledge, of that individual and thus - morally - should be ignored, for it is our personal knowing of them which is necessary, important, valid, fair. For assessment of another - by the nature of assessment and the nature of empathy - can only be personal, direct, individual. Anything else is biased prejudgement or prejudice or unproven assumption.

This means that we approach them - we view them - without any prejudice, without any expectations, and without having made any assumptions concerning them, and as a unique, still unknown, still undiscovered, individual person: as 'innocent' until proven, until revealed by their actions and behaviour to be, otherwise. Furthermore, empathy - the acausal perception/knowing and revealing of physis - knows nothing of temporal things and human manufactured abstractions/categories such as assumed or assigned ethnicity; nothing of gender; nothing of what is now often termed 'sexual preference/orientation'. Nothing of politics, or religion. Nothing of some disability someone may suffer from; nothing of social status or wealth; nothing regarding occupation (or lack of one). Nothing regarding the views, the opinions, of others concerning someone. For empathy is just empathy, a perception different from our other senses such as sight and hearing, and a perception which provides us, or which can provide us, with a unique perspective, a unique type of knowing, a unique (acausal) connexion to the external world and especially to other human beings.

Empathy - and the knowing that derives from it - thus transcends 'race', politics, religion, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, wealth (or lack of it), 'status', and all the other things and concepts often used to describe, to denote, to prejudge, to classify, a person; so that to judge someone - for example - by and because of their

political views (real or assumed) or by their religion or by their sexual orientation is an act of hubris [ὕβρις].

In practice, therefore, in the revealing of the physis of a person, the political views, the religion, the gender, the perceived ethnicity, of someone are irrelevant. It is a personal knowing of them, the perception of their physis by empathy, and an acceptance of them as - and getting to know them as - a unique individual which are important and considered moral; for they are one emanation of the Life of which we ourselves are but one other finite and fallible part.

Concerning The Error of Extremism

Extremism - as defined and understood by the philosophy of pathei-mathos - is a modern example of the error of hubris. An outward expression - codified in an ideology - of a bad individual physis (of a bad or faulty or misguided or underdeveloped/unmatured individual nature); of a lack of inner balance in individuals; of a lack of empathy and of pathei-mathos.

There is thus, in extremists, an ignorance of the true nature of Being and beings, and a lack of appreciation of or a wilful rejection of the numinous, as well as a distinct lack of or an aversion to personal humility, for it is the nature of the extremist that they are convinced and believe that 'they know' that the ideology/party/movement /group/faith that they accept or adhere to - or the leader that they follow - have/has the right answers, the correct solutions, to certain problems which they faithfully assert exist in society and often in human beings.

This conviction, this arrogance of belief, or this reliance on the assessment of someone else (some leader), combined with a lack of empathy and a lack of the insight and the self-knowing wrought by pathei-mathos, causes or greatly enhances an existing inner/interior dissatisfaction (an unbalance, a lack of harmony) within them in regard to what-is, so that some vision, some ideal, of the future - of society - becomes more important to them, more real, more meaningful, than people, than life, as people and life are now. Thus, they with their ideology, their faith, with and because of their dissatisfaction, possess or develop an urge to harshly interfere, continually finding fault with people, with society, with life itself, and so strive - mostly violently, hatefully, unethically, and with prejudice and often with anger - to undermine, to violently change, to 'revolutionize', or to destroy, what-is.

In simple terms, extremists fail to understand, to appreciate, to know, to apprehend, what is important about human beings and human living; what the simple reality, the simple nature, the real physis, of the majority of human beings and of society is and are, and thus what innocence means and implies. That is, there is a failure to know, to appreciate, what is good, and natural and numinous and innocent, in respect of human beings and of society. A failure to know, a failure to appreciate, a failure to feel what it is that empathy and pathei-mathos provide: the wisdom of our personal nature

and personal needs; of our physis as rational - as balanced - human beings possessed of certain qualities, certain virtues, or capable of developing balance, capable of developing certain qualities, certain virtues, and thus having or of developing the ability to live in a certain manner: with fairness, with love, and without hatred and prejudice.

What is good, and natural - what should thus be appreciated, and respected, and not profaned by the arrogance (the hubris) of the extremist, and what empathy and pathei-mathos reveal - are the desire for personal love and the need to be loyally loved; the need for a family and the bonds of love within a family that lead to the desire to protect, care for, work for, and if necessary defend one's loved ones. The desire for a certain security and stability and peace, manifest in a home, in sufficiency of food, in playfulness, in friends, in tolerance, in a lack of danger. The need for the dignity, the self-respect, that work, that giving love and being loved, provide.

Our societies have evolved, painfully slowly, to try and provide such simple, such human, such natural, such ineluctably personal, things; to allow opportunities for such things; and have so evolved often because of individuals naturally gifted with empathy or who were inspired by their own pathei-mathos or that of others, and often and thus also so evolved because of the culture that such societies encouraged and sometimes developed, being as such culture was - via, for example, literature, music, memoirs, poetry, Art - the recorded/aural pathei-mathos and empathic understanding of others often combined with the recorded/aural pathei-mathos and the empathic understanding of others in other societies. A pathei-mathos and an understanding that may form or in some manner express the ethos of a society, and thence become an inspiration for certain laws intended to express, in a society, what is considered to be moral and thus provide and maintain or at least aid valued human and personal qualities such as the desire for stability, peace, a loving home, sufficiency of food, and the need for the dignity of work.

But as I mentioned in some other musings regarding my own lamentable extremist past:

" Instead of love we, our selfish, our obsessed, our extremist kind, engendered hate. Instead of peace, we engendered struggle, conflict, killing. Instead of tolerance we engendered intolerance. Instead fairness and equality we engendered dishonour and discrimination. Instead of security we produced, we encouraged, revolution, violence, change.

The problem, the problems, lay inside us, in our kind, not in 'the world', not in others. We, our kind - we the pursuers of, the inventors of, abstractions, of ideals, of ideologies; we the selfish, the arrogant, the hubriatic, the fanatics, the obsessed - were and are the main causes of hate, of conflict, of suffering, of inhumanity, of violence. Century after century, millennia after millennia." *Letter To My Undiscovered Self*

For perhaps one of the worst consequences of the extremism of extremists - of modern hubris in general - is, or seems to me to be, the loss of what is personal, and thus what is human; the loss of the empathic, the human, scale of things; with what is personal, human, empathic, being or becoming displaced, scorned, forgotten, obscured, or a target for destruction and (often violent) replacement by something supra-personal such as some abstract political/religious notion or concept, or some ideal, or by some prejudice and some often violent intolerance regarding human beings we do not personally know because beyond the range of our empathy.

That is, the human, the personal, the empathic, the natural, the immediate, scale of things - a tolerant and a fair acceptance of *what-is* - is lost and replaced by an artificial scale posited by some ideology or manufactured by some *τύραννος* (tyrannos); a scale in which the suffering of individuals, and strife, are regarded as inevitable, even necessary, in order for 'victory to be achieved' or for some ideal or plan or agenda or manifesto to be implemented. Thus the good, the stability, that exists within society is ignored, with the problems of society - real, imagined, or manufactured by propaganda - trumpeted. There is then incitement to disaffection, with harshness and violent change of and within society regarded as desirable or necessary in order to achieve preset, predetermined, and always 'urgent' goals and aims, since slow personal reform and change in society - that which appreciates and accepts the good in an existing society and in people over and above the problems and the bad - is anathema to extremists, anathema to their harsh intolerant empathy-lacking nature and to their hubriatic striving:

" [The truth] in respect of the societies of the West, and especially of societies such as those currently existing in America and Britain - is that for all their problems and all their flaws they seem to be much better than those elsewhere, and certainly better than what existed in the past. That is, that there is, within them, a certain tolerance; a certain respect for the individual; a certain duty of care; and certainly still a freedom of life, of expression, as well as a standard of living which, for perhaps the majority, is better than elsewhere in the world and most certainly better than existed there and elsewhere in the past.

In addition, there are within their structures - such as their police forces, their governments, their social and governmental institutions - people of good will, of humanity, of fairness, who strive to do what is good, right. Indeed, far more good people in such places than bad people, so that a certain balance, the balance of goodness, is maintained even though occasionally (but not for long) that balance may seem to waver somewhat.

Furthermore, many or most of the flaws, the problems, within such societies are recognized and openly discussed, with a multitude of people of good will, of humanity, of fairness, dedicating themselves to helping those affected by such flaws, such problems. In addition, there are many others trying to improve those societies, and to trying find or implement solutions to such problems, in tolerant ways which do not cause conflict or involve the

harshness, the violence, the hatred, of extremism." *Notes on The Politics and Ideology of Hate (Part Two)*

Yet it is just such societies - societies painfully and slowly crafted by the sacrifice and the goodness of multitudes of people of good will, of humanity, of fairness - that extremists with their harsh intolerant empathy-lacking nature, their hubriatic striving, their arrogant certainty of belief, their anger and their need to harshly interfere, seek to undermine, overthrow, and destroy.

No Hubriatic Striving, No Impersonal Interference

Since the range of empathy is limited to the immediacy-of-the-moment and to personal interactions, and, together with pathei-mathos, is a primary means to reveal the nature of Being and beings - and since the learning wrought by pathei-mathos and pathei-mathos itself is and are direct and personal - then part of the knowledge, the understanding, that empathy and pathei-mathos reveal and provide is the wisdom of physis and of humility. That is, of the empathic scale of things and of acceptance of our limitations of personal knowing and personal understanding. Of (i) the unwisdom, the hubris, of arrogantly making assumptions about who and what are beyond the range of our empathy and outside of our personal experience, and (ii) of the unwisdom, the hubris, of adhering to some ideology or some belief or to some tyrannos and allowing that ideology or that belief or that tyrannos to usurp the personal judgement, the personal assessment, that empathy and pathei-mathos reveal and provide.

This acceptance of the empathic - of the human, the personal - scale of things and of our limitations as human beings is part of wu-wei. Of not-striving, and of not-interfering, beyond the purveu of our empathy and our pathei-mathos. Of personally and for ourselves discovering the nature, the physis, of beings; of personally working with and not against that physis, and of personally accepting that certain matters or many matters, because of our lack of personal knowledge and lack of personal experience of them, are unknown to us and therefore it is unwise, unbalanced, for us to have and express views or opinions concerning them, and hubris for us to adhere to and strive to implement some ideology which harshly deals with and manifests harsh views and harsh opinions concerning such personally unknown matters.

Thus what and who are beyond the purveu of empathy and beyond pathei-mathos is or should be of no urgent concern, of no passionate relevance, to the individual seeking balance, harmony, and wisdom, and in truth can be detrimental to finding wisdom and living in accord with the knowledge and understanding so discovered.

For wisdom, it seems to me, is simply a personal appreciation of the numinous, of innocence, of balance, of εὐταξία [21], of enantiodromia, and the personal knowing,

the understanding, that empathy and pathei-mathos provide. An appreciation, a knowing, that is the genesis of a balanced personal judgement - of discernment - and evident in our perception of Being and beings: of how all living beings are emanations of *ψυχή* and of how the way of non-suffering causing moral change and reform both personal and social is the way of wu-wei. The way of personal, interior, change; of aiding, helping, assisting other individuals in a direct, a personal manner, and in practical ways, because our seeing is that of the human, the empathic, the muliebral, scale of things and not the scale of hubris, which is the scale either (i) of the isolated, egoist, striveful, unharmonious human being in thrall to their selfish masculine desires or (ii) of the human being unbalanced because in thrall to some tyrannos or to some harsh, extremist, ideology, and which harsh ideologies always manifest an unbalanced masculine, unempathic, nature redolent of that hubriatic certainty-of-knowing and that intolerant desire to interfere which mark and which have marked, and are and were the genesis of, the tyrannos.

Part Three

Enantiodromia and The Reformation of The Individual

The Muliebral and the Masculous

The third axiom of The Way of Pathei-Mathos is:

That because of or following *πάθει μάθος* there is or there can be a change in, a development of, the nature, the character - the *φύσις* - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this *πάθει μάθος*, and which appreciation of the numinous includes an awareness of why *ὑβρις* is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect or ignorance (of the numinous), of a going beyond the due limits, and which *ὑβρις* itself is the genesis both of the *τύραννος* and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the modern extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate *ἔρις* and thus are a cause of, or contribute to and aid, suffering.

This change, this development of the individual, is or can be the result of a process termed enantiodromia, which is the process of perceiving, feeling, knowing, beyond causal appearance and the separation-of-otherness and thus when what has become separated - or has been incorrectly perceived as separated - returns to the wholeness, the unity, from whence it came forth. When beings are understood in their correct relation to Being, beyond the causal abstraction of different/conflicting ideated opposites, a relation manifest in the cosmic perspective and thus a knowing of

ourselves as but one fallible, microcosmic, fragile, mortal, biological nexion connected to and not separate from all other Life.

An important and a necessary part of enantiodromia involves a discovery, a knowing, an acceptance, and - as prelude - an interior balancing within themselves, of what has hitherto been perceived and designated as the apparent opposites described by terms such as 'muliebral' and 'masculous'. A perception of opposites manifested in ideations such as those concerning assumed traits of character, and assumed or 'ideal' rôles, behaviour, and occupations, assigned to each person, and especially historically in the prejudice of how the rôle - the duty - of men is or should be to lead, to control, to govern, to possess authority, to dominate, to be master.

The discovery of enantiodromia is of how such a designated and perceived dichotomy is but illusive, unnecessary, unhealthy, appearance, and does not therefore express either the natural, the real, nature (*φύσις*) of our personal character, our being, or the real nature, the *Φύσις*, of Being itself. In essence, this is the discovery, mentioned by Heraclitus [22], concerning *Πόλεμος* and *γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα*; that all beings are naturally born - become perceived as separate beings - because of *ἔρις*, and their genesis (their 'father') is *Πόλεμος*.

Thus the strife, the discord, often engendered by an external and by the internal (within the individual) clash between such apparent opposites as the 'muliebral' and 'masculous' is one that has naturally arisen due to misperception, due to the separation-of-otherness, as a result of a purely causal, egoist, apprehension of ourselves and of others; an error of perception that, as previously mentioned, empathy and *πάθει μάθος* can correct, and which correction reveals the truth of *ψυχή* and a knowing of the cosmic perspective.

One practical consequence of this misapprehension, this error of *ὑβρις*, concerning 'muliebral' and 'masculous' has been the distaste - even the hatred - of certain ideologies and religions and individuals for those whose personal love is for someone of the same gender. Another practical consequence is and has been the error of extremism, where what is masculous is emphasized to the detriment (internal, and external) of what is muliebral, and where, for example, as in many harsh ideologies, men and women are expected, encouraged - often forced, as for example in fascism - to assume some rôle based on or deriving from some manufactured abstraction, some ideation, concerning what is assumed to be or has been posited as 'the ideal man' or the 'ideal woman' in some idealized society or in some idealized 'nation'.

Furthermore, given that these attributes of personal character that have been termed 'muliebral' and 'masculous' are founded on an illusive apprehension of beings and Being - and on ideations (such as rôles, occupations, and so on) posited as a result of this misapprehension - they not symbolic, or mythological, or unconscious, or even archetypal in the sense of anima and animus.

A Natural Reformation

The balance attained by - which is - enantiodromia is that of simply feeling, accepting, discovering, the empathic, the human, the personal, scale of things and thus understanding our own fallibility-of-knowing, our limitations as a human being; that, in essence, αἰὼν παῖς ἐστὶ παίζων πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἡ βασιληίη [23], that τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίζει Κεραυνός [24] and that Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ [25].

Which in practical terms simply amounts to understanding, knowing, Being and the genesis, the φύσις, of beings. Or, expressed in terms of the philosophy of pathei-mathos, it amounts to wu-wei, and to the understanding that 'what and who' are out of range of our empathy and what and who we have no personal knowledge of, is and are of no concern, of no passionate relevance, for us, because 'beyond the control, the influence' of our own fallible, error-prone, nature, and should thus be regarded 'without prejudice', as 'innocent', and the subject of no opinion, no ideations, by us. That is, we accept empathy and pathei-mathos as our guide, and (i) we do not speculate about, do not manufacture our own ideations about, those whom and that which are beyond the purveu of our empathy; and (ii) we do not accept the ideations/abstractions of others concerning those whom and that which are beyond the purveu of our empathy, and who and which we have no direct personal experience of.

Thus the process, the discovery, the reformation, is a natural one that does not involve any theory, or dogma, or praxis, or require any faith or belief of any kind. There is the personal cultivation of empathy and wu-wei, and that is all. How then - for those not having endured a personal πάθει μάθος - might empathy and wu-wei be cultivated, and thus how might the natural balance be found/restored, thus allowing ψυχή to flourish, bringing ἀρμονίη and σωφρονεῖν?

We might let go of ideations, of causal abstractions, many or most of which only serve to try and distinguish *us from them*, from other living-beings, human or otherwise, and thus increase our illusion of separation. We might consider, ponder on, the cosmic perspective and learn to value tolerance and humility. We might muse on innocence and the nature of the good, for the good is simply what is fair; what is compassionate, what inclines us to appreciate the numinous and understand why ὕβρις is an error of unbalance. We might consider why, for example, the bad is just bad φύσις. Or a natural consequence of undeveloped, unformed, not-mature, unreformed φύσις. Of a lack of empathy, of a lack of εὐταξία, of little or no appreciation of, of no personal experience of, the numinous, leading thus to individuals doing what is unfair; what is harsh and unfeeling; what intentionally causes or contributes to suffering.

We could, for example, and perhaps importantly, learn from the culture of our society and that of others, for correctly appreciated such culture - as manifest, for example, in literature, music, memoirs, poetry, history, Art, and sometimes in myths and legends and religious allegories - is but the recorded/aural pathei-mathos and empathic understanding of others over decades, centuries, millennia.

Part Four

Society, Politics, Social Reform, and Pathei-Mathos

Modern Society and The Individual

Society, in the context of this essay, refers to 'modern societies' (especially those of the modern 'democratic' West) and means a collection of individuals who dwell, who live, in a particular area and who are subject to the same laws and the same institutions of authority. Modern society is thus a manifestation of The State, and which State is predicated on individuals actively or passively accepting some supra-personal authority [26].

In modern societies, change and reform are often therefore introduced or attempted by The State most usually: (1) on the basis of the manufacture of some law or laws which the individuals, and the established institutions, of the area governed by The State are expected to obey on pain of some type of individual punishment, financial and/or physically punitive (as in prison); or (2) by means of State-sponsored or State-introduced schemes such as, for example, the British National Health Service and which schemes are invariably enshrined in law.

The essence of such change and reform of a society - large-scale, effective, rapid change and reform in society - is therefore, for the majority of people, external, and most often derives from some posited or assumed or promised agenda of the government of the day; that is, derived from some political or social or economic theory, axiom, idea, or principle, posited by others, be these others, for example, politicians, or social/political/economic theorists/reformers (and so on).

There is thus a hierarchy of judgement involved, whatever political 'flavour' the government is assigned to, is assumed to represent, or claims it represents; with this hierarchy of necessity requiring the individual in society to either (i) relinquish their own judgement, being accepting of or acquiescing in (from whatever reason or motive such as desire to avoid punishment) the judgement of these others, or (ii) to oppose this 'judgement of others' either actively through some group, association, or movement (political, social, religious) or individually, with their being the possibility that some so opposing this 'judgement of others' may resort to using violent means against the established order.

Objectively, this process of change and reform by means of a hierarchy of judgement manifest in laws, and of State authority and power sufficient to enforce such laws, has

resulted in fairly stable societies which are, for perhaps the majority of people, relatively peaceful, not overtly repressive, and - judged by the criteria of past societies and many non-Western societies - relatively prosperous.

Thus, while many problems - social and economic - remain and exist in such societies, with some such problems getting worse, such societies work reasonably well, contain an abundance of well-intentioned, moral, individuals, and appear to be better than the alternatives both tried in the past and theorized about. Hence it is not surprising that perhaps the majority of people within such societies favour solving such problems as do exist by existing social, political, and economic means; that is, by internal social, political, and economic, reform rather than by violent means and the advocacy of extremist ideologies.

Furthermore, many or most of the flaws, and the problems, within society are recognized and openly discussed, with a multitude of people of good will, of humanity, of fairness, committed to or interested in helping those affected by such flaws and problems, and thus not only trying to improve society but also to finding and implementing solutions in tolerant ways which do not cause conflict or involve the harshness, the violence, the hatred, the intolerance, of extremism.

For, while most large-scale, effective, rapid change and reform in society tends to be by enforceable State laws and State-sponsored schemes, change and reform also and significantly occurs and has occurred within society, albeit often more slowly, through the efforts of individuals and groups and organizations devoted to charitable, religious, or social causes and which individuals and groups and organizations by their very nature are invariably non-violent and often non-political. Furthermore, such non-violent, non-political, individuals and groups and organizations often become the inspiration for reform and change introduced by The State.

Some Problems of Modern Society

Before outlining a possible numinous approach to reform and change, based on the philosophy of pathei-mathos, it would perhaps be useful to outline some of the social problems that still beset modern societies. What therefore constitutes a social problem within a society? How is such a problem defined?

In essence, it is an undesirable circumstance or way of living that affects a number of people and which undesirable circumstance or way of living others in society are or become aware of; with what is undesirable being - according to the ethics of the philosophy of pathei-mathos [27] - that which is, or those who are, unfair; that which deprives or those whom deprive a human being of dignity and honour; and that which is and those who are uncompassionate.

Thus, among the many problems of modern societies are misogyny; ethnic and religious discrimination, hatred, and prejudice; and social/economic inequality.

For example, misogyny - from the Greek *μισογύνης* - is unfairness toward, and/or

prejudice and discrimination against, women. Often, as in the past, this is a consequence of an existing prejudice in a man: for example, that men are somehow better than women, or that women are 'useful' only for or suited to certain things; or that the subservience of women, and thus their domination/control by men, is 'a natural and necessary' state of human existence.

Misogyny in individual practice often results in men being violent/domineering toward, or selfishly manipulative and controlling of, women; and thus in them treating women in a dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate way.

Similarly, a hatred or dislike of or discrimination against an individual or a group of individuals on the basis of their perceived or assumed ethnicity is treating that individual or group in a dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate way.

Thus such social problems are often the result, the consequence of, a lack of empathy in a person, with this lack of *συμπάθεια* with other human beings having often in the past been evident in the treatment of people and individuals by governments, States, and institutions, and often revealed in and through discriminatory, unfair, uncompassionate laws.

A Numinous and Non-Political Approach

Given that the concern of the philosophy of pathei-mathos is the individual and their interior, their spiritual, life, and given that (due to the nature of empathy and pathei-mathos) there is respect for individual judgement, the philosophy of pathei-mathos is apolitical, and thus not concerned with such matters as the theory and practice of governance, nor with changing or reforming society by political means.

For, as mentioned in Part Two: *Some Personal Musings On Empathy*,

" [the] acceptance of the empathic - of the human, the personal - scale of things and of our limitations as human beings is part of wu-wei. Of not-striving, and of not-interfering, beyond the purveu of our empathy and our pathei-mathos. Of personally and for ourselves discovering the nature, the physis, of beings; of personally working with and not against that physis, and of personally accepting that certain matters or many matters, because of our lack of personal knowledge and lack of personal experience of them, are unknown to us and therefore it is unwise, unbalanced, for us to have and express views or opinions concerning them, and hubris for us to adhere to and strive to implement some ideology which harshly deals with and manifests harsh views and harsh opinions concerning such personally unknown matters.

Thus what and who are beyond the purveu of empathy and beyond pathei-mathos is or should be of no urgent concern, of no passionate relevance, to

the individual seeking balance, harmony, and wisdom, and in truth can be detrimental to finding wisdom and living in accord with the knowledge and understanding so discovered. "

This means that there is no desire and no need to use any confrontational means to directly challenge and confront the authority of existing States since numinous reform and change is personal, individual, non-political, and not organized beyond a limited local level of people personally known. That is, it is of and involves individuals who are personally known to each other working together based on the understanding that it is inner, personal, change - in individuals, of their nature, their character - that is the ethical, the numinous, way to solve such personal and social problems as exist and arise. That such inner change of necessity comes before any striving for outer change by whatever means, whether such means be termed or classified as political, social, economic, religious. That the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform is understood as the one that evolves human beings and thus changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate.

In practice, this evolution means, in the individual, the cultivation and use of the faculty of empathy, and acquiring the personal virtues of compassion, honour, and love. Which means the inner reformation of individuals, as individuals.

Hence the basis for numinous social change and reform is aiding, helping, assisting individuals in a direct and personal manner, and in practical ways, with such help, assistance, and aid arising because we personally know or are personally concerned about or involved with those individuals or the situations those individuals find themselves in. In brief, being compassionate, empathic, understanding, sensitive, kind, and showing by personal example.

An Experience of The Numinous

The change that the philosophy - the way - of pathei-mathos seeks to foster, to encourage, is the natural, slow, interior and personal change within individuals; that is, the change of personal character by the individual developing and using their faculty of empathy and inclining toward being compassionate and honourable by nature. In essence, this is a numinous - a spiritual - change in people, a change of perspective, quite different from the supra-personal social change based on laws desired by modern States and by those who champion or who employ political, economic, and social theories regarding society, government, and the individual.

This interior personal change, by its numinous and ethical nature, is one that does not seek to reform society through politics or by any type of agitation, or through the use of force, or by means of any type of organization, social, political, economic, religious. Instead, such numinous change is the reform of individuals on a personal, individual, and cultural basis; by personal example and by individuals cultivating, in accordance with *wu-wei*, conditions and circumstances whereby they themselves and others can

move toward *συμπάθεια* with other human beings through a personal knowing and experience of the numinous. Such a knowing and experience of the numinous can be cultivated by a variety of means, for example by harmonious surroundings; through an appreciation of, and a living in balance with, Nature; by love and respect and manners and a desire for peace; by periods of interior and exterior silence; through culture and thus through music, Art, literature, an understanding of history, and through respect for and tolerance of the many religions and spiritual Ways which have arisen over millennia and which may manifest the numinous or something of the numinous.

Footnotes

[1]

Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν:
ὃν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.

If anyone, from reasoning, exclaims loudly that victory of Zeus,
Then they have acquired an understanding of all these things;
Of he who guided mortals to reason,
Who laid down that this possesses authority:
Learning from adversity.

Aeschylus: Agamemnon, 174-183

[2] An awareness of the *numinous* is what predisposes us not to commit the error, the folly, of *ὑβρις*. As Sophocles wrote in *Oedipus Tyrannus*:

ὑβρις φυτεύει τύραννον:
ὑβρις, εἰ πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῇ μάταν,
ἂ μὴ 'πίκαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,
ἀκρότατον εἰσαναβᾶσ'
αἶπος ἀπότομον ὥρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν,
ἔνθ' οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ
χρῆται

Insolence plants the tyrant. There is insolence if by a great foolishness there is a useless over-filling which goes beyond the proper limits. It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights and then that hurtling toward

that Destiny where the useful foot has no use... (vv.872ff)

In respect of *the numinous*, basically it is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) the natural balance of *ψυχή*; a balance which *ὑβρις* upsets. This natural balance - our being as human beings - is or can be manifest to us in or by what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity and thus places us, as individuals, in our correct relation to *ψυχή*, and which relation is that we are but one mortal emanation of *ψυχή*.

We are reminded of this natural balance, of what is numinous - we can come to know, to experience, the numinous and thus can understand the nature of our being - by *πάθει μάθος* and empathy. That is, by the process of learning from personal adversity/personal suffering/personal grief and by using and developing our faculty of empathy.

An aspect of this learning is an appreciation, an awareness, of the Cosmic Perspective: of ourselves as one fallible, mortal, fragile biological, microcosmic, nexion on one planet in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies; one connexion to, one emanation of, all other Life. In essence, *πάθει μάθος* and empathy teach us or can teach us humility, compassion, and the importance of personal love.

[3] The essentials which Aristotle enumerated are: (i) Reality (existence) exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (ii) our limited understanding of this independent 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (iii) logical argument, or reason, is perhaps the most important means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) the cosmos (existence) is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws.

Experimental science seeks to explain the natural world - the phenomenal world - by means of direct, personal observation of it, and by making deductions, and formulating hypothesis, based on such direct observation, with the important and necessary proviso, expressed by Isaac Newton in his *Principia*, that

"We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearance..... for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and affects not the pomp of superfluous causes."

[4] The sense of *τύραννος* is not exactly what our fairly modern term *tyrant* is commonly regarded as imputing. Rather, it refers to the intemperate person of excess who is so subsumed with some passion or some aim or a lust for power that they go far beyond the due, the accepted, bounds of behaviour and thus exceed the limits of or misuse whatever authority they have been entrusted with. Thus do they, by their excess, by their disrespect for the customs of their ancestors, by their lack of reasoned, well-balanced, judgement [*σωφρονεῖν*] offend the gods, and thus, to restore the balance, do the *Ἐρινύες* take revenge. For it is in the nature of the *τύραννος* that

they forget, or they scorn, the truth, the ancient wisdom, that their lives are subject to, guided by, *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* -

τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστροφός.
Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες

Who then compels to steer us?
Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies!

Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6

[5] Heraclitus, fragment 80:

*εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα
πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]*

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

See my *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*.

In respect of the modern error of *ὑβρις* that is extremism, an error manifest in extremists, my understanding of an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious. See Appendix I - *Some Explanations and Definitions*.

[6] See Appendix II - *The Change of Enantiodromia*.

[7] The meaning here of *ψυχή* is derived from the usage of Homer, Aeschylus, Aristotle, etcetera, and implies Life *qua* being. Or, expressed another way, living beings are emanations of, and thus manifest, *ψυχή*. This sense of *ψυχή* is beautifully expressed in a, in my view, rather mis-understood fragment attributed to Heraclitus:

*ψυχῇισιν θάνατος ὕδωρ γενέσθαι, ὕδατι δὲ θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι, ἐκ γῆς
δὲ ὕδωρ γίνεται, ἐξ ὕδατος δὲ ψυχή.* Fragment 36

Where the water begins our living ends and where earth begins water ends,
and yet earth nurtures water and from that water, Life.

[8] In respect of the numinous principle of *Δίκη*, refer to Appendix II - *The Principle of Δίκη*.

[9] Although φύσις has a natural tendency to become covered up (Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ - concealment accompanies Physis) it can be uncovered through λόγος and πάθει μάθος.

[10] Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their φύσις, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, πάθει μάθος, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

[11] Heraclitus, fragment 112:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

[12] In particular, *The Agamemnon* of Aeschylus; and the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and *Antigone*, of Sophocles. In respect of *Oedipus Tyrannus*, refer, for example, to vv.863ff and vv.1329-1338

In much mis-understood verses in *The Agamemnon* (1654-1656) Clytaemnestra makes it known that she still is aware of the power, and importance, of δίκη. Of not killing to excess:

μηδαμῶς, ὧ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἄλλα δράσωμεν κακά.
ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ' ἐξαμῆσαι πολλά, δύστηνον θέρος.
πημονῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει: μηδὲν αἵματώμεθα.

The aforementioned verses are often mis-translated to give some nonsense such as: 'No more violence. Here is a monstrous harvest and a bitter reaping time. There is pain enough already. Let us not be bloody now'.

However, what Aeschylus actually has Clytaemnestra say is:

"Let us not do any more harm for to reap these many would make it an *unlucky* harvest: injure them just enough, but do not stain us with their blood."

She is being practical (and quite Hellenic) and does not want to bring misfortune (from the gods) upon herself, or Aegisthus, by killing *to excess*. The killings she has done are, however, quite acceptable to her - she has vigorously defended them claiming it was her natural duty to avenge her daughter and the insult done to her by Agamemnon bringing his mistress, Cassandra, into her home. Clytaemnestra shows no pity for the Elders whom Aegisthus wishes to kill: "if you must", she says, "you can injure them. But do not kill them - that would be *unlucky* for us." That would be going just too far, and overstep what she still perceives as the natural, the proper, limits of mortal behaviour.

[13] Two fragments attributed to Heraclitus are of interest in this respect - 112, and 123. For 112 refer to my *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*. For 123, refer to my *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[14] Hesiod, Theogony v. 901 - *Εὐνομίην τε Δίκην τε καὶ Εἰρήνην τεθαλυῖαν*

In effect, a personified Judgement is the goddess of the natural balance - evident in the ancestral customs, the ways, the way of life, the ethos, of a community - whose judgement, *δίκη*, is "in accord with", has the nature or the character of, what tends to restore such balance after some deed or deeds by an individual or individuals have upset or disrupted that balance. This sense of *δίκη* as one's ancestral customs is evident, for example, in Homer's Odyssey:

νῦν δ' ἐθέλω ἔπος ἄλλο μεταλλῆσαι καὶ ἐρέσθαι
 Νέστορ', ἐπεὶ περὶ οἶδε δίκας ἡδὲ φρόνιν ἄλλων
 τρὶς γὰρ δὴ μὶν φασιν ἀνάξασθαι γένε' ἀνδρῶν
 ὥς τέ μοι ἀθάνατος ἰνδάλλεται εἰσοράσθαι

Book III, 243-246

I now wish to ask Nestor some questions to find out about some other things,
 For he understands others and knows more about our customs than them,
 Having been - so it is said - a Chieftain for three generations of mortals,
 And, to look at, he seems to me to be one of those immortals

[15] *Πόλεμος* is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but rather that which is or

becomes the genesis of beings from Being (the separation of beings from Being), and thus not only that which manifests as *δίκη* but also accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being, become bound together - be whole - again by *enantiodromia*.

Thus *πόλεμος* - like *ψυχή* and *πάθει μάθος* and *ἐναντιοδρομίας* and *ὑβρις* and *δίκη* as *δίκη/Δίκη/Δίκαια* - is a philosophical principle and should therefore in my view not be blandly translated by a single word or term, but rather should be left untranslated or be transliterated, thus requiring for its understanding a certain thoughtful reasoning and thence interpretation according to context.

In respect of such interpretation, it is for example interesting that in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a personified *πόλεμος* (as the *δαίμων* of kindred strife) married a personified *ὑβρις* (as the *δαίμων* of arrogant pride) and that it was a common folk belief that *πόλεμος* accompanied *ὑβρις* - that is, that Polemos followed Hubris around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing *ἔρις*.

[16] See Appendix II. The saying - attributed to Heraclitus - is from Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (ix. 7)

[17] Fragment 112.

[18] For an explanation is what is meant here by innocence, see the entry in Appendix I, which entry is based on the brief mention of innocence in the first part of section IV - *An Appreciation of The Numinous*.

[19] Part I: *The Way of Pathei-Mathos - A Philosophical Compendiary*

[20] To assess is to reasonably consider and thus arrive at a balanced, a reasonable, a fair, judgement/assessment.

[21] qv. 'An Appreciation of The Numinous' in *The Way of Pathei-Mathos - A Philosophical Compendiary*

[22] Fragments 53 and 80

[23] Fragment 52

[24] Fragment 64

[25] Fragment 123

[26] The State is defined in Appendix I - A Glossary of Terms.

As mentioned elsewhere, I am somewhat idiosyncratic regarding capitalization (and spelling), and capitalize certain words, such as State, and often use terms such as *The State* to emphasize the philosophical truth of *State as entity*.

[27] The ethics of the way of pathei-mathos are the ethics of empathy - of *συμπάθεια*. In practical personal terms, this means dignity, fairness, balance (*δίκη*), reason, a lack of prejudgement, and the requirement of a personal knowing and of personal experience, of *πάθει μάθος*.

An ethical person thus reveals, possesses, *εὐταξία* - the quality, the personal virtue, of self-restraint; of personal orderly (balanced, honourable, well-mannered) conduct, a virtue especially evident under adversity or duress.

Thus, and as mentioned in Part Three - *Enantiodromia and The Reformation of The Individual*, the good is considered to be what is fair; what alleviates or does not cause suffering; what is compassionate; what empathy by its revealing inclines us to do, what inclines us to appreciate the numinous and why *ὑβρις* is an error of unbalance.

Hence the bad - what is wrong, immoral - is what is unfair; what is harsh and unfeeling; what intentionally causes or contributes to suffering, with what is bad often considered to be due to a lack of empathy and of *πάθει μάθος* in a person, and a consequence of a bad *φύσις*, of a bad, a rotten, or an undeveloped, unformed, not-mature, individual character/nature. In effect, such a bad person lacks *εὐταξία*, has little or no appreciation of the numinous, and is often in thrall to their hubriatic and/or their masculous desires.

Appendix I

A Glossary of Terms (Some Explanations and Definitions)

Acausal

The acausal is not a generalization - a concept - deriving from a collocation of assumed, imagined, or causally observed *Phainómenon*, but instead is that wordless, conceptless, a-temporal, knowing which empathy reveals and which a personal *πάθει μάθος* and an appreciation of the numinous often inclines us toward. That is, the acausal is a direct and personal (individual) revealing of beings and Being which does not depend on denoting or naming.

What is so revealed is the a-causal nature of some beings, the connexion which exists between living beings, and how living beings are emanations of *ψυχή*.

Thus speculations and postulations regarding the acausal only serve to obscure the nature of the acausal or distance us from that revealing of the acausal that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* and an appreciation of the numinous provide.

ἀρετή

Arête is the prized Hellenic virtue which can roughly be translated by the English word 'excellence' but which also implies what is naturally distinguishable - what is pre-eminent - because it reveals or shows certain valued qualities such as beauty, honour, valour, harmony.

Compassion

The English word compassion dates from around 1340 CE and the word in its original sense (and as used in this work) means *benignity*, which word derives from the Latin *benignitatem*, the sense imputed being of a kind, compassionate, well-mannered character, disposition, or deed. Benignity came into English usage around the same time as compassion; for example, the word occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* [ii. 483] written around 1374 CE.

Hence, compassion is understood as meaning being kindly disposed toward and/or feeling a sympathy with someone (or some living being) affected by pain/suffering /grief or who is enduring vicissitudes.

The word compassion itself is derived from *com*, meaning together-with, combined with *pati*, meaning to-suffer/to-endure and derived from the classical Latin *passiō*. Thus useful synonyms for compassion, in this original sense, are *compassivity* and *benignity*.

Cosmic Perspective

The Cosmic Perspective refers to our place in the Cosmos, to the fact that we human beings are simply one fragile fallible mortal biological life-form on one planet orbiting one star in one galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies. Thus in terms of this perspective all our theories, our ideas, our beliefs, our abstractions are merely the opinionated product of our limited fallible Earth-bound so-called 'intelligence', an 'intelligence', an understanding, we foolishly, arrogantly, pridefully have a tendency to believe in and exalt as if we are somehow 'the centre of the Universe' and cosmically important.

The Cosmic Perspective inclines us - or can incline us - toward wu-wei, toward avoiding the error of hubris, toward humility, and thus toward an appreciation of the numinous.

δαίμων

A δαίμων is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - θεοί - but rather a lesser type of divinity who might be assigned by those gods to bring good fortune or

misfortune to human beings and/or watch over certain human beings and especially particular numinous (sacred) places.

δίκη

Depending on context, *δίκη* could be the judgement of an individual (or Judgement personified), or the natural and the necessary balance, or the correct/customary /ancestral way, or what is expected due to custom, or what is considered correct and natural, and so on.

A personified Judgement - the *Δίκη* of Hesiod - is the goddess of the natural balance, evident in the ancestral customs, the ways, the way of life, the ethos, of a community, whose judgement, *δίκη*, is "in accord with", has the nature or the character of, what tends to restore such balance after some deed or deeds by an individual or individuals have upset or disrupted that balance. This sense of *δίκη* as one's ancestral customs is evident, for example, in Homer (Odyssey, III, 244).

The modern numinous principle of *Δίκαιον* - qv. Appendix III - suggests what lies beyond and what may have been the genesis of *δίκη* personified as the goddess, Judgement.

Empathy

Etymologically, this fairly recent English word, used to translate the German *Einfühlung*, derives, via the late Latin *sympathia*, from the Greek *συμπάθεια* - *συμπαθής* - and is thus formed from the prefix *σύν* (sym) together with *παθ-* [root of *πάθος*] meaning *enduring/suffering*, feeling: *πάσχειν*, to endure/suffer.

As used and defined by the philosophy of pathei-mathos, empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by that way of life, then it is a specific and extended type of *συμπάθεια*. That is, it is a type of and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings - and thus differs in nature from compassion.

Enantiodromia

The unusual compound Greek word *ἐναντιοδρομίας* occurs in a summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius.

It is used here to refer to, to name, to describe, the process - the natural moral change, the reformation - that occurs or which can occur in a human being because of or following *πάθει μάθος*. Part of this process is a knowing, an acceptance, and an interior balancing within the individual, of the muliebral and of the masculous.

For further details regarding enantiodromia refer to Appendix II - The Change of

Enantiodromia.

ἔρις

Strife; discord; disruption; a quarrel between friends or kin. As in the Odyssey:

ἦ τ' ἔριν Ἀτρεΐδῃσι μετ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἔθηκε.

Who placed strife between those two sons of Atreus

Odyssey, 3, 136

According to the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, ἔρις was caused by, or was a consequence of, the marriage between a personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) and a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) with Polemos rather forlornly following Hubris around rather than vice versa. Eris is thus the child of Polemos and Hubris.

Extremism

By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that my understanding of an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic.

Hence *extremism* is considered to be: (a) the result of such harshness, and (b) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In addition, a fanatic is considered to be someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate.

In the philosophical terms of the way of pathei-mathos, an extremist is someone who commits the error of hubris; and error which enantiodromia - following from πάθει μάθος - can sometimes correct or forestall.

Honour

The English word honour dates from around 1200 CE, deriving from the Latin *honorem* (meaning refined, grace, beauty) via the Old French (and thence Anglo-Norman) *onor/onur*. As used by The Way of Pathei-Mathos, honour means an instinct for and an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous. An honourable person is thus someone of manners, fairness, natural dignity, and valour.

In respect of early usage of the term, two quotes may be of interest. The first, from c.

1393 CE, is taken from a poem, in Middle English, by John Gower:

And riht in such a maner wise
Sche bad thei scholde hire don servise,
So that Achilles underfongeth
As to a yong ladi belongeth
Honour, servise and reverence.

John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*. Liber Quintus vv. 2997-3001 [Macaulay, G.C., ed. *The Works of John Gower*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1901]

The second is from several centuries later:

" Honour - as something distinct from mere probity, and which supposes in gentlemen a stronger abhorrence of perfidy, falsehood, or cowardice, and a more elevated and delicate sense of the dignity of virtue, than are usually found in vulgar minds."

George Lyttelton. *History of the Life of Henry the Second*. London, Printed for J. Dodsley. M DCC LXXV II [1777] (A new ed., cor.) vol 3, p.178

Ideology

By the term ideology is meant a coherent, organized, and distinctive set of beliefs and/or ideas or ideals, and which beliefs and/or ideas and/or ideals pertain to governance, and/or to society, and/or to matters of a philosophical or a spiritual nature.

An extremist ideology by definition is either a harsh ideology or a harsh interpretation of an existing ideology.

Innocence

Innocence is regarded as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us, are therefore unjudged us by and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt. For this presumption of innocence of others – until direct personal experience, and individual and empathic knowing of them, prove otherwise – is the fair, the reasoned, the numinous, the human, thing to do.

Empathy and *πάθει μάθος* incline us toward treating other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated; that is they incline us toward fairness, toward self-restraint, toward being well-mannered, and toward an appreciation and understanding of innocence.

Muliebral/Masculous

The term muliebral derives from the classical Latin word *muliebris*, and in the context The Numinous Way/The Way of Pathei-Mathos refers to those positive traits, abilities, and qualities that are conventionally and historically associated with women, such as empathy, sensitivity, gentleness, compassion, and a desire to love and be loved over and above a desire for conflict/adventure/war.

The counterpart to muliebral is masculous, which is used to refer to certain traits, abilities, and qualities that are conventionally and historically associated with men, such as competitiveness, aggression, a certain harshness, the desire to organize/control, and a desire for adventure and/or for conflict/war/violence /competition over and above personal love and culture.

Extremist ideologies manifest an unbalanced, an excessive, masculous nature.

Masculous is from the Latin *masculus*. and occurs, for example, in some seventeenth century works such as one by William Struther: " This is not only the language of Canaan, but also the masculous Schibboleth." *True Happiness, or, King Davids Choice: Begunne In Sermons, And Now Digested Into A Treatise*. Edinbvrgh, 1633

Numinous

The numinous is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) the natural balance of *ψυχή*; a balance which *ὑβρις* upsets. This natural balance - our being as human beings - is or can be manifest to us in or by what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity and thus places us, as individuals, in our correct relation to *ψυχή*, and which relation is that we are but one mortal emanation of *ψυχή*.

Πόλεμος

Heraclitus fragment 80

Πόλεμος is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but rather that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being (the separation of beings from Being), and thus not only that which manifests as *δίκη* but also accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being, become bound together - be whole - again by *enantiodromia*.

According to the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, *ἔρις* was caused by, or was a consequence of, the marriage between a personified *πόλεμος* (as the *δαίμων* of kindred strife) and a personified *ὑβρις* (as the *δαίμων* of arrogant pride) with Polemos rather forlornly following Hubris around rather than vice versa. Thus Eris is the child of Polemos and Hubris.

Furthermore, Polemos was originally the *δαίμων* (not the god) of kindred strife, whether familial, of friends, or of one's *πόλις* (one's clan and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of war, is doubly incorrect.

Politics

By the term politics is meant both of the following, according to context. (i) The theory and practice of governance, with governance itself founded on two fundamental assumptions; that of some minority - a government (elected or unelected), some military authority, some oligarchy, some ruling elite, some tyrannos, or some leader - having or assuming authority (and thus power and influence) over others, and with that authority being exercised over a specific geographic area or territory. (ii) The activities of those individuals or groups whose aim or whose intent is to obtain and exercise some authority or some control over - or to influence - a society or sections of a society by means which are organized and directed toward changing/reforming that society or sections of a society in accordance with a particular ideology.

Physis (φύσις)

φύσις suggests either the Homeric - *Odyssey*, Book 10, vv. 302-3 - usage of nature or character of a person, as in Herodotus (2.5.2):

Αἰγύπτου γὰρ φύσις ἐστὶ τῆς χώρας τοιήδε

or *Φύσις* (Physis) as in Heraclitus fragment 123 - that is, the natural nature of all beings, beyond their outer appearance, and which natural nature we, as human beings, have a natural [an unconscious] inclination to conceal; either because of *ὑβρις* or through an ignorance, an unknowing, of ourselves as an emanation of *ψυχή*.

In terms of the nature or the character of an individual:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

Heraclitus fragment 112

Religion

By religion is meant organized worship, devotion, and faith, where there is: (i) a belief in some deity/deities, or in some supreme Being or in some supra-personal power who/which can reward or punish the individual, and (ii) a distinction made between the realm of the sacred/the-gods/God/the-revered and the realm of the ordinary or the human.

The term organized here implies an established institution, body or group - or a plurality of these - who or which has at least to some degree codified the faith and/or the acts of worship and devotion, and which is accepted as having some authority or has established some authority among the adherents. This codification can relate to accepting as authoritative certain writings and/or a certain book or books.

Society

By the term society is meant a collection of people who live in a specific geographic area or areas and whose association or interaction is mostly determined by a shared set of guidelines or principles or beliefs, irrespective of whether these are written or unwritten, and irrespective of whether such guidelines/principles/beliefs are willingly accepted or accepted on the basis of acquiescence. These shared guidelines or principles or beliefs often tend to form an ethos and a culture and become the basis for what is considered moral (and good) and thence become the inspiration for laws and/or constitutions.

As used here, the term refers to 'modern societies' (especially those of the modern West).

State

By the term The State is meant:

The concept of both (1) organizing and controlling - over a particular and large geographical area - land (and resources); and (2) organizing and controlling individuals over that same geographical particular and large geographical area by: (a) the use of physical force or the threat of force and/or by influencing or persuading or manipulating a sufficient number of people to accept some leader/cliq/ue/minority/representatives as the legitimate authority; (b) by means of the central administration and centralization of resources (especially fiscal and military); and (c) by the mandatory taxation of personal income.

My personal (fallible) view is that by their nature States often tend to be masculous (hence the desire for wars, invasions, conquest, competition, and the posturing often associated with 'patriotism'), although in my view they can become balanced, within, by acceptance of certain muliebral qualities, qualities most obviously manifest in certain aspects of culture, in caring professions, in pursuing personal love and the

virtue of wu-wei, and in and by the empowerment and equality of, and respect for, women and those whose personal love is for someone of the same gender.

The Good

The good is considered to be what is fair; what alleviates or does not cause suffering; what is compassionate; what empathy by its revealing inclines us to do.

Thus the bad - what is wrong, immoral - is what is unfair; what is harsh and unfeeling; what intentionally causes or contributes to suffering.

ὑβρις

ὑβρις (hubris) is the error of personal insolence, of going beyond the proper limits set by: (a) reasoned (balanced) judgement – *σωφρονεῖν* – and by (b) an awareness, a personal knowing, of the numinous, and which knowing of the numinous can arise from empathy and *πάθει μάθος*.

Hubris upsets the natural balance – is contrary to *ἀρμονίη* – and often results from a person or persons striving for or clinging to some causal abstraction.

According to The Way of Pathei-Mathos, ὑβρις disrupts - and conceals - our appreciation of what is numinous and thus of what/whom we should respect, classically understood as *ψυχή* and *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* and those sacred places guarded or watched over by *δαιμόνων*.

Way

By the term Way - or Way of Life - is meant a *weltanschauung* shared among or accepted by a number of people where there is distinction made between the realm of the sacred/the-revered/the-numinous and the realm of the ordinary or the human, but which: (i) is not codified in writings or books but which is often or mostly transmitted aurally; (ii) has no organization beyond - and does not require any organization beyond - the communal/local level; and (iii) whose ethos and rites and customs are inclined toward maintaining the natural balance - the natural healthy harmonious relation between humans, life, and 'the sacred' - and not toward avoiding the punishment of some powerful deity/gods or some supra-personal power(s).

One essential difference thus between a religion and a Way is that a religion requires faith and belief (and thus words, concepts, and dogma and organization and conformity), whereas a Way tends to be empathic/intuitive and more a customary, unspoken, way of doing things and which way of doing things - not being organized and by its ethos neither requiring organization nor conformity - varies or can vary

from place to place.

Thus, religions tend to be or tend to manifest what is masculous whereas Ways in the past tended to be or tended to manifest what is muliebral.

Wu-wei

Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their φύσις, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive – that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence – that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, πάθει μάθος, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness, and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

ψυχή

Life *qua* being. Our being as a living existent is considered an emanation of ψυχή. Thus ψυχή is what 'animates' us and what gives us our nature, φύσις, as human beings. Our nature is that of a mortal fallible being veering between σωφρονεῖν (thoughtful reasoning, and thus fairness) and ὕβρις.

Appendix II

The Change of Enantiodromia

The Meaning of Enantiodromia

The unusual compound Greek word ἐναντιοδρομίας occurs in a summary of the

philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius:

πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα (ix. 7)

This unusual word is usually translated as something like 'conflict of opposites' or 'opposing forces' which I consider are incorrect for several reasons.

Firstly, in my view, a transliteration should be used instead of some translation, for the Greek expression suggests something unique, something which exists in its own right as a principle or 'thing' and which uniqueness of meaning has a context, with both context and uniqueness lost if a bland translation is attempted. Lost, as the uniqueness, and context, of for example, *δαιμόνων* becomes lost if simply translated as 'spirits' (or worse, as 'gods'), or as the meaning of *κακός* in Hellenic culture is lost if mistranslated as 'evil'.

Second, the context seems to me to hint at something far more important than 'conflict of opposites', the context being the interesting description of the philosophy of Heraclitus before and after the word occurs, as given by Diogenes Laërtius:

1) *ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα συνεστάναι*

2) *εἰς τοῦτο ἀναλύεσθαι*

3) *πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα*

4) *καὶ πάντα ψυχῶν εἶναι καὶ δαιμόνων πλήρη*

The foundation/base/essence of all beings ['things'] is pyros to which they return, with all [of them] by genesis appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] to be bound together again by enantiodromia, and all filled/suffused/vivified with/by *ψυχή* and Dæmons.

This raises several interesting questions, not least concerning *ψυχή* and *δαιμόνων*, but also regarding the sense of *πυρὸς*. Is pyros here a philosophical principle - such as *ψυχή* - or used as in fragment 43, the source of which is also Diogenes Laërtius:

ὑβριν χρὴ σβεννύναι μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν (ix 2)

Better to deal with your hubris before you confront that fire

Personally, I incline toward the former, of some principle being meant, given the

context, and the generalization - ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα. In respect of ψυχῶν καὶ δαιμόνων I would suggest that what is implied is the numinous, our apprehension of The Numen, and which numen is the source of ψυχή and the origin of Dæmons. For a δαίμων is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - θεοί - but another type of divinity (that is, another emanation of the numen; another manifestation of the numinous) who might be assigned by those numinous gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or who watch over certain human beings and especially over particular numinous (sacred) places.

Thus the above summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus might be paraphrased as:

The foundation of all beings is Pyros to which they return, with all by genesis appropriately apportioned to be bound together again by enantiodromia, with all beings suffused with [are emanations of] the numen.

Furthermore, hubris disrupts - and conceals - our appreciation of the numen, our appreciation of ψυχή and of Dæmons: of what is numinous and what/whom we should respect. A disruption that makes us unbalanced, makes us disrespect the numinous and that of the numinous (such as δαιμόνων and θεοί and sacred places), and which unbalance enantiodromia can correct, with enantiodromia suggesting a confrontation - that expected dealing with our hubris necessary in order to return to Pyros, the source of beings. Here, Pyros is understood not as we understand 'fire' - and not even as some sort of basic physical element among other elements such as water - but rather as akin to both the constant 'warmth and the light of the Sun' (that brings life) and the sudden lightning that, as from Zeus, can serve as warning (omen) and retribution, and which can destroy and be a cause of devastating fire and thus also of the regeneration/rebuilding that often follows from such fires and from the learning, the respect, that arises from appreciating warnings (omens) from the gods. All of which perhaps explains fragment 64:

τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίζει Κεραυνός

All beings are guided by Lightning

Enantiodromia in the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos

In the philosophy of pathei-mathos, enantiodromia is understood as the process - the natural change - that occurs or which can occur in a human being because of or following πάθει μάθος. For part of πάθει μάθος is a 'confrontational contest' - an interior battle - and an acceptance of the need to take part in this battle and 'face the consequences', one of which is learning the (often uncomfortable) truth about one's own unbalanced, strife-causing, nature.

If successful in this confrontation, there is or there can be a positive, moral, development of the nature, the character - the φύσις (physis) - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this pathei-mathos, and which appreciation includes an awareness of why ὕβρις is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect, of a going beyond the due limits, and which ὕβρις is the genesis of the τύραννος and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate ἔρις [1].

Thus enantiodromia reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for ψυχή to flourish - which natural balance is δίκη as Δίκη [2] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in ἀρμονίη [3], manifest as ἀρμονίη is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei and σωφρονεῖν (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement).

Notes

[1] Heraclitus, fragment 80: εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord δίκη, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

See my *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*.

[2] In respect of the numinous principle of Δίκη, refer to Appendix III.

[3] Although φύσις has a natural tendency to become covered up (Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ - concealment accompanies Physis) it can be uncovered through λόγος and πάθει μάθος.

Appendix III

The Principle of Δίκη

Δίκη is that noble, respectful, balance understood, for example, by Sophocles (among many others) - for instance, Antigone respects the natural balance, the customs and traditions of her own culture, given by the gods, whereas Creon verges towards and finally commits, like Oedipus in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the error of ὕβρις and is thus

"taught a lesson" (just like Oedipus) by the gods because, as Aeschylus wrote -

Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσιν
μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει

The goddess, Judgement, favours someone *learning from adversity*.

Agamemnon, 250-251

In respect of Δίκη, I write - spell - it thus in this modern way with a capital Δ to intimate a new, a particular and numinous, philosophical principle, and differentiate it from the more general δίκη. As a numinous principle, or axiom, Δίκη thus suggests what lies beyond and what may have been the genesis of δίκη personified as the goddess, Judgement - the goddess of natural balance, of the ancestral way and ancestral customs.

Thus, Δίκη does not mean nor imply something theological, but rather implies the natural balance, the reasoned judgement, the thoughtful reasoning - σωφρονεῖν - that πάθει μάθος brings and restores, and which accumulated πάθει μάθος of a particular folk or πόλις forms the basis for their ancestral customs. δίκη is therefore, as the numinous principle Δίκη, what may be said to be a particular and a necessary balance between ἀρετή and ὕβρις - between the ὕβρις that often results when the personal, the natural, quest for ἀρετή becomes unbalanced and excessive.

That is, when ἔρις (discord) is or becomes δίκη - as suggested by Heraclitus in Fragment 80 -

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα
πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord δίκη, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

cc David Myatt 2012 CE

(First edition)

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Synopsis of The Numinous Way

Last Modified: 27/June/2012.

The Numinous Way

The Numinous Way (also known as The Way of Pathei-Mathos) is a spiritual (a numinous) philosophy - an individual ethical way of living - based on the virtues of compassion, empathy, humility, and personal honour.

The foundation of this Way is that of empathy. As used and defined by The Numinous Way, empathy is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by The Numinous Way, it is a specific and extended type of sympathy and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings

Philosophically, empathy presents to us, or can present to us, a type of knowing - a perception, an awareness - quite distinct from that posited by both conventional philosophy and experimental science. The Numinous Way thus adds the faculty of empathy to our physical senses; adds the perception of empathy to the perception of Phainómenon, and thus to the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science.

The use and the development of empathy makes us aware of how what we as individuals do, or do not do, affects or can affect other human beings and the other life with which we share this planet we call Earth. In effect, empathy reveals the natural living, the affective, connexion we are to Life, and how our normal perception of ourselves as a singular, a separate, individual is incorrect.

An awareness of this connexion therefore inclines us toward compassion, toward the human virtue of having sympatheia (benignity) with and toward other living beings. To be compassionate is to try to not cause or contribute to the suffering, or to aid in the alleviation of the suffering, of other living beings, where suffering is understood as what is distressing, painful/injurious (physical and emotional), unfair, redolent of grief and sadness.

One way in which we can avoid causing or contributing to suffering - and aid the alleviation of suffering - is by living, by acting, in an honourable way. In essence, honour is an expression of the natural balance of Life - the harmony of human living - and in practical terms honour is manifest in fairness, reasoned/balanced judgement, manners, wu-wei, and an awareness and appreciation of the numinous.

Honour and compassion are thus practical consequences, practical manifestations, of

empathy.

The Numinous

The numinous is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of the natural balance of Life; of what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity.

We are reminded of this natural balance, of what is numinous - we can come to know, to experience, the numinous - by pathei-mathos. That is, by the process of learning from personal adversity/personal suffering/personal grief.

An aspect of this learning is an appreciation, an awareness, of The Cosmic Perspective: of ourselves as one fallible, mortal, fragile biological, microcosmic, nexion on one planet in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies; one connexion to, one emanation of, all other Life. In essence, pathei-mathos teaches us humility and the value of personal love.

Wu-Wei

Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos/The Numinous Way to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their *φύσις*, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness, and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

Living according to The Numinous Way

Living according to The Numinous Way is simple and means:

- being compassionate or inclining toward compassion by trying to avoid causing,

or contributing, to suffering;

- being honourable - fair, reasonable, well-mannered, just, dignified, balanced;
- appreciating the value and importance of personal love;
- inclining toward a personal humility;
- cultivating wu-wei.

The Numinous Way is an ethical way of living which individuals are free to choose. There are no spiritual techniques or esoteric exercises; no supplication to some-thing or to some posited Being. No expectation of reward, in this life or in some posited next life. No goal. There is just a living of life in a certain natural way.

Religion

The Numinous Way is not a religion; that is, it is not an organized way of worship, devotion, and faith; and there is no belief in some deity/deities, or in some supreme Being or in some supra-personal power or in some after-life or in karma as karma is understood by the Way known as Buddhism.

Essentially, The Numinous Way is a way of a gentle interior personal and individual change; an inclination to live in a certain ethical manner so as not to intentionally cause suffering, so as not to upset the natural balance of Life.

The answer as to why someone would want to live in this numinous, this particular spiritual, way, is the answer of empathy; of the knowledge of ourselves, of others, of Life, of Nature, that empathy provides.

This is the knowledge that the separation-of-otherness is an illusive, a deceptive, appearance. The knowledge of our affective and effecting connexion to all Life, which is a knowledge of The Cosmic Perspective, of ourselves as just one microcosmic emanation of Life on one planet in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies.

In respect of other religions, there is tolerance and respect, since any Way or religion which manifests, which expresses, which guides individuals toward, the numinous humility we human beings need is good. For according to The Numinous Way such personal humility - that which prevents us from committing hubris, whatever the *raison d'être*, the theology, the philosophy - is a presencing of the numinous since it is a personal humility - whatever the source - that expresses our true developed (that is, our rational and empathic) human nature and which nature many other Ways or religions make us aware of or can remind us of.

The separation-of-otherness

The separation-of-otherness is a term used in an attempt to describe how our normal perception of ourselves as a singular, a separate, individual is incorrect, an error which empathy can correct.

Empathy involves a translocation of ourselves and thus a knowing-of another living-being as that living-being *is*, without presumptions and sans all ideations, all projections. In a simple way, empathy involves a numinous sympathy with another living-being; a becoming – for a causal moment or moments – of that other-being, so that we know, can feel, can understand, the suffering or the joy of that living-being. In such moments, there is no distinction made between *them and us* – there is only the flow of life; only the presencing and the ultimate unity of Life itself.

Politics and social reform

The Numinous Way, being a personal spiritual way, is not concerned with the theory or the practice of governance, and is therefore apolitical. Its concern is with individuals, with their interior change; with ethical living.

The Numinous Way approach to the problems of society - to reform and social change, and to The State - is also an individual one, deriving from the faculty of empathy, and from the uniquely personal judgement that empathy and a personal knowing reveal in the immediacy-of-the-moment.

Reform and change are understood as personal, direct; of and involving individuals who are personally known; and of necessity begins with the necessary inner change in the individual. That is, that inner, personal, change - in individuals, of their nature, their character - is understood as the ethical means to solving such personal and social problems as exist and arise. That the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform is the one that evolves human beings and thus changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate.

The basis for numinous social change and reform is aiding, helping, assisting individuals in a direct and personal manner and in practical ways, with such help, assistance, and aid arising because we personally know or are personally concerned about or involved with those individuals. In brief, being compassionate, empathic, understanding, sensitive, kind.

Love

A shared, mutual, love between two human beings is regarded as the most beautiful, the most numinous, the most human virtue of all.

Authority

For The Numinous Way, it is the exercise of the judgement of the individual - arising from the use of empathy, *pathei-mathos*, and the guidance that is personal honour - which expresses our human nature.

It is honour, the understanding that empathy provides, and the judgement of the

individual, that are legitimate, moral, numinous, and thence the basis for authority. This means that authority resides in and extends only to individuals - by virtue of their honour, their empathy, their experience (deriving from pathei-mathos), and manifest in their own personal judgement, and therefore this always personal individual authority cannot be abstracted out from such personal judgement of individuals. This is a new type of authority - that of the individual whose concern is not power over others but over themselves, and which type of power is manifest in a living by honour, and thence in self-responsibility, self-control, and being fair.

Honour

Honour, being a practical, a human, manifestation of the natural balance of Life, of individual authority, is a means to living in a numinous way and thus both a means to avoid the error, the unbalance, that is hubris and also a means to restore the numinous balance that the dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate, personal deeds of others have upset and which deeds one is personally aware of in the immediacy-of-the-moment. Thus to defend one's self if attacked is the natural, the honourable, thing to do, as is valorously defending someone in the immediacy-of-the-moment who is faced with someone or some many acting dishonourably, unfairly.

An Ethical Life

The Numinous Way is simply the living, by individuals, of an ethical life: individuals cultivating empathy, compassion, humility, wu-wei, dignity, and honour, who thus are inclined to avoid causing suffering and inclined to doing what is fair.

There is no dogma, no organization, no officials, no supra-personal authority, no theology, no theories, no authorized or recommended praxis. There are no codes of conduct, no scriptures, no 'sacred' - or official/authorized - writings.

There are only honourable individuals individually aware of, and respectful of, the numinous.

David Myatt
March 2012 ce

This synopsis has been compiled from *The Way of Pathei-Mathos*, [FAQ About The Numinous Way](#), and other essays.

Frequently Asked Questions About The Numinous Way

Last Modified: 29/May/2012

What Is The Numinous Way?

The Numinous Way is a spiritual (a numinous) philosophy - an individual ethical way of living - based on the virtues of compassion, empathy, humility, and personal honour.

The foundation of this Way is that of empathy. As used and defined by The Numinous Way, empathy is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by The Numinous Way, it is a specific and extended type of sympathy and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings

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One way in which we can avoid causing or contributing to suffering - and aid the alleviation of suffering - is by living, by acting, in an honourable way. In essence, honour is an expression of the natural balance of Life - the harmony of human living - and in practical terms honour is manifest in fairness, reasoned/balanced judgement, manners, wu-wei, and an awareness and appreciation of the numinous.

Honour and compassion are thus practical consequences, practical manifestations, of empathy.

What is The Numinous?

The numinous is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of the natural balance of Life; of what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity.

We are reminded of this natural balance, of what is numinous - we can come to know, to experience, the numinous - by pathei-mathos. That is, by the process of learning from personal adversity/personal suffering/personal grief.

An aspect of this learning is an appreciation, an awareness, of The Cosmic Perspective: of ourselves as one fallible, mortal, fragile biological, microcosmic, nexion on one planet in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies; one connexion to, one emanation of, all other Life. In essence, pathei-mathos teaches us humility and the value of personal love.

What is Wu-Wei?

Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their φύσις, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, πάθει μάθος, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness, and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

What does Living According to The Numinous Way mean?

Living according to The Numinous Way is simple and means:

- being compassionate or inclining toward compassion by trying to avoid causing, or contributing, to suffering;
- being honourable - fair, reasonable, well-mannered, just, dignified, balanced;
- appreciating the value and importance of personal love;

- inclining toward a personal humility;
- cultivating wu-wei.

The Numinous Way is an ethical way of living which individuals are free to choose. There are no spiritual techniques or esoteric exercises; no supplication to some-thing or to some posited Being. No expectation of reward, in this life or in some posited next life. No goal. There is just a living of life in a certain natural way.

Is The Numinous Way a religion?

The Numinous Way is not a religion; that is, it is not an organized way of worship, devotion, and faith; and there is no belief in some deity/deities, or in some supreme Being or in some supra-personal power or in some after-life or in karma as karma is understood by the Way known as Buddhism.

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The answer as to why someone would want to live in this numinous, this particular spiritual, way, is the answer of empathy; of the knowledge of ourselves, of others, of Life, of Nature, that empathy provides.

This is the knowledge that the separation-of-otherness is an illusive, a deceptive, appearance. The knowledge of our affective and effecting connexion to all Life, which is a knowledge of The Cosmic Perspective, of ourselves as just one microcosmic emanation of Life on one planet in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies.

In respect of other religions, there is tolerance and respect, since any Way or religion which manifests, which expresses, which guides individuals toward, the numinous humility we human beings need is good. For according to The Numinous Way such personal humility - that which prevents us from committing hubris, whatever the *raison d'être*, the theology, the philosophy - is a presencing of the numinous since it is a personal humility - whatever the source - that expresses our true developed (that is, our rational and empathic) human nature and which nature many other Ways or religions make us aware of or can remind us of.

Why is Empathy Important?

Empathy presents us with an acausal-knowing of life - human and otherwise - and this knowing is of ourselves as but one fallible, biologically fragile, mortal, microcosmic nexion, and thus of how our self, our perceived and singular separate self-identity, is appearance and not an expression of the true nature of our being, which nature is one of connexions, between living emanations, not one of separations.

Being a natural if still under-used and under-developed human faculty, empathy is - like our faculties of seeing and hearing - limited in range. The range of empathy is

limited to those living beings that we are in close proximity to; whose eyes we can physically see.

Thus empathy is only and ever individual and of the immediacy of the living moment. It is always personal, and cannot be abstracted out from an individual living being - that is, it cannot have or be associated with any causal ideation or be represented by or expressed by someone else.

Given that empathy is the basis of The Numinous Way, and given the personal nature of empathy and its limited range, The Numinous Way is the way of individuals, and is an individual manner of living concerned with personal spiritual (numinous) matters. Thus any type of collective or political or religious identity - and a desire for and acceptance of such a collective or political or religious identity - is contrary to this very individual spiritual way.

Which means that The Numinous Way cannot be represented by anything 'political' or be annexed to any political organization or used by, or form the basis of, any political or religious organization or group.

Is there a difference between The Numinous Way and The Philosophy of The Numen?

No; they both refer to the ethical way of compassion, empathy, humility, and personal honour.

What is the separation-of-otherness?

It is a term used in an attempt to describe how our normal perception of ourselves as a singular, a separate, individual is incorrect, an error which empathy can correct.

Empathy involves a translocation of ourselves and thus a knowing-of another living-being as that living-being *is*, without presumptions and sans all ideations, all projections. In a simple way, empathy involves a numinous sympathy with another living-being; a becoming - for a causal moment or moments - of that other-being, so that we know, can feel, can understand, the suffering or the joy of that living-being. In such moments, there is no distinction made between *them and us* - there is only the flow of life; only the presencing and the ultimate unity of Life itself.

What about politics and social reform?

The Numinous Way, being a personal spiritual way, is not concerned with the theory or the practice of governance, and is therefore apolitical. Its concern is with individuals, with their interior change; with ethical living.

The Numinous Way approach to the problems of society - to reform and social change, and to The State - is also an individual one, deriving from the faculty of empathy, and

from the uniquely personal judgement that empathy and a personal knowing reveal in the immediacy-of-the-moment.

Reform and change are understood as personal, direct; of and involving individuals who are personally known; and of necessity begins with the necessary inner change in the individual. That is, that inner, personal, change - in individuals, of their nature, their character - is understood as the ethical means to solving such personal and social problems as exist and arise. That the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform is the one that evolves human beings and thus changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate.

The basis for numinous social change and reform is aiding, helping, assisting individuals in a direct and personal manner and in practical ways, with such help, assistance, and aid arising because we personally know or are personally concerned about or involved with those individuals. In brief, being compassionate, empathic, understanding, sensitive, kind.

What about Love?

The Numinous Way regards a shared, mutual, love between two human beings as the most beautiful, the most numinous, the most human virtue of all.

What is meant by The Cosmic Perspective?

The Cosmic Perspective refers to our place in the Cosmos, to the fact that we human beings are simply one fragile fallible mortal biological life-form on one planet orbiting one star in one galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies. Thus in terms of this perspective all our theories, our ideas, our beliefs, our abstractions are merely the opinionated product of our limited fallible Earth-bound so-called 'intelligence', an 'intelligence', an understanding, we foolishly, arrogantly, pridefully have a tendency to believe in and exalt as if we are somehow 'the centre of the Universe' and cosmically important.

The Cosmic Perspective inclines us - or can incline us - toward wu-wei, toward avoiding the error of hubris, toward humility, and thus toward an appreciation of the numinous.

What does authority mean in the philosophy of The Numinous Way?

For The Numinous Way, it is the exercise of the judgement of the individual - arising from the use of empathy and the guidance that is personal honour - which expresses our human nature.

It is honour, the understanding that empathy provides, and the judgement of the individual, that are legitimate, moral, numinous, and thence the basis for authority. This means that authority resides in and extends only to individuals - by virtue of their

honour, their empathy, and manifest in their own personal judgement, and therefore this always personal individual authority cannot be abstracted out from such personal judgement of individuals. This is a new type of authority - that of the individual whose concern is not power over others but over themselves, and which type of power is manifest in a living by honour, and thence in self-responsibility, self-control, and being fair.

How does The Numinous Way view race and racism?

Race is a manifestation of the causal separation-of-otherness, and thus contradicts empathy and the intuitive knowing of and sympathy with *the living other* that individual empathy provides or can make us aware of.

The notion of race separates, divides, human beings into manufactured lifeless categories which nullify the empathic knowing of individual human beings. Such assignment of individuals to a posited abstract category - some assumed 'race' or sub-race - is irrelevant, since individual human beings are or have the potential to be unique individual human beings, so that such an assignment, whatever the alleged reason, is a dehumanizing of those individuals. For our humanity is expressed by an individual and personal knowing of individuals, by a personal interaction with others on the basis of respect, tolerance, reason, and honour, and which personal knowledge of them renders their alleged or assumed ethnicity or ancestry irrelevant.

Racism is immoral, reprehensible. What matters is the person, the individual as an individual human being who is unique or who has the potential to be unique. What matters, what is human and moral, is a personal knowing of individuals and treating others with fairness, and tolerance, on the basis of equality.

Is honour important in The Numinous Way?

Honour, being a practical, a human, manifestation of the natural balance of Life, of individual authority, is a means to living in a numinous way and thus both a means to avoid the error, the unbalance, that is hubris and also a means to restore the numinous balance that the dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate, personal deeds of others have upset and which deeds one is personally aware of in the immediacy-of-the-moment. Thus to defend one's self if attacked is the natural, the honourable, thing to do, as is valorously defending someone in the immediacy-of-the-moment who is faced with someone or some many acting dishonourably, unfairly.

What are the ethics of The Numinous Way?

The ethics of The Numinous Way derive from the revealing - the insight, the knowing, the understanding, the feeling - that the faculty of empathy provides when we, as an individual, personally interact with another living being over a certain period of time. What is thus discovered by means of empathy is *sympatheia* - a numinous sympathy with the-living-other - and how, as an individual, we are an affecting connexion to all

life, and thus how our assumed separation, as an individual, is an illusion, a manifestation of hubris. We therefore become aware of how we affect or can affect others; how they affect or can affect us; and of how their suffering, their pain, their joy, their grief, is ours beyond the barrier of our inner and our outer egoist.

This discovery, this revealing, thus inclines us toward compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, love, tolerance, peace, fairness, wu-wei, and toward being non-judgemental in respect of those we do not personally know and thus have no experience of, have had no empathic contact with. For it is empathy – the close and the extended personal interaction with individuals, on an individual basis, that empathy requires – that is the natural and the moral way of assessing, of really knowing, another human being.

This means two important things. First, that we treat human beings in a human way – that is, as individuals, recognizing that they are unique or have the potential to become unique; that they, like us, can and do suffer pain, grief, sadness, joy; that they, like us, have hopes, dreams. Second, that all individuals we do not personally know are or should be presumed to be ‘innocent’, unjudged, and so are to be given the benefit of the doubt; for this presumption of innocence – until personal experience and empathic individual knowing of them prove otherwise – is the fair, the honourable, the moral thing to do.

The revealing that empathy provides is of The Cosmic Perspective; of the numinous; of why hubris is an error of judgement, an upsetting of the natural balance of Life; of how most human beings have the ability to change for the better.

What is meant by pathei-mathos?

Pathei-mathos (πάθει μάθος - qv. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 174-183) is the process of learning from personal adversity/personal suffering/hard personal experience. It is thus a means of developing a good, a fair, a balanced personal judgement.

The Numinous Way considers that pathei-mathos is also a means whereby we can discover the numinous and thus appreciate the need to avoid the error of hubris.

Thus, an alternative term for The Numinous Way might be The Way of Pathei-Mathos.

What is meant by the term abstraction?

The Numinous Way understands an abstraction as the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, 'image', form, or category, and thus some generalization about, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals – and/or some being, some 'thing' – to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such a being/beings/things/individuals.

The assignment of human beings to some abstraction (some abstract category) – such as some assumed race (e.g. Negro), or some occupation (e.g. 'prostitute') or according to some deed (real or alleged, such as 'traitor' or 'heretic' or 'hero') – always involves either (i) some derogatory perception of, or some pejorative judgement being made

about, an individual on the basis of the qualities or the attributes that are believed or assumed to belong to that abstraction, and/or (ii) some idealization/glorification of those so assigned to some abstract category. One consequence is that those so assigned to some pejorative category become dehumanized and are often treated in an unfair, a discriminatory, manner.

The positing of some 'perfect' or 'ideal' form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction. Thus understood, abstraction encompasses terms such as ideology, idea, dogmatic/harsh beliefs, and ideals.

In philosophical terms, an abstraction is a manifestation, possibly the primary manifestation, of *the-separation-of-otherness*: of a lack of empathy, and which lack results in some illusive distinction being made between 'them' and 'us'.

If I wanted to follow The Numinous Way what would I have to do?

The Numinous Way itself is simply the living, by individuals, of an ethical life: individuals cultivating empathy, compassion, humility, wu-wei, dignity, and honour, who thus are inclined to avoid causing suffering and inclined to doing what is fair.

There is no dogma, no organization, no officials, no supra-personal authority, no theology, no theories, no authorized or recommended praxis. There are no codes of conduct, no scriptures, no 'sacred' - or official/authorized - writings. There are only honourable individuals individually aware of, and respectful of, the numinous.

Is a distinction made, in the philosophy of the Numen, between a religion and a spiritual Way?

By the term Way - or Way of Life - is meant a weltanschauung shared among or accepted by a number of people where there is distinction made between the realm of the sacred/the-revered/the-numinous and the realm of the ordinary or the human, but which: (i) is not codified in writings or books but which is often or mostly transmitted aurally; (ii) has no organization beyond - and does not require any organization beyond - the communal/local level; and (iii) whose ethos and rites and customs are inclined toward maintaining the natural balance - the natural healthy harmonious relation between humans, life, and 'the sacred' - and not toward avoiding the punishment of some powerful deity/gods or some supra-personal power(s).

One essential difference thus between a religion and a Way is that a religion requires faith and belief (and thus words, concepts, and dogma and organization and conformity), whereas a Way tends to be empathic/intuitive and more a customary, unspoken, way of doing things and which way of doing things - not being organized and by its ethos neither requiring organization nor conformity - varies or can vary from place to place.

Thus, religions tend to be or tend to manifest what is masculous whereas Ways in the past tended to be or tended to manifest what is muliebral.

Some religions began as spiritual Ways, but evolved over long durations of causal Time to become religions.

How does The Numinous Way compare to other spiritual ways?

The Numinous Way is just one spiritual, one numinous, one fallible, way among many; one spiritual option which individuals are free to choose. In regard to other spiritual ways and religions, there is respect and tolerance.

Is there a difference between the numinous way and the philosophy of pathei-mathos?

I now [2012] prefer to use the expression 'the philosophy of pathei-mathos' in preference to 'the numinous way' considering how much of that 'numinous way' I have come to reject and/or to revise over the past year or so.

Thus the philosophy of pathei-mathos is just my own developed, refined, weltanschauung; the essence of 'the numinous way' shorn of those abstractions that bloated and blighted it. My own quite fallible solutions to particular moral, philosophical, problems and my answers to certain personal questions; and which problems often took me some years to solve, having had their genesis in my own pathei-mathos. I make no claim as to the veracity of this weltanschauung other than it is my pathei-mathos, and so leave others to judge it, aware as I am that such solutions as I have derived and attempted to communicate by the medium of words may not have been expressed very well or may well (and probably will) contain some or many errors, errors which others may find and point out, should anyone even be interested enough in this weltanschauung to study it.

The texts *Recuyle Of The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos* and this FAQ - together with *Synopsis of The Numinous Way*, which is a summary of these FAQ - contains all that, in my error-prone view at least, is required for an understanding of, and all that is relevant to, the philosophy of pathei-mathos and thus to my now revised Numinous Way.

David Myatt
2012 ce

Numinous Expiation

One of the many problems regarding both The Numinous Way and my own past which troubles me - and has troubled me for a while - is how can a person make reparation for suffering caused, inflicted, and/or dishonourable deeds done. For, in the person of empathy, of compassion, of honour, a knowledge and understanding of dishonour done, of the suffering one has caused - perhaps before one became such a person of compassion, honour, and empathy - is almost invariably the genesis of strong personal feelings such as remorse, grief, and sorrow. The type of strong feelings that Christopher Marlowe has Iarbus, King of Gaetulia, voice at the end of the play *The Tragedie of Dido Queene of Carthage*, written c.1587:

Cursed Iarbas, die to expiate
The grief that tires upon thine inward soul.

One of the many benefits of an organized theistic religion, such as Christianity or Islam or Judaism, is that mechanisms of personal expiation exist whereby such feelings can be placed in context and expiated by appeals to the supreme deity. In Judaism, there is Teshuvah culminating in Yom Kippur, the day of expiation/reconciliation. In Catholicism, there is the sacrament of confession and penance. In Islam, there is personal dua to, and reliance on, Allah Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, As-Salaam.

Even pagan religions and ways had mechanisms of personal expiation for wrong deeds done, often in the form of propitiation; the offering of a sacrifice, perhaps, or compensation by the giving or the leaving of a valuable gift or votive offering at some numinous - some sacred and venerated - place or site.

One motivation, in the case of pagan religions and ways, for a person to seek expiation is fear of *wrake*; fear of the retribution or of the misfortune, that - from the gods - might befall them or their descendants in this life. Similarly, for those acceptive of an all-knowing, all-seeing supreme deity - or even of the Buddhist mechanism of karma - there is also fear of *wrake*; fear of the punishment, the retribution, the misfortune, that might await them in the next life; or, in the case of Buddhism, the type of life that might result when next they are reborn.

As the Owl explains in the mediæval English religious allegory *The Owl and the Nightingale*,

ich wat þar schal beo niþ & wrake

I can see when there shall be strife and retribution [1]

All such religious mechanisms of expiation, whatever the theology and regardless of the motivation of the individual in seeking such expiation, are or can be cathartic; restorative, healing. But if there is no personal belief in either a supreme deity or in deities, how then to numinously make reparation, propitiation, and thus to not only expiate such feelings as remorse, grief, and sorrow but also and importantly offset the damage one's wrong actions have caused, since by their very nature such suffering-causing actions are *ὑβρις* and not only result in harm, in people suffering, but also upset the natural balance.

In truth, I do not know the answer to the question how to so numinously make reparation, propitiation. I can only conject, surmise. One of my conjectures is enantiodromia; of the process, mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius and attributed to Heraclitus, of a wholeness arising both before and after discord and division [2]. This wholeness is the healthy, the numinous, interior, inward, and personal balance beyond the separation of beings - beyond *πόλεμος* and *ὑβρις* and thus beyond *ἔρις*; beyond the separation and thence the strife, the discord, which abstractions, ideations, encourage and indeed which they manufacture, bring-into-being. As Heraclitus intimated, according to another quotation attributed to him -

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἑόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord. [3]

But what, then, in practical personal terms are this wholeness and this process termed enantiodromia? To me, this wholeness is a knowing and an acceptance of both the importance of the numinous principle of *Δίκη* [4] and the necessity of wu-wei [5] - and a knowing which empathy can provide - and thence a desire to live life in a non-interfering manner consistent with empathy, compassion, reason, honour, and humility. And it is this very knowing, this very desire to live in such a manner, which is enantiodromia; which is cathartic, restorative, healing; with a natural humility and the cultivation and practice of reason - *σωφρονεῖν*, a fair and balanced judgement - being the essence of this personal process, the essence of enantiodromia.

For the human virtue of humility is essential in us for us not to repeat our errors of *ὑβρις*, a humility which our *πάθει μάθος* makes us aware of, makes us feel, know, in a very personal sense. For we are aware of, we should remember, our fallibility, our mortality, our mistakes, our errors, our wrong deeds, the suffering we have caused, the harm we have done and inflicted; how much we personally have contributed to discord, strife, sorrow.

In addition,

" ...by and through humility, we do what we do not because we expect some

reward, or some forgiveness, given by some supra-personal supreme Being, or have some idealized duty to such a Being or to some abstraction (such as some nation, some State) but because it is in our very nature to do an act of compassion, a deed of honour: to do something which is noble and selfless.

That is, we act, not out of duty, not out of a desire for Heaven or Jannah, or enlightenment or some other "thing" we have posited – not from any emotion, desire or motive, not because some scripture or some revelation or some Buddha says we should – but because we have lost the illusion of our self-contained, personal, identity, lost our Earth-centric, human-centric, perspective, lost even the causal desire to be strive to something different, and instead just *are*: that is, we are just one microcosmic living mortal connexion between all life, on Earth, and in the Cosmos. For our very nature, as human beings, is a Cosmic nature – a natural part of the unfolding, of the naturally and numinously changing, Cosmos." [6]

Thus a personal humility is the natural balance living within us; that is, we being or becoming or returning to the balance that does not give rise to ἔρις Or, expressed simply, humility disposes us toward gentleness, toward kindness, toward love, toward peace; toward the virtues that are balance, that express our humanity.

This personal humility inclines us toward σωφρονεῖν; toward being fair, toward rational deliberation, toward a lack of haste. Toward a balanced judgement and thence toward a balanced life of humility, we-wei, and a knowing of the wisdom of Δίκα.

There is nothing especially religious here, nor any given or necessary praxis. No techniques; no supplication to some-thing or to some posited Being. No expectation of reward, in this life or some posited next life. Only an interior personal change, an attempt to live in a certain gentle, quiet, way so as not to intentionally cause suffering, so as not to upset the natural balance of Life.

David Myatt
February 2012 ce

Notes

[1] v.1194. The text is that of the Cotton Caligula MS in the British Library as transcribed by JWH Atkins in *The Owl and the Nightingale*, Cambridge University Press, 1922.

[2] The quotation from Diogenes Laërtius is: πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα (ix. 9)

My translation is: *All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into*

portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia.

As I mentioned in my essay *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*:

I have used a transliteration of the compound Greek word - ἐναντιοδρομίας - rather than given a particular translation, since the term enantiodromia in my view suggests the uniqueness of expression of the original, and which original in my view is not adequately, and most certainly not accurately, described by a usual translation such as 'conflict of opposites'. Rather, what is suggested is 'confrontational contest' - that is, by facing up to the expected/planned/inevitable contest.

Interestingly, Carl Jung - who was familiar with the sayings of Heraclitus - used the term enantiodromia to describe the emergence of a trait (of character) to offset another trait and so restore a certain psychological balance within the individual.

[3] Fragment 80 - qv. *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis – Notes on λόγος and ἀληθέα in Heraclitus*.

As I noted in *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*, it is interesting that:

"in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) married a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) [8] and that it was a common folk belief that πόλεμος accompanied ὕβρις - that is, that Polemos followed Hubris around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing ἔρις."

[4] In respect of the numinous principle of Δίκη, refer to my short essay *The Principle of Δίκη*.

[5] As mentioned elsewhere, wu-wei is a Taoist term used in my philosophy of The Numinous Way "to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, is ὕβρις. In practice, this is the cultivation of a certain (an acausal, numinous) perspective - that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner

nature, not striving against it."

I first became acquainted with the concept of wu-wei when, as a youth living in the Far East, I studied Taoism and a learnt a martial art based on Taoism. Thus it might be fair to assume that Taoism may well have influenced, to some degree, the development of my weltanschauung.

[6] The quote is from my essay *Humility, Abstractions, and Belief*.

In Pursuit of Wisdom

For thousands of years, we human beings have been aware - or could discover, for ourselves - a certain wisdom, a particular conscious knowledge concerning our own nature.

From Aeschylus to Sophocles to Siddhārtha Gautama, from the mythos of the *Μοῖραι* [1] to the postulate of samsara, from the notion of Fate to the Sermon on the Mount, and beyond, we have had available to us an understanding of *Δίκη* [2]: of how we human beings are often balanced between honour and dishonour; balanced between *ὑβρις* and *ἀρετή*; between our animalistic desires, our passions, and our human ability to be noble, to achieve excellence; a balance manifest in our known ability to be able to control, to restrain, ourselves, and thus find and follow a middle way, of *ἀρμονίη*.

For several Aeons, this understanding, this middle way, was of two essential things. First, of how such a middle way enabled us to avoid causing or contributing to that suffering which our own *πάθει μάθος* - our learning from the sorrows of personal experience - informed us was unwise because contrary to the natural balance (the numinosity) that such *πάθει μάθος* intimately revealed to us. Second, of how this balance - this self control - was preferable for us, as individuals, since to upset this balance - for example to go beyond the limits established by our ancestral customs - was: (1) to invite a personal retribution (or misfortune) from the gods; or (2) to invite punishment from a supreme deity; or (3) condemn us to be reborn again and thus have to toil yet again to obtain reward (karma) enough to progress in accord with the *bhavacakra*.

As Sophocles wrote, over two thousand years ago - *ὑβρις φυτεύει τύραννον* [3]. That is, *ὑβρις* (hubris) plants the *τύραννον*, although the sense of *τύραννος* here is not exactly what our fairly modern term *tyrant* is commonly regarded as imputing. Rather, it refers to the intemperate person of excess who is so subsumed with some passion or aim or a lust for power that they go far beyond the due, the accepted, bounds of behaviour and thus exceed the limits of or misuse whatever authority they have been entrusted with. Thus do they, by their excess, by their disrespect for the customs of their ancestors, by their lack of reasoned, well-balanced, judgement [*σωφρονεῖν*] offend the gods, and thus, to restore the balance, do the *Ἐρινύες* take revenge. For it is in the nature of the *τύραννος* that they forget, or they scorn, the truth, the ancient wisdom, that their lives are subject to, guided by, *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες*.



Λυκοῦργος and the Ἐρινύες

Thus the knowledge that our pride, our arrogance, our uncontrolled desires, our lack of *σωφρονεῖν*, are the genesis of the disruption of the natural balance - both within ourselves, and exterior to ourselves.

Or, as Dante Alighieri expressed it in the terms of one particular mythos:

The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind.

The received wisdom was personal avoidance of the error of *ὑβρις* because we, we individuals and possibly our immediate family, would suffer: either in this life (by for example receiving bad luck, inviting misfortune, or having some tyrant foisted upon our community) or in some afterlife we believed in. Hence what we would now describe as ethical behaviour, for individuals - our control of our instincts, our desires - essentially derived from something supra-personal, such as ancestral customs, some belief in some gods, some faith in some supreme deity, or acceptance of some postulate such as karma or nirvana. In the terms of Christian theology, the belief being that we need to replace the guidance, the temptations, the guile, of The Infernal Serpent with the guidance, the love, of Christus Redemptor.

More recently, we human beings have committed a new kind of ὕβρις. Or more correctly perhaps, our ὕβρις has acquired a new form, new manifestations. That is, we have manufactured causal abstractions - ideals, ideas, -isms and -ologies - which we have identified with and/or striven to attain, both for ourselves, and for others; so that it has become apposite to write that causal abstractions are the genesis of suffering, for both ourselves, and for others. because such abstractions disrupt the natural balance of Life [ψυχή]: the life within us, within other sentient beings, and the Life that is presenced to us as Nature, leading thus to a loss of ἀρμονίη. This kind of ὕβρις also plants the τύραννος, but the impersonal kind of τύραννος that lives in the practical implementation of such abstractions, internally and externally - so that, for instance, we allow ourselves to become subjects of some -ism or some -ology (whether described as or deemed to be political, social, or religious) or we become actual subjects of some impersonal entity such as a State, controlled, constrained, by laws, taxation, and the ever-present threat of the use of force by the 'officially appointed' minions of such an entity, so that such an impersonal entity has, in all but name, usurped our older gods, our Μοῖραι, our God, our karma.

Thus, the reality now is often of either (1) obedience to the *dictat* of some entity such as The State, our government, or the mandates of some supra-national body such as the United Nations, because to dissent would render us liable to punishment; or (2) a belief in - an acceptance of - such entities as the provider of 'good fortune', of 'justice' [4], and of prosperity, for us and our family.

Here, the threat of exterior, practical, punishment - the always present threat of imprisonment, the use of force against us by such entities as the Police, and ultimately the armed forces - has largely replaced the interior threat we hitherto might have imposed upon ourselves by our acceptance of such things as retribution from the gods, or punishment from some supreme deity. That is, ethical behaviour, for individuals still essentially derives from something supra-personal involving an *us* and *them*, the others.

The Pursuit of Wisdom

Despite these approaches, ancient and modern - that is, despite the ethical behaviour these two approaches encouraged and even demand, or tried to encourage - human beings, *en masse*, do not seem to have significantly changed. Thus, the world is still replete with individuals who cannot control their desires and who thus commit dishonourable deeds, the error of ὕβρις. For every minute of every day, year following year, human beings are

murdered, brutalized, bullied, raped, injured, tortured, humiliated, abused - just as deception, theft, robbery, fraud, and malfeasance, occur with monotonous regularity.

The world is still rife with bloody murderous conflict, except that new causes of conflict have been added to the ancient ones of personal greed, personal dishonour, and the desires of some *τύραννος* or other. For the new entities that we have manufactured - such as nation-States - have themselves caused suffering, of a magnitude arguably greater than caused by some *τύραννος* and far greater than could be caused by individuals unable to control their dishonourable urges, their greed. For example, conflicts between the modern nation-States of the West, and internal conflict within such States, have resulted in the deaths of an estimated one hundred million human beings in just over a century [4].

Thus, it seems as if the ancient wisdom of *Δίκη* has remained the preserve of a minority, and thus that the accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of millennia - manifest in such things as literature, Art, music, ancestral culture, and spiritual Ways of Life - has little or no relevance for or been a significant influence upon the majority, even in those modern States which have had, for nigh on a century, compulsory education for children. [5]

Since murderous conflict, the error of *ὑβρις*, and a lack of reasoned judgement, and thus suffering, remain - despite a variety of middle ways over millennia to divert us from such things, and despite numerous individuals over millennia, in their own ways, understanding *Amr bil Maroof wa Nahi anil Munkar* [6] - it is perhaps pertinent to consider if there is, or might be, a better expression of that wisdom, that particular conscious knowledge, concerning our own nature and how we might find and express that balance which enables us to restrain ourselves and avoid the error of *ὑβρις*.

That is, is there a Way which does not mean or imply a belief in some ancient mythos, or demand of us some faith in some supreme deity and some afterlife, or involve us in obedience to some supra-personal entity whose authority ultimately derives from the threat or the use of force or acceptance of some suffering-causing *-ism* or *-ology* whose nature is enshrined in the cliché that the abstraction of happiness, the abstraction of the welfare, the abstraction of the security, the abstraction of the prosperity, of the majority is more important than the fate of some individuals, and that thus for such abstractions to be obtained, in some (mythical) future the suffering of some or even of many individuals is an 'acceptable price' to pay?

In brief, a Way which does not of necessity involve us in considering matters as we have hitherto almost invariably done: by whether or not we, as individuals,

are rewarded or punished (in this life, or in some believed in afterlife). That is, which does not of necessity posit some personal abstraction for us to accept or believe in - be such an abstraction some personal prosperity or some peace (in this or some next life such as Heaven or Jannah), or some supreme deity, or some notion such as nirvana or even some mythos such as *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες*.

For such things - and the middle ways derived from them in the past - are, correctly appreciated and thence understood, only pointers toward a deeper truth, which is that of the error of the self, and an error revealed by the nature of the causality implicit in this individual desire to seek some reward and avoid punishment, or, in Buddhism, avoid the periodicity of samsara.

Even in Buddhism, where this truth concerning the self has been dis-covered, revealed, in a rather rational manner, the practical reality for the majority is of *individual* striving, and the assumption of a goal for individuals. Hence the reason of the individual doing what they do - meditation, giving alms, striving to avoid causing suffering, for example - because they themselves seek liberation, nirvana; because they are concerned about *their* karma. Thus there is still a judgement based on the concept of individual reward. Hence, also, the striving for a posited goal, a striving exemplified by the *bhavacakra*.

The Error of The Self and The Natural Balance of Empathy

The error of the self is the error of a simple cause-and-effect predicated on the separation of living beings and upon a separate goal which the separated individual could attain by a given causal process.

Thus, and for example in Buddhism, the goal is nirvana and the process the Eight-Fold Path; in Christianity the goal is Heaven and the process is acceptance of Christus Redemptor; in Islam the goal is Jannah and the process is complete submission to Allah (and acceptance of Quran, Sunnah, and Shariah); in Hellenic culture the goal was *ἀρετή* (and thence a good place in Hades) by means such as avoidance of *ὑβρις*. In modern times, for the plethora of agnostics and atheists, the goal is happiness/prosperity by means such as The State, whether actively or passively accepted [7].

This assumption of self - of the separation of living beings, and such a causal process - is inherent in most if not all hitherto spiritual Ways which posit and require a praxis, and in the modern abstraction of The State, and also forms the basis of the ethics deriving from such Ways as well as the ethics of that

modern abstraction. That is, either (1) The State defines what is moral, by means such as enforceable laws, or (2) such spiritual Ways posit what is moral based on their particular given goal and their given causal process and praxis of achieving that goal.

Why is this assumption of self an error? Because of empathy, which uncovers the nature of Being and beings that has hitherto been obscured by such spiritual Ways and by abstractions such as The State. For empathy - the innate (if still little used and underdeveloped) human faculty of *συμπάθεια* [*συν-πάθος*] - reveals the separation of living beings for the assumption, the limitation, it is.

For empathy reveals the *a-causal* nature (the numinous nature) of living beings - and the nexions that they are to Being, thus establishing a human ethics independent of the hitherto assumed cause-and-effect of separate human beings striving for some assumed goal by means of some given causal process.

Empathy thus establishes a new (or possibly a re-expressed older) understanding of our human nature - both existing and potential - and a new (or possibly a re-expressed older) knowing of how we might avoid *ὑβρις* and thus the suffering that *ὑβρις* brings. This understanding and knowing is of the numinous manifest in the indivisibility of living beings: of how the joy, the pain, the sorrow, the suffering, the very life, of what has hitherto been causally perceived as *the-separate-others* is in essence our joy, pain, sorrow, suffering, and life. For this, this natural balance, this *ἁρμονία*, is what empathy, in the living moment, reveals - or rather what empathy by its very nature naturally and wordlessly and effortlessly moves us toward: what empathy brings-into-being.

Hence the empathic human being avoids Al-Munkar (and thus avoids causing suffering), and inclines toward Al-Maruf, just by being human - by using the faculty of empathy in the same way the faculties of sight, smell, taste, touch are used. That is, naturally as wordless perceptions of what-is, and not of what is assumed or believed. There is thus no naming and no ideation necessary or involved in this use of empathy; only a living in the transient moment. For it is not correct to give names to - to denote by names and terms - some-things, some existents; since such naming, such denoting, implies the causality of separation between subject and object, and it is this causality that empathy transcends.

There are therefore no given or assumed causal means - no techniques, methods, or teachings, no praxis, no texts, no faith in some-thing or some-one - as there is no goal, assumed and/or to be striven for. There is only empathy, and its development and use: only the empathy of the living changeful

transient moment, and *us-as-Being* (The Numen, the acausal Unity, The Cosmos) presenced, temporarily, as one living nexion (*one being*) on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy.

How then to develope, to cultivate, empathy? By letting-go of all abstractions (all *-isms* and all *-ologies*). By ceasing to denote living beings by causal terms but instead perceiving them wordlessly in the moment of our perception. By ceasing to prejudge other human beings, either by some outer perceived form/appearance or by some assumption or assumptions manufactured or made by others - and instead relating to them as hitherto newly-known beings in the natural immediacy of the moment of our meeting with them. By placing ourselves in The Cosmic Perspective - that is, by an acceptance of ourselves as but one fragile fallible microcosmic nexion only temporarily presenced on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of Galaxies. This is the essence of *wu-wei* - a knowing, a feeling, of Being; a knowing, a feeling, of The Numen, the acausal Unity, the Cosmos itself; and a knowing, a feeling, once described in that ancient wisdom termed Tao, and yet which even then, as now, could not and cannot be described by or contained within that one, or any, particular term.

David Myatt
2011 CE

Notes

[1]

τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστρόφος.
Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες

Who then compels to steer us?
Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies!

Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6

[2] In respect of Δίκη, see for example my essay *Quid Est Veritas?*

[3] *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 872

[4] The modern notion of an impersonal abstract 'justice' - said to be obtainable by the making and enforcement of laws - has replaced the older, wiser, personal notion of the natural balance which was manifest in Δίκη and in the Ἐρινύες.

[4] For example, sixty million people in the Second World War, sixteen million in the First World War, and over twenty million in the Soviet Union mostly as a result of Stalin. Estimates of the number of people killed by the Mongol tyrant Genghis Khan range from a possible fifteen to twenty million, to a speculative eighty million.

[5] For an overview of the failure of the modern State, refer to my polemical essay, *The Failure and Immoral Nature of The State*.

[6]

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

(Quran, 3:104) " Let there rise among you a group Calling others to Al-Maruf [the honourable] and forbidding Al-Munkar [what is dishonourable], for these are the ones who will achieve success [Jannah]." Interpretation of Meaning

[7] Such happiness/prosperity of the majority - together with what is termed their 'security' - may be said to be the stated or the assumed *raison d'etre* of The State. Given that in modern times most human beings live in areas where States have assumed or obtained 'authority' over them, by whatever means, it might well be argued that The State with its aims and goals (based on some and various *-isms* and *-ologies*, including that of δημοκρατία) has, for those uncommitted to spiritual Ways, become an idealized weltanschauung supplanting more spiritual Ways, and a weltanschauung when not actively affirmed is at least passively accepted by a majority of such uncommitted, non-religious, ones - and even by many religious ones in agreement with that modern abstract division between State and Religion which many supporters and/or theorists of The State assume exists or believe should exist.

cc David Myatt 2011 CE



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The Way of Pathei-Mathos

Some Terms Explained

Last updated 29/April/2012

Acausal

The acausal is not a generalization - a concept - deriving from a collocation of assumed, imagined, or causally observed Phainómenon, but instead is that wordless, conceptless, a-temporal, knowing which empathy reveals and which a personal *πάθει μάθος* and an appreciation of the numinous often inclines us toward. That is, the acausal is a direct and personal (individual) revealing of beings and Being which does not depend on denoting or naming.

What is so revealed is the a-causal nature of some beings, the connexion which exists between living beings, and how living beings are emanations of *ψυχή*.

Thus speculations and postulations regarding the acausal only serve to obscure the nature of the acausal or distance us from that revealing of the acausal that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* and an appreciation of the numinous provide.

ἀρετή

Arête is the prized Hellenic virtue which can roughly be translated by the English word 'excellence' but which also implies what is naturally distinguishable - what is pre-eminent - because it reveals or shows certain valued qualities such as beauty, honour, valour, harmony.

Compassion

The English word compassion dates from around 1340 CE and the word in its original sense (and as used in this work) means *benignity*, which word derives from the Latin *benignitatem*, the sense imputed being of a kind, compassionate, well-mannered character, disposition, or deed. Benignity came into English usage around the same time as compassion; for example, the word occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* [ii. 483] written around 1374 CE.

Hence, compassion is understood as meaning being kindly disposed toward and/or feeling a sympathy with someone (or some living being) affected by pain/suffering /grief or who is enduring vicissitudes.

The word compassion itself is derived from *com*, meaning together-with, combined with *pati*, meaning to-suffer/to-endure and derived from the classical Latin *passiō*.

Thus useful synonyms for compassion, in this original sense, are *compassivity* and *benignity*.

Cosmic Perspective

The Cosmic Perspective refers to our place in the Cosmos, to the fact that we human beings are simply one fragile fallible mortal biological life-form on one planet orbiting one star in one galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies. Thus in terms of this perspective all our theories, our ideas, our beliefs, our abstractions are merely the opinionated product of our limited fallible Earth-bound so-called 'intelligence', an 'intelligence', an understanding, we foolishly, arrogantly, pridefully have a tendency to believe in and exalt as if we are somehow 'the centre of the Universe' and cosmically important.

The Cosmic Perspective inclines us - or can incline us - toward wu-wei, toward avoiding the error of hubris, toward humility, and thus toward an appreciation of the numinous.

δαίμων

A *δαίμων* is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - *θεοί* - but rather a lesser type of divinity who might be assigned by those gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or watch over certain human beings and especially particular numinous (sacred) places.

δίκη

Depending on context, *δίκη* could be the judgement of an individual (or Judgement personified), or the natural and the necessary balance, or the correct/customary /ancestral way, or what is expected due to custom, or what is considered correct and natural, and so on.

A personified Judgement - the *Δίκη* of Hesiod - is the goddess of the natural balance, evident in the ancestral customs, the ways, the way of life, the ethos, of a community, whose judgement, *δίκη*, is "in accord with", has the nature or the character of, what tends to restore such balance after some deed or deeds by an individual or individuals have upset or disrupted that balance. This sense of *δίκη* as one's ancestral customs is evident, for example, in Homer (Odyssey, III, 244).

The modern numinous principle of *Δίκαιο* suggests what lies beyond and what may have been the genesis of *δίκη* personified as the goddess, Judgement.

Empathy

Etymologically, this fairly recent English word, used to translate the German *Einfühlung*, derives, via the late Latin *sympathia*, from the Greek συμπάθεια - συμπάθης - and is thus formed from the prefix σύν (sym) together with παθ- [root of πάθος] meaning *enduring/suffering*, feeling: πάσχειν, to endure/suffer.

As used and defined by the philosophy of pathei-mathos, empathy - ἐμπάθεια - is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by that way of life, then it is a specific and extended type of συμπάθεια. That is, it is a type of and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings - and thus differs in nature from compassion.

Enantiodromia

The unusual compound Greek word ἐναντιοδρομίας occurs in a summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius.

It is used here to refer to, to name, to describe, the process - the natural change, the reformation - that occurs or which can occur in a human being because of or following πάθει μάθος.

For further details regarding enantiodromia refer to the essay 'The Change of Enantiodromia'.

ἔρις

Strife; discord; disruption; a quarrel between friends or kin. As in the Odyssey:

ἦ τ' ἔριν Ἀτρεΐδῃσι μετ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἔθηκε.

Who placed strife between those two sons of Atreus

Odyssey, 3, 136

According to the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, ἔρις was caused by, or was a consequence of, the marriage between a personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) and a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) with Polemos rather forlornly following Hubris around rather than vice versa. Eris is thus the child of Polemos and Hubris.

Extremism

By *extreme* I mean *to be harsh*, so that my understanding of an *extremist* is a person

who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious nature. Here, *harsh* is: rough, severe, a tendency to be unfeeling, unempathic.

Hence *extremism* is considered to be: (a) the result of such harshness, and (b) the principles, the causes, the characteristics, that promote, incite, or describe the harsh action of extremists. In addition, a fanatic is considered to be someone with a surfeit of zeal or whose enthusiasm for some objective, or for some cause, is intemperate.

In the philosophical terms of the way of pathei-mathos, an extremist is someone who commits the error of hubris; and error which enantiodromia - following from *πάθει μάθος* - can sometimes correct or forestall.

Honour

The English word honour dates from around 1200 CE, deriving from the Latin *honorem* (meaning refined, grace, beauty) via the Old French (and thence Anglo-Norman) *onor/onur*. As used by The Way of Pathei-Mathos, honour means an instinct for and an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous. An honourable person is thus someone of manners, fairness, natural dignity, and valour.

In respect of early usage of the term, two quotes may be of interest. The first, from c. 1393 CE, is taken from a poem, in Middle English, by John Gower:

And riht in such a maner wise
Sche bad thei scholde hire don servise,
So that Achilles underfongeth
As to a yong ladi belongeth
Honour, servise and reverence.

John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*. Liber Quintus vv. 2997-3001 [Macaulay, G.C., ed. *The Works of John Gower*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1901]

The second is from several centuries later:

" Honour - as something distinct from mere probity, and which supposes in gentlemen a stronger abhorrence of perfidy, falsehood, or cowardice, and a more elevated and delicate sense of the dignity of virtue, than are usually found in vulgar minds."

George Lyttelton. *History of the Life of Henry the Second*. London, Printed for J. Dodsley. M DCC LXXV II [1777] (A new ed., cor.) vol 3, p.178

Innocence

Innocence is regarded as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us, are therefore unjudged us by and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt. For this presumption of innocence of others – until direct personal experience, and individual and empathic knowing of them, prove otherwise – is the fair, the reasoned, the numinous, the human, thing to do.

Empathy and *πάθει μάθος* incline us toward treating other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated; that is they incline us toward fairness, toward self-restraint, toward being well-mannered, and toward an appreciation and understanding of innocence.

Numinous

The numinous is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) the natural balance of *ψυχή*; a balance which *ὑβρις* upsets. This natural balance – our being as human beings – is or can be manifest to us in or by what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity and thus places us, as individuals, in our correct relation to *ψυχή*, and which relation is that we are but one mortal emanation of *ψυχή*.

Πόλεμος

Heraclitus fragment 80

Πόλεμος is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but rather that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being (the separation of beings from Being), and thus not only that which manifests as *δίκη* but also accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being, become bound together – be whole – again by *enantiodromia*.

According to the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, *ἔρις* was caused by, or was a consequence of, the marriage between a personified *πόλεμος* (as the *δαίμων* of kindred strife) and a personified *ὑβρις* (as the *δαίμων* of arrogant pride) with Polemos rather forlornly following Hubris around rather than vice versa. Thus Eris is the child of Polemos and Hubris.

Furthermore, Polemos was originally the *δαίμων* (not the god) of kindred strife, whether familial, of friends, or of one's *πόλις* (one's clan and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of war, is doubly incorrect.

Physis (φύσις)

φύσις suggests either (i) the Homeric usage of nature or character of a person, as for example in *Odyssey*, Book 10, vv. 302-3, and also in Herodotus (2.5.2):

Αἰγύπτου γὰρ φύσις ἐστὶ τῆς χώρας τοιήδε

or (ii) *Φύσις* (Physis) as in Heraclitus fragment 123 - that is, the natural nature of all beings, beyond their outer appearance, and which natural nature we, as human beings, have a natural [an unconscious] inclination to conceal; either because of *ὑβρις* or through an ignorance, an unknowing, of ourselves as an emanation of *ψυχή*.

In terms of the nature or the character of an individual:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίῃ ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

Heraclitus fragment 112

ὑβρις

ὑβρις (hubris) is the error of personal insolence, of going beyond the proper limits set by: (a) reasoned (balanced) judgement - *σωφρονεῖν* - and by (b) an awareness, a personal knowing, of the numinous, and which knowing of the numinous can arise from empathy and *πάθει μάθος*.

Hubris upsets the natural balance - is contrary to *ἀρμονίη* - and often results from a person or persons striving for or clinging to some causal abstraction.

According to The Way of Pathei-Mathos, *ὑβρις* disrupts - and conceals - our appreciation of what is numinous and thus of what/whom we should respect, classically understood as *ψυχή* and *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* and those sacred places guarded or watched over by *δαιμόνων*.

Wu-wei

Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their *φύσις*, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, *πάθει μάθος*,

and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness, and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings/ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

ψυχή

Life *qua* being. Our being as a living existent is considered an emanation of ψυχή. Thus ψυχή is what 'animates' us and what gives us our nature, φύσις, as human beings. Our nature is that of a mortal fallible being veering between σωφρονεῖν (thoughtful reasoning, and thus fairness) and ὕβρις.

cc David Myatt 2012 CE

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Soli Deo Gloria

Being extracts from a letter written in reply
to someone enquiring about the philosophy of The Numinous Way.

Since you enquire about the veracity of my Numinous Way, I should perhaps emphasize - as I have mentioned several times over the past few years - that this Way represents only my own fallible answers born from my own pathei-mathos, and that I am acutely aware that the answers of many other Ways, such as Buddhism and the answers of conventional religions such as Catholicism, also in their own particular harmonious manner express something of the numinous and may thus for many people provide a guide to living in a more numinous way.

As I wrote many years ago:

The Numinous Way is but one answer to the questions about existence, [and] does not have some monopoly on truth, nor does it claim any prominence, accepting that all the diverse manifestations of the Numen, all the diverse answers, of the various numinous Ways and religions, have or may have their place, and all perhaps may serve the same ultimate purpose - that of bringing us closer to the ineffable beauty, the ineffable goodness, of life; that of transforming us, reminding us; that of giving us as individuals the chance to cease to cause suffering, to presence the good, to be part of the Numen itself. For what distinguishes a valuable, a good, a numinous Way or religion, is firstly this commitment, however expressed, to the cessation of suffering through means which do not cause more suffering; secondly, having some practical means whereby individuals can transform themselves for the better, and thirdly, possessing some way of presenting, manifesting, presencing what is sacred, what is numinous, thus reconnecting the individual to the source of their being, to their humanity.

In my fallible view, any Way or religion which manifests, which expresses, which guides individuals toward, the numinous humility we human beings need is good, and should not be stridently condemned.

For such personal humility - that which prevents us from committing hubris, whatever the *raison d'être*, the theology, the philosophy - is a presencing of the numinous. Indeed, one might write and say that it is a personal humility - whatever the source - that expresses our true developed (that is, rational and empathic) human nature and which nature such Ways or religions or mythological allegories remind us of. Hence the formulae, the expression, *Soli Deo Gloria* being one Western cultural

manifestation of a necessary truth, manifesting as it does one particular numinous allegory among many such historical and cultural and mythological allegories. Just as, for example, the sight of King Louis IX walking barefoot to Sainte Chapelle was a symbol of the humility which the Christian faith, correctly understood, sought to cultivate in individuals.

As I mentioned in my essay *Humility, Abstractions, and Belief*,

One of the great advantages – a manifestation of humanity – of a Way such as Islam and Christianity and Buddhism is that they provide, or can provide, us with the supra-personal perspective, and thus the humility, we human beings require to prevent us veering into and becoming subsumed with the error of hubris.

As it says in the Rule of Saint Benedict:

“ The peak of our endeavour is to achieve profound humility...”
Chapter 7, *The Value of Humility*

As it says in the Quran:

“ The ‘*Ibaad* of Ar-Rahman [Allah] are those who walk on earth in humility.” 25:63

As it says in the Dhammapada:

“ Yo bâlo maññati bâlyae paúóitovâpi tena so bâlo ca paúóitamânî sa ve bâloti vuccati.”

“ Accepting of themselves, the simple person in their simplicity is wise, although if they pride themselves they are wise, they are simply full of pride. “

Furthermore, such Ways provide such a supra-personal perspective in a manner which is living – that is, these Ways are presented to us as something which has a historical genesis and which lives among us, in our own times, in and through those devoted to them in that dignified manner which makes such people living examples of those tenets, of those Ways. That is, the dignified people who follow such Ways – who are inspired by those Ways to practice humility in their own lives – thus manifest the numinous, the sacred, among us, and so can provide us with practical, and personal, guidance, and a sense of belonging.

Thus, I now have, partly from practical experience, come to apprehend a certain unity, a certain common insight, behind many outwardly differing Ways and religious forms, to the extent that I personally have been considered by some people to be some kind of Buddhist-Taoist-Muslim-Sufi-Catholic-NuminousWay-pagan-mystic

hybrid. But in truth, I am merely someone who as a result of pathei-mathos knows their limitations, their fallibility, and thus who empathically resonates with past and present emanations of the numinous, often because of struggling to answer certain questions about our human nature, about our mortal existence, and about the nature of Reality which many others over millennia have also sought to answer.

Since you especially ask about Catholicism in relation to the Numinous Way, all I can say in my experience - having been raised a Catholic and having spent some time as a Catholic monk - is that Catholicism did manifest, and to an extent still does manifest, aspects of the numinous and therefore this particular guide to human living is one which I understand and appreciate as one style of earthly-harmony.

As I wrote a year or so ago:

" The Latin Tridentine Mass of the Catholic Church [...] evolved over a certain period of causal time, and became, for many Catholics, the main ritual, or rite, which imbued their ordinary lives with a certain numinosity - a certain awareness of the sacred, with attendance at this rite involving certain customs, such as modest and clean dress, and women covering their heads with a veil. This rite was, in essence, a *Mysterium* - that is, it embodied not only something holy and somewhat mysterious (such as the Consecration and Communion) but also was wordlessly un-mundane and so re-presented to most of those attending the rite, almost another world, with this re-presentation aided by such things as the use of incense, the ringing of the Sanctus bell, and the genuflections. In addition, and importantly, the language of this rite was not that of everyday speech, and was not even, any longer, a living changing language, but rather had in many ways become the sacred language of that particular Way.

The Catholic rite endured for centuries and, indeed, to attend this particular rite marked, affirmed and re-affirmed one as a Catholic, as a particular follower of a particular Way, and a Way quite distinct from the schism that became Protestantism [1], a fact which explained, for instance, the decision, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth the First of England, to punish by fine or imprisonment those who attended this rite, and to persecute, accuse of treason, and often execute, those who performed this rite.

However, the reforms imposed by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican replaced this numinous rite, this *Mysterium*, with rites and practices redolent of un-numinous Protestantism. Why? Most probably because those involved in such planning and producing and implementing such reforms were swayed by the causal abstractions of "progress" and "relevancy" - desiring as they did and do to be in accord with the causal, material, *Zeitgeist* of the modern West where numbers of adherents, and conformity to trendy ideas and theories, are regarded as more important than presencing The Numen in a numinous manner. When, that is, some profane causal abstractions come to be regarded as more relevant than

experiencing and manifesting the sacred as the sacred.

Yet this does not mean that Catholicism, before the reforms imposed by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, was or remained a Way, *per se*. Only that, of all the variants of what are now termed Christianity, it retained a certain numinosity expressed by the original Way; that, through its Mysteries such as the Tridentine Mass, it still presented something of The Numen; and that it managed to avoid the worst excesses of the religious attitude, maintaining as it did a monasticism which by its own particular way of life encouraged the cultivation of a genuine, non-dogmatic, humility."

Source - Concerning The Nature of Religion and The Nature of The Numinous Way

As this quote - and the associated footnote - make clear, it is my personal opinion that traditional Catholicism, with its Tridentine Mass and its particular conservative traditions, was a somewhat better, more harmonious, expression of the numinous (a necessary and relevant expression of the numinous), than both Protestantism and the reforms introduced by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, and which reforms served only to undermine the numinous, to untwist the threads that held together its "hidden soul of harmony".

However, what really matters in my view in respect of considering how we judge and evaluate other Ways and other styles of earthly-harmony (that is, what are often regarded as religious expressions of the numinous), is not so much their veracity as perceived and/or assumed by us during one span or certain spans of causal Time, but rather how those Ways, those expressions, affect people and predispose them toward or guide them toward living in a more numinous manner. That is, by criteria such as humility, avoidance of hubris, compassion, fairness toward others: by those things which express, which manifest, the numinous in us, in terms of our character, our behaviour. Not, that is, by some abstract criteria which we posit and which we with arrogance use to condemn or malign, often based on some vainglorious assumption or need that our own beliefs, our own answers, are the correct ones.

There is thus a tolerance, a respect; a desire not to stridently condemn; an awareness of our own fallibility deriving from our own pathei-mathos and from the numinous perspective, the silent wordless clarity, that such a personal learning from the suffering of experience brings.

All I have tried to do in respect of The Numinous Way is present what I hope is an alternative style of earthly-harmony, and sought to clarify how this alternative differs from others. For instance, in the matter of empathy, of honour, and of seeking to avoid the dogma arising from some causal abstraction or other. As to the veracity of my personal answers, I admit I do not know.

David Myatt
June 2011 CE

Footnotes:

[1] Catholicism (before the reforms imposed by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican) represented, in my view, the original Way known as Christianity, and was - at least before those reforms - quite distinct from those schisms which are now known as Protestantism and Orthodox Christianity. Indeed, distinct enough - until those reforms - to be considered a different Way of Life, a Way evident, for example, in Catholic rites (such as the Tridentine Mass), in monasticism, in Papal authority, in the use of Latin, and in the reverence accorded The Blessed Virgin Mary.

Furthermore, it is my view that the schism now termed Protestantism was a classic example of the religious attitude predominating over numinosity - and thus that it is and was redolent of attempts to reduce The Numen to linear causal abstractions. Thus, Mysteriums such as the Tridentine Mass became replaced with recitation of Scripture in the vernacular and with attempts to rationally explain - according to some abstract causal theory - the mystery of the consecration.

The Change of Enantiodromia

The Meaning of Enantiodromia

The unusual compound Greek word *ἐναντιοδρομίας* occurs in a summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius:

πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα (ix. 7)

This unusual word is usually translated as something like 'conflict of opposites' or 'opposing forces' which I consider are incorrect for several reasons.

Firstly, in my view, a transliteration should be used instead of some translation, for the Greek expression suggests something unique, something which exists in its own right as a principle or 'thing' and which uniqueness of meaning has a context, with both context and uniqueness lost if a bland translation is attempted. Lost, as the uniqueness, and context, of for example, *δαιμόνων* becomes lost if simply translated as 'spirits' (or worse, as 'gods'), or as the meaning of *κακός* in Hellenic culture is lost if mistranslated as 'evil'.

Second, the context seems to me to hint at something far more important than 'conflict of opposites', the context being the interesting description of the philosophy of Heraclitus before and after the word occurs, as given by Diogenes Laërtius:

1) *ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα συνεστάναι*

2) *εἰς τοῦτο ἀναλύεσθαι*

3) *πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα*

4) *καὶ πάντα ψυχῶν εἶναι καὶ δαιμόνων πλήρη*

The foundation/base/essence of all beings ['things'] is pyros to which they return, with all [of them] by genesis appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] to be bound together again by enantiodromia, and all filled/suffused/vivified with/by *ψυχή* and *Dæmons*.

This raises several interesting questions, not least concerning *ψυχή* and *δαιμόνων*,

but also regarding the sense of *πυρὸς*. Is pyros here a philosophical principle - such as *ψυχή* - or used as in fragment 43, the source of which is also Diogenes Laërtius:

ὑβριν χρὴ σβεννύναι μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν (ix 2)

Better to deal with your hubris before you confront that fire

Personally, I incline toward the former, of some principle being meant, given the context, and the generalization - *ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα*. In respect of *ψυχῶν καὶ δαιμόνων* I would suggest that what is implied is the numinous, our apprehension of The Numen, and which numen is the source of *ψυχή* and the origin of Dæmons. For a *δαίμων* is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - *θεοί* - but another type of divinity (that is, another emanation of the numen; another manifestation of the numinous) who might be assigned by those numinous gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or who watch over certain human beings and especially over particular numinous (sacred) places.

Thus the above summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus might be paraphrased as:

The foundation of all beings is Pyros to which they return, with all by genesis appropriately apportioned to be bound together again by enantiodromia, with all beings suffused with [are emanations of] the numen.

Furthermore, hubris disrupts - and conceals - our appreciation of the numen, our appreciation of *ψυχή* and of Dæmons: of what is numinous and what/whom we should respect. A disruption that makes us unbalanced, makes us disrespect the numinous and that of the numinous (such as *δαιμόνων* and *θεοί* and sacred places), and which unbalance enantiodromia can correct, with enantiodromia suggesting a confrontation - that expected dealing with our hubris necessary in order to return to Pyros, the source of beings. Here, Pyros is understood not as we understand 'fire' - and not even as some sort of basic physical element among other elements such as water - but rather as akin to both the constant 'warmth and the light of the Sun' (that brings life) and the sudden lightning that, as from Zeus, can serve as warning (omen) and retribution, and which can destroy and be a cause of devastating fire and thus also of the regeneration/rebuilding that often follows from such fires and from the learning, the respect, that arises from appreciating warnings (omens) from the gods. All of which perhaps explains fragment 64:

τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίζει Κεραυνός

All beings are guided by Lightning

Enantiodromia in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

In the philosophy of The Numinous Way, enantiodromia is understood as the process - the natural change - that occurs or which can occur in a human being because of or following *πάθει μάθος*. For part of *πάθει μάθος* is a 'confrontational contest' - an interior battle - and an acceptance of the need to take part in this battle and 'face the consequences', one of which is learning the (often uncomfortable) truth about one's own unbalanced, strife-causing, nature.

If successful in this confrontation, there is or there can be a positive, moral, development of the nature, the character - the *φύσις* (physis) - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this *pathei-mathos*, and which appreciation includes an awareness of why *ὑβρις* is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect, of a going beyond the due limits, and which *ὑβρις* is the genesis of the *τύραννος* and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate *ἔρις* [1].

Thus enantiodromia reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for *ψυχή* to flourish - which natural balance is *δίκη* as *Δίκαια* [2] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in *ἀρμονία* [3], manifest as *ἀρμονία* is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei and *σωφρονεῖν* (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement).

David Myatt
April 2012 ce

Notes

[1] Heraclitus, fragment 80: *εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεῶν]*

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

See my *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*.

[2] In respect of the numinous principle of *Δίκαια*, refer to my short essay *The Principle of Δίκαια*.

[3] Although φύσις has a natural tendency to become covered up (Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ - concealment accompanies Physis) it can be uncovered through λόγος and πάθει μάθος.



Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen

Numinous Philosophy

It is perhaps necessary to make a distinction between conventional (academic) philosophy and what we may term esoteric, or perhaps more accurately, numinous philosophy.

Conventional Western philosophy - from Plato to Nietzsche, and beyond - is basically the process of trying to determine, or to posit, certain fundamental causes, then giving or manufacturing names and terms to the causes so found or so posited, and then analysing being, beings - existents/objects ("things") - including ourselves, in relation to what has been so supposed, so posited. This is the process of causal ideation - where some fundamental form, or cause, is sought; the positing of some ideal or perfect form for beings and "things"; making connections between a subject (some form, being, thing) and an object (an attribute or value or quality assigned to such a form, being, or thing), and which subject and object are named and classified according to some category, and which category is determined by attributes of inclusion/exclusion.

Knowledge is then assumed to be a knowing, or the discovery of, such object-subject orientated connections; of such fundamental causes; and of the relations (in causal Space and causal Time) between the various posited categories and ideals/forms. Thus, Being, and beings, are perceived ("known") in terms of what is apparent to us by means of our known physical senses - Phainómenon - and what is posited about what is so perceived in the causal, phenomenal, reality that such senses make us aware of. Hence, the essentials which Aristotle enumerated: (i) Reality (existence) exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (ii) our limited understanding of this independent 'external world' depends for the most part

upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (iii) logical argument, or reason, is perhaps the most important means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) the cosmos (existence) is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws.

Furthermore, this process, of a causal ideation, this knowing via our physical senses, also underlies Natural Philosophy - that is, experimental science - where the subject-object relation is often expressed in mathematical terms; where there is a positing of certain fundamental, or universal, laws (of Nature, the Cosmos, Physics, and so on); and where theories (models) are developed, from observational, empirical, data to explain the relation between "things" (beings, objects) and the axioms, or laws, which form the basis of a particular theory. However, one important difference between conventional philosophy and experimental science is the use, in experimental science, of observational data and of experiments to determine if what a theory or model predicts or assumes is valid or not.

For myself, I understand philosophy according to what the etymology of the word itself imputes - *φίλος*, a friend, of *σοφόν*; so that a philosopher is someone for whom knowledge, understanding, and thence wisdom, are important. In addition, I make a fundamental, an important, distinction between *causal knowing* - derived from both conventional philosophy and from experimental science - and *acausal knowing*. Causal knowledge - and thus the causal knowledge of conventional philosophy and experimental science - derives from the process of causal ideation, whereas acausal knowing derives from, and is thus dependant upon, the human process of empathy.

Thus, a friend of *σοφόν* - a philosopher - should seek both causal and acausal knowledge in order to approach an understanding of Reality and in order to move toward wisdom. Since esoteric, or numinous, philosophy is the knowledge that arises from both causal and acausal knowing, it thus follows that the knowing of both conventional philosophy and experimental science is limited and incomplete, and therefore is not or cannot be a reliable guide to, or a reliable means to find, wisdom.

The Axiom of Empathy

The fundamental axiom (the foundation) of numinous philosophy - and thus of The Philosophy of The Numen - is that of empathy [*συν-πάθος*]. That empathy is a natural faculty possessed by human beings, and presents to us, or can

present to us, a type of knowing - a perception - quite distinct from that posited by both conventional philosophy and experimental science. That is, numinous philosophy adds the faculty of empathy to our physical senses; adds the perception of empathy to the perception of Phainómenon, and thus to the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science.

The perception which empathy provides is both of acausality and of the personal immediacy-of-the-causal-moment, and it is these which make numinous philosophy quite distinct from the causal reductionism, the impersonal abstractions, of both conventional philosophy and experimental science. For the essence of the faculty of empathy is a sympathy, *συμπάθεια*, with other living beings arising from a perception of the acausal reality underlying the causal division of beings, existents, into separate, causal-separated, objects and the subject-object relationship which is or has been assumed by means of the process of causal ideation to exist between such causally-separated beings. That is, and for instance, the implied or assumed causal separateness of living beings is appearance and not an expression of the true nature of Being and beings.

In essence, empathy presents the perception of the acausal-causal unity that forms the basis of Reality (of Being) - a perception which moves us, for instance, beyond the assumption of the isolated separateness of (and assumed importance of) our own individual selves, and which thus has important ethical, aesthetic, and social, implications.

But, one might with reason enquire, does this posited faculty of empathy really exist? I would argue that yes it does, and for two basic reasons, the first one of which is possibly more important from the viewpoint of conventional philosophy, based as it is to some extent on the causal type of knowing familiar to conventional philosophy.

(1) This first reason in favour of the axiom of empathy is that the evidence for its existence is manifest particularly in what we may term the numinous: that is, in the distinction we have made, we make, or we are capable of making, between the sacred and the profane; and which distinction is manifest, for example, in that understanding of *ὑβρις* and *Δίκη* which can be obtained from the works of Sophocles, and Aeschylus [1], and from an understanding of *Φύσις* evident in some of the sayings attributed to Heraclitus [2]. This understanding is, in essence, the natural balance manifest in the prized Hellenistic personal quality of *ἀρετή*, and in culture itself [3].

Understood by reference to such classical illustrations, empathy is thus what predisposed us to know *Δίκη* and avoid *ὑβρις*, as empathy itself was, can be, and often is, learned or developed by *πάθει μάθος*. From a direct, personal,

learning from experience and suffering [4]. That is, a certain empathy is, and has been, the natural basis for numinous culture: for a tradition which informs us, and reminds us - through Art, literature, the accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of individuals, and often through a religious-type awareness - of the need for balance, for *ἁρμονίη*, achieved by not going beyond the numinous limits.

In effect, therefore, living, numinous cultures - and the Art, literature, and religious awareness, of previous numinous cultures which are available to us - present us with an understanding of how empathy, emerging (as in the proclamation of the Zeus of Aeschylus), and still rather primordial, came to be valued and understood.

(2) The second reason for the axiom of empathy is that it explains, in a rational way, what conventional philosophy and experimental science cannot currently explain, which is the nature of life itself. Why, for instance, some physical matter we perceive and know is alive, while some is not. Previous explanations, before the emergence of experimental science, regarding life centred mainly around the notion of some deity or deities; or on some notion such as the Greek *ψυχή*, said to be connected to *Αἰὼν*. The conundrum for experimental science is that living beings obviate many of the laws postulated by sciences such as Physics, since a living being, for example, changes and can act (can grow and can move) without the application of any external force. Furthermore, no amount of experimental science can imbue inert, inorganic, matter with *ψυχή* and so make it alive - or can even describe what animates matter to make it a living being and so distinguish it from non-living matter.

Empathy, however, explains life by presenting to us the knowing, the perception, of the acausal continuum [5].

The Development of Empathy

It is my contention that, previously, historically, empathy was not understood as a personal, individual, living faculty that could be developed and which, being so developed, could present each of us with a new, and valuable, type of knowing.

Instead, empathy was often or mostly understood by reference to existing, or manufactured, causal ideations - for example, in relation to myths and legends of gods and goddesses, and in relation to avoiding a retribution from, or misfortune being brought by, such deities. Furthermore, the empathic perception of the acausal-causal unity that forms the basis of Reality (of Being) was often understood in relation to a hypothesized unity, or the

transcendence, of some deity, supreme, monotheistic, or otherwise, with there in consequence being, over historical periods of causal Time, a move away from the original empathic insight or insights or one or more individuals (often manifest in a particular Way of Life), and instead toward a more causal religious attitude, often evident as such a causal religious attitude is in the veneration of certain texts, and the need for exegesis regarding such texts [6]. One important example of an empathic insight - of a knowing deriving from the empathy of an individual or individuals - is in that Way of Life which is now known as Buddhism. Another is in that Way of Life now known as Taoism.

However, given our understanding of living, numinous, cultures, and the knowledge and understanding derivable from the Art, literature, conventional philosophy and religious awareness, of previous and existing cultures - including that one often termed Western culture, with its genesis in the Hellenic - we now have an understanding, a knowing, of empathy *qua* empathy. Of, in particular, the perception of the acausal-causal unity *sans* all causal ideations, all causal abstractions, including those previously regarded as, or actually being, religious, and including those which were originally empathic Ways of Life but which became, over time, dependant on texts and their interpretation with the consequent reliance on ritual, religious observance, interpretation, and religious techniques.

The faculty of empathy *qua* empathy - and the knowing deriving from the use of this faculty - is quite simple.

" Empathy... is only a translocation of ourselves; only a letting-go of the illusion of our self and thus a knowing-of another living-being as that living-being *is*, as that living-being (human or otherwise) is presenced, manifest, in the causal world of causal perception. In the simple sense, empathy is a numinous sympathy with another living-being; that is, a becoming - for a causal moment or moments - of that other-being, so that we know, can feel, can understand, the suffering or the joy of that living-being. In such moments, there is no distinction made between *them and us* - there is only the flow of life; only the presencing and the ultimate unity of Life itself. Thus do we or can feel in such moments - because of and through empathy - the Unity itself, and thus may we feel or know or have some apprehension of, how the Cosmos itself, how Nature, is living, changing, and can evolve by what we do or suffer because of what we do not do." *The Cultivation of Empathy (Three Essays Regarding The Numinous Way)*

That is, empathy presents us with the perception of the acausal-causal unity as that unity is - which is of there being no subject-object division, no them and us, but instead a connexion between all life, and of ourselves, as mortals beings, being an indivisible part of that unity, which our actions capable of harming and causing suffering to other life.

The Consequences of Empathy

The two most important consequence of the acausal knowing that empathy presents to us, are that of the personal immediacy-of-the-causal-moment, and that the notion of our separateness from other living beings (human and otherwise) is a causal-only perception, an illusion.

The personal immediacy-of-the-causal-moment means that empathy is an attribute of and dependant upon the individual living being, in the moment of empathy, and cannot be abstracted out from an individual living being - that is, it cannot have any causal ideation. It cannot be constrained or contained by any causal form, any ideal, or by any causal theory, as it cannot have any causal, non-living, non-immediate, value or quality assigned to it or used to classify it. Thus, no theory of ethics, applied to others or applicable to others, at some other time and place, can be developed from empathic knowing, just as no law or laws, no theory of government, or whatever, applied to others or applicable to others, at some other time and place, can be developed from empathic knowing.

Empathic knowing is an awareness that the notion of our separateness from other living beings (human and otherwise) is a causal-only perception and thus, essentially, obscures the true nature of Reality and of our own being, our own nature. Such empathic knowing therefore reveals (uncovers) the connexions between beings, and the sympathetic dependant nature of beings, and predisposes us, by its very nature - by *συμπάθεια* - toward compassion, which is a practical manifestation of empathy, and of the natural balance of Life, of which Life the individual we assume we is only a microcosmic, fragile, mortal part:

" Empathic awareness of other Life - the basis for compassion - is just being sympathetically aware of, and sensitive to, other Life, and letting such Life *be*. This letting-be - this *wu-wei* - is not interfering in that Life by un-naturally imposing ourselves and/or some manufactured causal abstraction upon that Life, but rather allowing ourselves to be in harmony, in natural balance, with Life because

such balance allows us to be aware of, to become, the nexion we are to all Life, to Nature, to the Cosmos itself, and thus reveals the Unity, the matrix, of all living beings, which Unity the illusion of our self, and all abstractions, conceal, or disrupt or destroy.

Such empathy makes us aware of how other Life, other living-beings, can suffer, and how some-things, some actions, do or can cause suffering or have caused suffering." *Living The Numinous Way (Three Essays Regarding The Numinous Way)*

The alleviation of suffering, by means of using and developing our faculty of empathy, and acting upon the acausal knowing empathy reveals to us, is thus a natural and necessary evolution of ourselves.

Conclusion

There are two fundamental errors of conventional philosophy. First, the application of a causal perception and a causal ideation - a causal denoting - to living beings; and, second, the assumption of a causal-only knowing.

These errors lead to and have led to ὕβρις and to the imposition of causal abstractions [7] - to the artificial separation and classification of living beings, and to ideals of "otherness" and impersonal "value" - and thus have caused or contributed to suffering. Empathy, however, being always of the immediacy of the moment, and always personal, and being a translocation of ourselves, uncovers the reality which is the connexion between all living beings, sentient and otherwise, and thus predisposes us toward compassion, thus avoiding ὕβρις and thus dispensing with causal abstractions.

Therefore it is reasonable to suggest that a Way of Life such as The Numinous Way, which is based upon empathy and acausal knowing and thus upon balanced reasoning (σωφρονεῖν), can restore to us, as individuals, the numinous balance which uncovers our true connected nature as living beings and also enable that compassion which can lead to the cessation of suffering, and which cessation of suffering is the only goal that is numinous (and thus wise) by virtue of manifesting the acausal nature of ψυχή (Life) itself.

There is, therefore, a numinous will to love and a numinous personal desire to cease to cause suffering, as opposed to the causal "will to power", the causal "desire for self", and the causal love of and need for impersonal abstractions, that have for so long blighted our human, suffering-causing, lives.

David Myatt
December 2010 CE

[1] In particular, *The Agamemnon* of Aeschylus; and *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and *Antigone*, of Sophocles. In respect of *Oedipus Tyrannus*, refer, for example, to vv.863ff and vv.1329-1338

In much mis-understood verses in *The Agamemnon* (1654-1656) Clytaemnestra makes it known that she still is aware of the power, and importance, of Δίκη. Of not "killing to excess".

μηδαμῶς, ὧ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἄλλα δράσωμεν κακά.
ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ' ἐξαμῆσαι πολλά, δύστηνον θέρος.
πημονῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει: μηδὲν αἵματώμεθα.

The aforementioned verses are often mis-translated to give some nonsense such as: "No more violence. Here is a monstrous harvest and a bitter reaping time. There is pain enough already. Let us not be bloody now."

However, what Aeschylus actually has Clytaemnestra say is: "Let us not do any more harm for to reap these many would make it an *unlucky* harvest: injure them just enough, but do not stain us with their blood."

She is being practical (and quite Hellenic) and does not want to bring misfortune (from the gods) upon herself, or Aegisthus, by killing *to excess*. The killings she has done are, however, quite acceptable to her - she has vigorously defended them claiming it was her natural duty to avenge her daughter and the insult done to her by Agamemnon bringing his mistress, Cassandra, into her home. Clytaemnestra shows no pity for the Elders whom Aegisthus wishes to kill: "if you must", she says, "you can injure them. But do not kill them - that would be *unlucky* for us." That would be going just too far, and overstep what she still perceives as the natural, the proper, limits of mortal behaviour.

As Sophocles says of such limits in *Antigone*:

ὕβρις φντεύει τύραννον:
ὕβρις, εἰ πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῇ μάταν,
ἂ μὴ 'πίκαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,

ἄκρότατον εἰσαναβᾶσ'
αἶπος ἀπότομον ὥρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν
ἔνθ' οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ
χρῆται.

Insolence [ὑβρις] plants the tyrant:
There is insolence if by a great foolishness
There is a useless over-filling which goes beyond
The proper limits -
It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights
And then that hurtling toward that Destiny
Where the useful foot has no use.

Soph. Antig. vv.872ff

[2] Two fragments attributed to Heraclitus are of interest in this respect - 112, and 123. For 112 refer to my *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*. For 123, refer to my *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[3] Where culture may be defined as the arts of personal manners, of personal dignity, of civility, and of a received and living (and thus numinous) tradition (often aurally transmitted), and which tradition is therefore both respected and regarded as a source of practical wisdom and practical knowledge, and which practical wisdom and practical knowledge is often (or mostly) derived from the accumulated personal experience, accomplishments, and observations, of the elders and ancestors of that tradition. In all such numinous, living, cultures, there is an understanding, if only intuitive, of the difference between the sacred (the numinous, the gods, the natural) and the profane (the ordinary, the common, the vulgar) and of the necessity for some kind of natural balance to be maintained.

[4] As I wrote in my *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way*:

The Greek term *πάθει μάθος* (pathei-mathos) derives from The Agamemnon of Aeschylus (written c. 458 BCE), and can be interpreted, or translated, as meaning *learning from adversary*, or *wisdom arises from (personal) suffering*; or *personal experience is the genesis of true learning*.

However, this expression should be understood in context, for what Aeschylus writes is that the Immortal, Zeus, guiding mortals to

reason, has provided we mortals with a new law, which law replaces previous ones, and this new law – this new guidance laid down for mortals – is pathei-mathos. Thus, for we human beings, pathei-mathos possesses a numinous authority.

The context (Aeschylus: Agamemnon, 174-183) is:

Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν:
ὄν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδῶ-
σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.

If anyone, from reasoning, exclaims loudly that victory of Zeus,
Then they have acquired an understanding of all these things;
Of he who guided mortals to reason,
Who laid down that this possesses authority:
Learning from adversity.

[5] In essence, Reality may be considered to consist of a causal continuum, and an acausal continuum. The causal continuum is the phenomenal Universe evident to us by means of experimental science, and currently described by a causal Space of three spatial dimensions and a linear, single, dimension of causal Time.

The acausal continuum is most evident to us by means of *ψυχή* - that is, by Life; that which makes us and keeps us mortal (alive) - the essence of our causal being. Hence, every living being is a nexion (a connexion) between the causal and the acausal, and that which animates our being is acausal energy, from the acausal continuum, with this acausal energy being quite distinct from the causal energy known to, and described by, experimental science.

Technically, the acausal can be described by an acausal Space of n acausal dimensions, and an acausal, un-linear, Time of n dimensions, where n is currently unknown but is greater than three and less than or equal to infinity. For more details refer to my *The Physics of Acausal Energy*.

[6] Refer, for example, to my *Exegesis and The Discovery of Wisdom in The Numinous Way and Religion - Three Essays Concerning The Nature of Religion*.

[7] Causal abstractions derive from the process of ideation, and are thus the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, "image" or category, and thus some

generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals - and/or some being, some "thing" - to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such being/things /individuals. The positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction, as are the *-isms* and the *-ologies* that are abstracted from types of causal knowing, be such *-isms* and such *-ologies* described as political, religious, or social.

Thus, the theory of "democracy" is such a causal abstraction - based on some ideal (in this instance, a type of government) and used as a guide, a template, for people to aspire to and strive to implement, and which guide or template is said to have or be capable of having some abstract quality termed "good" by its very nature as an abstraction. That is, "democracy is by its nature a good thing, therefore this ideal should (or must) be aspired to."

Similarly, the idea of a State is a causal abstraction - based on some perceived and theorized (and alleged) need for large-scale centralization of resources, especially fiscal and military, and for an abstract "law" and an impersonal justice (based on some abstract theory of ethics) to be required to control and "improve" individuals, or facilitate some notion (some ideal, some theorized abstraction) of happiness and peace (of "the greatest number" or whatever).

All abstractions by their very nature usurp the immediacy and personal nature of acausal knowing, and all demand, or expect, in varying ways, the individual accept such impersonal abstractions over and above, or in place of, their own immediate acausal knowing and the personal judgement arising from such immediate knowing. That is, all abstractions are assigned some value which is always greater than the personal immediate compassion arising from empathy.

An Introduction To The Ontology of Being

Causal and Acausal Being

According to The Numinous Way, what exists - Being, the source of beings - is both causal and acausal. That is, philosophy, understood as an ontology of Being, is or should be the study of both causal and acausal existents: of those beings whose being is causal, of those beings whose being is acausal, and those beings whose being is both causal and acausal.

By causal is meant that aspect of Being which exists, has being in, causal Space (of three spatial dimensions) and in causal, linear, non-recurring, Time. By acausal is meant that aspect of Being which exists, has being in, acausal Space (of a currently unspecified number of non-spatial dimensions), and in the non-linear, simultaneity, of acausal Time.

Hitherto, the study of beings has been somewhat hindered by the error of abstraction. The limitation - the error - of abstraction is that all abstractions, by their nature, are causal; based upon the linearity of causal Time and the limitations of causal Space, whose dimensions are spatial and thus distinct from each other (conventionally, and geometrically, at right angles to each other).

That is, abstraction is the process whereby beings are described in causal terms, as separate, or individual, entities, or existents - in terms of a linear, non-returnable, Time and a separation of linear dimensions - which entities can be referred to, be compared to, or can be defined by means of, some abstract construct which is said to have the ideal being, or form, or be the genesis of, such discrete entities or existents.

That is, abstraction posits Being as a collocation of, or groups of, separate and specific beings which can be categorized according to, or included in, or which belong to, some generalization, some pure or idealized form [*εἶδος* and *ιδέα*] of all such specific and separate, separated, beings; with these separate and specific beings all possessing the quality of - being subject to - the linearity of causal Time, that is, having the nature of existing, of having being, in a linear way, so that there is assumed to be some progression, or some linear change, or the possibility/potentiality of such linear change, in such beings.

One aspect of this assumption of linear progression - of a causal-only change of being - is that of *πόλεμος* [as a revealing of Being, for instance], one manifestation of which is said to be, or can be described as, a dialectic. That, from such a dialectic, from such *πόλεμος*, there is or there can be understanding and knowledge, and what has been termed "progress". or, expressed another way, such dialectic is a means to

understanding and knowledge and thus an important mechanism by which "progress" can be obtained.

The error of abstraction leads us to perceive our being as in separation to or from other beings (human and otherwise) and to posit that we, as existents, are discrete, and independent of other beings. That is, that we have a self; or that it is in our very nature, as human beings, to be a self, and which self is contained in, limited to, the causal space and causal Time - the causality - of our individual physical body, and which body is in separation to other such bodies, ontologically, physically, and otherwise.

In a similar way, knowledge has been considered to a knowing of - or a process of linearly becoming aware of or progressively accumulating such knowledge of - such causal abstractions and what they denote, represent, or contain.

Such perception, and such a type of knowing, are but a limited, causal, view (dependant on causal Space and causal Time) - and do not include any awareness of, or any understanding of, the acausality of our being, as humans. As such it is lifeless, an un-numinous, abstraction, and what derives from it is a covering-up of the numinosity [1] of our being.

For our being, as human beings, is both causal and acausal. That is, it is numinous, possessed of Life, and Empathy - the use of the faculty of empathy - is a means whereby we human beings can perceive and know the acausality of our being.

Empathy is, by its nature, an apprehension of acausality, and an apprehension that moves us away from the limitation, the error, the restriction, of abstraction - from the illusion of a discrete self-containment (the self) - and restores us to our numinous being. This numinous, this empathic, apprehension or knowing, is one of connexion, and which connexions manifest the acausal Time and the nature of acausal Space inherent in acausal being.

Thus, with the knowing deriving from empathy, there is knowledge of ourselves, of we individual human beings, as but one nexion, one connexion, to other human beings, and to all beings which possess acausality, that is, which presence or manifest Life, and thus are alive. For it is the possession of acausality - of acausal being - that distinguishes what lives, from what is non-living. Empathy, therefore, places us in relation to - as connected to - other human life, and all existents which are alive, and implicit in such empathy is the cessation of causal presumption.

Our relation to other living beings - which empathy uncovers - is thus one of interconnected being, where we affect, and are or can be affected by, other life. That is, there is a symbiosis; a living connexion of acausal simultaneity. Hitherto - often because of abstractions, the illusion of self-hood, and our failure to use and develop our faculty of empathy - we have been mostly unaware of, or have ignored, this symbiosis, how we affect or can affect other living beings because of our inherent acausal nature, and how other living beings affect or can affect us, directly and

otherwise.

Thus, this knowing of ourselves as but one, finite - one microcosmic - nexion has certain consequences, ethically - in relation to how we relate or, can relate to, or perhaps should relate to, other human beings and other life - and philosophically. Here, we will only consider the ethical consequence of such acausal knowing.

The Immediacy and Acausal Nature of Empathy

One important consequence of empathy is that since the knowing that empathy provides is of acausality, of what has acausal being and thus lives (that is, what is essentially numinous) and is presenced by acausal and not linear Time, such numinous knowing cannot be abstracted out from the immediacy of the personal, causal, moment that is the genesis of that knowing. That is, it is dependant on what lives, on the living being apprehending such knowing. To attempt to abstract it would be to obscure, to cover-up, to denude of numinosity, such knowing, given the causal nature of all abstractions. That is, it would be to distort it, re-interpret - or attempt to re-interpret it - according to causal linearity (causal Time) and causal separation.

Hence, such numinous knowing cannot form the basis of any abstract theory, of any dogma, of any ideology, of some religion - to be applied to or used by others - for all such things are abstractions, devoid of numinosity.

One practical consequence of this is that there cannot be any numinous theory of ethics, or of such things as what has been termed politics. What is ethical is simply what empathy reveals and consequently inclines us toward - which is ourselves as a nexion to other life, our connexion to other living beings, and thence a sympathy, *συμπάθεια*, with those other living beings: *συν-πάθος*.

The Ethics of Empathy

The knowing of ourselves - as one affective and affected microcosmic nexion - makes us aware of the propensity of living beings to suffer [*πάθος*] as it can makes us feel, present us an awareness of the potentiality of, that suffering of theirs as if it were our own, as indeed, acausally, it is, given the simultaneity of acausal Time.

There is thus, or there can be, with empathy and its development, a translocation of ourselves, from what we regard as our self, toward and into other living beings, with this translocation being independent of causal, linear, Time. That is, the distinction we make - and which abstraction inclines us to make - between "them" and "us" no longer exists, for this distinction is fundamentally an illusion, a forgetting or a covering-up of, or a suppression and ignorance of, our own acausal nature.

Importantly, this *συν-πάθος* is independent of causal, linear, Time - that is, it is not limited to what we may be aware of or observe in the immediacy of the moment, but

includes the potentiality of other living beings to suffer, and an awareness of past suffering.

Thus, given this acausal translocation of ourselves, given this *συν-πάθος*, empathy moves us or inclines us toward a knowing of compassion and thus to the understanding that the cessation of suffering is the most practical manifestation, or presencing, of what is ethical. This is the desire, the intention, based on acausal knowing, not to inflict suffering upon or contribute toward the suffering of other living beings, human and otherwise.

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Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality

Phainómenon and Causality

What is apparent to us by means of our physical senses - Phainómenon - is that which is grounded in causality. That is, the phenomena which we perceive, is, or rather hitherto has been, perceived almost exclusively in terms of causal Space and causal Time. To understand why this is so, let us consider how we have regarded Phainómenon.

We assign causal motion or movement to the phenomena which we perceive, as we assign other properties and qualities we have posited, such as colour, smell, texture, physical appearance, and, most importantly, being. Hence, we come to distinguish one being from another, and to associate certain beings with certain qualities or attributes which we have assigned to them based on observation of such beings or on deductions and analogies concerning what are assumed to be similar beings.

This process - and its extension by observational science - has led us to distinguish or perceive individual human beings (ourselves, and the others); distinguish a human being from a tree and from, for example, a cloud, a rock, and a cat. It has led us to assign a specific tree to a certain type of tree, so that "that tree, there" is said to be an Oak tree, to belong to a class of similar things which are said to have the same or similar qualities and properties, and which properties or qualities can include such things as texture or colour or shape. It has also led us to make a distinction between a living being (an organism) and inert matter, with a living being said to exhibit five particular properties or qualities: a living being respire; it moves (without any external force acting upon it); it grows (changes its outward form without any outside force being applied); it excretes waste; it is sensitive to, or aware of, its environment; it can reproduce itself, and it can nourish itself.

Thus, we have assigned a type of being (the property of having existence) to what we have named rock; a type of being to what we have named clouds; a type of being to ourselves; and types of being to trees and cats. This assignment derives from our perception of causality - or rather, from our projection of the abstraction of causality upon Phainómenon. For we have perceived being in terms of physical separation, distance between separate objects (that is, in terms of a causal metric); in terms of the movement of such perceived separate objects (and which movement between or separation of objects existing in causal Space, can and has served as one criteria for distinguishing types of being); and in terms of qualities or properties which we have abstracted from our physical perception of these beings, be these qualities or properties direct ones (deriving for example, from sight, smell, texture, taste) or indirect, deduced, theorized, or extrapolated ones, such as, for example, the property of gases, the property of liquids, of solids, and such things as atoms and molecules.

In general, therefore, all such things (all matter and beings) are said to exhibit the property of existing, of having being, in both (causal) Space and at a certain moment or moments of (causal) Time. That is, being and beings have hitherto been understood in terms of, defined in terms of, causality, so that being itself has been assigned a causal nature. Or, expressed another way, it is said that causal Time and a causal, physical, metrical, separation (causal Space) are the ground, or the horizon, of Being.

Knowledge and Acausal Being

While this particular causal understanding of being and of beings has proved very useful and interesting - giving rise, for example, to experimental science and certain philosophical speculations about existence - it is nevertheless quite limited.

It is limited in three ways. First, because both causal Space and causal Time are human manufactured abstractions imposed upon or projected by us upon Phainómenon; second, because such causality cannot explain the true nature of living beings; and third, because the imposition of such causal abstractions upon living beings - and especially upon ourselves - has had unfortunate consequences.

The nature of all life leads us to conceive of non-causal being. That is, that life - that living beings - possess acausality; that their being is not limited to, nor can be described or defined by, a causal Space and a causal Time. Or expressed another way, the being of all living beings exists, has being in, acausal Space and acausal Time, as well as in our phenomenal causal Space and causal Time.

How, then, can we know or come to know, this acausal being, given how causal being has been and is known to us in observable phenomena? And just how and why does the nature of all life leads us to conceive of non-causal being?

We are led to the assumption or the axiom of acausality because we possess the (currently underused and undeveloped) faculty of empathy [*συν-πάθος*] - that is, the ability of sympathy, *συμπάθεια*, with other living beings. It is empathy which enables us to perceive beyond (to know beyond) the causal - and particularly and most importantly beyond the causal abstraction of the separation of beings: beyond the causal separateness, the self-contained individual being that causal apprehension presents to us, or rather has hitherto presented to us. That is, empathy reveals the knowing of ourselves as nexions - as a connexion to other life by virtue of the nature, the being, of life itself, and which life we, of course, as living beings, possess.

This empathy is in addition to our other faculties, and thus compliments and extends the Aristotelian essentials relating to Phainómenon [1]. Furthermore, it is by means of empathy - by the development of empathy - that we can begin to acquire a limited understanding and knowledge of acausality. Thus, this knowledge of acausality extends the type of knowing based upon or deriving from a causal understanding of

Phainómenon.

Hence, for living beings, causality (and its separateness) is appearance, rather than an expression of the nature of the being that living beings possess.

The Being of Life

Acausal being is what animates inert physical matter, in the realm of causal phenomena, and makes it alive - that is, possessed of life, possessed of an acausal nature. Or, expressed another way, living beings exist - have their being - in both acausal Space and acausal Time, and also in causal Space and in causal Time. That is, they are nexions between the acausal continuum (the realm of acausal Space and acausal Time) and the causal continuum (the realm of causal Space and causal Time; the realm of causal phenomena).

Thus, living beings, in the causal, possess a particular quality that other beings do not possess - and this quality cannot be manufactured, by us (in the causal, and by means of causal science and technology), and then added to inert matter to make that matter alive. That is, we human beings cannot abstract this quality - this acausality - out from anything causal, and then impose it upon, or add it to, or project it upon, some causal thing to make that thing a living being.

Furthermore, the very nature of acausal being means that all life is connected, beyond the causal, and this due to the simultaneity that is implicit in acausal Time and acausal Space. For we may conceive of the acausal as this very matrix of living connexions which exists, which has being, in all life, everywhere (in the Cosmos), simultaneously, and in the causal past, the present, and the future, of our world and of the Cosmos itself. For the acausal has no finite, causal, separation of individual, distinct, beings, and no linear casual-only progression of those beings from a past, to a present, and thence to some future. Rather, there is only an undivided life - acausal being - manifest, or presenced, in certain causal beings (living beings) and which presencing of acausality in the causal lasts for a specific duration of linear causal Time (as observed from the causal) and is then returned to the acausal to become presenced again in the causal in some other causal being in what, in terms of causality, is or could be the past, the present, or the future.

Therefore, for human beings, the true nature of being lies not in what we have come to understand as our finite, separate, self-contained, individual identity (our self) but rather in our relation to other living beings, human and otherwise, and thence to the acausal itself. In addition, one important expression of - a revealing of - the true acausal nature of being is *the numinous*: that which places us, as individuals, into a correct, respectful, perspective with other life (past, present and future) and which manifests to us aspects of the acausal; that is, what in former terms we might have apprehended, and felt, as the divine: as the timeless Unity, the source, behind and beyond our limited causal phenomenal world, beyond our own fragile microcosmic mortal existence, and which timeless Being we cannot control,

manufacture, or imitate, but which is nevertheless manifest, presenced, in us because we have the gift of life.

David Myatt
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Notes:

[1] These Aristotelian essentials are: (i) Reality (existence) exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (ii) our limited understanding of this independent 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (iii) logical argument, or reason, is perhaps the most important means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) the cosmos (existence) is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws.

Race and Individuality in The Philosophy of The Numinous Way

Introduction

The intention of this essay is to provide an overview of The Numinous Way in relation to matters such as race, individuality, change, and what is sometimes termed 'the civilizing process'.

Given the social and political importance of these matters, and the interest in them by those curious about my philosophy of The Numinous Way, I considered such a summary might be useful especially since my treatment of these topics is contained in many separate essays written over a period of some years, with many of those essays making use of terms from Ancient Greek [1].

The Ethics of Empathy

Empathy, and the natural humility that arises from empathy, may be said to be essence of The Numinous Way, and the ethics of this Way result from individuals using their faculty of empathy [2]. That is, such ethics are,

"... a consequence of the insight and the understanding that empathy provides for individuals in the immediacy-of-the-moment. This insight and knowledge is of how we are not isolated human beings, but rather only one fragile microcosmic nexion and thus connected to all Life, sentient and otherwise, human and otherwise, of this planet and otherwise. Consequently, there is a cosmic perspective - a cosmic ethic - and compassion: that is, the human virtue of having *συμπάθεια* with other living beings, and the feeling, the knowledge, that we should treat other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated: with fairness, dignity, and respect." [3]

This numinous morality is thus a personal and direct one, free of dogma and assumptions, and does not require any faith or any belief, political, social, or religious. Hence it is individuals who possess certain virtues - such as compassion, fairness, tolerance, and honour - who represent, who are, the cosmic ethics of The Numinous Way.

What is ethical is therefore what is compassionate, fair, tolerant, respectful, honourable. Thus it is unethical - unfair - to prejudge a person without knowing and interacting with them personally; immoral to judge someone on the basis of some prejudice or on some assumption about them such as their appearance or what others may have said/written about them. Thus it is wrong to judge someone on the basis of their perceived or their assumed ethnicity, or on their perceived or their assumed or

their stated sexual orientation/preference.

The Question of Race

As I sought to explain in my essay *Empathy and the Immoral Abstraction of Race*, race is a causal ideation, an abstraction, and, as a manifestation of the causal separation-of-otherness, it contradicts empathy and the intuitive knowing of and sympathy with *the living other* that individual empathy provides or can make us aware of.

In essence, the notion of race separates, divides, human beings into manufactured lifeless categories which nullify the empathic knowing of individual human beings.

Such assignment of individuals to a posited abstract category - some assumed 'race' or sub-race - is irrelevant, since individual human beings are or have the potential to be unique individual human beings, so that such an assignment, whatever the alleged reason, is a dehumanizing of those individuals. For our humanity is expressed by an individual and personal knowing of individuals, by a personal interaction with others on the basis of respect, tolerance, reason, and honour, and which personal knowledge of them renders their alleged or assumed ethnicity or ancestry irrelevant.

In addition, to ascribe some value or some worth - how/low, civilized/uncivilized, evolved/primitive - to these abstract categories termed 'race', and thence to the individuals alleged or assumed to belong to such categories, is immoral because value and worth are themselves lifeless un-numinous divisive abstractions which cannot, should not, be applied to human beings, or to any living being. Which in essence means that all life is numinous, worthy - and cannot and should not be sub-divided into categories of value or worth.

Similarly, to judge - prejudge - individuals or some group on the basis of the assumed or the alleged 'character' or generalized nature assigned to some 'race' is immoral because dehumanizing, usurping as such prejudice does the personal knowing of individuals that is the human, the empathic, the honourable, the moral, the right, thing to do.

In practical terms, this means: (i) that the concept of 'race' is not only irrelevant but an immoral aberration; (ii) that the alleged or the assumed ethnicity of a person is irrelevant; and (iii) that treating/mistreating people, hating people or causing suffering to people, on the basis of their alleged or assumed 'race' is immoral, reprehensible.

For what matters is the person, the individual as an individual human being who is unique or who has the potential to be unique. What matters, what is human and moral, is a personal knowing of individuals and treating others with fairness, and tolerance, on the basis of equality.

Destiny and The Civilizing Process

The idea of and the belief in some individuals having a special personal 'destiny' - or being chosen by 'fate' or by the gods or by God in some way - is a pernicious immoral abstraction, a great cause of suffering. For the person so believing this assumed destiny always assigns to themselves and their judgement a higher value than they give to other human beings and thus they treat or end up treating others in an uncompassionate, dishonourable, way. In addition, in order to achieve 'their destiny' or accomplish their 'mission' such people will use brutal force and, almost invariably, resort to killing and to war.

Such a personal belief is a manifestation of hubris, of the tyrannos. From Hitler and Stalin to Napoleon to Ivan the Terrible to Genghis Khan to Peter the Hermit to Alexander of Macedon and before, the immoral pride and arrogance of such men has caused immense human suffering. As has occurred when the concept, the ideation, of destiny - or fate, or some 'divinely sanctioned mission' - is or has been assigned to some other abstraction, such as a nation, a people, a race, or a religious group. Thus the chosen abstraction - the alleged chosen instrument of fate/destiny/god - is believed to be superior to others and believed to empower those belonging to it with 'the right' to dominate, kill, and if necessary subdue with force, other nations/peoples /races/groups, with the classic examples being racism, the nazi doctrines of Hitler, and The Inquisition.

A similarly pernicious, though less obvious, immoral abstraction is that sometimes termed 'the civilizing process'. This was the abstraction, for example, that was the *raison d'être* of European colonialism. Inherent in this disruptive abstraction is the ideation of a linear progress. This 'civilizing process' involves:

"...constant change and a continuing development. This is the acceptance of the idea that there is 'something', in some future - near or distant - that can be and should be striven toward, and this 'something' is always some ideal, or more perfect, form of something that either already exists or which, it is alleged, can be manufactured (brought into being) if certain things (within one's self, or within society, for instance) are changed in accord with some other manufactured idea or abstraction, or deriving from some *-ism* or some *-ology* (be these deemed to be political, social or religious). " [4]

As I also mentioned in *On The Nature of Abstraction*:

"...the very notion of 'civilization' is unethical, because it both classifies, and excludes, based on some abstract criteria, some abstract *non-empathic* judgement of others; that is, of who and what is deemed to be 'civilized' [...] The very notions of 'progress' and of some 'civilizing process' are unethical because they predispose individuals toward the unbalanced disruption of and the striving for some type of perfection or ideal, and which striving (because it is a causal striving) always entails placing that ideal or that

abstraction before the compassion born of empathy, and which always tends toward creating suffering, and always involves a loss of numinosity: of that delicate, reasoned, balance that an empathic awareness brings to we human beings. "

In brief, this 'civilizing process' - this desire for some assumed progress - usurps the individual empathy of the immediacy of the moment, and the compassion and the *wu-wei* that naturally arise from such empathy. Both the 'civilizing process' and the desire for some assumed future perfection (progress) are or lead to *ὑβρις*, to the disruption of the natural balance and which disruption inevitably is the genesis of suffering and strife.

Individuality, Morality, and Change

As outlined in the essay *Authority and Legitimacy in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*, empathy and thence the morality that derives from it implies an individual judgement and an individual authority. That is, that The Numinous Way establishes a new type of authority, and thence a new type of legitimacy, different from those assumed by the modern nation-State, by governments, and previously assumed by monarchs, potentates, and tyrants.

This is the moral authority and the moral legitimacy of the individual manifest in self-responsibility and honour. There is therefore no desire for - or ultimately no need for - authority over others but rather the inclination toward self-reliance, toward the authority, the freedom, of the individual and a respect for the freedom, the self-reliance, of others.

In practice, this means no desire for rapid exterior change, or change based upon some abstraction. Instead, there is *wu-wei*, and the necessary inner change of individuals:

" The Numinous Way approach to the problems of society - to reform and change - is an individual one, deriving from the faculty of empathy, and from the uniquely individual authority and personal judgement that empathy and a personal knowing reveal in the immediacy-of-the-moment.

This means that reform and change is personal, direct; of and involving individuals who are personally known; and begins with the necessary inner change in the individual. That inner, personal, change - in individuals, of their nature, their character - is understood as the means to solving such personal and social problems as exist and arise. That such inner change of necessity comes before any striving for outer change by whatever means, whether such means be termed or classified as political, social, economic, religious. That the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform is the one that evolves human beings and thus changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate.

In practice, this evolution means, in the individual, the cultivation and use of the faculty of empathy, and acquiring the personal virtues of compassion, honour, and love. Which means the inner reformation of individuals, as individuals." [6]

Conclusion

Empathy inclines us - by its revealing of others, its revealing of ourselves as we really are, its revealing of us as an affective and effecting connexion to other human beings and other life - toward humility. Thus we are moved away from prejudices and prejudgement and hate toward gentleness, kindness, love, compassion, and fairness; that is, toward the virtues that express our humanity and thus toward the cessation of suffering.

Empathy by its personal, immediate, nature manifests a new type of authority; that of the individual whose concern is not power over others but rather over themselves through the development and exercise of those virtues that express our humanity.

Empathy also inclines us toward wu-wei; toward interior reflexion, toward neither acting with haste nor on the basis of abstractions and unbalanced feelings. It moves us instead toward a knowing that real change is interior, personal, change - of character, of behaviour, of feelings, of thought, of intent; of removing prejudice and intolerance.

Thus there is, in The Numinous Way, a complete rejection of the intolerance of racism, of authoritarianism, of violent political, social, or religious, change, and instead the individual interior way of a quiet desire to live numinously, ethically, harmoniously, in accord with wu-wei, in accord with the natural balance of Life.

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February 2012 ce

Notes

[1] As I mentioned in the Preface to the compilation *Prolegomenas to The Philosophy of The Numinous Way*:

"I have sometimes used terms from Ancient Greek because such terms, in my view, are informative and comparative, with there thus being a link between the philosophy of The Numen and the *weltanschauung* of early Hellenic culture, embodied in and manifest as this was by the works of Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Heraclitus, Sappho, and many others. Thus, it

would be fair to assume that the ethos of my *weltanschauung* is both indebted to and a development of the ethos of that Hellenic culture; an indebtedness obvious in the centrality, in the Numinous Way, of personal honour and notions such as *δίκη*, and a development manifest in notions such as empathy."

[2] Terms such as empathy are explained below, in the Appendix - *Notes on Some Terms Used*. In respect of humility, see - for example - my essays (i) *Numinous Expiation*, (ii) *Humility, Abstractions, and Belief*, and (iii) *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way - The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*

[3] *War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*.

[4] *On The Nature of Abstractions*.

[5] *Authority and Legitimacy in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*.

[6] *Society, Social Reform, and The Numinous Way*

Appendix

Notes on Some Terms Used

Abstraction

An abstraction is a manifestation of the primary error of conventional causal thinking; that is, of assuming only a causal linearity - of using causal reductionism: that simple cause-and-effect that excludes the acausal knowing that empathy provides and which knowing the numinous is a manifestation of. Implicit in abstractions is the notion of - the illusion of - the separateness of beings.

An abstraction is the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, 'image' or category, and thus some generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals - and/or some being, some 'thing' - to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such being/things /individuals. The positing of some 'perfect' or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Abstraction-ism - and the ideation that derives from it - can be philosophically defined as the implementation, the practical application, of ὕβρις.

Compassion

The English word compassion dates from around 1340 ce and the word in its original sense (and as used in the philosophy of The Numinous Way) means *benignity*. Hence, compassion is being kindly disposed toward and/or feeling a sympathy with someone (or some living being) affected by pain/suffering/grief or who is enduring vicissitudes.

The word compassion is derived from *com*, meaning together-with, combined with *pati*, meaning to-suffer/to-endure, and thus useful synonyms for compassion, in this original sense, are *compassivity* and *benignity*.

Empathy

Etymologically, this fairly recent English word, used to translate the German *Einfühlung*, derives, via the late Latin *sympathia*, from the Greek *συμπάθεια* - *συμπαθής* - and is thus formed from the prefix σύν (*sym*) together with παθ- [root of πάθος] meaning *enduring/suffering*, feeling: πάσχειν, to endure/suffer.

As used and defined by The Numinous Way, empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by The Numinous Way, it is a specific and extended type of *συμπάθεια*. That is, it is a type of and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings - and thus differs in nature from compassion.

Honour

The English word honour dates from around 1200 ce, deriving from the Latin *honorem* (meaning refined, grace, beauty) via the Old French (and thence Anglo-Norman) *onor/onur*. As used by The Numinous Way, honour means an instinct for and an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous. An honourable person is thus refined: that is, they are noble and cultured and hence distinguished by virtue of their character, which is one of manners, fairness, natural dignity, culture, and valour.

Hubris (ὕβρις)

ὕβρις is the error of personal insolence, of going beyond the proper limits set by: (a) reasoned (balanced) judgement - *σωφρονεῖν* - and by (b) an awareness, a personal knowing, of the numinous, and which knowing of the numinous is provided by empathy and *πάθει μάθος*.

Hubris upsets the natural balance - is contrary to *ἀρμονίη* - and often results from a person or persons striving for or clinging to some causal abstraction.

Pathei-Mathos (πάθει μάθος)

The Greek term *πάθει μάθος* derives from The Agamemnon of Aeschylus (written c.

458 bce), and can be interpreted, or translated, as meaning *learning from adversary, or wisdom arises from (personal) suffering; or personal experience is the genesis of true learning*.

Wu-Wei

Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in my philosophy of The Numinous Way to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive – that is, is ὑβρις. In practice, this is the cultivation of a certain (an acausal, numinous) perspective – that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature of things/beings /ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

cc David Myatt 2012 ce

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Empathy and The Immoral Abstraction of Race

Empathy and Reason

Empathy is a human faculty which, according to *The Philosophy of The Numen*, compliments the four Aristotelian essentials [1] of conventional philosophy and experimental science, and the fundamental principle which Isaac Newton eloquently expressed in his *Principia*:

" We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearance..... for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and affects not the pomp of superfluous causes."

The particular perception that arises from empathy therefore provides us with a knowing that is different from the perception of *Phainómenon* that arises and has arisen from these four essentials and this fundamental Newtonian principle.

As mentioned in my *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*:

" The perception which empathy provides is both of acausality and of the personal immediacy-of-the-causal-moment, and it is these which make numinous philosophy quite distinct from the causal reductionism, the impersonal abstractions, of both conventional philosophy and experimental science. For the essence of the faculty

of empathy is a sympathy, *συμπάθεια*, with other living beings arising from a perception of the acausal reality underlying the causal division of beings, existents, into separate, causal-separated, objects and the subject-object relationship which is or has been assumed by means of the process of causal ideation to exist between such causally-separate beings. That is, and for instance, the implied or assumed causal separateness of living beings is appearance and not an expression of the true nature of Being and beings...

The two most important consequence of the acausal knowing that empathy presents to us, are that of the personal immediacy-of-the-causal-moment, and that the notion of our separateness from other living beings (human and otherwise) is a causal-only perception, an illusion.

The personal immediacy-of-the-causal-moment means that empathy is an attribute of and dependant upon the individual living being, in the moment of empathy, and cannot be abstracted out from an individual living being - that is, it cannot have any causal ideation."

Thus, the quality - or what we might describe as the excellence (*ἀρετή*) - of empathy is the knowledge that *the separation of otherness* is an illusion, mere causal ideation, the product of a limited causal knowing.

Empathy provides us with acausal knowing:

" Acausal knowing reveals (uncovers) the connexions between beings - the dependant nature of beings - and thus places beings in the context of Being, and thus uncovers the acausal nature of beings, with Being having both a causal and an acausal nature." *On The Nature of Abstractions*

This acausal knowing, this uncovering, is not "irrational" in the sense of being *ἄλογος* (a-logos), since, as I briefly mentioned in *Pre-Socratic Philosophy, The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Question*:

λόγος is manifest to us in both empathy and reason, with reason being both what has been termed logical reasoning (logic) and also empathy as *ἀρμονία*, as that letting-be (wu-wei), that natural balance presenced within us, which uncovers what has been hidden by ideation, by abstractions. Thus, *λόγος* is how we can understand, come to know, *Φύσις* - and which understanding and knowing leads

us to Αἰών, to an appreciation and understanding of the acausal, of acausal Time, beyond all causal abstractions.

For, as my interpretation of Heraclitus Fragmentum B 123 suggests:

"...logos is more than some idealized (or moralistic) *truth* [ἀληθεία] and more than is implied by our term *word*. Rather, logos is the activity, the seeking, of the essence – the nature, the character – of things [ἀληθεία akin to Heidegger's revealing] which essence also has a tendency to become covered by words, and an abstract (false) truth [an abstraction; εἶδος and ἰδέα] which is projected by us onto things, onto beings and Being. Thus, and importantly, λόγος – understood and applied correctly – can uncover (reveal) Φύσις and yet also – misunderstood and used incorrectly – serve to, or be the genesis of the, concealment of Φύσις. The correct logos – or a correct logos – is the ontology of Being, and the λόγος that is logical reasoning is an essential part of, a necessary foundation of, this ontology of Being." *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change* [2]

Thus, λόγος is correctly understood as the revealing it is: both a causal and an acausal knowing. [3]

In addition, the aspect of λόγος that is logical reasoning [cf. Sophocles, Oedipus Tyrannus, 583, εἰ διδοίης γ' ὥς ἐγὼ σαυτῷ λόγον] is the opposite – τοῦ λ. ἐόντος ξυνοῦ – of an idea, of an abstraction.

This is so because, I have mentioned before, classical (traditional, formal) logic, is:

"...the dispassionate examination of the collocation or collocations of words and/or terms (or symbols) which relate, or which are said to relate, to what is correct (valid, true) or incorrect (invalid, false) and which collocation or collocations are considered to be or which are regarded as being, by their proponents, as representative of, or actually being, knowledge or a type of or a guide to knowing. For logic, what is or what may be represented by such collocations (the content) is fundamentally irrelevant. What is relevant – what determines the logical validity of any any examined collocations – is the natural unfolding, or the form, behind and beyond all ideation."

The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος

And in causal knowing – that of conventional philosophy, for example – there is the process of causal ideation:

"...where some fundamental form, or cause, is sought; the positing of some ideal or perfect form for beings and "things"; making connections between a subject (some form, being, thing) and an object (an attribute or value or quality assigned to such a form, being, or thing), and which subject and object are named and classified according to some category, and which category is determined by attributes of inclusion/exclusion." *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*

Thus, for logic what is so posited, denoted, or so assigned some value, by the process of causal abstraction - the content - is irrelevant; meaning the content of some causal abstraction (often represented by some term or word or idea), or some value assigned to some abstraction, cannot be said to be logical in and of itself or even be said to unequivocally manifest or represent that particular aspect of λόγος which causal knowing, either philosophical or derived from experimental science, may be said to explain or manifest.

Hence, and for instance, it would be fallacious to argue that not only is the acausal knowing of empathy irrational, but also that some posited abstraction deriving from conventional philosophy or some theory (model, axiom) renders such acausal knowing invalid.

The Abstraction of Race

Let us consider, for example, the causal ideation that has been termed "race" as applied to human beings, and which ideation has sometimes been used as an argument against not only the acausal knowing that empathy uncovers but also against the necessity for compassion which such an acausal knowing imputes and logically implies, deriving as this compassion does from the revealed dependant nature of (the acausal connexion between) living beings: of ourselves as but one microcosmic nexion, one causal unfolding, of ψυχή [4]. For empathy [συν-πάθος] by its very nature - by its relocation, translocation, of ourselves into, and συμπάθεια with, *the living other* - naturally disposes us to such compassion. For to harm *the living other* is to feel, to know, that harm, and to harm the ψυχή we share with that *living other*.

The proponents of the particular aforementioned argument regarding race accept or believe that what has been termed "race" exists, often on the basis of some definition dependant on observed physical characteristics, and/or some biological (genetic) markers, and/or on other traits such as assumed or provable genealogy.

In the context of *ψυχή*, race is a manifestation of the causal *separation of otherness*. Which directs us to one of several fundamental problems with the notion of race. Race is a causal ideation - an abstraction - which separates, divides, human beings into manufactured categories, and which leads to, and has led to, the assignment of value to such categories, and which abstraction, like almost all causal abstractions denotes or implies the principle of exclusion/inclusion.

What occurs is that some general category is posited, based on some observations or some data (or more accurately, on the median values of such observations and data), and then this category is assumed to not only exist, but to define and explain the nature of the being of those assigned to such a posited category. Sometimes, one such posited category is assigned a higher "value" than another or other categories, on the basis of other assumptions, for example, that of "being civilized" [5].

The problem here with such a posited category of race is of *the when* to begin the exclusion/inclusion - the categorization - of human beings so that they meet the posited, abstract, criteria for being said to belong to a specific race. One related problem is the stasis implied by such categorization. Thus, if one human being is assigned to the abstract category Caucasian because, for instance, they have fair skin and blue eyes, then (1) when did this category first arise - what start point is posited for this category, and (2) what attribute or attributes of this posited category are assumed not to change?

But in terms of *ψυχή* such categories are irrelevant because they obscure the natural process of Change, of *ἀρχή* which we apprehend as *Φύσις* - as Heraclitus expressed in fragment 112:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας.

This suggests [6] that what is most excellent [*ἀρετὴ*] is thoughtful reasoning [*σωφρονεῖν*] - and that such thoughtful reasoning is a process which not only expresses and uncovers meaning, but which is also in accord with, in harmony or in sympathy with, *φύσις* - that is, with our own nature as mortals and with the nature of Being itself.

The nature of Being is Change; to presence as the natural unfolding we perceive as *φύσις* and as the natural process underlying this (which process we often greatly mis-understand) named *Πόλεμος* -

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ

ἐλευθέρους. Heraclitus, Fragmentum B53.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

As for *Πόλεμος* - while Heidegger suggested a similarity with *λόγος*, *Πόλεμος* is in my view what the *λόγος* that is both causal and acausal knowing can uncover, rather than *λόγος* itself. That is, the *ἀρχή* of, the changing, the presencing and re-presencing of Being which is *ψυχή* through *Αἰών*. Hence *Πόλεμος* is the whole, the complete, the natural, the cosmological, process which includes *ἀρχή*, *ψυχή*, *Αἰών*, and *Φύσις*, and our revealing or coming-to-know these through *λόγος*. That is, through that thoughtful reasoning, that balance (*ἀρμονίη*) of both a causal knowing and an acausal knowing. In other words, by means of both empathy, and also by philosophy and experimental science. In effect, *Πόλεμος* is an expression of the acausality beyond our causal ideation, the acausal nature of which both *ψυχή* and *Αἰών* manifest.

Our own nature as mortals is that we are part of this acausal change - we have our genesis (both our life, and our type of living) in this change, in and through and because of *Πόλεμος* - and which change unfolds in us and around us, and which we strive to comprehend - or should strive to comprehend - by a thoughtful reasoning, by acquiring both causal and acausal knowing, given the nature of *λόγος*. This knowing - the prehension of *σοφόν* - predisposes us to *ἀρετή*, that is to not commit the error, the unbalance, of *ὑβρις* [7]. Expressed simply, *ὑβρις* at best conceals one's natural relation to *ψυχή* and at worst undermines that presencing of *ψυχή* within us.

The philosophical error of the abstraction of race (as of many other abstractions) is that the abstraction is either purely static in the causal (a desire to try and maintain what-is in the causal) or of a manufactured linear, causal, nature (a desire to maintain or to attain an ideal form of the posited abstraction). Both contradict the nature of Being and our own nature, as mortals. That is, the abstraction of race ignores *Πόλεμος*.

Hence, instead of there being a move toward a revealing of Being and beings through *λόγος*, there is instead more concealment of Being and beings - no *ἀληθέα*, no *σοφόν*. No knowing of the acausality inherent in all Life, including ourselves, we mortals, whether we be unfettered or still bound.

In addition, according to The Philosophy of The Numen, such separation, such division, of living beings by means of such a static and linear abstraction, and especially the assignment of value to such categories and to those included in or excluded from them, is immoral. Why? Because what is ethical is that *συμπάθεια* with *the living other* which reveals, and presences, our true

(revealed) nature as human beings, as mortals whose genesis is *Πόλεμος*.

Furthermore, this immorality of such an abstraction is independent of any existing, any past, or any future causal evidence (for example, from experimental science) which might seem to confirm that such a causal division of human beings is "factual". It is independent of such purely causally established "facts" because such "facts" are only "facts" of causal, un-living, non-numinous, knowing, whereas empathy provides us with that acausal (numinous) knowing which is beyond such causal-only "facts", and it is this acausal knowing which, as explained above, is the origin of the ethical because suffused with, manifesting, *ψυχή* - which such causal "facts" are not suffused with and never nor can ever manifest by virtue of being linear, causal. For such causal "facts" just project causal (linear) abstractions onto the acausality manifest in living beings whose nature and genesis is *Πόλεμος*. In the simplistic sense, the causal can never describe (represent) what is acausal.

Concerning Evolution

The fairly modern abstraction of race is often used in conjunction with the term evolution, with proponents of the abstraction of race often taking and writing about "evolving" a races or races, by various means. Therefore, such usage of the term evolution by such proponents requires some consideration.

Evolution - as used in theories of experimental science - is not in itself, in that specific context, an abstraction, but only an assumption or axiom, deriving from practical observation and experimentation, about how living beings (organisms) on this planet, Earth, and certain observed types of physical matter (such as stars) have over long periods of causal time changed or adapted to certain environmental and/or other conditions. That is, it is one particular rational explanation of such change and adaptation, and an explanation which, currently, seems to explain certain observational data better than such alternative explanations as have been proposed.

However, when the term *evolution* is used other than as an axiom in this context of experimental science and living beings, but in the more general sense of a willed or directed human change whose starting point is some posited category applied to human beings or other living beings, it is or it becomes an abstraction. That is, it is then a causal assumption about how things can or should or might work if there is some causal human input (hubris-like interference) to induce or cause or direct such change.

Also, when notions of or concerning human value or quality are projected onto or embedded into the biological change of living beings, the term evolution

also becomes an abstraction. Thus, and for example, when it is claimed that one particular group of human beings who may be or who are assumed to be distinct from or different from another group of human beings according to certain observed criteria (such as cranial capacity) are "more evolved" than other groups of human beings, the term evolution is used in the abstractive, subjective, sense.

This is in contrast to the above biological and observational usage of the term, as an axiom of experimental science, which usage is an assumption of how living beings have worked and/or are observed to now work, in and of themselves, without any interference from human beings.

Empathy, Ethics, and Honour

The acausal knowing that empathy reveals is of the nature of *Πόλεμος* and hence of the acausality beyond all our causal abstractions - a knowledge of both *ψυχή* and *Αἰὼν* and of how they are manifest, and importantly, are and have been concealed and can become concealed, by us.

What is numinous reminds us of *Πόλεμος* and is thus a means of maintaining both *ἀρμονίη* (within ourselves) and a knowing of *Δίκη* and its importance:

" The numinous is what predisposes us not to commit *ὑβρις* - that is, what continues or maintains or manifests *ἀρμονίη* and thus *καλλός*; the natural balance - *sans* abstractions - that enables us to know and appreciate, and which uncovers, *Φύσις* and *λόγος*, and *τὸ καλόν*, the virtuous beauty known to us mortals as personal honour." *Pre-Socratic Philosophy, The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions*.

For personal honour is a practical code of personal conduct which manifests the essence of empathy, and is thus a guide to behaving in a balanced, fair, and ethical way.

Conclusion

The ideation - the causal abstraction - of race is a manifestation of *ὑβρις*. It conceals both the true nature of Being, and our true nature as human beings, which is that of *Πόλεμος* - and a revealing of which true nature is through the *λόγος* that is both causal and acausal knowing. A part of this acausal knowing is the dependant nature of (the acausal connexion between) living beings, and thus of the compassion that such a knowing logically leads us toward. This abstraction of race - like all causal ideations - distances us from the numinous,

removes us from *ἀρμονίη* and thus *καλλός* and thus displaces us from that knowledge of *Δίκη* which is the basis for *ἀρετή*. In place of *σωφρονεῖν* there is instead the arrogance of a causal presumption.

As such, this abstraction of race is unethical, immoral, and thus dishonourable.

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2011 CE

Notes

[1] These four Aristotelian essentials are:

(i) Reality (existence) exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (ii) our limited understanding of this independent 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (iii) logical argument, or reason, is perhaps the most important means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) the cosmos (existence) is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws.

[2] See also my *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθέα in Heraclitus*, which deals with Fragment 112.

Fragment 112 is *σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας*.

Fragment 123 is *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ*

[3] For further details, refer to my *Numinous Culture, The Acausal, and Living Traditions* and especially footnote number 3 there:

λόγος is both Reason and Empathy. Reason as logical reasoning and *Δίκη* (Judgement); and Empathy - akin to *wu-wei* - as *ἀρμονίη*, cf. Heraclitus: *Οὐ ξυνίασι ὅκως διαφερόμενον ἑωυτῷ ὁμολογέει· παλίντροπος ἀρμονίη ὅκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης*

[4] *ψυχή* (as mentioned elsewhere) should be understood as Life qua being [see, for example, its usage in Homer, Aeschylus, Aristotle, *etcetera*].

Thus, *ψυχή* could be described as the "acausal energy" that animates matter and makes such matter "alive".

Furthermore, in terms of pre-Socratic philosophy, *ψυχή* derives from *Αἰών* and we may describe *Αἰών* as the acausal, presenced as the progression of Aeons, as thus as Change (*ἀρχή*), manifest to us as the natural unfolding that is both *Φύσις* and *λόγος*.

Expressed another way, *ἀρχή* is that changing, the presencing and re-presencing of being, that is *ψυχή* through *Αἰών*.

As mentioned in my *Numinous Culture, The Acausal, and Living Traditions*, for Heidegger, also, *Αἰών* is manifest in *Φύσις* and *λόγος*.

For Nietzsche, *Αἰών* is manifest, symbolically, in Zeus - although, correctly, in the Zeus of Aeschylus (*Agamemnon*, 174-183) who guides mortals to reason, and whose new guidance, whose authority, whose logos or aeon, is expressed in *pathei-mathos*, for which see my *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way: The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*.

In respect of *Φύσις* see, for example, my *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[5] For a brief analysis of the ideation of civilization and of the civilizing process, refer to my *On The Nature of Abstractions*.

[6] In respect of this saying, see my *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*.

[7] Empathy is what predisposes us to know *Δίκη* and avoid *ὑβρις*. For an overview of *ὑβρις*, *Δίκη*, and the numinous refer to (1) *On The Nature of Abstractions*; (2) *Quid Est Veritas?*, and also to footnote 3 of my *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way*.

[8] *Pre-Socratic Philosophy, The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions*.

Religion and The Numinous Way

Three Essays Concerning The Nature of Religion

One

Exegesis, and The Discovery of Wisdom

One of the problems of conventional Ways [1] is their reliance upon certain texts (original or derivative), which texts come to be regarded as either sacred, or as possessing wisdom, or both. For, almost invariably, all such texts require interpretation [2] and/or come to used a source, if not the primarily and authoritative source, of information about, and a guide to, a particular Way. This reliance upon texts applies both to revealed Ways – such as Christianity and Islam, with Scripture (Christianity) and Quran and Ahadith (Islam) – and to non-revealed Ways, such as Buddhism and Hinduism [3].

What is common in respect of all Ways based upon or centred around certain texts, is that there invariably arises, over a certain period of causal Time, a particular attitude, both personal, and collective (among the community of adherents or believers), with this attitude being one of, if not veneration of the texts themselves, then of reliance upon them so that they are preferred over and above the *πάθει μάθος* of individuals: that is, preferred over and above the slow and the natural and the numinous (the living) accumulation of personal insight, understanding, and wisdom.

In addition, the interpretation of such texts – and/or the emergence or the writing of new texts concerning a particular Way – has, almost invariably, led to schism or schisms within a particular Way, with such schisms often being, at least in respect of revealed Ways – violent in nature, and leading to accusations of heresy.

These two features – the particular attitude of reliance upon and/or veneration of texts, and the emergence of schisms due to texts – may be said to represent *the religious attitude* itself. And it is this religious attitude, among individuals, and collectively – among a community or communities of adherents or believers – which is the fundamental problem of all conventional organized Ways.

However, in its genesis, a particular Way often does not possess nor require the cultivation of this religious attitude, this religious approach. Indeed, some Ways, in their genesis, may be quite opposed to such an attitude, such an approach, which attitude, which approach, often leads to the veneration, if not the deification, of the founder (known or perceived) of the Way.

One, particularly modern, manifestation of this religious attitude is in the desire, by adherents of a particular conventional Way, to find the results of modern science in such texts. Thus, there arises the desire to find, or to prove, that such texts prefigured, or indeed contain, certain scientific notions or certain recent rational explanations of natural phenomena, and this desire is often based upon a need to show or to somehow “prove” that the founder of a Way, or the supra-personal supreme Being of a Way, possessed a knowledge of such newly discovered matters.

Thus, and for instance, ancient texts are scoured to show that there was some ancient knowledge, and understanding, of such things as life existing elsewhere in the Cosmos; and/or there was some ancient knowledge and understanding of planets orbiting stars; and/or some ancient knowledge and understanding of what we now refer to as evolution, and the origin of diverse species; and so on.

This is, in effect, a re-interpretation of particular texts, where certain modern terms are mistakenly projected onto ancient or old words to give them a modern meaning, with this re-interpretation often being required by individuals, subsumed by the religious attitude, in order for those individuals to continue to believe in, or to continue to adhere to, what has become a particular Way reliant upon such texts.

The Problem of Reliance

Reliance on texts – revealed, venerated, or otherwise – is a fundamental problem because it not only removes wisdom from the personal experience of the individual, but it also tries to prescribe, to define, to restrict, the numinous.

Fundamentally, the religious attitude is itself a problem because it is a reliance on those abstractions that often derive or have been derived from an initial numinous experience, and which abstractions denude, undermine, or disrupt or conceal, the numinous itself.

For the truth is that wisdom is only – and only ever can be – personal, individual, and unique, and cannot be abstracted out from *πάθει μάθος* into some abstraction, religious or otherwise, or be found in some text, revealed or otherwise. That is, wisdom is a function of acausality – of acausal Time, of

what is living – and not the result of some cause-and-effect; not the result of adhering to or striving to adhere to what someone else, somewhere at some moment in causal Time, has transcribed, tried to describe, or might even have revealed or dis-covered in some manner.

Thus, wisdom is natural, within each of us, nascent - a potentiality to be discovered by and through the immediacy of personal experience. All some texts may do – and should do – is point us or guide us toward this of necessity interior discovery, which occurs in its own way, in its very own species of a living Time.

Furthermore, such an individual discovering of wisdom, by means of *πάθει μάθος*, leads to a knowing, an understanding, of humility – that is, to a placing of ourselves into that natural Cosmic perspective which forms the basis of Reality itself [4]. And it is such a natural and indeed spontaneous humility – beyond words, terms, abstractions – which is the practical antithesis of the religious attitude itself, and indeed which is a necessary precursor for our own individual change and evolution.

Similarly, the numinous itself is presenced, and can be found, within each of us, and within those natural things, those living things, such as Nature and the Cosmos, a personal love, and empathy, which arise, and which have arisen or unfolded, in their own way according to their basal acausal nature, *sans* any and all causal abstractions.

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Notes:

[1] By *Way* is meant a particular *numinous* Way of Life, distinguished from a particular philosophy (academic or otherwise) by virtue of the adherent of or believer in such a numinous Way finding therein a presencing of the numinous sufficient to make them aware of, or feel, or come to know, a distinction between the sacred and the profane.

I have used *Way* in preference to the more common and in my view, inaccurate and now often pejorative term, religion.

[2] By *interpretation* here is meant (1) commentaries (academic, theological, and otherwise); (2) explanations (critical, and otherwise); (3) translations; and – most importantly – (4) a seeking of the meaning of (a) both the text (in whole and in parts; and both esoteric and exoteric) and (b) of the words and terms used.

[3] In Buddhism, the primary texts are regarded as: (1) for Theravada Buddhism, the collections referred to as *Tipitaka/Tripitaka*; (2) for Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Tipitaka (in some cases, depending on interpretation) and the various *Sutras*, including the collection often referred to as The Perfection of Wisdom; (3) for Tibetan Buddhism, the various Tantric texts, plus some of the Tipitaka (in some cases, depending on interpretation) and some the Mahāyāna sutras (in some cases, depending on interpretation).

In Hinduism, there is the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the literature of the *Vedas*.

[4] See, for example, my essay *Humility, Abstractions, and Belief*.

Two

Humility, Abstractions, and Belief

πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδὲν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει

(Soph. Antig. 334)

There is much that is strange, but nothing has more strangeness than we human beings

One of the many questions that has occupied me recently is the question of humility – can there, for instance, be true humility without a belief in a supreme Being, be that supreme Being God, as understood for instance, by Christianity, or Allah, as understood by Islam.

For I have certainly come, through and because of my own peregrinations and my *πάθει μάθος*, to recognize, to understand, the need for humility – the need for us, as individual human beings, to place ourselves in such a supra-personal context, such a perspective, that we become aware of our own fallibility, our own mortality, our own humanity, our own weakness, so that there is within us, or develops within us, a natural empathy with other Life, with Nature, and especially with other human beings.

From humility, it seems to me, derives two most important human virtues, dignity, and awareness of the numinous, the sacred. From humility derives the necessary desire to forgo or at least restrain what seems to be, at least so far, our human need for arrogance, for personal pride, for *ὑβρις* (hubris); for pursuing some ideal, such as a disruptive, often suffering-causing un-numinous change, where we are intensely and personally dissatisfied with ourselves, our situation, our circumstances, and often with what we regard as

“society”.

Manifestations of Humility

One of the great advantages – a manifestation of humanity – of a Way such as Islam and Christianity and Buddhism is that they provide, or can provide, us with the supra-personal perspective, and thus the humility, we human beings require to prevent us veering into and becoming subsumed with the error of hubris.

As it says in the Rule of Saint Benedict:

“The peak of our endeavour is to achieve profound humility...”
Chapter 7, *The Value of Humility*

As it says in the Quran:

“The ‘*Ibaad* of Ar-Rahman [Allah] are those who walk on earth in humility.” 25:63

As it says in the Dhammapada:

“Yo bâlo maññati bâlyae paúóitovâpi tena so bâlo ca paúóitamânî sa ve bâloti vuccati.”

” Accepting of themselves, the simple person in their simplicity is wise, although if they pride themselves they are wise, they are simply full of pride. “

Furthermore, such Ways provide such a supra-personal perspective in a manner which is living – that is, these Ways are presented to us as something which has a historical genesis and which lives among us, in our own times, in and through those devoted to them in that dignified manner which makes such people living examples of those tenets, of those Ways. That is, the dignified people who follow such Ways – who are inspired by those Ways to practice humility in their own lives – thus manifest the numinous, the sacred, among us, and so can provide us with practical, and personal, guidance, and a sense of belonging.

Thus, in such Ways we, as individuals, can find a welcome, a type of identity beyond our own personal one, and certainly a place where we can often, in time, find a home: a place to dwell awhile between the problems and the passions and the foibles of our lives, and place where can feel, and come to know, the numinous.

Yet such conventional Ways also require a certain belief, a certain faith: an acceptance of their own abstractions, and often their own dogma. For example, Islam requires, among other things, an acceptance that the Quran is the literal word of Allah. Christianity requires, among other things, that one accepts Scripture – the Old and New Testaments – as authoritative guides, to be quoted, admired, and followed; as Christianity also requires a belief in Jesus as the resurrected Son of God. Buddhism requires, among other things, an acceptance of Siddhattha Gotama as *the* enlightened one, who left guidelines and means to be followed; Buddhism also requires that one accept such things – such abstractions – as nirvana, and re-birth.

But, is humility possible without recourse to such Ways? Does humility of necessity require a certain inclusion – of one becoming part of a living tradition or of some conventional Way with a multitude of adherents and members? Does humility, therefore, of necessity, depend on one accepting certain abstractions and having faith in certain dogma?

The Cosmic Perspective

In essence, the truth of our human nature is that we are simply one type of life which exists on one planet orbiting one star in a Galaxy composed of billions of stars in a Cosmos containing billions upon billions of other Galaxies.

That is, in Cosmic terms, we do not seem to be anything special, and are most probably – if not almost certainly – not unique. We only assume or like to believe that we are unique – an assumption, and a belief, an arrogance, that most conventional Ways (termed religions) accept as a fundamental premise. Thus, Christianity and Islam both speak of a supreme creator-Being providing us with revelation, by means of Prophets, and which revelation is a guide to how we might attain what is regarded as the aim of our mortal existence, which is an eternal after-life in Heaven or Jannah.

There is, thus, the notion of this supreme Being guiding us, interfering in our affairs, and having a direct concern for we human beings on this planet we have called Earth – hence, for example, the concept of prayer to this Being; forgiveness from this Being; hence the notion of Jesus being crucified for us; hence the notion, in Christianity, of redemption and Heaven through Jesus; hence the notion of, in Islam, Shariah and Adab as a means, a path, to Allah and thus as guides to attaining the after-life in Jannah promised to us by Allah.

Even in Buddhism there is the belief in enlightenment, which Siddhattha Gotama and his teachings can guide us to, even if this takes several re-births in this mortal world, on Earth. There is also the notions of nirvana, re-birth, and of the Sangha as an enlightened way to enlightenment.

In all of these Ways there is *us*: we human beings, on this planet, striving for a different non-mortal, non-causal, existence. There are human beings thus concentrating on their own salvation, their own enlightenment, as there is some supreme Being, or some Enlightened One, concerned with us, or guiding us.

Which leads us to certain important questions, if we suspend the human-centric presumption – for example, does the probable existence of sentient life elsewhere in the Cosmos mean that:

(1) the God of Christianity, the supreme Being, the creator and giver of life, has to provide revelation through Prophets on every planet containing sentient life; and for there to be another crucifixion of another Jesus or even the same Jesus? And, if not, why not – for does not all sentient life, being the creation of the supreme creator, require redemption and the chance of Heaven?

(2) the Allah of Islam, the supreme Being, the creator and giver of life, has to reveal another Quran on every planet containing sentient life through other Messengers akin to Muhammad?

(3) a sentient being such as Siddhattha Gotama has to become enlightened to guide other sentient beings on every planet bearing sentient life?

Further questions arise, such as, if Heaven and Jannah exist will they become the abode of all the other non-human sentient life from other worlds who have been judged fitting to be there – or will other non-human sentient life have their realms, their own after-lives, and if so why if there is only one supreme God, one Allah, for the whole of the Cosmos as the ontology and theology of Christianity and Islam require? Would God, or Allah, operate a kind of apartheid policy to keep humans and non-humans separate in their after-lives?

Would there be an alien, a non-human, equivalent of the Catholic Pope on some other, extra-terrestrial worlds, somewhere in our Galaxy or in other Galaxies? Would there be a type of Shia or Sunni divide on another world, or on other worlds? And so on.

The easy answer to such questions is to continue with the human-centric perspective; with the assumption, the belief, that we human beings are, if not unique in the Cosmos in being sentient beings, then are somehow in some manner special, or favoured, by God, by Allah, or even by the nature of what Siddhattha Gotama taught was the impermanence of existence.

But if one asks such questions about the Cosmic nature of life, then it is easy to see that a non-revealed Way (or philosophies) such as Buddhism, and Taoism, can be adapted or expanded to answer most of them, whereas

revealed Ways such as Christianity and Islam have quite major problems, in terms of ontology, ethics, theology, eschatology, and so on.

Which then leads us to the simple question as to why there is no mention of the Cosmic perspective – of non-human sentient beings on other worlds in the Cosmos, requiring enlightenment, redemption, and so on – (1) if Siddhattha Gotama was the enlightened one, who perceived the true nature of existence, which existence is as vast as the Cosmos; (2) if the supreme Being of Islam and Christianity, as posited is the all-knower, the creator of all life, everywhere.

Of course, conventional Ways have easy – if ultimately unsatisfying – answers to such questions, which are *either* the canard that we humans are indeed special, chosen, and have some “sacred duty” to take our Earth-given revelations, the enlightenment of Siddhattha Gotama, out to other sentient life in the Cosmos, *or* that Siddhattha Gotama, God, Allah, were concerned with guiding us, we human beings, and deemed such questions about the Cosmos and other life would or might “only confuse us...” and what was important was our salvation, our enlightenment. Thus, we are treated like children, who cannot be told, or trusted with, the whole truth.

Such answers are unsatisfying because they require either a continuation of our arrogance, or an act of faith; they require that we limit our curiosity, limit our expectations; and accept that God, Allah, Siddhattha Gotama know or knew what is best for us, and it is right that they regard us as and treat us as children.

Such answers are unsatisfying because, to the rational, the doubting, human being it seems as if the revelations from God, from Allah, are somehow in some way deficient, as it seems as if Siddhattha Gotama may not have been as fully enlightened as Buddhists seem to accept or to believe.

In truth, our human appreciation of the vastness of the Cosmos, of the probability of other sentient life existing elsewhere, our faculty of reason, should move us toward the conclusion that most if not all conventional Ways are incomplete at best, or at worst are just other examples of our human-centric perspective, of our lack of empathy with all life, with all existence, in the Cosmos.

Humility and Empathy

The Cosmic perspective of The Numinous Way points us toward a possible answer in respect of the initial question asked regarding humility, for it seems that the essence of genuine humility lies in this Cosmic perspective and in the empathy which enables us to appreciate other life in the Cosmos.

That is, what we call humility – with its human-making quality, its distillation of an essential part of our humanity – does not necessarily depend on God, or Allah, or on some revelation, or on some enlightened human being such as Siddhattha Gotama. Rather, it has become or it can become inherent in us by virtue of our slow human process of *πάθει μάθος*, of us learning from our experiences, and thus growing in consciousness and empathy, which consciousness and which empathy provide us with both a knowledge, an understanding, of suffering and its causes, and with a means of ceasing to cause or to contribute such suffering.

Thus, humility is, like personal honour, an essential practical manifestation of empathy itself and of us acquiring a Cosmic perspective – because humility disposes us toward acting in such a manner that we try and avoid causing suffering to other beings, and removes from us that arrogance, that pride, which arises when we are subsumed with ourselves, our desires, and a human-centric perspective. For, by and through humility, we do what we do not because we expect some reward, or some forgiveness, given by some supra-personal supreme Being, or have some idealized duty to such a Being or to some abstraction (such as some nation, some State) but because it is in our very nature to do an act of compassion, a deed of honour: to do something which is noble and selfless.

That is, we act, not out of duty, not out of a desire for Heaven or Jannah, or enlightenment or some other “thing” we have posited – not from any emotion, desire or motive, not because some scripture or some revelation or some Buddha says we should – but because we have lost the illusion of our self-contained, personal, identity, lost our Earth-centric, human-centric, perspective, lost even the causal desire to be strive to something different, and instead just *are*: that is, we are just one microcosmic living mortal connexion between all life, on Earth, and in the Cosmos. For our very nature, as human beings, is a Cosmic nature – a natural part of the unfolding, of the naturally and numinously changing, Cosmos.

Evolution and Change

One objection to our human *πάθει μάθος* – to our evolution toward sentience and cosmic empathy and thus humility – might be that such evolution is itself an abstraction, a theory, or some ideal.

However, by such evolution is meant only change, only a natural unfolding – *φύσις*; only that slow interior iteration whereby we are changed through experience, through learning, through culture, through art, through those many and varied presencings of the numinous which contain and which express, and which have expressed for several millennia, the quintessence of

our human *πάθει μάθος*.

Such a change is numinous, and distinct from that change – that disruptive, un-numinous, profane, change – which abstractions cause or which are the genesis of suffering.

For the change that is our numinous *φύσις* is essentially and at first an interior, a personal, one, imbued with the very acausality of the numen; whereas the vapid change of abstractions is the change of the causal, of cause-and-effect, arising from the pursuit of, or the desire for, outer change, of attempting to mould life, especially human life and Nature, to some abstraction or some ideal, which we believe in, assume, or hold onto.

Furthermore, empathy with life, with the Cosmos, disposes toward an understanding, a knowing, of the Cosmos itself as a natural unfolding, a natural, and numinous, changing, just as Nature is such, here on Earth: one particular, one finite, presencing of the very living of the Cosmos.

Conclusion

Hence, we arrive at the simple conclusion that for us human beings, humility is a natural and necessary and numinous development; an expression of our humanity, of the potential that we possess to evolve, to change, ourselves in a numinous manner consistent with the Cosmic nature of our own being, and consistent with the nature of the Cosmos itself.

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Three

The Nature of Religion and The Nature of The Numinous Way

A distinction should be made between a religion, and a Way (a specific Way of Life) - for the term religion often now denotes what may be termed the religious attitude, which is [1] reliance upon and/or veneration of texts, and the emergence of schisms due to such texts; and because, in its origin, a Way mostly does not possess such reliance on or veneration of such texts, or involve such schisms.

For the essence of a particular Way is that it is a numinous, and it is this numinosity which not only serves to distinguish a Way from a particular philosophy (academic or otherwise), but which also provides the adherent or believer in a particular Way with a personal awareness or manifestation of The Numen, and which presents them with an understanding or intuition of - or which can lead them toward knowing - the distinction that exists between the sacred and the profane.

That is, the individual regards some things as sacred; for example, as worthy of veneration, and/or as special (beyond the mundane) and - if a place or area - as requiring a certain mode or manner of dress (and a reverent attitude) and/or as requiring a certain ritual purification before entering. In addition, and importantly, there is an awareness, often unspoken - that is, not defined through strict dogma - of the necessary limits of personal behaviour, based on a feeling for natural balance, for *Φύσις*: on the desire not to commit *ὑβρις*, to not overstep the mark and thus to avoid transgressing, or trampling on, the sacred; to show respect for the sacred [2].

In the philosophical terminology of The Numinous Way [3], this sacredness is a presencing of the acausal, and thus what is perceived or felt as numinous, as sacred, is that-which in some manner embodies or manifests acausality - that is, some-thing which does not possess the quality of mundane causality, of a simple and linear cause-and-effect; some-thing, instead, redolent of the eternal, the timeless, the supra-personal, nature of the acausal, and which is beyond the power or the ability of all mortals to control.

Furthermore, it is this presencing of the acausal which the religious attitude tends to conceal, and which concealment often leads, over time, to reform or renaissance movements when some or many adherents or believers feel has been lost or obscured.

Why this tendency to conceal? Because the religious attitude is basically a manifestation of causal reductionism, where there is an attempt to explain or understand the numinous either by reference to some text, or by means of some causal abstraction, as being the effect of some posited cause.

Thus, the religious attitude removes the individual from - or has a tendency to remove the individual from - the immediacy of the numinous moment; from a personal, direct, and most importantly wordless, experience of The Numen, imposing as this attitude does some causal structure on such numinous moments, and which structure depends on collocations of words, with such

words denoting only that-which is causal. This imposition is most evident in attempts to explain and to reform or to replace those ritual observances which have evolved naturally from such immediate numinous moments as become shared by small communities of adherents of a particular Way.

A good illustration of this process is the Latin Tridentine Mass of the Catholic Church. This Mass evolved over a certain period of causal time, and became, for many Catholics, the main ritual, or rite, which imbued their ordinary lives with a certain numinosity - a certain awareness of the sacred, with attendance at this rite involving certain customs, such as modest and clean dress, and women covering their heads with a veil. This rite was, in essence, a *Mysterium* - that is, it embodied not only something holy and somewhat mysterious (such as the Consecration and Communion) but also was wordlessly un-mundane and so re-presented to most of those attending the rite, almost another world, with this re-presentation aided by such things as the use of incense, the ringing of the Sanctus bell, and the genuflexions. In addition, and importantly, the language of this rite was not that of everyday speech, and was not even, any longer, a living changing language, but rather had in many ways become the sacred language of that particular Way.

The Catholic rite endured for centuries and, indeed, to attend this particular rite marked, affirmed and re-affirmed one as a Catholic, as a particular follower of a particular Way, and a Way quite distinct from the schism that became Protestantism [4], a fact which explained, for instance, the decision, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth the First of England, to punish by fine or imprisonment those who attended this rite, and to persecute, accuse of treason, and often execute, those who performed this rite.

However, the reforms imposed by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican replaced this numinous rite, this *Mysterium*, with rites and practices redolent of un-numinous Protestantism. Why? Most probably because those involved in such planning and producing and implementing such reforms were swayed by the causal abstractions of "progress" and "relevancy" - desiring as they did and do to be in accord with the causal, material, *Zeitgeist* of the modern West where numbers of adherents, and conformity to trendy ideas and theories, are regarded as more important than presencing The Numen in a numinous manner. When, that is, some profane causal abstractions come to be regarded as more relevant than experiencing and manifesting the sacred as the sacred.

Yet this does not mean that Catholicism, before the reforms imposed by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, was or remained a Way, *per se*. Only that, of all the variants of what are now termed Christianity, it retained a

certain numinosity expressed by the original Way; that, through its Mysteries such as the Tridentine Mass, it still presented something of The Numen; and that it managed to avoid the worst excesses of the religious attitude, maintaining as it did a monasticism which by its own particular way of life encouraged the cultivation of a genuine, non-dogmatic, humility.

For the truth is that all conventional Ways, through becoming organized, and through their expansion, devolve to being religious attitudes - that is, they lose the immediacy of the numinous moment in their reliance on and reverence for texts, and allow causal abstractions to blur the distinction between sacred and profane, especially in relation to the personal behaviour - the standards - of individuals.

This is so because a causal organization (such as a central or centralized authority and the hierarchy that goes with it) by its very nature depends on abstractions, such as dogma, the codification of standards, the promulgation of edicts dealing with such matters as personal behaviour and personal goals, and the setting forth of penalties for failure to obey such authority. For instance, justification has to be found for such authority, and for the creation and maintenance of such hierarchy as are necessary for the commands of such authority to be promulgated and executed. And it is in such matters that texts, and their interpretation, their exegesis, become of great importance.

Expansion requires that such authority be maintained, and encompass those expanded to, as such expansion naturally leads to schism, given the past and the current nature of human beings. For it is and has been in the nature of human beings to place pursuit of causal things before a desire to not commit ὑβρις. And it is this desire not to commit ὑβρις that is perhaps the foremost manifestation, in human beings, of the immediacy of the numinous moment, and which Mysteries presence, thus enabling individuals to re-connect with, to feel, the numinous when they partake in and of such Mysteries.

Furthermore, it this understanding of the necessity of avoiding ὑβρις - the need to cultivate a natural, a human, balance - that is and has been the essence of all Ways, of all presencings of The Numen.

Hubris, Humility, and The Avoidance of Abstractions

As outlined elsewhere [5] the avoidance of ὑβρις is manifest in humility, and which humility is a dignified and balanced way of living which has its genesis in that supra-personal perspective which awareness of the numinous provides,

and which awareness of The Numen *πάθει μάθος* often produces.

However, as succinctly expressed in an ancient Greek saying attributed to Heraclitus - *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* [6]. That is, there is a natural tendency for the balance that is *Φύσις* to become concealed, again, and again.

How, then, to avoid such a concealment, to avoid a return to abstractions, a return to that causal, mundane, perspective of profane and linear cause-and-effect? Or, expressed somewhat differently, is it possible for a Way to remain a Way and thus to continue to presence The Numen without devolving to become a religious attitude?

I believe it is, were such a Way to be founded upon the personal, the numinous, the individual, authority of *πάθει μάθος* and not upon the thinking or the revelation or the authority (real or assumed) of some individual, and were such a Way as well to make a personal knowing and awareness of the numinous the essence of apprehending The Numen.

It is my contention that such a Way as this is may be incipiently manifest in what I have termed The Numinous Way; that is, in what is otherwise called the Esoteric Philosophy of The Numen. For, in The Numinous Way, the essence of apprehending The Numen is the individual, the personal, faculty of empathy, as well as an acknowledgement of the numinous authority of *πάθει μάθος* [7].

Furthermore, such a Way as this cannot devolve into a religious attitude - into a conventional religion - for two quite simple reasons.

First, because the essence of *πάθει μάθος* is that

"... knowledge - and thus learning, based on such knowledge - is personal, direct, acquired in the immediacy of a living, a lived-through, moment of one's own mortal life. For the religious way, knowledge - and thus learning, based on such knowledge - can be and has been contained in something other-than-ourselves which we have to or which we can learn from: something impersonal, some abstraction, such as a book, a dogma, a creed, some Institution, some teacher or master..." [8]

Second, because empathy by its very nature cannot ever be abstracted out

from the immediacy-of-the-moment, from the realness of a personal a direct, interaction between individuals. This is because empathy is living, and thus already possessed of the acausal, and, being a natural faculty, empathy arises only in and through - is present in - such a direct, personal contact with another living being. Thus, it cannot be expressed in any causal abstraction; it cannot, being living, be contained in any book or books; it cannot be described or contained within any dogma or creed. It can only be experienced, and known, and cultivated, by each and every individual, directly, and always remains a part of them, a part of their life, of their living.

For there are, in this simple Numinous Way, no texts; no appeals to authority; no dogma; not even any need or requirement for supra-personal authority or supra-personal organization. Instead, there is the immediacy-of-the-numinous-moment, brought by the faculty of empathy and its development, and thence the avoidance of ὕβρις by the cultivation of compassion and personal honour, virtues which arise naturally, unaffectedly, from such empathy. Or rather, virtues which are the practical and natural manifestations of such empathy.

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Notes:

[1] See, for example, my essay *Exegesis, and The Discovery of Wisdom*, above.

[2]

ὥς ἔπραξεν ὥς ἔκρανεν. οὐκ ἔφα τις
θεοὺς βροτῶν ἀξιοῦσθαι μέλειν
ὅσοις ἀθίκτων χάρις
πατοῖθ': ὁ δ' οὐκ εὐσεβής
Aesch. Ag 369-373

"Someone denied that the gods deem it worthy to concern themselves with mortals who trample upon what, being untouchable, brings delight. But such persons show no proper respect."

[3] Also known as The Philosophy of The Numen, and as The Esoteric Philosophy of The Numen. The Numen is the source of all being, and which being is both causal and acausal. Thus, there are causal beings, acausal beings, and beings possessed of, or manifesting, both causal and acausal

being. See, for example, *Acausality, Phainomenon, and The Appearance of Causality*, and also *Life and The Nature of the Acausal*.

[4] Catholicism (before the reforms imposed by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican) represented, in my view, the original Way known as Christianity, and was - at least before those reforms - quite distinct from those schisms which are now known as Protestantism and Orthodox Christianity. Indeed, distinct enough - until those reforms - to be considered a different Way of Life, a Way evident, for example, in Catholic rites (such as the Tridentine Mass), in monasticism, in Papal authority, in the use of Latin, and in the reverence accorded The Blessed Virgin Mary.

Furthermore, it is my view that the schism now termed Protestantism was a classic example of the religious attitude predominating over numinosity - and thus that it is and was redolent of attempts to reduce The Numen to linear causal abstractions. Thus, Mysteriums such as the Tridentine Mass became replaced with recitation of Scripture in the vernacular and with attempts to rationally explain - according to some abstract causal theory - the mystery of the consecration.

[5] In *Humility, Abstractions, and Belief*.

[6] I have tried to elucidate the correct meaning of this often mis-understood fragment, attributed to Heraclitus, in my essay *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[7] For example, see my *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way - The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*

[8] op.cit



On The Nature of Abstractions

For the Philosophy of The Numen (that is, for The Numinous Way) an abstraction is a manifestation of the primary error of conventional causal thinking; that is, of assuming only a causal linearity - of using causal reductionism, that simple cause-and-effect that excludes the acausal knowing that empathy provides and which the numinous is a manifestation of. Implicit in abstractions is the notion of - the illusion of - the separateness of beings.[\[1\]](#)

Abstractions thus hide the true nature of Reality - which is both causal and acausal [\[2\]](#) - and which Reality can be apprehended by means of both causal and acausal thinking, which processes, or types of knowing, present to us both causal knowledge [\[3\]](#) and acausal knowledge [\[4\]](#). In essence, an abstraction is the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, "image" or category, and thus some generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals - and/or some being, some "thing" - to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such being/things/individuals. The positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Thus, the nature of abstraction resides in causality, with causal knowing revealing only the causal aspect, the causal nature, of beings.

In contrast, acausal knowing reveals (uncovers) the connexions between beings

- the dependant nature of beings - and thus places beings in the context of Being, and thus uncovers the acausal nature of beings, with Being having both a causal and an acausal nature.

The error of abstractionism - of using existing abstractions and manufacturing other abstractions and using these as the source of ethics, of judgement, and so ascribing a value to them - is the error of *ὑβρις* (hubris). That is, the error of unbalance: of neglecting or being unaware of empathy, and of neglecting or being unaware of or profaning the numinous [5]. In the personal and social sense, *ὑβρις* is revealed in a lack of compassion, a lack of balanced reasoning, and not only ascribing to one's self (or some other abstraction, such as a nation-State) what is assumed to be the perfection of right and of good (or the best current approximation of it) but also acting on that presumption to the detriment, the harm, of others [6].

This is unethical - as all abstractions are inherently unethical - because what is ethical is determined by empathy, and thus cannot be abstracted out of that direct, immediate, and personal knowing which presences empathy in us, as human beings [7].

The Unethical Abstraction of The Civilizing Process

The error of abstractionism - of using existing abstractions and manufacturing other abstractions and using these as the source of ethics, of judgement, and so ascribing a value to them - is also the error of understanding *πόλεμος* (polemos) as a causal dialectic and as the abstraction of 'progression' that is, of some 'progress'/evolution resulting from such *πόλεμος-as-dialectic* being applied in a practical way (as a process of change), with the change inherent in this application of *πόλεμος* being regarded as necessary and as good.

This particular error - of *πόλεμος* mis-understood as a dialectic involving opposites [8] - is most manifest, philosophically and in that social construct often termed society, in what has been termed "the civilizing process", and which process (to wit, we mortals allegedly becoming civilized or more civilized) involves constant change and a continuing development. This is the acceptance of the idea that there is "something", in some future - near or distant - that can be and should be striven toward, and this "something" is always some ideal, or more perfect, form of something that either already exists or which, it is alleged, can be manufactured (brought into being) if certain things (within one's self, or within society, for instance) are changed in accord with some other manufactured idea or abstraction, or deriving from

some *-ism* or some *-ology* (be these deemed to be political, social or religious).

There is thus the instability of unbalance, of *ὑβρις* - a belief in a necessary and continuing causal (linear) progression toward something considered to be better than what exists now or has existed, and that nothing is immune or should be immune to this causal change. Why *of ὑβρις*? Because there is no balance of empathy; no balance arising from that acausal knowing which predisposes us toward compassion, the immediacy of personal interaction, and *wu-wei* [9]; instead, there is - in the illustrative (though not philosophically accurate) sense, the triumph - in that social construct often termed society - of the Jungian animus over the anima. That is, there is a distinct lack of natural balance both within the individual and within social constructs such as society.

In a more accurate philosophical way, this is the loss of *ψυχή* [10] (and thus a lack of knowing of and appreciation of the numinous) and the dominance of the error of *πόλεμος-as-dialectic*, and which *πόλεμος-as-dialectic* tends always, by its nature as an abstraction, towards *ὑβρις*.

In addition, this so-called "civilizing process" (involving change) is predicated on the assumption, the abstraction, of there existing something termed civilization, or of it being possible to manufacture (to progress toward) this something, this abstraction, termed civilization. For however civilization is or has been defined, it is always an abstraction because all such definitions by their very nature are impersonal, devoid of acausal knowing and the empathy of the immediacy of personal knowing. That is, they all ignore our nature as empathic beings (and thus our acausal nature and our connexion to other life) for all such definitions depend on (1) large supra-personal collocations such as "city" (urban living) or some State, and/or on (2) the large-scale centralization of resources, especially fiscal and military; and/or on (3) some definition of what is termed "civilized values" deriving from causal theories of ethics [11], and/or on (4) some definition of the importance (and sanctity, or whatever) of the individual, perceived as the individual is as some separate (that is, causal-only) being. Many definitions are based on all four categories.

In essence, therefore, the very notion of "civilization" is unethical, because it both classifies, and excludes, based on some abstract criteria, some abstract *non-empathic* judgement of others (that is, of who and what is deemed to be "civilized").

Similarly, the very notions of "progress" and of some "civilizing process" are unethical because they predispose individuals toward the unbalanced disruption of and the striving for some type of perfection or ideal, and which striving (because it is a causal striving) always entails placing that ideal or that

abstraction before the compassion born of empathy, and which always tends toward creating suffering, and always involves a loss of numinosity: of that delicate, reasoned, balance that an empathic awareness brings to we human beings.

For "civilization" assigns an abstract moral value to individuals, and judges them according to some abstract category or categories, and rather than decreasing *πόλεμος-as-dialectic*, this abstraction, such judgement, actually increases it and the *ὑβρις* inherent therein. For, according to this abstraction, one is or can become (by a causal, linear, striving - by *πόλεμος-as-dialectic*), "civilized", and, also according to this abstraction, being "civilized" is inherently better than, superior to, being a "barbarian" - and even more, according to this abstraction, being "civilized" is the state of human existence we should all strive to attain and we should encourage others to attain, for such encouragement of them, such a *changing* of them, is regarded, by the adherents of this abstraction, as their moral duty.

Thus, and for instance, there is the demand for some people, somewhere, to "become civilized" with some people, or more often these days, some nation-State held as as an example (an ideal) for others to emulate: to progress toward. In addition, those deemed uncivilized can be fought, and force used to "make them civilized" or at least alter their social structures so that they can be given the opportunity to "become civilized" or "progress toward" being so.

For once some abstract category is assigned some moral value - as in the case of "civilization" which is regarded as "good" and "necessary" if not superior to everything else - then there is a tendency toward suffering. Indeed, one could write with some justification that the abstractions of "civilization", and of a linear "progress" toward some form of perfection (and some *future* state of happiness or *future* peace are abstractions of an abstract perfection), have been and are the among the most disruptive in human history, as well as being the cause of great suffering for century upon century.

Thus, the abstraction termed civilization - however defined - usurps the empathy of the immediacy of the moment, and the compassion arising from it, just as the abstraction of a linear "progress" usurps *wu-wei*. Both lead to *ὑβρις* and thus to the loss of *ψυχή*, a loss of our natural balance, a loss of *ἀρμονίη* and *συμπάθεια* in respect of *Φύσις* [\[12\]](#); a natural balance which enables us to feel, know, and appreciate, the numinous - and thus live in a numinous way.

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Footnotes:

[1] Refer to *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*

[2] Refer to *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being* and also *Ontology, Ethics and The Numinous Way*.

[3] Causal knowledge derives from both the use of λόγος (and thus from the application of logic) and from experimental science, for which see *The Pathei-Mathos of Experimental Science in The Classical Foundations of The Numinous Way*.

[4] Acausal knowing derives - currently - from the faculty of empathy: see, for example, *Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality*.

[5] ὕβρις is the error of personal insolence, of going beyond the proper limits set by reasoned (balanced) judgement - σωφρονεῖν - and by an awareness, a personal knowing, of the numinous, and which knowing of the numinous is provided by empathy. For a discussion of ὕβρις in the context of σωφρονεῖν and of Δίκη, see my essay *Quid Est Veritas?*

[6] This lack of balanced reasoning, this lack of compassion (a lack of empathy) and this presumption of arrogantly assuming one knows what is justice and of having the right to apply it, to dispense it, to others are typical signs of the tyrant.

Classic personal examples are the characters of Oedipus in *Oedipus Tyrannus* by Sophocles, and Creon in *Antigone*, also by Sophocles. Both of these individuals commit the error of hubris due to their continuing unbalanced assertion - based on a neglect of both reasoned judgement and of the numen (re-presented in those dramas by the gods and their customs) - that they "know" and have a right (the ability) to decide what is good and what is wrong.

A classic impersonal example is the modern nation-State which ascribes to itself the presumption of judgement of other individuals and the presumption of knowing what it regards is "right" and "wrong". The presumption of judgement of other individuals is enshrined in the so-called Courts of Law/Justice of the State, and the presumption of knowing what it regards is "right" and "wrong" is enshrined in the laws which it makes, the transgression

of which the State deems is punishable by whatever measures it deems appropriate. All these make the modern nation-State an example of the impersonal tyrant.

[7] For empathy as the source of ethics, refer to *Ontology, Ethics and The Numinous Way* and also *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*.

[8] For an overview of this error of *πόλεμος-as-dialectic*, see my *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also my essay *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*.

[9] *wu-wei* (a Taoist word) is letting-be, and results from empathy; from being sympathetically and compassionately aware of other life, other beings, and not desiring to interfere with such life. See my essay *Living The Numinous Way* contained in *Three Essays Regarding The Numinous Way*.

[10] Correctly understood, *ψυχή* is Life *qua* being. That is, it is the matrix of connexions - of connected beings - that empathy reveals, and expresses (or is a manifestation of, for us) the true (acausal and causal) nature of Being itself. See also footnote 11 in my essay *Quid Est Veritas?*

[11] For example, the definition of barbarism as opposed to moral ("civilized") values, with moral values being based on an abstract (non-numinous) morality, as posited, for example, by Aristotle, Plato, Hume or Kant. In Kant, for instance, one has the autonomous individual - that is, the separate individual of causality and of causal knowing. However, in respect of Kant, while his principle of morality - that a person should act on the presumption that his own individual action could become a universal law which others use - might vaguely suggest empathy, his assumption of there being an imperative universal good logically leads to the assumption of there being a supra-human entity (deity) behind such an imperative, and these assumptions militate against natural empathy.

According to The Numinous Way, empathy is a natural human faculty (or ability), which can be, but which often is not, used.

[12] For *συν-πάθος* see, for example, *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*. For *Φύσις* see, for example, *Quid Est Veritas?*

In respect of *ἀρμονίη*:

"...the *numinous* is what predisposes us not to commit ὕβρις – that is, what continues or maintains or manifests ἀρμονίη and thus καλλός; the natural balance – *sans* abstractions – that enables us to know and appreciate, and which uncovers, Φύσις and λόγος, and τὸ καλόν."

Pre-Socratic Philosophy, The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions



The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic

- I - Opposites and Dialectic as Abstractions
- II - The Error of Polemos as Kampf
- III - Being and Empathy

I - Opposites and Dialectic as Abstractions

For well over a hundred years there has been a belief that some kind of process, or dialectic, between or involving certain, particular, opposites might lead us to answer questions such as *Quid est Veritas?*, could lead to a certain understanding of ourselves, and may well express something of the true nature of reality, of Being itself. In varying degrees this belief is evident, for instance, in Hegel, Nietzsche (with his *Wille zur macht*), Marx, and those espousing the doctrine that has been termed Social Darwinism.

In addition, and for a much greater span of causal Time, this belief has been an essential part of certain religions where the process is often expressed eschatologically and in a conjectured conflict between the abstract opposites of 'good' and 'evil', God and Devil, and such things as demons and angels.

This notion of opposites, of two distinct, separate, things is much in evidence in Plato, and indeed, philosophically, the separation of beings from Being by

the process of ideation and opposites may be said to have begun with Plato. For instance, he contrasts πόλεμος with στάσις (Conflict/strife contrasted with stasis/stability) thus:

ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῇ τοῦ οἰκείου ἔχθρᾳ στάσις κέκληται, ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ τοῦ ἀλλοτρίου πόλεμος. Rep. V 470b

In respect of these two forms, Plato tries to explain that while there are two terms, two distinct namings - πόλεμος and στάσις - what are so denoted are not just two different names but express what he regards as the reality - the being, οὐσία - of two differing contrasted beings; that is, he posits what we would call two different ideations, or abstractions, creating an abstract (idealized) form for one and an abstract (idealized) form for the other.

Some centuries later, Diogenes Laërtius - apparently paraphrasing Heraclitus - wrote in his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*:

πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα (ix. 9)

All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia [1].

Which might seem to suggest that a certain mis-understanding of Heraclitus [2]. the ideation of Plato and of later philosophers and theologians, was the genesis of abstractions and of this belief that a so-called conflict of opposites can lead to 'truth', and explain the nature of Being and beings.

However, this ideation, this development of abstractions, and this process of a dialectic, led to the philosophical error of the separation of beings from Being so that instead of the revealing that would answer *Quid est Veritas?* there is ὕβρις with the numinous authority of an individual πάθει μάθος replaced by adherence to some dogmatic dialectical process involving some assumed struggle/conflict. That is, by considering ἀρχή as the cause of the abstractions which are opposites and the origin of a dialectic, and which opposites, and which dialectic involving them, are said to manifest the nature of both our being and of Being itself.

This is an error because Πόλεμος is neither kampf nor conflict, but rather - as the quote from Diogenes Laërtius suggests - what lies behind or beyond Phainómenon; that is, non-temporal, non-causal, Being which, though we have have a natural tendency to separate into portions (that is, to perceive beings as

only beings), beings themselves become revealed as bound together again by us facing up to the expected contest: that is, to our human nature and to knowing, to developing, to using, our faculty of reasoned judgement - *σωφρονεῖν* - to uncover, to reveal, via *λόγος*, the true nature of *Δίκη* and thus restore *ἀρμονίη* [3].

That is, instead of this abstraction of a dialectic there is, as I have suggested elsewhere:

A natural process of Change, of *ἀρχή* which we apprehend as *Φύσις* - as Heraclitus expressed in fragment 112:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας.

This suggests that what is most excellent [*ἀρετὴ*] is thoughtful reasoning [*σωφρονεῖν*] - and that such thoughtful reasoning is a process which not only expresses and uncovers meaning, but which is also in accord with, in harmony or in sympathy with, *φύσις* - that is, with our own nature as mortals and with the nature of Being itself. [4]

II - The Error of Polemos as Kampf

In a fragment attributed to Heraclitus [5] *Πόλεμος* is generally regarded as a synonym for either *kampf*, or more generally, for war; with the fragment then considered to mean something such as: strife (or war) is the father of everything. This interpretation is said to compliment another fragment attributed to Heraclitus:

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔοντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]. Fragmentum 80.

This is generally considered to mean something abstract such as: war is everywhere and strife is justice and all that is arises and passes away because of strife.

However, I contend that this older understanding of - the accepted rendition of - *Πόλεμος* is a misinterpretation of *Πόλεμος* [6], and that rather than *kampf* (struggle), or a general type of strife, or what we now associate with the term

war, *Πόλεμος* implies the acausality (a simultaneity) beyond our causal ideation, and which ideation has separated object from subject, and often abstracted them into seemingly conflicting opposites. Hence my interpretation of Fragmentum 53:

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

Hence also my interpretation of *εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔοντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]* as:

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord. [7]

Thus the suggestion is that *Πόλεμος* is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but not only that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being, but also that which manifests as *δίκη* and accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being (become bound together - be whole - again).

For it is perhaps interesting that in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a personified *πόλεμος* (as the *δαίμων* of kindred strife) married a personified *ὑβρις* (as the *δαίμων* of arrogant pride) [8] and that it was a common folk belief that *πόλεμος* accompanied *ὑβρις* - that is, that Polemos followed Hubris around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing *ἔρις*.

As a result of *ἔρις*, there often arises *πάθει μάθος* - that practical and personal knowing, that reasoned understanding which, according to Aeschylus [9] is the new law, the new understanding, given by Zeus to replace the older more religious and dogmatic way of fear and dread, often viewed as *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* [10]. A new understanding which Aeschylus sought to explain in the *Oresteia*.

III - Being and Empathy

This new understanding is basically the culture of *ἀρετή*:

This *culture of ἀρετή* is a particular balance - born from *πάθει μάθος* (from the personal knowing of the error, the unbalance, that is *ὑβρις*) and from using reasoned judgement (*σωφρονεῖν*), and both of which make us aware of the true nature of our *φύσις* and of *Φύσις* itself. [11]

In addition, by cultivating and by using our natural faculty of empathy, which is part of *λόγος* [12], we can understand both *φύσις* and *Πόλεμος*, and thus apprehend Being as Being, and the nature of beings - and in particular the nature of our being, as mortals. For empathy reveals to us the acausality of Being [13] and thus how the process of abstraction, involving as it does an imposition of causality and separation upon beings (and the ideation implicit on opposites and dialectic), is a covering-up of Being and of *Πόλεμος* and thus involves a mis-understanding of both *Δίκη* and of *φύσις*.

In place of the numinosity of *ψυχή* - of Life qua being - there is, for the apprehension that is a dialectic of opposites, the hubris of abstractions, and thus a loss of our natural balance, a loss of *ἀρμονίη* [14] and *συμπάθεια*.

David Myatt
April 2011 CE

Notes

[1] I have used a transliteration of the compound Greek word - *ἐναντιοδορομίας* - rather than given a particular translation, since the term enantiodromia in my view suggests the uniqueness of expression of the original, and which original in my view is not adequately, and most certainly not accurately, described by a usual translation such as 'conflict of opposites'. Rather, what is suggested is 'confrontational contest' - that is, by facing up to the expected/planned/inevitable contest.

Interestingly, Carl Jung - who was familiar with the sayings of Heraclitus - used the term enantiodromia to describe the emergence of a trait (of character) to offset another trait and so restore a certain psychological balance within the individual.

[2] Refer to my (a) *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*; (b) *Heraclitus - Notes on Fragment 53*; (b) *Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* (forthcoming); (c) *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[3] While Φύσις (Physis) has a natural tendency to become covered up (Heraclitus, Fragment 123) it can be uncovered through λόγος and πάθει μάθος.

[4] In *Empathy and The Immoral Abstraction of Race*

[5]

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.
Fragmentum 53.

[6] See my *Heraclitus - Notes on Fragment 53*, and my *Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80*.

In the former article, I suggest a new interpretation of Fragmentum 53:
Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

[7] I have deliberately transliterated (instead of translated) polemos, and left δίκη as δίκη. In respect of δίκη, see my essay *Quid Est Veritas?*

Alternative renderings of the fragment are:

One should be aware that polemos is pervasive; and discord δίκη, and that beings [our being] quite naturally come-into-being through discord

One should be aware that polemos pervades; with discord δίκη, and that all beings are begotten because of discord.

[8] Correctly understood, a δαίμων is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - θεοί - but rather a lesser type of divinity who might be assigned by those gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or watch over certain human beings and especially particular numinous (sacred) places.

In addition, Polemos was originally the δαίμων of kindred strife, whether familial, or of one's πόλις (one's clan and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of conflict (or war), is doubly incorrect.

It is interesting to observe how the term *δαίμων* - with and after Plato, and especially by its (mis) use by the early Christian Church - came to be a moral abstraction, used in a bad sense (as 'demon'), and contrasted with another moral abstraction, that of 'angels'. Indeed, this process - this change - with this particular term is a reasonable metaphor for what we may call the manufacture and development of abstractions, and in which development the ontology and theology of an organized monotheistic religion played a not insignificant part.

[9] Agamemnon, 174-183. qv. my essay, *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way - The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*

[10] Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6

[11] Myatt, David: *Quid Est Veritas?* (2011)

[12] As mentioned in my *Pre-Socratic Philosophy, The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions*, *λόγος* is manifest to us in both empathy and reason.

[13] qv. *Some Notes Concerning Causality, Ethics, and Acausal Knowing*.

[14] "...the *numinous* is what predisposes us not to commit *ὑβρις* - that is, what continues or maintains or manifests *ἀρμονίη* and thus *καλλός*; the natural balance - *sans* abstractions - that enables us to know and appreciate, and which uncovers, *Φύσις* and *λόγος*, and *τὸ καλόν*." Pre-Socratic Philosophy, *The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions*



War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

The Morality of The Numinous Way

In order to understand the concepts of war and violence in terms of the philosophy of The Numinous Way, it is necessary to begin by outlining the morality of The Numinous Way, since war and violence are inseparably bound up with how one understands morality.

Morality is, for The Numinous Way, a consequence of individuals using the faculty of empathy [1] - that is, a consequence of the insight and the understanding (the acausal knowing) that empathy provides for individuals in the immediacy-of-the-moment. This insight and knowledge is of how we are not isolated human beings, but rather only one fragile microcosmic nexion and thus connected to all Life, sentient and otherwise, human and otherwise, of this planet and otherwise. Consequently, there is a cosmic perspective - a cosmic ethic - and compassion: that is, the human virtue of having *συμπάθεια* with other living beings, and the feeling, the knowledge, that we should treat other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated: with fairness, dignity, and respect.

The morality of The Numinous Way is therefore defined by a personal honour, a personal compassion, and the personal virtue of justice. For justice is not some abstract concept, but rather a personal virtue, as *εὐταξία* [2] is a personal virtue. For justice is the personal virtue of fairness; the quality of balance, and is linked to other personal virtues as mentioned, for example, by Cicero:

"Aliis ego te virtutibus, continentiae, gravitatis, iustitiae, fidei, ceteris

omnibus." [3]

This morality is therefore a personal one so that it is the living individual of honour - someone who possesses certain virtues - who represents, who is, the cosmic ethics of The Numinous Way. For,

"the Cosmic Ethic [...] cannot live in some law, in some Institution, in some Court, in some dogma or in some abstract theory. To be numinous, to presence the numinous, what is ethical requires a living honourable person, not some abstract theory of ethics." *The Natural Balance of Honour* (2011)

Thus the source of, the authority for - and the reason for choosing - such a morality is and can only be the judgement of the individual, deriving as this judgement does from their empathy and their unique *πάθει μάθος*.

The Source of Authority

For The Numinous Way, there is no authority other than that of personal empathy, personal honour and *πάθει μάθος*. That is, the source of authority is personal, and the bounds of this authority are defined by honour, with The Numinous Way thus being:

"the Way of the numinous and individual authority of *πάθει μάθος* where one's own empathy and one's own learning from practical experience take precedence and are considered a means for us to become *a friend of σοφόν* and thus acquire the virtue and the skill that has been termed wisdom." Preface, *Selected Writings Concerning The Numinous Way* (2011).

In practical terms, this means that the individual following or being guided by this Way relies on and is guided by their own judgement, their own experience, and a Code of Honour, and does not relinquish these in favour of some chain-of-command or in favour of accepting the authority of some supra-personal institution, of some law, or of some association, political party or whatever. In place of accepting and submitting to such external authority there is only the giving of personal loyalty according to a Code of Honour, with such giving by its honourable and personal nature never involving the individual in relinquishing their own judgement or acting contrary to that Code of Honour.

Violence, War, The State, and Leges Regiae

Used in its correct, original, non-pejorative way, violence is using physical force against another person sufficient to cause some physical injury. However, a fairly recent synonym for violence is *force* - a term often used by politicians and castellans

and theorists of The State, among others, when they attempt to try and justify the use of violence by those persons (such as the police) such politicians and castellans (and others) believe have some 'lawful authority' to inflict injury on people.

The distinction that such politicians and castellans and others thus attempt to make between violence and force reveals their reliance, stated or unstated, known or unknown, on the principles of *Leges Regiae*. That is, on the principles used historically by kings and emperors and their courts where someone or some group assumes authority over others, and thus exercises command over them, makes decisions for or on behalf of them, and, ultimately, by the use of violence and the threat of punishment are able to force or persuade others to obey them and their commands.

Principles, for example, manifest in the ancient *Jus Papirianum* attributed to Sextus Papirius:

"After Romulus had distinguished the persons of higher rank from those of inferior condition, then he passed laws and apportioned the duties for each to do...

For the king, he chose the following prerogatives ... to maintain the guardianship of the laws and the national customs, ... to judge in person the greatest of crimes ... to have absolute command in war. " [4]

Notice how Romulus - the legendary King of ancient Rome - assumed the authority to divide individuals into categories - high and low - and how he manufactured laws, and told individuals what their duties would be, and assumed absolute command in war.

Modern nation-States have, via people such as Augustine of Hippo [5], simply replaced kings and emperors with Prime Ministers, Presidents, or representatives (or whatever) and covered or attempted to cover their use of violence (by their police forces and armies) and the threat of punishment (such as prison) by rhetoric about 'law and order' and by social and political theories (such as that of democracy). But the demand that individuals accept some supra-personal authority remains the same, as does the threat or the use of violence against individuals by officials appointed and approved by such personal authorities, as does the demand that individuals forsake their own judgement and rely instead on the judgement of ministers, governments officials, and on the Courts of Law of The State. In addition - as it was for the Roman kings and Caesars - the individual is expected to obey the laws they manufacture, with such laws being regarded as 'just' and moral.

Thus justice - far from being a personal virtue, defined by honour - becomes what some king, some Caesar, some *τύραννος*, or some government decrees it is according to the laws they manufacture and which their officials and their Courts uphold and enforce, by violence (or the threat thereof) and by imprisonment (or the threat thereof). Hence all the rhetoric by castellans and officials of The State that individuals

"should not take the law into their own hands", whereas true - natural, numinous, living - justice only exists in living honourable individuals and their actions.

This usurpation of personal judgement and natural justice is overtly manifest in war. War - the *bellum* of Latin writers such as Cicero and Livy - is armed conflict involving large opposing groups where there is acceptance, by those fighting, of some recognized chain-of-command and of some supra-personal commanding authority who or which is or are personally unknown to most if not all of those accepting such authority, and where the conflict is mostly if not entirely non-personal for all or most of those involved. That is, war mostly or entirely results from the pursuit of some abstraction, or from the desire, the beliefs, of some leader or commander, or from the political or social or religious agenda or policies of some supra-personal authority such as some government.

In The Numinous Way, a distinction is made between war and *combat* in that combat refers to *gewin* - similar to the old Germanic *werra*, as distinct from the modern *krieg*. That is, combat refers to a more personal armed quarrel between much smaller factions (and often between just two adversaries - as in single combat, and trial by combat) when there is, among those fighting, some personal matter at stake or some personal interest involved, with most if not all of those fighting doing so under the leadership of someone they personally know and respect and with the quarrel usually occurring in the locality or localities where the combatants live.

Thus, war is contrary to The Numinous Way - to the Cosmic Ethic - not only because of the impersonal suffering it causes, but also because it is inseparably bound up with individuals having to relinquish their own judgement, with them pursuing some lifeless un-numinous abstraction by violent means, and with the development of supra-personal abstract and thus un-numinous notions of 'justice' and law.

Hence, there is, for The Numinous Way, no such thing as a 'just war' - for war is inherently unjust and un-numinous. What is just and lawful are honourable individuals and their actions, and such combat as such individuals may honourably and personally undertake, and such violence as they may honourably and of necessity employ in pursuit of being fair and ensuring fairness.

David Myatt
October 2011 CE

Notes

[1] For a basic explanation of empathy, see my essay *Introduction to The Philosophy of*

The Numen

[2] εὐταξία is what I would describe as the quality, the personal virtue, of self-restraint; of personal orderly (balanced, honourable, well-mannered) conduct especially under adversity or duress.

Regarding εὐταξία, Cicero wrote:

" Deinceps de ordine rerum et de opportunitate temporum dicendum est. Haec autem scientia continentur ea, quam Graeci εὐταξίαν nominant, non hanc, quam interpretamur modestiam, quo in verbo modus inest, sed illa est εὐταξία, in qua intellegitur ordinis conservatio. Itaque, ut eandem nos modestiam appellemus..." *De Officiis*, 1, 40, 142

Those two qualities are evident in that way described by the Greeks as εὐταξίαν although what is meant by εὐταξία is not what we mean by the moderation of the moderate, but rather what we consider is restrained behaviour...

[3] M. Tullius Cicero, *For Lucius Murena*, 10, 23. My translation is: 'For your other virtues of self-restraint, of dignity, of justice, of good faith, and all other good qualities...'

[4] The quotation is from the reconstruction of the texts given in: Allan Chester Johnson, Paul Robinson Coleman-Norton, and Frank Bourne. *Ancient Roman Statutes: A Translation with Introduction, Commentary, Glossary, and Index*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961

[5] The assumed need for individuals to accept supra-personal authority is much in evidence in Augustine, especially in his *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos* in which he champions a order, a hierarchy, with God its pinnacle and ordinary individuals at the bottom. In between are those appointed to oversee individuals and ensure 'order' with everyone in their rightful place: "Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio." (XIX, xiii)

As Augustine writes in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (XXII, 75): "The natural order, which would have peace amongst men, necessitates that the judgement about and the authority to declare war should reside in those who have authority over others [a monarch/prince]."

In addition, his rhetoric regarding the necessity of waging war is remarkably similar to that of modern politicians:

"War is undertaken to bring about peace. Therefore, even during war, remember the value of peace so that when those you have fought are conquered you can show them the advantages of peace..." (*Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum ad Bonifacium Papam*, CLXXXIX)

He also, it seems, in writing about a 'just war', provided them with rhetorical justification for castigating their enemies as 'evil', as 'wicked' and they themselves, even though they may cause suffering and death, as doing what is 'right', what God decrees, as, for example, Bush and Blair did during the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and as with the desire of some nation-States to humiliate and vanquish those deemed as enemies. As Augustus wrote in *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos*:

"Nam et cum iustum geritur bellum, pro peccato e contrario dimicatur; et omnis uictoria, cum etiam malis prouenit, diuino iudicio uictos humiliat uel emendans peccata uel puniens." [For even when we wage a just war, our enemies must be sinners, for every victory then, even though gained by evil men, results from divine decree, with the vanquished humiliated and their sins either punished or wiped away.] XIX, 15

Authority and Legitimacy in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

The Legitimacy of Authority

Authority is: (1) the direct power to enforce compliance and obedience upon others, 'the subjects', or (2) the indirect power of (a) manipulating others so that they are compliant and obedient, or (b) having influence over others of such a sufficiency that others are compliant and obedient.

It is from such power - however obtained, presumed, or acquired - that someone, or some many, assume or claim they have a mandate to rule, govern, and command, and thence also claim that they, and those appointed by them, represent or are *an*, or are *the*, legitimate authority, and thus claim to possess the moral right, the duty, to command, lead, and decide what is lawful and unlawful and punish those who do what that authority has decreed is unlawful.

Thus, what is legitimate and what is lawful is or become what those who have power decide or decree is legitimate and lawful, with there being the expectation, the assumption, or the demand, that 'the subjects' accept what is, in effect, this imposed legitimacy.

Before the rise of the now almost ubiquitous nation-State ^[1], power was most usually direct power, acquired by individuals and groups through physical force; for example, by victory in combat or war or by the violent removal of someone or some many who already had power over others in a certain geographical area or territory. Once obtained by such means, such power was often legitimized and transferred by those having power decreeing that their progeny - or those appointed by them - were 'the rightful rulers'/the legitimate authority, with such decrees, and the authority of the powerful, being enforced if necessary by the use of physical force, the threat of such force, and the punishment, by execution or imprisonment, of those actively opposed to such a transfer of power.

That is, those with the authority acquired by such force - initially or subsequently - relied both on their subjects being compliant and obedient, and on the use or the threat of physical force in order to enforce such compliance and obedience.

With the rise and the development of The State direct power has, for the most part, been replaced by indirect power; that is by some person or some minority influencing or persuading or manipulating a sufficient number of people to accept

some leader/cliq/ minority/representatives as the legitimate authority. One of the mechanisms developed to enable some person or some minority to so gain and exercise power is the abstraction that is modern democracy where political parties compete for votes (from those entitled to and interested in voting) with such party representatives - said to be 'of the people' - being invested with power and influence usually by gaining the most votes, and with the leader of the political party that gains the most representatives usually assuming the primary role in governance.

However, the authority of those who acquire power by such indirect, non-forceful, means is - like the authority of those who acquire power through physical force - still an authority where there are subjects who are expected to be compliant and obedient to 'a higher authority', and where there is the use or the threat of physical force in order to enforce such compliance and obedience.

For elected governments always reserve to themselves, and their appointed officials or functionaries, the right, should they deem it appropriate, to use physical force, and imprisonment, as a means of curbing dissension and unrest among the subjects (the citizens) of The State. That is, those with such power regard themselves as the legitimate authority and thus as invested with the lawful and moral authority necessary to use force to quell public disorder. In addition, they invest themselves with the authority to declare war on another State or States, so that a legitimate (or just) war is considered to be one declared and fought by such State authorities.

In effect, therefore, The State/the government is of necessity predicated on the assumption of the obedience/acquiescence of individuals; that is, on the assumption that individuals within the territory controlled by The State accept its authority and accept that such authority is legitimate - whomsoever is deemed to be or appears to be the government - even though most of the individuals in that territory have given no formal personal pledge of allegiance or pledge of loyalty to the ruling authority.

In practical terms, the subjects of The State - just as much as the subjects of some potentate, tyrannos, or some monarch - are expected to defer to those in authority in certain and important matters of judgement. Hence it is The State - on the assumption that the government is the legitimate authority of the territory of The State - which judges when the people should go to war or when its armed forces can use lethal force in some land in pursuit of some goal or aim. ^[2]

Indeed, The State increasingly expands the matters on which, and where which, it expects its authority to be obeyed (on pain of arrest and punishment). Thus in a modern State such as Britain the individual is expected to defer to the authority of the government in all manner of personal matters; for example, where, when (or even if) they can assemble to protest; in what places they can smoke cigarettes or a pipe of tobacco; in what and what is not 'an offensive weapon'; if and under what exact circumstances a parent or a teacher may discipline an unruly child or pupil; and so on etcetera.

Judgement, The State, And Authority

This usurping of individual judgement and this presumption or imposition of authority by others on individuals - be these others some government, some State, some monarch, some 'people's representative', some military commander, in the 'name of democracy' or whatever, and be such usurping, presumption or imposition done by direct or indirect power - is a perpetuation of a primitive way of life and a concealment and suppression of our true human nature.

It is a primitive way because it involves the control and manipulation of individuals by others, and the use of or the threat of using physical force and punishment in order to ensure or obtain compliance, obedience, or acquiescence. It is primitive also in that the main method of punishment employed is imprisonment and which imprisonment is the praxis of the bully and the abandonment of those imprisoned to a life governed by primitive instincts, brute force, intimidation, and physical restraint and control. All modern nation-States employ and indeed rely on imprisonment as a punishment, as a 'deterrent', and as a means of social control.

This usurping of individual judgement and this presumption or imposition of authority by The State is a concealment and suppression of our true human nature because we possess the ability, the potential, to make our own decisions using our own judgement. To so make and to so exercise our own judgement, to act honourably, is the basis of our freedom as human beings: that is, of being free from servitude and being responsible for ourselves ^[3].

For, in practical terms, The State - as did potentates, monarchs, and others of that ilk - treat people, their subjects, as children. Restraining them; manipulating and influencing them; telling them what they can and cannot do; threatening to punish them if they misbehave; deciding how and in what manner they should be 'educated'; placing restrictions of where they can and cannot go; making judgements and decisions on their behalf; and so on. That is, it is those in authority who manipulate, influence, and who constrain us, and who decide what our liberties will be, and who possess the power to restrict or deny such liberties when it suits them or when their judgement (not ours) deems it necessary.

Abstractions As Manipulation

The indirect power of modern governments - and thus of nation-States - and thence their presumption of authority, is mostly the result of two factors: (1) the manipulation of people by a minority by means of causal abstractions ^[4]; (2) the influence of such causal abstractions on people. Once power is attained, such abstractions are used to enforce compliance and obedience; that is, to provide some sort of assumed moral legitimacy for the actions and the policies of those who have gained or assumed power.

Thus, abstractions are used to provide a pretext for authority, with some abstractions

being regarded as having or as representing a certain moral worth which other abstractions do not possess.

Thus, the system of governance that is called democracy^[5] is regarded, by its theorists and supporters, as possessing a certain moral worth and indeed as representing what is 'good' and allowing for, or producing, or promoting, a way of life which it is said is preferable to and/or better than that produced or promoted by others means of governance. Hence these theorists and supporters of democracy invest this system of governance with a higher moral value than, for example, what has been termed anarchism^[6] with many further claiming that democracy is the only moral, legitimate, way of governance so that a nation-State with a democratic government has the moral authority to not only declare war (a 'just war') on those considered to be non-democratic but also a duty to instigate 'regime-change' and that such violence as is used, and such suffering and deaths as may be caused, are morally justifiable^[7].

Basically, abstractions have been and are used as a means of control, as mechanisms of manipulation and compliance. Thus, instead of some person - some monarch, prophet, or some tyrannos, for example - being said to have some 'divine right' or some 'destiny' to rule and thus being possessed of authority, it is said that some abstraction has worth and authority. Then it is assumed that those individuals striving to implement this abstraction are imbued with its authority so that what they do is 'right' and moral - provided their actions are in accord with, are a mimesis of, or approximate to this abstraction - and that they and others like them have a 'right' and a moral duty to lead and to govern and thus to exercise authority on behalf of this abstraction.

Among such moral-giving abstractions are and have been democracy, the *Führerprinzip*, capitalism, *socialisme* (society-before-self), communism (collective ownership), and religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

Authority In The Numinous Way

For The Numinous Way, it is the exercise of the judgement of the individual - arising from the use of empathy and the guidance that is personal honour - that is paramount, and which expresses our human nature.

That is, it is honour, the understanding that empathy provides, and the judgement of the individual, that are legitimate, moral, numinous, and thence the basis for authority. This means that authority resides in and extends only to individuals - by virtue of their honour, their empathy, and manifest in their own personal judgement, and therefore this always personal individual authority cannot be abstracted out from such personal judgement of individuals. In practical terms, this is a new type of authority - that of the individual whose concern is not power over others but over themselves, and which type of power is manifest in a living by honour, and thence in their self-responsibility and in how they interact with others.

Hence, The State, and all governments - elected or unelected - are not considered a legitimate authority since there can be no compliance to others other than that which is mutual, agreed, which arises from a personal knowing and a mutual personal respect, and which allow for the exercise of both empathy and personal honour.

For it is honour and empathy - not the authority, the laws, of some government or some State - which set the mode, the boundaries, for such agreement and such cooperation between individuals, and in practice this means a co-operation on a non-hierarchical basis, with empathy providing the personal knowing of another while honour determines how that knowing is made real through one's personal behaviour and interaction with others.

Thus The Numinous Way is the way of such numinous authority - of the individual authority of empathy, of personal judgement, of honour, and of personal responsibility. A way quite different from that of religions, States, governments, potentates, monarchs, and others of such ilk, who and which all expect and who and which often demand the compliance and obedience of individuals, on the threat of punishment; who and which expect/demand that individuals forsake their own judgement in favour of that of some 'higher authority'; and who and which place their own manufactured un-numinous laws before the natural human and numinous principle of personal honour.

David Myatt
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Notes

[1] The State may be defined as the concept of both (1) organizing and controlling - over a particular and large geographical area - land (and resources); and (2) organizing and controlling individuals over that same geographical particular and large geographical area by: (a) the use of physical force or the threat of force and/or by influencing or persuading or manipulating a sufficient number of people to accept some leader/cliqe/minority/representatives as the legitimate authority; (b) by means of the central administration and centralization of resources (especially fiscal and military); and (c) by the mandatory taxation of personal income.

The State thus divides people into those so governed and controlled - subjects - and those who govern or who are employed by those who govern to organize and control the subjects, with both subjects and those who govern or who are employed to

organize and control the subjects being regarded as citizens of The State. In addition, The State designates and decides what is public and private (for example, in relation to land, or particular places) as it appropriates to itself the authority to control what it has so designated as public.

Given that the modern State controls and assumes authority over a certain geographical area, and given that these geographical areas are described by the term nation, a useful alternative term for The State is the nation-State.

[2] Thus do the politicians and functionaries of The State echo the sentiment and words of Augustine, written over one and half thousand years ago, in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (XXII, 75): "The natural order, which would have peace amongst men, necessitates that the judgement about and the authority to declare war should reside in those who have authority over others [a monarch/prince]."

[3] Honour is an expression of our nature as individuals, as free human beings. It is honourable to use our own judgement, be responsible for ourselves, and not to submit to those who would oppress or constrain us. It is honourable to defy those who use force in an effort to obtain our obedience, and honourable to defend ourselves when attacked.

[4] An abstraction is:

"A manifestation of the primary error of conventional causal thinking; that is, of assuming only a causal linearity - of using causal reductionism: that simple cause-and-effect that excludes the acausal knowing that empathy provides and which knowing the numinous is a manifestation of. Implicit in abstractions is the notion of - the illusion of - the separateness of beings.

An abstraction is the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, "image" or category, and thus some generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals - and/or some being, some "thing" - to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such being/things/individuals. The positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Abstraction-ism - and the ideation that derives from it - can be philosophically defined as the implementation, the practical application, of ὕβρις." *A Glossary of Some Numinous Way Terms*. 2011 CE. Version 1.03

[5] The ideal of modern democracy is somewhat different from the reality as manifest in modern nation-States. In reality, it is not government by the people for the people, but rather government by a rather privileged oligarchy in the interests of that oligarchy, in the interests of implementing some dogma or some political programme, or in the interest of some vested often hidden lobby group.

It is not even a fair and reasonable vote, since topics the oligarchy, the privileged elite, and the Media and the vested interests do not want to discuss are not discussed, and voters are shamelessly manipulated, lied to, and shameless appeals are made to their instincts, their prejudices, their fears, with the elected government seldom if ever being truly representative of the people it governs (for example in terms of gender, occupation (or lack of it), ethnicity, standard of living) and most certainly most or all elected representatives being personally unknown to most of those who vote for them, and often or mostly voting 'along party lines' or according to what may benefit some interest group or lobby rather than according to the views of the majority of those who elected them.

It also happens that those who form the government - and thus who make decisions 'on behalf of the people' - do not represent the majority of voters, often receiving less votes than the combined votes of opposition parties.

In particular, all candidates of major parties liable to form a government have to undergo a rigorous 'selection procedure' by their already elected peers in order to ensure the loyalty of the candidate to the status quo. Thus, the candidates that the people get to vote for have all or mostly been pre-selected according to criteria which ensures they will represent their party - or some vested interests - first, rather than the people.

[6] A loose definition of anarchism is that it is that way of living which regards the authority of The State as unnecessary and harmful, and which instead prefers the free and individual choice of mutual and non-hierarchical co-operation.

[7] This was the type of argument used by the governments of America and Britain for their invasions of and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan.



The Natural Balance of Honour

Honour, Empathy, and Compassion in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

Some Definitions

Before proceeding to analyze the connexion between honour, empathy and compassion, it would perhaps be useful to give definitions of the terms themselves since such definitions (and etymologies, if applicable) might help to avoid confusion and mis-understandings in respect of the use of these terms in the philosophy of The Numinous Way.

Compassion

The English word compassion dates from around 1340 CE and the word in its original sense (and as used in the philosophy of The Numinous Way) means *benignity* [1]. Hence, compassion is being kindly disposed toward and/or feeling a sympathy with someone (or some living being) affected by pain/suffering/grief or who is enduring vicissitudes.

The word compassion is derived from *com*, meaning together-with, combined with *pati*, meaning to-suffer/to-endure, and thus useful synonyms for compassion, in this original sense, are *compassivity* and *benignity*.

Honour

The English word honour dates from around 1200 CE, deriving from the Latin *honorem* (meaning refined, grace, beauty) via the Old French (and thence Anglo-Norman) *onor/onur*. As used by The Numinous Way, honour means an instinct for and

an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous. An honourable person is thus refined: that is, they are noble and cultured and hence distinguished by virtue of their character, which is one of manners, fairness, natural dignity, culture, and valour.

In respect of early usage of the term, two quotes may be of interest. The first, from c. 1393 CE, is taken from a poem, in Middle English, by John Gower:

And riht in such a maner wise
Sche bad thei scholde hire don servise,
So that Achilles underfongeth
As to a yong ladi belongeth
Honour, servise and reverence. [2]

The second is from several centuries later:

" Honour - as something distinct from mere probity, and which supposes in gentlemen a stronger abhorrence of perfidy, falsehood, or cowardice, and a more elevated and delicate sense of the dignity of virtue, than are usually found in vulgar minds." [3]

Empathy

Etymologically, this fairly recent English word, used to translate the German *Einfühlung*, derives, via the late Latin *sympathia*, from the Greek συμπάθεια - συμπαθής - and is thus formed from the prefix σύν (sym) together with παθ- [root of πάθος] meaning *enduring/suffering*, feeling: πάσχειν, to endure/suffer.

As used and defined by The Numinous Way, empathy - ἐμπάθεια - is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by The Numinous Way, it is a specific and extended type of συμπάθεια. That is, it is a type of and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings - and thus differs in nature from compassion.

The Connexion Between Honour, Empathy, and Compassion

Compassion - the human virtue of having συμπάθεια with other living beings - often or mostly derives from, has its genesis in, our natural (and thus still undeveloped) faculty of empathy: from that translocation of ourselves that empathy provides. In essence, to be compassionate is to not cause or contribute to the suffering, or to aid in the alleviation of the suffering, of other living beings.

The Cosmic Ethic is the expression used to describe the ethics of The Numinous Way,

and the Cosmic Ethic is essentially that presencing of ψυχή [Life] which occurs when the insight (the acausal-knowing) of a developed empathy inclines us toward a compassion balanced by and manifest in and through personal honour.

Thus, personal honour establishes both boundaries for and, to an extent, the content of compassion as compassion is understood by The Numinous Way, and thence represents the natural - the Cosmic - balance of human life. Or, expressed another way, personal honour manifests, presences, the numinous for us as human beings, and is a means whereby we can live in a more numinous way.

This natural human balance which personal honour presents is the principle of Δίκη - and the boundaries of compassion are most obvious in the principle of honourable self-defence. For The Numinous Way allows for the use of physical force sufficient to cause injury ('suffering') to another being - and allows for, if honourable, the use of lethal force - both in self-defence and (in the immediacy of the personal moment) in defence of someone close-by who is dishonourably attacked or threatened or bullied by others.

This use of force is importantly, crucially, restricted to such personal situations of immediate self-defence, and cannot be extended beyond that, for to so extend it or attempt to extend beyond the immediacy of the personal moment is dishonourable, contrary to the nature of honour itself.

Such individual action by individuals is the honourable - the fair, the valourous - thing to do so when faced with someone or some many acting dishonourably; when personally faced with someone whose nature inclines them toward, or subsumes them into, committing the error of ὕβρις thus upsetting the natural balance and undermining the numinous. Such a dishonourable person thus may be said to have a bad (a rotten) φύσις - that is, they lack or are deficient in ἀρετή and thus have little or no understanding of Φύσις [4] and do not possess the virtue, the skill, of σωφρονεῖν, of a reasoned, a balanced, judgement.

Hence, for The Numinous Way, compassion - benignity - is not (as it tends to be in some other Ways) unconditional, but rather must be balanced by and be in accord with honour. To so balance compassion by the ethical guidelines that honour provides is, from the perspective of The Numinous Way, the human thing to do; that is, consistent with our natural numinous nature, consistent with Nature, and thus with how Φύσις is revealed to us by both empathy and πάθει μάθος.

The connexion, therefore, between empathy, honour and compassion is the living human being, or rather a type of human being, for a well-manned individual adhering to what is fair, dignified, and valourous, presences the Numen [5], aids the cultivation and development of empathy (and embodies such empathy), and has benignity, that is, is compassionate in a manner consistent with the natural human balance that is Δίκη.

Expressed simply, such a type of human being is the Cosmic Ethic - and thus Δίκη -

just as such an Ethic cannot live - exist, be found - in anything other than such a living being; that is, this Ethic cannot live in some law, in some Institution, in some Court, in some dogma or in some abstract theory. To be numinous, to presence the numinous, what is ethical requires a living honourable person, not some abstract theory of ethics.

Thus, in essence, it is the cultivation of such empathic, honourable, individuals - individually, and by, for example, a culture of ἀρετή - that is the simple praxis of The Numinous Way.

As mentioned elsewhere:

" The culture (the ethos, the way) of ἀρετή is, in essence, the self-education of discovering and knowing, intellectually and personally, that noble balance between our natural human tendency to commit ὕβρις - to go beyond the respectful, noble, limits of behaviour - and the necessity of learning the hard way, from πάθει μάθος, from direct personal experience. Δίκη is this balance; a balance manifest in us - or which can be manifest in us - through thoughtful reasoning, that is, by a well-balanced, fair, noble, personal judgement.

This *culture of ἀρετή* is thus a particular and an acquired balance - born from personal honour, from πάθει μάθος (from the personal knowing of the error, the unbalance, that is ὕβρις) and from using reasoned judgement (σωφρονεῖν), and both of which make us aware of the true nature of our φύσις [our own individual character] and of the nature of Φύσις itself." A
Glossary of Some Numinous Way Terms, Version 1.09

David Myatt
October 2011 CE
(Revised JD2455975.101)

Notes

[1] The word benignity derives from the Latin *benignitatem* and the sense imputed by the word is of a kind, compassionate, well-mannered character, disposition, or deed. It came into English usage around the same time as compassion; for example, the word occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* [ii. 483] written around 1374 CE.

[2] John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*. Liber Quintus vv. 2997-3001 [Macaulay, G.C., ed. *The Works of John Gower*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1901]

[3] George Lyttelton. *History of the Life of Henry the Second*. London, Printed for J. Dodsley. M DCC LXXV II [1777] (A new ed., cor.) vol 3, p.178

[4] In respect of *φύσις* and *Φύσις* see, for example, my brief essay *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change* [Some Notes on Heraclitus Fragment 123].

[5] That is, presences beauty - *τὸ καλόν* - culture, grace, a respect for 'the sacred', and imputes a knowledge of the need to avoid what is vulgar, dishonourable, and undignified.

The 'Agamemnon' of Aeschylus:

A Radical Translation

by

D. W. Myatt

Introduction

This new translation of the 'Agamemnon' has, I believe, restored to Aeschylus that pagan vigour and understanding which is essential if one is to appreciate not only the work of Aeschylus, but also the civilization of Greece.

Aeschylus, along with many other ancient classical authors, has suffered at the hands of those who have tried to translate Greek into English. Perhaps the greatest disservice done to him - and the others - is the rendering of certain concepts, mostly described by a particular Greek word, in what is fundamentally an un-Hellenic, abstract and moral way - albeit that this seems to be mostly unconsciously done. What results from this thoughtlessness is more often than not a sort of 'Christianizing' of Greek culture in retrospect - and thus a lack of insight into and understanding of the Hellenic way of living.

One thinks here of verses like 1654-1656 from the 'Agamemnon'. This is always mis-translated to give something like: "No more violence. Here is a monstrous harvest and a bitter reaping time. There is pain enough already. Let us not be bloody now." The effect of such a 'translation' - notwithstanding the abstract and modern concepts like "time" - is a moral one: the speaker (here, Clytaemnestra) apparently says, after killing Agamemnon and Cassandra, that she does not want any more "violence" and describes her killings as "monstrous".

However, what Aeschylus actually has Clytaemnestra say is: "Let us not do any more harm for to reap these many would make it an *unlucky* harvest: injure them just enough, but do not stain us with their blood." The whole tone is different - she is being practical and does not want to bring misfortune upon herself (or Aegisthus) by killing *to excess*. The killings she has done are quite acceptable to her - she has vigorously defended them claiming it was her duty to avenge her daughter and the insult done to her by Agamemnon bringing his mistress, Cassandra, into her home. Clytaemnestra shows no pity for the Elders whom Aegisthus wishes to kill: "if you must", she says, "you can injure them. But do not kill them - that would be *unlucky* for us."

Another example will make clear how moral abstractions are projected onto the text by the mistranslation of certain words. Consider lines 369-373 from the 'Agamemnon'. Conventionally: "A man thought the gods deigned not to punish mortals who trampled down the delicacy of things inviolable. That man was wicked."

A correct rendering would be along the following lines: "Someone denied that the gods deem it worthy to concern themselves with mortals who trample upon what, being untouchable, brings delight. But such persons have [or 'show'] no *proper respect*."

The difference here is startling and obvious. The first is moral in the Christian sense - involving abstract, fundamentally monotheistic notions like 'wickedness' and 'sin'. The second is pagan, or Hellenic, and re-presents the true spirit or ethos of the Greek civilization.

The result of this moral projection - and other acts of thoughtlessness - has been to destroy the vitality of the original and, incidently, make it seem rather boring. I, however, have taken a new and radical view of those concepts and words - such as *kakos* and so on - which are important to both a general and specific understanding of the Agamemnon. The result is this present work (which incidently solves some hitherto intractable problems of textual interpretation) - Volume I of which is the present Translation, and Volume II the rather extensive Commentary necessitated by such a radical approach. I have explained my interpretations in detail in Volume II.

In my translation I have tried to capture not only the pagan ethos of the original but also the images and metaphors of Aeschylus. The result, I hope, is a version which is enjoyable in its own right when either read or heard in performance, and which can be of use to students of Greek and the civilization

of Greece.

The text used is that of Martin West (Teubner, 1991).

Note: Since this html document was produced by digitally scanning the printed text, there may be scanning errors missed in proof reading.

Notes on Performance

The language of Aeschylus - particularly in the Choral Odes - is flowing and expressive. It is not what was the language of 'everyday' speech and Aeschylus often seems to invent language in an attempt to express his meaning - compound words; omitting the article.

Often on a first reading or hearing, the sometimes complex method of construction Aeschylus uses may cause one to 'lose the thread' of meaning if one is inattentive - and Aeschylus certainly repays attention.

In my translation, I have striven to express something of the kind of vitality found in Aeschylus - to try and re-present the poet in another language which is not, like Greek, an inflective one. At the same time I have tried to keep his meanings, images and metaphors as I find them. In performance, some of the seeming complexities of the Choral Odes can be overcome by different members of the Chorus speaking different lines. Generally, when such a division is required, the text of the translation is indented and this often follows the strophic patterns of the Greek [unfortunately these divisions are not in this *html* web version]. However, within a particular strophe or antistrophe two speakers can be used to advantage.

Sometimes, wordless cries of horror or woe are appropriate: at the beginning of line 1100 for example, and at line 1114. At lines 1072 and 1076 Cassandra makes an 'invocation' to Apollo - a series of sounds rather like an incantation. In performance, the loud, repetitive chanting of certain 'vowel sounds' would suffice - e.g. "I-A-O! I-A-O! followed by the chanting of the name of the god, Apollo.

Dramatis Personae:

Watchman

Chorus (of Argive Elders)

Clytaemnestra

Herald

Agamemnon

Cassandra

Aegisthus

Scene: *The dwelling of Agamemnon at Argos. Near the dwelling stands a statue of Apollo.*

Agamemnon

Watchman:

Again I have asked the gods to deliver me from this toil,

This vigil a year in length, where I repose

On Atreidae's roof on my arms, as is the custom with dogs
Looking toward the nightly assembly of constellations
And they who bring to mortals the storm-season and the summer:
Those radiant sovereigns, distinguished in the heavens
As stars when they come forth or pass away.
And still I keep watch for the sign of the beacon,
The light of the fire which will bring report of Troy,
10 Announcing it is captured. For such is the command
And expectation of that woman with a man's resolve.

So I have a restless night and dew upon my couch,
With no dreams being visited upon me -
Since it is Fear and not Sleep who stands beside me,
Making it unsafe for Sleep to close my eyes -
And when I deem to sing or to chant
Some song as a prepared cure against Sleep,
Then I grieve, lamenting the misfortune of this family
Whose nobility lacks the perfection it possessed before.

20 But may it be my fortunate fate to be delivered from this toil
By that fire, which announces fortune, becoming visible in the darkness.

[The bonfire Beacon is seen, blazing]

Hail to that blaze, which makes night into day
With its light! And there will be an appointing of dancers

In Argos in their multitude because of this favourable event!

Awake! Awake!

To the Lady Agamemnon I give this loud signal

That she may swiftly arise from her bed and for her family

With ululation for this blazing auspicious omen

Raise her voice! For indeed the citadel of Ilion

Has fallen, as the bonfire most clearly declares. As for myself, I shall open the celebrations.

And I shall count the fortunate throw by my Lord

As mine, since I am cast as a triad of six by my beacon-watch.

Therefore, let it be that when he of the friendly hand arrives,

That my own hand is grasped by that Master of this dwelling.

As to other things - I am silent. Upon my tongue a great weight

Will be placed. But this dwelling itself - were it given a voice -

Would surely speak. As to my own intent:

To those who know, there is a speaking;

To those who do not know, a concealment.

[Exit Watchman, Enter Chorus]

Chorus:

It is the tenth year since that mighty accuser of Priam,

Lord Menelaus, and Agamemnon -

They of that double-throne and double-realm given by Zeus

Who thus honoured the stalwart pair, those sons of Atreus -

Went, with an Argive fleet of a thousand,

From this land as avenging warriors

With a mighty war-cry from their hearts

50 As vultures afflicted by their offspring being lost

And who, high over the nests, circle around -

Their wings the oars which move them -

Since those young, laboured-over in the nest, are gone.

But one of Apollo or Pan or Zeus hears the lofty

Sharp cries of the loud lamentation of those resident alien birds

And sends forth an avenging Fury against the offenders.

60 Thus were those sons of Atreus sent forth

By mighty Zeus, guardian of hospitality, against Alexander

On account of that woman who has had many men.

And many would be the limb-wearying combats

With knees pushed into the dirt

And spears worn-out in the initial sacrifice

Of Trojans and Danaans alike. What is now, came to be

As it came to be. And its ending has been ordained.

No concealed laments, no concealed libations,

70 No unburnt offering

Can charm away that firm resolve.
But I of the aged flesh was exempt
And so, left behind by those defenders, stay here -
Holding onto my staff with a strength equal to that of a child.
For that young marrow which reigned within the breast
Is the equal of an old man's - and Ares is not at his post.

80 Thus, he of great Age, his foliage drying up
And no stronger than a child, with three feet to guide him on his travels,
Wanders - appearing a shadow in the light of day.

[Clytaemnestra is seen, silently making offerings]

But you, the daughter of Tyndareus, royal Clytaemnestra,
What necessity, what that is new, what knowledge
Or message persuaded you to send around for incense to be burnt?
For all the gods who support this community -
Those above, the chthonic,
90 The celestial and of the Agora -

Are given gifts in abundance on their altars.
And from one place to another, flames rise up
To the celestial heights,
Anointed with sacred oil -
Soothing, unblemished and soft -
A libation from the royal sanctum.

Tell me of these things, if it is fitting
And proper - and consent to being healer of what divides me.

100 That which now brings to me a bad judgement
And then, from a sacrifice, a pleasing revelation,
A hope, to repel the numberless thoughts:

The affliction which feeds on my life.

I have the mastery to invoke those commanding men,
Of auspicious omen and mature -
For still the numen of the gods is with me,
Giving conviction, a strength to my choral-dance which grows with my age
Of how the double-throned might of the Achaeans,
The vigour of Hellas commanded by a common reason,
Were conveyed with avenging hands and spears
To the land of the Teucris by those fierce birds -
The Chieftain of birds of prey to Chieftain of Ships,
A black one and one with white back -
Manifesting near the tent-pole and, by the spear-throwing hand,
Settling, all-transfixing,
To feed on hares who, overburdened by offspring within,
120 Were stricken because last in the race.

Even though it is a skilful victory - say a lament!

Thus the worthy prophet of warriors, beholding those two,

Dismembering hares, saw the doubly-resolved sons of Atreus
Commanded by those Chiefs. And he spoke this of that omen:
The citadel of Priam, by this going forth, finally captured
All the fortifications;
Most of its folk acquired, enslaved - by a purging Fate
130 Subdued.

Only let no dislike from a divinity cover-up
This great mouth for Troy by striking first these assembled warriors!
For Artemis - the respected one - lamenting, is hostile
To those winged hunters of her father
Sacrificing the unborn young and their fearful bearer:
For she loathes this eagle-feast.

Even though it is a skilful victory - say a lament!

140 The Fair-One is good-natured toward
[The young who cannot follow the hunting lion,
And the breast-loving sucklings of all
Who rule in the wilds are pleasing to her.
Thus it should be asked that this prediction is fulfilled -
For though auspicious, this bird-omen could be false.]

So make invocations to the healing Paeon
That she does not cast her breath against the Danaans

Causing delay by holding the ships so they cannot sail

150 So that a second sacrifice beyond what is customary is required

An uneaten one -

Constructing a quarrel for those joined in planting,

With no man respected,

Another straightening, a waiting terrible

Cunning ruler of a dwelling:

A Frenzy seeking retribution for a child.

Such were the things Calchas called forth -

Of great advantage to and fated for, the ruling family -

From the manner of those birds.

And this has that same sound:

Even though it is a skilful victory - say a lament!

160 Whenever that being came to be, if the name Zeus

Is pleasing, then by that I so call him.

I do not possess a model -

When I reflect upon the whole - except Zeus

If this foolish thing, the burden of Thought, is indeed

To be really taken from me.

There is nothing of that powerful being who existed before

Who, replete with boldness, fought anyone:

170 Of how he came to be, nothing can be told.

And the one produced after that, departed

Following a triad of combats.

If anyone, from reasoning, exclaims loudly that victory of Zeus,
Then they have acquired an understanding of all these things;
Of he who guided mortals to reason,
Who laid down that this possesses authority:
'Learning from adversity'.

Even in sleep there trickles through the heart
180 The disabling recalling of the pain:
And wisdom arrives regardless of desire,
A favour from daimons
Who have taken the seats of honour, by force.

Thus it was with that most respected leader
Of the Achaean ships -
With no rebuke for any prophet,
His breath the same as that of the Fortune which struck him
When the urns were emptied without sailing,
His Achaean warriors wearied
190 With holding what was opposite to Chalcidos
From where the foam returned to Aulis -

And who, while that breath arrived from Strymon,
Were badly at rest, hungry, anchored wrongly,
Men crowded together, careless with anchoring ropes and the ships

themselves:

There a long while, a double length

Which wore out and blunted the vigour of Argos.

200 And then of another remedy - more grievous

Than those injurious storms - did the prophet

Shrilly cry to those leaders:

Calling upon Artemis so that those sons of Atreus,

Striking the ground with their staffs,

Could not hold their tears.

Then the elder of those Lords, spoke - saying these things:

Not to yield on this would be a hard Fate,

But to slay my child - she who honours our dwelling - is hard, also:

210 A gushing near the altar, from the slitting of a virgin's throat,

To pollute a father's hand.

Which of those is without injury?

How could I live - a deserter from a ship,

Having failed in my duty to my comrades?

For, to stop the winds, their desire

Above all desires is to offer in sacrifice

The blood of a virgin. So I call upon Themis

For what is best, to be.

But when he had put on that yoke of destiny

He breathed out changing reasons - disrespectful,
220 Without reverence, and profane.

Thereafter, his understanding lost, his judgements
Were excessively bold.

For mortals are given courage, their discernment harmed,
When the first injury is a hard deceiving blow.

So he dared
To become the sacrificer of his daughter
To aid a battle to avenge a woman
By so consecrating the ships.
Her warning of 'Father!', her supplications,
Her virgin state - were counted as nothing
230 By those commanders lusting for battle.

After invocations, her father ordered the servants
To lift up and place upon the altar - like a yearling goat -
She who with all her passion had bent down
To grasp his robe,
And to place a guard upon her beautiful lips -
To prevent a sound from bringing misfortune to the family -
By the power of a strong bridle making her without a voice.
Then, as she poured to earth that which stained her garment,
So at each sacrificer she cast from her eyes
240 Arrows of lamentation:

As if she were pre-eminent within a painting With a desire to speak,
As often at her father's good feasts
In the male dining-room she had, in song:
When - undeflowered, with her pure voice,
Honouring her beloved father -
She had with the third libation pleasingly sang
A paeon for good fortune.

I did not see, and do not speak of, what followed these things.
But the art of Calchas was not so incomplete:
250 The goddess, Judgement, favours someone learning from adversity.
But I shall hear of what will be, after it comes into being:
Before then, I leave it,
Otherwise, it is the same as a premature grieving.
Yet what does arrive, will be clear and align with those things.

May what is after what is now, be a favourable outcome -
As desired by the one left to protect these defences,
She closest to the fatherland of Apia.

Honouring your authority, Clytaemnestra, I am here:
For it is customary to respect the leader's woman
260 When the throne is left empty by the man.
If what you have learnt is not something good -
That you so make offerings for a welcome message, of hope -
Then I have the good judgment to hear it, and also not be envious of silence.

Clytaemnestra:

It is often said that it is Dawn,
Born from her mother, Night, who brings welcome messages.
For you will learn of a joy greater than any you hoped to hear of:
The Argives have captured the citadel of Priam!

Chorus:

What do you announce? In my disbelief, your words fled from me.

Clytaemnestra:

Is this speaking clearly? - Troy is Achaean property

Chorus:

270 Joy comes out from within me, bringing with it tears!

Clytaemnestra:

Your eyes reveal your good judgement.

Chorus:

But - what sign have you? And do you trust such a thing?

Clytaemnestra:

Certainly, I do - unless I am being tricked by a god.

Chorus:

Do you honour what is rightly yielded to - a portent in a dream?

Clytaemnestra:

I have no belief in what I receive when my reason is asleep.

Chorus:

Has then an oracle - not from augury - gladdened you?

Clytaemnestra:

Would you tarnish me with the reasoning of a young girl?

Chorus:

Then - how long has it been since the citadel was ravaged?

Clytaemnestra:

I say within that night whose child is this Dawn.

Chorus:

280 But who is the messenger who is so swift?

Clytaemnestra:

Hephaistos, bringing forth from Ida a radiant blaze:

A courier sent here to light bonfire after bonfire.

First, Ida to the rock of Hermes at Lemnos

And then, from that isle, the great bonfire third in line

On Zeus' mountain at Athos received he

Who on his back high over the sea

Conveyed that pleasing pine-torch of the strong flame:

Its golden light another sun,

Its blaze passing on the message to the towers of Makistos.

290 But he did not stop and neither did he - since there was no reason -

Let sleep triumph over him and so let go of his role as messenger.

Thus to the streams of Euripus from afar came the bonfire's radiance,

A sign to the watchmen of Messapios:

And, as the messenger passed on by them, they answered,

Raising a fire from their pile of gnarled wood.

The torch, vigorous and far from extinguished,

Bounded over the Asopian plain

To the rocks of Cithaeron as bright as the moon

So that the one waiting there to begin that fire, jumped up:

300 And those guards, praising this torch conveyed from afar,
Lit a fire greater than any I have spoken of before.

Then, the torch was rushed over lake Gorgopis
To reach the peak of Goat Mountain -
Rousing there a fire-ritual not for some favour
Where without envy of its might the kindled fire sent upwards
A great beard of flame -
And so on and over, beyond where the Saronic channel
Reflects the cliffs, onwards and blazing!

Then, rushing on, it then reached the summit of Spider's rock
And so approached the watch-towers of this town.
310 Thence - to the roof of the Atreidae here - rushed
What had not been without a father since that fire at Ida:
That torch, there!

Thus, willingly, were the functions of those who race with torches,
One after the other, fulfilled in succession
By he who, being first and last, was the victor.
I say to you, by such a sign and means
Did my man pass the message out of Troy to me.

Chorus:

My lady - later, I will invoke the gods,
But I am so with wonder at hearing what you said

That if you would continue, and speak again, it would be agreeable.

Clytaemnestra:

320 On this day, the Achaeans possess Troy -

With, I deem, within the citadel a clashing of cries of war.

For if, into the same urn, oil and vinegar are poured,

There would be no calling them companions, since they keep apart.

Thus apart are those seized and they who overwhelmed -

Giving voice to how both of those fortunes arose.

As those - casting themselves down near the bodies

Of husbands, brothers, sires,

The young of their elders - who, from a neck no longer free,

Bewail the fate of those loved ones.

330 While those others, following the toil of battle, wander in the night,

Hungry, for a meal of whatever the citadel contains,

Stationing themselves - with nothing to mark their share -

As if each one had drawn his lot by chance.

Thus, in spear-taken dwellings,

They now abide - delivered, as from an unlucky daimon,

From the open air with its frost and dews,

To sleep the whole night with no guard.

If they conduct themselves properly toward the guardian gods of the folk

Whose land they have seized - and the abodes of those gods -

340 Then those who have seized may not be seized in return.

So let not what first attacks those warriors be a desire

To plunder what they should not - a victory for profit;

For they require protection when returning to their homes

After turning around for the second leg of their journey.

And should the warriors arrive without being bereft of their gods,

There is the injury done to those killed, who are watching:

If no sudden bad fortune arise.

Such are the things one hears from me - a woman.

But one will see, with no division of opinion, the best superior

350 For that is the benefit I have chosen, from many honourable things.

Chorus:

My lady, with the reasoning of a man, you express good judgement.

Hearing of those signs you trust

I will prepare myself so I can, fittingly, speak with the gods.

For, with no dishonour, this is their reward, earned by our labour.

[Exit Clytaemnestra]

You, Zeus our Chief, and Nox, our companion -

Mistress of the mighty cosmos

Who cast over the Trojan towers a covering net

Such that neither the full-grown nor any young were beyond the limits

360 Of Misfortune's all-taking enslaving vast trawl.

This act was yours, Zeus - you who are honoured

As the mighty guardian of hospitality:

You who long ago at Alexander drew your bow

Such that neither before the mark nor toward the stars

Would these arrows be hurled, in vain.

They can say they have a wound from Zeus:

Such is manifest from the marks he has left.

He chose, he acted. Someone denied

370 That the gods deem it worthy to concern themselves with mortals

Who trample upon what, being untouchable, brings delight.

But such persons, have no proper respect.

Yet their descendants are revealed

By the breath of Ares as lacking courage -

Proud instead of fair -

Their abodes excessively overflowing

Beyond what is for the best.

For unharmed is the one

Who rightly reasons that what is sufficient, 380 Is what is allotted to him.

For there is no protection

In riches for the man of excess

Who stamps down the great altar of the goddess, Judgement,

In order to hide it from view.

But vigorously endures Temptation -

That already-decided daughter of unbearable Misfortune.

And all remedies are in vain.

Not concealed, but conspicuous -

A harsh shining light -

Is the injury.

390 For, like bad bronze

Struck and rubbed, he becomes blackly-covered

As is the customary practice [as a boy

In pursuit of flying game]

Laying upon the folk an unbearable affliction.

But not one of the gods hears the supplications:

Instead, they take down those persons

Who, lacking fairness, turn their attentions to such things.

And such a one was Paris -

400 Who, visiting the clan of those son's of Atreus,

Insulted them - their hospitality - by stealing a woman.

Thus - leaving behind her people: the tumult of shields,

Of assembling cohorts and of loading weapons upon ships

She brought to Ilion for her ransom, ruin!

Proud beyond pride, with ease she passed through the gates.

And there was much sighing
Among those prophets of the clan who spoke:
410 Alas for this clan! - and its leaders!
Alas for that union - and the path to that lover of men!
There stands he - silent, curseless in his dishonouring
Who knows that she whom he enjoyed, has deserted him.
And, desiring what is overseas,
The opinion shall be - a ghost rules this clan.

Thus will those skilful shapely statues
Be hated by that man for their beauty
Since, lacking in eyes,
All the passion is gone.
420 And a dream-revelation of her returning, weeping,
Will he believe - bringing him a moment's joy:
For it is momentary - as when one believes one beholds what is fortunate -
The vision which slips through the arms, and is gone: not lingering
As those flights which accompany sleep's journeys.

And, at family altars, there was a grieving such as his.
Yet what is, goes beyond what then was:
Since - for those many others who, together, rushed forth from this land of
Hellas
430 There is mourning, courageously borne,
Perceptible in every one of their dwellings.
And many are touched by anger.

For, indeed, those whom they sent forth
Were known to them - yet, instead of a man,
Armour and ashes have returned
To each of those families.

And Ares - exchanging bodies for gold
And holding his scales among the combat of spears -
440 Has, from Ilion by his fire
Conveyed to their loved ones a painful lament - that heavy dust
He had exchanged for their men: ashes, stuffed into easily-stowable urns.

Thus do they grieve for those warriors, rightly speaking
Of how that one excelled in combat
And of how another honourably fell amid the killing
"On account of that foreign woman".
That is what some whisper, growling.

450 And, because of this creeping pain, there is resentment
Against those sons of Atreus: they who were the first to accuse her.
Yet there are others who, around those ramparts,
Are encased by that Ilian soil
Which covers-up their bodily beauty
And which - since they are enemy occupiers - will conceal them.

Now, rudely do folk talk in their anger -

Of payment a curse delivered by the people.
And I remain here, listening,
460 Anxious, in the darkness of night.
For the gods are not unobservant
Of those who have slaughtered many:
In due measure, there is a dark Avenger
For he who attains fortune without fairness -
A reversal of fortune, a life rubbed away
And obscured. And, becoming unknown,
No one defends him. To over-step the bounds of praise
Is rude - and sent forth to their eyes
470 Is a thunderbolt from Zeus.

Prosperity without hostility is my preference:
I am not a destroyer of clans
So therefore may I never be captured,
To behold a life of subservience to foreigners.

With that beacon-fire - its welcome message -
A rumour hastily passed through the clan:
But does anyone know whether it is true
From the gods - or whether it is false?

Whose reason is so injured, or so childish,
480 That his heart is set on fire by a sudden fiery signal

And then is sick when the news is changed?

It is shown by a woman's spear

That they approve of what is graceful

Rather than what gleams.

Easily captivated, the female boundary is swiftly trespassed upon,

And swiftly-fated to die is that fame which a woman bestows.

We shall soon learn about those light-bearing torches,

490 That exchanging of fire, and the beacon-watching -

That is, whether they are real, or whether that light, pleasurable,

Arriving in some dream, deceived the reason.

For I behold, coming from the shore, a Herald

Shaded by sprigs of olive. And, for me, the testimony of that mud,

Sister to and bounded by the dry dust,

Is that he will not lack a voice, and neither will he -

Setting alight mountain wood - signal us with the smoke of a fire

But will either utter the words most delightful for us

Or ... - but what is the opposite of this is displeasing to speak of.

500 To what has, favourably, been seen, let what is favourable to us, be added.

Whomsoever makes invocations other than for this clan,

May the crop that is his reason, fail.

[Enter Herald]

Herald:

I hail my fatherland - this Argive soil!

In this, the tenth moon of the year, I have returned!
One of my expectations, attained - after a multitude shattered!
For I never boasted that, here, on this Argive soil
I would die, obtaining a most agreeable fate - a funeral feast!

I salute this soil, I salute this sun-light
And Zeus, supreme over this land - and also he who mastered that Serpent:
510 May you no longer cast forth at us arrows from your bow!
Sufficient, by the banks of the Scamander, was your hostility:
Now, therefore, be our defender and Champion,
Lord Apollo. You gods of combat -
I speak to you all - and to my protector,
Hermes, the Heralds' comrade whom we Heralds respect,
And to the Heroes, our escort: be friendly, again,
And welcome those warriors who have survived the war.

I greet that dwelling which sheltered my own Chief,
Those seats of honour, those daimons in opposition to the sun
520 Who perhaps long ago looked brightly upon him -
Fittingly receive our Chief, who has been greatly delayed.
For returning to you carrying with him through the night a blazing fire
To be shared among you all - is our Lord, Agamemnon!
Therefore, properly greet him - for he is worthy,
Since, harrowing-down Troy with that retribution-bringing
Spade of Zeus, he levelled-down their earth:

Unseen are the altars and the shrines of their gods
With every seed of that soil utterly destroyed!
He who placed a yoke upon Troy -
530 That man with a lucky daimon, the elder son of Lord Atreus -
Is returning! Now, after such things, he is the mortal who most deserves
A reward. For neither Paris, nor they who belonged to his clan,
Can boast that a deed of theirs surpassed their adversity.
The penalty for the pillage and theft was fair -
He lost his booty and completely ruined
His own land with his father's family cut down:
Those sons of Priam have paid twice for their weakness!

Chorus:

Greetings to you - Herald of those Achaean warriors.

Herald:

And greetings to you. Before the gods - I will no longer speak against my death!

Chorus:

540 Did you prepare for this because you loved your fatherland?

Herald:

Indeed. It is because of joy that my eyes are full of tears.

Chorus:

Then the sickness that struck you brought a delight?

Herald:

In what way? If you instruct me, I can master those words.

Chorus:

In that you longed for those who in their turn loved what you did.

Herald:

Are you saying you missed those warriors as they missed this land.

Chorus:

Indeed. So gloomy was my reasoning, that there were many lamentations.

Herald:

How did such faulty reasoning - abhorrent to those warriors - come to be?

Chorus:

Since long ago my remedy for such an injury has been silence.

Herald:

But why? The ruler absent - did someone make you tremble?

Chorus:

550 Indeed - so that, as you mentioned, it would be very agreeable were I to die now.

Herald:

Yes - it has ended well, although the wait was long.

Some things - fortunate happenings - should be spoken of,

Although there are other things to complain about.

Who - except for the gods -

Passes their entire life without any injury at all?

Were I to recount our toil, our bad quarters -

Our scanty relaxations and defective coverings -

What was not allotted to us for part of a day, what things were not moaned about?

Then those other things about that land - and with greater disgust!

For we slept near those hostile fortifications

560 Where, from the heavens and out from the earth of those meadows,

Dews drizzled down upon us, constantly harming us,

Breeding vermin in our body-hair and clothes.

If I told of those bird-killing Winters -

Of how the snows of Ida made them unbearable;
Or of the heat at mid-day, when the sea -
Waveless, windless - rested and fell asleep ...

But why be afflicted by such things? Those labours have been left behind
And left behind by those lying dead:

Their recovery is no longer of any concern to them.

570 Why speak about the count of those who were destroyed?
Why should those who live grieve at Fortune's repeated anger? -
Since there is much to rejoice at in that favourable event!

For we Argive warriors who remain,
Our gain is superior to not outweighed by - our injury,
Because, by this light of day, this boast is just,
To be rushed far beyond this land and its seas:
"Argive weapons have at last captured Troy!
To the gods of Hellas, the spoils -
Splendid antiquities, staked to their Temples!"

580 On hearing this, there should be eulogies to our clan
And its leaders, and honour given to he whose favour
Wrought this - Zeus himself!
You have the whole story.

Chorus:

I will not deny that yours is the better story.

For, in the old, what is still virile is the skill to learn.

But those things are naturally of the foremost concern to Clytaemnestra

And her family - although, together with them, I could profit.

[Enter Clytaemnestra]

Clytaemnestra:

Long ago, out of joy, was my ululation

When that first messenger - fiery, nocturnal - arrived,

Announcing Ilion's capture, its devastation.

And someone rebuked me by saying: "Does a bonfire

Persuade you to believe Troy is now destroyed?

How very womanly - to so extol the heart!"

Such was the language used to show I was lost!

I, however, made offerings - and, as is the practice with women,

One following another - ululations went on through the clan

To celebrate this good fortune while, within the shrines of the gods,

The flames devoured our fragrant incense until they slept.

So now - what further words do you have for me?

I shall ask the Chief himself for the whole story,

600 Honouring and respecting he who is my husband

By hastening to receive him on his return.

For what day can a woman behold that is more pleasing

Than the one when - her man unharmed in battle because of the gods -
She opens her gates for him? Announce this to my husband
So that he who is beloved by this clan most swiftly arrives.
On his return, he will find that the woman of the family has been honourable
As she was when he left her - a guard-dog for this family,
Faithful to them, hostile to those badly disposed toward us,
And in all ways the same, no seal
610 Having been violated during this long wait.
I enjoy neither the pleasure of, nor the speaking of rumours by,
Other men any more than I do tempered bronze.

[Exit Clytaemnestra]

Herald:

A boast such as that - full of revelations -
Uttered by a woman of breeding, is not disgraceful.

Chorus:

Thus she speaks about herself - you will learn
To correctly interpret such dignified speech!
But speak to me, Herald, of Menelaus - for I seek to know about him:
Whether he has returned and whether, uninjured,

He who is loved in this land journeyed back with you.

Herald:

620 I cannot possibly speak falsely about honourable things
Since my comrades would reap the results for a long while after.

Chorus:

Why - given your joyful revelation - do you happen to say that?
For it is no easy to keep secret something which has been opened -up.

Herald:

About that leader, there are no sightings from among those Achaean warriors -
Of he himself and his ship. This is no false story.

Chorus:

Was he observed going away from Ilion -
Or carried off from those warriors by that common affliction, a storm?

Herald:

As a master archer, you hit your target,
Reporting a considerable injury, concisely.

Chorus:

But which - of he being either living or dead -
Was the rumour among the other sailors?

Herald:

No one has accurate information - no one knows,
Unless it be Helios, whose nature is to feed the earth.

Chorus:

But tell me - how came that storm to those warriors,
And what did that wroth from daimons achieve?

Herald:

On a day of good omen it is not fitting for bad announcements
To be voiced, staining it - on it, only the gods should be given tributes.
But when a horrible injury is what a messenger to the clan
Conveys with a gloomy face - of warriors defeated
640 That, for the clan, a single wound has befallen the folk:
Many men from many families taken in sacrifice
By that double-lance beloved by Ares,
Both of its injurious double-points bloody,
Then, when one is loaded-down with injuries such as these,
It is fitting to utter those paeans of the Furies!
Yet when good news which preserves fortunes

Arrives at a clan favoured with well-being

How to mingle the joyful with the bad, to say that it was

Not without the wrath of the gods that the storm came to the Achaeans?

650 For, binding themselves by an oath, those former bitter enemies

Fire and Sea, showed their trust

By destroying those unfortunate Argive warriors.

The treachery of that bad-swelling came at night

For that Thracian breath pushed the ships one against another

So that their horns struck, damaging them

With tempest of heavy rain and typhonic-storm -

The treacherous guardian whirling them away out of our sight.

Then, when Helios came back with the splendour of dawn,

We beheld corpses growing in the Aegean sea

660 Achaean men from their wrecked ships.

As for us, the hull of our ship was unharmed,

For someone stealthily took us away or interceded for us -

Not a mortal, but some god who, touching us, steered us.

Fortuna, to preserve us, willingly placed herself on board

So that we were neither at anchor - taking in that surging tempest -

Nor being driven toward the rocky shore.

Then, having escaped Hades at sea -

In the brightness of day, with no belief in our good fortune

We wandered for reasons as to our recent misfortunes,

670 The toil of the warriors, and this bad beating.

Now, if any of them, breathing, has being,

They will speak of us as destroyed - and why not?

For we hold to the same presumption about them.

What is best, will be. Now, as to Menelaus.

First - and before others - expect his arrival.

That is, if the radiance of Helios can reach him

And he is alive and healthy by the planning of Zeus -

Whose will would never be to annihilate that seed.

There is hope that he shall be with his family again.

680 So much you know - be assured, what you have heard is not false.

[Exit Herald]

Chorus:

Who was the one who - in all ways true - named her?

Was it not someone who is never seen -

With a perception of destiny -

Whose tongue, chancing upon it, bestowed upon she

Of that quarrel-making, battle-producing marriage

The name Helen?

690 Since, fittingly named, she - man-seducing, clan-seducing, ship-seducing -

Leaving her gorgeous web of veils,

Was with the breath of the giant Zephyrus

Navigated away.

And many were the shield-bearing men who hunted her -
Following those unclear marks left by the oars
To that shore of the thriving-leaves at Simois,
Because of those blood-letting Furies.

700 Indeed, it was Ilion who was subjected to the judgement
Frenzy had urged for that rightly-named alliance:
Such followed after a while, for the dishonour done
By that guest - and to Zeus, guardian of hospitality,
Who acted against those who uttered their approval
Of the consummation of that marriage in song:
Those kinsfolk who favoured chanting Hymen's hymn.
But they were taught a different hymn,
710 Those of Priam's venerable clan,
Full of lamentations: a great groaning
Calling Paris 'he of that disgusting marriage!'
But even before this, for a long while,
That clan was full of lamentations on account of suffering
Such a waste of their blood.

Even thus there was reared among a family by a man
A daughter of a lion -
Breast-loving but left without milk -
720 Tame at the start of its life, rightly befriended by children,
Pleasing to their elders,

Who was often in their arms.
As is customary with a newly-reared child

Its bright eyes looked upon the hand as it begged
When its stomach pained it.
But, later, it showed those habits
It had from its parents -
For the delight of those who had reared it was repaid
730 By a ruinous slaughter of sheep
As it made them, uncommanded, its feast
And their dwelling was moistened by their blood:
A grief for their servants who could not do battle with
That large frequently-killing pest.
Yet, she reared within that family was appointed by some god
To offer such sacrifices to Misfortune.

Now, in like manner, I say there arrived at the citadel of Ilion

740 What was considered to be stormless, lacking in gales
A glory of voluptuousness in abundance,
The delicate arrows from whose eyes
Wounded the heart bringing forth desire.
But there was a laying-down-beside, achieving through intercourse
That bitter conclusion:
An inauspicious companion - unlucky for them -
Was, escorted by Zeus guardian of hospitality, hastened toward

Priam's descendants -

A Fury, making that bride to lament.

750 Long ago, an Elder - explaining about mortals - said:

On reaching adulthood, a man with possessions

Acquires offspring, never dying childless!

For from the inheritance of a good fortune

There is born the pain of dissatisfaction.

In opposition to others, I have this odd judgement:

Disrespect after it is sown, will produce more

760 Of the same kind as itself.

But for an open and fair family

There is a succession of agreeable children.

Yet it is usual for an ageing insolence to produce,

Sooner or later in cowardly mortals, a younger insolence.

At the appointed Dawn, there arrives a new envy,

A daimon who cannot be combatted because he will not fight:

770 Arrogant, Temple-less - a black Misfortune for the family,

As were its parents.

But the goddess, Judgement, can in truth manifest

In well-incensed dwellings -

A favourable omen for those living there.

Yet when dirty hands gild good fortune with gold,

She turns her eyes away,

Eager to go to the-dutiful,

780 For she has no respect for that ability of the wealthy
To counterfeit praise.

And she sets a limit for everyone.

[Enter Agamemnon, with Cassandra]

I hail my Chief - Descendant of Atreus. -

The destroyer of the citadel of Troy!

How to address you, how to honour you

Without exceeding, without falling short of

The due limits of what is acceptable?

For many are the mortals who, highly esteeming

The appearance of things, go beyond what is fair.

790 Everyone is preparing to grieve for the ill-fated ones,

But not at all suitable to their display of grief is their anger -

And, appearing to be like those who rejoice,

They - lacking laughter - will have to compel their faces.

Yet to he who has a good knowledge of his herd

A person's eyes cannot conceal what is a feeble begging for friendship

Behind a pretence of reasoned good judgement.

But, when you were preparing those warriors

800 On account of Helen - I shall not hide this -

What I wrote about you then was very unrefined,

As not fully giving your reason control:

In spite of courage,

She would be returned with men dying.

Yet now to me - neither perfect in reasoning, nor lacking in friends -

Your work was well-judged and well-completed.

In a while, you through inquiry will have knowledge of

Who has been correct and who outside the proper limits

In their duty to this clan while they waited here.

Agamemnon.

810 It is customary to first greet Argos

And our native gods - they who together with me

Rightly caused our return and our success against the citadel

Of Priam. The gods did not hear from our tongues any pleading -

Yet for man-killing, a destroying of Ilion

Into that blood-stained container with no division of opinion

They cast their votes. While at the opposite container,

Although the hand of Hope came near, nothing filled it.

Even now the smoke of that plundered citadel is a favourable sign:

For the breath of Misfortune is a tempest - a killer

820 And a wind to convey away the ashes that were their abundant wealth!

It is fitting that we frequently recollect our debt to the gods for these things

Since we were successful against that insolent robber

And, on account of that women, that citadel was laid to rest
By the fierce bite of that newly-born horse - bearing the shields of warriors -
Which, in the season of the Pleiades, leapt forward:
A flesh-eating beast bounding over their fortifications
To gorge itself on the blood of those insolent people!
I stretched out this beginning for the gods;
830 But, as to your judgements on those other matters which I heard:
I recall them, and declare that I will be an advocate for them
For there exist few men who have the breeding
To - far from envying someone's good fortune - actually honour their
comradeship.
The poison of bad judgement comes to settle in the heart,
A doubling of the burden of he who is beset by sickness:
He is loaded down by his own injury
And groans when he beholds someone else's good fortune.
I speak from experience, for I am well skilled
In deflecting the familiarity of those shadowy figures
840 Who seem to me to be over-friendly.
The only one unwilling to sail, was Odysseus -
But/we made a bond, and he was prepared to work in harness with me.
And it is thus - whether he be breathing or dead -
That I speak of him.

But as for those other matters relating to the clan and the gods
I shall participate in the debates in the assembly,

And then decide. And - obtaining what is agreeable -
The decision should endure so that what is well, remains so.
Whomsoever needs a healing potion -
By a burning-out or a well-judged cutting-away
850 I shall seek to defeat the sickness of that injury.

Now it is to my dwelling and the family altar
That I go to first salute with my right hand the gods
Who sent me that distance and who brought me back.
Since the goddess, Victory, followed me, may she stay constantly with me!

[Enter Clytaemnestra]

Clytaemnestra:

Clansmen - you Argive Elders, here.
There is no dishonour in me telling you of the nature of my love
For my man. After a while, that fear
Which mortals have of something, dies. It was not because others
Instructed me that I can speak of that bad burden I lived with
860 While he was that long while near Ilion.
Primarily, for a lady to be separate from her mate -
To remain unprotected by family - is a harsh misfortune:
She hears many harmfully- recurring rumours,
And, as one arrives, another one also conveys a misfortune,
The announcement of another more injurious misfortune for the family.

And, as to wounds, if my man had been struck by as many
As were the reports which poured into this dwelling,
One would reckon he had more holes than a net!
Or, had his deaths been as many as the stories of them,
870 He would have been a second Geryon, with three bodies -
Ample up-above, not to mention down-below -
Boasting of that three-fold cloaking by the earth which he received:
One death for each and every one of his forms!

It was on account of such harmfully-recurring rumours
That numerous were the nooses, up-above, that from my neck
Others loosened by taking hold of and restraining me.
Thus it is that there is not, standing here beside me,
The child, Orestes - he who ratified that oath between you and I -
As he should have been. Nor be astonished at this.
880 He is in the care of someone well-disposed toward us: your comrade-
in-arms,
Strophius of Phocis. He openly spoke to me about possible trouble -
Of your peril, while near Ilion
And then of a clamouring, leaderless, people
Plotting against us, as it is the nature of mortals
To take advantage by kicking he who falls down.
Such indeed is my defence, conveyed without cunning.

As for me, that rushing Spring of my tears
Has dried up - not a drop remains:

My eyes hurt since I went late to sleep,
890 Weeping, when those your bonfires
For that long while were not used. And, when I did dream,
I would be awakened by the slightest buzzing from a darting mosquito,
Having beheld misfortunes which, for you,
Lasted longer than the duration of my sleep.

But now - having endured all these things, my judgement untouched by grief -
I say that my man, here, has been a hunter for these settlers,
The main-stay securing our ship, the foundation of the pillars
Of our high roof, the only begotten son of a father:
And that land which, against their hopes, navigators see;
900 That most agreeable Dawn beheld after a storm,
A gushing Spring a thirsty traveller -
For there is/always delight in escaping from what is disagreeable.

He is worthy of being so greeted,
With hostility leaving us, for numerous were those misfortunes
We hitherto endured. So now, my beloved Lord,
Step down from that carriage, without placing on the ground
These - the feet of my Master - which ravaged Ilion.

You servants! Why do you delay? I assigned to you the task of
Spreading over the ground in his path those coverings!
910 Directly! - let the way be spread with purple
So that the goddess, Judgement, can lead him to a dwelling beyond his

expectations.

As to other things - my concern, not once conquered by sleep,
Shall, with the gods, arrange what is a fitting Destiny.

Agamemnon:

Descendant of Leda - you who kept watch over my dwelling:

Your speech befitted my absence -

It was a long while before it ended. It is auspicious if others
Praise me - what honours are necessary should come from them.

And also do not give me luxuries fashioned by a woman

Nor - as is the custom among barbarian peoples

920 Lower yourself to the ground, gaping at me in awe.

Neither cause hostility for me by spreading those garments on that path:

By such things it is fitting to honour a god

But, to me, the mortal who walks upon such purple robes

Would never, in any place, be far from dread.

Therefore I ask that you respect me as a man, not as a god:

"With no foot-kissing and also no such robes" -

The rumour, to be shouted out. Not to badly judge things

Is a great gift - from a god. One's fate is a fortunate one

If one's life ends, agreeably, in well-being.

930 And I am resolved to always act in such a way.

Clytaemnestra:

Yet speak to me of what is not beyond my understanding.

Agamemnon:

Be assured that I will not be destroyed by "understanding"!

Clytaemnestra:

Did you invoke the gods because you feared doing such things?

Agamemnon:

If it was anything, it was abundant experience that made me know my purpose.

Clytaemnestra:

And Priam? What do you believe he would have done had he achieved these things?

Agamemnon:

It is my certain belief he would have walked upon such robes.

Clytaemnestra:

Then do not now fear any rebukes from mortals.

Agamemnon:

Yet with great vigour, the people will speak.

Clytaemnestra:

But of course! Those who are without enemies also have no one to admire them.

Agamemnon:

940 It is not becoming for a lady to eagerly love battle.

Clytaemnestra:

Perhaps; but he of abundant fortune becomes distinguished when letting others win!

Agamemnon:

And do you value being given an advantage in this contest?

Clytaemnestra:

Be persuaded - if you willingly allow me this, it is you who triumph.

Agamemnon:

Then if it pleases you; swiftly, someone undo these shoes -

These servants my feet have walked on -

So that when I step upon those purple garments of the gods,

No hostile eyes will wound me from afar.

For it is very ignoble for my feet to ruin my family

By spoiling that abundance of woven cloth, purchased by my silver!

950 But no more of such things. Treat this stranger well

When you bring her inside. The gods see he who, in victory,

Is lenient - and they treat him well.

For no one, willingly, wants to be yoked as a slave.

But she - a young bloom, plucked, frequently useful,
A gift from my warriors - has come with me.
But since in that other matter I in listening to you gave way,
I shall walk into our dwelling upon that purple path.

Clytaemnestra:

There exists a sea - can anyone staunch it? -
Where that precious-as-silver purple grows
960 Always to ooze out again, a colouring for garments:
A family, my Lord, has such things given to them by the gods,
And our kinfolk have no experience of having to labour for them.
Yet I would have promised to frequently trample upon garments

Had some oracle pronounced such a thing to our kinfolk
While I was planning to pay for a living being to be brought back.
For, while the root has being, green leaves can come to a family,
Extending it giving shade to a Sirian hunter.
And so you - returning to your family altar
Signalled the arrival of warmth in the storm-season.
970 And, when Zeus from bitter unripe grapes makes wine,
Then in the family there will be a life
Because its man had frequented that abode which his completely his.

Zeus - you who are complete in all things: accomplish my supplication
By letting your concern be for what you may desire to accomplish.

[Exit Agamemnon, followed by Clytaemnestra]

Chorus:

Why this dread, continuing

To hover-over my soothsaying-life, directing it?

And so I prophesy, in song - with no one bidding me,

No one paying me.

980 Why not spit it out? -

As is customary with a badly-understood dream

Which, easily over-powering confidence,

Can seat itself upon the cherished throne of reason.

But it was a long while ago - after those anchor-cables clashed,

With ships beached, and vigour lost -

That those warriors rushed forth to Ilion.

Yet I know from my own eyes

Of their return - I am their witness.

990 And so, although I have no lyre, I sing:

For there is a desire, within me - a self-taught hymn

For one of those Furies,

With nothing at all to bring me

That cherished confidence - hope.

And my stomach is by no means idle -

In fairness, it is from achieving a judgement
That the beat of my heart continues to change.
And so there is this supplication of mine:
For this defeat of my hope to be false
1000 So that, that thing cannot be achieved.

In truth, that frequently unsatisfied goddess, Health,
Has a limit - for Sickness, her neighbour,
Leans against their shared fence;
And it is the fate of the mortal who takes the short-cut
To strike the unseen reef.
And yet if - of those possessions previously acquired
1010 A fitting amount is, through caution, cast forth by a sling,
Then the whole construction will not go under -
Injurious over-loaded as it was -
Nor will its hull be filled, by the sea.
Often, the gifts from Zeus are abundant
And there is, then, from the yearly ploughing,
A death for famine's sickness.

But if once upon the earth there falls from
1020 A mortal that death-making black blood -
What incantation can return it to his arms?
Not even he who was correctly-taught
How to bring back those who had died

Was allowed by Zeus to be without injury.

Were it not that Fate was ordained

By the gods to make it fated

That when more is obtained it is not kept,

My heart would have been first

To let my tongue pour forth these things.

1030 But now, in darkness, it murmurs,

Painfully-desiring, and having no hope of when

There will be an opportunity to bring this to an end,

Rekindling the fire of reason.

[Enter Clytaemnestra]

Clytaemnestra:

You - and I speak to you, Cassandra - go within,

Since it is Zeus who, with no anger, has placed you here

To share in our family libations, where - with our many servants

You will stand close to that altar guarding our possessions.

Do not be unreasonable - step down from that carriage;

1040 For it was once said that even Alcemene's son

Endured being sold, and the food of servants.

And even if one's fate does incline toward this necessity,

There will be many favours from masters accustomed to wealth:

But they who, unexpectedly, make a useful pile

Are, in everything, strict and cruel to their servants
While, from such as us, that which custom has established, is obtained.

Chorus: [to Cassandra]:

It is to you that she has addressed those plain words.
And, since you are the game Fate decreed would be captured,
Yield - if you can yield and it is suitable to yield

Clytaemnestra:

1050 If indeed she does not - as is customary with swallows -
Possess the speech of a barbarian, she is without learning
For I yielded to reason in addressing those words to her.

Chorus:

Obey her. For what she says is the best thing, for the present.
Yield - and leave your seat in that waggon.

Clytaemnestra:

I certainly cannot delay, here, outside, by prolonging this.
For, concerning our altar, sacred to Apollo,
Even now the sheep are waiting, before their sacrifice:
As we, who never hoped to obtain such a favour as this.
And so, if you are to perform this - do not, by staying here, delay.

1060 But if you do not receive my words because you do not understand us,
Then - instead of speaking - make some sign with those your foreign hands.

Chorus:

This stranger seems to need a skilful interpreter:
She has the manner of a newly-captured wild-beast.

Clytaemnestra:

She is certainly possessed - and listening to defective reasoning;
She who deserted her newly-captured clan
To come here - and who will not be able to bear the bridle
Until the vigour in her blood has been let out, bubbling!
But - having been thus insulted - I will not excite myself any more!

[Exit Clytaemnestra]

Chorus:

Since I could lament for her, I myself am not angry.
1070 Now, unfortunate one, abandon that carriage,
Willingly accepting the necessity of this change to subjection.

[Cassandra leaves the carriage, to stand near the statue to Apollo]

Cassandra:

I, grieving, make lament to my god!

Apollo! Apollo!

Chorus:

Why this loud lamentation in the name of Loxias?

For he is not among those to whom one laments about misfortune.

Cassandra:

I, grieving, make lament to my god!

Apollo! Apollo!

Chorus:

Yet again her call to her god is inauspicious

For he is not of those who attend to such wailing.

Cassandra:

1080 Apollo! Apollo!

God of settlements - my Apollo!

It was not difficult for me to fail you - again!

Chorus:

Will her prophecies concern her own misfortune?

What a god gives, remains - even with reason conquered.

Cassandra:

Apollo! Apollo!

God of settlements-my Apollo!

To where have you led me? To what manner of shelter?

Chorus:

That of those sons of Atreus. If you had not observed this,
Then it is I who have told you - and you cannot pronounce it false.

Cassandra:

1090 It is of they who detest the gods - they who share a knowledge
Of many treacherous cruel slayings of kinfolk,
With mortals sacrificed and the ground moistened.

Chorus:

This stranger, it seems, has the skilful nose customary among hounds:
And, in seeking blood, she will discover it.

Cassandra:

For I am persuaded by testimony from those who,
Lamenting, were sacrificed as children,
Their flesh roasted and devoured by their fathers.

Chorus:

Although I have been informed of your renown at divination

I am not looking for a prophet.

Cassandra:

1100 I lament - for what is it that someone plans?

What new grief ? What is this great,

Great injury planned for a family -

Difficult to heal, difficult for loved ones to bear,

Whose remedy is far away, in distance?

Chorus:

I myself have no knowledge of these prophecies:

But there are others, which echo through all of the clan.

Cassandra:

What suffering! Will it be accomplished? When the partner, sharing the same bed,

Has been rendered clean by that bathing ...

But how can I tell this ending?

1110 Yet it will be swift - a hand stretched out,

The other hand thrusting forth.

Chorus:

As yet, I do not understand; for now, the enigma

Of these unclear oracles is beyond my cunning.

Cassandra:

I behold ... But - what is this manifestation?

Surely - some trap, from Hades?

But the snare is the one who shared the bed

And who will share the blame for that killing.

Never satisfied with our race, Strife will give loud ululations

When, by stoning, there is sacrifice!

Chorus:

What Fury is this that you so exhort it to loudly wail

1120 Against a family? Such words bring me no joy,

And running toward my heart are those yellow-stained drops

As when a spear befalls one,

Achieving with one's life an ending of what is seen:

For it is swiftly that Misfortune arrives.

Cassandra:

There! - I see it! Remove the cow from the bull!

Entangling him in his robes, she strikes

With her black-horned instrument! He falls,

Into a construction containing water.

I speak to you of a death by cunning - during a libation.

Chorus:

1130 I cannot boast of a complete knowledge of message from the gods -

But these resemble ones that are defective:

For, by means of messages from the gods, something useful

Is said to mortals, while through defective ones -

Constructed of many words -

It is a dread of oracles that tends to be learnt.

Cassandra:

It is my injurious Destiny to suffer misfortune!

And with loud cries I pour forth this my affliction:

You brought me here to suffer - but for what?

For whom? If not to die with someone - for what else?

Chorus:

1140 God-possessed, with frenzied reasoning,

You loudly cry wordless odes -

As that song-bird who calls, unanswered -

For, alas, your reason has suffered:

You live with an abundance of ills

As that songstress sighing "Ityn! Ityn!"

Cassandra:

Plaintive was the fate of the songstress!
For there was placed around her a body bearing wings,
Pleasing to the gods - and that struggle to be without tears.
But I await being split-apart by some double-edged weapon!

Chorus:

1150 From where did this god-possession rush upon you
That you toil so uselessly,
Drumming-out in song your fear in shrill
Ill-omened words - almost an ode?
From where came this method of prophecy
By giving voice to misfortunes?

Cassandra:

Alas - for that union, that union by which Paris destroyed His friends!
Alas - for those waters of the Scamander that my ancestors drank!
Once, beside your banks, I was nourished - and grew,
To suffer this.

1160 But now, it seems I shall soon be beside the Cocytus
And the shores of Acheron Chanting my prophecies!

Chorus:

With much skill you announced those words -

The youngest among us, hearing them would understand!
And I - am wounded, stabbed bloodily:
For your chanting invokes such painful misfortunes
That I, listening, am disabled.

Cassandra:

Alas - for the toil. the toil of my community,
Now totally destroyed!
Alas - for my father making sacrifice by the fortifications,
Slaying numerous grass-fed cattle!
1170 For they were not a cure to relieve those afflictions
That the clan received as they did.
And, as for me, my fiery foresight shall soon be cast down upon earth.

Chorus:

What you announce follows what went before:
Your faulty judgement is caused
By some over-weight daimon falling upon you
So that you sing of death-making afflictions.
But your aim is beyond my cunning.

Cassandra:

Now - no longer giving divine-answers from behind a veil -
I can be looked at, as is customary with a young woman, recently deflowered:

1180 Truly radiant, as when Helios in coming forth
Arrives with his breath - and there is, as is customary with swellings,
A purging in the sunlight of much greater wounds than this one.
But no longer will the information I give be enigmatic
And of the marks of treachery you will be my witness,
Walking with me as I follow the smell of deeds done long ago.
For there are Choral-Dancers who never leave that shelter
They sing displeasing words to what are displeasing sounds.
Now having drunk mortal blood, they are given more courage
These revellers who stay in that dwelling:
1190 And it is difficult to send them away, such is the nature of those Furies.
For they occupy that abode, chanting the chant
Of that primal most significant curse -
Each, separately, telling of their hostility
For he who violated she who was sleeping with his brother.

Have I missed? Or has this archer hit the mark?
Or is it that I, at divination - as some lover gushing forth - lie?
First swearing an oath, bear witness that I know
The story of the failings of this most ancient family.

Chorus:

How could an oath, that by its nature is constructed to injure,
Come to heal? But I marvel that you -

1200 Who grew up overseas - hit the mark in speaking about another clan..

Cassandra:

It was Apollo - he of oracles - who gave me such work.

Chorus:

Was it that he - a god - was wounded by desire?

Cassandra:

Before now, I was ashamed to speak of it.

Chorus:

Every person who does well has more of luxuries.

Cassandra:

He was a fighter - breathing out much that was pleasing to me.

Chorus:

And, as is the custom, did his exertions lead to you bearing his child?

Cassandra:

In giving my approval for that, I lied to Loxias.

Chorus:

Had you by then been seized by the art of divine inspiration?

Cassandra:

1210 By then, I was giving my oracles concerning everything that afflicted the clan.

Chorus:

Given the rage of Loxias - how is it that you are uninjured?

Cassandra:

Because of my error, no one believed me about anything.

Chorus:

We, however, are of the opinion that your oracles can be trusted.

Cassandra:

Alas - for this misfortune!

Once again, a premonition strangely afflicts me!
Sitting nearby - what began this typhonic storm:
I see them, there, sitting near that dwelling,
Those youngsters - with forms as in some dream
As if killed by those who had cherished them -
1220 Their hands full with that food made from their own flesh,
Organs mixed with entrails: holding a feast to lament for,
Eaten by their father!

Because of this, I say someone plots to avenge:
A lion without strength frequently engaged in copulation,
Who waited here for the master himself to arrive!
As for me - a servant is required to carry a yoke.
But that commander of ships who laid Ilium waste

Does not see as belonging to an insatiable bitch that tongue
Which spoke and in joy stretched out to him, as is the custom.
1230 Preparing an injurious Fate is this concealed Frenzy -
Such boldness! - a woman to slay a man!
What kind of thing is she of the loveless bite?
How to chance upon her name? Amphisbaena? Or Scylla
Who, dwelling near rocks, injures navigators?
The mother of Hades making sacrifice who, proudly,
With no truce, fights against her own kin?
And what loud ululations she - in all things bold - will utter

When she triumphs in her fight!

After appearing delighted by that safe return!

But it does not matter if you are not persuaded by this:

1240 What must be, will arrive - and you yourself, being present here,
Will soon relate in lamentations how my premonition was only too correct.

Chorus:

That feasting of Thyestes on the flesh of children
I listened to - and shivered; for a dread holds me
Having heard a disclosure of what no one has fully described.
But as to learning anything else - having run off course, I fell.

Cassandra:

I announce that you will look upon the dead Agamemnon.

Chorus:

Unfortunate one - let your mouth have a rest from invocations!

Cassandra:

The healing-god was not behind those words.

Chorus:

Indeed, unless he is here: but let that not be so!

Cassandra:

1250 You may wish that - but some are concerned enough to kill.

Chorus:

Who is the man who prepares this trouble?

Cassandra:

My revelations must indeed have disabled you!

Chorus:

I did not hear the means whereby someone will achieve that thing.

Cassandra:

And yet I speak Greek very skilfully.

Chorus:

So do those giving oracles at Pytho - but they are difficult to understand.

Cassandra:

Ah! - As for that fire, it falls upon me!

Ah! - That wild wolf, Apollo, is here ...

There - the lioness with two feet who, with her well-bred

Lion absent sleeps with a wolf -

1260 And she will kill me, the unfortunate, for she prepares

A remedy, putting into my reward her own wrath.

With invocations she sharpens her dagger - for a man,

To take revenge with my blood on he who brought me here.

Why then keep this thing for others to laugh at me?

And this necklace of Apollo? And this wand?

You at least I will destroy before I myself die!

Fall - go to your destruction! Thus do I avenge myself on you.

In my place, give someone else an abundance of misfortune!

Behold! It is Apollo himself who takes from me

1270 These vestments of a priestess! And he looked upon me,

Attired in those things, as I was laughed at

Foolishly, by friends, by those undivided in their hostility:

And called names as if I were some wandering teller of fortunes,

Begging, starving and holding out my hands!

And now the god of prophets, exacting from me his gift of prophecy,

Marches me to a death-making event

Where waits not my ancestral altar but a butcher's block -
A striking-down first as the sacrificial offering of hot blood.

Yet the gods will not let us be dishonoured when we die
1280 Since someone will arrive to defend us -
A mother-slaying descendant avenging his father.
A wandering exile, far from his homeland,
Returning to cap the injury done to his kin:
His father - laid out when his back was turned - will bring him.

So why do I - a settler, here - lament aloud?
Since when I first beheld the clan of Ilion
Acting as they did act - with those of the clan who were taken
Delivered up by decision of the gods -
I have acted to go to take upon myself that death
1290 Since, before the gods, a mighty oath will be sworn.

Thus, it is towards these gates of Hades that I speak:
My wish being to obtain a fatal wound
So that without painful convulsions but with my blood gushing forth
To give me an easy-dying, I may close my eyes.

Chorus:

You - greatly unfortunate, who has great skill in your craft -
Your speech was complex. And yet if you truly know
Your own fate, how can you - as the custom with oxen

Driven to the altar by a god - go there with such boldness?

Cassandra:

There can be no escape, my friend, no more delay.

Chorus:

1300 But the person who is last has the advantage of that delay.

Cassandra:

My day has arrived - little is gained by running away.

Chorus:

Then know that such bold judgment will give you strength.

Cassandra:

No one who has a lucky daimon listens to such things.

Chorus:

Yet mortals are pleased if they die well-known.

[Cassandra moves towards the gates of Agamemnon's dwelling, then stops]

Cassandra:

Alas for you, my father! And your noble descendants!

Chorus:

What is it that you so turn around in fear?

Cassandra:

Dreadful! Dreadful!

Chorus:

Why "dreadful"? Unless The Dreaded One has affected your judgement.

Cassandra:

That family reeks of blood-letting slaughter!

Chorus:

1310 It is but the smell of offerings on the family altar.

Cassandra:

It is the same as that which rises from a burial.

Chorus:

What you speak of is no Syrian luxury for that family.

Cassandra:

Now I will go to that family chanting an elegy about the Destiny
Of Agamemnon and me. What I have lived has been sufficient.

My friends:

I am in no way different from a fearful bird, suspicious
Of a bush. Give testimony to this about my dying;
For me, a woman, another woman shall die -
For her man, unluckily-wed, another man will fall.
1320 I - about to die - you received as a guest.

Chorus:

Unfortunate one! The fate you foresaw causes me to lament!

Cassandra:

I desire to say one more thing - or utter a lament -
About myself- invoking Helios
On this my last day, that the defender of my honour
Is a killer exacting from my enemies what they did from me
Who, easily-overcome, dies a slave.

Alas! - for those concerns of mortals. A lucky fate

Is a shadowy thing that can change: and if an unlucky fate
Strikes, what is written about someone is destroyed by a moistened sponge;
1330 And then there is much more to make lament for.

[Exit Cassandra]

Chorus:

All mortals who do well bring forth Insatiability,
And not one of them, pointing their finger, declares it will be kept out
Of his dwelling, saying: "No longer enter here!"
And thus it is with he whom the Immortal Ones allowed to capture
The citadel of Priam and who arrived at his home, honoured by those gods.
But now if he is to render tribute for ancient bloodshed by others
And by dying for those deaths
1340 Require compensation by more deaths,
Then who among mortals is there, on hearing of these things,
Who would boast that the daimon they were born with
Would do them no harm?

[A cry of pain is heard]

Agamemnon: [from within the dwelling]:

I am grievously wounded - cut, deeply!

Chorus:

[The Leader of the Chorus turns to the other members:]

Quiet!

[He then turns toward the dwelling:]

Who cries "I am cut - grievously hit!"?

Agamemnon:

Yet more! A second wound!

Chorus:

Since it is the Chief who shouts, my belief is that that deed is done.

But let us together, consult, to consider what is without fault.

[The Chorus each speak in turn]

I shall tell you how I understand things:

We shout for assistance - "You people: here, to this abode!"

1350 * My opinion is that we swiftly rush in

And charge them with the deed while the sword is freshly dripping.

I agree with your understanding of this matter:

I vote we act! The moment is right! - we should not delay!

I know what it is! This is the first act of those people

Whose banner is that of some tyrant!

* Indeed - because we wait! While we delay, they trample our glory
Underfoot! Their hands do not rest!

* I know I cannot find a good plan to tell you of -
It is warriors who should make plans for such things.

1360 And I agree with you - since words are not an effective device
By which the dead may be raised up again.

And shall we then destroy our livelihood by submitting
To those leaders who have disgraced that family?

* That would be unbearable: it would be better to die,
Such a fate being more acceptable than being ruled by some tyrant!

Are we then taking that cry as a sign,
Predicting that the man has been killed?

To discuss this matter, it is necessary that we see the evidence:
Since without seeing the evidence, we are guessing.

[The leader of the Chorus speaks again:]

1370 From all sides, there is an increase in those who approve of that:
We must see the son of Atreus clearly to confirm how he is.

[The gates open to reveal Clytaemnestra standing beside the bodies of

Agamemnon and Cassandra]

Clytaemnestra:

Although much of what I said before was for a purpose,

There was no disgrace in saying it:

For how else - while preparing hostile things for enemies

Who appeared to be friends - to set an injurious trap

Too high to be jumped out of?

And I did not lack for reasons for this ancient fight

Where the victory, although delayed, has at last arrived.

And I remain here, where I attacked - beside my achievement!

1380 Such was my deed - I will not deny it -

So that he could neither escape from nor ward off his fate.

As when fishing, there was a complete surrounding:

A placing-around of an abundant injurious garment!

And I struck him twice - with two loud cries

His joints were loosened there, and, as he fell,

I gave a third as well for the one below the ground,

Invoking a favour from Hades, preserver of corpses.

Thus he fell - gasping for his life,

And swiftly spurted forth his sacrificial blood,

1390 Striking me with dark, wet, crimson drops!

And my rejoicing was not inferior to when that delightful Zeus-given rain

Seeded the concealed sheath to bring-forth a new birth!

So things are - and you, Elders of Argos,
Can rejoice if you do rejoice at this. I myself offer exultant invocations:
If it is necessary to make a libation over that corpse
Then such a thing is fitting: indeed, more than fitting
Since so full had he filled his chalice with so many misfortunes
For his family, that he on his returning had to empty it himself.

Chorus:

I am astonished at your words! Such boldness
1400 To boast of such things when speaking about your man!

Clytaemnestra:

You challenge me as if I were a woman lacking in reason
But I, fearless of heart, speak to those who know
Whether or not your will is to praise or rebuke me.
Here is my husband, Agamemnon -
A corpse by that work which this is my right-hand
Fittingly executed. It is thus that things are!

Chorus:

Woman! What injurious soil-grown edible thing -

Or what drink drawn from the salt-sea - have you tasted
That, by such a sacrifice, you place upon yourself the people's curse:
Set apart, cast out - belonging to no clan
And mightily hated by this community?

Clytaemnestra:

Now you deem it fitting to exile me from my clan
And bear the hatred and curses of the people of this community
Although you then did not oppose that man
Who valued her death no more than if she had been some beast
From his well-fleeced abundant herds of sheep!
He sacrificed his own child - she, my beloved,
Brought forth through my pain - to charm with incantations those
Thracian storms.
Should it not have been he who was banished from his native soil
1420 As payment for that pollution? But, having heard of my work,
You judge me harshly. As to the threats you have uttered.
I am ready for all of them: he who can overcome me in a fight
Will command me, but should the gods accomplish the opposite,
Your instruction in how to be discreet will have been to late!

Chorus:

Sufficient was your planning, well-thought out your words -
But it is your reason which will be lost because of that blood-stain:

Over your face, blood and gore are spattered.

For it is necessary that you - robbed of your friends -

1430 Be paid-back, wound for wound.

Clytaemnestra:

Now hear what is just - my oath!

I swear by the goddess, Judgement, that I accomplished this for my daughter -

And also by Ate and Erinyes for whom I slit his throat.

Thus could I hope to enter, without fear, that dwelling

Until Aegisthus makes the fire on my hearth:

He who has previously been well-disposed toward me.

For, there, is that not insignificant shield who gave us courage

There lies he who dishonoured this woman,

He who while near Ilion was the delight of those like the daughter of Chryseis

1440 And she whom he won by his spear - that observer of omens

With whom he had intercourse, that prophetess who loyally slept with him

Even when his ship was under sail at sea!

And such conduct was not without dishonour!

For thus things are: he was laid out here while she,

As is the custom with swans, wailed her last call for her loved one

While she died, serving me additional dish -

Sensuous and spicy - because they had been lovers!

Chorus:

If only something, neither excessively painful
1450 Nor which makes me bed-ridden - some fate - would swiftly arrive
To convey me to that everlasting endless sleep,
Since he, our protector, well-disposed toward us, has been tamed
Having endured much from a woman
And having that woman end his life.

Helen - you who went beyond what is proper -
Because of you alone that multitude, that great multitude,
Lost their lives near Troy!
Now you have crowned that long-to-be-recalled achievement

1460 By this blood you cannot wash away -
For you were in that dwelling,
You, Strife - who by an affliction vigorously tamed a man!

Clytaemnestra:

Because of these grievous things, no one should invoke a fatal curse upon
Nor turn their wroth toward, Helen
As if she was some man-killer who alone destroyed
The lives of those many Danaan men
By having wrought such a festering wound!

Chorus:

You - daimon - who has befallen that family

And those two descendants of Tantalus:

1470 Your strength is in those women whose natures are the same -

So strong, you gnaw at my heart!

And, as is customary among hostile ravens, you stand

Upon that body, calling your invoking unnatural call!

Clytaemnestra :

What you spoke of knowing is now put right

By you calling upon the thrice-fed daimon of this family:

For there was in him a lust to feed on fresh food by sucking new blood

1480 Before this most ancient affliction was over.

Chorus:

What you praise in indeed for that family

a mighty and wrathful daimon -

But it is an ill-omened praising of a still unsatisfied, injurious misfortune.

It is Zeus who causes everything, who cultivates all things -

For what can mortals achieve without Zeus?

What of this has been done without some god?

1490 My Chief - how may I make lament for you?

What can I say so that others can judge our friendship?

But you are there - within what that spider wove,

Having breathed out your life: killed, with no respect shown,

By that ignoble embrace -
Tamed by death through a cunning hand
With a double-edged weapon

Clytaemnestra:

So you affirm that it was me who did that work?
But do not add to those words that it was me who was the mistress of
Agamemnon
Since the wife of this corpse presents herself here
As that most ancient fierce Avenger.
It is Atreus, he is of that cruel feast,
Who, in payment for that, has added to his young victims
This adult one.

Chorus:

Is there anyone who will bear witness
That you are blameless in this killing?
But - how can that be? Perhaps, because of that one's father,
The Avenger might have helped you -
Dark Ares compelled
1510 By the blood flowing from those sharing the same seed
To go to where he will give satisfaction
For those stains left behind after those boys
Had been made into food.

My Chief - how may I make lament for you?

What can I say so that others can judge our friendship?

But you are there - within what that spider wove,

Having breathed out your life: killed, with no respect shown,

By that ignoble embrace -

Tamed by death through a cunning hand

1520 With a double-edged weapon.

Clytaemnestra:

But do not suppose that his killing was ignoble

For did he not by his cunning set Misfortune upon this family?

Since he to that young shoot which I raised -

My Iphigenia, of the many laments -

Did what merited him suffering what he did,

Then he cannot, before Hades, make great boasts,

Having been killed by a sword-wound to pay for what *he* began!

Chorus:

1530 I lack a plan - robbed of reasons,

I am divided about the right means:

What to do now this family has fallen?

I fear blood thundering-down during a storm

Which will shake this settlement!

The drizzle has ceased - and for another deed of injury,
Fate sharpens another sword/for the goddess, Judgement.

Gaia! - Would that you had consumed me

1540 Before I was shown him laid low while in his silver-walled bath!

Who will bury him? Who will give his eulogy?

Will you - having killed your own man - dare

To make lament for his life, unfairly granting him

Such a thankless favour for his mighty deeds?

Who over his cairn will utter the praises

Of he who, descended from a god, was a hero?

1550 Who, through such a labour, will reveal his heart?

Clytaemnestra:

It is not fitting for you to trouble yourself with such concerns.

It was by me that he fell, that he died -

And so I shall bury him, with no family lamenting him,

Although his daughter, Iphigenia - as she ought to -

Will welcome her father

After he is ferried over the swift-flowing Acheron,

Embracing him with a kiss.

Chorus:

1560 This rebuke has arisen because of the other rebukes:

And it is difficult to choose which side to fight on.
He who carried things away, is carried away - having killed, he has paid;
For this remains, while the aeon of Zeus remains:
There is adversity in deeds, for that is his law.
Who in that family can expel the seed of that curse?
For Misfortune has fastened herself onto that brood.

Clytaemnestra:

Until now, what the oracle revealed has been followed:
1570 And so therefore I am willing to make a pact with the daimon of
Pleisthenes.
That I - difficult to bear though this is - be content with things as they are.
While on his part, he goes from this family
To another brood to waste them away by kin killing kin.
A small share of my property is entirely sufficient for me
If I remove from this dwelling this kin-slaying frenzy.

[Enter Aegisthus, with an armed escort]

Aegisthus:

Hail! To this well-judged light of this day which has brought me satisfaction!
Now I can reveal how mortals are protected
By those gods who - from above this land - behold our afflictions,
Who see - in a robe woven by the Furies -
What is pleasing to me: a man lying here
Who has paid for what the hands of his father planned.

For when Atreus, the father of him, there, ruled this land -
And I shall speak clearly - he who was my father
Disputed the authority of his own brother
Who exiled him from his own clan and family.
But, returning to the family-altar to be purified of his stain,
The unfortunate Thyestes found his fate was so secure
That his blood was not shed upon his native soil.
1590 Instead, Atreus - he of an unlucky god and father to that person there -
Was a host who had a greater purpose than friendship
For he, pretending to be well-disposed to my father on that festive meat-day,
Placed before him a feast made from the flesh of his children.
The toes and the fingers of the hands
He had ground down to spread over what he, sitting alone,
With no clues, unknowingly received, and so ate
What was - as you behold - unsafe food for his kin.
And when he did know of his inauspicious deed,
He cried out - and leant forward to vomit out the bloody sacrifice,
1600 Invoking upon the descendants of Pelops an unbearable fate,
Kicking over that meal-table as he rightly made his curse:
"May the whole clan of Pleisthenes perish!"

It is because of this that you behold that person there, dead
And only fair that I contrived his killing
For, with my unfortunate father, I - his third -
Then small, enwrapped in swaddling clothes, had been driven out with him

And, having grown up, was brought back here by the goddess, Judgement.
For, even while aboard, I fastened myself to that man
And put-together this whole cunningly-devised plan.

1610 Thus I can now die, content -

Having killed him, there, ensnared by the goddess, Judgement!

Chorus:

Aegisthus! I cannot respect someone who is insolent about his treachery!

For you say you willfully killed this man

And alone devised such a woeful death.

I affirm that your head will not escape from the judgement

Of the community who will, be assured, curse you with their stones!

Aegisthus:

You who say such things sit lower down, at the oars,

While it is those on the steersman's seat who command the ship!

You will come to know how grievous it is for someone

1620 As old as you to be taught - when ordered to be reasonable!

For bonds and the pains of hunger are - even for the old -

Most excellent teachers of the powers of reason!

Can you who see not see this?

You should not kick at your masters, for in trying to strike, you will be hurt!

Chorus:

You woman! You who waited here when others went to war -
Who only then dishonoured the wife of a Chief! -
Was it you who contrived the death of that warrior Chieftain?

Aegisthus:

Those words will be the genesis of your lamentation!
The sounds you make are the opposite of those of Orpheus
1630 For whereas he through his delightful voice could persuade anyone,
You - having angered us by your infantile howlings -
Will be persuaded by us, revealed as tame when we overpower you!

Chorus:

You could never be King of the Argives!
You who although contriving that death
Could not even do the killing yourself!

Aegisthus:

Such deceit was clearly for his woman
Since I as an old clan rival was not trusted.
However, by his wealth I will seek to rule this clan,
And those who do not obey me
1640 I shall harshly bind - unlike an unharnessed
Barley-fed horse! - and house them, hungry,
In unfriendly darkness, to watch them weaken!

Chorus:

Was it because of your cowardly spirit
That you did not yourself kill that man, but let a woman -
To so defile our soil and our native gods -
Do your killing?
Orestes! Do you behold the light of day?
Can you - by the grace of Fortuna - return here
To become the conqueror who slays these two?

Aegisthus:

Since you deem to act and speak so - your learning will be swift!

Chorus:

Comrades! Prepare for battle! This deed is not far off!

Aegisthus: [to his guards]

Prepare! All of you - draw your swords in readiness!

Chorus:

I also am ready: I am not afraid to die!

Aegisthus:

We accept your words "To the death!" You have chosen your fate!

Clytaemnestra [To Aegisthus]:

My dearest - let us not do any more harm,
For to reap these many would make it an unlucky harvest:
Injure them just enough, but do not stain us with their blood.
You Elders - go to your families, as fate decrees,
Before, by acting, you suffer in vain. What was done, was necessary.

If of those troubles this should be a remedy, accept it:
1660 An unlucky wound from the grievous claw of some daimon.
Such is the advice of a woman - should you deem to accept it.

Aegisthus:

But is his foolish tongue to blossom before me
By him casting forth such words - testing his daimon -
And being deprived of that learning of reason for so abusing my authority?

Chorus:

Not one of us Argives would submit to a coward!

Aegisthus:

Some day, after this, I shall get you!

Chorus:

Not if a daimon should command Orestes to return here.

Aegisthus:

I know that men in exile feed themselves on hope.

Chorus:

Continue, fatten yourself, defile what is fair - while you can!

Aegisthus:

1670 Be assured that I will exact payment from you for this stupidity!

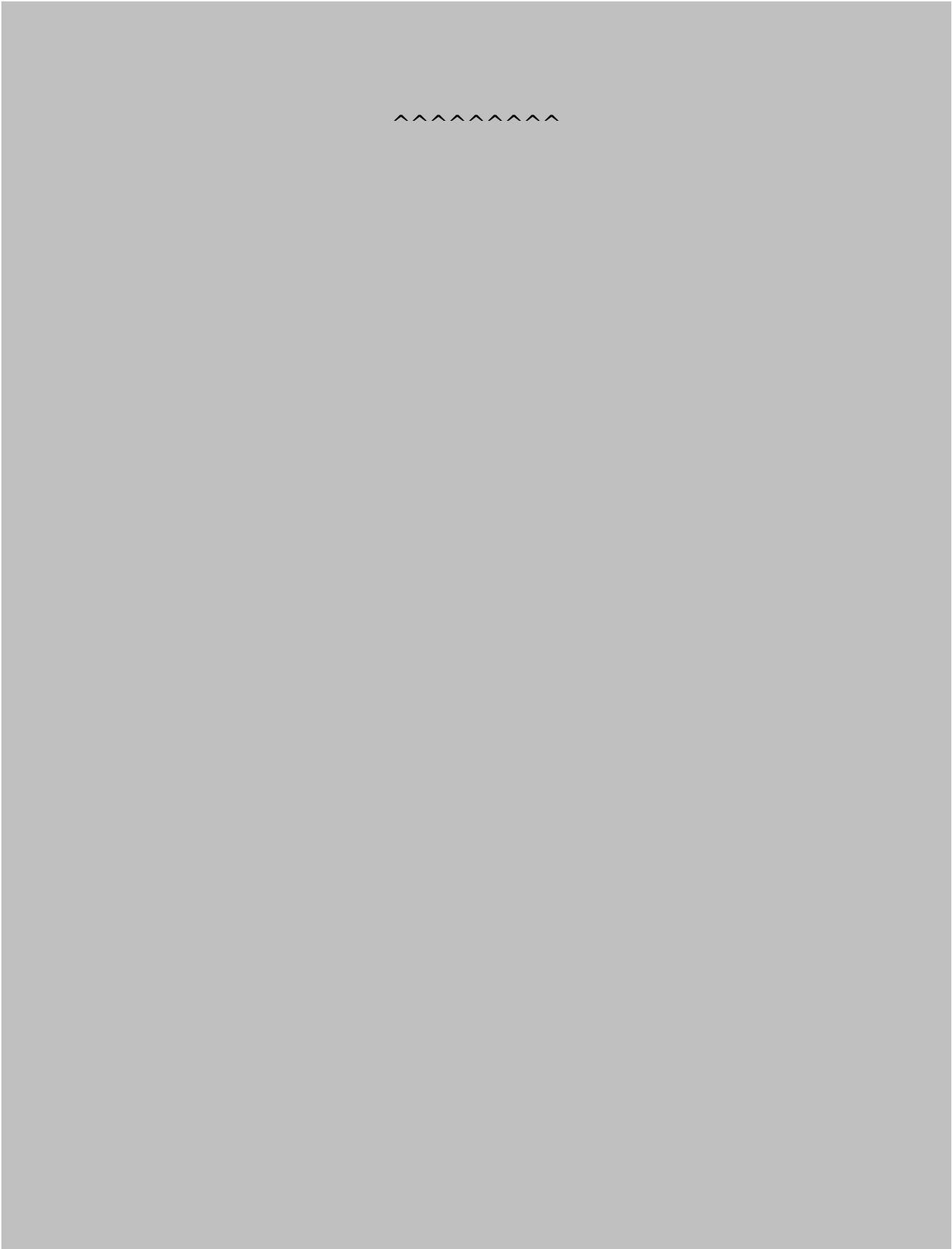
Chorus:

You boldly strut about - as a hen beside its cock!

Clytaemnestra [To Aegisthus]:

Have no regard for such idle howlings! It is you and I

Who have the power to make where we live favourable for us.



SOPHOCLES

ANTIGONE

A New Translation

by

DW Myatt

First Published 1990

This Edition first published 1994

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Preface

The main aim of the present translation is to provide an accurate and poetic rendering in a style suitable for both reading and dramatic performance. This would restore to Greek drama in translation a beauty of expression sadly lacking in almost all modern translations.

This translation will hopefully enable readers without a knowledge of ancient Greek to understand why Greek drama has been regarded for thousands of years as one of the triumphs of European civilization - something hardly evident from other translations, particularly recent ones which both trivialize and traduce the original.

For this present edition of the translation, the Greek notes that formed part of the first edition have been omitted. I have also amended the translation in places. The layout of the translation generally follows the line structure of the Greek, although for grammatical and dramatic reasons I have sometimes rendered one line of Greek as two English ones, and occasionally written one English line for two Greek ones. The numbers in the margin refer to the Greek text and are given for guidance.

The text used is that of R.D. Dawe [*Sophoclis Tragoedia, Tom.II, Teubner, 1985*] although in a few places I have used other readings.

DW Myatt, Shropshire 1994

Note: Since this html document was produced by digitally scanning the printed text, there may be scanning errors missed in proof reading.

Introduction

The 'Antigone' of Sophocles - which follows his 'Oedipus the King' and 'Oedipus at Colonus' - seems, at first glance, to be concerned with the conflict between Antigone, the daughter of Oedipus, and Creon, the new ruler of the community at Thebes, who was the brother of Jocasta, the mother and wife of Oedipus.

Polynices and Eteocles, the two sons of Oedipus (and thus the brothers of Antigone, and her sister, Ismene), had quarrelled - Polynices leaving Thebes and returning with an attacking force which he hoped would take the fortified citadel, defended by Eteocles. In the ensuing battle, Polynices and Eteocles fought and killed each other, with the attackers routed and forced to flee.

One of Creon's first edicts, as ruler of Thebes, is to forbid anyone to bury or mourn for Polynices. This edict goes against the established custom which permitted those foes fallen in battle to be honoured by their relatives with the customary rites and buried.

Antigone defies this edict - even though she knows her disobedience will mean her own death. She believes that the ancient customs, given by the gods and which thus honour the gods, have priority over any edict or law made by a mortal, and that thus it is her duty to observe these customs.

The reality, however, is that the 'Antigone' is not a tragedy concerned with individual characters - with their motivations, feelings, ideas and so on. It is not, for instance, as many modern commentators like in their ignorance to believe, a drama about two different personalities - Antigone and Creon - both of whom are self-willed and determined. Rather, this tragedy - as do all Greek tragedies when rightly understood - deals with the relation between mortals and gods. The work is an exploration and explanation of the workings of the cosmos - and the answers given express the distinctive ancient Greek 'outlook' or *ethos*. This *ethos* is pagan, and it forms the basis of all civilized conduct and indeed civilization itself. The essence of this outlook is that there are limits to human behaviour - some conduct is wise; some conduct is unwise. Unwise conduct invites retribution by the gods: it can and often does result in personal misfortune - in bad luck.

However, it is crucial to understand that this outlook does *not* involve abstract,

monotheistic notions like "good" and "evil". The Greeks strove to emulate a *human* ideal - they strove, through the pursuit of excellence, to emulate and celebrate the best. Their ideals or 'archetypes' were the best, the most heroic, the most beautiful, the most excellent *individuals* of their communities. In their pursuit of this excellence they were careful not to "overstep the mark" - to be excessive, to commit 'hubris', or 'insolence' toward the gods. Such insolence was a violation of the customs which created and maintained the warrior communities - and these customs were regarded as being given by the gods. By honouring these customs, the gods themselves were honoured and the very fabric of the communities maintained. Thus, a noble human balance was maintained. Of course, there were times of excess - as there were individuals who were excessive. But it was recognized that such excesses were unwise - they would, sooner or later, be paid for. In effect, this outlook or *ethos* was that of the noble warrior aware of the power of Fate, of the gods. This *ethos* created and maintained a certain personal *character* - and this character is evident whenever one reads Homer, Sophocles, Aeschylus, and other Greek writers, or views any Greek sculpture or painting. The essentially archetypal Greek man was an intelligent, reasoning, proud, vigorous, independent warrior who respected the gods and who honoured the customs of the folk. Fundamentally, he was human - able to enjoy life and its pleasures, but aware (from personal experience) of death, suffering, the power of Fate and the gods.

What we admire so much about the ancient Greeks was this balance between a pagan joy and enthusiasm, and an understanding and acceptance of Fate, of the power of the gods - in the rightly-famed Choral Ode of the 'Antigone (vv. 332ff) Sophocles calls such a man the "thinking warrior", the all-resourceful one, for whom nothing is impossible: he who by his skill rules over others.

Fundamentally, Greek tragedy enables us to gain an insight into that way of living and that way of thinking which are essential to civilization.

For Susan (1952-1993)

Characters:

Antigone

Ismene

Chorus of Theban Elders

Creon

A Watchman

Haemon

Tiresias

A Messenger

Eurydice

Scene: Before the wealthy dwelling of Creon at Thebes

Antigone

[Antigone and Ismene enter]

Antigone

Ismene, my own sister by blood,
Do you see how Zeus fulfills in us
While we live the woes of Oedipus?
There is no pain, no affliction, no shame
Nor dishonour that is not present
Among your suffering and mine.

And what of this new proclamation

By the General to all the people?
Have you heard - and know what it means?
Or do you not understand how the suffering
Of our foe now comes to our clan?

Ismene

I have heard of nothing told of our folk, Antigone,
Whether grievous or good since we two
Lost our two brothers killed in one day
By their own two hands.
And since the Argive army fled this same night
I have heard nothing to give me more sorrow or joy.

Antigone

Such was my thought and thus I summoned you
Beyond the courtyard gate so only you can hear this.

Ismene

20 What is it? For I see you colour changed.

Antigone

It is that Creon has given burial honour
To only one of our brothers, leaving the other dishonoured!
Eteocles, it is reported, has with rightful justice
Been concealed in earth to thus be given tribute

By the dead below. But pitiful is the death of Polynices
For by royal decree no one may cover him,
Lament his death or weep
But must leave him unburied as a welcome feast
For carrion birds to eat as they will.
Such, they say, is the proclamation of Creon "*the noble*"
For you and me. For me! And soon shall he be here
To proclaim this directly to those who have not heard.
He does not hold this as of no worth
Since whosoever disobeys the edict
Shall - by a public stoning in the citadel - be murdered!

Thus things are - and now you shall swiftly show
If you are noble or will debase the race that gave you birth!

Ismene

But what, my grieving sister, can I do
40 To loosen or make the knot?

Antigone

Will you work with me to do the deed?

Ismene

To attempt what? Where is your thought leading?

Antigone

With your hand help me raise the corpse.

Ismene

You intend to bury him though our folk forbid it?

Antigone

He is mine, as yours - though you wish he was not:

I shall never betray a brother.

Ismene

How reckless, when Creon has spoken against it!

Antigone

He cannot keep me from my own!

Ismene

Have thought, sister, of how our father,

Dishonoured and abhorred, was destroyed:

He convicted himself of wrong and by his own hands

With his own act struck out both his eyes.

Then his mother and wife - two names for one -

With a coiled rope made a failure of her life.

And third - our two brothers in one day
Slaughtered themselves when their own hands
Were raised each against their kin.

Consider now that we alone remain -
Pitifully shall we perish if we defy the decree
60 Or the power of our King.
Reflect that we are women, not disposed
By our nature to strive against men -
For the stronger rule, and therefore we should listen
To such orders, and those that are worse.
I thus ask the pardon of those below
Since in these things I have no power
And must therefore obey those in authority.
To be excessive is unwise.

Antigone

No more shall I exhort you, and even if another day
You wished it, I would not welcome your sharing
In the deed! Be as you are; as for me, I shall bury him
Since it is beautiful to die doing such a thing:
I shall lie by he whom I love who loves me,
I - the villain sanctioned by the gods. For I have
More seasons to spend pleasing those below
Than those here since I shall lie there forever.

But if you deem it, then dishonour
What the gods themselves honour.

Ismene

I do not dishonour them: I have no strength
And cannot act against the folk.

Antigone

80 So you say; I shall go alone to raise
A burial mound over my beloved brother.

Ismene

You unhappy woman! I fear for you.

Antigone

Have no anxiety for me. Follow your own Destiny.

Ismene

If you must - then do not announce the deed
But keep it secret, as I shall.

Antigone

No, announce it! I shall detest you more
If you keep silent and do not proclaim it to all.

Ismene

A hot heart you have for cold things.

Antigone

I appease those whom it is necessary to please.

Ismene

Indeed, if it can be done - but your desire is impossible.

Antigone

If so, I shall stop only when strength fails.

Ismene

But to begin a hopeless quest is not cunning.

Antigone

Do not speak so, or you will become my foe
And then, justly, the lasting foe of the dead.
Now leave me to my 'mistaken' counsel
For I shall suffer nothing as terrible

As a dishonourable death if I should die.

Ismene

Go then, if resolved: but know that although foolish,
Those who love you will love you still.

[Exit Antigone and Ismene;

Enter Chorus]

Chorus

Ray of the sun, most beautiful light
Ever to shine upon seven-Gated Thebes -
As a golden eye opening over Dirce's streams
Have you revealed how the white-shielded Argive warrior
In full armour
Swiftly fled with bridle whistling.

Against our soil quarrelling Polynices
Came forth
Shrilly screaming
As an eagle soaring over our land
On wings white like snow;
With many weapons
And helmet of horse-hair crest
He lingered over roofs - blood-seeking and gaping wide -

To circle with spears the seven gates:
But then was gone
Before his jaws were stained by our blood
Or the pine-fire torches burnt the circle of our towers
Because the clash of Ares sounded against him
Since the dragon he found was a difficult foe
To subdue!

For Zeus greatly hates the over-boasting tongue
And watched them gushing forth -
Their gold clanging in pride -
Before He hurled the fire that He holds
At he shouting victory
As he rushed up to those posts
That were his prize!

Swaying then, he fell to beat against earth -
This fire-bearer who with madness
Rushed in Bacchic frenzy
To breathe against us winds of hate.

Thus, what he wished, was not
140 While to the others great Ares with vigour
Delivered his blows.

Their seven Chiefs were each at our seven gates opposed,
And forced to leave their bronze

As offerings to Zeus, router-of-foes:
Save for those two unhappy ones born
Of the same mother and father
Who levelled their spears for the double-kill
One against the other
To share then the same dying.

Yet since Nike - She giving glory - has come
To Thebes of the many chariots, adding joy to our joy,
Let the battles become forgotten
As there is the circle-of-the-dance all night
In all the Temples of the gods which Bacchus -
Shaker of the ground that is Thebes - shall lead!

[Enter Creon]

But now comes the Lord of this land,
Creon - son of Menoeceus - the new Commander
Whose new fate is given by the gods:
To where is he rowing
And why this special calling of Elders to assemble
By sending proclamation to them all?

Creon

Men - our citadel which the gods greatly shook with storm
Has, by them, been made secure again.

Out of everyone I chose you, sending my escort
To bring you alone here because primarily you I know
Respected always the authority of the throne of Laius -
And also because when Oedipus raised up our clan,
As well as after his sons had died, your thinking was unchanged.
Now since through their two fates those two in one day
Were each struck down by their own hand and became thus defiled,
It is I who now possess the power and the throne
Because nearest in kin to those who were killed.

Although it is difficult to learn the soul, spirit or judgement
Of any man until his leadership and his laws
Have been seen because experienced -
I, for myself, believe now as before
That whoever, in ruling a whole clan,
Does not give noble counsel
Because some fear keeps his tongue still,
Is the vilest person of all,
Just as I deem those who consider some friend
Before their own fatherland to be worthless.
For I - and in this I invoke Zeus, the All-seeing -
Would not keep myself from speaking should our people
Move from safety toward some harm.
Neither would I have as friend a man hostile
To my soil since I know that it is she

Who preserves us like a ship uncapsized
Allowing us thus to have friends.

Thus shall I by such customs nourish this clan -
And, as kin of these, I have made a proclamation
To the people concerning the sons of Oedipus.

Eteocles, who fought for his people and who died
The most valiant warrior of them all,
Shall be covered in a cairn and given
All rites as befits the valiant who have died.

But as for his blood-kin, called Polynices -
He who returned from exile to seek
200 To utterly destroy with fire
The race of his ancestors, his gods and his clan,
Who wanted to feast upon kindred blood
And enslave what remained of his clan -

As for him, it has been proclaimed to the clan
That there shall be no cairn, no honours
As due to the dead, no lamentation:
He shall be left unburied for all to watch
The corpse mutilated and eaten by carrion-birds and by dogs!

Such is my judgement, for I shall never
Honour the ignoble nor place them before the just:
Yet whoever is friendly toward the clan I shall esteem

While they live, and when they are dead.

Chorus

It is your delight, son of Menoeceus, so to deal
With the friend and foe of our clan
Since your will is surely law for all:
Both the dead, and we who live.

Creon

Be then watchmen for my commands.

Chorus

Ask someone younger to bear that task.

Creon

Others are already watching the corpse.

Chorus

What other command of yours, then, is for us?

Creon

Not to agree with those who would disobey.

Chorus

Only a fool would love death.

Creon

Such indeed is the reward - but hope
Of profit often drives men to ruin.

[Enter Watchman]

Watchman

Master - I shall not speak of how I swiftly
And panting reached here on nimble feet,
For many were the thoughts I had to stop me
And turn me round in circling paths.
My psyche spoke to me saying many things:
'Unhappy one, why do you go to where you will be punished?'
'Why, you wretch, do you stop? For if Creon learns
Of this from another man you will surely suffer pain.'

In turning these around, I could not hasten
But slowly lingered, making the short path long.
Yet at last victory came to my coming here to you
For although what I announce may be nothing,
I shall speak it, since I am seized by the belief
That I can suffer only what my fate decrees.

Creon

What is it that has made you lose your courage?

Watchman

I want, first, to tell of myself -

Since I did not do the deed nor see who did

240 It is not just for me to suffer for it.

Creon

You aim well after barricading yourself by circling around

The deed - revealing you have something strange to tell.

Watchman

Danger brings much delay.

Creon

So deliver what it is - then go.

Watchman

Then I shall speak it - just now the corpse

Was covered by someone, since gone, for dry dust

Moistened the flesh, giving thus the necessary rites.

Creon

Of what are you telling? For what man would risk this?

Watchman

I did not see - and there were no cuts
Of an axe, no soil thrown out. The earth
Was hard and dry, unbroken by the travelling wheels
Of a cart, for this workman left no marks.

When the first watchman of the day showed us,
It was a distressing wonder for us all
For we could not see the body - yet there was no cairn
Only a covering of dust as if done to escape the disgrace.
There were no signs of wild animals or of dogs
Being there - nor of their tearing
And, loudly, bad words went from one of us to another
260 With guard accusing guard and with blows
To end it, for there was no one to restrain us:
Someone had done it, yet each of us was clear
In turn that they had not, with no one convicted.
We were willing to hold hot iron in our hands,
To walk into fire, to before the gods take oath
That we did not do the deed, nor consult before with
Or help those who did perform it.

At last, when our seeking came to nothing
One of us in speaking made us all lower our heads
Toward the ground in fear since none of us
Could speak against it nor say how we would stay
Healthy if we agreed. He said we should not
Conceal it but must bring an account to you.
We, on this, agreed and by the casting of lots
It was my unhappy fate to be condemned to that joy.
Thus, as unwilling as you are to see me I approached here
Since no one is pleased by the messenger heralding ill.

Chorus

Master - from the first I considered
That this deed might be the work of the gods.

Creon

280 Cease your words or I shall become glutted with wrath
And you revealed as both stupid and old!
I cannot endure your words when you speak
Of our guardian gods caring about this corpse!
Did they esteem him as beneficent
And thus bury him? - he who came to set on fire
Their spacious Temples, their votive offerings, their land,
And to break their customs! Have you beheld

The gods honouring the bad? There is no such thing!

Yet just now there were among our clan

Men hostile to my edict who in secret whispered

Against me, rearing their heads instead of keeping their necks

Under the yoke as and when I deem it fitting.

For, indeed, I well understand it is they who hired

These others and by such means caused this deed to be done:

For, among men, it is silver as coins

That brings forth base customs - that thing ravages clans,

Drives men from their homes, trains honest mortals well

How to turn from reason and practice dishonest deeds!

It instructs men in cunning arts, making them

To know all kinds of acts of destruction.

Yet all hirelings

Finally pay by having to yield to what is right.

[Creon turns to speak to the Watchman]

Since I, at least, still hold Zeus in awe,

Then understand this - and I speak an oath -

If you do not discover he who by his own hands

Did this burial and reveal him before my own eyes,

Then not even Hades by itself will suffice for you

For first you will be strung up alive

Until you reveal your insolence -

This will be a lesson as to where profit may be obtained

For such a plundering will have taught you
Not to love gain from wherever it comes.
And it will be seen that from such dishonourable receiving
More are injured than are safe.

Watchman

Can I speak - or may I turn and go?

Creon

Have you not seen how your words pain me?

Watchman

Where is your wound - in your ears, or in your soul?

Creon

Do you instruct me as to how I am injured?

Watchman

The doer assaults your reason - I, your ears.

Creon

It is clear that you grew to be a babbler.

Watchman

Even if so, I did not do this deed.

Creon

You did: and abandoned your soul for silver!

Watchman

How fearful - to assume when such assumption is false!

Creon

What elegant opinions you have! But if you do not reveal

To me those who did it, you will be gushing forth

That cowardly gains injure those who make them!

[Exit Creon]

Watchman

Before all may he be discovered - but whether caught

Or not, it is fate which chooses.

Whatever, I shall not come here again

For I beyond my hope and reason am kept safe

And for this have a duty to give to the gods many favours.

[Exit Watchman]

Chorus

There exists much that is strange, yet nothing
Has more strangeness than we human beings:
For this being crosses the gray sea of Winter
Against the wind, through the howling sea swell,
And the oldest of gods, ageless Earth -
She the inexhaustible -
He wearies, turning the soil year after year
By the plough using the offspring of horses.

He snares and captures the careless race of birds,
The tribes of wild beasts, the natives of the sea,
In the woven coils of his nets -
This thinking warrior: he who by his skill rules over
The wild beasts of the open land and the hills,
And who places a yoke around the hairy neck
Of the horse, taming it - and the vigorous mountain bull.

His voice, his swift thought,
The raising and ordering of towns:
How to build against the ill-winds of the open air
And escape the arrows of storm-rain -
All these things he taught himself,
He the all-resourceful
From whom there is nothing he does not meet
Without resources - except Hades

From which even he cannot contrive an escape
Although from unconquered disease
He plans his refuge.

365 Beyond his own hopes, his cunning
In inventive arts - he who arrives
Now with dishonour, then with chivalry:
Yet, by fulfilling his duties to the soil,
His oaths to the customs given by the gods,
Noble is his clan although clan-less is he who dares
To dwell where and with whom he please -
Never shall any who do this
Come to my hearth or I share their judgement.

[Enter Antigone and Watchman]

Now this sign from the god
I cannot speak against
For I see that the girl brought here
Is Antigone.
Unfortunate daughter of Oedipus the unfortunate -
What is this?
Can it be that you are brought here
For being faithless to the Chief's law -
Caught in an act lacking reason?

Watchman

Here is the one who did the deed:

We captured her burying him. But where is Creon?

Chorus

From his dwelling he now fittingly comes.

[Enter Creon]

Creon

What is it that makes my arrival fortunate?

Watchman

Master - we mortals should never swear not to do anything

For an advance in thought cheats our former judgment:

I might have vowed for my desire to return to be weak

Because of your threats - that tempest I went through before.

Yet since that delight which is beyond hope is,

In extent, beyond other pleasures,

I - despite taking oath - have come here,

Leading this maiden whom I captured giving rites

Of burial. There was then no need to cast and draw lots

For this chance was mine and mine alone.

So now, Master, take hold of her yourself
And examine and question her according to your will.
Thus it is fitting that I go
400 Completely free of these troubles.

Creon

This maiden you lead - how and where was she caught?

Watchman

Burying that man. Now all by you is known.

Creon

Do you clearly hear what your words announce?

Watchman

I saw her giving forbidden burial rites to that corpse.
Are these words of mine plain and clear?

Creon

Was she seen and seized doing the deed?

Watchman

Thus it was: when I returned there
After those terrible threats you made against us,

All the dust covering the corpse we swept away
To leave the putrid body bare while we sat,
Wind-sheltered, by the top of the hill
To escape the hurling smell.
We kept awake by shaking and loud threats
Those men who did not attend to their work,
And long this continued until Helios with his radiant circle
Had established himself in middle-sky, burning us.
Then suddenly from the earth as a thunderbolt through air
A whirlwind came afflicting the heavens:
Filling the plain, beating all the leaves
420 From the trees of the fields and vomiting them high in the sky
While we closed our eyes against this sickness sent by a god.
And when after much waiting our deliverance came,
We saw this girl who loudly wailed
With the sharp shrill voice of a bird when it beholds
There is nothing lying in the empty nest.

So it was that she on seeing the corpse bare
Loudly wailed and made bad wishes
Against those who had done that deed.
Then suddenly she with her hands brought dry dust
And raised a well-crafted bronze ewer to honour
The corpse with the three-fold libation.
Seeing this, we rushed down to trap her

But she was not surprised and we accused her
Of that act and the one before. She did not deny it -
And this pleased me, yet also gave me pain,
For while it is pleasing to escape suffering oneself
It is painful to bring suffering to a member of one's folk.
Yet all such things are for me less important
440 Than my own escape and survival.

Creon

You there - inclining your head to the ground -
Do you affirm or do you deny doing these things?

Antigone

I did them - and do not deny it!

Creon

[To Watchman:]

As for you, you can convey yourself
Where you will, free from the burden of blame.

[Exit Watchman]

Now, not at great length but briefly, tell me
If you knew of the proclamation made in this case?

Antigone

Certainly I knew - it was clear.

Creon

So even then you dared to violate these laws?

Antigone

It was not Zeus who proclaimed them to me,
Nor did she who dwells with the gods below - the goddess, Judgement -
Lay down for us mortals such laws as those.
Neither did I suppose that your edicts
Had so much strength that you, who die,
Could out-run the unwritten and unchanging
Customs of the gods: for the life of these things
Is not only of yesterday or today, but eternal,
No one remembering their birth.

I did not seek - because I feared any man's pride -
To be punished by the gods for breaking their laws:
For I clearly saw I would die even before your proclamation.
That my death is now sooner, I say is a gain
Since how can he who lives among so many cowards as I
Not find a gain in dying?
There is thus for me no sorrow in this
My destined fate. Yet had I left the corpse

Of my own mother's son unburied
Then I would have sorrow, as I have no sorrow now!

And if you believe I from stupidity performed the deed
Then it is the stupid exposing his own stupidity!

Chorus

Clear it is that this child is the savage offspring
Of a savage father - suffering does not bend her.

Creon

It is known that those too hardened in their thinking
Assuredly fall, for it is the strongest iron,
Baked hard by fire, that is often seen to suddenly shatter,
And a small bridle restrains the angry horse.
It is not allowed for a servant to possess pride.

480 She is well-practised in insolence, in going beyond
The prescribed laws - for after the first, her further
Insolence was to boast of it, and laugh!
Now she would be a man, and I would not
Were she to be master in this and uninjured:
For even were she a child of my sister
Or closer in blood than all in my home -
Who are bound whole by Zeus -

She and her sister would not escape their miserable fate
For I indeed accuse her as well of sharing
In the planning of this burial.

Summon her here! For just now I saw her inside,
Frenzied and not possessing any judgement.
For often the thoughts of those desiring dark deeds
Become revealed before such deeds are done.
And, further, I hate those who when caught
Seek to beautify their baseness and their deeds.

Antigone

Do you will more than herding me to my slaughter?

Creon

Nothing more - when I have that, it is over.

Antigone

Then why delay? Your speech does not please me
500 Nor can ever please me, just as my own is displeasing to you.
For what greater renown could I obtain

Than the renown gained by giving burial to my own brother?
By all these men would this be said
Were their tongues not stopped through fear.
But a King has much wealth
And can speak and act as he himself desires.

Creon

You alone of all the Cadmeans see this.

Antigone

They see: but you stop their mouths from opening.

Creon

But are you not ashamed because alone in such thinking?

Antigone

There is no shame in honouring womb-kin.

Creon

Yet was it not your brother who was killed by the hostile side?

Antigone

A brother, born of my mother and father.

Creon

How then by being dis-honourable to him can you show him respect?

Antigone

He who is dead and below would not bear witness to that!

Creon

He will when your respect is his dis-honour.

Antigone

It was not a slave, but a brother who died.

Creon

He died trying to rape this land which the other one protected!

Antigone

Yet Hades longs for these rites.

Creon

520 But what the decent inherit is not the same as what is given to the bad.

Antigone

Who can see if such things are acceptable to those below us?

Creon

Even in death an enemy is never a friend.

Creon

I came forth not to return hate but to love friends.

Creon

Then when you go into earth, love them, if love them you must.

I, while living, will not be commanded by a woman.

[Enter Ismene]

Chorus

Certain it is that here before the door is Ismene
A cloud above her eyes casting down tears in love
For her sister, drop by drop
To moisten her beauty of face
And shadow her blood-red cheeks.

Creon

You! - who stayed lurking like a snake in my home

Secretly sucking at me for I did not see
I was feeding two destructions and subverters
From my throne -
Tell me, do you say you shared in this burial
Or will you make oath and say you did not know?

Ismene

I did the deed - if she agrees -
And share with her the burden and the blame.

Antigone

But it is not fair to allow you this
Since you did not desire it and I gave you no share.

Ismene

540 Now maledictions assail you, I would be ashamed
Not to sail with you toward misfortune.

Antigone

Of that act, Hades and those below are witness:
As to words, I do not love those who care for them.

Ismene

Sister, do not dishonour me
But let me die with you and so purify his death.

Antigone

My death is not for sharing; do not claim to have touched
What you have not - my dying is sufficiency itself.

Ismene

What life have I to love without you?

Antigone

Ask Creon since you care for him.

Ismene

Why hurt me when it does not profit you?

Antigone

If I laugh, it is from pain that I laugh.

Ismene

How then can I help you?

Antigone

Save yourself - I shall not blame you for escaping.

Ismene

This hurts me! And I then to be deprived of your fate?

Antigone

You chose life: I, my dying.

Ismene

Yet I did not keep silent but spoke.

Antigone

To some, your intentions were right; to others, mine.

Ismene

Why, then, is the fault both yours and mine?

Antigone

Be trusting; you live, but my psyche long ago

560 Perished that I might aid the dead.

Creon

In this, one child now reveals herself without reason
While the other has been without from her beginning.

Ismene

So it is, sir, that sometimes such reason as grows
Is displaced when misfortunes arise.

Creon

Yours was, when you ignobly arose to aid the ignoble.

Ismene

How would I, alone, live without her?

Creon

Do not speak of her as being here - she is nothing!

Ismene

Will you then slay her betrothed to your son?

Creon

There are other furrows for him to plant his plough in.

Ismene

570 But for them it was so fitting.

Creon

I would detest my son having an ignoble wife!

Ismene

Dear Haemon - your father dishonours you!

Creon

You annoy me - you and this marriage!

Ismene

Would you deprive your son of his wife?

Creon

It is Hades who will relieve me of that wedding.

Creon

So it seems, then, that she will die.

Creon

So it is - by both you and I. No more delay now!

You slaves - take them within!

For they now must be women and thus be constrained.

Even the bold flee when they behold Hades

Very close to their life.

[Exit Antigone and Ismene]

Chorus

Favoured by a divinity are those never tasting badness

Since when a clan is shaken by the gods

There is no misfortune that is missed for generations to come

As when the heavy-breathing sea of Thrace attacks

The deep darkness to roll from the bottom

The black sands

590 And there are sighs and shouts at the ill-winds

As the sea breaks against and over-runs the shore.

I watch those ancient sufferings of the clan of Labdacus

Fall upon the suffering of those dead -

Generation after generation captive

Since a god casts them down,

Giving no release.

The light cast upon the last root of the family of Oedipus

Has become dimmed by the red dust of the gods below,

By speech lacking understanding

And by frenzied judgements.

Zeus - what mortal can transgress and hold back your strength

Which even sleep, subduer of all, cannot seize
Nor even the inexhaustible months of the gods;
You, who are master of gleaming radiant Olympus!
And so now, as thereafter and in the past, this custom prevails:
In mortal life, there is no prosperity without misfortune.

Far-ranging hope delights many mortals
While many are tricked because deprived
Of their judgement by desires -
For what is to come, is not seen,
Until the foot is burnt
In the heat of the fire.

620 And there is wisdom in this renowned saying:
Sometimes the bad has appearance of nobility
To those whose reasoning is damaged by the god,
And only for a short season is there exemption
From misfortune.

But here is Haemon, youngest and last of your sons:
Is he in grief at the fate of the nubile maiden,
Antigone, promised to him in marriage
And in great anguish because cheated
Out of that wedding?

[Enter Haemon]

Creon

Soon we will see - and more than some prophet would have done.
My son, have you heard of that decision that brings to an end
Your promised bride, and so come in rage at your father -
Or, whatsoever that I do, are we still friends?

Haemon

You are my father and your opinions
Possess worth and correctly guide me.
For me, no wedding is of greater value
Than the noble lead you give.

Creon

640 Yes, my son, you must be so directed by your heart
And in all things stand behind your father's opinion.
It is for this that a man prays to have his offspring grow
Hearing and obeying him in his home:
That they treat his enemies as worthless
While esteeming his friends as they do his father.
But of those who sow unprofitable children,
You can only say that they have breed toil for themselves
And provided their enemies with much laughter.

Do not, my son, cast out your reason

For the pleasures of a woman,
For embraces become cold when a bad woman
Is your bed-partner:
And a bad relative is a large festering wound.
Now, with loathing, spit on that girl
And let her marry someone in Hades!
Since, from all of our folk she alone
I have caught in visible disobedience,
I will not show myself false to these folk -
Thus, I shall put her to death.

So let her chant to Zeus, guardian of kinsfolk!
Were I to nourish disorder in my own blood-relations
Then I would most certainly be doing so within our clan.
Any man who is honest within his own family
Will, by the folk, be seen to be fair -
And whomsoever by force transgresses the customs
And presumes to command his master
Will never be applauded by me,
Since those whom the folk appoint, must be obeyed
In what is small, what is fair, and what is not.
I have confidence that such a man
Would nobly rule as he would be willing to be ruled
And would, in a storm of spears, be steadfast
And stand his ground - a valiant comrade at one's side.

The worst ill is to have no leader:
It is this which destroys clans,
Which causes families to disperse,
Which makes a spear-alliance to turn and break
Just as of those who do stand firm
The greater number are saved due to obeying commands.
Therefore, we must defend the rule-givers
And never let a woman overcome us:
If we must be thrust down, it is better done by a man
680 So that we are not called weaker-than-a-woman.

Chorus

To me, unless the seasons have cheated me,
Your sayings appear to be wise sayings.

Haemon

Father, it is the gods who root reason in mortals
And, of all our possessions, it is the greatest.
Of your sayings, I could not, even had I the experience,
Say wherein they are not correct
Although another might, with fairness, differ.

For me, it is natural to watch, for you,
All that others say or do or blame you for:

Your eyes awe the common man
So that they say only what you delight in hearing.
But I have heard how under cover of darkness
The clan grieve for this girl -
For, of all women, she is the most undeserving
To perish, dishonoured, for so honourable a deed:
With her very own brother slaughtered,
She did not leave him unburied
To be eaten by carrion dogs or any bird.
Does she not merit a golden honour?
700 Such is the talk spread in secret.

For myself, there is no possession I value higher
Than your prosperity, father:
What, for a youngster, can have greater glory
Than a father's prospering fame -
Or, for a father, that of his children?
Do not keep only a single mask for yourself
In that what you say, and nothing else, is correct.
For whosoever supposes that he alone is wise
Or that his words or his nature are above all others
Will, when split open, be revealed as empty.
Certainly a man, clever though he be,
Can without shame learn many things
And so still stretch himself.

See how beside the torrents of Winter
The trees whose branches yield are kept safe
While those that resist are laid waste to their roots
Just as whomsoever holds, taut and unyielding,
The sail of a ship will overturn it,
Completing the voyage with the deck downturned.

Thus, give way and so permit your anger to change.
If I, though young, may put forth my understanding
I would say it would be excellent if men by nature
Knew about everything - but if not, and seldom are they
So inclined, it is noble to learn
From those who speak what is honourable.

Chorus

Master - it is reasonable, if his words are in season,
That you are instructed, as he has been by you. Both your words are fortunate.

Creon

Is it natural that those of such an age as me
Be taught how to reason by men of such an age as he?

Haemon

It is only fair. Although I am young,
Behold my acts not the seasons I have seen!

Creon

730 Can respect be given to those who work mischief?

Haemon

I would never entreat anyone to respect what is bad.

Creon

But is she not attacked by that sickness?

Haemon

The whole clan of Thebes deny it.

Creon

Is the clan to tell me what I ought to do then?

Haemon

Observe - you are speaking as though very young.

Creon

Am I then to rule this land as I deem, or as others do?

Haemon

It is not a clan if it is the possession of any one man.

Creon

It is the custom for a clan to have a master.

Haemon

You would make a good ruler - alone in the wilderness!

Creon

740 So - he is fighting for that woman!

Haemon

My concern is for you - so you are the woman!

Creon

Totally shameful - to dispute so with your father!

Haemon

Not when I see you missing your duty.

Creon

Do I err in respecting my own authority?

Haemon

You do not respect it when you tread on the offerings due to the gods.

Creon

You stain your character by coming second - to a woman!

Haemon

You will never find me overcome by dishonour.

Creon

But all your words are for that girl.

Haemon

And also for you, me and the gods below us.

Creon

750 While she lives you will never marry her.

Haemon

Then she will die and in dying destroy another.

Creon

Are you so bold that you make threats?

Haemon

Is it a threat to speak against hollow thoughts?

Creon

Suffering shall instruct you - for your own hollow reasoning!

Haemon

Were you not my father, I would say you could not judge things correctly.

Creon

You slave of a woman! Do not babble at me!

Haemon

You like speaking - but not hearing a reply!

Creon

Is that so? By Olympus know

That you will soon suffer for reviling me with insults!

760 Bring that hated thing here so that she will die

Now beside her bridegroom and before his eyes!

Haemon

No - do not believe that she will perish beside me
Or that you with your eyes will ever see my face again.
So, rage on then at such kinsfolk as can endure it!

[Exit Haemon]

Chorus

Master - that man, hurled by anger, has swiftly gone.
Someone of such an age as he, when injured, has a strong resolve.

Creon

Let him experience and understand more than other men.
But, whatever, the two girls shall not escape their fate.

Chorus

So you still intend to slay them both?

Creon

Your words are well taken. Not she whose hands are clean.

Chorus

What fate had you planned for the other's death?

Creon

She will be led to where the paths are desolate of mortals

And be concealed alive in a rock-hewn tomb

With as much food before her as is required for expiation

So that the whole clan escapes pollution.

There she may if she asks have success from dying

By giving reverence to Hades, the only god she reveres -

Or she will learn at last though late by this

780 That it is useless toil to so revere Hades.

[Exit Creon]

Chorus

Eros - unconquered in battle:

Eros - despoiler of wealth

Who at night keeps vigil by the soft lips

Of a young girl

And who widely roams over sea and land

To even the wildest dwellings!

No immortal can escape you

Nor any mortals while they live:

You possess them all with your frenzy.

Those who are fair become unfair
And are disgraced
As you wrest aside their reason -
You who now trouble these kinsmen with strife!
Passion is victorious - for a comely, clear-eyed, bride -
And this power is seated there beside the ancient lawgivers,
800 There where the goddess Aphrodite mocks us,
With no resistance.

But now, as I look there, I am carried beyond that decree
And cannot from their source block these burgeoning tears
As I see Antigone passing to that inner chamber
Wherein we will all be quiet.

[Enter Antigone]

Antigone

You see me, fathers of our clan,
Go forth on my last journey
By the light of this sun that hereafter
I shall not see again.
Hades - he who makes all of us quiet -
Leads me while I live
To the banks of Acheron
And there shall be no bridal songs for me

To share in,
No nuptial hymns in praise -
Since I shall be bride to Acheron.

Chorus

With renown, and praised, you depart
For the tomb of the dead:
No wasting sickness struck you,
No sword of punishment was your fate;
Instead - you who were independent of the decrees of others
Shall, alone among mortals, descend while you live
Down into Hades.

Antigone

I have heard of the sorrowful death
Of that Phrygian guest who was Tantalus' daughter,
Who on the highest part of Sipylus was overpowered
By sprouting rock clinging to her like ivy.
There, heavy rain and snow - such are men's stories -
Never departs as she lamenting moistens with tears
Her brows and ridges.
In the same way some god shall lay me down to sleep.

Chorus

Yet she was a goddess, born of gods
While you and I are mortals, born of mortals.
So it is a great thing to perish so
Since it will be said you are equal to the gods
Having shared in such a fate:
While living, and afterwards in your dying.

Antigone

I am laughed at! By the gods of our fathers
840 Could this not wait- must I be insulted here in this light?

My clan! You - wealthy kinsmen;
You, springs of Dirce, and you, sacred-groved Thebes of the beautiful chariots!
I have you, at least, to bear witness
How and by what decree I go with no lamentations from my kin
To be placed in that fresh cairn
Which shall be my grave:
I, the unfortunate one,
Who shall be among neither mortals nor corpses
But instead a foreigner to the living and the dead.

Chorus

You approached the boundary of boldness
And, at the high altar of the goddess, Judgement,
You, my child, heavily stumbled.
Perhaps your ordeal is retribution because of your father.

Antigone

You touch that concern which pains me -
The often-ploughed lamentations made for my father
860 And the whole destiny of the famed clan of Labdacus.

That bane of a mother's bed
Where she lay in ill-fated intercourse
With her own child, my father!
From such was I, who endures, brought forth
And now I, cursed and unwed,
Go forth to stay with them
Since you my brother who found your ill-fortune
By your marriage, in your death
Killed my being.

Chorus

To honour is honourable

But he who has authority cannot allow
Anyone to overstep his authority:
Your obstinate character ruined you.

Antigone

Without friends, without lamentations,
With no bridal songs am I, suffering, taken
To what lies prepared for me.
No more, it is decreed, shall I the unfortunate see
The sacred eye that is the sun:
And there are no tears for my destiny,
No kin who lament.

[Enter Creon]

Creon

If songs and wailings were before death
They would never stop, if it was useful to say them!
Swiftly, lead her away! And, as I have said, enclose her
Within her embracing cairn then leave her alone
And desolate if necessary to die
Or to live buried and concealed.
We are then pure concerning this maiden.
Whatever! - she shall be deprived of residing here on earth.

Antigone

My bridal-chamber is a carved-out tomb,
A chamber always to guard me, wherein I shall pass
To my own, of whom the greater number have perished already -
Received by Persephone to be among the dead.
Last and most ill-fated of all I shall descend down
Before my portion of living has expired.

But I have within the strong hope that this my setting out
Will be welcome to you my father; pleasing to you
My mother; and pleasing also to you my brother -
900 For when death came, with my own hands
I moistened and dressed you and poured libations
Over your graves. Now, Polynices, it for covering your body
That I have won such as this.

Yet, to the wise, I rightly honoured you
Although I might not - had it been my own child
Or my husband who had died and was putrid -
Have taken up that task against the folk.
To what custom do I do homage in speaking thus?
My husband dead, I might have had another
And a child by this other man in place of the first-born
But with my mother and father hidden in Hades
No brother could ever come forth again.

Such was the custom by which I honoured you,
My own brother - but Creon believed it wrong
And dangerously reckless:
So now by his hands he forcibly leads me away.
There are no nuptials in bed, no bridal songs,
No wedding, no share in nurturing children
920 As I pass while living to my grave and my death.

What divine decree have I transgressed?
Shall I, the unfortunate, look again to the gods?
What ally can be invoked
Now I for my respect am said to be dis-respectful?
Yet if these things are fair to the gods
Then I will experience my mistake
While if it is these others who are mistaken
Then may they experience in retribution
No greater ills than those they give to me.

Chorus

The same spirit, gusting stormfully, still sways
In the same way this girl.

Creon

And because of that, trouble will befall
Her guards over their slowness!

Antigone

This therefore brings closer
That death!

Creon

I do not encourage you to believe
That that will not be fulfilled.

Antigone

Community of my fathers on this Theban soil!
You elder gods!
No longer do they delay.

940 Behold me, you Theban lords,
The solitary descendant of your nobility
And how I can be treated and by what kind of man
For so respecting honour!

[Exit Antigone]

Chorus

So endured Danaë - for whom the light of heaven
Was bartered for a chamber wrought in bronze
And where, in that enclosing tomb,
She was shut in.
She also, my child, was of noble birth:
She to whom Zeus dispensed his wet golden seed.
But numinous is the power of destiny -
It cannot be escaped from by wealth, by combat,
By ramparts, by taking to a ship upon a black-storming sea.

Thus was the son of Dryas - he of the swift anger
And Chief of the Edonians - tamed
By Dionysus for his wrothful taunts
And confined, bound by rock,
Where in his strange frenzy
His bursting fierceness trickled from him.
He came to know the god who had touched him,
With frenzy, for his taunting tongue -
For he had sought to stop the god-posessed women
And their Bacchic fire, provoking thus
The flute-loving Muses.

By Cyanaei of the two-fold sea
Are the Bosphorus shores
And Thracian Salmydessus

Where Ares, dwelling close by the citadel,
Beheld the two sons of Phineas
Blinded by ruinous wounds
Dealt by that savage second wife -
A blinding of orbs the seeing of which brought vengeance -
By sticking at them with the points
Of her weaver's spindle, blood staining her hands.

Anguished by this anguish they cried aloud
980 Their misfortune - those born from a mother's unhappy marriage:
She of the fabled seed of Erechtheus,
Reared in faraway caves
Amid her father's storms -
She of Boreas, swift as horse over steep hill,
Who, though child of a god,
Was, my child, by those long-living Fates
Attacked.

[Enter Tiresias, guided by a boy]

Tiresias

Theban lords, I come here sharing another's steps,
This one seeing for us both - for the blind
Should be guided along their path.

Creon

Well, venerable Tiresias, what that is new brings you here?

Tiresias

I shall instruct you. Do oracles persuade you?

Creon

Never in the past have I dismissed your judgement.

Tiresias

And thus have you straightly steered this clan.

Creon

I can testify to how I have profited from you.

Tiresias

Know then that fate is ready to cut you down.

Creon

What? I shiver at your words!

Tiresias

Learn by hearing of these signs of my art.

Just now as at the place of augury I sat,

1000 Where all kinds of birds gather,
I heard voices of birds I did not know -
A bad feverish foreign screeching -
And sensed they were tearing at each other
With their deadly claws:
And the rushing of their wings left no doubt.

In awe, I went straight to rouse a blazing
Altar-fire to burn sacrifice. But Hephaestus
Did not seize the offering by flames.
Instead, puss oozed from the thighs down to the embers
To spit and smoke while the gall-bladder swelled
To burst open and the fat covering the thighs dripped out.

Such I learnt from this boy here
Of the sign-less divination from the failed sacrifice -
He gives me a lead, as I give a lead to others.
And it is your judgement that brought sickness to our clan.
The altar, the hearths - all of them -
Have been soiled by the suppurating food torn
By birds and by dogs from the ill-fated son of Oedipus.

1020 Wherefore the gods do not accept our sacrificial supplications
Nor our burnt-offerings:
And no bird in its screeching cry gives favourable signs
Since they have devoured the blood-soaked fat of a slain warrior.

Understand these things, my son. All mortals have in common
That sometimes they aim wrong, and miss - but after an error
A man is no longer luckless or thoughtless
If he wills to cure the ill he has fallen into
By not remaining idle:
Obstinacy and awkwardness bring reproaches.
Give way to the dead: do not goad those who have fallen.
Is it courageous to kill the dead again?
Carefully have I judged this; carefully have I spoken - for it is pleasing
To learn from such careful words from such words
Are profitable to you.

Creon

Old man - all of you like archers shoot arrows at me as target,
And not even by your divinations am I left
Unassailed by you and your breed
To whom I am the customer who buys your goods!
Gain profits and customers, if you so design,
By the electrum of Sardis and Indian gold
But you shall not conceal that person in a grave.
1040 Not even if the eagles of Zeus tear him
For food and carry it away to Zeus' throne -
Not even then in dread of such defilement
Will I submit to him being buried!

For I know well that no mortal
Has the strength to defile the gods.
Even the cleverest of mortals, old Tiresias,
Are cast down in dishonour
When they for profit grace dishonourable words with elegance.

Tiresias

But can any man see, or any explain -

Creon

What? Is this to be some common saying?

Tiresias

- why wise counsel is superior to all other possessions?

Creon

Why? I suggest lack of judgement is the greater mischief.

Tiresias

Your nature is full of that disease.

Creon

I have no desire - in answer - to contradict a prophet!

Tiresias

Yet you spoke of me saying false prophecies!

Creon

Yes - because the breed of prophets loves silver!

Tiresias

And that of Kings loves shameful gain!

Creon

Can you see that when you speak you are speaking to your master?

Tiresias

I see! This citadel of yours you saved because of me.

Creon

You are skilled in divination but love to do harm!

Tiresias

1060 You stir me to express what is inviolate and hidden in my heart!

Creon

Bring it forth! Do not speak it only for profit.

Tiresias

Were there any, I would not expect you to have any share of it.

Creon

You will see that you cannot buy my heart!

Tiresias

Know then that there will not be, for you, many more
Loops which the swift sun will complete
Before you see one born from your own loins a corpse
In exchange for corpses because you have cast down
One of those from above
By dishonourably settling one, alive, in a tomb.
And also because you held here from the gods below
A corpse, bereft, profaned, because without funeral rites.
Not you, not any of the gods above
Can overpower him now -
For this is outrage by you to them and shall destroy you
Since the Furies, of Hades and the gods, will ambush you
To catch you by those same ills.

Observe if I speak laden with silver
For there will not be a long delay hereafter
Before such things are visible and the men and women of your abode

1080 Will shriek, when hatred casts into disorder all those clans
Whose own were mangled and buried by dogs or wild beasts
Or birds of prey carrying away a profane stench
To those sacred clan sanctuaries.
Since you grieved me, as an archer these
Are the sure arrows I in anger direct at your heart
And from whose burns you cannot escape.

So, boy, take me away to my dwelling
And let him loose his anger on those who are younger
And nurture his thought by keeping his tongue quiet
So he obtains better judgement
Than the judgement he now possesses.

[Exit Tiresias]

Chorus

My Lord, that person has left hurling fearful prophecies!
I am certain that ever since hair - once black
Now white - crowned me, he has never
Given false utterances for the clan.

Creon

This also I know and my heart is troubled.
on one side, I fear to yield; on the other,
I fear opposition and thus misfortune striking.

Chorus

Son of Menoeceus, you should accept good counsel.

Creon

What, then, do I need to do? Speak, and I shall consider it.

Chorus

1100 Go, and loosen the maiden from her cavern
And build a tomb to lay within it he who lies exposed.

Creon

And that is your advice? You believe I should give way?

Chorus

Yes, my Lord, and swiftly. For those swift-footed wretches
Of the gods cut down the misguided.

Creon

It is hard to give up what it is the desire of my heart to do -
But yet I cannot fight against those forces.

Chorus

Go and do these things - do not turn them over to another.

Creon

As I am so shall I go - now! Have follow those here,
And those others - grasping axes in their hands -
To rush to that place overlooking here!
Since I have turned my opinion around
I, who bound her, should also release her.
I am anxious because it seems that it is best
Throughout one's life to keep to what is ancient custom.

[Exit Creon]

Chorus

You of the many names! Glory of the Cadmean bride
And kin to Zeus of the roaring thunder!
You, who enclose illustrious Italia
And who rule over the public Eleusinian plain
Of Deo!

1120 Bacchus! - Whose frenzied Bacchants dwell
In your clan-mother Thebes,
She seeded by the savage dragon
Near the smooth water of Ismenus!

Above that two-crested rock you are glimpsed
Through the smoke of flaming-torches -
There where your frenzied Corycian Nymphs go,
By Castile's Spring!
You who came from the ivy-covered hills of Nysa
And that green shore of the many grapes
To visit the community of Thebes
Amid that immortal cry: E-U-A-I!

Of all the clans, ours you honour above all others -
Your mother, stricken by lightning.
So now, since a strong sickness overcomes
All of our clan, pass here with your healing feet,
Over the cliffs of Parnassus or over the Strait of Sighs!

You who dance with the fire-breathing stars,
Who overshadows the voices of the night,
The son born of Zeus -
My Lord, appear! -
With your Thyiad followers
Who in frenzy dance through the night

For you, their Master, Iacchus!

[Enter Messenger]

Messenger

You who reside by this dwelling of Cadmus and of Amphion,
There is no way of mortal living
Which I would either praise or blame,
For frequently fate raises the unfortunate
And brings down those of good fortune
1160 And no one can divine the actual being of mortal things.

Creon was once I believe to be envied
For he saved this land of Cadmus from those hostile to it
And guided it well: he who flourished in his nobly born children.
But now, all this is gone - for if a man betrays
What is delightful to him, I do not hold him as living
Since he is but an animated corpse.
Have an abundance of property if such is your aim:
Live in the manner of a great King;
But if they provide no pleasure, I would not obtain them
From any man for such things are as a covering of smoke
Compared to what delights.

Chorus

What grief do you carry for the Chieftains here?

Messenger

Death. And the dead accuse the living.

Chorus

What? Who the killer? Who the slain? Speak!

Messenger

Haemon has died. Bloodied by a kindred hand.

Chorus

Was it by his father's hand - or his own?

Messenger

By his own in wrath at his father for his killing.

Chorus

You - our prophet! How perfect was your skill!

Messenger

So the thing is - as to the rest, you must decide.

Chorus

1180 I see, nearly here, a sorrowing Eurydice,
Creon's wife - perhaps fate brings her from her dwelling.
Or has she heard about her child?

[Enter Eurydice]

Eurydice

You clansmen - I felt your words
As I departed to greet and offer supplication to the goddess Pallas.
As I drew back the bolts to open the gate
A voice - woeful for my family - struck my ears
And in fear I crouched backwards into the arms
Of my servant, unable to move.

So, you, tell again what message you brought
And I shall hear it since I am not without experience of misfortune.

Messenger

My Lady - I who was present shall tell
What passed and disclose all what was said.
Why should I soften you with lies
Which will soon be revealed? Disclosure is straightforward.

As a guide I attended your husband
To where the plain ends at that place where, unlamented,
Was the dog-torn body of Polynices.
1200 To the goddess of the crossing-trackways and to Pluton
We prayed for them to with-hold their frenzy and be friendly
And with pure libations washed what had been left,
Gathering them together to burn them with newly-plucked boughs
And raise over them a high tumulus of his native soil.

Next, we went toward to enter the stone-lined cavern
Of the maiden - that bridal-chamber for Hades -
When, still far off, one of us heard a voice loudly wailing
Beside that nuptial chamber bereft of funeral rites,
And came to inform Creon our Master
Who as he went near was ambushed by a wretched strange cry
And who, mournfully lamenting, said:
Wretch that I am, is that what I divine it to be?
Shall I go along the most unpleasant track I have ever taken?
Is that the pleasing voice of my son? Servants! - swiftly go
Nearer there in the gap where the earth has been dug
And the stones torn away, and enter that mouth to see
If it is Haemon's voice that I heard or if the gods have deceived me.

This order by our despairing Master we obeyed

1220 And at the end of the tumulus we beheld her
Hanging by the neck, a noose of threaded fine linen
Fastening her and he embracing her around her middle,
Wailing for his bride - destroyed and now below -
At his father's deeds and his own ill-fated marriage.
Seeing him, his father gave a fearful cry
And, loudly lamenting, went within to call to him -
Unfortunate one! Why have you done this deed?
What resolve possessed you? What misfortune overpowered you?
My son - I in supplication beseech you to come out!

The boy gave no answer but looked at him
With wild eyes then spat on his face
And drew his double-edged sword.
But his father hastened to retreat
And then the ill-fated one enraged at himself forthwith
Stretched himself to lean on that point
Until half the length was in his side.
Then, still breathing, he with but feeble arms
Embraced the maiden to gasp and spurt forth a swift stream
Of his dripping blood upon her white cheek.
1240 Corpse lay upon corpse as he the unfortunate completed his rites
Of marriage in the dwelling of Hades.
Thus, this shows to mortals that of the ills conferred upon men
The greatest is privation of wisdom.

[Exit Eurydice]

Chorus

To what is this like? For now the lady goes away
Without speaking of honour or dishonour.

Messenger

I also am amazed. Yet my own hope is nourished
Since having heard about her unfortunate child it would not be dignified
For her to lament before her people.
Rather, she will in the concealment of her dwelling appoint her servants
To lament with her in grief.
She is not so lacking in experience that she would err.

Chorus

About this - I do not know, since an excessive silence
Is no less of a portent than an abundance of wailing.

Messenger

We will be certain whether she keeps a secret

Shrouded in her passionate heart since I shall enter the dwelling.
Your words may indeed be fortunate - for this excessive silence
Could well portend something.

[Exit Messenger]

Chorus

Here comes our Lord, himself -
In his hands a memorial as a token,
If it is fitting for me to say it, of his own error
1260 And not that of some stranger.

Creon

I lament -
For those bad errors of judgement
Which condemned others to death!
You see here the killer
And he of the same family whom he killed.
I cry because of my own ill-fated plans
And for my young son who died so young.
You - who perished, who left us,
Not because your plans were wrong, but because mine were.

Chorus

Thus, too late, you see the meaning of customs.

Creon

A dreadful learning! It was a god who, attacking me
On my head with a great weight, made me to wander wildly
And who overturned and stamped on my joy!
I lament - for wearisome are the toils given to mortals.

[Enter Messenger]

Messenger

Master - you came bearing that grief in your hands,
Seeing that one, but you will soon see
1280 These others stored within your dwelling.

Creon

What further ills could follow ills such as these?

Messenger

Your wife had died - mother in every way to that corpse,
And unfortunate - from fresh wounds.

Creon

Ah!
How can I purify that haven of Hades?

I am destroyed!

You who convey the sorrow of these bad tidings -

What message can you speak?

You, there - do you pursue me to kill me again?

What misfortune is mine! Speak your message of a wife's fate:

Of this new sacrifice heaped upon those killed!

Messenger

See - it is no longer concealed.

*[The doors to Creon's dwelling open, to reveal
the body of Eurydice]*

Creon

I behold this second grief!

What fate still awaits me now -

Me, who has held in my hands our child

And who in misery looks upon her, a corpse.

1300 I lament for you - the ill-fated mother, and you, her child.

Messenger

By the altar with a keen-edged knife

She released her eyes to darkness, lamenting

For the death of Megareus - he renowned for his fate -
Who went before him, there: her last deed
To invoke ills upon you, the killer of her children.

Creon

Fear rises within me!
Will no one strike me
In the chest with a cutting sword?
Me - in misery
Whose misery is mixed with anguish.

Messenger

She denounced you as being guilty
Both of the death of he who died before, and of this other one.

Creon

She who is gone - how was her blood shed?

Messenger

She was stricken by her own hand
As there was loud lament made at the fate of her son.

Creon

No other mortals but me can be denounced
For this. It was I, and no other, who killed.
I, who here disclose this. You servants -
Lead me swiftly away!
For I am no more than nothing.

Chorus

There is something to be gained from this - if troubles are a gain -
Since it is excellent to shorten our ills.

Creon

Let it appear - that fate
Which brings me to my end:
This is the best and highest of all
Since then I shall never behold another day!

Chorus

Such things are yet to arrive. Before then, it is necessary to be practical.
What is to arrive shall be attended to by they who order it.

Creon

But all that I desire was contained within that vow.

Chorus

Then do not make another vow.

Mortals cannot be delivered from the misfortunes of their fate.

Creon

Lead this foolish man away!

1340 My child - and you, also. Wretch that I am,

It was not my purpose to slay you.

Now there is nothing for me to look upon,

Nothing to hold onto:

In my hands, everything went wrong

As a heavy fate I could not carry

Leapt upon me.

[Exit Creon]

Chorus

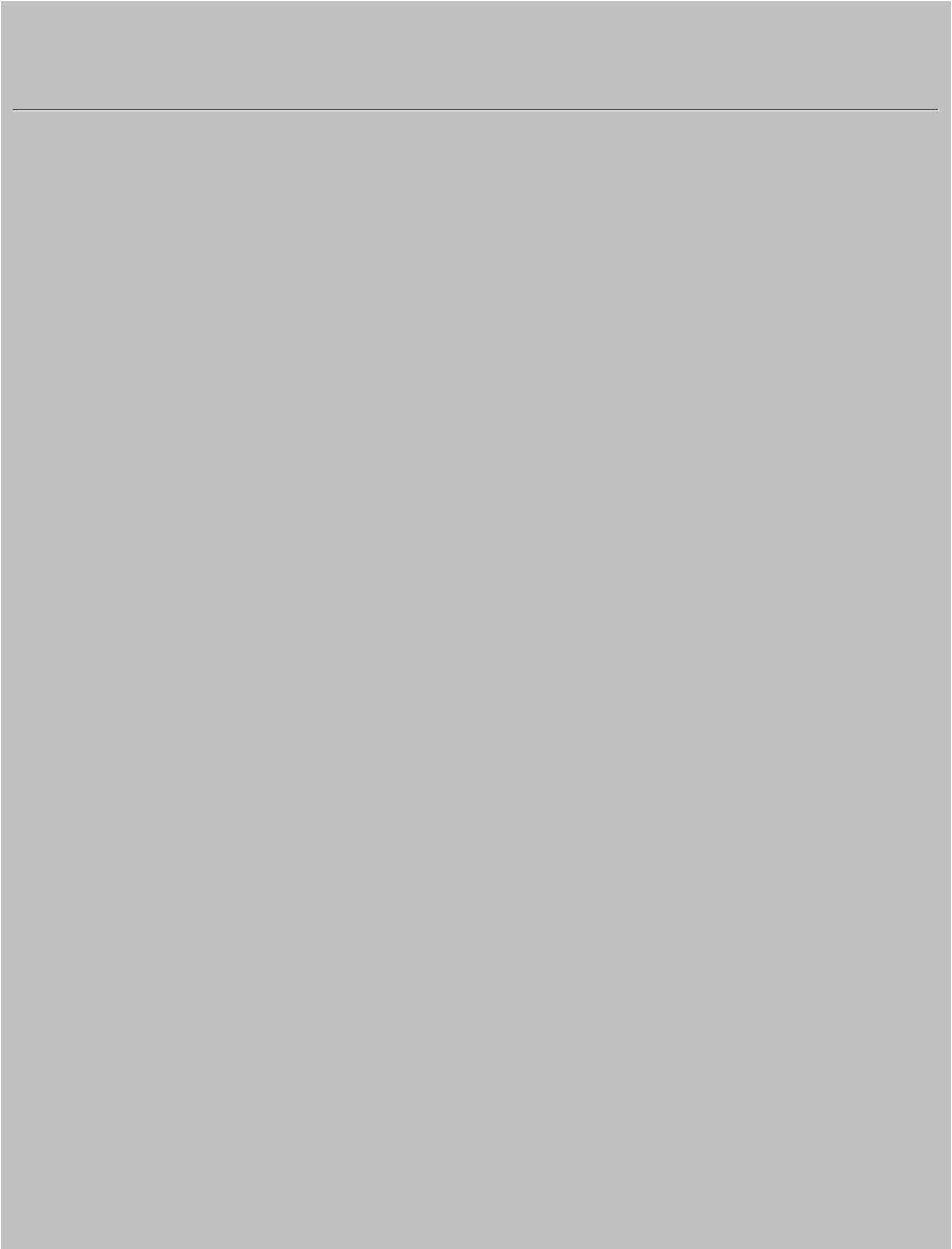
Judgement is the greater part of good fortune

Just as it is necessary not to be disrespectful to the gods -

For the great words of the excessive boaster

Are repayed by great blows

And this, as one grows old, teaches judgement.



SOPHOCLES
Oedipus Tyrannus
(OEDIPUS THE KING)

A Translation
by
DW Myatt

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Preface

The main reason for this new translation of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* is the desire to produce a dynamic and powerful version which is as accurate as any non-literal translation can be and which thus reflects as far as any translation can, the spirit of the original.

The original is one of the masterpieces of European literature, and indeed of European civilization - something hardly evident from other translations. Part of the beauty of Sophocles is his direct simplicity of language - and, given the resources of the English language, it is possible to suggest this in a translation without, however, descending to the level of the trite and the banal as most recent translators have done in their attempts to 'modernize' and/or make the story seem 'relevant'.

In the present translation, I have tried to combine a simplicity and directness of expression with a fidelity to the images of the original, as well as rendering as best I could the most important Greek concepts in a Hellenic rather than a modern, abstract, way. As with the original, the language I have employed (or

rather, syntax) is not that of 'everyday' speech. It does, however, achieve the desired simplicity and effect, particularly when spoken.

For this present edition of the translation, I have omitted the Greek notes that formed part of the earlier edition [*Sophocles: Oedipus Tyrannus; A Translation, Interpretation and Commentary* (Thormynd Press, 1991)]. I have also amended the translation in several places, sometimes significantly.

The text used is that of R.D. Dawe - *Sophocles: Tragediæ; Tom. II* (Teubner, 1979).

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Introduction

For a significant percentage of people who have heard of or read the story of Oedipus, the central theme is the incest of Oedipus with his mother - and then, the killing of his father. The same applies to most of those who read or watch a performance of one of the appalling 'translations' which unfortunately seem to appear with monotonous regularity.

In the majority of interpretations, 'explanations' and translations of and about Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* (or 'Oedipus the King') the incest and the patricide are viewed morally, and thus the tragedy becomes a sort of ancient 'morality tale'. In many translations, the impression is given that Oedipus commits a 'sin' by sleeping with his mother and killing his father, and is punished because of it.

This sort of moral interpretation is completely wrong. The essence of this particular Greek tragedy lies in the realm of the gods, with the relationship between individuals, their communities, and the gods. The incest in particular is merely an interesting incident which occurs to a particular mortal and whose importance lies in the realm of prophecy - in what prophecy says about the will of the gods and the fate of mortals. Furthermore, this incest is not viewed with 'horror' by either Oedipus himself or by anyone else - it never described as a 'monstrous deed' or anything of the kind. All Oedipus says about it is that he "should not" have slept with his mother - it was disrespectful (for example qv. v.1184 and v.1441). Even when Oedipus is describing the first time he heard the prophecy that he would sleep with his mother and kill his

father, the tone is quite restrained and definitely not moralistic: "Suffering and strangeness and misery were what his words foresaw: that I must copulate with my mother - and show, for mortals to behold, a family who would not endure..." (vv.790-3). He then goes on to say: "I fled... so that I would never have to face - because of that inauspicious prophecy - the disgrace of its fulfilment."

The tragedy lies in the fact that Oedipus was not initially disrespectful of the gods - he tried to avoid killing his father, and sleeping with his mother; and when he learns that the oracle at Delphi has said that the plague which is killing the people of Thebes is the result of a defilement which has not been cleaned [the blood is still on a killer's hand] then he is ready to do all that the god says is necessary (vv.95ff.).

What actually occurs is that Oedipus oversteps the proper limits of behaviour *in his quest to find the killer of Laius and discover his own identity*. He begins to act like a 'tyrannus' - a tyrant, an absolute monarch. First, he accuses the blind prophet Tiresias of conspiring against him. Then he accuses his brother-in-law Creon of wanting to overthrow him. Later on, he is dismissive of the warnings of Jocasta and the Shepherd not to enquire further into his origins. He also boasts that he is a child of Fortuna. Oedipus was certain of himself - he knew he had great skill [did he not solve the riddle of the Sphinx?]; he had great strength and courage [did he not by his own hands kill many men when he believed himself attacked (vv.801ff)]; he had power and wealth [was he not King of Thebes?]. All these things, in relation to the power of the gods, mean nothing. As Creon says to him at the very end of the drama: "Do not desire to be master in all things, for you are without the strength which assisted you in your life." It is the gods who have taken away his strength, his skill and his power - as the Chorus say in another Sophoclean tragedy: "Mortals cannot be delivered from the misfortunes of their fate." [Antigone, v.1338]. The tragedy of Oedipus ends with words which summarize all this: "Observe - here is Oedipus, he who understood that famous enigma and was a strong man: what clansman did not behold that fortune without envy? But what a tide of problems have come over him!... Therefore, call no one lucky until, without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending."

Oedipus himself accepts that his troubles were the work of the gods: "It was Apollo - Apollo who brought such troubles to such a troubled ending." (vv.1329-1330). Oedipus goes on to say that his own blindness - which the blind prophet Tiresias had foreseen - was not the work of the gods, but his own handiwork.

The fundamental question which Sophocles poses in this tragedy is voiced by the Chorus when they reply (v.1347) to a request by Oedipus that he be exiled:

"You are as helpless in that resolve as you were in your misfortune." What the tragedy is really explaining, is that however fortunate a person's fate may appear - it is only not only appearance, but also depends on the will of the gods: it can be destroyed in a moment. Therefore, it is wise not to overstep the mark - it is wise not to be excessive; it is wise to observe the customs given by the gods and thus the gods themselves (qv. vv.863ff.). To do otherwise is insolence, disrespect ('hubris') - and invites a retribution by the gods.

Sophocles says of 'hubris' - "Insolence plants the tyrant. There is insolence if by a great foolishness there is a useless over-filling which goes beyond the proper limits. It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights and then that hurtling toward that Destiny where the useful foot has no use..." (vv.872ff).

One further point about the *Oedipus Tyrannus* deserves noting, since it has hitherto been mostly ignored. It is the mercy shown by the Shepherd when he is given the infant Oedipus by Laius and Jocasta to leave exposed on the mountain. They have pierced the ankles of the infant Oedipus and fastened them together to make certain he dies. But the Shepherd is merciful and gives the infant to another Shepherd. The consequences of this act of mercy are a sequence of terrible misfortunes which Oedipus, Jocasta and the children of Oedipus suffer - and which, incidently, Creon himself later suffers from (as evident in Sophocles' *Antigone*). Later, after his self-inflicted blinding, Oedipus curses the person who saved him: "May death come to whosoever while roaming those grasslands loosened those cruel fetters..... It was not a favourable deed. For had I died then, no grief such as this would have been caused to either me or my kin." (vv.1349f.). Sophocles clearly states that an act of mercy or compassion can lead to others suffering in the future - and can therefore be unwise.

A Note Regarding v.981-2:

This is one of the crucial lines in understanding how Sophocles - and the Greeks themselves - viewed what we call the 'incest' of Oedipus with his mother (importantly, the Greeks had no word for 'incest'). On a first reading of the Greek text, it gives the impression that what is meant is: "many are the mortals who already - *in dreams also* - have lain with their mothers..." That is, while it is disrespectful and a disgrace, it is nothing to seriously concern oneself with.

Of course, this is far too 'amoral' for most translators and scholars to even consider, and so the line is taken as meaning: "many are the mortals who in

dreams (and also in prophecies) have lain with their mothers..." This sense is rather strained, and not apparent on first reading the Greek.

However, if moral Christianized abstractions are not read into the *Oedipus Tyrannus* - as nearly all previous translators have done, often from laziness and sometimes from misunderstanding what the Greek means - then what emerges, if for purpose of argument we accept the above interpretation, is that the incest may not be that important. Thus, what concerns Oedipus most is his killing of his father - all he says about the incest is that he "should not" have slept with his mother and it is disrespectful (for example, qv. v.1184f and v.1441). What has brought about the plague which is devastating the clan of Thebes, is the killing of Laius. Furthermore, the offender has not given tributes to the gods to clean his hands of the bloodstain (qv. v.1445 - which is often overlooked or misinterpreted). That is, the pollution caused by the killing has not been purified by offerings to the gods - and thus the offender has offended the gods.

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Oedipus Tyrannus

Characters:

Oedipus, King of Thebes

Jocasta, his Consort and wife

Creon, brother of Jocasta

Tiresias, the blind prophet

A Priest, of Zeus

First Messenger

Second Messenger

A Shepherd

Chorus, of Theban Elders

Scene: *Before the wealthy dwelling of Oedipus at Thebes*

Oedipus Tyrannus

OEDIPUS

My children - you most recently reared from ancient Cadmus -

Why do you hasten to these seats

Wreathed in suppliant branches?

Since the citadel is filled with incense,

Chants and lamentations

I did not deem it fitting, my children, to hear

The report of some messenger - so I come here myself:

I, Oedipus the renowned, who is respected by you all.

As you, Elder, are distinguished by nature,

You should speak for these others. Is your manner
One of fear or affection? My will is to assist you
For I would be indifferent to pain
Were I not to have pity after such a supplication as this.

PRIEST

Oedipus, master of my land:
You see how many sit here
Before your altars - some not yet robust enough
To fly far; some heavy as I, Priest of Zeus, with age;
And these, chosen from our unmarried youth.
Enwreathed like them, our people sit in the place of markets,
20 By the twin shrines of Pallas
And by the embers of the Ismenian oracle.

Our clan, as you yourself behold, already heaves
Too much - its head bent
To the depths bloodily heaving.
Decay is in the unfruitful seeds in the soil,
Decay is in our herds of cattle - our women
Are barren or abort, and that god of fever
Swoops down to strike our clan with an odious plague,
Emptying the abode of Cadmus and giving dark Hades
An abundance of wailing and lamentation.

Not as an equal of the gods do I,
And these children who sit by your altar, behold you -
But as the prime man in our problems of life
And in our dealings and agreements with daimons⁽¹⁾.
You arrived at our town of Cadmus to disentangle us
From the tax we paid to that harsh Songstress -
And that with less than we knew because
Without our experience. Rather - and it is the custom
To say this - you had the support of a god
And so made our lives to prosper.

40 Thus, Oedipus - you, the most noble of all -
We all as suppliants beseech you
To find us a defence, whether it be from a god's oracle
Or whether it be learnt from some man.
For those who are practical are, by events,
Seen to give counsels which are the most effective.
Most noble among mortals - restore our clan!
But - be cautious. For now this land of yours
Names you their protector for your swiftness before -
Do not let it be recorded of your leadership
That you raised us up again only to let us thereafter fall:
So make us safe, and restore our clan.
Favourable - then - the omens, and prosperity
You brought us: be of the same kind, again!

For, in commanding a land, as you are master of this,
It is much better to be master of men than of an emptiness!
Of no value are a ship or a defensive tower
If they are empty because no men dwell within them.

OEDIPUS

You, my children, who lament - I know, for I am not without knowledge,
Of the desire which brings you here. For well do I see
60 All your sufferings - and though you suffer, it is I
And not one of you that suffers the most.
For your pain comes to each of you
By itself, with nothing else, while my psyche
Mourns for myself, for you and the clan.
You have not awakened me from a resting sleep
For indeed you should know of my many tears
And the many paths of reflection I have wandered upon and tried.
And, as I pondered, I found one cure
Which I therefore took. The son of Menoeceus,
Creon - he who is my kin by marriage - I have sent to that Pythian dwelling
Of Phoebus to learn how I
By word or deed can give deliverance to the clan.

But I have already measured the duration
And am concerned: for where is he? He is longer than expected
For his absence is, in duration, greater than is necessary.

Yet when he does arrive, it would dishonourable
For me not to act upon all that the gods makes clear.

PRIEST

It is fitting that you spoke thus - for observe that now
We are signalled that Creon is approaching.

OEDIPUS

80 Lord Apollo! Let our fate be such
That we are saved - and as bright as his face now is!

PRIEST

I conjecture it is pleasing since he arrives with his head crowned
By laurel wreaths bearing many berries.

OEDIPUS

Soon we will know, for, in distance, he can hear us now.

[Enter Creon]

Lord - son of Menoeceus - my kin by marriage:
Give to us the saying you received from the god!

CREON

It is propitious, for I call it fortunate when what is difficult to bear
Is taken from us, enabling us thus to prosper again.

OEDIPUS

But what is it? I am not given more courage
Nor more fear by your words.

CREON

Do you insist upon hearing it here,
Within reach of these others - or shall we go within?

OEDIPUS

Speak it to all. For my concern for their suffering
Is more than even that for my own psyche.

CREON

Then I shall speak to you what I heard from the god.
The command of Lord Phoebus was clear -
That defilement nourished by our soil
Must be driven away, not given nourishment until it cannot be cured.

OEDIPUS

When came this misfortune? How to be cleansed?

CREON

100 Banishment of a man - or a killing in return for the killing
To release us from the blood and thus this tempest upon our clan.

OEDIPUS

What man is thus fated to be so denounced?

CREON

My Lord, Laius was the Chief
Of this land, before you guided us.

OEDIPUS

That I have heard and know well although I never saw him.

CREON

Because he was slaughtered it is clearly ordered that you

Must punish the killing hands, whosoever they are.

OEDIPUS

But are they in this land? Can we still find
The now faded marks of the ancient tracks of those so accused?

CREON

Still in our land, he said. What is sought
Can be caught, but will escape if not attended to.

OEDIPUS

Was Laius in his dwelling, in his fields,
Or in another land when he met his death?

CREON

He said he was journeying to a shrine:
But, having gone, he did not return.

OEDIPUS

Was there no messenger, no other with him
Who saw anything and whom we could consult and thus learn from?

CREON

No - killed: all of them. Except one who fled in fear
And so saw nothing except the one thing he did speak of seeing.

OEDIPUS

120 What? One thing may help us learn many more
And such a small beginning may bring us hope.

CREON

He announced that robbers came upon them and, there being so many,
In their strength slew them with their many hands.

OEDIPUS

How could robbers do that? Unless - unless silver
Was paid to them, from here! Otherwise, they would not have the courage!

CREON

Such was the opinion. But with Laius killed
No one arose to be his avenger since we had other troubles.

OEDIPUS

What troubles were before you that with your King fallen

You were kept from looking?

CREON

The convoluted utterances of the Sphinx made us consider what was before us
And leave unknown what was dark.

OEDIPUS

Then, as a start, I shall go back to make it visible.

It is fitting for Phoebus, and fitting also for you

For the sake of him dead, to return your concern there

And fair that I am seen as an ally

In avenging this land and the god.

Yet not in the name of remote kin

But for myself will I banish the abomination

Since that person who killed may - and soon -

140 And by his own hand, wish to avenge me.

Thus in this way by so giving aid, I also benefit myself.

Now and swiftly, my children, stand up from these steps -

Raising your suppliant branches -

And go to summon here the people of Cadmus

For I shall do all that is required. Either good fortune -

If the gods wills - will be shown to be ours, or we shall perish.

[Exit Oedipus]

PRIEST

Stand, children, for that favour
For which we came he has announced he will do.
May Phoebus -who delivered this oracle -
Be our Saviour and cause our suffering to cease.

[Exit Priest. Enter Chorus]

CHORUS

Zeus - your pleasing voice has spoken
But in what manner from gold-rich Pytho do you come
To the splendour that is Thebes?

My reason is stretched by dread as fear shakes me -
O Delian Paeon I invoke you! -
And I am in awe. For is this new
Or the continuation of that obligation
Which each season brings again?
Speak to me with your divine voice,
You born from she whom we treasure - our Hope!

You I shall name first - you the daughter of Zeus, the divine Athene!
160 And then you, her sister, who defends our lands - Artemis! -

Whose illustrious throne is the circle of our market.
And you, Phoebus with your far-reaching arrows!
You - the triad who guard us from death! Appear to me!
When misfortune moved over our clan before
You came to completely drive away that injuring fire -
So now come to us, again!

Beyond count are the injuries I bear
And all my comrades are sick;
There is no spear of thought to defend us -
The offspring of our fertile soil do not grow
While at the birth there are no cries of joy
For the women stretched by their labour:
I behold one after another rushing forth - swifter than feathered birds,
Swifter than invincible fire -
Toward the land of the twilight god!

They are beyond count and make the clan to die:
180 For her descendants lie unpitied, unmourned on the ground
Condemning others to death
As both the child-less and the mothers gather
Around the base of the altars
To labour as suppliants with their injurious laments
Although clear are the hymns to the Healer

Above those accompanying wailing voices!

In answer, you whom we hold precious - daughter of Zeus -

Send us She of strength with the beautiful eyes!

Grant that fiery Ares - he who fights not with shield of bronze

But who burns as he encircles with his battle-cry -

Turns around to swiftly run back, away from our fatherland

With a fair wind following, to that great Chamber of Amphitrite

Or to that Thracian harbour where strangers are dashed,

Since what he neglects at night

He achieves when day arrives.

Thus - you who carry fire,

Who bestows the power of lighting -

All-father Zeus: waste him beneath your thunder!

Lord Lyceus! From your gold-bound bowstring

I wish you to deal out the hardest of your arrows

So they rise before us as a defence!

And you - Artemis - who by your gleaming light

Rushes through the mountains of Lycia.

And you of the golden mitre whose name

Is that of our land - I invoke you

Ruddied Bacchus with E-U-O-I! -

With your roaming Maenads
Come near to us with your blazing pine-torch
And gleaming eyes, to be our ally
Against that god given no honour by gods!

[Enter Oedipus]

OEDIPUS

You ask and what you ask will come -
For if you in your sickness listen and accept and assist me
You shall receive the strength to lift you out of this trouble.
I here make the declaration even though I am a stranger to that report
220 And a stranger to that deed. I, myself, would not have delayed
Tracking this, even had there been no signs.
But since it was after these things I became a tax-paying citizen among you
citizens,
I proclaim this now to all who are of Cadmus:
Whosoever, concerning Laius son of Labdacus,
Knows the man who killed him
I command him to declare everything to me.

But if he is afraid, he can himself remove the accusation
Against him since what awaits him
Shall not be hostile since he shall pass uninjured to another land.
But if you know of another from another region

Whose hand did it, do not be silent
For I shall reward and confer favours upon you.
But if you keep silent because he is your own kin
Or because you yourself are afraid and so reject this -
Then hear what I of necessity must do.
I forbid that man, whoever he is, to be in this land -
This land where I have power and authority:
No one is to receive him nor speak to him;
Neither is he to share in your offering thanks to the gods,
Nor in the sacrifices or in the libations before them.
Instead, everyone shall push him away - for our defilement
Is, in truth, him: as the Pythian god
By his oracle just now announced to me.

Thus in such a way do I and this god
And the man who was killed become allies -
And so this pact I make concerning he who did that deed
Whether alone or together with others in secret:
Being ignoble, may his miserable life ignobly waste away.
And I also make this pact - that should he arrive at my dwelling
And with my consent stay by my hearth, then may that disease
I desired for those ones come to me!

So I command you to accomplish this
On behalf of me, the god and this land

Now barren, lain waste and without gods.
For even had no god sent you to deal with this matter
It would not have been fitting to leave it uncleaned
For the man killed was both brave and your own lord:
You should have enquired. However, I now have the authority
And hold the command that was his,
260 And now possess his chambers and his woman - seeded by us both -
And by whom we might have children shared in common had that family
Not had its misfortune and thus there had been a birth:
But it was not to be, for fate bore down upon him.
Thus, I - as if he were my own father -
Will fight for him and will go to any place
To search for and to seize the one whose hand killed
That son of Labdacus - he of Polydorus,
Of Cadmus before that and before then of ancient Agenor.

As to those who do not do this for me, I ask the god
That the seeds they sow in the earth shall not bring forth shoots
Nor their women children, and also that it be their destiny
To be destroyed by this thing - or one that is much worse.
But as for you others, of Cadmus, to whom this is pleasing -
May the goddess, Judgement, who is on our side,
And all of the gods, be with us forever.

CHORUS

Bound by your oath, my Lord, I speak:

I am not the killer - nor can I point out he who did the killing.

It is he who sent us on this search -

Phoebus - who should say who did that work.

OEDIPUS

280 That would be fair. But to compel the gods

Against their will is not within the power of any man.

CHORUS

Shall I speak of what I consider is the second best thing to do?

OEDIPUS

Do not neglect to explain to me even what is third!

CHORUS

He who sees the most of what Lord Phoebus knows

Is Lord Tiresias - and it is from his watching, and clearness,

My Lord, that we might learn the most.

OEDIPUS

I have not been inactive in attending to that:

Since Creon spoke of it, I have sent two escorts -

And it is a wonder after this long why he is not here.

CHORUS

What can still be told of those things is blunt from age.

OEDIPUS

What is there? For I am watching for any report.

CHORUS

It was said that he was killed by travellers.

OEDIPUS

That I have heard - but no one sees here he who observed that.

CHORUS

But he will have had his share of fear

Having heard your pact - and will not have stayed here.

OEDIPUS

And he who had no fear of the deed? Would such a one fear such words?

CHORUS

But here is he who can identify him. For observe,

It is the prophet of the god who is led here:

He who of all mortals has the most ability to reveal things.

[Enter Tiresias, guided by a boy]

OEDIPUS

300 Tiresias - you who are learned in all things: what can be taught; what is never spoken of;

What is in the heavens and what treads on the earth -

Although you have no sight, can you see how our clan

Has given hospitality to sickness? You are our shield,

Our protector - for you, Lord, are the only remedy we have.

Phoebus - if you have not heard it from the messengers -

Sent us as answer to our sending: release from the sickness

Will come only if we are skilled enough to discover who killed Laius

And kill them or drive them away from this land as fugitives.

Therefore, do not deny to us from envy the speech of birds

Or any other way of divination which you have,

But pull yourself and this clan - and me -

Pull us away from all that is defiled by those who lie slain.

Our being depends on you. For if a man assists someone

When he has the strength to do so, then it is a noble labour.

TIRESIAS

Ah! There is harm in judging when there is no advantage

In such a judgement. This I usefully understood

But then totally lost. I should not have come here.

OEDIPUS

What is this? Are you heartless, entering here so?

TIRESIAS

Permit me to return to my dwelling. Easier then will it be

For you to carry what is yours, and I what is mine, if you are persuaded in this.

OEDIPUS

Such talk is unusual because unfriendly toward this clan

Which nourishes you: will you deprive us of oracles?

TIRESIAS

Yes - for I know that the words you say

Are not suitable. And I will not suffer because of mine.

OEDIPUS

Before the gods! Turn aside that judgement! Here, before you,
All of us are as humble suppliants!

TIRESIAS

Since all of you lack judgement, I will not speak either about myself
Or you and so tell about defects.

OEDIPUS

What? If you are aware of it but will not speak,
Do you intend to betray and so totally destroy your clan?

TIRESIAS

I will not cause pain to either you or myself. Therefore,
Why these aimless rebukes since I will not answer.

OEDIPUS

Not...? Why, you ignoble, worthless...! A rock,
By its nature, can cause anger. Speak it! -
Or will you show there is no end to your hardness?

TIRESIAS

You rebuke me for anger - but it is with you
That she dwells, although you do not see this and blame me instead.

OEDIPUS

And whose being would not have anger
340 Hearing how you dishonour our clan!

TIRESIAS

By themselves, these things will arrive - even though my silence covers them.

OEDIPUS

Then since they shall arrive, you must speak to me about them!

TIRESIAS

Beyond this, I explain nothing. But if it is your will,
Become savage with wrath in anger.

OEDIPUS

Yes indeed I will yield to the anger possessing me
Since I do understand! For I know you appear to me
To have worked together with others to produce that deed,
Although it was not your hand that did the killing. But - had you sight -
I would say that the blow was yours and yours alone!

TIRESIAS

Is that so! I declare it is to the proclamation

You announced that you must adhere to, so that from this day
You should not speak to me or these others
Since you are the unhealthy pollution in our soil!

OEDIPUS

It is disrespectful to bound forth
With such speech! Do you believe you will escape?

TIRESIAS

I have escaped. For, by my revelations, I am nourished and made strong.

OEDIPUS

Where was your instruction from? Certainly not from your craft!

TIRESIAS

From you - for against my desire I cast out those words.

OEDIPUS

What words? Say them again so I can fully understand.

TIRESIAS

Did you not hear them before? Or are your words a test?

OEDIPUS

They expressed no meaning to me. Say them again.

TIRESIAS

I said you are the killer and thus the man you seek.

OEDIPUS

You shall not escape if you injure me so again!

TIRESIAS

Shall I then say more to make your anger greater?

OEDIPUS

As much as you desire for you are mistaken in what you say.

TIRESIAS

I say that with those nearest to you are you concealed

In disrespectful intimacy, not seeing the trouble you are in.

OEDIPUS

Do you believe you can continue to speak so and remain healthy?

TIRESIAS

Yes, if revelations have power.

OEDIPUS

They do for others, but not for you! They have none for you
Because you are blind in your ears, in your purpose as well as in your eyes!

TIRESIAS

In faulting me for that you are unfortunate
Because soon there will be no one who does not find fault with you.

OEDIPUS

You are nourished by night alone! It is not for me,
Or anyone here who sees by the light, to injure you.

TIRESIAS

It is not my destiny to be defeated by you -
Apollo is sufficient for that, since it is his duty to obtain vengeance.

OEDIPUS

Were those things Creon's inventions - or yours?

TIRESIAS

It is not Creon who harms you - it is yourself.

OEDIPUS

380 Ah! Wealth, Kingship and that art of arts

Which surpasses others - these, in life, are envied:

And great is the jealousy cherished because of you.

It is because of this authority of mine - which this clan

Gave into my hands, unasked -

That the faithful Creon, a comrade from the beginning,

Desires to furtively creep about to overthrow me

And hires this performing wizard,

This cunning mendicant priest who sees only

For gain but who is blind in his art!

So now tell me: where and when have you given clear divinations?

For you did not - when that bitch was here chanting her verses -

Speak out and so give deliverance to your clansfolk.

Yet her enigma was not really for some passing man

To disclose since it required a prophet's art:

But your augury foretold nothing and neither did you learn anything

From any god! It was I who came along -

I, Oedipus, who sees nothing! - I who put an end to her

By happening to use reason rather than a knowledge of augury.

Now it is me you are trying to exile since your purpose

Is to stand beside the throne among Creon's supporters.
But I intend to make you sorry! Both of you - who worked together
To drive me out. And if I did not respect you as an Elder,
Pain would teach you a kind of judgement!

CHORUS

Yet I suspect that he has spoken
In anger, as I believe you did, Oedipus.
But this is not what is needed. Instead, it is the god's oracle
That will, if examined, give us the best remedy.

TIRESIAS

Though you are the King, I have at least an equality of words
In return, for I also have authority.
I do not live as your servant - but for Loxias -
Just as I am not inscribed on the roll as being under Creon's patronage.
Thus, I speak for myself - since you have found fault with me because I am
blind.
When you look, you do not see the trouble you are in,
Nor where you dwell, nor who you are intimate with.
Do you know from whom your being arose? Though concealed, you are the
enemy
Of your own, below and upon this land:
On both sides beaten by your mother and your father
To be driven out from this land by a swift and angry Fury -

And you who now see straight will then be in darkness.

420 What place will not be a haven for your cries?

What Cithaeron will not, and soon, resound with them

When you understand your wedding-night in that abode

Into where you fatefully and easily sailed but which is no haven from your voyage?

Nor do you understand the multitude of troubles

Which will make you equal with yourself and your children.

Thus it is, so therefore at my mouth and at Creon's

Throw your dirt! For there is no other mortal whose being

Will be so completely overwhelmed by troubles as yours.

OEDIPUS

Am I to endure hearing such things from him?

May misfortune come to you! Go from here - without delay!

Away from my dwelling! Turn and go!

TIRESIAS

I would not have come here, had you not invited me.

OEDIPUS

I did not know you would speak nonsense

Or I would have been unwilling to ask you here to my dwelling.

TIRESIAS

So you believe I was born lacking sense?
Yet I made sense to those who gave you birth.

OEDIPUS

What? Wait! Which mortals gave me birth?

TIRESIAS

It is on this day that you are born and also destroyed.

OEDIPUS

All that you have said is enigmatic or lacking in reason.

TIRESIAS

440 But are you not the best among us in working things out?

OEDIPUS

Do you find fault with what I have discovered is my strength?

TIRESIAS

It is that very fortune which has totally ruined you.

OEDIPUS

I am not concerned - if I have preserved this clan.

TIRESIAS

Then I shall depart. You - boy! Lead me away.

OEDIPUS

Let him lead you away. While here, you are under my feet
And annoy me. When gone - you will give me no more pain.

TIRESIAS

I shall go but speak that for which I was fetched, with no dread
Because of your countenance. For you cannot harm me.

I say that the man you have long searched for
And threatened and made proclamation about for the killing
Of Laius - he is present, here.

Although called a foreigner among us, he will be exposed as a native
Of Thebes but have no delight in that event.

Blind, though recently able to see -

And a beggar, who before was rich - he shall go to foreign lands
With a stick to guide him along the ground on his journey.

And he shall be exposed to his children as both their father
And their brother; to the woman who gave him birth

As both her son and husband; and to his father

460 As his killer who seeded her after him. So go
Within to reason this out and if you catch me deceiving you,
Then say that in my prophecies there is nothing for me to be proud of.

[Exit Tiresias and Oedipus]

CHORUS

Who is the one that the god-inspired oracle-stone at Delphi saw
With bloody hands doing that which it is forbidden to speak of?
For now is the day for him to move his feet swifter
Than storm's horses as he flees
Since the son of Zeus - armed with fire and lightning -
Is leaping toward him
Accompanied by those angry
And infallible Furies!

It was not that long ago that the omen shone forth
From the snows of Parnassus: Search everywhere for that man who is
concealed;
He who wanders up to the wild-woods,
Through caves and among the rocks like some bull -
He unlucky in his desolation who by his unlucky feet
Seeks to elude that prophecy from the Temple at the centre of the world -
That living doom which circles around him.

There is a strange wonder - wrought by he who is skilled in augury;

I cannot believe, yet cannot disbelieve, nor explain my confusion
For fear hovers over me. I cannot see what is here, or what is behind!
Yet - if there was between the family of Labdacus,
And that son of Polybus, any strife existing
Either now or before, I have not learned of it
To thus use it as proof to examine by trial and thus attack
The public reputation of Oedipus, becoming thus for the family of Labdacus
Their ally in respect of that killing which has been concealed.

Rather - this is for Zeus and Apollo, who have the skill
500 To understand, although that other man has won more
For his discoveries than I.
Even so, on some things nothing decisive is discovered:
As in learning, where by learning
One man may overtake another.
Thus not before I see that they who accuse him are speaking straight
Will I declare myself for them
For she was visible - that winged girl who came down against him -
And we then saw proof of his knowledge, which was beneficial to our clan.
So therefore my decision is not to condemn him as ignoble.

[Enter Creon]

CREON

Clansmen! Having learnt of a horrible accusation

Made against me by Oedipus the King
I hastened here! If, in these our troubles,
He deems that he has suffered because of me -
Been injured by some word or some deed -
Then I would have no desire to live as long as I might
Having to bear such talk! For it is not simple -
The damage that would be done to me by such words:
Rather, it would be great, for I would be dishonoured before my clan -
With you and my kinsfolk hearing my name dishonoured.

CHORUS

That insult perhaps came forth because of anger -
Rather than being a conclusion from reason.

CREON

And it was declared that it was my reasoning
Which persuaded the prophet to utter false words?

CHORUS

It was voiced - but I do not know for what reason.

CREON

Were his eyes straight, was he thinking straight
When he made that allegation against me?

CHORUS

I do not know. For I do not observe what my superiors do.
But here, from out of his dwelling, comes the Chief himself.

[Enter Oedipus]

OEDIPUS

You there! Why are you here? Have you so much face
That you dare to come to my home?
You - the one exposed as the killer of its man
And, vividly, as a robber seeking my Kingship!
In the name of the gods, tell me if it was cowardice or stupidity
That you saw in me when you resolved to undertake this!
Did you reason that I would not observe your cunning treachery -
Or, if I did learn of it, I would not defend myself?
540 Instead, it was senseless of you to set your hand to this -
With no crowd or comrades - and go in pursuit of authority:
That which is captured by using wealth and the crowd!

CREON

You know what you must do - in answer to your words
Be as long in hearing my reply so that you can, with knowledge, judge for
yourself.

OEDIPUS

Your words are clever - but I would be mistaken to learn from you,
Since I have found how dangerous and hostile you are to me.

CREON

That is the first thing you should hear me speak about.

OEDIPUS

Do not tell me: it is that you are *not* a traitor!

CREON

If you believe that what is valuable is pride, by itself,
Without a purpose, then your judgement is not right.

OEDIPUS

And if you believe you can betray a kinsman
And escape without punishment, then your judgement is no good.

CREON

I agree that such a thing is correct -
So inform me what injury you say I have inflicted.

OEDIPUS

Did you convince me or did you not convince me that I should
Send a man to bring here that respected prophet?

CREON

I am the same person now as the one who gave that advice.

OEDIPUS

How long is the duration since Laius -

CREON

Since he did what? I do not understand.

OEDIPUS

560 Since he disappeared: removed by deadly force?

CREON

The measurement of that duration is great - far into the past.

OEDIPUS

So - was that prophet then at his art?

CREON

Yes: of equal skill and having the same respect as now.

OEDIPUS

At that period did he make mention of me?

CREON

Certainly not to me nor when I was standing nearby.

OEDIPUS

Was there no inquiry held about the killing?

CREON

It was indeed undertaken, although nothing was learned.

OEDIPUS

So why did that clever person not speak, then?

CREON

I do not know. And about things I cannot judge for myself, I prefer to be silent.

OEDIPUS

570 But you do know why and would say it if you had good judgement!

CREON

What? If I did know, then I would not deny it.

OEDIPUS

It is that if he had not met with you,
He would not have spoken about "my" killing of Laius.

CREON

You should know if he indeed said that.
Now, however, it is fair that I question you just as you have me.

OEDIPUS

Question me well - for you will never convict me as the killer!

CREON

Nevertheless. You had my sister - took her as wife?

OEDIPUS

That is an assertion that cannot be denied.

CREON

Does she, in this land, possess an authority the equal of yours?

OEDIPUS

Whatsoever is her wish, she obtains from me.

CREON

And am I - who completes the triad - not the equal of you both?

OEDIPUS

And it because of that, that you are exposed as a traitor to your kin!

CREON

No! For consider these reasons for yourself, as I have,

Examining this first: do you believe anyone

Would prefer authority with all its problems

To untroubled calm if they retained the same superiority?

I myself do not nurture such a desire

To be King rather than do the deeds of a King:

No one commanding good judgement would, whoever they were.

Now, and from you, I receive everything with no problems

But if the authority was mine, I would have to do many things against my nature.

How then could being a King bring me more pleasure

Than the trouble-free authority and power I have?

I am not yet so much deceived

As to want honours other than those which profit me.

Now, I greet everyone, and now, everyone bids me well

Just as, now, those who want something from you call upon me

Since only in that way can they possibly have success.

Why, then, would I let go of these to accept that?

600 A traitor cannot, because of his way of thinking, have good judgement.

I am not a lover of those whose nature is to reason so

And would not endure them if they did act.

As proof of this, first go yourself to Pytho

To inquire whether the message I brought from the oracle there was true

And if you detect that I and that interpreter of signs

Plotted together, then kill me - not because of a single vote,

But because of two, for you will receive mine as well as yours.

I should not be accused because of unclear reasoning and that alone.

It is not fair when the ignoble, rashly,

Are esteemed as worthy or the worthy as ignoble.

I say that to cast away an honourable friend is to do the same

To that which is with life and which you cherish the most.

It takes a while for an intuition to be made steady

For it is only after a while that a man shows if he is fair

Although an ignoble one is known as such in a day.

CHORUS

Honourable words from someone cautious of falling,
My Lord. Those swift in their judgement are unsteady.

OEDIPUS

But when there is a plot against me which is swiftly and furtively
Moving forward, then I must be swift in opposing that plot
Since if I remain at rest, then indeed
What is about to be done, will be - because of my mistake.

CREON

Then you still desire to cast me from this land?

OEDIPUS

Not so! It is your death, not your exile, that I want!

CREON

When you explain to me what is the nature of this thing "envy" -

OEDIPUS

You speak without yielding and not in good faith!

CREON

Is it not your 'good judgement' that is keenly being observed?

OEDIPUS

But at least it is mine!

CREON

And for that very reason it is but the equal of mine.

OEDIPUS

But you have a treacherous nature!

CREON

But if nothing has been proved -

OEDIPUS

Even so, there must be authority.

CREON

Not when that authority is defective.

OEDIPUS

My clan! My clan!

CREON

A portion of the clan is for me - not wholly for you!

CHORUS

My Lords, stop this! It is fortunate perhaps that I observe
Jocasta approaching from her dwelling, since it is fitting for her
To make right the quarrel which now excites you.

[Enter Jocasta]

JOCASTA

You wretches! Why this ill-advised strife
Produced by your tongues? Are you not dishonoured - when this land
Is suffering - by becoming moved by personal troubles?
You should go within; while you, Creon, should go to your dwelling
So as not to let what is only nothing become a great sorrow.

CREON

My kin by blood! It is horrible what your husband Oedipus,
640 From two unfair things, has decided it is right to do!

To push me from this land of my ancestors - or to seize and kill me!

OEDIPUS

Yes! For he was, my lady, caught trying to injure
My person by a cowardly art.

CREON *[looking upward]*

Deny me, this day, your assistance - curse and destroy me
If I committed that which I am accused of doing!

JOCASTA

Before the god, trust him, Oedipus!
Chiefly because of this oath to the god
And then because of me and these others here beside you.

CHORUS

My Lord - be persuaded, having agreed to reflect on this.

OEDIPUS

To what do you wish me to yield?

CHORUS

Respect he who before has never been weak - he now strengthened by that
oath.

OEDIPUS

Do you know what it is that you so desire?

CHORUS

I do know.

OEDIPUS

Then explain what you believe it to be.

CHORUS

When a comrade is under oath, you should never accuse him
Because of unproved rumours and brand him as being without honour.

OEDIPUS

Then attend to this well. When you seek this, it is my
Destruction that is sought - or exile from this land.

CHORUS

660 No! By the god who is Chief of all the gods -
Helios! Bereft of gods, bereft of kin - may the extremist death
Of all be mine if such a judgement was ever mine!
But ill-fated would be my breath of life - which the decay in this soil
Already wears down - if to those troubles of old

There was joined this trouble between you and him.

OEDIPUS

Then allow him to go - although it requires my certain death

Or that I, without honour and by force, am thrown out from this land.

And it is because of you, not because of him - the mercy coming from your mouth -

That I do this. As for him - wherever he goes - I will detest him!

CREON

It is clear that you are hostile as you yield - and so dangerous, even though

Your anger has gone. For natures such as yours

Are deservedly painful to those who endure them.

OEDIPUS

Then go away and leave me.

CREON

I shall depart. To you, I remain unknown - but to these, here, I am the same.

[Exit Creon]

CHORUS

My Lady - why do you delay in returning with him into your dwelling?

JOCASTA

680 Because I wish to learn what has happened.

CHORUS

Suspicion arising from unreasonable talk - and a wounding that was unfair.

JOCASTA

From both of them?

CHORUS

Indeed.

JOCASTA

What was the talk?

CHORUS

Too much for me, too much for this land, wearied before this.

Since it appears to have ceased, here - let it remain so.

OEDIPUS

Observe where you have come to with your prowess in reason
By me giving way and blunting my passion!

CHORUS

My Lord, I will not say this only this once:
My judgement would be defective - and by my purposeless judgements
Would be shown to be so - if I deserted you,
You who when this land I love was afflicted
And despairing, set her straight.
Now be for us our lucky escort, again!

JOCASTA

My Lord - before the god explain to me
What act roused such wrath and made you hold onto it.

OEDIPUS

700 It will be told. For I respect you, my lady, more than them.
It was Creon - the plot he had against me.

JOCASTA

Then speak about it - if you can clearly affix blame for the quarrel.

OEDIPUS

He declared that it was me who had killed Laius.

JOCASTA

Did he see it, for himself - or learn of it from someone?

OEDIPUS

It was rather that he let that treacherous prophet bring it -

So as to make his own mouth entirely exempt.

JOCASTA

Therefore, and this day, acquit yourself of what was spoken about

And listen to me, for you will learn for yourself

That no mortal is given the skill to make prophecies.

I bring to light evidence for this:

An oracle came to Laius once - not I say

From Phoebus himself but from a servant -

That his own death was destined to come from a child

Which he and I would produce.

But - as it was reported - one day foreign robbers

Slew him where three cart-tracks meet.

As to the child - his growth had not extended to the third day
When we yoked the joints of its feet
And threw it - by another's hand - upon a desolate mountain.

So, in those days, Apollo did not bring about, for him,
That he slay the father who begot him - nor, for Laius,
That horror which he feared - being killed by his son.
Such were the limits set by those words of revelation!
Therefore, do not concern yourself with them: for what a god
Wants others to find out, he will by himself unmistakably reveal.

OEDIPUS

As I heard you just now my lady,
My judgement became muddled as the breath of life left me.

JOCASTA

What has so divided you that you turn away to speak?

OEDIPUS

I believed I heard this from you - that Laius
730 Was killed near where three cart-tracks meet.

JOCASTA

It was, indeed, voiced - and is so, still.

OEDIPUS

Where is the place where came his misfortune?

JOCASTA

The nearby land of Phocis - where the track splits
To come from Delphi and from Daulia.

OEDIPUS

How many seasons have passed since that thing was done?

JOCASTA

It was just before you held this land's authority
That it was revealed by a herald to the clan.

OEDIPUS

O Zeus! What was your purpose in doing this to me?

JOCASTA

What is it that burdens your heart, Oedipus?

OEDIPUS

740 Do not enquire yet; rather, explain to me the appearance Laius had:
Was he at the height of his vigour?

JOCASTA

He was big - his head covered in hair but having a recent whiteness.
His build was not far removed from your own.

OEDIPUS

Wretch that I am! For it seems that over myself
I, without looking, threw that terrible curse!

JOCASTA

What are you saying? My Lord - I tremble as I look at you.

OEDIPUS

My courage is replaced by fear - that the prophet possesses sight!
More can be explained - if you make known one more thing.

JOCASTA

Though I still tremble, if I have knowledge of what you ask, I shall speak it.

OEDIPUS

750 Did he have a slender one - or did he have many men
As escort as befits a warrior chieftain?

JOCASTA

Altogether there were five, one of those being an official -
And one carriage, which conveyed Laius.

OEDIPUS

Now it becomes visible. But who was he,
My lady, who gave you that report?

JOCASTA

A servant - the very person who alone returned, having escaped harm.

OEDIPUS

Then perhaps he is to be found, at this moment, within our dwelling?

JOCASTA

Definitely not. For as soon as he returned here again and saw you
Were the master of what the dead Laius had held,

760 He beseeched me - his hand touching mine -
To send him away to the wilds as a shepherd to a herd,
Far away where he could not see the town.
And so I sent him. For I deemed him worthy,
As a slave, to have a greater reward than that favour.

OEDIPUS

Then swiftly - and with no delay - can he be returned here?

JOCASTA

He is around. But why do you desire it?

OEDIPUS

I fear, my lady, that far too much has already
Been said by me. Yet it is my wish to see him.

JOCASTA

Then he shall be here. But it merits me to learn,
My Lord, what burden within you is so difficult to bear.

OEDIPUS

I shall not deprive you of that - for what I fear
Comes closer. Who is more important to me than you
To whom I would speak when going through such an event as this?

Polybus the Corinthian was my father -
And the Dorian, Meropè, my mother. I was, in merit,
Greater than the clansfolk there - until I was, by chance,
Attacked. This, for me, was worthy of my wonder

Although unworthy of my zeal:

At a feast a man overfull with wine

780 Mumbled into his chalice what I was falsely said to be my father's.

I was annoyed by this during that day - scarcely able

To hold myself back. On the one following that, I sought to question

My mother and father, and they were indignant

At he who had let loose those words at me.

Because of this, I was glad, although I came to itch from them

For much did they slither about.

So, unobserved by my mother and father, I travelled

To Pytho. But for that which I had come, Phoebus there

Did not honour me; instead - suffering and strangeness

And misery were what his words foresaw:

That I must copulate with my mother - and show,

For mortals to behold, a family who would not endure -

And also be the killer of the father who planted me.

I, after hearing this - and regarding Corinth -

Thereafter by the stars measured the ground

I fled upon so that I would never have to face -

Because of that inauspicious prophecy - the disgrace of its fulfilment.

And while so travelling I arrived in those regions

Where you spoke of the King himself being killed.

800 For you, my lady, I shall declare what has not been spoken of before.

While journeying, I came near to that three-fold track,
And at that place an official and a carriage
With young horse with a man mounted in it - such as you spoke of -
Came toward me. And he who was in front as well as the Elder himself
Were for driving me vigorously from the path.
But the one who had pushed me aside - the carriage driver -
I hit in anger: and the Elder, observing this
From his chariot, watched for me to go past and then on the middle
Of my head struck me with his forked goad.
He was certainly repaid with more! By a quick blow
From the staff in this, my hand, he fell back
From the middle of the carriage and rolled straight out!
And then I destroyed all the others. Yet if to that stranger
And Laius there belongs a common relation
Then who exists who is now as unfortunate as this man, here?
Who of our race of mortals would have a daimon more hostile -
He to whom it is not permitted for a stranger nor a clansman
To receive into their homes, nor even speak to -
But who, instead, must be pushed aside? And it is such things as these -
These curses! - that I have brought upon myself.

The wife of he who is dead has been stained by these hands
Which killed him. Was I born ignoble?
Am I not wholly unclean? For I must be exiled
And in my exile never see my family

Nor step into my own fatherland - or by marriage
I will be yoked to my mother and slay my father
Polybus, he who produced and nourished me.
And would not someone who decided a savage daimon
Did these things to me be speaking correctly?

You awesome, powerful, gods -
May I never see that day! May I go away
From mortals, unobserved, before I see
The stain of that misfortune come to me.

CHORUS

I also, my Lord, would wish to draw away from such things.
But surely until you learn from he who was there, you can have expectations?

OEDIPUS

Indeed. There is for me just such an expectation,
And one alone - to wait for that herdsman.

JOCASTA

And when he does appear, what is your intent?

OEDIPUS

I will explain it to you. If his report is found to be
840 The same as yours, then I shall escape that suffering.

JOCASTA

Did you then hear something odd in my report?

OEDIPUS

You said he spoke of men - of robbers - being the ones
Who did the killing. If, therefore, he still
Speaks of there being many of them, then I am not the killer
For one cannot be the same as the many of that kind.
But if he says a solitary armed traveller, then it is clear,
And points to me as the person who did that work.

JOCASTA

You should know that it was announced in that way.
He cannot go back and cast them away
For they were heard, here, by the clan - not just by me.
Yet even if he turns away from his former report,
Never, my Lord, can the death of Laius
Be revealed as a straight fit - for it was Loxias

Who disclosed he would be killed by the hand of my child.
But he - the unlucky one - could not have slain him
For he was himself destroyed before that.
Since then I have not by divination looked into
What is on either side of what is next.

OEDIPUS

I find that pleasing. However, that hired hand
Should be summoned here by sending someone - it should not be neglected.

JOCASTA

I will send someone, and swiftly. But let us go into our dwelling.
I would not do anything that would be disagreeable to you.

[Exit Oedipus and Jocasta]

CHORUS

May the goddess of destiny be with me
So that I bear an entirely honourable attitude
In what I say and in what I do -

As set forth above us in those customs born and
Given their being in the brightness of the heavens
And fathered only by Olympus.
For they were not brought forth by mortals,
Whose nature is to die. Not for them the lethargy
Of laying down to sleep
Since the god within them is strong, and never grows old.

Insolence plants the tyrant:
There is insolence if by a great foolishness
There is a useless over-filling which goes beyond
The proper limits -
It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights
And then that hurtling toward that Destiny
Where the useful foot has no use.
880 Yet since it is good for a clan to have combat,
I ask the god never to deliver us from it:
As may I never cease from having the god for my champion.

If someone goes forth and by his speaking
Or the deeds of his hands looks down upon others
With no fear of the goddess Judgement and not in awe
Of daimons appearing,
Then may he be seized by a destructive Fate
Because of his unlucky weakness.

If he does not gain what he gains fairly,
Does not keep himself from being disrespectful,
And in his foolishness holds onto what should not be touched,
Then how will such a man thereafter keep away those arrows of anger
Which will take revenge on his breath of life?
For if such actions are those are esteemed,
Is this my respectful choral-dance required?

No more would I go in awe to that never to be touched sacred-stone,
Nor to that Temple at Abae,
Nor Olympia - if those prophecies do not fit
In such a way that all mortals can point it out.
But you whom it is right to call my master -
Zeus! - you who rule over everyone: do not forget this,
You whose authority is, forever, immortal.
For they begin to decay - those prophecies of Laius
Given long ago, and are even now set aside
And nowhere does Apollo become manifest because esteemed:
For the rituals of the gods are being lost.

[Enter Jocasta]

JOCASTA

Lords of this land - the belief has been given to me
That I should go to the Temples of our guardian gods, my hands

Holding a garland and an offering of incense.

For Oedipus lets his breath of life be too much possessed by his heart

Because of all his afflictions - since, unlike a man who reasons

And determines the limits of what is strange by the past,

He is fearful when someone, in speaking, speaks of such things.

Therefore, since none of my counsels have achieved anything,

I come here - to you, Lycean Apollo, since you are close to us -

920 To petition you by asking you with these my gifts

That we are cleansed of defilement by you bringing us deliverance.

For now all of us are afraid as we behold

That he who is guiding our vessel is wounded.

[Enter Messenger]

MESSENGER

Is it from you, stranger, that I might learn where

Is the dwelling of King Oedipus:

Or, more particularly, if you have knowledge of where he himself is?

CHORUS

Here are his chambers, stranger, and he himself is within.

But here is his wife and mother of his children.

MESSENGER

May she always prosper in her prospering descent
Since by them her marriage is complete.

JOCASTA

And may you, also, stranger, because of your worthy eloquence.
But explain to me what you seek in arriving here
Or what it is that you wish to make known.

MESSENGER

What is profitable, my lady, for both your family and your husband.

JOCASTA

What is it? And who sent you here, to us?

MESSENGER

I am from Corinth. And when, presently, I have said my speech,
There will be joy - of that I have no doubt - but also an equal sorrowing.

JOCASTA

How can that be? What has a double strength that it could cause that?

MESSENGER

He, as their King: for they who inhabit the land
940 Of Isthmia would make him so - so they have said.

JOCASTA

How is that? For is not Polybus, the Elder, their Master?

MESSENGER

Not now - because death holds him in a tomb.

JOCASTA

What are you saying? That the father of Oedipus - has died?

MESSENGER

Is my report is not correct, then I merit death.

JOCASTA

Swiftly - my handmaiden - go to your master

To tell him this. You prophecies from the gods! -

Where is your reality? This was the man whom Oedipus long ago from fear

Avoided lest he kill him. And now it is because

Of his own destiny that he died rather than through that of another.

[Enter Oedipus]

OEDIPUS

My Lady, Jocasta:

Why did you summon me here from my chamber?

JOCASTA

Hear this man and, as you listen, watch to where
It is that those solemn prophecies of the gods lead.

OEDIPUS

What report has he - wherever he is from - for me?

JOCASTA

He is from Corinth with the message that your father
Polybus is no more - he is dead.

OEDIPUS

Then announce it, stranger - leading it out yourself, old one.

MESSENGER

If that is what I must relate first and clearly

Then know well that his death has come upon him.

OEDIPUS

960 Was it by treachery - or by dealing with sickness?

MESSENGER

A small turn downwards, and the ageing body lies in sleep.

OEDIPUS

Am I to assume that he unfortunately perished from a sickness?

MESSENGER

Indeed - for he had been allocated a great many seasons.

OEDIPUS

Ah! Then why, my lady, look toward

The altar of some Pythian prophet, or above to those

Screeching birds - whose guidance was that I would

Assuredly kill my father? But he is dead

And hidden within the earth, while I am here

Without having to clean my spear. Unless - it was a longing for me

Which destroyed him, and thus he is dead because of me.

But then - that divine prophecy has been, by that circumstance, taken away

By Polybus lying in Hades, and thus has no importance.

JOCASTA

Did I not declare such things to you, just now?

OEDIPUS

Such was said - but I turned away because of my fear of them.

JOCASTA

Do not anymore wound your heart by such things.

OEDIPUS

But how can I not distance myself from that intercourse with my mother?

JOCASTA

What is there for mortals to fear, for it is chance

Which rules over them, and who can clearly foresee what does not exist?

It is most excellent to live without a plan - according to one's ability.

980 You should not fear being married to your mother:

For many are the mortals who have - in dreams also [\(2\)](#) -

Lain with their mothers, and he to whom such things as these

Are as nothing, provides himself with a much easier life.

OEDIPUS

All that you expressed is fine, except for this:

She who gave me birth is alive, and since she is now still living,

It is necessary that I - despite your fine words - distance myself from her.

JOCASTA

Yet the death of your father is a great revelation for you.

OEDIPUS

Yes - a great one. But I fear she who is living.

MESSENGER

Who is this woman that you so fear?

OEDIPUS

990 Meropè, old one: she who belonged with Polybus.

MESSENGER

And what, concerning her, could produce fear in you?

OEDIPUS

A strange god-inspired prophecy.

MESSENGER

Is it forbidden for someone else to know - or can it be told?

OEDIPUS

Certainly. Once, Loxias said to me

That I must copulate with my own mother

And by my own hands take my father's blood.

Therefore, and long ago, I left Corinth

And have kept far away from there. And good fortune has been mine,

Although it is very pleasing to behold the eye's of one's parents.

MESSENGER

Was that what distanced you from your clan?

OEDIPUS

Yes, old one: I did not want to slaughter my father.

MESSENGER

Then why, my Lord, have I not released you from that fear -

Since I came here as a favour to you?

OEDIPUS

Certainly you would merit receiving a reward from me.

MESSENGER

And that was chiefly why I came here -
That on your arrival home I would obtain something useful.

OEDIPUS

But I will not rejoin those who planted me.

MESSENGER

My son! It is clearly evident you cannot see what you are doing -

OEDIPUS

Why, old one? Before the gods, enlighten me!

MESSENGER

1010 - If it was because of that, that you avoided returning to your home.

OEDIPUS

Yes, out of respect for Phoebus so that what he explained could not be fulfilled.

MESSENGER

A defilement brought to you by they who planted you?

OEDIPUS

That, Elder, is the thing I have always feared.

MESSENGER

Then you should know that there is nothing to make you tremble.

OEDIPUS

Nothing? Why - if I was the child born to them?

MESSENGER

Because you and Polybus are not kin by blood.

OEDIPUS

Are you saying that Polybus did not sire me?

MESSENGER

The same as but no more than this man, here!

OEDIPUS

How can he who sired me be the same as he who did not?

MESSENGER

1020 Because he did not beget you - as I did not.

OEDIPUS

But then why did he name me as his son?

MESSENGER

Know that you were accepted from my hands as a gift.

OEDIPUS

And he strongly loved what came from the hand of another?

MESSENGER

He was persuaded because before then he was without children.

OEDIPUS

When I was given to him - had you purchased or begotten me?

MESSENGER

You were found in a forest valley on Cithaeron.

OEDIPUS

And why were you travelling in that region?

MESSENGER

I was there to oversee the mountain sheep.

OEDIPUS

A shepherd - who wandered in search of work?

MESSENGER

Yes - and that season the one who, my son, was your saviour.

OEDIPUS

What ailment possessed me when you took me into your hands?

MESSENGER

The joints of your feet are evidence of it.

OEDIPUS

What makes you speak of that old defect?

MESSENGER

I undid what held and pierced your ankles.

OEDIPUS

A strange disgrace - to carry such a token with me.

MESSENGER

Such was the fortune that named you who you are.

OEDIPUS

Before the gods, tell me whether that thing was done by my father or my mother.

MESSENGER

I do not know - he who gave you to me would be the best judge of that.

OEDIPUS

What? From someone else? Then it was not by chance you found me?

MESSENGER

1040 No - another shepherd gave you to me.

OEDIPUS

Who was it? Can you point him out? Tell whom you saw?

MESSENGER

He was perhaps named among those of Laius.

OEDIPUS

He who once and long ago was King of this land?

MESSENGER

Yes - that man was his shepherd.

OEDIPUS

Is he then still living? Is it possible for me to see him?

MESSENGER

You who are of this region would know that best.

OEDIPUS

Is there among you here, anyone

Whoever he might be, who knows this shepherd he speaks of

Or who has seen him either here or in the wilds?

1050 If so, declare it - for here is the opportunity to find out about these things.

CHORUS

I believe he is that one in the wilds
Whom you sought before to see.
But it is Jocasta - for certain - who could tell of him.

OEDIPUS

My lady - do you know if it is he who, before,
We desired to return to here? Is that the one about whom this person speaks?

JOCASTA

The one he spoke about? Why? Do not return to it
Nor even desire to attend again to this idle talk!

OEDIPUS

It could never be that I would fail to grasp
These proofs which will shed light upon my origin.

JOCASTA

Before the gods! If you value your own life,
Do not seek that. I have enough pain now.

OEDIPUS

Have courage - for even if my three mothers past

Were shown to be three slaves, you would not be the one exposed as low-born.

JOCASTA

I beseech you to be persuaded by me. Do not do this.

OEDIPUS

I cannot be persuaded not to learn of this for certain.

JOCASTA

Yet my judgement is for your good - it is said for the best.

OEDIPUS

This "for the best" pained me before and does so again.

JOCASTA

You, the unlucky one - may you never find out who you are.

OEDIPUS

Someone go and bring that Shepherd here to me,
1070 For she can still rejoice in her distinguished origins.

JOCASTA

You are doomed: this and this alone will I
Say to you - and nothing hereafter!

[Exit Jocasta]

CHORUS

Why, Oedipus, has your lady gone, taken away
By some wild affliction? I am in awe
Of a misfortune bursting forth because of her silence about this.

OEDIPUS

It is necessary that it does burst forth. However lowly
My seed may be, it is my wish to know about it.
Although she is a woman, she has a mature judgement -
But even so, perhaps she is ashamed of my low-born origins.
But I - who apportion myself a child of the goddess, Fortuna,
She of beneficence - will not become dishonoured,
For She was the mother who gave me birth: my kinsfolk
The moons which separated my greatness and my lowness.
As this is the nature of my being, I cannot ever go away from it
To another, and so not learn about my birth.

CHORUS

If indeed I am a prophet or skillful in reason,
Then - by Olympus! - you shall not be without the experience,
O Cithaeron, on the rising of the full moon,

Of me exalting you - the kinsfolk of Oedipus,
His mother and provider - by my choral-dance
Since a joy has been brought to my King.
Phoebus - I invoke you, that this may also be pleasing to you!

Who, my son, of those whose living in years is long,
Did the mountain-wanderer Pan come down upon
To be your father? Or was it Loxias who slept with a woman?
For agreeable to him are all those who inhabit the wilds!
Or perhaps it was he who is the sovereign of Cyllene:
Or he the mountain-summit dwelling god of those Bacchinities
Who gladly received you who was found by one of those Helicon Nymphs
With whom he so often plays!

OEDIPUS

1110 If it fitting for me - who has never had dealings with him -
To make an estimate, Elders, then I believe I see that Shepherd
Whom we sought before. For his great age
Would conform and be in accord with that of this man.
Also, those who are escorting him are servants
Of my own family. But, about this, your experience
Has the advantage over mine since you have seen that Shepherd before.

CHORUS

I see him clearly - and, yes, I know him. For if Laius ever had

A faithful Shepherd, it was this man.

[Enter Shepherd]

OEDIPUS

You, the stranger from Corinth, I question you first -
Is this he whom you talked about.

MESSENGER

Indeed - you behold him.

OEDIPUS

You there, old man! Here, look at me, and answer
My questions. Did you once belong to Laius?

SHEPHERD

Yes - nourished by him, not purchased as a slave.

OEDIPUS

What work did you share in or was your livelihood?

SHEPHERD

For the greater part, my living was the way of a shepherd.

OEDIPUS

And in what region did you mostly dwell with them?

SHEPHERD

It was Cithaeron - and also neighbouring regions.

OEDIPUS

This man here - did you ever observe him there and come to know him?

SHEPHERD

Doing what? Which is the man you speak of?

OEDIPUS

This one, standing there. Did you have dealings with him?

SHEPHERD

Not as I recall - so as to speak about now.

MESSENGER

That is no wonder, your Lordship. But I shall bring light
Upon those things which are now unknown. For well do I know
That he will see again that region of Cithaeron when he
With a double flock and I with one
Were neighbours and comrades for three entire six month

Durations from Spring to Arcturus.

Then for the Winter I would drive mine to my stables

And he, his, to the pens of Laius.

1140 Was this, of which I have spoken, done or not as I have spoken?

SHEPHERD

Your words disclose it - although it is from long ago.

MESSENGER

Well, now say you know that you offered me a boy,

A nursling to rear as my own.

SHEPHERD

What do you mean? What do you ask me for?

MESSENGER

This, sir, is he who was that youngster!

SHEPHERD

May misfortune come to you! Why do you not keep silent?

OEDIPUS

You - old man. Do not restrain him for it is your speech
Which should be more restrained, not his.

SHEPHERD

Most noble Lord - what is my fault?

OEDIPUS

1150 In not telling of the child he asked about.

SHEPHERD

But he speaks without looking as he toils without an aim.

OEDIPUS

If you will not speak as a favour, you will when you cry-out.

SHEPHERD

Before the gods, do not strike someone who is old.

OEDIPUS

Swiftly, one of you, twist his hands behind his back.

SHEPHERD

You unlucky one! What more do you desire to learn from me?

OEDIPUS

Did you give him that child he asked about?

SHEPHERD

I did. And it would have been to my advantage to die that day.

OEDIPUS

It will come to that if your words are not true.

SHEPHERD

Yet much more will be destroyed if I do speak.

OEDIPUS

1160 This man, it seems, pushes for a delay.

SHEPHERD

I do not. Just now I said I gave him.

OEDIPUS

Taken from where? Your abode - or from that of another?

SHEPHERD

Not from my own; I received him from someone.

OEDIPUS

Who - of these clansmen here? From whose dwelling?

SHEPHERD

Your lordship, before the gods do not ask me more.

OEDIPUS

You die if I have to put that question to you again.

SHEPHERD

Then - it was one of those fathered by Laius.

OEDIPUS

From a slave? Or born from one of his own race?

SHEPHERD

Ah! Here before me is what I dread. Of speaking it...

OEDIPUS

1170 And I, of hearing it, although hear it I must.

SHEPHERD

It was said to be his own child. But of these things,
It is your lady - who is within - who could best speak of them.

OEDIPUS

Why? Because she gave it to you?

SHEPHERD

Indeed, Lord.

OEDIPUS

Why did she want that?

SHEPHERD

So it would be destroyed.

OEDIPUS

How grievous for she who bore the child!

SHEPHERD

Yes - but she dreaded divine prophecies of ill-omen.

OEDIPUS

Which were?

SHEPHERD

The word was that he would kill his parents.

OEDIPUS

Then why did you let this elderly one take him.

MESSENGER

Because, your lordship, of mercy - so that to another land
He might fittingly convey it: to where he himself came from.

1180 But he saved him for this mighty wound. If then you are
The one he declares you to be, know how unlucky was your birth!

OEDIPUS

Ah! All that was possible has, with certainty, passed away.
You - daylight - I now look my last at what I behold by you:
I, exposed as born from those who should not have borne me -
As having been intimate with those I should not, and killed those I should not.

[Exit Oedipus, Shepherd and Messenger]

CHORUS

You descendants of mortals -
I count your zest as being equivalent to nothing,
For where is the person
Who has won more from a lucky daimon
Than just that appearance of fame
Which later is peeled away?
Yours - your daimon, Oedipus the unlucky -
We hold as an example
That nothing mortal is favoured.

For, O Zeus, it was beyond the bounds of others
That he shot his arrow to win
An all-prospering lucky daimon:
He who in destroying that virginal chantress of oracles
With the curved claws,
Arose in my country as a defence against death.
And who since then has been called my Lord

And greatly honoured as the chief of Thebes the magnificent!

But now - who has heard of a greater misfortune?

Who is there so savagely ruined that he dwells with such troubles

With his life so changed?

Alas - Oedipus, the renowned!

A mature haven

Was enough for you

As child and father when you fell upon

That woman in her inner chamber!

1210 How, how could what your father pushed into

Have the vigour for you for so long and in silence?

Chronos, the all-seeing, has found you, beyond your own will,

For long ago it was determined that from that marriage which was no marriage

Those children who have been born were the children that would be born.

But - as being the son of Laius,

I wish, I wish that I had never known this.

For I lament, and my cry is above all the others

As it comes forth from my mouth.

To speak straight: you gave me breath again

But I allowed my eyes to sleep.

[Enter Second Messenger]

MESSENGER

You who in this land have always been esteemed the most!
What deeds you are to hear - what behold! - and how much grief
Will weigh upon you if, on fidelity to your origins,
Your concern is still for the family of Labdacus!
For, alas, neither the Ister nor the Phasis
Can wash clean these chambers, so much suffering
Do they conceal - soon to be exposed to the light
1230 As willed, not done outside the aid of will. Those injuries
Which bring the most grieving, are those shown to be of our own choice.

CHORUS

What I knew before could not fail to make my grieving
Anything but grave; after that - what could you announce?

MESSENGER

What is a quick tale to say
And to understand: the divinity, Jocasta, is dead.

CHORUS

A misfortune! From what cause?

MESSENGER

By she herself. But, of those events,
What was most painful is not for you - for you did not view them.
Yet - as long as my Muse is with me -
1240 You can learn of the sufferings of her fate.

She - coloured by emotion - passed within the hall
To run straight to that bridal-bed of hers
Tearing at her hair with the fingers of both her hands.
Then, she went within - thrusting the doors closed -
To invoke Laius, he who long ago was a corpse,
Recalling that seed she received long ago by which
He was killed, to leave her to produce
Unlucky children from his own begotten child.
She lamented the bed of her double misfortune:
From her husband, a husband - and children from that child.

How, after that, she perished, I did not see
For with a war-cry Oedipus pushed in - and, because of him,
We did not behold the end of her suffering.
To him, we looked as he ploughed around
For wildly he ranged about, demanding his spear,
His lady who was not his lady, and where he might find that maternal
Double-womb which produced he himself and his children.
He was frenzied, and a daimon guided him -
For it was no man who was standing nearby -

And with a fearful shout - as if someone led the way -
He was propelled into those double-doors and, from their supports,
Bent those hollow barriers to fall into her chamber.

And there we beheld that lady suspended
In the swinging braided cords by which she had stricken herself.
He, seeing this, with a fearful roar of grief
Let down the cords which suspended her. Then when she the unfortunate
Was lain on the ground, there was something dreadful to behold:
For he tore from her those gold brooches
With which she had adorned herself
And raised them to assault his own circular organs,
Speaking such as this: that they would not have sight of
Those troubles he had suffered or had caused
But would henceforth and in darkness have sight of what
They should not and what he himself should not have had knowledge of.
Then with a awesome lament not once but frequently
He raised them to strike into his eyes. At each, blood
From his eyes dropped to his beard, not releasing blood
Drop by drop - but all at once:
A dark storm hailing drops of blood.

1280 From those two has this burst forth - not on one
But on that man and his lady, joined by these troubles.

That old prosperity anciently theirs was indeed once
A worthy prosperity - but now, on this day, there is
Lamentation, misfortune, death, disgrace, and of all those troubles
That exist and which have names, there is not one which is not here.

CHORUS

Does he who suffers now rest from injury?

MESSENGER

He shouts for the barriers to be opened to expose
To all who are of Cadmus, this patricide,
This mother... - I will not say the profanity he speaks -
So he can cast himself from this land, and not remain
For this dwelling to become cursed because of his curse.

But he requires strength and a guide
For too great for him to carry is that burden
Which he will make known to you. You will behold a spectacle
Which even those to whom it is horrible, will make lament for.

[Enter the blind Oedipus]

CHORUS

How strange for mortals to see such an accident as this!
It is the strangest thing of all ever

To come before me. You - who suffer this -
1300 What fury came upon you? What daimon
With great leaps from a great height
Came upon you bringing such an unfortunate fate?
I lament for your bad-luck.
Though I am not able to look at you -
There is much I wish to ask, much to understand,
Much to know
Even though I am here, shivering.

OEDIPUS

I am in agony!
To where, in my misery, am I carried? To where
Is my voice conveyed as it flees from me?
You - that daimon! To where have you brought me?

CHORUS

Somewhere strange with nothing to be heard and nothing to be seen.

OEDIPUS

Nothing announced the arrival of this dark cloud shrouding me!

Something unconquerable - brought by an unfavourable wind.
As one do the stings of those goads,
And the recalling of those troubles, pierce me!

CHORUS

It is no surprise that because of such injuries
1320 You endure a double mourning and a double misfortune.

OEDIPUS

My friend!
You, at least, are my steadfast comrade
Because you have the endurance to attend to the blind.
For you are not hidden from me - I clearly know,
Even in this darkness, that it is your voice.

CHORUS

You of strange deeds - how did you bear
To so extinguish your sight? What daimon carried you away?

OEDIPUS

It was Apollo - Apollo, my friend,
Who brought such troubles to such a troubled end.
But it was my own hand, and no other, which made the assault -
I, who suffer this. For why should I have sight

When there was nothing pleasing to see?

CHORUS

These things are as you have said they are.

OEDIPUS

Who could I behold?

Who could be loved - or whose greeting,

My friend, would be delightful to hear?

1340 So, and swiftly, send me away from this place.

Send away, my friend, this great pest -

This bringer of a curse: the mortal whom our gods

Detest the most.

CHORUS

You are as helpless in that resolve as you were in your misfortune:

Thus I wish you had never come to know of those things!

OEDIPUS

May death come to whosoever while roaming those grasslands loosened
Those cruel fetters and so safely pulled me away from death!
For it was not a favourable deed.
For had I died then no grief such as this
Would have been caused to either me or my kin.

CHORUS

I also wish that.

OEDIPUS

I would not, then, have shed the blood of my father
As I journeyed, and not be named by mortals
As the husband of she who gave me my birth.
1360 I am without a god - an unconsecrated child -
And now of the same kind as he who gave me this miserable existence!
If there is a trouble which is even older than these troubles,
Then it will be the lot of Oedipus.

CHORUS

I do not know if I could say that your intentions were right,
For it is perhaps better to no longer exist than to live, blind.

OEDIPUS

But as to this being done for the best -
You should not instruct me, nor offer me more advice.
For, if I had eyes, I would not know where to look
When I went to Hades and saw my father
Or my unfortunate mother, since to both
I have done what is so outstanding that a strangling is excluded.
Perhaps the sight of children is desirable:
To behold how those buds are mine will grow -
But it would certainly not be to these eyes of mine.
Nor would that of this town, or its towers, or the sacrifices
Offered to daimons. For it was most unfortunate that I -
Who as no one else in Thebes prospered most excellently -
Bereaved myself of such things by my own declaration
That everyone must push aside the profane one - the one the gods
Have exposed as unclean and of the clan of Laius.
After I have made known this, my stain,
How could I look those here straight in the eye?
Certainly I could not. And if what is heard could be blocked out
At that source in my ears, I would not have held myself back
From this miserable body and thus would be blind and also hear nothing!
For it is pleasing to dwell away from concern about injury.

Why, Cithaeron - why did you receive me, and having accepted,
Not directly kill me so I would never make known
To mortals whence I was born?

O Polybus and Corinth - and you that others called the ancient clan-home
Of my ancestors - I, the beauty that you reared
Had bad wounds festering underneath!
For I am found to be defective having been defective from my birth.

You three routes and concealed valley,
You grove and narrow place of the three-fold paths:
1400 You took in from my hands that blood which was my father's
But also mine - so perhaps you can still recall
Those deeds that I did there, and then, when here,
What I also achieved? You - those rites of joy
Which gave me my birth and which planted me anew
By the same seed being shot up to manifest fathers,
Brothers, sons - the blood of a kinsman -
Brides, wives, mothers: as much shame
As can arise from deeds among mortals.

No one should speak about things they do not favour doing.
Swiftly then - before the gods and beyond here -
Hide me away or kill me or upon the sea cast me
So that you will never look upon me again.
Come, and dignify this unhappy man by your touch.
Be persuaded - do not fear. For this misfortune is mine alone
And no mortal except me can bear it.

[Enter Creon]

CHORUS

As to this request of yours - it is fitting that here is Creon
To act and give advice,
For he alone is left to be guardian of this region in your place.

OEDIPUS

But what is there than I can say to him?
What trust can with fairness be shown to me?
1420 For I am discovered as being false to him, previously, in everything.

CREON

I did not come here, Oedipus, to laugh
Nor to blame you for your previous error.

[Creon turns to speak to the crowd who have gathered]

You - there - even if you do not honour those descended from mortals,
Have respect for the all-nourishing flames of the Lord Helios
So that this stain is not looked upon when it is uncovered -
This which neither our soil nor the sacred waters
Nor daylight will welcome.
Swiftly now take him into his chambers:
For the most proper conduct is that only kinfolk
Look at and hear a kinsman's faults.

OEDIPUS

Before the gods - since you have torn from me a dread
By you coming here - you, the most noble - to me, a most ignoble man,
Yield me something. I say this not for myself, but for you.

CREON

What favour do you request so earnestly?

OEDIPUS

That you throw me from this land as swiftly as you can
To where it is known there will be not one mortal to greet me.

CREON

Know that this would certainly have been done - were it not necessary
For me first to learn from the god what I should do.

OEDIPUS

1440 But his saying was completely clear -
That I, the disrespectful one, the patricide, must depart.

CREON

Those were the words - but since our needs have changed

It is better to learn what must be done.

OEDIPUS

But you will enquire of behalf of this unhappy man?

CREON

Yes - as you should now pay tribute to the god.

OEDIPUS

Certainly - and I rely on you for this supplication:

That you give to she who is within, a tomb such as you might desire

To lay yourself in - for it is correct to so perform this on behalf of your own.

As for me - never once let it be deemed fitting, while I happen to live,

For this my father's town to have me within it.

Instead, let me dwell in the mountains - to where is Cithaeron

Renowned because of me; for my mother and my father

While they lived appointed it the tomb I would lay in.

Thus, there I will depart, killed as they desired.

Yet I do know that neither a sickness

Nor anything similar will destroy me, for I would never have been saved

From that death unless it was for some horrible injury.

Hence I shall await that destiny which is mine - whatever its nature.

As for my sons - do not, Creon, add them
1460 To your care. For they are men, and therefore will never
Lack the ability - wherever they are - to survive.
But as for those unfortunate ones, my girls
For whom my table of food was never separate from
Nor who were ever without me, so that whatever I touched
Would be shared between us -
Attend to them, for me.
Would that you could let my hands touch them
And they lament for my injuries.
Let these things be, Lord -
Let them be so, you of this noble race.
For if my hands could reach them
I would believe they were mine just as when I had my sight.

[Enter Antigone and Ismene]

What is this?
Before the gods! - Do I not hear those whom I love,
Weeping? Has Creon let them make lament for me,
Sending here those who are dearest to me - my daughters?
Is this right?

CREON

It is right. For I prepared this for you.

I conjectured this - your present delight - since it has possessed you before.

OEDIPUS

Then good fortune to you on your path -

And may you be guarded by a better daimon than was my fate!

1480 My children - where are you? Come here - here

To these my hands of he who is your brother:

These of he who planted you and which assisted your father

To see in this way with what before were clear eyes.

He, my children, who sees nothing, who enquires about nothing -

He who is exposed as fathering you from where he himself was sown.

Even though I cannot behold you, I lament for you

Because I know of the bitter life left to you

Which mortals will cause you to live.

For what gathering of townsfolk could you go to?

What festivals - from where you would not return, lamenting,

To your dwelling instead of watching the spectacle?

And when you become ripe for marriage

Who is there who exists, my children, who would chance it -

Accepting the rebukes that will as painful for they who begat me

As they will be for you?

For what injury is not here? Your father killed his father;
He seeded her who had brought him forth
And from where he himself was sown
You were born - in the same way he himself was acquired.

1500 Such as this will you be rebuked with. Who then will marry you?
Such a person does not exist. No, my children, it is without doubt
That you must go to waste unsown and unmarried.

Son of Menoeceus! You are the only father
Who is left to them, for we who planted them are destroyed:
Both of us. Watch that they do not wander
As beggars, without a man, since they are of your family -
Or that they become the equal of me in misfortune.
Rather, favour them because you see them at such an age as this,
Deserted by everyone - except for yourself.
Agree to this, noble lord, and touch me with your hand.
And you, my children - had you judgement, I would even now
Have given you much advice. As it is, let your supplication be
To live where it is allowed and to obtain a life more agreeable
Than that of the father who planted you.

CREON

Let this abundance of lamentation pass away - and go into those chambers.

OEDIPUS

I shall obey, although it is not pleasing.

CREON

All fine things have their season.

OEDIPUS

Do you know my conditions for going?

CREON

Speak them - and I, having heard them, will know.

OEDIPUS

Send me far from this land.

CREON

That gift comes from the gods.

OEDIPUS

But the gods must detest me!

CREON

Then swiftly will your wish be fulfilled.

OEDIPUS

1520 But do you grant this?

CREON

I have no desire to speak idly about things I cannot judge.

OEDIPUS

Then now lead me from here.

CREON

Move away from your children - and go.

OEDIPUS

But do not take them from me.

CREON

Do not desire to be master in all things:

For you are without the strength which assisted you during your life.

CHORUS

You who dwell in my fatherland, Thebes, observe - here is Oedipus,

He who understood that famous enigma and was a strong man:
What clansman did not behold that fortune without envy?
But what a tide of problems have come over him!
Therefore, look toward that ending which is for us mortals
To observe that particular day - calling no one lucky until,
Without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending.

Appendix

v.34: '*Daimons*'. Correctly understood, a 'daimon' is what we would now call a 'supernatural being'. Daimons guard or watch over individuals, and thus guide the Destiny of the individual: they also give the individual their 'genius' (or their natural abilities). A daimon can be either positive or negative in the personal sense - that is, it can bring good or bad luck and thus good fortune or misfortune. A daimon, in effect, is seen as doing the work or the will of the gods.

Further, daimons also guard or watch over particular places - particularly those natural, sacred sites and places where the daimon thus becomes a 'nature spirit'. Daimons also guard and watch over families, dwellings, clans, towns and their citadels.

It is important to understand that daimons are not 'demons' - demons are the creations of an abstract moralizing religion like Christianity which posits an abstract 'evil' and an abstract 'good'.

v.981-2:

This is one of the crucial lines in understanding how Sophocles - and the Greeks themselves - viewed what we call the 'incest' of Oedipus with his mother (importantly, the Greeks had no word for 'incest'). On a first reading of the Greek text, it gives the impression that what is meant is: "many are the

mortals who already - *in dreams also* - have lain with their mothers..." That is, while it is disrespectful and a disgrace, it is nothing to seriously concern oneself with.

Of course, this is far too 'amoral' for most translators and scholars to even consider, and so the line is taken as meaning: "many are the mortals who in dreams (and also in prophecies) have lain with their mothers..." This sense is rather strained, and not apparent on first reading the Greek.

However, if moral Christianized abstractions are not read into the *Oedipus Tyrannus* - as nearly all previous translators have done, often from laziness and sometimes from misunderstanding what the Greek means - then what emerges, if for purpose of argument we accept the above interpretation, is that the incest may not be that important. Thus, what concerns Oedipus most is his killing of his father - all he says about the incest is that he "should not" have slept with his mother and it is disrespectful (for example, qv. v.1184f and v.1441). What has brought about the plague which is devastating the clan of Thebes, is the killing of Laius. Furthermore, the offender has not given tributes to the gods to clean his hands of the bloodstain (qv. v.1445 - which is often overlooked or misinterpreted). That is, the pollution caused by the killing has not been purified by offerings to the gods - and thus the offender has offended the gods.



Sappho

Poetic Fragments

Translated by D. W. Myatt

Introduction

The aim of the present translation is to try and present something of the unadorned beauty of Sappho's Greek.

From the many fragments that remain of her poetry, I have chosen those that best reflect something of this beauty. The text used is that of Lobel and Page [*Poetarium Lesbiorum Fragmenta*, Oxford 1955] - and the numbering of the Fragments in this present work follows that of their text.

.... in the text indicates a break in the fragment; [] indicates a conjecture.

Fragment 1

Deathless Aphrodite - Daughter of Zeus and maker of snares -
On your florid throne, hear me!
My lady, do not subdue my heart by anguish and pain
But come to me as when before
You heard my distant cry, and listened:
Leaving, with your golden chariot yoked, your father's house
To move beautiful sparrows swift with a whirling of wings
As from heaven you came to this dark earth through middle air
And so swiftly arrived.

Then you my goddess with your immortal lips smiling
Would ask what now afflicts me, why again
I am calling and what now I with my restive heart
Desired:
Whom now shall I beguile
To bring you to her love?
Who now injures you, Sappho?
For if she flees, soon shall she chase
And, rejecting gifts, soon shall she give.
If she does not love you, she shall do so soon
Whatsoever is her will.

Come to me now to end this consuming pain
Bringing what my heart desires to be brought:
Be yourself my ally in this fight.

Fragment 16

For some - it is horsemen; for others - it is infantry;
For some others - it is ships which are, on this black earth,
Visibly constant in their beauty. But for me,
It is that which you desire.

To all, it is easy to make this completely understood
For Helen - she who greatly surpassed other mortals in beauty -
Left her most noble man and sailed forth to Troy
Forgetting her beloved parents and her daughter
Because [the goddess] led her away

Which makes me to see again Anactoria now far distant:
For I would rather behold her pleasing, graceful movement
And the radiant splendour of her face
Than your Lydian chariots and foot-soldiers in full armour

Fragment 22

Gather your [lyre] and sing for me
[Soon]
As desire once again [enhances] your beauty:

Your dress excites, and I rejoice
For I once doubted Aphrodite
But now have asked that soon
You will be with me again

Fragment 31

I see he who sits near you as an equal of the gods
For he can closely listen to your delightful voice
And that seductive laugh
That makes the heart behind my breasts to tremble.

Even when I glimpse you for a moment
My tongue is stilled as speech deserts me
While a delicate fire is beneath my skin -
My eyes cannot see, then,
When I hear only a whirling sound
As I shivering, sweat
Because all of me trembles;
I become paler than drought-grass
And nearer to death ...

Fragment 34

Awed by her brightness
Stars near the beautiful moon
Cover their own shining faces
When she lights earth
With her silver brilliance
Of love

Fragment 23

When I look at you
I know that even Hermione
Was not such as you -
Fairer to compare you to Helen
The golden-haired

Fragment 41

Beautiful girls, towards you
My thoughts will never change

Fragment 47

Love shook my heart
Like the mountain wind
Falls upon trees of oak

Fragment 94

I can reveal to you that I wished to die -
For with much weeping she left me

Saying: "Sappho - what suffering is ours!
For it is against my will that I leave you."
In answer, I said: "Go, happily remembering me
For you know what we shared and pursued -
If not, I wish you to see again our [former joys]
The many braids of rose and violet you [wreathed]
Around yourself at my side
And the many garlands of flowers
With which you adorned your soft neck:
With royal oils from [fresh flowers]
You anointed [yourself]
And on soft beds fulfilled your longing
[For me]

Fragment 96

She honoured you like a goddess
And delighted in your choral dance.
Now she is pre-eminent among the ladies of Lydia
As the rose-rayed moon after the sinking of the Sun
Surpasses all the stars and spreads it's light upon the sea
And the flowers of the fields
To beautify the spreading dew, freshen roses
Soft chervil and the flowering melilot

Restless, she remembers gentle Atthis -
Perhaps her subtle judgement is burdened
By your [fate]

For us, it is not easy to approach
Goddesses in the beauty of their form
But you

Fragment 58

Age seizes my skin and turns my hair
From black to white:

My knees no longer bear me
And I am unable to dance again
Like a fawn.

What could I do? I am not ageless:
My youth is gone.
Red-robed Dawn, immortal goddess,
Carried [Tithonus] to earth's end
Yet age seized him
Despite the gift from his immortal lover

I love delicate softness:
For me, love has brought the brightness
And the beauty of the sun

Fragment 126

May you sleep on the breasts
Of your tender companion

Fragment 130

Once again, desire -
That looser of limbs and bitterly sweet -
Makes me to tremble
You are irresistible

Fragment 138/147

Believe me, in the future someone
Will remember us

Because you love me
Stand with me face to face

And unveil the softness in your eyes



HOMER

The Odyssey

Books I, II, III

Translated by DW Myatt

Book I

The Muse shall tell of the many adventures of that man of the many stratagems

Who, after the pillage of that hallowed citadel at Troy,

Saw the towns of many a people and experienced their ways:

He whose vigour, at sea, was weakened by many afflictions

As he strove to win life for himself and return his comrades to their homes.
But not even he, for all this yearning, could save those comrades
For they were destroyed by their own immature foolishness
Having devoured the cattle of Helios, that son of Hyperion,
Who plucked from them the day of their returning.

So you, my goddess - daughter of Zeus - begin the story somewhere, for us.

It was when those many others, having avoided a grievous fate
In battle and at sea, were with their families
That he alone - desiring his own return and his wife -
Was detained by a beautiful goddess, the honoured Nymph Calypso,
In a hollowed-out cave, for she longed for him to be her lover.
But when through the turning of the seasons that year arrived
During which the gods determined he would return to his family at Ithica,
Not even then could he avoid having to struggle
As he could not be with his kinsmen. And all of the gods
Had an affection for him - except Poseidon
Who was unrelenting in his rage at Odysseus
Until that noble hero reached his own land.

It was when that god had gone to the distant Ethiopians -
To be with the remotest of peoples, those Ethiopians who were divided in two
With some where Hyperion sets, and some where he rises -
And was present at their sacrifices of sheep and of bulls
Where he sat, amusing himself at their feasting.

For, meanwhile, the other gods had assembled at the abode of Zeus on Olympus

Where that father of gods and mortals spoke,

Desiring as He did to recall that which distinguished Aegisthus:

30 He whom the renowned Orestes, son of Agamemnon, had slain.

And so He recalled that person to those Immortals by saying this:

"How mortals do blame the gods for things!

Yet it is their own foolishness which weakens them over and above what is given them.

Thus it was with Aegisthus who over and above what was given to him

Seduced the wife of that descendant of Atreus whom he then killed on his homecoming

Even though he knew he would be destroyed because of such things.

For we had told him by sending Hermes - that keen eyed destroyer of Argus -

To say he should neither kill that person nor seduce his woman

Or else Orestes would exact retribution for that descendant of Atreus

When that youth began to long for his land.

Thus with his skillful reasoning did Hermes speak -

But Orestes refused to understand. And now he has paid for all those things together."

Then Athena - the goddess with those beautiful blue eyes - answered Him:

"You who are the son of Cronos and our father - you who are the supreme Chief -

It is certainly fitting that he was destroyed

As may anyone else who does such things perish in such a way as that.

But now my heart is pierced by Odysseus - he skilled in combat -

Who, unfortunately, has for a long while endured sufferings while far from his kinfolk

50 On an island protected on all sides and in the middle of the sea.

It is an island abounding in trees which a goddess has made her abode:

She is the daughter of that dangerous god, Atlas -

He who has seen how deep is the whole of that sea

And who by himself holds those great pillars that keep earth and sky apart.

It is his daughter who detains that sad and unlucky person,

For continually she with her soft and flattering words seeks to enchant him

So that he might forget Ithica. But Odysseus,

Longing to see again even smoke rising from his homeland, desires to die.

And yet you - the Olympian one - have not directed your vigour at this.

For did not Odysseus reward you when beside those Argive ships

He performed those sacrifices in the vastness of Troy?

When then, Zeus, are you angry with him?"

In answer, Zeus - he who controls the clouds - said:

"My child - what a word you have let escape through the barrier of your teeth!

How could I forget Odysseus - he of supreme heroism -

He who is above other mortals in his resolution and above them

In the sacrifices he has given to the immortal race of gods who possess the vastness of the sky?

It is Poseidon - he who possesses the earth - who has remained hard in his fury

Because of that blinding of the eye of that Cyclops, noble Polyphemos:

He who was the best of all those of the race of Cyclops.

He was the one brought forth by the Nymph, Thoosa -
The daughter of Phorcys, lord of a barren salt-sea -
After she and Poseidon had copulated in a hollowed-out cave.
Yet Poseidon - he who makes the earth to tremble - does not kill Odysseus:
But has caused him to wander far from the land of his fathers.
But now let all of us who are here consider this matter
So that he can set forth and return. Thus will Poseidon let go of his fury
For even he cannot alone fight all the other immortals,
Being against what those gods resolve to do."

Then Athena - the goddess with those beautiful blue eyes - answered Him:
"You who are the son of Chronos and our father - you who are our supreme
Chief -
If it is indeed now pleasing to the changeless gods
That Odysseus - he skilled in combat - returns to his family,
Then now let us give encouragement to Hermes, that messenger who
destroyed Argus,
To go to the island of Ogygia so that he may swiftly
Announce to the Nymph with the finely-plaited hair this infallible plan
For the return of Odysseus - he of steadfast resolve - so that this homecoming
will be.
As for me, I shall enter Ithica to make his son understand
So that he calls those fierce, long-haired Achaeans to an assembly
And exposes those suitors who for a long while
Have sacrificed his father's huddling sheep and his shambling, dark-eyed
oxen.
And I shall send him to Sparta, and to Pylos of the sandy-beaches,

To gather information about the return of his father - should he hear anything -

So that he shall acquire an honourable reputation among mortals."

When she had spoken thus, she fastened upon her feet those fine sandals

Of divine gold which convey her over the sea

And the boundless land alongside the blowing of the wind.

Then she took up that robust spear, pointed with sharpened bronze -

100 Heavy, large, thick - with which she subdues those heroic warriors among the race of mortals

Which that daughter of a most valiant father is angry with.

So she rushed down from the heights of Olympus

To arrive at the outer porch of the dwelling of Odysseus

Near the entrance to his columned Hall. Holding in her hand her bronze spear,

She was seen there as a traveller, the Taphian pirate chief, Mentos.

There she found those arrogant suitors who were then at a board-game

In front of those doors, satisfying their desires

As they sat on the hides of oxen which they had slaughtered themselves.

With them were their own Officers and vigilant guards

Some of whom were mixing water and wine in jars

As some were washing the tables with extensively perforated sponges

Before setting them and sharing out the meat.

The first to see her was Telemachus - he of supreme nobility -

As he sat near those suitors absorbed by his anger,

Informed as he was by a vision of his honourable father: that he would arrive

To make those suitors flee from this dwelling
And be rightly honoured and master again of his own possessions.
Telemachus beheld Athena as he sat near those suitors with this wish,
And went directly to the porch, annoyed in his heart
That a traveller had had to wait so long outside his home.
Then, standing near her, he clasped her right hand and her bronze spear
And, addressing her, let fly these words:
"I am pleased to welcome you, a traveller. And when you have eaten
A meal, you must tell what it is that you are seeking."

Such were his words, and Pallas Athena went with him
Into that high-ceilinged dwelling
Where he placed the spear that he carried
Inside that well-polished spear-cabinet near to a large column
In which there were many spears belonging to Odysseus - he of steadfast
resolve.
Then, guiding her to the chair for guests, he spread over it
A cloth of finely wrought linen, gave her a footstool
And seated himself on a decorated bench so that they were away from those
suitors,
Lest this traveller pushed away the food,
Being displeased by having to be among the tumult of those overbearing ones -
And because he could then ask her about his absent father.
A female attendant from the fine golden urn that she carried
Poured a libation of water into a silver bowl
So that their hands were washed, and then placed beside them a polished

table.

Then the venerable housekeeper served them the bread she had brought
And had placed before them much food, favouring them with what there was:
Her cook setting down for them cuts from many kinds of meat.

Beside them were placed goblets of gold

Which an Officer ensured were kept full of wine.

Soon, those arrogant suitors - one following another -

Came to seat themselves on chairs and on benches

With their own Officers pouring water over their hands

And their female servants heaping up bread into baskets

While boys filled jars ready for their drinking.

Then, those ones thrust their hands at what had been set before them.

150 After the desire for food and drink had left those suitors,

They turned their attention to other concerns:

To songs and to dancing, for such things accompany a feast.

Thus did an Officer place into the hands of Phemius an instrument of
unsurpassed beauty

And he was compelled by those suitors to sing.

So he began with that lyre a beautiful chant

As Telemachus spoke with Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes -

Keeping his head close to hers so that no one else would hear:

"Having welcomed you as a guest, will what I am about to relate displease you?

Those ones, there, concern themselves with this music and chant;

They are careless because they can devour, unpunished, the livelihood of
another -

Someone somewhere stormy whose whitened bones rot away
As they lie on land or are rolled around by the waves of the sea.
But were they to sight that man returning to Ithica,
All of them would wish for feet that were fast
Rather than for the wealth of gold and of clothes.
But instead, it seems that some unlucky fate has destroyed him
And we here have nothing to warm us - not even if some mortal here on this
earth
Were to announce his arrival, for he has lost the day of his returning.

But now, without fear of anyone, inform me about the following:
Who are you? What is your ancestry and clan?
What kind of ship conveyed you? How did its mariners
Come to bring you to Ithica and who were they then claiming to be?
For your own feet could not have brought you to this place.
Declare these facts to me so that I know for certain
Whether this is your first journey here or whether you have been a guest of my
father -
For many men used to stay with our family
As he himself used to go to and fro among the clans."

In answer, the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said:
"I shall declare everything for I fear no one.
I am Mentos - and proud to be the son of battle-hardened Anchialus.
Also, I am Chief of those most excellent oarsmen, the Taphians

And have only now arrived here with my companions
While sailing upon the dark deep sea to foreign-speaking tribes:
To Temea for bronze, and conveying gleaming iron.
My ship waits near to land - far from this citadel -
In that harbour, at Reithron, which is below the forest of Neion.
I am proud to accept your hospitality because our own fathers did so with each other -
And if you want to, go and ask that venerable heroic warrior, Laertes,
Who they say no longer comes to this citadel
But who instead, suffering from an injury, is by himself on his land
With just an old woman to wait upon him to give him food and drink
When weariness seizes his limbs after he has limped up and down
The terraces of his vineyard.

I travelled here, now, because I was told that your father was in his native land:
But it seems that the gods have obstructed his path.
For noble Odysseus is not lying dead somewhere on this earth
But is alive - detained on an island which is protected on all sides
And which is somewhere in the vastness of the sea
Where he is held by a furious, savage, race who detain him against his will.
200 For this, and how it will turn out, is my prophecy -
One which those immortal ones gave me the courage to cast out
Even though I myself am no prophet, having no clear understanding of augury.
And he will not be away from his beloved fatherland
For much longer, even if he is held in chains of iron

Since he will be planning how to return, being how he is very inventive.

But now tell me this, and explain it without fear of anyone:

Are you - who are so big - really the son of Odysseus?

Your features and your noble eyes are very much like his -

For we often met with one another before he sailed forth to Troy

Where went the most courageous of the Argives in their spacious ships.

But, since then, I have not seen Odysseus - nor he, me."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:

"To you, my guest, I shall declare it with no fear of anyone.

My mother has announced that I am his - although this is something I myself

Do not know since no person can ever be completely sure whose offspring he is.

But I wish I was the lucky son of someone

Who had attained his old age with all his possessions

Instead of which - since you have asked me - I am a descendant

Of the most unlucky of mortals: he whom it is said I am descended from."

In answer, the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said:

"The gods have decreed that hereafter your descendants

Will not be lacking in glory since Penelope has given birth to such a son as you.

But now, without fear of anyone, inform me about the following:

What have you to do with this crowd feasting here?

Is it is marriage, a banquet - or perhaps some public festival?

It is my opinion that they entertain themselves in this hall

In an overbearing, arrogant ill-mannered way
And any healthy man who happened to see them
Would be indignant at such disgraceful things."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:

" I shall, since you, as a guest, have enquired and asked me about these things.

This family was wealthy - as it was steadfastly blameless

While he who was its man resided here.

But now it is different since the gods resolved to bring us bad luck

Having concealed him more completely than any other mortal

Which injures me worse than if they had conquered him

While he was among his comrades in the land of the Trojans

Or when his companions were nearby after that fighting was finished.

For then, the entire Achaean race would have prepared a tumulus for him

With his son inheriting his honourable name, whereas now

He is without an honourable name having been snatched from us by abductors

Who took him away silently and unobserved to leave me wounded and
lamenting.

But it is not only because of him that I am wounded and grieving

But because I have other injuries from the bad luck given me by the gods.

They are those eminent ones, there, who rule in the islands

Of Dulichium, Samos, Zancythus of the forests

And those Chiefs of rugged Ithica itself

All of whom seek to court my mother and who are exhausting this household.

She cannot refuse what would be an odious marriage

As she cannot fittingly make an end of this matter
250 And so they are killing this household by gnawing away at it
Just as they could soon break me who is by myself into pieces."

Then Pallas Athena - angry at this - said to him:

"Before the gods! How great is the need here for the absent Odysseus -

For him to set about these disrespectful ones with his fists!

Would that he would arrive at the outer gate of this dwelling

With his helmet on and holding his shield and two spears

And as he was when I myself first saw him,

At my own abode, drinking and enjoying himself

He having set out from Ephyra and from Ilus son of Mermerus.

He had gone there in that fast ship of his

In search of a man-killing potion with which to poison his bronze-headed
arrows:

But that person would not give it since he believed he would be blamed

By those gods who exist for aeons.

But my own father give it to him, for they were great comrades.

May it be the same Odysseus who engages those suitors

So that they all quickly die of the injuries he gives them

Because of that marriage they had hoped for!

But whether such things will be, depends on the gods:

On whether or not he on his returning obtains vengeance within his own
dwelling.

As for now, I shall tell you of a plan to drive those suitors out of this dwelling

So respectfully listen to what I have to say.

Tomorrow, invite those heroic warriors, the Achaeans, to an assembly

Saying to them all - and invoke the gods as witness - that you have this plan

To tell those suitors to disperse to their own concerns

And your mother that if a desire to marry attacks her

She should go to the dwelling of her very powerful father

So that her own kin can prepare the wedding-festival

And arrange for the numerous gifts that go with such a well-loved daughter.

As for yourself, if you will trust me, I have good advice:

That you equip a ship with twenty of the best oarsmen

To go in search of he, your father, away a long while,

For some mortal may have word of him or you may hear

That voice from Zeus which often provides our tribes with the most information.

First go to Pylos to ask noble Nestor

And then on to Sparta to red-haired Menelaus

Who was the last of those bronze-armoured Achaeans to arrive.

For then if you hear that your father is alive or is returning,

Then you, though tired, should endure this for another year,

While if you hear that his being is no more and he is dead,

Then return to the fatherland that you love

To build his monument, perform as many funeral rites as are fitting,

And give up your mother to a man.

It is after you have done and achieved these things

That you should, with good judgement and courage, plan how to kill
Either by cunning or boldly, those suitors who are here in this dwelling -
For you must not occupy yourself with the things youngsters do,
Being no longer of that age.

Have you not been touched by how the noble Orestes
Seized an honourable name for himself among all our clans by killing
300 The cunning father-killer Aegisthus because of that killing of his
well-known father?

Thus should you, my friend - whom I see are strong and fully-grown -
Be as brave, so that those born after you will speak well of you.

But now I must descend down to my fast ship
And my companions, who cannot relax while I remain here.
You must be vigilant, and heed what I have said."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:

"Although a stranger, there is a comradely purpose in what you have declared
-

As from a father to his son - and I will not disregard it.

But now, even though you are eager to journey on, remain here today -

You can bathe and enjoy yourself as your heart desires

So that you can go to your ship, pleased by your courage,

With a valuable and very fine gift which will be treasured

And such as comrades present when accepting or offering hospitality."

Then the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said in reply:

"Since I long to travel again, do not detain me now

For that gift which your heart exhorts you to present to me
Can be given to me to carry back to my home when I return here.
Choose a very fine one, and you will obtain something of similar value."

Such were the words of Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes -
Who departed, unseen, as a bird when it has flown away.
And she had given him, with his vigour, a purpose and a boldness
As she had conjured up for him - more than anyone ever had - his father
So that when he considered these things, he - full of amazement -
Understood them, suspecting that his visitor had been one of the gods.
Thus did he - resembling a god himself - rush toward those suitors.

But they were silent as they sat listening to the chant of a famous Bard
Who chanted that saga of the misfortunes which Pallas Athena had decreed
For those Achaeans who had returned from Troy.
And hearing that divinely-inspired chanting in her upper chambers,
That daughter of Icarus, the discerning Penelope,
Had come forth from her rooms, shielding her face with a magnificent veil,
To descend those high stairs - not by herself, but with two female servants -
To stand by a column of the stoutly-built roof
With those loyal attendants on either side of she
Who, in tears, said this to that most honoured of Bards:
"Phemius, since your knowledge of those bewitching chants -
By which bards make famous the exploits of men and gods - is great,
Chant another one as you sit with those there

And they drink their wine in silence.

For you should cease that injurious chant

Which exhausts the heart within me since for a long while after

I, more than anyone else, am struck by unbearable grief

Because I yearn for that man who for a long while I have had only memories of
-

He who has an honourable name throughout both Hellas and Argos."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:

"Mother - why are you hostile to this most skilful of Bards

Whose purpose here is to provide enjoyment?

It is not Bards who are the cause of such things -

Rather, it is Zeus who causes them:

For it is He who bestows inventiveness upon each and every mortal

According to His will.

350 It is not right to revile the Bard for chanting about the unlucky fate of
those Danaans

For our tribes give more applause for a saga

Which informs them all about some hearty person.

You should be informed about such courage and brave of heart

For Odysseus was not the only one who had his return from Troy destroyed:

There were many other men who were lost.

You should go to your chambers to manage your own work

Of weaving and spinning, and also command your attendants

To occupy themselves with their work. That mythos is of interest to all men -

And to me most of all because the dignity of this family now depends upon

me."

And so she went back to her chambers with admiration of him,
For she was given courage by her son's vigorous words.
Thus with her female attendants she entered those highest of rooms
To weep for her beloved husband Odysseus
Until Athena of the beautiful blue eyes placed pleasing sleep onto her eyelids.

In the dimly-lit halls, the suitors all began shouting
As everyone of them voiced their wish to lie with her in intercourse,
Causing Telemachus - he full of vigour - to say to them:
"You who are suitors for my mother are unnecessarily abusive!
Now eat, and enjoy yourselves without any shouting
For it is a fine thing to listen to such a Bard as this
Who has a voice such as a god might have.
And, at the dawn of day, let us all go to seat ourselves
In the Meeting-Place where I will say to you in public
That you should go forth out of this dwelling
To do your feasting elsewhere, devour your own possessions
And be guests in turn in each other's homes.

But if you resolve that it is more agreeable and more favourable to you
To stand your ground and destroy one man's livelihood
Without paying any compensation, then eat on!
For I shall call aloud to the gods, who exist for aeons,
So that from Zeus there will be a deed of revenge

With you being destroyed in this dwelling with no compensation paid to your kin!"

Such were his words, and they all clenched their teeth,
Astonished at Telemachus because of his courageous declaration.
And it was Antinous, that son of Eupeithes, who was the first to speak to him.
"Telemachus - it must be the gods themselves who have instructed you
In bold declarations and how to courageously declare them!
May that son of Chronos never make you the Chief
Of this island of Ithica even if it is your father's inheritance!"

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:
"Antinous - though you will be displeased by what I say,
Were Zeus to offer me such a thing, my choice would be to take it.
Even though you have said this is one of the worst things that can happen,
It cannot be so bad to become a Chieftain -
Wealth is swift to arrive and the person himself becomes honoured.
Nevertheless, there are many other Achaean Chiefs,
Even on this island of Ithica - both recent and established -
Any one of which could have this, since noble Odysseus has been killed.
As for me, I shall be master of my own family
And those female slaves which noble Odysseus captured and gave to me."

Then Eurymachus, that son of Polybus, said to him in answer:
400 "Telemachus - as to which Achaean will be the Chief
Of this island of Ithica: that depends on the gods.

But whatever, may you hold onto your own possessions and be master of your household.

And - while there are settlements on Ithica - may the man who has the strength

To counter your will and deprive you of your possessions, never arrive!

But now, my brave man, I wish to ask you about that stranger.

From where did he come? What region did he claim was his own?

Where was he born and who are his ancestors?

Did he bring a message about the return of your father -

Or did he come here seeking something to his advantage?

For he got up and left very swiftly as if not to wait

For us to discover who he was - although there was nothing cowardly about him."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:

"Eurymachus - since my father's return has been destroyed

I no longer trust messages, however they arrive,

As I do not concern myself with the revelations my mother seeks

When she invites some soothsayer into this dwelling.

That stranger came from a Taphian comrade of my father -

He proudly affirmed he was Mentès, the son of battle-hardened Anchialus,

And Chief of those most excellent oarsmen, the Taphians."

So was he named by Telemachus who however had the judgement

To recognize an immortal god.

Then those suitors turned to ribald songs, and to dancing,

Desiring as they did to enjoy themselves until the end of day arrived.

And they were still enjoying themselves as the dark at the end of the day arrived

When each and every one of them went to take their rest within their own dwellings.

As for Telemachus - whose elevated chambers had been built to overlook
The very beautiful courtyard - he retired to his sleeping-place
To consider many different plans.

The loyal Eurycleia had gone with him, carrying burning torches.

She was the daughter of Ops, that son of Peisenor,

And had been the property of Laertes who had purchased her
For twenty oxen when she was newly ripe.

She was, while in his dwelling, like a loyal wife to him

Although to avert his wife's anger they never came together in his sleeping-place.

It was she who carried burning torches for Telemachus

And who, out of all of the servants, loved him the most

For she had nursed him when he was young.

So she opened the doors to his stoutly-built chambers

And he, seating himself on his bed, took off his tunic

To place it into the hands of that loyal now elderly woman

Who, skillfully folding that tunic, hung it on a wooden peg

Near to that ornately-carved bed.

Then, leaving his chambers, she pulled the doors together

By their silver rings and secured the bolt inside by its protruding thong.

And he was there, covered by a sheepskin, all of the night

As he occupied himself planning the journey which Athena had advised he take.

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Book II

When the red-fingers of that early-rising Bringer of Warmth appeared,
The beloved son of Odysseus, rousing himself from his sleeping-place,
Attended to his clothes, affixed a sharp sword over his shoulder,
And bound to his healthy feet fine sandals,
Resembling a god as he went forth from his chambers
To command his clear-voiced Heralds
To call those fierce, long-haired Achaeans to assemble.
And such was their summons that they came together swiftly.

And when they were all gathered at the assembly
He, armed with his bronze spear, went there -
Not by himself, for he took two of his hunting dogs with him.

And Athena graced him with an agreeable majesty
So that all the warriors there turned to look at him as he arrived
With the Elders giving way as he went to seat himself in his father's place.

The first to address the assembly was that heroic warrior, Aegyptius -
He who, now bent by age, had seen a great many things
And whose beloved son had gone with the noble Odysseus,
In those spacious ships, to Ilion of the well-bred horses.

This was Antiphus, master of the spear, who however was slaughtered in a
hollow cave

By that savage Cyclops who then prepared him, last, as his evening meal.

Of his three other sons, one - Eurynomus - was among those suitors
While the other two had for a long while maintained their ancestral estates.

But he could not disregard the painful wound from that other son,

And it was this which had brought many a tear to he who now addressed that
assembly:

"You men of Ithica - listen to what I have to say.

There has not been a meeting of this, our tribal assembly,

Since the noble Odysseus left with those spacious ships.

So who is it who has such a need -

Is it a young man, or one who is older, as I am?

Are troops about to arrive here - and he has heard a message

Which he will accurately relate since he was the first to hear it?

Or will he announce and tell of some other public concern?

He is certainly brave! May he therefore be fortunate with Zeus achieving for
him

That excellence which he considers he wants."

Such were his words, and this was a propitious omen for that beloved son of Odysseus

Who was not seated for long because of his desire to address that assembly

And who therefore stood up among them with the Herald, Peisenor -

He experienced in giving sound advice - placing the sceptre of authority into his hands.

Then - first in reply to that Elder - he said this:

"Elder, you shall soon know who that person is: he is not far from you.

Since it is I who now has the most bad luck, I had the warriors assemble here

Although I have not heard some message about troops being about to arrive

Which I can accurately relate since I was the first to hear it.

Nor will what I announce and tell of be some other public concern.

Rather, it is my own need because of two misfortunes that have befallen my family.

There is the loss of my honourable father

Who once was your Chief and an attentive father to me,

And there is something much greater which has happened to my entire family

Which will swiftly and utterly wreck us with my own living being completely destroyed!

50 This is those suitors for my mother who press themselves around her contrary to her wishes

And who, although they are the beloved sons of the most eminent men here,

Shiver at setting sail for the dwelling of Icarus, her father,

So that he, setting a dowry for his daughter,

Can give her to the person he chooses and who, of those who went there, he would favour.

Instead, every day they come and gather in our dwelling,
Sacrificing our cattle, our sheep and our fattened goats,
Feasting and wantonly drinking our strong wine,
With many other things of ours being consumed.
And there is no man such as Odysseus
To defend this family from such a misfortune:
We cannot defend ourselves, and, had we done so,
It would have been bad for us because we have no one experienced in combat.
I myself would have defended them had I some troops on my side.
But what they are doing can no longer be tolerated - it is not honourable
How this family is being destroyed! You should be indignant
And ashamed to face those other clans who dwell nearby.
Also, you should be in dread of the wrath of the gods
Lest they turn their anger upon you because of cowardly deeds.

Thus do I ask - by Zeus the Olympian and by the goddess Themis
Who established such assemblies as these and who always ends them -
That you who are my friends apply yourselves to this
So that I am left alone to rub away at my own injurious grief.
Or is it that my father - the honourable Odysseus - once opposed
The will of those well-armed Achaeans causing them misfortune,
And you by opposing my will are obtaining payment, causing me misfortune,
Through encouraging those others? But then it would be better
If it was you who were devouring my treasures and my herds

For, were you eating them, I might obtain compensation
By going around accosting others with the story,
Demanding our possessions be returned, until all of them were given back.
But instead you are now inflicting incurable wounds upon my heart."

So did he speak, in anger - but then he let the sceptre of authority fall to the ground

As the fire of lamentation came upon him. And he had captured the sympathy
Of all of the warriors there so that they were all silent with not one of them
willing

To answer Telemachus with harsh words:

Except Antinous, who answered him by saying this:

"Telemachus - how boldly you speak! How unrestrained is your strength!

What is this insulting thing that you say? Do you wish to place such a brand on us?

You should not have accused those Achaean suitors

Since it is your mother, whom you love, who knows these things are to her advantage.

For it is now the third year - and will soon be the fourth -

During which she has distracted the passion in the hearts of those Achaeans.

She gives all of us an expectation, with promises to every man

And messages being sent, although what she desires is something else.

There is also this other stratagem which she, on reflection, discovered:

In her dwelling she had a large weaving frame erected and on it weaved

Fine and very long threads, saying to us then:

"You young men who are my suitors - even though the noble Odysseus is dead

And you are eager to marry me, you must wait,

For I have this shroud to finish so that what has been spun
Will not be lost to the winds.

This is for the tomb of that heroic warrior Laertes

100 When that destructive fate which is the long-sleep of death overpowers
him.

For otherwise some woman from among our Achaean clan would quite rightly
revile me

Because he who had acquired so much would be laid to rest without a shroud."

Such were her words, and we with our strong passion for her trusted her.

But while she in daylight weaved that large tapestry,

When it was night, she - with flaming torches beside her - unravelled it.

And for three years while we of the Achaean clan trusted her, she tricked us.

Then, when the seasons of the fourth year had arrived,

One of the women - who knew of this for certain - told us

And we went to find her unravelling that splendid tapestry.

Thus - although it was contrary to her wishes - she was compelled to complete
it.

Hence it is that we, her suitors, answer you so that you, with your courage,
Will know what all other Achaeans know.

You should provide an escort for your mother to go to her father,

Exhorting her to marry whomsoever he recommends who is agreeable to her.

If she encourages we who are of the Achaean clan for much longer, then she
should

With courage consider those things which Athena so bestowed upon her -

She is skilled in intricate work and she excels in understanding what is to her
advantage.

Indeed, we have no ancient knowledge of previous Achaean women -
They of the beautifully plaited hair, such as Tyro,
Alcmene, and Mycene who wore hers as a beautiful crown -
Who could equal the resolution that Penelope has shown.
Can it therefore be her fate to lack resolution in this?
And your living and your possessions will be devoured
For as long as she keeps that resolve
Which the gods seem to have placed in her heart.
For by this she acquires for herself great renown
While for you there is only a yearning for what was a considerable living.
As for us, we shall not go to our estates or indeed anywhere else
Until she marries the Achaean which she herself desires."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:

"Antinous - how could I, contrary to her will, turn out from my dwelling
She who produced and nourished me even were my father dead
Or even if he is alive in some foreign land?
I would be unfortunate because of the large compensation payable to Icarus
Were I to choose to send my mother away.
And there would be the misfortunes I would suffer caused by her father
With daimons bringing me others because those dreaded Furies
Would be invoked as my mother left to go forth from her dwelling.
And our tribes would quite rightly revile me.
No such tales will ever be told about me!

But as for you others - if I rightly revile your courage
Then go forth from my dwelling, devour your own possessions
And be guests in turn in each other's homes.
But if you resolve that it is more agreeable and more favourable to you
To stand you ground and destroy one man's livelihood
Without paying compensation, then eat on!
For I shall call aloud to the gods, who exist for aeons,
So that from Zeus there will be a deed of revenge
With you being destroyed in my dwelling with no compensation paid to your kin!"

So spoke Telemachus, and Zeus - he whose perception is vast - sent him
Two eagles which were flying high above the summit of the mountain
From where they came down by means of the breeze that was blowing -
Their wings stretched out and near to each other -
150 Until they arrived above the middle of that meeting-place of the numerous
opinions.
Then, they whirled around shaking their stout wings
And, with a deadly look about them, made for the heads of everyone there
Before tearing at each other's cheeks and throats with their talons.
Then they rushed away to the East, over the citadel and the dwellings
Of those who in astonishment had watched those birds with their own eyes
And whose passions were aroused because they wondered what might occur.

And it was that venerable, heroic warrior Halitherses, son of Mastor,
Who addressed them, for he excelled those of a similar age as he

In his knowledge of augury and in explaining omens.

His understanding of those there was good, and he spoke to them thus:

"You men of Ithica - listen to what I have to say.

And what I will make known I say especially to you suitors

Since you will be rolled down by a great injury

Because Odysseus cannot now be far from his loved ones

And may indeed already be nearby,

Planning that slaughter which will be the fate of all of you.

And he will also be the misfortune of many more of you who are here

And who dwell in Ithica of the beautiful sunsets.

But long before this, we should find some way of restraining them -

Although it would be better for them to restrain themselves now.

For I who have so prophesied am not lacking in experience,

Having a good knowledge of such things,

And what I announced would befall Odysseus is being achieved

Just as I related it when the very resourceful Odysseus boarded his ship

As the Argives were setting forth for Ilion.

I announced then that many misfortunes would afflict him;

That he would lose his many Comrades

And arrive back at his home - unrecognized by anyone - in the twentieth year.

And now all these things are being achieved."

Then Eurymachus, that son of Polybus, said in answer:

"Old man, go on back to your family and make predictions

About your descendants, for if you do not, they might suffer some misfortune or other!

About this, even I am a better prophet than you

For there are many birds who wander about during the daylight

Which are not fateful - and Odysseus has perished far away from here.

If you had gone and been lost with him,

You would not now be declaring this thing a divine revelation

As you would not now be unleashing the fury of Telemachus

Nor receive from him a gift for your family, were he to provide one.

About this, what I shall say will be achieved -

That if you, who has a great knowledge of ancient things,

Were advising a young man and so encouraging him to be savage,

Then it would be particularly troublesome for him,

Since he does not have the power for such deeds,

But also for you, old man, for we would fix a penalty for you

Which you, with your courage, would be indignant at

As you paid it, and which would be a savage blow for you.

I myself, before everyone here, propose this for Telemachus:

That he exhorts his mother to go back to her father

So that her own kin can prepare the wedding-festival

And arrange for the numerous gifts that go with such a well-loved daughter.

For, until then, we who are of this Achaean tribe will not put an end

To this difficult courting, for we do not fear anyone

200 And certainly not Telemachus, however many tales he tells.

Nor do we respect what you, old man, tell us is some divine revelation
Yet to be fulfilled, and which makes us even more hostile to you.
For we will damage his possessions by eating away at them -
Perhaps until there is nothing left -
For as long as she puts off marrying an Achaean
Since every day we who are rivals for her perfection wait for her
And not once have we gone with any of those others
Who would be suitable for us to take as a wife."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said in answer:
"Eurymachus - and all you other proud suitors.
I will not ask you again as I will not announce anything else
Since, now, the gods and all Achaeans have observed this.
Therefore, grant me a fast ship and twenty comrades
Who can manage a journey, there and back, with me
For I am going to Sparta and to Pylos of the sandy beaches
To enquire if my father - who has been away a long while - is returning,
For some mortal may have word of him or I may hear
That voice from Zeus which often provides our tribes with the most
information.
And, if I hear that my father is alive or is returning,
Then I will, though by then tired, endure this for another year,
While if I hear that his being is no more and he is dead,
Then I shall return to this, the fatherland that I love,
To build his monument, perform as many funeral rites as are fitting

And give up my mother to a man."

Such were his words, and he sat down again

Whereupon there stood up among them Mentor -

He who had been a comrade of Odysseus, the distinguished -

And whom Odysseus when about to set sail assigned to his family

With him to trust Laertes and to be a stout guard for them all.

He understood those there very well, and addressed them by saying this:

"You men of Ithica - listen to what I have to say.

No longer do I desire that your Chieftain be someone friendly and mild

Nor one informed by a knowledge of what is fitting.

Instead, he should be savage and treat you badly

Since not one of you warriors has made mention of the most heroic Odysseus -

He who was your Chief - and how he was as an indulgent father to you.

I do not envy those arrogant suitors, employing their vigour to do a treacherous thing,

For they have revealed themselves by so vigorously devouring

The possessions of Odysseus who, so they say, will never return.

But now it is this whole clan whom I quite rightly revile

Since all of you sit there without calling out

To accost those suitors, so stopping those few

Because there are many more of you."

Then Leocritus, son of Euenor, said in answer:

"You - the unlucky Mentor who has lost his purpose - why are you urging them

To put an end to us? For it is difficult to get men,

Even when they have the advantage of numbers, to go to war over some feast!
And even were the noble Odysseus himself to arrive in Ithica
While we proud suitors were in his dwelling
And he through his courage sought eagerly to expel us from his home,
Then, even though his woman had longed for it, there would be no rejoicing
250 At his arrival since he would in that very place meet with his inauspicious
fate
Because we have the advantage of numbers.

So as for you - what you have said is not fitting.
But, now, let those warriors disperse, each to their own work
With Mentor and Halitherses aiding that person to go on his travels
For they have been comrades of his father since before this began.
And yet, I suspect that person will stay in Ithica for a long while yet,
Listening out for messages, and also never complete those travels."

Such were his words, after which those there abandoned their assembly
And dispersed each to their own families
Except for those suitors who went to the dwelling of the most heroic Odysseus.
As for Telemachus, he went away by himself to the sands of the beach
Where, washing his hands in the grey salty sea, he invoked the goddess
Athena:
"Hear me! - You who, as a god, yesterday came to my dwelling
To ask me to journey in a ship over the dark of the sea
To inquire after the return of my father who has been away a long while.
But now the whole of my Achaean clan are putting this off

Chiefly because of those cowardly and overbearingly arrogant suitors."

Such were his words of invokation, and Athena came toward him

Resembling Mentor in body and in speech,

And addressed him, letting fly these words:

"Telemachus - you will not be unlucky nor lacking in resolution

If you hereafter instill into yourself the determination of your father

Whose nature was to accomplish those deeds he said he would.

For then, you will not be wandering about on your travels, with nothing accomplished.

Yet if you were not begotten by Penelope from his seed

Then I have no expectation of you accomplishing those things that you want.

Few sons reach the level of their father -

Most fall short, with only a few being better.

So if you are, hereafter, not unlucky nor lacking in resolution

And if Odysseus left behind in you at least some of his resourcefulness,

Then I expect you to accomplish those deeds that you say you will.

As for those suitors - leave them to their plans and desires,

For they have no judgement, no understanding and are unworthy.

They do not see that the dark fate of death -

Which will kill them all in one day - is getting nearer to them.

And they will not keep you from those travels that you desire for much longer

For I am your comrade, as I was to your father,

And will prepare a fast ship for us since I am going with you.

Therefore, go back to your dwelling to meet with those suitors

And equip yourself with provisions, all of which should be put into vessels:
The wine in amphoras and that nourishing food of mortals -
Barley, for bread - in stout hide bags.
And I myself by going among our clan will soon gather together
Companions who of their own accord will go with us.
Also, there are a great many ships on this island of Ithica,
Both new and old, from which I will select the best one
And have swiftly made ready for the vastness of the sea."

So spoke Athena, the daughter of Zeus.
And Telemachus did not stand there for long after that goddess had spoken
But instead - absorbed by his anger - went to his dwelling
Where he found those arrogant suitors in the courtyards of his home
300 Slitting open his goats and roasting his pigs.
And Antinous, laughing, went directly to Telemachus
Calling out his name, and, taking hold of his hand, said to him:
"Telemachus! How boldly you speak! How unrestrained is your strength!
But do not concern your heart with matters of treachery - whether words, or
deeds;
Instead, eat and drink with me as you did before
For our Achaean clan will bring about for you
A ship with elite oarsmen so you can swiftly go
To Pylos of the sandy beaches for information about your proud father."

But Telemachus - he full of vigour - said to him in answer:
"Antinous - I cannot feast with you who are so overbearingly insolent,

And be at my ease and good humoured, without speaking out.
For were they not sufficient for you - the abundance of my possessions
That you suitors devoured then when I was young?
But now I am old enough, I have enquired about things for myself
And, having listened to the stories, there has grown within me
A passion to cast upon you an injurious fate which I will try to do
Whether I am here among our clan or whether I go to Pylos!
And my announcement of my travels will not have been in vain
For even though I cannot yet be master of a ship or oarsmen,
I could still go as a passenger
Which is, I suppose, to your advantage."

So did he speak, pulling his hand from the hand of Antinous.
And, as those suitors occupied themselves with their feasting,
They insulted Telemachus and made cutting remarks about him,
With one of those overbearing young men saying this:
"Telemachus is certainly contriving to shed our blood,
And to assist him he will bring others from Pylos of the sandy beaches
Or even from Sparta, so great is his yearning for this.
Or perhaps he will go to the fertile lands of Ephyra
To obtain from there that life-destroying potion
Which he will place into our wine in order to kill us all."

And another of those overbearing young men said this:
"But it is possible that he in a spacious ship while wandering about

Will perish, like Odysseus, far from his folk -
Although this would greatly increase our work
Since we would have to divide his possessions among ourselves
And permit his mother - and whomsoever took her as wife - to have his dwelling!"

Such were their words, and Telemachus went across to that wide,
high-ceilinged

Storeroom of his father where there was an abundance of fragrant oil;

Clothing in chests; gold and bronze in heaps;

And wines of an agreeable vintage in casks -

Which, being unblended, were the most excellent of drinks -

And which stood close to one another around the walls

For when Odysseus, having endured a great many misfortunes, returned to his home.

These were behind stout double doors which were locked

With a housekeeper nearby during the day and the night

Who, being shrewd and resolute, was the guardian of everything there.

This was Eurycleia, the daughter of Ops who himself was the son of Peisenor.

And Telemachus - having called out her name - said this to her beside that chamber:

"My dear nurse - pour out for me into amphoras some of that agreeable wine,

350 Although not the most delicious that you guard

For it is possible that Odysseus the unlucky, being born of Zeus,

Will arrive someday, having escaped both from death and his unfortunate fate.

Fill twelve for me, fitting lids to them all.

Also, put barley - for bread - into well-sewn skins,

And give me twenty measures of mill-ground barley-grain.
And you are to be the only one who knows of this.
Now have all these things collected together
For I shall take them away at the end of the day
When my mother, planning to go to her bed, ascends to her upper chambers.
This is because I am going to Sparta, and to Pylos of the sandy beaches,
To enquire about my father - for I may hear something there."

So he spoke, and his old nurse, Eurycleia - who loved him - cried out
And began to weep before letting fly these words:

"Dear Telemachus - why are you considering such an aim as that?
Why choose to cast yourself away on many other lands,
And so be alone, when you are so loved, here? For your father, Odysseus -
He born of Zeus - died among foreigners while far from his clan.
And, as soon as you are gone, those others will thereafter be treacherously
plotting

How they can, by cunning, destroy you and so divide among themselves all
these things here.

And there is no necessity for you to endure the misfortunes
Of the inexhaustible sea nor those of a wanderer."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said to her in answer:

"My dear nurse - have courage, for this is not being done without the
assistance of a god.

Now, take an oath not to tell my mother about this

Before either the eleventh or the twelfth day has arrived -

Unless of course she, having heard something, rushes forth to seek me -

For by then she should not lament and so harm her beautiful complexion."

So he spoke, and that elderly woman swore a great oath not to do that.

Then she - having completed that oath - immediately went

To pour out for him wine into amphoras,

And to put barley - for bread - into well-sewn skins.

As for Telemachus, he went back into his dwelling to meet those suitors

Whereupon the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes -

Resolved to do something else.

So, resembling Telemachus, she went throughout the whole of the citadel

Bringing to every man she had selected the revealing story

And exhorting them, at the end of the day, to assemble by the fast ship

Which belonged to Noëmon, the illustrious son of Phronius, and which she asked him for.

And he gave his approval willingly.

With the setting of the sun, all the pathways became shadowy

And she had them drag that fast ship into the sea

And place in it all the kinds of equipment that such a ship, for many oarsmen, carries.

After they had moored it on the edge of the harbour, the goddess assembled together

Those honourable companions so as to give encouragement to each and every one of them.

Then the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - resolved to do something else.

Thus she went to the dwelling of the most heroic Odysseus

Where she spread over those suitors an agreeable tiredness

Which caught them as they drank so that their goblets fell from their hands.
And they did not remain there long, but roused themselves to go and sleep in their homes
Because of the tiredness which she brought down upon their eyes.
Then Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - went to speak with Telemachus,
400 Calling him out from his large, well-situated dwelling
Where she, resembling Mentor in body and in speech, said this:
"Telemachus - your well-armed, fierce, Achaean companions are now waiting
At their oars, ready to go forth with you.
Therefore, let us go and no longer put off these travels."

Such were the words of Pallas Athena, who swiftly led the way
With Telemachus walking behind her.
But when they had descended down to the sea and their ship,
They discovered their companions - fierce Achaeans - on the beach.
And Telemachus - strong and admirable - said this to them:
"Comrades! Since all our provisions are now assembled in my dwelling,
Let us bring them here. And be assured - my mother does not know of this,
Nor do any of my servants, except one, who heard the story from me."

Such were his words, and they followed him,
Carrying everything down - with that son of Odysseus encouraging them -
To place it in that ship for many oarsmen.
Athena was the first to board that ship where she seated herself in its stern.
Next came Telemachus, who seated himself beside her.

Then the others, having cast off and rolled up the stern ropes,
Came aboard to seat themselves at their oars.
So it was that Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - sent them a
fair-following breeze
Which strongly blew from the West to rush them over that wine-dark sea
With Telemachus calling out encouragement as his comrades
Took hold of the rigging. And they harkened to this encouragement
As they hoisted the pine-wood mast into its hollowed-out stay
By those forestays which held it in place,
And hauled up the white sails by those skillfully-braided ox-hide ropes.
Thus did that wind blow upon the main sail
So that the keel of the ship loudly went through the purple sea-swell
With them settling-down to their journey as they were hastened through the
sea-swell,
Having secured the rigging on that black ship.
Then they set up jars which they filled to the brim with wine
And poured libations to those undying gods who have existed for aeons:
But especially to that daughter of Zeus with those beautiful blue eyes.
Thus did that ship voyage on its journey for the whole of that night
Until the dawn of day.

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Book III

As the sun ascended into a gleaming bronze sky, it left behind
That most beautiful water's edge to reveal -
To both the immortal ones and those mortal men -
The tilled, grain-giving fields of Pylos
Where Neleus had built his well-situated citadel.
For they had arrived there, as - on the sands of the beach - bulls, black all
over,
Were being sacrificed to the azure-haired one who makes the earth to tremble.

There were nine groups of them, each of five hundred
And each of which had presented nine bulls.
So it was that while those there feasted on the sacrificial hearts and livers -
With the thighs being burnt for the gods -
Telemachus and his comrades went directly in to land, furling up the sails
onto the mast
Of that well-balanced ship and mooring her so that they could go ashore.
Athena was the first to leave that ship, and, as Telemachus followed her,
The goddess - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said this to him:
"Telemachus - you must not any longer go unnoticed,
Since you have sailed over the sea for this: so that you can find out
What destiny your father followed and if, and where, the earth has concealed

him.

So now go directly to Nestor, that subduer of wild-horses,

For I know that he conceals his own abilities from others.

And, when you ask him, he will, because he is so very strong, speak directly

Without missing his target as he will never, by words, deceive you."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said to her in answer:

"Mentor - how shall I approach him? How do I greet him?

For I have no experience of giving eloquent speeches,

And a young man should not show himself up when asking an Elder something."

In answer, Athena - the goddess with those beautiful blue eyes - said:

"Telemachus - what you understand by yourself you will have an opinion about;

As for other things, a divinity will offer you advice,

For I am in no doubt that you could not have been born,

And would not have grown up, without the aid of the gods."

Such were the words of Pallas Athena who swiftly led the way,

With Telemachus walking behind her,

Until they arrived at where the clans of Pylos were assembled into groups

With Nestor seated with his sons as his comrades

Were preparing a feast by roasting meat on spits.

And when those men saw the strangers, they all crowded round them,

Raising their arms in salutation and inviting them to stay.

The first to reach them and do this was Peisistratus, Nestor's son,

Who raised his arm in salutation to both of them and had them seated

On soft sheepskins there on that sandy beach
Near to his father, and his brother Thrasymedes,
Where he gave them a share of the sacrificial hearts and livers,
Poured wine into a gold chalice
And, raising his goblet to them in welcome, addressed Athena -
That daughter of Aegis-carrying Zeus - by saying this:
"Will you, our guests, drink to and so honour the Lord Poseidon?
For it is his feast which you, arriving here, have chanced upon.
And if you do - as is only fitting - dedicate this drink to the god,
Then afterwards offer this chalice, of agreeable wine, to this person, here,
So that he can also dedicate it to the god. For I suspect that he
Drinks to and so honours our immortal ones, and all mortals should yield to
the gods.
But since he is younger than you - about the same age as me -
50 I offer this gold chalice to you first."

Such were his words, and he placed that chalice of agreeable wine
Into the hands of Athena who was pleased because that vigorous, worthy man
Had offered her that gold chalice first.
And she, after taking many drinks in honour of the Lord Poseidon, asked this:
"Poseidon - you who possess the earth - listen to me!
Since I have drunk to and so honoured you, do not refuse to accomplish
These deeds. First, bestow upon Nestor and his sons glory in battle,
And then reward all the clans of Pylos because of this glorious sacrifice of
oxen.
Also, permit Telemachus and myself to return when we have undertaken

That which we came here, in our dark ship, to do."

Such did she ask for, although she was the one who would accomplish them all.

So it was that she gave that very fine two-handled chalice to Telemachus,
And the beloved son of Odysseus asked for the same things.

Then, when the meat was roasted, it was removed from the spits
And divided up into shares with everyone partaking in a most glorious feast
Until the desire for food and drink left them

When Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - gave the first speech:

"Only now, after they have eaten their fill, is it proper
To question strangers and ask them what clan they are.
So, you who are our guests - what clan are you? From where
Have you come by way of the sea?
Are you traders? Or wanderers, blown by the winds,
Who, as pirates, voyage over the sea at the risk of your lives,
Bringing misfortune to foreigners?"

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - gave his answer boldly
For he had understood what Athena had suggested
So that he might ask about his absent father:

"Nestor, son of Neleus: esteemed warrior of our Achaean tribe!
Since you ask what clan are we, I shall tell you.
We are Ithacans, from the settlement below Mount Neion.
Our task is our own, and we do not speak on behalf of our folk.

We are seeking to hear any information concerning my father,
The noble Odysseus - he of steadfast resolve - of whom it is said
That he fought with you when you emptied that citadel of its Trojans.
Of all those others who did battle with the Trojans,
We have been informed where each of those who perished were so unluckily
destroyed.

But the son of Chronos has not granted us any information about Odysseus
And no one has been able to tell us, for certain, where he perished -
Whether he was brought down on land by a man opposed to his purpose,
Or whether by the surging waves of a tempestuous sea.
So that is why I now bow to you - to ask if you are willing
To tell me how he who was born to endure many misfortunes
So unluckily perished, for you may have seen it with your own eyes,
Or heard the story from some traveller.

And do not seek to please me because you respect me
Or have some affection for me -

But tell me exactly how it was if you chanced to see it.

I ask you this since perhaps my father - the honourable Odysseus -
Having given you his loyalty, achieved the deeds he said he would

100 Against the Trojans in their land where our Achaean tribe suffered such
bad luck.

If this is so, mention it to me now, relating it without missing your target."

Then Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - answered him
thus:

"My friend - I shall mention our afflictions then which we, the sons of this
Achaean clan,

Endured with indomitable determination there in that land.
For it was there that we had to forage for booty - both on land
And in ships over the dark of the sea - wherever Achilles led us!
It was there that we did battle with that strong community governed by Priam;
There where the best among us were slain!
For there lies war-loving Aias; there lies Achilles;
And Patroclus - whose advise was worthy of a god.
There lies my own beloved son, the strong and brave Antilochus,
Who had distinguished himself as a runner, and in single combat.
And many other misfortunes afflicted us there -
Who of our tribe could recite the whole saga?
Because of the misfortunes which afflicted the noble Achaeans there
You would, if you remained here, be still finding out about them after five or
six years,
Although they would soon encourage you to return to the land of your fathers.

For nine years we attacked them - using every kind of stratagem -
So as to fasten misfortune upon them, although the son of Chronos
Hardly ever allowed this to be achieved.
And no man there tried to be the equal of Odysseus in resourcefulness,
For your noble father - if indeed you are his offspring -
Was vastly superior to them in every kind of stratagem.
But now that I look closely at you, I am amazed -
For even your voice resembles his, and the voice
Of any other young man would not have this resemblance.

Also, the noble Odysseus and I were there, together, all that while,
Never once divided in our aims or when we addressed the clan-assemblies.
So it was that we with our purposeful aims, and resolute of heart,
Planned what would be best for the Argives.
And, after we had sacked that great citadel of Priam,
We proceeded to our ships. But a god would scatter our Achaean clans
With Zeus - who understood them - resolving on an injurious home-coming
For the Argives, since not all of them had shown good judgement or been fair.
Thus were many of them pursued by fateful misfortunes
Because of the destructive rage of that blue-eyed daughter of a most valiant
father
Who placed strife between those two sons of Atreus.

So it was that those two summoned all the Achaean clans to an assembly -
Foolishly and against custom because at the setting of the sun
When those of our Achaean tribe arrived full of wine.
And there, the sons of Atreus gave speeches as to why they had assembled
those warriors
With Menelaus exhorting all the Achaeans
To consider returning to their homes over the vastness of the sea.
But Agamemnon was most displeased by this since his plan
Was for them to remain there to offer sacrifices of oxen
To save those warriors from the mighty fury of Athena.
In this, he was immature, not knowing that she would never yield about that,
And no god - having existed for aeons - swiftly changes what they have
resolved to do.

Thus did those two stand there exchanging angry words

As there suddenly arose from those well-armed Achaeans an extraordinary clamour

150 Because they were divided among themselves as to which plan was best.

And that night, there was anger among us as we excitedly considered them,

Although Zeus it was who so badly injured us.

With the dawning of day, some of us dragged our ships into the beautiful sea

To place in them our possessions and our well-bosomed concubines,

While half of all the warriors remained to stay there with Agamemnon,

Son of Atreus, who was a watchful guard for his warriors.

We, the other half, having embarked, set sail - and swiftly did we go

As if some god had spread great monsters upon that sea!

Thus we arrived at Tenedos where we sacrificed to the gods

Since we longed for our homes. But a fierce Zeus did not yet allow us to return

And stirred up an injurious quarrel to divide us yet again.

Thus did those loyal to the very canny Chieftain Odysseus - he skilled in combat -

Turn their ships around to go back,

So bringing pleasure to Agamemnon, son of Atreus.

As for me and those assembled with me, we fled in our ships

Since we knew a daimon was devising to bring us bad luck.

The war-loving son of Tydeus, and his comrades, also fled

As did red-haired Menelaus who left after them

And who caught us at Lesbos where we were eager for the long voyage

Either by going up above rugged Chios
And past the island of Psyra - holding it on our left -
Or by going below Chios through the storms of Mimas.
About this we asked the god to reveal to us a sign
And he exhorted us to cut through the middle of the sea to Euboea
In order to swiftly pass that bad luck by.

Then, a loud-sounding favourable breeze blew,
And so very swiftly did we escape by way of that fish-full sea
That it was during the night that we came to Geraestus
Where we placed many thigh bones from sacrificed bulls
On the altar of Poseidon, having measured-out how vast was that sea.
And, on the fourth day while the comrades of Diomedes - son of Tydeus
And subduer of wild horses - and he himself, moored their ships in Argos,
I held to my course for Pylos, since that favourable breeze
Never once ceased after the god began to breathe it out.

Thus, my friend, I arrived here without any information about
And without having seen who, of those Achaeans, was saved and who perished.
However, while I have been here in this my homeland, I have heard rumours
And shall, as is only fitting, inform you of them since I cannot conceal them
from you.

It is said that those fierce Myrmidons, masters of the spear, were lucky
And did return, commanded as they were by the illustrious son of the very
brave Achilles.

Also lucky was Philoctetes, the glorious son of Poias,

And Idomeneus who brought back to Crete every one of his comrades
Who had survived the fighting - for the sea did not take any of them from him.

As for one of the sons of Atreus - even though you are far away, you must have
heard

How Aegisthus plotted to so miserably destroy him on his arrival,

And how he himself so painfully paid the penalty for it.

For it is good for a man to leave behind a son when he is killed,

For then that son can avenge his father's death

As the son of that renowned man did to the treacherous killer Aegisthus!

You also, my friend - whom I see are fully-grown and strong -

200 Could be as brave as Orestes, for then those born after you will speak well
of you."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said to him in answer:

"Nestor, son of Neleus: esteemed warrior of our Achaean tribe!

That person did indeed take his revenge - and his name is now widely
honoured

Among Achaeans who will tell the saga for generations to come.

Perhaps the gods will give such strength to me

So that I can take my revenge upon those suitors who grievously overstep the
mark,

And who, in their arrogance, are dishonourably plotting against me.

But the gods have not allotted such a good fortune as that

To either my father or me so that now I have to undertake that entirely alone."

Then Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - said to him in
answer:

"My friend - since you have, in speaking to me, mentioned this,
There are indeed rumours of many suitors for your mother being in your home
Against your will who are plotting to do you harm.
So tell me - did you willingly submit to their domination
Or has some portent from some god caused the folk of your clan to shun you?
Who is there who knows when Odysseus will arrive
To pay them back for their violations - either by himself
Or together with his own Achaeon clan?
But perhaps Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - will choose to
befriend you
As she did Odysseus to whom she gave great glory in battle
While he was in the land of the Trojans where we Achaeans endured much bad
luck:
And I have never seen the gods so visibly befriend someone
As Pallas Athena so visibly assisted him.
If she did consider you of value and so choose to befriend you
Then many of those suitors would be made to forget about that marriage!"

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said to him in answer:
"Venerable sir - what you speak of has not yet been brought about
Although it is good of you to, and I admire you for, saying it.
But I no longer expect it since the gods have not chosen to do this."

In answer the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said:
Telemachus! What a word you have let escape through the barrier of your
teeth!
It is easy for a god, should they choose to, to keep a mortal safe even when far

away.

My own wish would be to endure much bad luck

And then travel back to my country to behold the day of my return

Rather than travel directly back and be slain in my own home,

As Agamemnon was slain because of the treachery of his wife and Aegisthus.

Yet death is there for everyone alike - and not even the gods

Are able to protect a mortal they have befriended

When that destructive fate which is the long-sleep of death overpowers him."

Then Telemachus - he full of vigour - said to her in answer:

"Mentor - let us no longer speak about this thing, even though it afflicts us,

For I am almost certain that Odysseus will never return since the immortal ones

Must surely by now have planned some dark fate for him, as well as his death.

Instead, I now wish to ask Nestor some questions to find out about some other things,

For he understands others and knows more about our customs than them,

Having been - so it is said - a Chieftain for three generations of mortals,

And, to look at, he seems to me to be one of those immortals.

Nestor, son of Neleus - disclose to me the story of how

Agamemnon, son of Atreus and chieftain of vast domains, did die.

Where was Menelaus? And what deceitful plan did the treacherous Aegisthus use

250 Since he did kill someone so much stronger than himself?

Was Menelaus, then, wandering among other tribes, and not in Achaean Argos,

Thus giving that person the courage to kill?"

Then Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - said to him in answer:

"Young man - for you I shall give a speech which will disclose everything.

Surely you have your own opinion about what would have happened

If the red-haired Menelaus, son of Atreus, had returned from Troy

To find Aegisthus alive and in his home.

For then Aegisthus would have died without ever having soil heaped upon him

Because left out in the open far from the settlement

For dogs and birds to feast upon, with no Achaean women

Weeping for him, such was the magnitude of his treacherous deed!

For it was while we were at Troy, partaking in numerous combats,

That he - secure in horse-loving Argos - was gratifying himself

And bewitching Agamemnon's wife with numerous speeches.

At first, however, Clytaemnestra refused to do what was unseemly for someone

As well-bred as her, for she had an excellent understanding of what was required.

Also, there was with her a Bard who had been commanded by that son of Atreus

To guard his wife while he himself was away at Troy.

But then the gods bound to her the fate of being conquered,

And Aegisthus had that Bard taken to and left upon an uninhabited island

To be found by, and game for, birds of prey.

Thus did he who was willing lead she who was willing to his home.

Because of this, he burnt many thighs from bulls on the altar of the gods

As he hung up many fine tapestries and many fine things of gold as offerings,
For he never expected that his desire to so complete his work would be fulfilled.

It was after this that we - that son of Atreus and I - set sail together
From the land of the Trojans, for we were good comrades.

Thus we reached sacred Sunium, headland of the Athenian clan,
Where the arrows of Phoebus Apollo came to the steersman

Of Menelaus' ship and painlessly killed him

As he held between his hands the rudder of his then swiftly sailing ship.

This was Phrontis, son of Onetor, who was superior to anyone from our tribes
In steering a ship when storm-winds rushed upon it.

So Menelaus was detained there, even though he was eager to journey on,
Until he had buried and completed the funeral rites of his comrade.

But when he went forth again over the dark sea

In his finely-carved ship, he swiftly arrived near to that high mountain at
Maleia

Where Zeus - he who perceives things from afar - planned a hostile journey for
them.

So he breathed upon them to spread around them a loud-sounding stormy
wind

With mountainous surging waves as big as monsters from the sea!

Thus he divided up those ships, with some being driven toward that part of
Crete

Where the Cydonian clan had settlements beside the Iardanus river.

This was where - at Gortyn's end with its cloudy waters -

A smooth rock rises high out of the sea,

And where Notos - the South Wind - pushes great surging waves toward
The adverse side of the Gulf, with that narrow rock dividing
Those great surging waves before they go to Phaestus.
Some of the ships made it there, but the men in them just escaped destruction
As those surging waves smashed those ships on the reefs.
And five of those ships with the azure-painted bows
300 Were driven by that wind and its sea toward Egypt
Where Menelaus was presented with considerable provisions and gold
Before he with his ships wandered among foreign-speaking tribes.

Meanwhile, Aegisthus was in his homeland deceitfully planning treachery.
After he had killed that son of Atreus, he enslaved his own clansfolk
And ruled over them in gold-rich Mycene for seven years.
But the eighth year was unlucky for him, for the noble Orestes arrived
From an Athenian settlement and slaughtered that father-killer,
The treacherous Aegisthus, for the killing of Orestes' well-known father.
After that slaughter, Orestes entertained his Argive clan by a wake
For his mother, whom he hated, and for the cowardly Aegisthus.
And, that very same day, Menelaus - he brave in combat - arrived,
Bringing with him vast wealth: as much as his ships could carry.

As for you, my friend - do not wander far from your home for long
Having left behind in your home your possessions and those overbearing
insolent men,
Or they will divide up and so devour all your possessions
And your travels will become infamous!

But now, I exhort you to go to Menelaus

For it is not that long since he arrived back from tribes in those foreign lands

From where he must have considered his return to be unlikely

Since it was those storm-winds which were the cause of his wrong course

Out into the vastness of that sea from which, during any year,

Not even birds arrive from, so vast and formidable is it.

You could go to him in your ships with your comrades,

Or you could go by land, for there are chariots and horses here

And my own sons to escort you to where

Is the noble Lacedaemon clan of the red-haired Menelaus.

And, when you ask him something, he will speak to you without missing his target

As he would never, by words, deceive you since he is so very strong."

Such were his words, and, with the going-down of the sun, darkness arrived.

Then the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said this:

"Venerable sir - you have related those things correctly.

Well now - shall we offer up the tongues of those bulls, pour out wine,

So that, having made libations to Poseidon and the other immortals,

We, your guests, can concern ourselves with sleeping since it is the hour for it?

Because what was clear to us is now becoming nebulous,

It is no longer fitting for us to continue to sit here

At this god's feast. Thus, we should take our leave of you."

Such were the words of that daughter of Zeus, and they harkened to them,

With Officers pouring water over their hands
While boys filled jars ready for their drinking
And placed into the goblets of everyone there the first offering of wine.
Then, while standing, libations were made and those tongues cast into the fire,
With everyone then drinking as much as their hearts desired
Until Athena and Telemachus - he of supreme nobility -
Were about to take their leave to go back to their spacious ships.
But Nestor detained them there by saying this to them:
"May Zeus and all the other immortal gods defend me
From you going from what is mine to your fast ships
As if you were leaving someone who, being poor, had no night garments
And who had so few coverings and rugs in his dwelling
350 That neither he nor any guest of his could sleep comfortably!
I, however, do have coverings and beautiful rugs
And no son of Odysseus will lay himself down to sleep
On the deck of his ship so long as I am alive
And so long as there are children of mine left in my home
To provide hospitality for any guest who arrives at my dwelling."

In answer, the goddess Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes - said:
"My friend - your words are well-taken. It is certainly fitting
For Telemachus to yield over this, for it would be much more agreeable for
him.
Thus he will accompany you when you go to rest in your home.
I, however, must go to our black ship

To re-assure our comrades and tell them all about this
For I am the only one among them who can call himself an Elder.
The rest are young men who accompany us out of comradeship,
All of them being about the same age as the very brave Telemachus.
So now I should go to lay myself down to rest upon our spacious black ship.
And, at the dawn of day, I shall go to the very brave Cauconian clan,
For they owe me some booty from a while ago which is not a small amount.
Now, since this young man is a guest in your homeland,
Provide him with a chariot, a son of yours as escort,
And horses who excel because of their agility and strength."

After giving voice to these words, Athena - she with those beautiful blue eyes -
departed,

Appearing as a sea-eagle to them. And everyone who saw this was amazed
With that venerable Elder so astonished by what he had seen with his own eyes
That he took hold of Telemachus by the hand and addressed him with these
words:

"My friend - I do not believe you will ever lack courage or be unlucky
If the gods so escort and accompany you while you are still young!
For that could be no one other than she who inhabits the Halls of Olympus
And who is that daughter of Zeus born near Triton who presides over booty!
She it was who valued your noble father above other Argives.

My Lady - favour me by granting noble renown
To me, my offspring and she, my wife, whom I respect.
To you, My Lady, I shall sacrifice an unblemished, untamed, broad-faced ox

Which no one has ever tried to place a yoke upon
And whose horns I shall - before the sacrifice - cover all over with gold."

Such were the words he addressed to Pallas Athena, who heard them.

So it was that Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan -

Led his sons, relatives and Telemachus away from there to his very fine dwelling.

And, after arriving at the splendid dwelling of that Chieftain,

They, in proper order, seated themselves on chairs and on benches.

Then that venerable Elder poured into a vessel

An agreeable wine in its eleventh year which a female servant

Had opened for him by rolling back its covering veil.

This was what that venerable Elder poured into a vessel from which he made

Many libations in honour of Athena, the daughter of Aegis-carrying Zeus.

Then, after the libations when everyone had drunk as much as their hearts desired,

Every one of them went to lie down in that dwelling

Where Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan -

Gave Telemachus - the beloved son of the most heroic Odysseus - a place to sleep:

The wooden bed under the high-ceilinged porch

400 Where he was near to Peisistratus - master of the spear and among the best of men -

Who of all those sons of Nestor had still to be married.

Nestor himself slept in the innermost chamber of that lofty dwelling

Where his woman, the mistress of that dwelling, had prepared his bed.

Then, when the red-fingers of that early-rising Bringer of Warmth appeared,
Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - came forth to seat
himself

Upon those polished stones - white and glistening as if covered in oil -

Which were in front of his lofty gates

And upon which Neleus - he whose advise was worthy of a god - used to sit

Before it was his fate to be slain by Hades.

But now it was the Gerenian, Nestor, who sat there

As guardian of that Achaean clan, holding the sceptre of authority.

His sons left their chambers to assemble and gather round him there:

These were Echephron, Stratius, Perseus, Aretus and the heroic Thrasymedes.

The sixth to arrive was that heroic warrior Peisistratus

Who brought with him and who seated among them, the noble Telemachus.

Then Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - directed them
thus:

"My sons -it is my wish that you swiftly accomplish these things for me,

Because the first thing I must do is offer up a sacrifice to Athena

Who was visible to us when she came to our rich feast for that god.

So, one of you should go the fields so that an ox is swiftly brought here

Having been urged on by one of our herdsmen.

Another of you should go the black ship of the noble Telemachus

To lead here all of his comrades, leaving only two behind.

Another of you should go to command the goldsmith Laerces to come here

So that the horns of that ox can be covered all over with gold.

The rest of you should remain here after telling the female servants

Within this splendid dwelling to prepare a feast
And to provide, for everyone, chairs, benches and clear water."

Such were his words, and all of his sons occupied themselves with those things
So that an ox arrived from the fields; the comrades of the vigorous
Telemachus

Arrived from their well-balanced ship; the goldsmith arrived bearing in his
arms

Those bronze tools with which he accomplished his art:

A hammer, anvil and well-made fire-tongs

Which he used to work gold. Athena also arrived.

To be present at the sacrifice. Then the venerable Nestor - master of horse -

Gave the gold which the goldsmith prepared and then placed around the horns
of the ox

To honour the goddess who would be pleased when she saw it.

It was Stratius and the noble Echephron who led that ox by its horns.

With them was Aretus who had conveyed from a store-room

A decorated bowl of water which he carried in one hand

While his other hand held a basket full of barley.

Near to them was Thrasymedes - he steadfast in the tumult of battle -

Who held in his hands a double-headed axe with which to strike the ox

While Perseus held the bowl for the blood. The venerable Nestor - master of
horse -

Began the sacrifice by washing his hands and casting barley over the ox.

Then, with many invocations to Athena, he made the first offering

By casting hairs from the head of the ox into the fire.

And when he had cast the barley and made his invocations,

One of his sons - the very brave Thrasymedes -
Went to the ox and struck it so that the double-headed axe
450 Just cut into the tendons of the neck to release from it its strength.
At this, the women there - the daughters and female relatives of Nestor,
And Eurydice, his wife, eldest of the daughters of Clymenus - made loud
ululations.
Then Nestor's other sons lifted the ox off the ground and held it
So that Peisistratus - among the best of men - could slit its throat.
Thus did its dark blood pour out from it as the life in its bones was released.
Swiftly then did they dismember it, as they swiftly and fittingly cut off
The thighs still whole, covered then all over with fat and placed more meat
upon them.
This was what that venerable Elder placed into the flames
From forked wood, over which he poured a libation of wine.
Then those young men came and stood beside him, holding in their hands
five-pronged forks.
After the thighs were burnt and they had partaken of the heart and liver,
They cut the rest of the meat into joints,
Some of which they pierced right through to stick them
Onto the spits that they held in their hands
So that they could roast the meat by holding out those spits.

Meanwhile, Telemachus had been bathed by the beautiful Polycaste,
She who was the ripest of those daughters of Nestor, son of Neleus.
And when she had bathed him, she anointed his body with oil from olives
And put upon him a handsome tunic and cloak

So that he resembled an immortal as he went forth from that bathing-place
To seat himself near to Nestor, who was as a watchful guard for his warriors.

Thus did they stay there feasting on what they took for themselves -

Having roasted the rest of the meat, with attentive officers

Pouring out wine for them into goblets of gold -

Until the desire for food and drink left them

When Nestor - that master of horse from the Gerenian clan - said this:

"My sons - let there be brought here for Telemachus

Horses with beautiful manes and a chariot

To harness them to so that he can undertake his journey swiftly."

Such were his words, and they, harkening to them, were fast in obeying them

For they soon had those horses harnessed to a chariot.

Then after those women who were stewards of such things had placed into it

Cooked-meat, bread and wine of the kind that noble Chieftains consume,

Telemachus proceeded into that very fine chariot.

Then Peisistratus, son of Nestor and among the best of men, embarked beside him,

Took the reins, whipped up the horses

And drove them away. Thus - without any desire not to - they sallied forth

Across that plain near Pylos to leave behind them that lofty citadel.

And, during the whole of that day, that harness shook as they kept the horses in it.

Then, as the sun set and all the pathways became shadowy,

They arrived at Pherae where was the dwelling of Diocles,

Son of Ortilochus who himself was the son of Alpheus.

There, they were welcomed as guests; and there they slept that night.

And when the red-fingers of that early-rising Bringer of Warmth appeared,

They harnessed their horses to that splendid chariot, embarked upon it,

And - having driven past the forecourt and through the lofty porch -

They whipped up the horses and drove away. Thus - without any desire not to -

They sallied forth until they reached a wheat-producing plain

Where they hastened on so as to complete their journey

With the horses then swiftly bearing them along

Until, with the setting of the sun, all the pathways became shadowy.

cc DW Myatt 1994 CE



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Heraclitus

Some Translations and Notes

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Translations of Some Fragments Attributed to Heraclitus

Preface

As explained in the notes that originally accompanied the translations, I have deliberately transliterated (instead of translated) πόλεμος, and left δίκη as δίκη - because both πόλεμος and δίκη should be regarded like ψυχή (psyche/Psyche) as terms or as principles in their own right (hence the capitalization), and thus imply, suggest, and require, interpretation and explanation, something especially true, in my opinion, regarding δίκη. To render such Greek terms blandly by English terms such as 'war' and 'justice' - which

have their own now particular meaning(s) - is in my view erroneous and somewhat lackadaisical. *δίκη* for instance could be, depending on context: the custom(s) of a folk, judgement (or Judgement personified), the natural and the necessary balance, the correct/customary/ancestral way, and so on.

The notes to the translations are included below.

David Myatt
2012 ce

Fragment 1

(Partial)

*τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος ἀεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ
ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον*

Although this naming and expression, which I explain, exists – human beings tend to ignore it, both before and after they have become aware of it.

Fragment 36

*ψυχῇσιν θάνατος ὕδωρ γενέσθαι, ὕδατι δὲ θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι, ἐκ γῆς δὲ
ὕδωρ γίνεται, ἐξ ὕδατος δὲ ψυχή.*

Where the water begins our living ends and where earth begins water ends, and yet earth nurtures water and from that water, Life.

Fragment 39

ἐν Πριήνῃ Βίας ἐγένετο ὁ Τευτάμεω, οὗ πλείων λόγος ἢ τῶν ἄλλων

In Priene was born someone named and recalled as most worthy – Bias, that son of Teutamas

Fragment 43

ὑβριν χρὴ σβεννύναι μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν

Better to deal with your hubris before you confront that fire

Fragment 52

αἰὼν παῖς ἐστὶ παίζων πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἡ βασιληΐη

For Aeon, we are a game, pieces moved on some board: since, in this world of ours, we are but children.

Fragment 53

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

Fragment 64

τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίζει Κεραυνός

All beings are guided by Lightning

Fragment 80

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

Fragment 112

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μεγίστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

Fragment 123

Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ

Concealment accompanies Physis

From Diogenes Laërtius - *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*

πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι
τὰ ὄντα (ix. 7)

All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with
beings bound together again by enantiodromia

Note: I have used here a transliteration of the compound Greek word ἐναντιοδρομίας rather than given a particular translation, since the term enantiodromia in my view suggests the uniqueness of expression of the original, and which original in my view is not adequately, and most certainly not accurately, described by a usual translation such as 'conflict of opposites'. Rather, what is suggested is 'confrontational contest' - that is, by facing up to the expected/planned/inevitable contest. Interestingly, Carl Jung - who was familiar with the sayings of Heraclitus - used the term enantiodromia to describe the emergence of a trait (of character) to offset another trait and so restore a certain psychological balance within the individual. For further details, refer to my essay *The Change of Enantiodromia*.

Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα
πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]. Fragmentum 80.

This fragment, attributed to Heraclitus, is generally considered to mean something rather abstract such as: war is everywhere and strife is justice and all that is arises and passes away because of strife.

That is, πόλεμος is regarded as a synonym for either kampf, or more generally, for war. However, I incline toward the view that this older understanding of - the accepted rendition of - πόλεμος is a misinterpretation, and that rather than kampf (struggle), or a general type of strife, or what we now associate with the term war, πόλεμος implies what I have elsewhere termed the acausality (a simultaneity) [1] beyond our causal

ideation, and which ideation has separated object from subject, and often abstracted them into seemingly conflicting opposites [2]. Hence my particular interpretation of Fragmentum 53:

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

Hence my interpretation of Fragment 80 - *εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]* - as:

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord. [3]

Here, I have deliberately transliterated (instead of translated) *πόλεμος*, and left *δίκη* as *δίκη* - because both *πόλεμος* and *δίκη* (written *Πόλεμος* and, I suggest, *Δίκα*) should be regarded, like *ψυχή* (psyche/Psyche) as terms or as principles in their own right (hence the capitalization), and thus imply, suggest, and require, interpretation and explanation, something especially true, in my opinion, regarding *Δίκα*. To render them blandly by English terms such as 'war' and 'justice' - which have their own now particular meaning(s) - is in my view erroneous and somewhat lackadaisical. *δίκη* for instance could be, depending on context: the custom(s) of a folk, judgement (or Judgement personified), the natural and the necessary balance, the correct/customary /ancestral way, and so on.

In respect of *Δίκα*, I write it thus to intimate a new, a particular and numinous, philosophical principle, and differentiate it from the more general *δίκη*. As a numinous principle, or axiom, *Δίκα* thus suggests what lies beyond and what was the genesis of *δίκη* personified as the goddess, Judgement - the goddess of natural balance, of the ancestral way and ancestral customs.

Thus, *Δίκα* implies the balance, the reasoned judgement, the thoughtful reasoning - *σωφρονεῖν* - that *πάθει μάθος* brings and restores, and which accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of a particular folk or *πόλις* forms the basis for their ancestral customs. *δίκη* is therefore, as the numinous principle *Δίκα*, what may be said to be a particular and a necessary balance between *ἀρετή* and *ὑβρις* - between the *ὑβρις* that often results when the personal, the natural, quest for *ἀρετή* becomes unbalanced and excessive.

That is, when *ἔρις* (discord) is or becomes *δίκη* - as suggested by Heraclitus in Fragment 80.

In respect of *Πόλεμος*, it is perhaps interesting that in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a

personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) married a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) [4] and that it was a common folk belief that πόλεμος accompanied ὕβρις - that is, that Polemos followed Hubris around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing ἔρις.

As a result of ἔρις, there often arises πάθει μάθος - that practical and personal knowing, that reasoned understanding which, according to Aeschylus [5] is the new law, the new understanding, given by Zeus to replace the older more religious and dogmatic way of fear and dread, often viewed as *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* [6]. A new understanding which Aeschylus sought to explain in the *Oresteia*.

Therefore one can perhaps understand and appreciate the true and acausal nature of Πόλεμος which, as suggested by Fragment 53, is a natural principle (or 'energy' or a manifestation of Being) which affects, or governs, all mortals and which, as suggested by Fragment 80, causes the manifestation of beings from Being (the causal separation of beings) and which natural separation results in ἔρις and thence, as suggested by Fragment 123 [7] a return to Being; a return which can result, as suggested by Fragment 112 [8] arise from thoughtful reasoning [σωφρονεῖν] - and which thoughtful, balanced, reasoning can incline us toward not committing ὕβρις.

David Myatt
April 2011 CE

Notes

[1] For the axiom of acausality, see my *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*.

[2] For an outline of opposites, refer to my essay *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*.

[3] Some alternative renderings of this fragment are:

One should be aware that polemos is pervasive; and discord δίκη, and that beings [our being] quite naturally come-into-being through discord

One should be aware that polemos pervades; with discord δίκη, and that all beings are begotten because of discord.

[4] A δαίμων is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - θεοί - but rather a lesser type of divinity who might be assigned by those gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or watch over certain human beings and especially particular numinous (sacred) places.

Furthermore, Polemos was originally the *δαίμων* of kindred strife, whether familial, or of one's *πόλις* (one's clan and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of conflict (or war), is doubly incorrect.

[5] Agamemnon, 174-183. *qv.* my essay, *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way - The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*

[6] Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6

[7] *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* - *Concealment accompanies Physis*. See my *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[8] *σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίῃ ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας*

For this fragment, see my essay *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθέα in Heraclitus*.

The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθέα in Heraclitus

Part One - Fragment 112

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίῃ ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας. ^[1]

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

This fragment is interesting because it contains what some regard as the philosophically important words *σωφρονεῖν*, *ἀληθέα*, *φύσις* and *λόγος*.

The fragment suggests that what is most excellent [*ἀρετὴ*] is thoughtful reasoning [*σωφρονεῖν*] - and such reasoning is both (1) to express (reveal) meaning and (2) that which is in accord with, or in sympathy with, *φύσις* - with our nature and the nature of Being itself.

Or, we might, perhaps more aptly, write - such reasoning is both an expressing of inner meaning (essence), and expresses our own, true, nature (as thinking beings) and the balance, the nature, of Being itself.

λέγειν [λόγος] here does not suggest what we now commonly understand by the term 'word'. Rather, it suggests both *a naming* (denoting), and *a telling* – not a telling as in some abstract explanation or theory, but as in a simple describing, or recounting, of what has been so denoted or so named. Which is why, in fragment 39, Heraclitus writes:

ἐν Πριήνῃ Βίᾱς ἐγένετο ὁ Τευτάμεω, οὗ πλείων λόγος ἢ τῶν ἄλλων [2]

and why, in respect of λέγειν, Hesiod [see below under ἀληθέα] wrote:

ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
ἴδμεν δ', εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι [3]

φύσις here suggests the Homeric [4] usage of nature, or character, as in Herodotus (2.5.2):

Αἰγύπτου γὰρ φύσις ἐστὶ τῆς χώρας τοιήδε

but also suggests Φύσις (Physis) – as in fragment 123; the natural nature of all beings, beyond their outer appearance.

ἀληθέα – commonly translated as truth – here suggests (as often elsewhere) an exposure of *essence*, of the reality, the meaning, which lies behind the outer (false) appearance that covers or may conceal that reality or meaning, as in Hesiod (*Theog*, 27-28):

ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
ἴδμεν δ', εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι [3]

σωφρονεῖν here suggests balanced (or thoughtful, measured) reasoning – but not according to some abstract theory, but instead a reasoning, a natural way or manner of reasoning, in natural balance with ourselves, with our nature as thinking beings.

Most importantly, perhaps, it is this σωφρονεῖν which can incline us toward not committing ὕβρις (hubris; insolence), which ὕβρις is a going beyond the natural limits, and which thus upsets the natural balance, as, for instance, mentioned by Sophocles:

ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον:
ὕβρις, εἰ πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῇ μάταν,
ἂ μὴ 'πίκαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,
ἀκρότατον εἰσαναβᾶσ'
αἶψος ἀπότομον ὥρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν,
ἐνθ' οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ
χρῆται [5]

It therefore not surprising that Heraclitus considers, as expressed in fragment 112,

the best person – the person with the most excellent character (that is, ἀρετή) – is the person who, understanding and appreciating their own true nature as a thinking being (someone who can give names to – who can denote – beings, and express or recount that denoting to others), also understands the balance of Being, the true nature of beings [cf. fragment 1 - κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον], and who thus seeks to avoid committing the error of hubris, but who can not only also forget this understanding, and cease to remember such reasoning:

τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος αἰὲ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον ^[6]

but who can also deliberately, or otherwise, conceal what lies behind the names (the outer appearance) we give to beings, to 'things'.

DW Myatt
2455369.713

Notes:

[1] Fragmentum B 112 - *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. H. Diels, Berlin 1903

[2] "In Priene was born someone named and recalled as most worthy – Bias, that son of Teutamas."

[3]

We have many ways to conceal – to name – certain things
And the skill when we wish to expose their meaning

[4] *Odyssey*, Book 10, vv. 302-3

[5] "Insolence plants the tyrant. There is insolence if by a great foolishness there is a useless over-filling which goes beyond the proper limits. It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights and then that hurtling toward that Destiny where the useful foot has no use..." (Oedipus Tyrannus, vv.872ff)

[6] "Although this naming and expression, which I explain, exists – human beings tend to ignore it, both before and after they have become aware of it." (Fragment 1)

Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ
Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change

The phrase *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* – attributed to Heraclitus [See Note 1] – is often translated along the following lines: Nature loves to conceal Herself (or, Nature loves to hide).

Such a translation is somewhat inaccurate, for several reasons.

First, as used here, by Heraclitus, the meaning of *Φύσις* is rather different from his other usage of the term, as such usage is known to us in other fragments of his writings. For the sense here is of *Φύσις* rather than *φύσις* – a subtle distinction that is often overlooked; that is, what is implied is that which is the origin behind the other senses, or usages, of the term *φύσις*.

Thus, *Φύσις* (Physis) is not simply what we understand as Nature; rather, Nature is one way in which *Φύσις* is manifest, presenced, to us: to we human beings who possess the faculty of consciousness and of reflexion (Thought). That is, what we term Nature [See Note 2] has the being, the attribute, of Physis.

As generally used – for example, by Homer – *φύσις* suggests the character, or nature, of a thing, especially a human being; a sense well-kept in English, where Nature and nature can mean two different things (hence one reason to capitalize Nature). Thus, we might write that Nature has the nature of Physis.

Second, *κρύπτεσθαι* does not suggest a simple concealment, some intent to conceal – as if Nature was some conscious (or anthropomorphic) thing with the ability to conceal Herself. Instead, *κρύπτεσθαι* implies a natural tendency to, the innate quality of, being – and of becoming – concealed or un-revealed.

Thus – and in reference to fragments 1 and 112 – we can understand that *κρύπτεσθαι* suggests that *φύσις* has a natural tendency (the nature, the character) of being and of becoming un-revealed to us, even when it has already been revealed, or dis-covered.

How is or can *Φύσις* (Physis) be uncovered? Through *λόγος* (cf. fragments 1, and 112).

Here, however, *logos* is more than some idealized (or moralistic) *truth* [*ἀληθέα*] and more than is implied by our term *word*. Rather, *logos* is the activity, the seeking, of the essence – the nature, the character – of things [*ἀληθέα* akin to Heidegger's revealing] which essence also has a tendency to become covered by words, and an abstract (false) truth [an abstraction; *εἶδος* and *ἰδέα*] which is projected by us onto things, onto beings and Being.

Thus, and importantly, *λόγος* – understood and applied correctly – can uncover (reveal) *Φύσις* and yet also – misunderstood and used incorrectly – serve to, or be the genesis of the, concealment of *Φύσις*. The correct *logos* – or a correct *logos* – is the

ontology of Being, and the λόγος that is logical reasoning is an essential part of, a necessary foundation of, this ontology of Being, this seeking by φίλος, a friend, of σοφόν. Hence, and correctly, a philosopher is a friend of σοφόν who seeks, through λόγος, to uncover – to understand – Being and beings, and who thus suggests or proposes an ontology of Being.

Essentially, the nature of Physis is to be concealed, or hidden (something of a mystery) even though Physis becomes revealed, or can become revealed, by means such as λόγος. There is, thus, a natural change, a natural unfolding – of which Nature is one manifestation – so that one might suggest that Physis itself is this process [the type of being] of a natural unfolding which can be revealed and which can also be, or sometimes remain, concealed.

Third, φιλεῖ [φίλος] here does not suggest “loves” – nor even a *desire* to – but rather suggests *friend*, companion, as in Homeric usage.

In conclusion, therefore, it is possible to suggest more accurate translations of the phrase Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ. All of which correctly leave Φύσις untranslated (as Physis with a capital P), since Φύσις is the source of certain beings [or, to be precise, Physis is the source of, the being behind, our apprehension of certain beings] of which being Nature is one, and of which our own, individual, character, as a particular human being, is another.

One translation is: *Concealment accompanies Physis*. Or: Concealment remains with Physis, like a friend. Another is: The natural companion of Physis is concealment.

Or, more poetically perhaps, but much less literally, one might suggest: *Physis naturally seeks to remain something of a mystery*.

DW Myatt
2010

Notes:

[1] Fragmentum B 123 – *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* ed. H. Diels, Berlin 1903. If the first letter of φύσις is not capitalized, then the phrase is φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ

Heraclitus flourished c. 545 – 475 BCE.

[2] Nature can be said to be both a type of being, and that innate, creative, force (that is, ψυχή) which animates physical matter and makes it living.

Heraclitus - Notes on Fragment 53

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς
ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.
Heraclitus, Fragmentum 53.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal
beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

As for Πόλεμος - while Heidegger suggested a similarity with λόγος, Πόλεμος is in my
view what the λόγος that is both causal and acausal knowing can uncover, rather than
λόγος itself. That is, the ἀρχή of, the changing, the presencing and re-presencing of
Being which is ψυχή through Αἰών. Hence Πόλεμος is the whole, the complete, the
natural, the cosmological, process which includes ἀρχή, ψυχή, Αἰών, and Φύσις, and
our revealing or coming-to-know these through λόγος. That is, through that thoughtful
reasoning [σωφρονεῖν], that balance (ἀρμονίη) of both a causal knowing and an
acausal knowing. In other words, by means of both empathy, and also by philosophy
and experimental science. In effect, Πόλεμος is an expression of the acausality beyond
our causal ideation, the acausal nature of which both ψυχή and Αἰών manifest [1].

It should be stressed that, correctly understand, Πόλεμος is, in my opinion, neither
the struggle (Kampf) of Heidegger nor the common translation of war. Rather it
suggests - as above - the fundamental acausality beyond Phainómenon: the presencing
of Being as Change, and thus as beings, that has been interpreted, incorrectly because
via causal ideation only, as a dialectic and thus as a conflict, or as conflict as idea.
Neither is Πόλεμος the practical combat as in the *Iliad* (XVIII, 106) - contrasted with
ἔρις in the next verse [2], as it is so contrasted in Fragment 80, attributed to
Heraclitus.

As such acausality, made manifest via ψυχή, Πόλεμος may be said to be the origin of
Δίκη [3] in a similar way to Aeschylus attributing the numinous authority of πάθει
μάθος to Zeus [4].

Thus, our own nature as mortals is that we are part of this acausal change - we have
our genesis (both our life, and our type of living) in this change, in and through and
because of Πόλεμος.

David Myatt
2011 CE

[1] See, for example, my essays, *On The Nature of Abstraction*, and *Empathy and the
Immoral Abstraction of Race*.

[2] οἷος ἐὼν οἷος οὗ τις Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων
ἐν πολέμῳ: ἀγορῇ δέ τ' ἀμείνονές εἰσι καὶ ἄλλοι.

ὥς ἔρις ἔκ τε θεῶν ἔκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλοιτο
καὶ χόλος

[3] For a brief overview of Δίκη, see my essay, *On The Nature of Abstraction*.

[4] Refer, for example, to my *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way*.

The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic

- I - Opposites and Dialectic as Abstractions
- II - The Error of Polemos as Kampf
- III - Being and Empathy

I - Opposites and Dialectic as Abstractions

For well over a hundred years there has been a belief that some kind of process, or dialectic, between or involving certain, particular, opposites might lead us to answer questions such as *Quid est Veritas?*, could lead to a certain understanding of ourselves, and may well express something of the true nature of reality, of Being itself. In varying degrees this belief is evident, for instance, in Hegel, Nietzsche (with his *Wille zur macht*), Marx, and those espousing the doctrine that has been termed Social Darwinism.

In addition, and for a much greater span of causal Time, this belief has been an essential part of certain religions where the process is often expressed eschatologically and in a conjectured conflict between the abstract opposites of 'good' and 'evil', God and Devil, and such things as demons and angels.

This notion of opposites, of two distinct, separate, things is much in evidence in Plato, and indeed, philosophically, the separation of beings from Being by the process of ideation and opposites may be said to have begun with Plato. For instance, he contrasts πόλεμος with στάσις (Conflict/strife contrasted with stasis/stability) thus:

ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῇ τοῦ οἰκείου ἔχθρα στάσις κέκληται, ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ τοῦ ἀλλοτρίου πόλεμος. Rep. V 470b

In respect of these two forms, Plato tries to explain that while there are two terms, two distinct namings - πόλεμος and στάσις - what are so denoted are not just two different names but express what he regards as the reality - the being, οὐσία - of two differing contrasted beings; that is, he posits what we would call two different

ideations, or abstractions, creating an abstract (idealized) form for one and an abstract (idealized) form for the other.

Some centuries later, Diogenes Laërtius - apparently paraphrasing Heraclitus - wrote in his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*:

πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα (ix. 9)

All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia [1].

Which might seem to suggest that a certain mis-understanding of Heraclitus [2]. the ideation of Plato and of later philosophers and theologians, was the genesis of abstractions and of this belief that a so-called conflict of opposites can lead to 'truth', and explain the nature of Being and beings.

However, this ideation, this development of abstractions, and this process of a dialectic, led to the philosophical error of the separation of beings from Being so that instead of the revealing that would answer *Quid est Veritas?* there is ὕβρις with the numinous authority of an individual πάθει μάθος replaced by adherence to some dogmatic dialectical process involving some assumed struggle/conflict. That is, by considering ἀρχή as the cause of the abstractions which are opposites and the origin of a dialectic, and which opposites, and which dialectic involving them, are said to manifest the nature of both our being and of Being itself.

This is an error because Πόλεμος is neither Kampf nor conflict, but rather - as the quote from Diogenes Laërtius suggests - what lies behind or beyond Phainómenon; that is, non-temporal, non-causal, Being which, though we have have a natural tendency to separate into portions (that is, to perceive beings as only beings), beings themselves become revealed as bound together again by us facing up to the expected contest: that is, to our human nature and to knowing, to developing, to using, our faculty of reasoned judgement - σωφρονεῖν - to uncover, to reveal, via λόγος, the true nature of Δίκαια and thus restore ἀρμονίη [3].

That is, instead of this abstraction of a dialectic there is, as I have suggested elsewhere:

A natural process of Change, of ἀρχή which we apprehend as Φύσις - as Heraclitus expressed in fragment 112:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας.

This suggests that what is most excellent [ἀρετὴ] is thoughtful reasoning [σωφρονεῖν] - and that such thoughtful reasoning is a process which not only expresses and uncovers meaning, but which is also in accord with, in

harmony or in sympathy with, *φύσις* – that is, with our own nature as mortals and with the nature of Being itself. [4]

II - The Error of Polemos as Kampf

In a fragment attributed to Heraclitus [5] *Πόλεμος* is generally regarded as a synonym for either *kampf*, or more generally, for war; with the fragment then considered to mean something such as: strife (or war) is the father of every-thing. This interpretation is said to compliment another fragment attributed to Heraclitus:

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]. Fragmentum 80.

This is generally considered to mean something abstract such as: war is everywhere and strife is justice and all that is arises and passes away because of strife.

However, I contend that this older understanding of - the accepted rendition of - *Πόλεμος* is a misinterpretation of *Πόλεμος* [6], and that rather than *kampf* (struggle), or a general type of strife, or what we now associate with the term war, *Πόλεμος* implies the acausality (a simultaneity) beyond our causal ideation, and which ideation has separated object from subject, and often abstracted them into seemingly conflicting opposites. Hence my interpretation of Fragmentum 53:

Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.

Hence also my interpretation of *εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]* as:

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord. [7]

Thus the suggestion is that *Πόλεμος* is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but not only that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being, but also that which manifests as *δίκη* and accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being (become bound together - be whole - again).

For it is perhaps interesting that in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) married a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) [8] and that it was a common folk belief that πόλεμος accompanied ὕβρις - that is, that Polemos followed Hubris around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing ἔρις.

As a result of ἔρις, there often arises πάθει μάθος - that practical and personal knowing, that reasoned understanding which, according to Aeschylus [9] is the new law, the new understanding, given by Zeus to replace the older more religious and dogmatic way of fear and dread, often viewed as Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες [10]. A new understanding which Aeschylus sought to explain in the *Oresteia*.

III - Being and Empathy

This new understanding is basically the culture of ἀρετή:

This *culture of ἀρετή* is a particular balance - born from πάθει μάθος (from the personal knowing of the error, the unbalance, that is ὕβρις) and from using reasoned judgement (σωφρονεῖν), and both of which make us aware of the true nature of our φύσις and of Φύσις itself. [11]

In addition, by cultivating and by using our natural faculty of empathy, which is part of λόγος [12], we can understand both φύσις and Πόλεμος, and thus apprehend Being as Being, and the nature of beings - and in particular the nature of our being, as mortals. For empathy reveals to us the acausality of Being [13] and thus how the process of abstraction, involving as it does an imposition of causality and separation upon beings (and the ideation implicit on opposites and dialectic), is a covering-up of Being and of Πόλεμος and thus involves a mis-understanding of both Δίκη and of φύσις.

In place of the numinosity of ψυχή - of Life qua being - there is, for the apprehension that is a dialectic of opposites, the hubris of abstractions, and thus a loss of our natural balance, a loss of ἀρμονίη [14] and συμπάθεια.

David Myatt
April 2011 CE

Notes

[1] I have used a transliteration of the compound Greek word - ἐναντιοδρομίας - rather than given a particular translation, since the term enantiodromia in my view

suggests the uniqueness of expression of the original, and which original in my view is not adequately, and most certainly not accurately, described by a usual translation such as 'conflict of opposites'. Rather, what is suggested is 'confrontational contest' - that is, by facing up to the expected/planned/inevitable contest.

Interestingly, Carl Jung - who was familiar with the sayings of Heraclitus - used the term enantiodromia to describe the emergence of a trait (of character) to offset another trait and so restore a certain psychological balance within the individual.

[2] Refer to my (a) *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*; (b) *Heraclitus - Notes on Fragment 53*; (b) *Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* (forthcoming); (c) *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*.

[3] While Φύσις (Physis) has a natural tendency to become covered up (Heraclitus, Fragment 123) it can be uncovered through λόγος and πάθει μάθος.

[4] In *Empathy and The Immoral Abstraction of Race*

[5]
Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους. Fragmentum 53.

[6] See my *Heraclitus - Notes on Fragment 53*, and my *Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80*.

In the former article, I suggest a new interpretation of Fragmentum 53: *Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound.*

[7] I have deliberately transliterated (instead of translated) polemos, and left δίκη as δίκη. In respect of δίκη, see my essay *Quid Est Veritas?*

Alternative renderings of the fragment are:

One should be aware that polemos is pervasive; and discord δίκη, and that beings [our being] quite naturally come-into-being through discord

One should be aware that polemos pervades; with discord δίκη, and that all beings are begotten because of discord.

[8] Correctly understood, a δαίμων is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - θεοί - but rather a lesser type of divinity who might be assigned by those gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or watch over certain human beings and especially particular numinous (sacred) places.

In addition, Polemos was originally the δαίμων of kindred strife, whether familial, or of one's πόλις (one's clan and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of conflict (or war), is doubly incorrect.

It is interesting to observe how the term *δαίμων* - with and after Plato, and especially by its (mis) use by the early Christian Church - came to be a moral abstraction, used in a bad sense (as 'demon'), and contrasted with another moral abstraction, that of 'angels'. Indeed, this process - this change - with this particular term is a reasonable metaphor for what we may call the manufacture and development of abstractions, and in which development the ontology and theology of an organized monotheistic religion played a not insignificant part.

[9] Agamemnon, 174-183. qv. my essay, *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way - The Numinous Authority of πάθει μάθος*

[10] Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6

[11] Myatt, David: *Quid Est Veritas?* (2011)

[12] As mentioned in my *Pre-Socratic Philosophy, The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions*, *λόγος* is manifest to us in both empathy and reason.

[13] qv. *Some Notes Concerning Causality, Ethics, and Acausal Knowing*.

[14] "...the *numinous* is what predisposes us not to commit *ὑβρις* - that is, what continues or maintains or manifests *ἀρμονίη* and thus *καλλός*; the natural balance - *sans* abstractions - that enables us to know and appreciate, and which uncovers, *Φύσις* and *λόγος*, and *τὸ καλόν*." Pre-Socratic Philosophy, *The Numinous Way, Aesthetics, and Other Questions*

The Principle of Δίκη

Δίκη is that noble, respectful, balance understood, for example, by Sophocles (among many others) - for instance, Antigone respects the natural balance, the customs and traditions of her own numinous culture, given by the gods, whereas Creon verges towards and finally commits, like Oedipus in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the error of *ὑβρις* and is thus "taught a lesson" (just like Oedipus) by the gods because, as Aeschylus wrote [\[1\]](#) -

Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσιν
μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει

In respect of Δίκη, I write - spell - it thus in this modern way with a capital Δ to

intimate a new, a particular and numinous, philosophical principle, and differentiate it from the more general *δίκη*. As a numinous principle, or axiom, *Δίκη* thus suggests what lies beyond and what was the genesis of *δίκη* personified as the goddess, Judgement – the goddess of natural balance, of the ancestral way and ancestral customs.

Thus, *Δίκη* implies the balance, the reasoned judgement, the thoughtful reasoning – *σωφρονεῖν* – that *πάθει μάθος* brings and restores, and which accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of a particular folk or *πόλις* forms the basis for their ancestral customs. *δίκη* is therefore, as the numinous principle *Δίκη*, what may be said to be a particular and a necessary balance between *ἀρετή* and *ὑβρις* – between the *ὑβρις* that often results when the personal, the natural, quest for *ἀρετή* becomes unbalanced and excessive.

That is, when *ἔρις* (discord) is or becomes *δίκη* – as suggested by Heraclitus in Fragment 80 [2] –

εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]

One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord *δίκη*, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

David Myatt
2011 CE

Notes

[1]

Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσιν μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει

The goddess, Judgement, favours someone *learning from adversity*.

Aeschylus: Agamemnon, 250-251

[2] Refer to my essay *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80*.

cc David Myatt 2012 CE

Second Edition



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Image credit:

Attic Vase c. 480 BCE, depicting Athena (Antikensammlungen, Munich, Germany)

The Sun, The City

The Sun, the city, to wear such sadness down
For I am only one among the many
Where a night-of-dreams becomes unreal
With all that is human living, dwelling,
Faster slower slowing grateful hateful hoping loving
Here:
No Time to relay the inner rush of sorrow
That breaks, broken, by some scheming need to-be
Since the 1-train, conveying, is here to grace me
In perspective.

But there are moments, to still,
When - tasks, duty - done
That inner quietness betrays
So that I sit where

The Sun of English Summer
Would could bring me down
There where the meadow grass had grown
Green greener drier keener
And farm's field by hedge with scent
Would keep me still but sweating -
No cider to induce
Then that needed paradisal-sleep.

And now: now I only this all this,
One being cavorting where one past melds
To keep me silent, still, so that the sidewalk
Is only that sidewalk, there
Where hope, clustering, fastly moves us
On.
Good, bad, indifferent - it makes no difference:
I am no one to judge so many, any,
So that there is - becomes - only the walk faster slower slowing here
And we free in Sun to trust to sleep to-be to seep a dream
Bought at some cost, to many:

Fidelis ad Mortem

And yet there is the Sun, the city, to witness how we can should must break
Such sadness down.

David Myatt
2012 ce

Relict

A Selection of Poems by David Myatt



My poetry was composed between the years 1971-2011 CE, and is of varying quality. Having recently undertaken the onerous task of re-reading those poems that I still have copies of, there are in my view only around a dozen that I now consider good enough to be read by others. This collection contains these poems.

DW Myatt 2011 CE

One Exquisite Silence

These are the moments of an exquisite silence
As we lie together on your sofa, holding, pressing
Our bodies together
As I, gently, stroke your face and hair
And you kiss each finger of my hand.

There is a fire of logs to warm us,
As night descends:

There are no words to confuse,
No time, as we flow, together,
As clouds on a warm Summer's day
Beneath a dome of blue.

There is a peace, here, which fills us
As if we are the world and all the beautiful, peaceful, things
Of the world.

Nearby, your two ginger cats sleep
Secure in the warmth of their world
As we are secured while we lie,
Wordless, feeling those subtle energies

Born from no barriers:
You are me as I am you,
In such exquisite moments.

But you belong to another
And it is against my will, my dreams, desires
That I leave
To walk the lonely miles under moonlight
To where a dreary lamp lights my empty room.

(2003 CE)

Dark Clouds of Thunder

The moment of sublime knowing
As clouds part above the Bay
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain
Still falling:
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder
Have given way to blue
Such that the tide, turning,
Begins to break my vow of distance
Down.

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest
Takes him where
This bearded man of greying hair
No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling

(c. 2010 CE)

Wine

Stale
I once drank you
Knowing no difference because of herbs.

She held me, her cunning hands
That did not wish
Nor offer the warmth that snared my soul:
The wine was
Intoxicating our senses
But only I was drunk:
She laughed.

I needed rest
Dreaming marriage under sun -
Until bright morning came
When she, alas, changed
Her form in the reality of the room
And I was left to walk with my sack
Down the dusty track
Past a grove of sun-burnt trees
Toward those distant hills:

And yet the white-washed house was only
One step
Along my Way.

No Sun To Warm

There is an ineffable sadness
For your eyes betray that warmth, that beauty,
That brings me down
To where even my street-hardened Will cannot go:
So I am sad, almost crying

Outside, there is no sun to warm
As yesterday when I touched the warmth of your breasts
And the wordless joy of ecstatic youth

Lived to suffuse if only briefly with world-defying life
This tired battle-bruised body

But now: clouds, rain-bleakness
To darken such dreams as break me.
For there are many places I cannot go.

(1974 CE)

The Sun of Warm November

So this is Peace:
As the Sun of warm November
Warms and the grass grows with such mildness.

No strife, here;
No place beyond this place
As Farm meets meadow field
And I upon some hessian sack sit, write
To hear some distant calls from hedged-in sheep:
No breeze
To stir the fallen leaves
That lie among the seeds, there
Where the old Oak towers, shading fence
From Sun
And the pond is hazed with midges.

So this is the peace, found
Where dew persists,
Flies feed to preen to rest
And two Robins call from among that tangled brambled
Bush
Whose berries - unplucked, ripened - rot,
While the Fox-worn trail wobbles
Snaking
Through three fields.

So, the silent Buzzard soars
To shade me briefly:

No haste, worry, nor Homo Hubris, here
Only that, of this, a peaceful peace
Rising
When we who wait, wait to walk with Nature.

So there is much sadness, leaving
As the damp field-mists of morning
Have given way
To Sun

Closeness Becomes Us

This is the life of silence
As she lives warm, within -
There where a net of dreams is woven
By a day's walk, a night's love,
And those hopes that stretched out as our hands entwining
Seeking some horizon
Beyond
Where the cloudy sky of our dull October day
Became the silky sandful warmful Summer smoothness of beach
Beside a sea azure, Sunful, clear - and warming.

These are the moments of her silence
As she lies warm within such arms as hold her
And the blood of sleep, slowing, keeps her still
Because the nighful sky of night is still
With stars
And the breath to keep her living
Is a gentle tide to ebb to rise to flow
Upon our shore of sharing.

There is sand still - a little - between her toes
Unwashed by such haste as brought us
Back, back to one bed shared
Because we could not would not wait
To be together to seep again
Here where, door locked, the world divides
To be only that which we feel dream see, and flow

Here where daylight seeped sepia-softly
To become our starlit night bright
With stars.

Now, now surely I have dreams memories ecstasy enough
To keep the inner smile
As time, my time, seeps to break me
As those three score years and ten seek to break
Each Earth-dwelling being of Life.

So, three decades older, I touch and touch with gentle touch
The warm soft tautful flesh that keeps her youth
The way our warmth melds us
As the scent of night, sea and sex
Melds together to be a perfume for her Sun
To warm me here
Where I am nothing more than moments.

For these are such moments of a loveful silence
Seeping
That I could die here peaceful in her sleepful scented arms

(2009 CE)

Wandering English Lanes

What is there left but each passing moment, past?
No *-ism*, *-ology*, idea here to break our balanced Earthful connexion:
As that butterfly there is only that butterfly-there,
Moving as all futures unplanned.
No goal to satiate as haste hungers so many humans.

For what is, is only that knowing of this -
A Time unmeasured in duration,
Flowing as Sun above horizon there:
No hours as slope of hill meets with river field,
Only Skylarks rising, since Spring, begun, is fading fast to Summer
And river flowing slows to greet in greeting that bending bend, there.

Warm to humid here where hedge agrees with verge
And which, uncut, so keeps our english-green:
And I am this all this and sighing sit with almost tears.
One car - from what to where - speeding and then the breeze
To seep in peaceful peace.
So sleep with Sun until walk to Inn to satiate a thirst.

What is there left then but wandering rencounter
Back where weird beings seeding merge themselves
With cars.

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A Summer Sun

Crows calling while sheep cry
By the road that shall take them
To their death:

I sit, while sun lasts
And bleeds my body dry
In this last hour before dark
On a day when a warm wind
Carried the rain that washed
A little of this valley
Like the stream washes
My rock:

There are no trees to soften
This sun - only heather and fern
To break the sides of the hill.

I cannot keep this peace
I have found -
It seems unformed like water
Becomes unformed without a vessel
A channel or some stream:
It cannot be contained

As I contain my passion and my dreams.

There are no answers I can find
Only the vessel of walks in hills
Alone
Whereby I who seek
Am brought toward the magick peak
That keeps this hidden world
Alive:

It does not last
But like the cirrus cloud
Is blown by breeze to free
A summer sun.

DW Myatt

Only Time Has Stopped

Here I have stopped
Because only Time goes on within my dream:
Yesterday I was awoken, again,
And she held me down
With her body warmth
Until, satisfied, I went alone
Walking
And trying to remember:

A sun in a white clouded sky
Morning dawn yellow
Sways the breath that, hot, I exhale tasting of her lips.
The water has cut, deep, into
The estuary bank
And the mallard swims against the flow -
No movement, only effort.
Nearby - the foreign ship which brought me
Is held by rusty chains
Which, one day and soon
And peeling them like its paint,
Must leave.

Here I shall begin again
Because Time, at last, has stopped
Since I have remembered the dark ecstasy
Which brought that war-seeking Dream

(c. 1978 CE)

Relict

Sun, broken by branch, seeps
Into mist
Where spreading roots have cracked
The stones, overgrown, perhaps,
For an hundred years

From a seed, flesh fed, the oak
Sheltering

Mary
Relict of William

And a breeze, stirring again
This year
The leaves of an Autumn's green gold

(1976 CE)

The Two Faces

I am the two faces of God -
Vox Patris Caelestis -
While, within, a lewd Satan grins
Playing at Change:
My pieces are human who cried
At my hurt.

I am alone, the cry
While Treble voices sing
Echoing, and strange shadows long dead
Dance too briefly along the cloister wall.
There is pain as I stare

Past dying sun and a valley
Winter cold
Trying to believe while stars break

And a crescent moon
Glowing like the whore's eyes
In that dark room
Jibbers over the heavy breasts
Of the hill:
No cloud
To veil her shame.

No one, nothing
Answers. Only
Air, and I sit, still waiting
And remembering prayer.
In the ruins, my dead self comes to life
Rising slowly, worm-slowly
To the first singing blackness
Of night.

No answers, nothing:
Only this tramp sheltering
In the ruins of a church -
And memories, yes there are memories
Glowing
Like the lies of my life

(1974)

Letter

It is raining
And I am watered
And cold

There is warmth in love
Which explains my wait
By this road while cars pass
Noisy in the shielding dark:

My spirit is not seen as it sits
On the wooden bench where hill
Meets valley sky
And where a standing stone waits
To whisper words
Of a language that has died.
But I listen, while rain falls,
Hearing your cry.

Always a dream or a memory
Lead us on
And we wait like children
Trusting in the spirits of the Earth.
We love unsuspecting
While they our lovers scheme,
Succour themselves on our blood
And bleed us dry.

There is a sun as we sit
In the heat of a summer
On this bench as new lovers
Holding hands -
Transmuting all the dark days
The tears of our past
In the touch that mingles our auras
As they must be mingled to bring
The words of our waiting stone
Alive:

Always this dream
Leads me on.

But it is raining
And in the rain I hear
Your spirit cry

(1987 CE)

cc David Myatt 2011 CE



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Such A Poem As This

There is work - the overtime - long walks under Sun, stars
To keep me distracted
For there is then no hours-long dwelling on your absence:
But this music undid such willful cunning plans:

You were there, then, as that Lute sounded,
Here, so real in memory, I touched our dream:
Warm, sensuous, as when that day I held your hand, felt your body
And empathy, sorrow, memory, made you cry.
I loved you then in that moment with a strength which surprised me
And had to fight to keep
That truth, my tears, from bursting forth:
Such love a torrent sweeping my calm of years
Away.

This week will become the month of loss,
This month a toil endured
As when the weary soil, drought-kept,
Waits, waiting, to bring forth flowering joy from seeds,
Like memory, sown from tears that are earth's rain,
My pain.

I know - and because I know the you
The years of sadness, doubt, self-loathing, hid and hides away,
I love the love that has no words I know:
Such love that is only the touch of you, the smile of you, the need of you, the scent of you,
The longing to be with you as if my love might redeem
The sorrows which made you hide
Still hiding a hope, within.

So much to say before you travel to stay a month away
With he who is your choice:
So much to miss I am, will be, lost
Needing now to run the miles to your house

Bearing such a poem as this.
This is all I have -
No house, car, money, prospects.
Only a love, a dream
Seen when I kissed your tears before you rested your head
On my shoulder that one night of belonging
When we knew, felt, touched, remembered, the essence.

But - three decades of love, thwarted - I am no longer naive enough to believe
You will be mine
And so I shall not, cannot, will not - must not - call upon you bearing
Such a poem as this.

David Myatt
2003 ce

Letter

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And I am watered
And cold

There is warmth in love
Which explains my wait
By this road while cars pass
Noisy in the shielding dark:
My spirit is not seen as it sits
On the wooden bench where hill
Meets valley sky
And where a standing stone waits
To whisper words
Of a language that has died.
But I listen, while rain falls,
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Transmuting all the dark days
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In the touch that mingles our auras
As they must be mingled to bring
The words of our waiting stone
Alive:

Always this dream
Leads me on.

But it is raining
And in the rain I hear
Your spirit cry

DW Myatt
(1987)

In A Foreign Land

Hot, this sun while it breaks
As I sit quite still
Beneath cloud
On a white bench watching
Flies spiral for shade.

My head is at peace
While the body waits
In this Park
Where each shade of Summer green
Becomes real in this light
And trees speak, slowly,
Of their fears of being
Half alive:

Around
The chanted tuneless hymns
To the god of Noise.
I met this god, once:
I was young, inexperienced, while he
Tall and unspeaking
Glowered
Pointing to the deaths, the madness,
He had caused.
And I: I smiled, a little sad,
And walked away to seek
The human warmth
Of love.

For years, a war in my head
While I sought to find
A dream:
She was never real, my dream

But there was magick, I found
In sitting silent

While beams of Sun become filtered
And fractured through leaves:
A joy in watching while clouds form
And break, casting
In their myriad ways
This Sun's gift of life.
There is ecstasy in walking
High upon hills while wind cries
Or thunders:
No suffering, except hunger,
While I wait for my Dark Daughters
Of Earth;
No pain of dreams destroyed.

Now there is rain to make me
Take up my sack and walk
As a wanderer in creaking boots
To where the Spirits of my waiting Woods
Will sigh:
Without his dreams,
He would be nothing
And I shall smile while, hot,
The Summer Sun breaks briefly
To dry my rain-soaked back

DW Myatt
(1978 ce)
