

Personal Honour And A Vexatious Question

A dialogue between Rufus Malisius and David Myatt on the Memorial Day of Anselm, Benedictine Monk, 2026.



R.M. In the article *A Prejudice By Any Other Name*, dated Spring Equinox 2026, [1] the authors suggested that two items by two individuals associated with academia, one published in 2024 and the other in 2025, were indicative of a prejudice toward you, with the authors of that article quoting the definition of prejudice in the Oxford English Dictionary:

"a judgement formed before due examination or consideration; a premature or hasty judgement; a prejudgement; preconceived opinion not based on reason or actual experience; bias, partiality; unreasoned dislike, hostility; an unreasoning preference or objection; a preliminary or anticipatory judgement; a feeling, favourable or unfavourable, towards any person or thing, prior to or not based on actual experience; a prepossession; a bias or leaning to one side; an unreasoning predilection or objection." [2]

They also helpfully provided a definition of academia:

"A place where the arts and sciences are taught; an institution for the study of higher learning; in the general sense including a university, but in popular usage restricted to an educational institution claiming to hold a rank between a university or college and a school." [3]

Would you agree that those two individuals associated with academia were prejudiced?

D.M. Since those two individuals have apparently dismissed all my post-2012 writings, and thus my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos, on the assumption that such writings embody deception, then yes I do agree that those two are prejudiced. For they provided no evidence from their own research using primary sources [4] to support their allegation, nor provided any corroborating evidence from others who have undertaken such research because no such corroborating evidence exists since to date, so far as I know, no one, associated with academia or otherwise, has done such research.

I also agree with the assessment by the authors of that Equinoxal article that the allegation of those writings, and of my public rejection of extremism, being deceptive is a "phantasmagorical development" with me thus a shifting (or should that be, a shifty) figure conjured up in the imagination and through the medium of words spoken and written.

A development, however, that is not particularly new, having been made a decade or so previously by some individuals connected to a particular and political 'policy group'.

R.M. Didn't you archaistically challenge one of those allegationists to a duel of honour according to the etiquette of European duelling for spreading lies about you?

D.M. Indeed. I did challenge one of them to a duel although it was not an archaistic challenge since I did then and do now believe that a person is accountable, on an individual basis, for their behaviour and words with such a challenge involving the use of deadly weapons a most excellent, if not the most excellent, means of such personal accountability. A few others, and they are few, seem to agree with me since they have quoted from one of my writings [5] which mentioned such a challenge:

"In respect of rumours and allegations, I have, on a few occasions, challenged some individuals to a duel with deadly weapons, according to the etiquette of duelling. Not one of the individuals so challenged to a duel had the honour to accept, or issue a public apology in lieu of fighting such a duel. As I wrote some thirteen or more years ago:

I have never bothered to have recourse to civil law, and established Courts, to sue those making libellous allegations about me quite simply because the only law I believe in and strive to uphold is the law of personal honour. Given that I have challenged two journalists, according to the law of personal honour, to a duel with deadly weapons for making such malicious allegations, and given that they did not have the honour to accept this challenge or issue an apology in lieu of fighting a duel, I consider my honour vindicated [...]

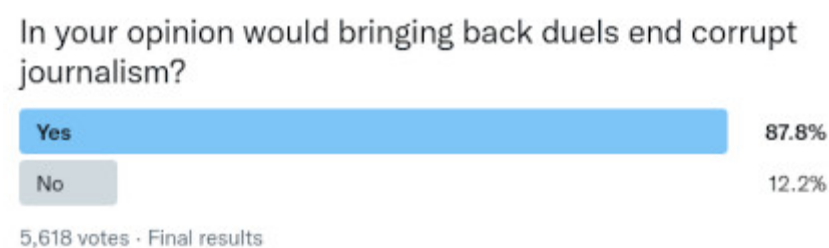
Such challenges, the lack of evidence to support the allegations and rumours, and the refusal of those so challenged to a duel of honour to either fight that duel of honour or issue an apology, reveals the truth of this particular matter – at least to those possessed of arête."

R.M. By arête I assume you used it in the classical sense - ἀρετή - to refer to a personal virtue such as dignity and valour?

D.M. Yes, and applicable in classical and later times to both men and women, as in Homer in reference to the wife of Odysseus:

ἡμεῖς δ' αὖ ποτιδέγμενοι ἥματα πάντα
εἵνεκα τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐριδαίνομεν, οὐδὲ μετ' ἄλλας 206
ἐρχόμεθ', ἃς ἐπιεικὲς ὀπυιέμεν ἐστὶν ἐκάστω
τὸν δ' αὖ Τηλέμαχος πεπνυμένος ἀντίον ἤϋδα

R.M. Some years ago there was a question about duelling on a 'social media' platform with the majority of respondents being in favour of it as a means of keeping journalists fair-minded.



My question is: do you wish you lived in an earlier time when duelling was acceptable among a certain type of people and thus before the advent of the Internet which has enabled individuals to often anonymously make and widely spread allegations about a person without any consequences?

DM. If I had been asked that question some twenty or more years ago my answer would probably have been 'yes' with my decades-long extremist peregrinations in one way a now regretted means to try and presence a new type of society where that virtue of a personal challenge and honourable accountability, and of single combat between protagonists on a field of battle between two armed forces, was a way to reveal ἀρετή and to settle disputes. With one memorable, and for me inspiring, person who undertook several such challenges on the field of battle Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Now, however, my perspective is not that of transient supra-personal presencings, political, religious, or social, whose causal dialectical nature, Certitude-of-Knowing, and embedded impersonal abstractions impel change, opposition, and imply conflict, suffering, and a limited life-span for such a presencing albeit sometimes of centuries; but of a personal, family, and sometimes communal, living whose horizons are of empathy, of compassion, and of what I have poorly-described as honour in the immediacy-of-the-personal-moment when a personal situation or encounter may require the individual human presencing of that personal virtue.

R.M. Would you consider the killing of Agamemnon by his wife Klytemnestra as described by Aeschylus such a necessary personal presencing of honour?

DM. A very interesting question, which Aeschylus in his Oresteia trilogy ventured to answer, and a question which I sought to satisfactorily answer for several decades with my answer differing from that of Aeschylus. In the *Agamemnon*, Klytaemnestra justifies her killing of her husband:

καὶ τήνδ' ἀκούεις ὀρκίων ἐμῶν θέμιν:
μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην,
Ἄτην Ἑρινύν θ'

I swear by the goddess, Fairness, that I accomplished this for my daughter -
And also by Ἄτη and Erinys for whom I slit his throat. [6]

In *The Libation Bearers*, Aeschylus has her son, Orestes, after disguising himself and befriending his mother, plan with his sister Electra, and as the god Apollo suggests, to avenge that killing. But after killing his mother and her lover, Orestes is pursued by the Furies (Ἑρινύες) who as was the custom seek a revengeful retribution and continually torment him.

In a drama attributed to Aeschylus a rhetorical question was asked then answered:

τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστροφός.
Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἑρινύες

Who then compels to steer us?
Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies!

Prometheus Bound, 515-6

In *The Eumenides*, Aeschylus has the Furies, with the aid of Athena, transformed, so that instead of being agents of revengeful personal and kindred retribution they oversee a more social, civic, form of order or balance [7] with there being a natural transition, not a revolution with the inevitable conflict; part of which transition is the Zeus-given code, or 'law', of *pathei-mathos*, of which Aeschylus writes in the *Agamemnon*,

Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν:
ὄν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδῶ-
σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.
174-183

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.

My own answer suggests neither the revengeful retribution of the Furies nor the more civic, 'Eumenidian', one of Aeschylus, but of empathy and a 'letting-be' (wu-wei) of what is beyond the immediacy of our individual moments, combined with the knowing born of a personal *pathei-mathos* that wordlessly reveals or has revealed the causes of suffering and its cyclicity. There is thus a personal Uncertainty-of-Knowing rather than that Certitude-of-Knowing which is almost invariably embedded, via the medium of words, in a law, in a diktat, or in some proclamation by some supra-personal (higher) authority, by some tyrannos, or by some potentate.

Prior to this change it was an Aeon of the gods offering tempting gifts to or having favourites or enemies among mortals, examples being Poseidon and Odysseus, and Aphrodite and Paris. As Heraclitus mentioned:

αἰὼν παῖς ἐστὶ παίζων πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἢ βασιλῆϊ

For Aeon, we are a game, pieces moved on some board: since, in this world of ours, we are but children. [Fragment 52]

This move from a society of personal and family revenge toward what I have temerously termed a Eumenidian society seems to be echoed in later post-classical societies where δίκη - or as in the weltanschauung of pathei-mathos of Δικα/Δίκᾱ [8] - was often the judgement or the will of a potentate (usually a King) or of a tyrant/dictator, and in our times the judgement by an impersonal judicial system based on laws or decrees by some supra-personal government or authority, elected and unelected.

In all these Aeons the judgement of the individual, born of pathei-mathos, is still ultimately subservient to, capable of being over-ruled by, some higher authority or more specifically by those acting on behalf of and given the necessary judgemental powers by that higher authority. That is, no way of communal living has emerged wherein such individual judgement is the guide rather than the exception.

Which returns us to the duel of honour where judgement is a personal and immediate matter between two individuals and decided without any intervention in whatever form by a higher authority. But can there be a type of society, a type of communal living, wherein such a test of personal character can not only exist but flourish as a way, for those accepting of it, of arriving at a judgment regarding a particular and personal matter? For in such communal ways of living, societies, as now exist such a personal and deadly way of deciding is at best deprecated and at worst outlawed. Which is perhaps why some who prefer their personal judgement to the impersonal judgment of a higher authority choose to live in that manner which has been termed "off-grid".

Are we still children who have to be overseen by some parental-type authority be that the gods; by some authority believed to be sanctioned by *the* god, ὁ θεός; by some authority believed to be sanctioned by 'the will of the people' which will is decided by a mechanism such as elections or in some cases by an armed revolution; or by some human-manufactured idea/ideal (ἰδέα/εἶδος) named Justice believed to be enshrined in various laws?

R.M. To which your answer is?

D.M. I have no definitive answer only the tentative one briefly described in a 2025 missive:

"In considering the 'numinous way of pathei-mathos' a somewhat vexatious question, which was briefly touched upon in a May 2025 interview, [9] is in regard to following what one's empathy and pathei-mathos (one's conscience) suggest in relation to what some authority in a nation-State has suggested we do, or even in law has demanded we should not do, such as the edicts during a certain period of English history which forbade performance of the Catholic Mass and the publication and distribution of items in support of Catholicism.

The vexatious question: is what our empathy and/or our pathei-mathos suggest we do always by its nature a private matter, or could it sometimes be a public matter suggestive of some kind of public statement or activity? A corollary being whether all, or only some, types of public statement or activity are political.

My own answer, derived from my pathei-mathos and my understanding of what is political [10] suggests that it is a private matter, a 'letting-be' of what is presenced at a particular causal Time in the particular society in which we live because we feel or we have discovered that all such societies, as the particular governance of a particular society, will change because their very existence, their physis, is causal, as are the causal abstractions (the ideas, ideals, the -isms and the -ologies) all societies are derived from and as are the mortals who believe, or who follow, or who seek to presence such

abstractions, even when before their fated dying they are changed, reformed, overthrown, by such causal mechanisms as changes in governance, civil disobedience, revolution, invasion, war and armed occupation.

My answer is only my fallible answer, and being fallible, causal, and causally presenced, possesses no authority beyond that of guiding me." [11]

R.M. But in the personal and non-political matter of known persons making allegations about an individual you still accept that duelling with deadly weapons is sometimes necessary?

D.M. As I noted in a previous reply, my understanding of honour now is that it may be necessary in the immediacy-of-the-personal-moment when a personal situation or encounter may require the individual human presencing of that personal virtue. Some allegation made by some person by means of some impersonal medium while an expression, a manifestation, of their physis, their character, is not of the immediacy-of-the-personal-moment as would be the case were that person to have the character, the dignity and courage, of saying it person-to-person.

But whether some allegation were it to be personally made requires the response of such a challenge is a question for each individual to answer, again in the immediacy-of-the-personal-moment.

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Footnotes

[1] <https://archive.org/download/a-prejudice-by-any-other-name/a-prejudice-by-any-other-name.pdf>

[2] Oxford English Dictionary, second edition, Oxford University Press, 1989, volume 12 (Poi-Que, p.356)

[3] Oxford English Dictionary, second edition, Oxford University Press, 1989, volume 1 (A-Baz, p.64)

[4] In his *Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos*, Myatt wrote:

"Among primary sources are original manuscripts germane to the subject or to a historical person, such as in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, Papyrus Bodmer in the Vatican Library, and in the case of Sappho fragments of papyri such as P. Oxyrhynchus. XV, 1787 fr. 1 and 2; archaeological or fossil remains from an historical period; contemporaneous manuscripts, letters, diaries, memoirs, personal journals, interviews, speeches, and other materials which describe or relate (i) events in which a person or persons participated in or observers of, (ii) ideas or creations, such as music, a philosophy, works of literature, poetry, and art-work which a person was responsible for and also their published writings in their original language, and authenticated manuscripts published and unpublished.

The writings, opinions, and conclusions of others about such subjects or persons are secondary sources, with tertiary sources a collection or compendium of such secondary sources. In regard to the original language of primary sources, if a person venturing an opinion about such material cannot read the original language, and does not personally translate such a work or passages from such a work and thus has to use the translations of others then their opinions and conclusions about that work are secondary sources." pp.794-5, of *Selected Writings*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/selected-writings-dwm.pdf>

[5] <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/dwm-a-matter-of-honour.pdf>

[6] In his translation of a passage from Hesiod's "Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι [Works and Days], vv 213-218, Myatt

describes Ἄτη as the goddess of Mischief. His translation, and the accompanying notes, are:

σὺ δ' ἄκουε δίκης, μηδ' ὕβριν ὄφελλε: ὕβρις γάρ τε κακὴ δειλῷ βροτῷ: οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλὸς
215 ῥηιδίως φερέμεν δύναται, βαρύθει δέ θ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς
ἐγκύρσας ἄτησιν: ὁδὸς δ' ἐτέρηφι παρελθεῖν
κρείσσων ἐς τὰ δίκαια: Δίκη δ' ὑπὲρ Ὑβριος ἴσχει
ἐς τέλος ἐξελθοῦσα: παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω

You should listen to [the goddess] Fairness and not oblige Hubris
Since Hubris harms unfortunate mortals while even the more fortunate
Are not equal to carrying that heavy a burden, meeting as they do with Mischief.
The best path to take is the opposite one: that of honour
For, in the end, Fairness is above Hubris
Which is something the young come to learn from adversity.

Notes:

a. δίκη. The goddess of Fairness/Justice/Judgement, and – importantly – of Tradition (Ancestral Custom). In Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, as in Θεογονία (Theogony), Hesiod is recounting and explaining part of that tradition, one important aspect of which tradition is understanding the relation between the gods and mortals. Given both the antiquity of the text and the context, 'Fairness' – as the name of the goddess – is, in my view, more appropriate than the now common appellation 'Justice', considering the modern (oft times impersonal) connotations of the word 'justice'.

b. Mischief. The sense of ἄτησιν here is not of 'delusion' nor of 'calamities', per se, but rather of encountering that which or those whom (such as the goddess of mischief, Ἄτη) can bring mischief or misfortune into the 'fortunate life' of a 'fortunate mortal', and which encounters are, according to classical tradition, considered as having been instigated by the gods. Hence, of course, why Sophocles [Antigone, 1337-8] wrote ὡς πεπρωμένης οὐκ ἔστι θνητοῖς συμφορᾶς ἀπαλλαγὴ (mortals cannot be delivered from the misfortunes of their fate).

c. δίκαιος. Honour expresses the sense that is meant: of being fair; capable of doing the decent thing; of dutifully observing ancestral customs. A reasonable alternative for 'honour' would thus be 'decency', both preferable to words such as 'just' and 'justice' which are not only too impersonal but have too many inappropriate modern connotations.

d. νήπιος. Literal – 'young', 'uncultured' (i.e. un-schooled, un-educated in the ways of ancestral custom) – rather than metaphorical ('foolish', ignorant).

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Source: Commentary to Ἱερός Λόγος, An Esoteric Mythos, Tractate III, pp. 412-413 of *DW Myatt: Greek And Latin Translations*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/dwm_translations.pdf

[7] By 'balance' Myatt is referring to his interpretation of δίκη, qv. footnote [8].

[8] As Myatt notes in Appendix I of his book *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*:

Δίκαι 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 παθοῦσ-
ιν 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.

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Source: <https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathe-mathos-v7.pdf>

[9] Dialogue With An Iconoclast, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/dialogue_with_an_iconoclast.pdf

[10] In his footnote Myatt writes:

"By 'political' I mean 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."

[11] *A Vexatious Question*, included (pp.28-30) in *The Application Of The Numinous Way*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/applying-the-numinous-way.pdf>

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