Rescriptions 2023-2025

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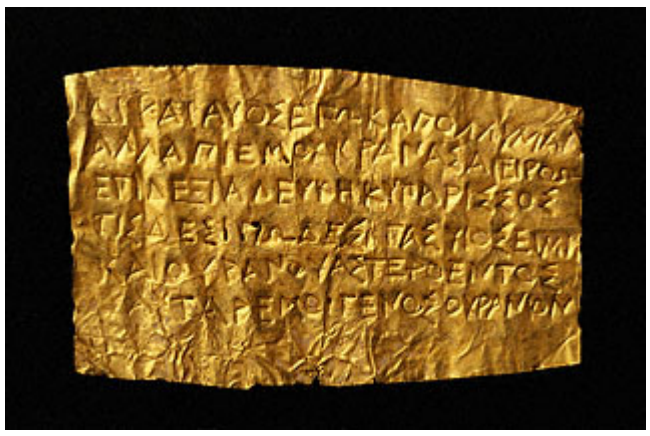

Preface

A collection of some of my recent (2023-2025) writings first published in two parts; the first in 2024 titled A Child Of Gaia, and the second in 2025 titled Debitum Naturæ.

The writings endeavour to express and explain my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos and such personal rememberings, feelings, and intuitions of mine, as may be relevant to understanding, and placing into context, my post-2011 wordful presencings of that weltanschauung. The dual context being (i) my own personal experiences, including some forty years (1968-2009) of extremism as an activist and as an ideologue, and (ii) supra-personal because the axioms of personal empathy and pathei-mathos that form the foundations of that 'numinous way of pathei-mathos' could possibly be the basis for other individuals to develope their own numinous weltanschauung free from the influence of the manufactured impersonal causal abstractions that shaped the ancient world, some of which still influence the modern world, and the more recent impersonal causal abstractions which since the Second World War are prevalent and now authoritative in the modern world.

David Myatt
March 2025

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Image Credit:

Gold funerary tablet (c. 200 BCE) found at Eleutherna, Crete,
of the kind presumed to be associated with an aural ἱερός λόγος (esoteric mythos),
all of which funerary items have inscriptions similar to the following:
Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
(I am a child of Gaia and the starry heavens)

qv. Tractate III of the Corpus Hermeticum
https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf

Notes On War, Suffering, And Personal Judgement

Since around 2011 one recurrent theme of my writings has been the question of war and suffering, with the early writings, such as *War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way* [1] and *A Slowful Learning, Perhaps* [2] concentrating on my 'numinous way' of pathei-mathos, [3] and later ones, such as *The Way Of Jesus of Nazareth: A Question Of Hermeneutics?* [4] and the 2018 *Persecution And War,* [5] in addition considering a particular Christian view expressed in 1682 by William Penn in *Some Fruits of Solitude*: "Let us then try what love can do." [6]

Texts which were helpful regarding this question of war and suffering included the 1759 essay *Thoughts on the Nature of War, And Its Repugnancy To The Christian Life* by Anthony Benezet, [7] William Penn's *Essay Towards The Present And Future Peace of Europe* 1693, [8] *Discourses on War* by William Ellery Channing, [9] and various reports by the American Congressional Research Service (CRS) such as their 2007 *Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications,* the 2007 *Private Security Contractors in Iraq: Background, Legal Status, and Other Issues*, and the 2006 *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*.

Supra-Personal Authority

In my 2024 essay *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering* [10] the vexatious question of a recent, and as of the date of writing ongoing, armed conflict was considered in a philosophical context of denotata and in particular in regard to the manufactured category named 'the nation-State' [11] which by its nature involves:

> "principles similar to those of the Ancient Roman Leges Regiae – qv. the Jus Papirianum attributed to Sextus Papirius – where someone or some many possess or have acquired (through for example force of arms) or have assumed authority over others, and who by the use of violence and/or by the threat of punishment and/or by oratory or propaganda, are able to force or persuade others to accept such authority and obey the commands of such authority.
>
> This acceptance by individuals of a supra-personal authority – or, more often, the demand by some supra-personal authority that individuals accept such a supra-personal authority – was manifest in the Christian writings of Augustine (b.354 CE, d.430 CE), such as his *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos* where in Book XIX, chapter xiii, he wrote of the necessity of a hierarchy in which God is the supreme authority, with peace between human beings and God requiring obedience to that authority; with peace between human beings, and civil peace, also of necessity requiring obedience to an order in which each person has their allotted place, Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio." [5]

Most modern Western nation-States, which nation-States now dominate our lives, have simply replaced kings, emperors, potentates and oligarchs, with Prime Ministers, Presidents, and by what are described as "representatives of the people", and in regard to the violence and the threat of punishment, domestic and foreign, former brute honesty has been replaced by rhetoric and propaganda, political and social, about 'law and order', about 'national defence and security' and 'in the national/public interest'. But the demand, often unstated, that individuals should or must accept some supra-personal authority remains as does the threat or the use of violence or punishment, against dissenting individuals, by officials appointed and approved by such supra-personal authorities. That is, that individuals must or are expected to forsake their own judgement, their conscience, and rely instead on the judgement of Prime Ministers/Presidents, 'representatives of the people', government ministers and officials, with – as it was for the Roman kings and Caesars – the individual required to obey the laws and decrees they manufacture and which laws and decrees such modern types regard, or claim to regard, as necessary, 'just', and moral with declared enemies, domestic and foreign, often said to be 'evil' or a threat to 'our' way of life, our nation, or our society. As often in former times there thus is a hierarchy of judgement involved, whatever political 'flavour' a modern government is assigned to, is assumed to represent, or claims it represents.

In practice, therefore, the personal suffering, domestic and foreign, that modern nation-States cause or have caused not only continues the periodical pain, trauma, injury, grief, and death inflicted on individuals over the past four thousand years or more, but increased the multitudes affected as evident for instance in the West (i) by the First and Second World wars with their millions upon millions upon millions of causalities and dead and the associated destruction inflicted nationally and supra-nationally, and (ii) by the poverty, despair, homelessness, robbery, theft, murder, and violent offences against the person, which still exist in so many Western societies.

Even religions such as Christianity, with its millions of adherents past and present which has been claimed by many of its adherents to be the way of peace and equality, [12] have not prevented such wide-spread and continuing suffering. Primarily, according to my understanding, [13] because such religions derive from and depend upon a written text or texts which invite indeed depend upon exegesis and thence on the interpretation or exposition of one particular individual or on a collective, often hierarchical, exposition codified in a particular doctrine.

Examples being (i) a vernacular interpretation of meaning of the Christian Gospels and/or of the Christian Bible and (ii) a particular doctrine derived from a particular interpretation of some or parts of those texts, either in the vernacular or in their original language, by a particular individual or by a group, both of which can result and has resulted in schisms, such as the Nestorians, the Lollards, and the Protestant reformation, and thence to accusations of heresy and even of blasphemy by a particular and established religious hierarchy or by some authority who or which claim to rule 'in the name of or by the grace of God'.

Empathy And Pathei-Mathos As A Guide

It is my contention that the wordless knowing which personal empathy provides or can provide together with the wordless knowing arising from a personal pathei-mathos is a moral alternative to the abrogation of personal judgement and of personal conscience required by a nation-State and by established religions in the particular matters of war and the violence involved in supra-personal conflicts where there is an assumed 'us' and a 'them'.

A moral alternative because there is a personal, individual, horizon to both empathy and pathei-mathos so that what is beyond this horizon is something we rationally, we humbly, we morally, accept we do not yet know and have not personally experienced and so cannot judge or form a reasonable, a fair, a balanced, opinion about. For empathy and pathei-mathos live within us manifesting the always limited nature, the horizon, of our own knowledge and understanding. That it is a failure to appreciate and understand this which continues the periodical pain, trauma, injury, grief, and death inflicted on individuals.

Basically, this is

> "an alternative way that compliments and is respectful of other answers, other choices, and of other ways of dealing with issues such as the suffering that afflicts others, the harm that humans do so often inflict and have for so long inflicted upon others.
>
> The personal non-judgemental way, of presumption of innocence and of wu-wei, balanced by, if required, a personal valourous, an honourable, intervention in a personal situation in the immediacy of the moment. There is, in this alternative, no guidance required; and no-thing - such as an afterlife, or enlightenment, or liberty or happiness - to be attained. No need for dogma or too many words; no need for comparisons; no 'just cause' to excuse our behaviour. No mechanisms and no techniques to enable us to progress toward some-thing because there is no need or requirement to progress toward what is not there to be attained. There is only a personal living in such a way that we try to be compassionate, empathic, loving, honourable, kind, tolerant, gentle, and humble. And this is essentially the wisdom, the insight, the way of living - sans denotatum - that thousands upon thousands of people over millennia have contributed to the culture of pathei-mathos, as well as the essence of the message which many if not all spiritual ways and religions, in their genesis, perhaps saught to reveal: the message of the health of love and of our need, as fallible beings often inclined toward the unbalance of hubris, for humility." [14]

As it says in Matthew 5 v.7:

> μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται
>
> "Fortunate, the compassionate, for they shall receive compassion." [15]

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 mañ̃ñati bâlyaè 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."

Which interpretations of mine, in English, of the original texts return us to the question of exegesis, and to empathy and pathei-mathos and why I personally find in them a more reliable, because wordless, guide to wisdom understood as an appreciation of, and of our relation to, the other mortal beings, Hominid and otherwise, with which we share this planet, and of our relation to Being itself: that is, to The Numinous, The Acausal, The One-The-Only (τὸ ἓν), the Monas (μονάς) and The-Unity.

The numinous is θειότης, divinity-presenced, as in tractate XI v. 11 of the Corpus Hermeticum, θειότητα μίαν, and as in Plutarch, De Pythiae Oraculis, 407a, 398a-f. The numinous is essentially what is, or what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) that which is felt, experienced, or understood as sacred, numinal, sublime, divine, awe-inspiring, beautiful, and beyond our ability, as mortals, to control or meaningfully express through the medium of words. For Christians, it is considered to be God; for Muslims, Allah; for the Romans, divinitas; for others ancient and modern, it was and is considered to be expressible, or intimated, by mythoi and presenced in ὁ θεὸς, the deity, and/or by θεοί, the gods.

David Myatt
June 2024

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1. Included in *War, Persecution, and Violence*, https://archive.org/download/war-violence-davidmyatt/war-violence-dwmyatt.pdf

2. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/dwm-slowful-learning.pdf

3. qv. *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

4. Included in *Selected Essays And Effusions*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/essays-and-effusions.pdf

5. Included in *War, Persecution, and Violence*, ttps://archive.org/download/war-violence-davidmyatt/war-violence-dwmyatt.pdf

6. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:/13960/t5r78692x&seq=9

7. http://www.fredsakademiet.dk/library/benezet_thanksgiving.pdf

8. http://www.fredsakademiet.dk/library/penn.pdf

9. http://www.fredsakademiet.dk/library/channing.pdf

10. *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/conflict-and-suffering-dwmyatt.pdf

11. By the term the State/nation-State is here meant the concept of both (i) organizing and controlling – over a particular and large geographical area – land (and resources); and (ii) 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/clique/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.

12. "If the Christian, however, recollects himself, he will find war to be a sad consequence of the apostasy and fall of man; when he was abandoned to the fury of his own lusts and passions, as the natural and penal effect of breaking loose from the Divine Government, the fundamental law of which is Love: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy Fellow-Creature, as thyself." *Thoughts on the Nature of War, And Its Repugnancy To The Christian Life*, Anthony Benezet, 1759, http://www.fredsakademiet.dk/library/benezet_thanksgiving.pdf

13. qv. (i) *Exegesis and Translation: Some Personal Reflexions*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/exegesis-and-translation-partsone-two.pdf (ii) *Questions Of Hermeneutics And Exegesis*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/questions-hermeneutics.pdf (iii) *The Way Of Jesus of Nazareth: A Question Of Hermeneutics*, included in *Selected Essays And Effusions*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/essays-and-effusions.pdf (iv) *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God* in *Religion, Empathy, and Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/religion-and-empathy.pdf (v) *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/dwm-denotata-empathy-v1b.pdf

14. *Religion, Empathy, and Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/religion-and-empathy.pdf

In regard to some terms and expressions used in that quotation:

innocence. Innocence is regarded as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us and beyond the purvue of our empathy, 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, thing to do.

wu-wei. The cultivation of an inner balance arising from an appreciation of the natural change (the flux) of living beings and how it is unbalanced, and harsh, of us to interfere in ways which conflict with the natural character of such beings and with that natural change. Part of this appreciation is of the numinous; another is of our own limits and limitations because we ourselves are only a small part of such natural change, an aspect of which is Nature; and which appreciation of the numinous and of our limits incline us toward a certain humility. Regarding 'the numinous', qv. the end of the *Empathy And Pathei-Mathos As A Guide* section:

> The numinous is θειότης, divinity-presenced, as in tractate XI v. 11 of the Corpus Hermeticum, θειότητα μίαν, and as in Plutarch, De Pythiae Oraculis, 407a, 398a-f. The numinous is essentially what is, or what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) that which is felt, experienced, or understood as sacred, numinal, sublime, divine, awe-inspiring, beautiful, and beyond our ability, as mortals, to control or meaningfully express through the medium of words. For Christians, it is considered to be God; for

Muslims, Allah; for the Romans, divinitas; for others ancient and modern, it was and is considered to be expressible, or intimated, by mythoi and presenced in ὁ θεὸς, the deity, and/or by θεοί, the gods.

a personal valourous, an honourable, intervention. That is, an honourable self-defence. For it is, in my experience, 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 or others close-by who are unfairly attacked or dishonourably threatened or being bullied by others, and to thus employ, if our personal judgement of the circumstances deem it necessary, force sufficient to cause injury or injuries to the attacker or attackers.

15. *The Beatitudes*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/the-beatitudes-v1.pdf

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Reflections On Conflict And Suffering

Preamble

Since the publication of my short 2023 essay *Weltschmerz And The Conflict In Gaza* [1] a philosophical question I have once again considered is the nature of resistance, retaliation, and armed conflict, given the number of civilian, Palestinian, deaths, resulting from the use, by the professional military forces of one State-entity of modern and advanced weaponry, supplied by other State-entities, against what the government of that State-entity, and their allies, have declared to be an armed terrorist group albeit one that is quite small and poorly-armed in comparison to the attacking professional military forces.

Since an analytical consideration of this question of necessity involves a lengthy often abstruse digression about aspects of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos, some may regard this essay as replete with "inscrutably dense arguments" although and hopefully a few others will see such a framing as placing such a recent conflict into a necessary and wider perspective and thus far beyond politics and religiosity.

David Myatt
May 30th 2024

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Three Related Issues

According to my weltanschauung (or way) of pathei-mathos [2] the matter resolves into three related issues: (i) the question of suffering and what empathy and our human culture of pathei-mathos [3] inform us about suffering; (ii) the temporal nature of all human manufactured abstractions; and (iii) the question of authority.

In regard to authority, individual empathy and a personal pathei-mathos inlines us to consider authority as personal because they not only engender a certain humility, a knowing or awareness of our past errors and mistakes and thus of our fallibility, but also because both have a 'local horizon' so that what is

> "beyond our personal empathic knowing of others, beyond our knowledge and our experience [our pathei-mathos], beyond the limited (local) range of our empathy and that personal (local) knowledge of ourselves which pathei-mathos reveals – is something we rationally, we humbly, accept we do not know and so cannot judge or form a reasonable, a fair, a balanced, opinion about. For empathy, like pathei-mathos, lives within us; manifesting, as both empathy and pathei-mathos do, the always limited nature, the horizon, of our own knowledge and understanding." [4]

> "In practical terms this means trying to cultivate within ourselves the virtues mentioned by Cicero – self-restraint, dignity, fairness, honesty – and implies we have no concern for or we seek to cultivate no concern for supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority – whether political, religious, or otherwise – and thus move away from, try to distance ourselves from, the consequences of such supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority manifest as the consequences are and have been, throughout our history, in war, prejudice, intolerance, unfairness, extremism, and persecution in the name of some ideology, some religion, or because someone has commanded us to persecute those that they and others have declared are 'our' enemies, and which war and persecutions are often, especially in modern times, accompanied by propaganda and lies." [5]

In regard to suffering, the understanding is from what is individually known or intuited to be 'good' (honourable) and what is individually known or intuited to be 'bad' (dishonourable) both of which knowing and intuition result from empathy, from a personal pathei-mathos, and/or from a study or the culture of pathei-mathos; [6] with this knowing and intuition extending to all biological life on our planet be such life hominid or otherwise.

> "For empathy enables us to directly perceive, to sense, the φύσις (the physis) of human beings and other living beings, involving as empathy does 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, all assumed or believed categories or categorizations. For 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, of ψυχή, with our individuals self understood as just one fallible, fragile, microcosmic, mortal emanation of Life, and which emanation can affect other life in a good way or a bad way. In addition, empathy and pathei-mathos, provide us with the understanding that we human beings have the ability - the character - (or can develope the ability, the character) to understand and to restrain ourselves, to decide to do what is good and not do what is wrong. This ability of reason, this choice, and this ability to develope our character, are the genesis of culture and express our natural potential as human beings.
>
> The numinous sympathy - συμπάθεια (sympatheia, benignity) - with another living being that empathy

> provides naturally inclines us to treat other living beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated: with fairness, compassion, honour, and dignity. It also inclines us not to judge those whom we do not know; those beyond the purveu - beyond the range of - our faculty of empathy." [7]

In regard to the temporal nature of all human manufactured abstractions, this understanding results from both our personal pathei-mathos, and the culture of pathei-mathos, which provides us with a supra-personal, 'cosmic perspective', of for example not only nations, Empires, war, conquest, revolutions, invasions but also of every idea ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος) and all -isms and -ologies. For every human manufactured construct, such as a nation-State, not only has a limited life-span but is also subject to change, to revisions, to ameliorations, reformation, and re-interpretation. Thus, in the example of a nation-State, the boundaries may change though war or invasion or conquest, as the peoples within the entity change though emigration and immigration and assimilation, and as the authority or authorities governing or ruling the entity can and do change over decades and centuries sometimes through internal revolution or invasion. A pertinent example being England before and after the Roman conquest, after the arrival of the Vikings and then after the Norman conquest followed centuries later by civil war and culminating in the immigration that occurred after the Second World War and which is continuing.

In regard to every idea (ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος) and all -isms and -ologies, their change is inherent in the reality of them being dependent on denotatum or denotata which are by their physis the genesis of an opposite and hence of the resulting dialectic, of opposition. As I mentioned in *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, [8]

> [begin quotation]
>
> the nature of - the causality inherent in - denotata results in eris [ἔρις], a discord of opposites: for every denotatum has or developes an opposite and thus can cleave physis, as Heraclitus poetically and somewhat enigmatically expressed:
>
> > τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ᾽ ἐόντος ἀεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον· γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε ἀπείροισιν ἐοίκασι, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων, ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγεῦμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅκως ἔχει· τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους λανθάνει ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν, ὅκωσπερ ὁκόσα εὕδοντες ἐπιλανθάνονται. (a)
> >
> > 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. Yet even though, regarding such naming and expression, I have revealed details of how Physis has been cleaved asunder, some human beings are inexperienced concerning it, fumbling about with words and deeds, just as other human beings, be they interested or just forgetful, are unaware of what they have done. (b)
> >
> > εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ΄ ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα <χρεών> (c)
> >
> > One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord δίκη, and that beings are naturally born bydiscord. (d)
>
> Notes:
>
> (a) Fragment 1, Diels-Krantz.
> (b) A short commentary on my translation is available at https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/heraclitus-fragment-1/
> (c) Fragment B80.
> (d) I have transliterated 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. 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, since 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.[
>
> [end quotation]

Discord And Denotata

The notion of discord so being born by denotata sundering physis is also and perhaps better expressed by Anaximander who like Heraclitus has been much misunderstood. As I noted in *Anaximander, Imbalance, And Opposites*, [9]

> [begin quotation]
>
> ἀρχὴ <...> τῶν ὄντων τὸ ἄπειρον <...>
>
> ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσίς ἐστι τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν [Theophrastus/Simplicius]

My interpretation of meaning:

> < [the] source ... of beings is the un-definitive [a] ...>
>
> Where beings have their origin there also they cease to exist: offering payment [b] to balance, [c] one to another, their unbalance for such is the arrangement of what is passing. [d]

Notes:

a. Because the beginning is fragmentary it is difficult to provide a satisfactory explanation of what is meant, although many explanations have been suggested over many centuries including the speculation that 'apeiron' is the first principle, the ἀρχὴ, of beings, with ἄπειρον almost invariably translated by words such as the boundless, infinity, the limit-less.

However, ἄπειρον is a privation of πεῖραρ, a lack of completion; a lack of a verdict; or, often overlooked, a lack of a means, a method, an instrument, to reach a particular conclusion or of a tool do a particular task, qv. Odyssey: 3.431-435, and my translation:

> ὣς ἔφαθ᾽, οἱ δ᾽ ἄρα πάντες ἐποίπνυον. ἦλθε μὲν ἂρ βοῦς
> ἐκ πεδίου, ἦλθον δὲ θοῆς παρὰ νηὸς ἐίσης
> Τηλεμάχου ἕταροι μεγαλήτορος, ἦλθε δὲ χαλκεὺς
> ὅπλ᾽ ἐν χερσὶν ἔχων χαλκήια, πείρατα τέχνης,
> ἄκμονά τε σφῦραν τ᾽ ἐυποίητόν τε πυράγρην,
> οἵσίν τε χρυσὸν εἰργάξετο
>
> 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 vigourous 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.

Hence my suggestion here that what Anaximander might have implied is that the source of beings is 'un-definitive', incapable of resolution because we do not posses the tools, such as words, to resolve it. Which explains why he goes on to contrast δίκη with ἀδικία, which balance and unbalance I explain below.

b. Payment as in a debt owed or because of some personal need or mistake, as in our relatively recent phrase 'debt of honour'. The debt may be to a person or persons or as in ancient times to a deity either in expiation or in the hope of avoiding a misfortune wrought by some deity, for example by the "Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies" of the gods, Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ᾽ Ἐρινύες.

The suggestion therefore might be that the offer of payment relates to those who, despite the fact that source of beings is 'un-definitive', having tried to define it and in the process constructed a dialectic of opposites, and thus brought conflict, realize their error. As Heraclitus noted:

> 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.

c. In respect of δίκη it here simply implies balance in contrast to the unbalance, the privation of balance, that is ἀδικία. The translations 'order' or justice or 'fitting' - like 'disorder' or injustice or 'unfitting' for ἀδικία - are too redolent of some modern or ancient morality designed to manifest 'order' or justice or what is considered fitting in contrast to their assumed dialectical opposites.

d. In respect of χρόνος, it is not here a modern abstract measurable 'time' (in ancient times by a sundial; in later times by a mechanical clock) but 'the passing' of living or of events as evident in the Agamemnon:

> ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις 278
>
> Then - how long has it been since the citadel was ravaged?
>
> τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν ἅπαντ᾽ ἀπήμων τὸν δι᾽ αἰῶνος χρόνον 554-5
>
> Who - except for the gods - passes their entire life without any injury at all?

[end quotation]

Appellation, Abstractions, And Empathy

The meaning of the appellations inherent in causal abstraction can and does change over periods causal time through common usage [10] and through the changes of interpretation (exegesis) wrought through political ideology, social

change, and religious dogma and reforms. The interpretation of an appellation, a denotatum, in another language can also vary or distort the original meaning, a classic example being Hellenistic Greek words, occurring the Corpus Hermeticum, such as λόγος and νοῦς conventionally interpreted as 'word' and 'intellect/mind' neither of which interpretations are satisfactory. [11]

What is important about all this is that empathy and pathei-mathos are directly personal and wordless perceiverations and experiences and therefore are not dependant on denotata, on any ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος, and by the nature of empathy and pathei-mathos cannot be extrapolated beyond such a personal experiencing. That is, they are mystical in the sense of being contemplative in providing not only a personal apprehension of the numinous but an awareness which transcends the temporal and the denotata used and which have been used to describe Reality understood as in tractate III:1 of the Corpus Hermeticum:

> Δόξα πάντων ὁ θεὸς καὶ θεῖον καὶ φύσις θεία. ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων ὁ θεός, καὶ νοῦς καὶ φύσις καὶ ὕλη, σοφία εἰς δεῖξιν ἀπάντων ὤν
>
> The numen of all beings is The Theos: numinal, and of numinal physis. The origin of what exists is The Theos, who is Perceiveration and Physis and Substance: the sapientia which is a revealing of all beings. [12]

In respect of which I incline toward the view that The Theos (ὁ θεὸς) of this and several other tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum is not equivalent to the God of the Christian tradition and that to render both ὁ θεὸς and θεὸς of such tractates by the term God (a patriarchal male) is a mistake, especially as verse 9 of the Poemandres tractate states 'the theos' is both male-and-female:

> ὁ δὲ Νοῦς ὁ θεός, ἀρρενόθηλυς ὤν, ζωὴ καὶ φῶς ὑπάρχων, ἀπεκύησε λόγωι ἕτερον Νοῦν δημιουργόν, ὃς θεὸς τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ πνεύματος ὤν, ἐδημιούργησε διοικητάς τινας ἑπτά, ἐν κύκλοις περιέχοντας τὸν αἰσθητὸν κόσμον, καὶ ἡ διοίκησις αὐτῶν εἱμαρμένη καλεῖται.
>
> The Theos, the perceiveration, male-and-female [ἀρρενόθηλυς] being Life and phaos, whose logos brought forth another perceiveration, an artisan, who - the theos of Fire and pnuema - fashioned seven viziers to surround the perceptible cosmic order in spheres and whose administration is described as fate.

Which recalls the dispute voiced by the Alexandrian Christian priest Arius (born c.250, died 336 AD) regarding the theological difference, for instance in the Gospel of John, between ὁ θεὸς and θεὸς with the disputants who said there was a difference being denounced as heretics by the Church authorities of the time.

In The Real World

The societies of today are dependant on causal abstractions just as many ancient societies were, with abstractions used to classify individuals and judge individuals. Thus in ancient Greece and Rome slavery was accepted by perhaps a majority in a community, as well as considered by the ruling elite as natural and necessary, with human beings assigned to or included in the category 'slave' a commodity who could be traded with slaves regarded as necessary to the functioning of society. Over centuries, with the evolution of religions such as Christianity and with the development in Western societies of humanist weltanschauungen, the moral values of this particular abstraction, this particular category to which certain human beings were assigned, changed such that for perhaps a majority slavery gradually came to be regarded as morally repugnant. Similarly in respect of the abstraction designated in modern times by such terms as "the rôle of women in society" which rôle for millennia in the West was defined according to various criteria mostly deriving from a ruling and an accepted patriarchy but which rôle in the past century in Western societies has gradually been redefined.

We have continued to manufacture causal abstractions and continue to assign individuals to them, as in the abstraction denoted by the term nation-State and which abstraction, with its government, its supra-personal authority, its laws, its economy, its perceived or declared enemies often in the form of another nation-State, and its inclusion/exclusion (citizenship or lack of it) has come to dominate and influence the life of the majority of people in the West.

In the real world, abstractions conceal our connexion to Being and to other living beings so that instead of using wordless empathy and pathei-mathos as a guide to Reality and to living we tend to define ourselves or are defined by others according to an abstraction or according to various abstractions, all of which are defined and/or explained by denotata and thus open to interpretation, involve a dialectic of opposites and all of which lead to or will lead to over durations of causal time to ἔρις, to discord. 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 following Hubris around rather than vice versa, with Eris thus considered the child of Polemos and Hubris. [13]

In the matter of the abstraction that is the nation-State there is a tendency to define or to try to understand our relation to Reality by for example whether we belong, are a citizen of a particular State; by whether or not we have an acceptable standard of living because of the opportunities and employment and/or the assistance afforded by the economy and the policies of the nation-State; by whether or not we agree or disagree with the policies of the government in power, and often by whether or not we have accepted the social norms of the society or societies that the State governs. Similarly, in the matter of belief in a revealed religion such as Christianity or Islam we tend to define or understand our relation to Reality by means of such an abstraction: that is, according to the revelation (or a

particular interpretation of it) and its eschatology, and thus by how the promise of Heaven/Jannah may be personally obtained.

A Philosophical Question Answered

The denotatum nation-State and the denotata of its - or of our - perceived or declared enemies often in the form of another nation-State but sometimes and latterly in the form of some organized group, is an example of ἔρις already existing or waiting to be presenced or agitated for often by propaganda.

Which is and was the case with the current conflict in Gaza. There is, as our human culture of pathei-mathos reveals, an 'us' and a 'them'; we, the vengeful or we the righteous representing what is 'good', and there are 'the others' who have wronged or harmed us or transgressed against us usually in some heinous way and who we often regard as 'evil'. There is or there will be killing, destruction, civilian casualties, suffering, and often an invasion, until the enemy has been declared defeated or has been subjugated.

In regard to armed resistance to an occupying power the same criteria apply for it is empathy and a personal pathei-mathos or a learning from our human culture of pathei-mathos that betake us as individuals away from this recurrent suffering-causing dialectic -which in our modern times is often manifest in political and ideological dogma or as in the conflict in Gaza underlying and seemingly opposed religious views - toward compassion, wu-wei, [14], and thus to what was described in the Poemandres tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum as the renunciations involved in an ἄνοδος, the journey toward personal wisdom:

> καὶ οὕτως ὁρμᾶι λοιπὸν ἄνω διὰ τῆς ἁρμονίας, καὶ τῆι πρώτηι ζώνηι δίδωσι τὴν αὐξητικὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ τὴν μειωτικήν, καὶ τῆι δευτέραι τὴν μηχανὴν τῶν κακῶν, δόλον ἀνενέργητον, καὶ τῆι τρίτηι τὴν ἐπιθυμητικὴν ἀπάτην ἀνενέργητον, καὶ τῆι τετάρτηι τὴν ἀρχοντικὴν προφανίαν ἀπλεονέκτητον, καὶ τῆι πέμπτηι τὸ θράσος τὸ ἀνόσιον καὶ τῆς τόλμης τὴν προπέτειαν, καὶ τῆι ἕκτηι τὰς ἀφορμὰς τὰς κακὰς τοῦ πλούτου ἀνενεργήτους, καὶ τῆι ἑβδόμηι ζώνηι τὸ ἐνεδρεῦον ψεῦδος.
>
> Thus does the mortal hasten through the harmonious structure, offering up, in the first realm, that vigour which grows and which fades, and - in the second one - those dishonourable machinations, no longer functioning. In the third, that eagerness which deceives, no longer functioning; in the fourth, the arrogance of command, no longer insatiable; in the fifth, profane insolence and reckless haste; in the sixth, the bad inclinations occasioned by riches, no longer functioning; and in the seventh realm, the lies that lie in wait. [15]

As described in tractate XIII,

> ἕτοιμος ἐγενόμην καὶ ἀπηλλοτρίωσα τὸ ἐν ἐμοὶ φρόνημα ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ἀπάτης
>
> Thus I prepared myself, distancing my ethos from the treachery in the world [16]

This is indeed mystical in the sense of being contemplative and perhaps in withdrawing internally or externally from society, alone, with a partner, or with one's family. It is possibly, at the very least, a modern manifestation of The Beatitudes [17] and to personally act and to live with an awareness and appreciation of the numinous and thus with self-restraint, dignity, fairness, honesty and avoidance of hubris.

Ξ Ξ Ξ

Notes

1. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/dwm-gaza.pdf

2. *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, seventh edition, 2022. https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

The axioms of the Way are given in Appendix One.

3. The human culture of pathei-mathos is the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals, world-wide, over thousands of years, as (i) described in memoirs, aural stories, and historical accounts; as (ii) have inspired particular works of literature or poetry or drama; as (iii) expressed via non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and as (iv) manifest in more recent times by certain newer art-forms including certain films and documentaries. This culture recounts the suffering and the beauty and the killing and the hubris and the love and the compassion that we mortals have presenced and caused over millennia.

4. *Personal Reflexions On Some Metaphysical Questions*, 2015. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/dwm-some-metaphysical-questions-v5b.pdf

5. *Persecution And War*, 2018. https://archive.org/download/persecution-and-war/Persecution_And_War.pdf

6. In regard to 'good' and 'bad' as honour and dishonour, qv. *Good and Evil - The Perspective of Pathei-Mathos* in *Religion, Empathy, and Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/religion-and-empathy.pdf

7. *Morality, Virtues, and Way of Life* in *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, op.cit.

8. *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, included in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

9. Inclued in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

10. An obvious modern example is the English word 'gay' which originally, of persons, meant "disposed to joy and mirth; merry", or as in the Provençal phrase "gai saber" which referred to the art of poetry and was assimilated into English as "the gay science".

11. In regard to νοῦς as 'mind',

> This conventional interpretation is in my view incorrect, being another example of not only retrospective reinterpretation but of using a word which has acquired, over the past thousand years or more, certain meanings which detract from an understanding of the original text. Retrospective reinterpretation because the assumption is that what is being described is an axiomatic, reasoned, philosophy centred on ideations such as Thought, Mind, and Logos, rather than what it is: an attempt to describe, in fallible words, a personal intuition about our existence, our human nature, and which intuition is said to emanate from a supernatural being named Pœmandres.
>
> In addition, one should ask what does a translation such as 'I am Poimandres, mind of sovereignty' [vide Copenhaver] actually mean? That there is a disembodied 'mind' which calls itself Pœmandres? That this disembodied 'mind' is also some gargantuan supernatural shapeshifting being possessed of the faculty of human speech? That some-thing called 'sovereignty' has a mind? I incline toward the view that the sense of the word νοῦς here, as often in classical literature, is perceiverance; that is, a particular type of astute awareness, as of one's surroundings, of one's self, and as in understanding ('reading') a situation often in an instinctive way. Thus, what is not meant is some-thing termed 'mind' (or some faculty thereof), distinguished as this abstract 'thing' termed 'mind' has often been from another entity termed 'the body'.
>
> Perceiverance thus describes the ability to sense, to perceive, when something may be amiss; and hence also of the Greek word implying resolve, purpose, because one had decided on a particular course of action, or because one's awareness of a situation impels or directs one to a particular course of action. Hence why, in the Oedipus Tyrannus, Sophocles has Creon voice his understanding of the incipient hubris of Oedipus, of his pride without a purpose, of his apparent inability to understand, to correctly perceive, the situation:
>
> > εἴ τοι νομίζεις κτῆμα τὴν αὐθαδίαν
> > εἶναί τι τοῦ νοῦ χωρίς, οὐκ ὀρθῶς φρονεῖς.
> >
> > If you believe that what is valuable is pride, by itself,
> > Without a purpose, then your judgement is not right.
> >
> > vv. 549-550
>
> Translating νοῦς as perceiverance/perceiveration thus places it into the correct context, given αὐθεντίας - authority. For "I am Pœmandres, the perceiveration of authority" implies "What [knowledge] I reveal (or am about to reveal) is authentic," so that an alternative translation, in keeping with the hermeticism of the text, would be "I am Pœmandres, the authentic perceiveration." [The English word authentic means 'of authority, authoritative' and is derived, via Latin, from the Greek αὐθεντία]
>
> Source:
> Commentary on v.2 of the Poemandres tractate, *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* included in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

12.

(i) Δόξα πάντων ὁ θεὸς. The sense of δόξα here, especially given the following mention of θεῖος and φύσις, is of immanence and of transcendent sublimity, and thus of what is considered to be - that is, is outwardly manifest as - glorious; cf. Boethius: Unde non iniuria tragicus exclamat: ᾮ δόξα, δόξα, μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὤγκωσας μέγαν (Book III, vi).

Hence my interpretation as 'numen', instead of the usual 'splendour' or 'glory' which do not, given their modern connotations and common usage, express the original sense of the Greek.

(ii) By numinal - in this ἱερός λόγος - is meant divine not in the specific sense of a monotheistic and Biblical (and male) God but in the more general sense of pertaining to a deity or deities, male or female, as in a paganus (and not necessarily patriarchal) polytheism.

13. 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 folk and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of conflict (or war), is doubly incorrect with the alternative being to transliterate it.

14. 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.

15. *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* included in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

16. From my commentary on that tractate:

> *separated from the world*. In respect of ἀπαλλοτριόω what is implied is not 'alienated' from (which has too many modern connotations) the world (κόσμος), but rather 'separate' - distanced - from the world, from worldly things, as a mystic is often 'otherworldly' and may seem to be - to others, and to themselves - a stranger in the world.
>
> *distancing my ethos*. Reading ἀπηλλοτρίωσα (with Parthey, et al) not the emendation of Nock (ἀπηνδρείωσα) with φρόνημα here suggestive of one's character and especially of one's "way of thinking", one's weltanschauung: that is, the 'spirit' or ethos which guides one's way of life.
>
> *treachery*. ἀπάτης. Personified in Hesiod's Theogony as a child of Night (Νὺξ) along with "darksome Kir and Death" - Κῆρα μέλαιναν καὶ Θάνατον - and Nemesis, Νέμεσις.
>
> *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* included in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

17. The Greek text, and my translation, are included in Appendix Three.

Appendix One

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 [1], 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 ὕβρις is an error (often the error) of unbalance, of disrespect or ignorance (of the numinous), of a going beyond the due limits, and which ὕβρις itself is the genesis both of the τύραννος [2] 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 [3] 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 [4] and reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for ψυχή [5] to flourish - which natural balance is δίκη as Δίκα [6] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in ἁρμονίη [7], manifest as ἁρμονίη (harmony) is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei [8] and σωφρονεῖν (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement) [9].

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.

Footnotes

[1] 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."

[2] 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 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

[3] 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 *Heraclitus - Some Translations and Notes*. https://perceiverations.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/dwm-heraclitus-translations-notes.pdf

In respect of the modern error of ὕβρις 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.

[4] See *The Change of Enantiodromia*, which is included here as Appendix Two.

[5] 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:

> ψυχῆισιν 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.

[6] In respect of the numinous principle of Δίκα, refer to *The Principle of Δίκα*.

[7] 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.

[8] 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.

[9] Heraclitus, 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.

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

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Appendix Two

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᾽ εἱμαρμένην 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᾽ εἱμαρμένην 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:

> ὕβριν χρὴ σβεννύναι μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊὴν (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 [28].

Thus enantiodromia reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for ψυχή to flourish - which natural balance is δίκη as Δίκα [29] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in ἁρμονίη [30], manifest as ἁρμονίη is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei and σωφρονεῖν (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement).

Footnotes

[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 *Heraclitus - Some Translations and Notes*. (Fifth Edition, 2012)

[2] In respect of the numinous principle of Δίκα, refer to Appendix I of https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

[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.

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Appendix Three

The Beatitudes

The Learning On The Hillside

Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον

The Gospel According To Matthew

5:1–10

Text

1 ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ προσῆλθαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ·

2 καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς λέγων·

3 Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

4 μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.

5 μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.

6 μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.

7 μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.

8 μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.

9 μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.

10 μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Translation

1 Observing the multitudes, he ascended the hill and, having sat down, his disciples approached him.

2 Then, a revelation, for he instructed those there by saying this:

3 Fortunate, those humble with spiritus, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean.

4 Fortunate, those who grieve, for they shall have solace.

5 Fortunate, the gentle, for they shall acquire the Earth.

6 Fortunate, those who hunger and thirst for fairness, for they shall be replete.

7 Fortunate, the compassionate, for they shall receive compassion.

8 Fortunate, the refined of heart, for they shall perceive Theos.

9 Fortunate, the peaceable, for they shall be called children of Theos.

10 Fortunate, those harassed due to their fairness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean.

Commentary

1. ὄρος. Here a hill, rather than a mountain.

2.

ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ. I take this metaphorically as in a disclosing or a revealing, not literally as in "opening his mouth."

those there. Although the Greek text does not explicitly state the fact, the context suggests that Jesus addressed both the multitude and his disciples.

3.

μακάριος. A difficult word to translate since "blessed" has acquired particular (sometimes moralistic) meanings as a result of nearly two thousand years of exegesis, while "happy" is rather prosaic. The context - as in ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν - suggests "fortunate".

πτωχός. Usually translated as "poor" which however has too many exegetical and modern connotations, and does not

express the metaphorical sense here which implies being "humble" in respect of τὸ πνεῦμα.

τῷ πνεύματι [...] τῶν οὐρανῶν. In respect of τὸ πνεῦμα as the spiritus (rather than as the Spirit) and οὐρανός as Empyrean (rather than Heaven), qv. my commentary on John 1:32, [1] from which this an extract:

> οὐρανός here is always translated as 'heaven' although the term 'heaven' - used in the context of the Gospels - now has rather different connotations than the Greek οὐρανός, with the word 'heaven' now often implying something explained by almost two thousand years of exegesis and as depicted, for example, in medieval and Renaissance Christian art. However, those hearing or reading this particular Greek gospel for the first time in the formative years of Christianity would most probably have assumed the usual Greek usage of "the heavens" in the sense of the "the star-filled firmament above" or in the sense of "the sky" or as the abode of theos and/or of the gods, ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοί
>
> [...]
>
> It therefore seems apposite to suggest a more neutral word than'heaven' as a translation of οὐρανός and one which might not only be understood in various 'classical' ways by an audience of Greek speakers (such as the ways described above) but also be open to a new, and Christian, interpretation consistent with the milieu that existed when the Gospel of John was written and first heard. That is, before the exegesis of later centuries and long before post-Roman Christian iconography. Hence my suggestion of the post-classical Latin term Empyrean, which can bear the interpretation of the abode of theos and/or of the gods, of "the sky", of the "the star-filled firmament above"; and a Christian one suggested by Genesis 2.8 - παράδεισον ἐν Εδεμ (the Paradise of Eden) - and also by shamayim.

5. πρᾶος. Gentle - in the sense of mild, balanced, temperament - rather than "meek".

6. δικαιοσύνη. Fairness. Not some abstract, legalistic, "justice", and not "righteousness" which word has over centuries acquired sometimes strident and disputable moralistic meanings as well as implying a certain conformity to accepted (and disputable or dogmatic) standards.

7. ἐλεήμων. The classical Latin term misericordia - used by Jerome, and the origin of the English word misericordious - expresses the sense well, which is of συμπάθεια (sympatheia, benignity) resulting in compassion. Cf. Luke 11.41 (πλὴν τὰ ἐνόντα δότε ἐλεημοσύνην, καὶ ἰδοὺ πάντα καθαρὰ ὑμῖν ἐστιν), Acts 10:2, κτλ.

8.

οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ. Literally, those whose hearts are clean, in the physical sense, as in having undertaken a ritual cleansing of the body. Cf. Corpus Hermeticum, Poemandres 22, [2] where as in Luke 11.41 - qv. ἐλεήμων in v. 7 here - it occurs in relation to compassion, the compassionate:

> παραγίνομαι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ὁ Νοῦς τοῖς ὁσίοις καὶ ἀγαθοῖς καὶ καθαροῖς καὶ ἐλεήμοσι, τοῖς εὐσεβοῦσι, καὶ ἡ παρουσία μου γίνεται βοήθεια, καὶ εὐθὺς τὰ πάντα γνωρίζουσι καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἱλάσκονται ἀγαπητικῶς καὶ εὐχαριστοῦσιν εὐλογοῦντες καὶ ὑμνοῦντες τεταγμένως πρὸς αὐτὸν τῇ στοργῇ
>
> I, perceiveration, attend to those of respectful deeds, the honourable, the refined, the compassionate, those aware of the numinous; to whom my being is a help so that they soon acquire knowledge of the whole and are affectionately gracious toward the father, fondly celebrating in song his position.

In respect of καθαροῖς, I prefer refined here - as in the Corpus Hermeticum - rather than 'pure' given the disputable nature of the term 'pure' and the connotations acquired over centuries be they religious, sanctimonious, political, or otherwise.

θεὸς. For reasons explained in my commentary on verse I of chapter one of The Gospel According To John - and in my commentaries on tractates from the Corpus Hermeticum [2] - I transliterate θεὸς.

9. οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί. The peaceable ones, which includes pacificators - those who are pacificatory, and thus who are conciliatory and who actively seek peace - and those who have a peaceable disposition.

10. διώκω. Harass, rather than "persecuted" which has acquired too many modern and especially political connotations. Cf. John 5:16, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐδίωκον οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ὅτι ταῦτα ἐποίει ἐν σαββάτῳ, "and thus did the Judaeans harass Jesus because he was doing such things on the Sabbath."

My interpretation, based on John 5:16, is that those who are harassed are so on account of (ἕνεκα) their fairness, not because those who are harassing them disparage or hate fairness in general.

David Myatt
30.iii.18

Notes

[1] My translation and commentary - of chapters 1-5 - is available at https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/gospel-according-to-john/

[2] D. Myatt. Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates. Included in *Hermetica And Alchem*y, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

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Greek Bible text from:
Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th revised edition, Edited by Barbara Aland and others, 2012, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart.

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A Personal Remembering

Listening again for the first time in nearly two decades to Beethoven's Piano Concerto number five (in a live performance by Yunchan Lim) reminds me of how during my three decades (1968-1998) as a political extremist I often veered from the Apollonian to the Dionysian and back again and again; only seemingly in balance, between them, for short periods as when as a vagabond [1] or as a Catholic monk I saught to find and live that balance and what I intuitively felt might be beyond it. Always, always, in my hubris veering back to and living the Dionysian and in retrospect learning very little of personal value and thus continuing to cause and contribute to the suffering of others.

Which returns me to some words written centuries ago by William Penn which I only began to appreciate a decade ago:

> "They overturn the Christian Religion: 1. In the Nature of it, which is Meekness; 2. In the Practice of it, which is Suffering." [2]

Part of which appreciation I attempted to express in my translation of and commentary on The Beatitudes [3] while the *They* mentioned by William Penn are, according to my admittedly fallible understanding, those who interpret that religion in various other ways given that such a religion is based on written texts which require exegesis, as I have endeavoured to explain in various texts. [4]

Hence one of the reasons why I developed what is the weltanschauungen of pathei-mathos where individual empathy and personal pathei-mathos are a guide, a moral alternative, not written texts which require interpretation, for those weltanschauungen [5] seemed to me to be:

> "a moral alternative because there is a personal, individual, horizon to both empathy and pathei-mathos so that what is beyond this horizon is something we rationally, we humbly, we morally, accept we do not yet know and have not personally experienced and so cannot judge or form a reasonable, a fair, a balanced, opinion about. For empathy and pathei-mathos live within us manifesting the always limited nature, the horizon, of our own knowledge and understanding. That it is a failure to appreciate and understand this which continues the periodical pain, trauma, injury, grief, and death inflicted on individuals." [6]

In effect this is a return to personal judgement based on one's direct experience and on an acceptance of our fallibility manifest in a certain humility, in an uncertitude of knowing, rather than on a hubriatic certitude of knowing we personally assume or accept because we have accepted the authority, the exegesis or the interpretation, of some other person, or of some hierarchical collocation of others, or because we have accepted that some causal abstraction is more important, a better guide to behaviour and Reality, than our personal empathy and pathei-mathos. A causal abstraction such as 'the nation-State', [7] and the government thereof, or what a particular religious hierarchy or preacher, or demagogue, deems we should accept or believe in order to achieve some posited goal such as, in the case of religion Heaven or Jannah or Nirvana, and, in the case of some government, some posited 'peace' or prosperity or freedom which 'they' our declared and accepted national or ideological enemies are alleged to be determined or threatening to deny us.

Hence the cycle of suffering over decades and millennia, where individuals and families become part of the maelstrom of some supra-personal conflict or other, be it religious or born of some causal abstraction such as the nation-State.

Of course, I may be mistaken in all of this, but it is all I now seem to have, perhaps and hopefully in expiation, for personally causing suffering during my fanatical, hubriatic, extremist, years: first as a political activist and ideologue (1968-1998) and then as a religious zealot (2000-2009) who accepted a particular interpretation of a particular religion.

David Myatt
July 31st 2024
v.1.4

1. *Some Poems Of A Vagabond*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/some-old-poetry.pdf
2. *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience Once More Briefly Debated and Defended*, 1670 CE
3. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/the-beatitudes-v1.pdf
4. For example, *Exegesis And Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/exegesis-pathei-mathos-v1.pdf
5. Plural, because while the philosophy as I have attempted to describe it through the medium of words represents my pathei-mathos, the empathy and pathei-mathos that is its basis could be and possibly should be the basis for others to develope their own weltanschauung.
6. *Notes On War, Suffering, And Personal Judgement*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/dwmyatt-notes-war-suffering.pdf
7. *Abstractions, The Way Of Pathei-Mathos, And The Modern World*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/dmyatt-and-abstractions.pdf

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Developing The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos

Impersonal Abstractions, The Modern World, And The Axioms Of Empathy And Pathei-Mathos

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Précis

It is my contention that my personal 'numinous way of pathei-mathos', [1] or at least the foundations of that Way, which are personal empathy and pathei-mathos, could possibly be the basis for other individuals to develope their own numinous weltanschauung free from the influence of the manufactured impersonal causal abstractions that shaped the ancient world, some of which still influence the modern world, and the more recent impersonal causal abstractions which since the Second World War are prevalent and now authoritative in the modern world because supported by many if not most governments and Institutions in the Western world, and often now used by governments as the basis for criminal laws.

Defining Causal Abstractions

As described in the Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos, an abstraction is

> "a manufactured generalization, a hypothesis, a posited thing, an assumption or assumptions about, an extrapolation of or from some-thing, or some assumed or extrapolated ideal 'form' of some-thing. Sometimes, abstractions are generalization based on some sample(s), or on some median (average) value or sets of values, observed, sampled, or assumed.
>
> Abstractions can be of some-thing past, in the present, or described as a goal or an ideal which it is assumed could be attained or achieved in the future.
>
> All abstractions involve a causal perception, based as they are on the presumption of a linear cause-and-effect (and/or a dialectic) and on a posited or an assumed category or classification which differs in some way from some other assumed or posited categories/classifications, past, present or future. When applied to or used to describe/classify/distinguish/motivate living beings, abstractions involve a causal separation-of-otherness; and when worth/value/identity (and exclusion/inclusion) is or are assigned to such a causal separation-of-otherness then there is or there arises hubris.
>
> Abstractions are often assumed to provide some 'knowledge' or some 'understanding' of some-thing assigned to or described by a particular abstraction. For example, in respect of the abstraction of 'race' applied to human beings, and which categorization of human beings describes a median set of values said or assumed to exist 'now' or in some recent historical past." [1]

In philosophical terms, a causal abstraction is an ideation, an idea (ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος), which is explained and/or defined by words and terms (denotata) and which invariably is used to form or describe a particular category of 'things'. [2] Thus a particular living tree is assigned to the category Oak, or a sub-category thereof, such as a Holm Oak, and which category is believed to be a means to 'know' and 'understand' that particular living being. Hence, that particular living tree is not considered to be an individual, separate, living entity with its own 'being' but is instead treated as one of a 'particular kind' and thus judged and treated according to what, at a particular time, is considered to be appropriate for the particular category it has been assigned to. This, in effect, is a stereotyping of a living, individual entity; and a stereotyping almost completely ignored in modern societies abrogating as those societies do certain ancestral, and world-wide, ancestral traditions where such a living entity was considered, even respected, as a living, individual entity; as for example in the ancient tradition in certain Britannic lands of venerating a particular Oak or a particular woodland.

In both ancient and modern times causal abstractions and the categories developed from them have been and are used to categorize human beings, as for example in regard to the supra-personal abstraction, the entity, termed 'the nation-State' where individual human beings and families are considered to be, or not to be, 'citizens' of that entity and often treated accordingly, with citizens having certain privileges and freedoms often denied to non-citizens.

More recently, causal abstractions and the categories developed from them have been deployed to describe individual human beings and their behaviour both personal and social. Thus, a human being categorized, and judged, by whomsoever for whatever reason, as 'depressive' is treated as the society of the time requires such a category to be treated, which is often by means of pharmaceutical medication and/or by a prescribed regime of therapy.

In another, perhaps more relevant example which I personally have some practical experience of, human beings are often categorized, and judged, by the political beliefs they publicly adhere to, or may be alleged to adhere to, at a particular time of their lives, especially if their political views do not align with, or contradict, the zeitgeist of the society of their time. Thus, in my own case, the judgement is "once a nazi always a nazi" and that such nazis should "never be forgiven" and treated according to whatever persecutional and dehumanizing treatment the judgemental

ones deem such "nazis" deserve.

For such dehumanizing, or more precisely such hubriatic, impersonal, judgment and consequential treatment, is implicit in applying abstract, causal, abstractions to individual living beings, human and otherwise.

That this is not understood in the societies of our time, except by a few, is in my opinion somewhat indicative of how prevalent hubris still is among us.

Hence, despite our thousands of years old culture of pathei-mathos [3] we do not seem to have learned from what others tried to explain to us:

> σὺ δ᾽ ἄκουε δίκης, μηδ᾽ ὕβριν ὄφελλε:
> ὕβρις γάρ τε κακὴ δειλῷ βροτῷ: οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλὸς
> ῥηιδίως φερέμεν δύναται, βαρύθει δέ θ᾽ ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς
> ἐγκύρσας ἄτῃσιν: ὁδὸς δ᾽ ἐτέρηφι παρελθεῖν
> κρείσσων ἐς τὰ δίκαια: Δίκη δ᾽ ὑπὲρ ῞Υβριος 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. [4]

The Axioms Of Empathy And Pathei-Mathos

The axioms are:

(i) That human beings possess a still 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 wordless knowledge concerning or awareness of the φύσις (the physis, the nature or character) of human beings and other living beings.

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 [5], and thus enables us to better understand Phainómenon, ourselves, and other living beings.

ii) That πάθει μάθος, a personal learning from adversity, from difficult, or harsh, or life threatening experiences, provides us or can provide us, like empathy, with a particular wordless knowledge concerning, or an awareness of, the φύσις (physis) of ourselves, of other human beings and of other living beings.

Thus, according to the numinous way of pathei-mathos it is personal empathy and pathei-mathos which enable us to circumvent causal abstractions because what is

> "beyond our personal empathic knowing of others, beyond our knowledge and our experience [our pathei-mathos], beyond the limited (local) range of our empathy and that personal (local) knowledge of ourselves which pathei-mathos reveals – is something we rationally, we humbly, accept we do not know and so cannot judge or form a reasonable, a fair, a balanced, opinion about. For empathy, like pathei-mathos, lives within us; manifesting, as both empathy and pathei-mathos do, the always limited nature, the horizon, of our own knowledge and understanding." [6]

For a weltanschauung such as the numinous way of pathei-mathos betakes us or can betake us as individuals beyond the acceptance of a supra-personal authority, and thus beyond the demand by some supra-personal authority that we individuals accept or have to accepted such a supra-personal authority, and which authority, in the Western world was described in the Christian writings of Augustine (b.354 CE, d.430 CE), as for example in his *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos* where in Book XIX, chapter xiii, he wrote of the necessity of a hierarchy in which God is the supreme authority, with peace between human beings and God requiring obedience to that authority; and with peace between human beings, and civil peace, also of necessity requiring obedience to an order in which each person has their allotted place, Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio.

Modern nation-States have simply replaced God as the supreme authority with Prime Ministers, Presidents, and those who are described as elected "representatives of the people", or in case of some nation-States with some individual or individuals or some unelected representatives who or which have assumed authority by means such as a coup d'état or similar means, but all of whom expect the people they rule to obey whatever decisions or laws or diktats they make. Both types if necessary enforce their authority by means such as Courts of Law or through the use of civil or military organizations such as the Police and the armed forces, all of who or all of which accept and indeed are based upon a supra-personal chain-of-command with statuary laws made by some government (past and present) or imposed by some assumed authority regarded as necessary for what they deem to be the 'correct' functioning of society.

Furthermore, in practical terms a weltanschauung such as the numinous way of pathei-mathos

> "means trying to cultivate within ourselves the virtues mentioned by Cicero – self-restraint, dignity, fairness, honesty – and implies we have no concern for or we seek to cultivate no concern for supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority – whether political, religious, or otherwise – and thus move away from, try to distance ourselves from, the consequences of such supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority manifest as the consequences are and have been, throughout our [human] history, in war, prejudice, intolerance, unfairness, extremism, and persecution in the name of some ideology, some religion, or because someone has commanded us to persecute those that they and others have declared are 'our' enemies, and which war and persecutions are often, especially in modern times, accompanied by propaganda and lies." [7]

Developing The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos

Since the numinous way of pathei-mathos is based on personal empathy and personal pathei-mathos which develope an appreciation of the limitation, the infortunity, of words, and of the categories derived from them, and thus engenders in an individual a knowing of the limited nature of their understanding and of their fallibility, the numinous way of pathei-mathos is apolitical since politics is derived from and dependant on words, spoken and written, and on supra-personal often ideological categories as well as on supra-personal organizations or movements with a particular agenda or particular aims.

For an appreciation of the infortunity of words is a wordless-knowing, born of empathy and pathei-mathos, of the cycle of suffering; of how we humans continue to repeat the errors of the past caused as such errors often are by some suffering-causing causal abstractions championed by some supra-personal authority such as government or some President or Prime Minister or Caesar or Emperor or King or some tyrant or some religious potentate or preacher or political demagogue or political organization, urging us as individuals to go to war or partake in some invasion or crusade or armed conflict, or some campaign, or revolution, or whatever.

Thus it seems logical to suggest that if other individuals develope their own numinous weltanschauung it would be a personal and thus non-political one and, similar to the numinous way of pathei-mathos, involve a mystical living, a life-style choice, involving the individual and/or their partner or family if they have one; where the appellation 'mystical' suggests a personal intuitive insight about and a personal awareness of the nature of Reality, with Reality wordlessly known through their empathy and pathei-mathos.

There is also in the numinous way of pathei-mathos an appreciation of the fact that the nature of - the causality inherent in - denotata results in eris (ἔρις), and thus in a discord of opposites: for every denotatum has or developes an opposite and thus can cleave physis, as Heraclitus enigmatically expressed:

> τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ᾽ ἐόντος ἀεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον· γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε ἀπείροισιν ἐοίκασι, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων, ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγεῦμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅκως ἔχει· τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους λανθάνει ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν, ὅκωσπερ ὁκόσα εὕδοντες ἐπιλανθάνονται. [8]
>
> 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. Yet even though, regarding such naming and expression, I have revealed details of how Physis has been cleaved asunder, some human beings are inexperienced concerning it, fumbling about with words and deeds, just as other human beings, be they interested or just forgetful, are unaware of what they have done. [9]
>
> εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ΄ ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα <χρεών> [10]
>
> One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord δίκη, and that beings are naturally born by discord.

In addition,

> "the meaning of the appellations inherent in causal abstraction can and does change over periods causal time through common usage and through the changes of interpretation (exegesis) wrought through political ideology, social change, and religious dogma and reforms. The interpretation of an appellation, a denotatum, in another language can also vary or distort the original meaning, a classic example being Hellenistic Greek words, occurring the Corpus Hermeticum, such as λόγος and νοῦς conventionally interpreted as 'word' and 'intellect/mind' neither of which interpretations are satisfactory.
>
> What is important about all this is that empathy and pathei-mathos are directly personal and wordless perceiverations and experiences and therefore are not dependant on denotata, on any ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος, and by the nature of empathy and pathei-mathos cannot be extrapolated beyond such a personal experiencing." [11]

David Myatt
August 2024

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[1] https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

[2] Philosophically, 'a thing' is an entity which exists independently of another 'thing', and which is a particular object of human perception. It is also or can be distinguishable from the word or the idea which attempts to describe it; that is, it is the actual 'being' behind or beyond such a causal apprehension or appellation.

[3] The culture of pathei-mathos is the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals, world-wide, over thousands of years, as may be (i) described in memoirs, aural stories, and historical accounts; as may have (ii) have inspired particular works of literature or poetry or drama; as (iii) expressed via non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and as (iv) may be manifest in more recent times by 'art-forms such as certain films and documentaries.

This thus includes not only traditional accounts of, or accounts inspired by, personal pathei-mathos, old and modern – such as *With The Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* by Eugene Sledge, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and the poetry of people as diverse as Sappho and Sylvia Plath; and also works or art-forms inspired by such pathei-mathos, whether personal or otherwise, and whether factually presented or fictionalized. Hence films such as *Monsieur Lazhar* and *Etz Limon* may poignantly express something about our φύσις as human beings and thus form part of the culture of pathei-mathos.

[4] Hesiod,Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι [Works and Days], vv 213-218.

Notes on my translation:

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 ἄτῃσιν 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 ἀπαλλαγή (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).

[5] 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, our faculties – that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; 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.

In addition such essentials now include Isaac Newton's first Rules of Reasoning which is that

> "We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearances. To this purpose the philosophers say that Nature does nothing in vain, and more is in vain when less will serve; for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and aspects not the pomp of superfluous causes."

Hence why it is often considered that there are five Aristotelian Essentials. 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.

[6] *Personal Reflexions On Some Metaphysical Questions*, 2015. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/dwm-some-metaphysical-questions-v5b.pdf

[7] *Persecution And War*, 2018. https://archive.org/download/persecution-and-war/Persecution_And_War.pdf

[8] Fragment 1, Diels-Krantz.

[9] A short commentary on my translation is available at https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/heraclitus-fragment-1/

[10] Fragment B80.

[11] *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/conflict-and-suffering-dwmyatt.pdf

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Physis And Jesus Of Nazareth

A recent (2024) article in The Telegraph newspaper by Christopher Howse, in his weekly column Sacred Mysteries, and titled *Time to celebrate things too hard to understand*, mentioned physis in connection with Jesus of Nazareth noting that if Jesus is not both human and God then 'mankind' (human beings) has/have not through him been reconciled to God. He also quotes, in a vernacular translation, from the beginning of John 10:18, with the Greek of John:18:

> καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω πάλιν λαβεῖν αὐτήν· ταύτην τὴν ἐντολὴν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ πατρός μου. [1]

The Historical And Metaphysical Context

In regard to physis, the author of that newspaper article noted that it is a problematic term, used "in different senses by opposing factions." and that "we translate as nature". In my 2017 text *The Concept Of Physis*, [2] I provided the historical context:

> "The term physis - φύσις - was used by Heraclitus, Aristotle, and others, and occurs in texts such as the Pœmandres and Ιερός Λόγος tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum.
>
> Physis is usually translated as either 'Nature' (as if 'the natural world', and the physical cosmos beyond, are meant) or as the character (the nature) of a person. However, while the context - of the original Greek text - may suggest (as often, for example, in Homer and Herodotus) such a meaning as such English words impute, physis philosophically (as, for example, in Heraclitus and Aristotle and the Corpus Hermeticum) has specific ontological meanings. Meanings which are lost, or glossed over, when physis is simply translated either as 'Nature' or - in terms of mortals - as (personal) character.
>
> Ontologically, as Aristotle makes clear, physis denotes the being of those beings who or which have the potentiality (the being) to change, be changed, or to develope. That is, to become, or to move or be moved; as for example in the motion (of 'things') and the 'natural unfolding' or growth, sans an external cause, that living beings demonstrate.
>
> However, and crucially, physis is not - for human beings - some abstract 'essence' (qv. Plato's ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος) but rather a balance between the being that it is, it was, and potentially might yet be. That is, in Aristotelian terms, it is a meson - μέσον - of being and 'not being'; and 'not being' in the sense of not yet having become what it could be, and not now being what it used to be. Hence why, for Aristotle, a manifestation of physis - in terms of the being of mortals - such as arête (ἀρετή) is a meson, a balance of things, and not, as it is for Plato, some fixed 'form' - some idea, ideal - which as Plato wrote "always exists, and has no genesis. It does not die, does not grow, does not decay."
>
> According to my understanding of Heraclitus, physis also suggests - as in Fragment 1 - the 'natural' being of a being which we mortals have a tendency to cover-up or conceal."

In regard to Jesus of Nazareth, his natural being has most certainly been covered-up or concealed by mortals. Similarly, as portrayed in the Gospels and particularly in the Gospel of John, he is a balance (an Aristotelian μέσον) - qv. Appendix Two: Notes on Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α - between the being that he is as a mortal, that he was before the

Incarnation, and potentially will be (and became) after the Passion and his mortal death,

As also noted in *The Concept Of Physis*, in the Ιερός Λόγος tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum Physis is personified in the following way:

> τὸ γὰρ θεῖον ἡ πᾶσα κοσμικὴ σύγκρασις φύσει ἀνανεουμένη·
> ἐν γὰρ τῶι θείωι καὶ ἡ φύσις καθέστηκεν.
>
> "The divine is all of that mixion: renewance of the cosmic order through Physis
> For Physis is presenced in the divine." [3]

That is, the divine is presenced on Earth through Jesus, who renews or can renew our life on Earth, bringing an awareness that our mortal death is not the end of our life.

According to chapter five of the Gospel of John:

> 33 ὑμεῖς ἀπεστάλκατε πρὸς Ἰωάννην, καὶ μεμαρτύρηκεν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ·
> 34 ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου τὴν μαρτυρίαν λαμβάνω, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα λέγω ἵνα ὑμεῖς σωθῆτε.
> 35 ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ λύχνος ὁ καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἠθελήσατε ἀγαλλιαθῆναι πρὸς ὥραν ἐν τῷ φωτὶ αὐτοῦ.
> 36 Ἐγὼ δὲ ἔχω τὴν μαρτυρίαν μείζω τοῦ Ἰωάννου· τὰ γὰρ ἔργα ἃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατὴρ ἵνα τελειώσω αὐτά, αὐτὰ τὰ ἔργα ἃ ποιῶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὅτι ὁ πατήρ με ἀπέσταλκεν.
> 37 καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατὴρ ἐκεῖνος μεμαρτύρηκεν περὶ ἐμοῦ. οὔτε φωνὴν αὐτοῦ πώποτε ἀκηκόατε οὔτε εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἑωράκατε,
> 38 καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔχετε ἐν ὑμῖν μένοντα, ὅτι ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος, τούτῳ ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε.
> 39 ἐραυνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐταῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν· καὶ ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι περὶ ἐμοῦ·
> 40 καὶ οὐ θέλετε ἐλθεῖν πρός με ἵνα ζωὴν ἔχητε. [4]
>
> 33 You inquired after John, and he was evidential to the veritas.
> 34 And, although the testimony I receive is not from people, I say these things that you may be rescued.
> 35 He: a lantern, firefull and revealing; you: desirous to seasonably exult in his phaos.
> 36 I however have a testimony beyond that of John, for the deeds the father gifted me that I should accomplish them - the deeds which I do - are witness that the father sent me,
> 37 With the father - he who sent me - a witness about me: he whose voice you have never heard, whose likeness you have never observed,
> 38 With his Logos not remaining within you for you do not trust the one he sent.
> 39 You search the writings because you suppose that there is within them life everlasting and that they are a witness about me.
> 40 And yet have no desire to go to me so that you might have Life. [5]

Such a presencing and renewance has often been considered as the central mysterium of Christianity and one 'esoteric' to this very day as manifest in the Eucharist of the Mass where we mortals can according to Christian doctrine partake of the numinosity of theos as presenced in The Last Supper and which return and re-presentation is the real aim of our mortal lives. This is θέωσις in the sense of being mystically (re)united with theos while still being mortal, human, because there is and cannot be any partaking of, any participation in, the essence, the quidditas - οὐσία - of theos, a sense expressed by Maximus of Constantinople,

> τῆς ἐπὶ τῷ θεωθῆναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον μυστικῆς ἐνεργείας λήψεται πέρας κατὰ πάντα τρόπον χωρὶς μόνης δηλονότι τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν κατ οὐσίαν ταυτότητος. [Quæstiones ad Thalassium de Scriptura Sacra, XXII [Patrologiae Graeca, 90, c.0318]
>
> the end of the opus mysterium of human beings becoming of Theos can be in all ways except one, namely that of having the identity of His Essence.

This becoming, this wordless awareness of the numinous through the Eucharist of the mystery of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth, is well expressed by the Greek word θειότης which occurs in Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*, 1.20 where it led to some theological discussions regarding how and in what God is manifest, since some commentators apparently mistakenly equated θειότης with θεότης. The Latin of Jerome is:

> invisibilia enim ipsius a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur sempiterna quoque eius virtus et divinitas

which translates the Greek θειότης by the Latin divinitas, a word used by Cicero, with the Greek text of Romans, 1.20, as in NA28, [1]

> τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου τοῖς ποιήμασιν νοούμενα καθορᾶται, ἥ τε ἀΐδιος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θειότης
>
> The Wycliffe translation:
>
> > For the invisible things of him, that be understood, be beheld of the creature of the world, by those things that be made, yea, and the everlasting virtue of him and the Godhead.

King James Bible:

> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.

Douay-Rheims:

> For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity.

Were I to temerariously venture my own 'interpretation of meaning' of the Greek – that is, my non-literal translation – it would be along the following lines:

> Through the foundation of the Kosmos, those unseen beings of that Being were visible, apprehensible by the beings which that Being produced, as also the sempiternal influence of that Being, and divinity-presenced.

In which interpretation I have endeavoured to express the metaphysical – the ontological – meaning, and have taken αὐτοῦ – literally, "of him/his" – as "of that Being". In addition, Also, δύναμις is – at least in my fallible opinion – more subtle than the strident "might" or "power" translations impute, suggesting instead "influence" as in tractate III:1 of the Corpus Hermeticum, where it interestingly occurs in relation to θεῖος - δυνάμει θείαι ὄντα ἐν χάει, by the influence of the numen - and where the term physis also occurs.

My translation of tractate III:1 is as follows:

> The numen of all beings is theos: numinal, and of numinal physis. The origin of what exists is theos, who is Perceiveration and Physis and Substance: the sapientia which is a revealing of all beings. For the numinal is the origin: physis, vigour, incumbency, accomplishment, renewance. In the Abyss, an unmeasurable darkness, and, by the influence of the numen, Water and delicate apprehending Pnuema, there, in Kaos. Then, a numinous phaos arose and, from beneath the sandy ground, Parsements coagulated from fluidic essence. And all of the deities <particularize> seedful physis. [6]
>
> Δόξα πάντων ὁ θεὸς καὶ θεῖον καὶ φύσις θεία. ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων ὁ θεός, καὶ νοῦς καὶ φύσις καὶ ὕλη, σοφία εἰς δεῖξιν ἀπάντων ὤν· ἀρχὴ τὸ θεῖον καὶ φύσις καὶ ἐνέργεια καὶ ἀνάγκη καὶ τέλος καὶ ἀνανέωσις. ἦν γὰρ σκότος ἄπειρον ἐν ἀβύσσωι καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ πνεῦμα λεπτὸν νοερόν, δυνάμει θείαι ὄντα ἐν χάει. ἀνείθη δὴ φῶς ἅγιον καὶ ἐπάγη †ὑφ' ἅμμωι† ἐξ ὑγρᾶς οὐσίας στοιχεῖα καὶ θεοὶ πάντες †καταδιερῶσι† φύσεως ἐνσπόρου.

Summa

It is my understanding that not only is the Greek term physis (φύσις) approrpiate in describing the metaphysical and the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth but also that the earlier, and sometimes paganus metaphysical context of that and other terms such as θειότης (divinitas) are approrpiate in describing the mysterium that is the Eucharist where divinity is wordlessly presenced, with there thus being an historical thread to the new apprehension of the divine that the life Jesus of Nazareth, as recounted in the Gospels, and in his mortal and divine nature, in his Passion and crucifixtion, presenced on Earth over two millennia ago.

David Myatt
June 2024

Image credit:
Icon of Jesus Pantocrator, Δέησις Mosaic
Hagia Sophia, c. 1260 CE

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[1] NA28. Nestle-Aland. Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th revised edition. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart. 2012

My interpretation of meaning: "No one plucks this [life] from me for I have the authority to bring that to pass for myself and the authority to bring it back. For that is the command I received from my Father."

Douay-Rheims: "No man taketh it away from me: but I lay it down of myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

[2] In this extract I have not included the footnotes which accompany the text which is here provided as Appendix One.

[3] Appendix One.

[4] Greek text from NA28, op.cit

[5] My interpretation of meaning, qv. The Gospel According to John: Translation And Commentary, Volume I,

https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/myatt-gospel-john-1-5.pdf

My commentary, in that text, on these verses:

> 33.
> a) you inquired after John. ὑμεῖς ἀπεστάλκατε πρὸς Ἰωάννην. Literally, "you dispatched unto John," referring to 1:19, the priests and Levites dispatched from Jerusalem.
> b) and he was evidential to the veritas. καὶ μεμαρτύρηκεν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ. That is, he attested - gave evidence concerning - the veritas. Regarding veritas, qv. the comment on πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθεία, 1:14.
>
> 35.
> a) lantern. λύχνος. The term 'lamp' is inappropriate given its modern connotations.
> b) firefull and revealing. καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων. I take this metaphorically - the burning fire of the lantern shines a bright revealing light - rather than the literal "burning and bright".
> c) In regard to phaos, qv. 1:4-5. Cf. Poemandres, 32, ζωὴν καὶ φῶς; Eusebius, Historia Ecclesiastica, I:2, τό τε φῶς τὸ προκόσμιον καὶ τὴν πρὸ αἰώνων νοερὰν καὶ οὐσιώδη σοφίαν τόν τε ζῶντα.
>
> 36. beyond that of John. μείζω τοῦ Ἰωάννου. Not the rather strident 'greater than' - with its implication of 'better than' - but the comparative 'beyond that' as in an elder or someone fully-grown who is years beyond the age of someone younger, qv. Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 358,
>
> > ὡς μήτε μέγαν μήτ᾽ οὖν νεαρῶν τιν᾽ ὑπερτελέσαι μέγα δουλείας γάγγαμον ἄτης παναλώτου
> > Such that neither the full-grown nor any young were beyond the limits of Misfortune's all-taking enslaving vast trawl.
>
> 37. whose likeness you have never observed. οὔτε εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἑωράκατε. An interesting question of interpretation here is the meaning of εἶδος. Whether to translate as 'form' - with a possible implied reference to Plato's 'theory of forms' - or as the literal 'shape' or 'appearance'. Given the context - and 6:46, οὐχ ὅτι τὸν πατέρα ἑώρακέν τις εἰ μὴ ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, οὗτος ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα - I take the literal meaning; hence likeness, as in Wycliffe.
>
> 39. you search the writings. ἐραυνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς. qv. 2:22 regarding γραφῇ not as the post-Hellenic exegetical 'scripture' but as having the usual Hellenistic meaning of 'that which is written', a writing. The ASV [Anglo-Saxon version] has Smeageað halige gewritu.

The Gospel According to John: Translation And Commentary, Volume I, op. cit.

[6] In respect of the translation:

The numen of all beings is theos. Δόξα πάντων ὁ θεὸς. The sense of δόξα here, especially given the following mention of θεῖος and φύσις, is of immanence and of transcendent sublimity, encompassing both (i) the interpretation given to the word in LXX and the New Testament, of a divine glory (qv. Exodus 16:10, Matthew 25:31, and Luke 2:9) and thus of what is considered to be - that is, is outwardly manifest as - glorious, or splendid, as in Matthew 4:8, a sense well-expressed in the Latin of Jerome: iterum adsumit eum diabolus in montem excelsum valde et ostendit ei omnia regna mundi et gloriam eorum, and (ii) the classical, more personal sense, of honour, and reputation or repute, the latter as for example referenced by Boethius: Unde non iniuria tragicus exclamat: Ὦ δόξα, δόξα, μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὤγκωσας μέγαν (Book III, vi).

Hence I have opted for 'numen', rather than the usual 'splendour' or 'glory' which do not, in my view given their modern connotations and common usage, express the sense of the Greek; with the meaning of 'numen' here being expressed by what follows: "numinal and of numinal physis", where by numinal - in this ἱερός λόγος - is meant divine not necessarily in the specific sense of a monotheistic and Biblical God but in the more general sense of pertaining to divinity in general.

τῶν ὄντων. What is real/what exists (Reality/Existence) - qv. the beginning of the Pœmandres tractate, and my commentary thereon, in *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf

νοῦς. Perceiveration, not 'mind', qv. Pœmandres 2.

substance. ὕλη, the materia of 'things' and living beings - contrasted with οὐσία, essence. qv. Pœmandres 10.

sapientia. σοφία. qv. Pœmandres 29.

vigour. ἐνέργεια. In the sense of vitality and vigorous activity. See my note on ἡ εἱμαρμένη, Pœmandres 15.

Abyss. ἄβυσσος.

A delicate apprehending pneuma. πνεῦμα λεπτὸν νοερόν. In respect of νοερός, the sense here is not 'intelligent'/'intelligence' - as in "quickness or superiority of understanding, sagacity", etcetera - but rather of self-

awareness; that is, of possessing a faculty to perceive, comprehend, and to rationally understand the external world. Which is why I have opted for 'apprehending'. influence. δύναμις. Not here 'force' or 'power' per se but rather the influence arising from, inherent in, the numen by virtue of the numinosity of theos. The kind of influence which can nurture a 'delicate apprehending pneuma'.

Kaos. χάος.

numinous phaos. φῶς ἅγιον. Regarding the transliteration of φῶς - using the Homeric φάος (phaos) - see my commentary on Pœmandres 4; and regarding ἅγιος as 'numinous', rather than the conventional 'holy' or 'sacred', refer to the commentary on Δόξα πάντων ὁ θεὸς above, and especially the note on the duality of the numinous in pagan weltanschauungen in my commentary on Pœmandres 5.

Appendix One

The Concept Of Physis

The term physis - φύσις - was used by Heraclitus, Aristotle, and others, and occurs in texts such as the Pœmandres and Ιερός Λόγος tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum.

Physis is usually translated as either 'Nature' (as if 'the natural world', and the physical cosmos beyond, are meant) or as the character (the nature) of a person. However, while the context - of the original Greek text - may suggest (as often, for example, in Homer and Herodotus) such a meaning as such English words impute, physis philosophically (as, for example, in Heraclitus and Aristotle and the Corpus Hermeticum) has specific ontological meanings. Meanings which are lost, or glossed over, when physis is simply translated either as 'Nature' or - in terms of mortals - as (personal) character.

Ontologically, as Aristotle makes clear [1], physis denotes the being of those beings who or which have the potentiality (the being) to change, be changed, or to develope. That is, to become, or to move or be moved; as for example in the motion (of 'things') and the 'natural unfolding' or growth, sans an external cause, that living beings demonstrate.

However, and crucially, physis is not - for human beings - some abstract 'essence' (qv. Plato's ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος) but rather a balance between the being that it is, it was, and potentially might yet be. That is, in Aristotelian terms, it is a meson - μέσον - of being and 'not being'; and 'not being' in the sense of not yet having become what it could be, and not now being what it used to be. Hence why, for Aristotle, a manifestation of physis - in terms of the being of mortals - such as arête (ἀρετή) is a meson, a balance of things, and not, as it is for Plato, some fixed 'form' - some idea, ideal - which as Plato wrote "always exists, and has no genesis. It does not die, does not grow, does not decay." [2]

According to my understanding of Heraclitus, physis also suggests - as in Fragment 1 - the 'natural' being of a being which we mortals have a tendency to cover-up or conceal [3].

Furthermore, physis is one of the main themes in the Pœmandres tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum, for the author seeks "to apprehend the physis of beings" [4] with physis often mystically personified:

> "This is a mysterium esoteric even to this day. For Physis, having intimately joined with the human, produced a most wondrous wonder possessed of the physis of the harmonious seven I mentioned before, of Fire and pneuma. Physis did not tarry, giving birth to seven male-and-female humans with the physis of those viziers, and ætherean [...]
>
> [For] those seven came into being in this way. Earth was muliebral, Water was lustful, and Fire maturing. From Æther, the pnuema, and with Physis bringing forth human-shaped bodies. Of Life and phaos, the human came to be of psyche and perceiveration; from Life - psyche; from phaos - perceiveration; and with everything in the observable cosmic order cyclic until its completion...
>
> When the cycle was fulfilled, the connexions between all things were, by the deliberations of theos, unfastened. Living beings - all male-and-female then - were, including humans, rent asunder thus bringing into being portions that were masculous with the others muliebral." [5]

Physis is also personified in the Ιερός Λόγος tractate:

> "The divine is all of that mixion: renewance of the cosmic order through Physis
> For Physis is presenced in the divine." [6]

The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos

In the philosophy of pathei-mathos, physis is used contextually to refer to:

> (i) the ontology of beings, an ontology - a reality, a 'true nature '- that is often obscured by denotatum [7] and by abstractions, [8] both of which conceal physis;
> (ii) the relationship between beings, and between beings and Being, which is of us - we mortals - as a nexion,

an affective effluvium (or emanation) of Life (ψυχή) and thus of why 'the separation-of-otherness' [9] is a concealment of that relationship;
(iii) the character, or persona, of human beings, and which character - sans denotatum - can be discovered (revealed, known) by the faculty of empathy;
(iv) the unity - the being - beyond the division of our physis, as individual mortals, into masculous and muliebral;
(v) that manifestation denoted by the concept Time, with Time considered to be an expression/manifestation of the physis of beings. [10]

My concept of physis is therefore primarily ontological.

Notes

[1] Refer to Appendix Two below.

[2] πρῶτον μὲν ἀεὶ ὂν καὶ οὔτε γιγνόμενον οὔτε ἀπολλύμενον οὔτε αὐξανόμενον οὔτε φθίνον (Symposium 210e - 211a).

[3] Refer to Appendix VI, *Some Notes on Heraclitus Fragment 1*, of *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*, op.cit.

[4] Pœmandres 3. *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf

[5] Pœmandres 16-18. *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* op.cit.

[6] Ιερός Λόγος 3; qv. *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates,* op.cit.

[7] In my philosophy of pathei-mathos, I use the term denotatum - from the Latin, denotare - in accord with its general meaning which is "to denote or to describe by an expression or a word; to name some-thing; to refer that which is so named or so denoted."

Thus understood, and used as an Anglicized term, denotatum is applicable to both singular and plural instances and thus obviates the need to employ the Latin plural denotata.

[8] An abstraction is a manufactured generalization, a hypothesis, a posited thing, an assumption or assumptions about, an extrapolation of or from some-thing, or some assumed or extrapolated ideal 'form' of some-thing. Sometimes, abstractions are generalization based on some sample(s), or on some median (average) value or sets of values, observed, sampled, or assumed.

Abstractions can be of some-thing past, in the present, or described as a goal or an ideal which it is assumed could be attained or achieved in the future. Abstractions are often assumed to provide some 'knowledge' or some 'understanding' of some-thing assigned to or described by a particular abstraction.

[9] Refer, for example, to my *The Error of The-Separation-of-Otherness* in *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

[10] *Time And The Separation Of Otherness - Part One*. 2012.

Appendix Two

Notes on Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α

Text

ἐκ δὴ τῶν εἰρημένων ἡ πρώτη φύσις καὶ κυρίως λεγομένη ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία ἡ τῶν ἐχόντων ἀρχὴν κινήσεως ἐν αὐτοῖς ᾗ αὐτά: ἡ γὰρ ὕλη τῷ ταύτης δεκτικὴ εἶναι λέγεται φύσις, καὶ αἱ γενέσεις καὶ τὸ φύεσθαι τῷ ἀπὸ ταύτης εἶναι κινήσεις. καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως τῶν φύσει ὄντων αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐνυπάρχουσά πως ἢ δυνάμει ἢ ἐντελεχείᾳ.

Translation

Given the foregoing, then principally - and to be exact - physis denotes the quidditas of beings having changement inherent within them; for substantia has been denoted by physis because it embodies this, as have the becoming that is a coming-into-being, and a burgeoning, because they are changements predicated on it. For physis is inherent changement either manifesting the potentiality of a being or as what a being, complete of itself, is.

Commentary And Notes

physis. φύσις. A transliteration, since (i) this is a fundamental philosophical principle/term that requires contextual interpretation, and (ii) the English words 'nature' and Nature not only do not adequately describe this principle but also lead to and have led to certain misunderstandings of Aristotle in particular and of classical Greek culture in general.

quidditas. οὐσία. Quidditas - post-classical Latin, from whence the English word 'quiddity' - is more appropriate here than 'essence', given the metaphysical (ontological) context and given that 'essence' now has so many non-philosophical connotations. An interesting alternative would be the scholastic term haeceitty. As with physis, quidditas is a philosophical term which requires contextual interpretation.

changement inherent. The expression ἀρχὴν κινήσεως is crucial to understanding what Aristotle means in respect of physis. In regard to κίνησις, since Aristotle here does not mean 'motion' or 'movement' in the sense of Newtonian physics (with its causal concepts of force, mass, velocity, kinetic energy), and since such physical movement is what the English words 'motion' and 'movement' now most usually denote, then alternatives must be found. Hence the translation 'changement'.

For what Aristotle is describing here is 'change', as for example in the natural development, the unfolding, the growth, of some-thing living that occurs because it is living; because it is possessed of Life and which Life is the ἀρχή of the changement, the 'original being' (the φύσις) from whence being-becomes to be often perceived and classified by us in orderly ways.

What is described is an a-causal change, of being-becoming - of being unfolding - and thus fulfilling the potentiality of being within it. Hence why here Aristotle writes ἀρχὴν κινήσεως, which describes the potential changement inherent in certain beings. 1 That is, the a-causal origin of beings-becoming, or having become, and which beings (having changed, developed, unfolded) we then perceive and classify in orderly ways 2, such as by shape or usefulness to us, or by a notion such as causality: in terms of physical- 'movement'. Which is why, in Aristotle, there is a relation between φύσις, μορφή, and εἶδος - εἶδος in the sense of 'perceiveration' and not, as in Plato, denoting an abstract 'form' or an 'ideal' - διὸ καὶ ὅσα φύσει ἔστιν ἢ γίγνεται, ἤδη ὑπάρχοντος ἐξ οὗ πέφυκε γίγνεσθαι ἢ εἶναι, οὕπω φαμὲν τὴν φύσιν ἔχειν ἐὰν μὴ ἔχῃ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὴν μορφήν.

Thus φύσις is what is a-causal in beings and which acausality is the origin of the 'natural' order that unfolds because of the potentiality of being to become, to presence in the causal, whence to be perceived by us in various orderly arrangements and/or arranged in terms of usefulness, and which arrangements/usefulness include τὸ καλόν - and thus schemata, τάξις 3 - and ἀρετή.

substantia. ὕλη. I have chosen to use the etymon of the English word 'substance' - qv. substantia in Thomas Aquinas, Sententia libri Metaphysicae - to again (i) emphasize the need for contextual interpretation in respect of a specific philosophical term, and (ii) to avoid whatever misunderstandings may arise from the modern (non-ontological) connotations of words such as 'matter' and 'substance'.

as have the becoming that is a coming-into-being, and a burgeoning, because they are changements predicated on it. καὶ αἱ γενέσεις καὶ τὸ φύεσθαι τῷ ἀπὸ ταύτης εἶναι κινήσεις. The sense of γένεσις here implies a 'coming-into-being' rather than just 'generation', just as φύω implies a being 'burgeoning' - unfolding, revealing itself (its physis) - rather than just 'growing'.

the potentiality of a being or as what a being, complete of itself, is. The Greek word ἐντελεχείᾳ is compounded from ἐν ελει ἔχει and the sense here - in relation to ἐνυπάρχουσά - seems to be twofold: of a being as an unchanged being, and of what a being has become (or is becoming) as a result of a change, for both types of being actually exist, are real. One exists as a being as it is and has remained, and one exists as the being it has become (or is in the process of becoming) through the potential for changement inherent within it. Thus, for Aristotle, physis denotes the being of both types of being.

°°°

[1] In respect of ἀρχὴ as implying what is primarily inherent, qv. 1012b-1013a.
[2] As Thomas Aquinas wrote: "Sciendum est autem, quod principium et causa licet sint idem subiecto, differunt tamen ratione. Nam hoc nomen principium ordinem quemdam importat; hoc vero nomen causa, importat influxum quemdam ad esse causati." Sententia libri Metaphysicae, liber 5, lectio 1, n 3.

[3] Regarding 1078a, τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἴδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὡρισμένον (the most noticeable expressions of kalos are schemata and harmony and consonancy), my view - given the context - is that τάξις here is best translated as "schemata", rather than "order" or "arrangement" both of which are vague, open to mis-interpretation, and unrelated to the context, which context is mathematical beauty. Similarly, ὁρίζω (to me) suggests consonancy, echoing as that (now somewhat obscure) English word does both by its use by, among others, Shakespeare (Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 2, 286) and also by its relation to the almost 'mathematical beauty' of some music (as evident for example in the counterpoint of JS Bach).

Furthermore, just because the Greek has συμμετρία it does not necessarily follow that the English word 'symmetry' is an appropriate translation, considering how the word symmetry is now used and has been used, in the West for many centuries, and especially in relation to art (in terms, for example, of objects and the human body).

Given that Aristotle in 1078a is referring to geometry in particular and mathematics in general, then an appropriate translation is 'harmony' - as in "a collation of representative signs or marks, so arranged that they exhibit their agreement and account for their discrepancies or errors." A harmony, in other words, that is most evident (as I mentioned in my essay) in Euclid's Elements, as schemata and consonancy are therein evident, most of the contents (theorems) of which book - deriving from people such as Pythagoras - were known to Aristotle.

Thus, a translation such as "the chief forms of beauty are order and symmetry and definiteness" can in my opinion lead to projecting onto Aristotle what he may not necessarily have meant; and projecting onto in respect of how we now, over two thousand years after Aristotle, understand and use such common English terms. Hence, also, why I sometimes use obscure English words (which may suggest a relevant meaning) or transliterations (as in physis).

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Weltschmerz And The Conflict In Gaza

Question: Given your past, which included anti-Zionist tirades when you were a neo-nazi and then when you were a supporter of al-Qaeda, I would be interested in your view of recent events in Palestine.

Reply: Does the term Weltschmerz express what I feel after decades of experiencing and inciting extremism and a decade of reflexion on and rejection of such extremism? Possibly, at least in some ways; [1] for in respect of the current (2023) conflict in Gaza I feel sadness, and am not surprised that such a conflict has arisen with the subsequent destruction of infrastructure, of homes, and the injuries, the deaths, including of women and children.

Not surprised, given what I understand is our human physis and our seemingly inability to avoid the error of hubris and our obvious ability to favour our own certitude-of-knowing. Will we, can we, as a species learn to develope empathy and thus be compassionate and appreciative of the numinous breeding as such empathy and appreciation of the numinous do a certain personal humility and thus an uncertitude-of-knowing? Will we, can we, as a species learn from our thousands of years old human culture of pathei-mathos?

It would seem not since we in the West, en masse, apparently have not learned from the horrors of the First and Second World wars; from the Vietnam war; from the invasions and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. Instead, hatred and certitude-of-knowing have triumphed again over personal empathy aided as in all those previous conflicts by propaganda both emotive and cunning.

Contra the *bellum iustum* of Augustine, since adopted as a principle by modern nation-States and others, where some elected or unelected official or President or Prime Minister or Congress or Parliament or potentate or whatever assumes or believe they have the authority to declare war, my understanding is that impersonal war, whenever wherever, whatever the alleged or assumed justification by whomsoever, is contrary to empathy, compassion, awareness of the numinous, and the personal learning that pathei-mathos engenders.

For such impersonal war with its necessary obedience to a chain-of-command abrogates personal judgement and what I have described as 'personal honour in the immediacy of the moment'. As I wrote in *One Vagabond In Exile From The Gods*, personal honour

> "presences the virtues of fairness, tolerance, compassion, humility, and εὐταξία - as (i) a natural intuitive (wordless) expression of the numinous ('the good', δίκη, συμπάθεια) and (ii) of both what the culture of pathei-mathos and the acausal-knowing of empathy reveal we should do (or incline us toward doing) in the immediacy of the personal moment when personally confronted by what is unfair, unjust, and extreme.
>
> Of how such honour - by its and our φύσις - is and can only ever be personal, and thus cannot be extracted out from the 'living moment' and our participation in the moment; for it [is] only through such things as a personal study of the culture of pathei-mathos and the development of the faculty of empathy that a person who does not naturally possess the instinct for δίκη can develope what is essentially 'the human faculty of honour', and which faculty is often appreciated and/or discovered via our own personal pathei-mathos." [2]

Hence, my fallible understanding now is that honour cannot be abstracted out from a personal moment and enshrined in some supra-personal written or aural code. Which, of course, is the exact opposite of what I believed during my thirty years as a neo-nazi extremist. Such a change of view was a painful, sorrowful, learning from experience:

> "There are no excuses for my extremist past, for the suffering I caused [...] 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 others..." [3]

A gift, a Phoenix, from the deaths of Sue and Francis who

> "died - thirteen years apart - leaving me bereft of love, replete with sorrow, and somewhat perplexed [...] 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." [4]

In further explanation all I have now are the words of TS Eliot 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.

In respect of wars and supra-personal conflicts, are we then, as a species, doomed to repeat the errors, the hubris, of the past? Almost a decade ago I asked myself a rhetorical question: what opinion would a hypothetical visiting alien from another star-system form about us? [5] My answer then was that the alien would probably consider us an aggressive, still rather primitive and very violent, species best avoided until such time as we might outwardly demonstrate otherwise.

Have we, since the outbreak of World War One in 1914 to the 2023 conflict in Gaza, demonstrated otherwise?

David Myatt
17th December 2023

Extract from a letter to a personal correspondent.

[1] Postscriptum: "in some ways" as Weltschmerz might be applied to some of the poems and letters of TS Eliot.
[2] *One Vagabond In Exile From The Gods*. https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2023/12/viator.pdf
[3] *Pathei-Mathos, Genesis of My Unknowing*. The essay is included in https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/reformation-extremism-v3b.pdf
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Exegesis And Pathei-Mathos

In my recent (2023) essay *A Sacramental Link?* I mentioned that my interpretation of the Gospel of John inclined me to suggest that Johannine Christianity was "the way of humility, of forgiveness, of love, of a personal appreciation of the divine, of the numinous; and a spiritual, interior, way somewhat different from past moralistic interpretations." [1]

My interpenetration of that text is however just one of thousands over centuries with many of those other interpretations, of that and the other Gospels and the Scriptures in general, causing schisms, conflicts, and accusations of heresy as in the case of the Alexandrian priest Arius (born c.250, died 336 AD) who voiced an interpretation of the difference between the denotatum θεὸς and the denotatum ὁ θεὸς in, for instance the Gospel of John, leading to that interpretation being denounced as heretical.

Which returns us to the problems of exegesis and denotata, and the axioms of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos which are:

(i) that it is empathy and pathei-mathos which can wordlessly reveal the ontological reality both of our own physis and of how we, as sentient beings, relate to other living beings and to Being itself;
(ii) that it is denotata - and thus the abstractions deriving therefrom - which, in respect of human beings, can and often do obscure our physis and our relation to other living beings and to Being;
(iii) that denotata and abstractions imply a dialectic of contradictory opposites and thus for we human beings a separation-of-otherness; and
(iv) that this dialectic of opposites is, has been, and can be a cause of suffering for both ourselves, as sentient beings, and - as a causal human presenced effect - for the other life with which we share our planet.

What is important about empathy and pathei-mathos is that they are directly personal perceiverations and experiences, and therefore have what I termed a 'personal horizon' meaning that they

> "cannot be extrapolated from such a personal knowing into some-thing supra-personal be this some-thing denotata, including an ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος, or an axiom (ἀρχή) or a source (αἴτιος) for some 'revelation' or ideology or similar manifestations constructed by and dependent on appellation." [2]

The knowing so revealed is only and always our personal fallible answer or answers, and which knowing is invariably a wordless empathic knowing that cannot be adequately expressed by words and terms (by denotata) without in some manner distorting it because words and terms depend on exegesis, which exegesis can and often does vary from century to century.

In practical terms this knowing implies a certain humility since empathy and pathei-mathos inform us that we are fallible beings, arising as this personal knowledge does from the intimations of the numinous that empathy and pathei-mathos almost invariably provide: of our connexion to other beings, human and otherwise; of our minute place in the Cosmos as one mortal, short-lived, being on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of Galaxies; and of the suffering of so many human beings, century after century, often caused by wars and conflicts often based on some certitude of belief in some cause, or on some passion, or on some interpretation of some religion, or some ideology or notion or 'destiny' with such wars and conflicts generationally replaced by others based on other certitudes of belief or on the same old passions.

A forgetting of this humility, will-fully or otherwise, has however frequently occurred and still occurs with the individual seeking to make their pathei-mathos the basis for some -ism or -ology or more often some interpretation of some existing -ism or -ology. However, a remembering of such humility can often lead to the life of the reclusive mystic or to a life of compassionately seeking to alleviate in some non-confrontational and practical way at least some of the suffering of other life, human and otherwise.

As I noted in *Soli Deo Gloria*,

> "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, saught to cultivate in individuals. " [3]

A Personal View

While I appreciate how various Ways of living and codified religions can presence and often have presenced the numinous and thus have been and are for many a conduit toward a personal humility and compassion, my personal perceiveration has been for over a decade and remains my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos, which is just some recollections of my experiences and contemplations regarding the loss of loved ones, of working and living on farms in England, and of solitary walks along a sea-shore and in the hills and deciduous woods of rural English Shires.

Given the 'personal horizon' of these recollections and contemplations they cannot not, without removing from them their essence of a personal wordless experiencing of the numinous, form the basis for anything supra-personal be it a philosophy or a Way to guide others, just as the recollections and contemplations of others ancient and modern, and the authors themselves, should not be or become or be seen as a guide or even as a meritorious example.

As it says in Ayat 63 of Surah 25 of the Quran:

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمۡشُونَ عَلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ هَوۡنٗا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ
ٱلۡجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُواْ سَلَٰمٗا

"The 'Ibaad of Ar-Rahmaan are those who walk on earth in humility and, when the arrogant speak to them, they reply Salaam." [4]

As the poetess Sappho wrote:

ἔγω δὲ φίλημμ᾽ ἀβροσύναν [...] τοῦτο καί μοι
τὸ λάμπρον ἔρως ἀελίω καὶ τὸ κάλον λέλογχε [5]

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

As it says in the Beatitudes:

Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.
μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.
μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.
μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.
μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.
μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.
μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Fortunate, those humble with spiritus, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean.
Fortunate, those who grieve, for they shall have solace.
Fortunate, the gentle, for they shall acquire the Earth.
Fortunate, those who hunger and thirst for fairness, for they shall be replete.
Fortunate, the compassionate, for they shall receive compassion.
Fortunate, the refined of heart, for they shall perceive Theos.
Fortunate, the peaceable, for they shall be called children of Theos.
Fortunate, those harassed due to their fairness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean. [6]

Which interpretations of mine illustrate the problems of exegesis, and why my preference, now and for over a decade, is and has been for the wordless perceiverations of empathy and of a personal pathei-mathos.

David Myatt
October 24th, 2023

An archive of my www.davidmyatt.info website, which incorporates the items cited below, is available at
https://archive.org/download/www.davidmyatt.info/www.davidmyatt.info.zip
(Accessed October 2023)

[1] The essay is included in www.davidmyatt.info/dwm-compilation-religion.pdf

[2] *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, 2022. www.davidmyatt.info/dwm-denotata-empathy-v1b.pdf

[3] *Soli Deo Gloria*, 2011. Included in www.davidmyatt.info/dwm-compilation-religion.pdf

[4] Ar-Rahmaan is one of the names of Allah, signifying The Most Merciful. The 'Ibaad of Ar-Rahmaan are the Believers who follow the Word of Allah in the Quran and as manifest in the example of the Prophet Muhammad.

[5] P. Oxyrhynchus. XV (1922) nr. 1787 fr. 1 et 2

[6] The Gospel According To Matthew 5: 3–10. My translation and commentary of The Beatitudes is included in www.davidmyatt.info/dwm-compilation-religion.pdf

Since I have used unusual words - for example, the spiritus instead of the conventional 'the spirit', and Empyrean instead of 'heaven' - I append here extracts from my commentary.

> μακάριος. A difficult word to translate since "blessed" has acquired particular (sometimes moralistic) meanings as a result of nearly two thousand years of exegesis, while "happy" is rather prosaic. The context - as in ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν - suggests "fortunate" [...]
>
> πτωχός. Usually translated as "poor" which however has too many exegetical and modern connotations, and does not express the metaphorical sense here which implies being "humble" in respect of τὸ πνεῦμα.
>
> τῷ πνεύματι [...] τῶν οὐρανῶν. In respect of τὸ πνεῦμα as the spiritus (rather than as the Spirit) and οὐρανός as Empyrean (rather than Heaven), qv. my commentary on John 1:32 from which this an extract:
>
> οὐρανός here is always translated as 'heaven' although the term 'heaven' - used in the context of the Gospels - now has rather different connotations than the Greek οὐρανός, with the word 'heaven' now often implying something explained by almost two thousand years of exegesis and as depicted, for example, in medieval and Renaissance Christian art. However, those hearing or reading this particular Greek gospel for the first time in the formative years of Christianity would most probably have assumed the usual Greek usage of "the heavens" in the sense of the "the star-filled firmament above" or in the sense of "the sky" or as the abode of theos and/or of the gods, ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοί [...]
>
> It therefore seems apposite to suggest a more neutral word than 'heaven' as a translation of οὐρανός and one which might not only be understood in various 'classical' ways by an audience of Greek speakers (such as the ways described above) but also be open to a new, and Christian, interpretation consistent with the milieu that existed when the Gospel of John was written and first heard. That is, before the exegesis of later centuries and long before post-Roman Christian iconography. Hence my suggestion of the post-classical Latin term Empyrean, which can bear the interpretation of the abode of theos and/or of the gods, of "the sky", of the "the star-filled firmament above"; and a Christian one suggested by Genesis 2.8 - παράδεισον ἐν Εδεμ (the Paradise of Eden) - and also by shamayim.

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Questions Of Hermeneutics And Exegesis

For over twenty years questions of hermeneutics and exegesis in relation to religions, ideologies, and philosophies have interested and concerned me, leading to my conjecture that the use of denotata to express a revelation, a spirituality, an idea, an ideal, or a philosophy, results in not only a dialectic of opposites - for example in the Gospels of Christianity ἁμαρτία (conventionally interpreted in Gospel translations as sin) contrasted with 'righteousness' (and being saved, rewarded by God with everlasting life in Heaven) and φαῦλος (conventionally in interpreted in Gospel translations as evil) contrasted with 'good' - but also in problems of exegesis: as in how Hellenistic Greek is expounded in terms of a modern language such as English. Thus, is the interpretation of 'sin' from the Hellenistic Greek ἁμαρτία imposing a meaning that may not have been germane to the milieu of such an ancient period in all or certain instances? [1]

In the matter of the Gospels of John did the author use ἁμαρτία to express, to expound, something - 'sin' - which might well have been a foreign concept to speakers of the Greek of that time when there was a common belief among many of them in a hierarchy of pagan deities and of propitiation (such as offering gifts or a sacrifice to the gods) for misdeeds or for 'offending' a god or gods or to ask for their help?

Consider the tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum some arguably written around the time or not long after that Gospel, with the Poemandres tractate centred around θεός as in this from v.3:

> φημὶ ἐγώ, Μαθεῖν θέλω τὰ ὄντα καὶ νοῆσαι τὴν τούτων φύσιν καὶ γνῶναι τὸν θεόν·
>
> "I answered that I seek to learn what is real, to apprehend the physis of beings, and to have knowledge of theos." [2]

Is theos here the Jehovah of the Hebrews and the God of Christianity? Or is it better to understand theos in a non-anthropomorphic way as Being, the source of beings, mortal and otherwise? If the interpretation is 'God' then this tractate, and many of the others, arguable express early Christian weltanschauungen with an implicit dialectic of opposites, unlike the neutral, non-anthropomorphic Being which can metaphysically be understood as 'the divine', the numinous. [3]

Such a dialectic, as I have previously endeavoured to explain, [4] invariably leads to conflict both internal, within some individuals, and external between individuals and entities, such as religious or political groups or factions who or which claim to have the correct or a better interpretation or understanding of their beliefs or ideology. Hence extremism [5] and the suffering that such extremism causes.

My personal experiences, over some four decades, and my subsequent reflexion on that experience, have led me to conclude that, rather than denotata, the personal experiencing of the numinous through empathy and pathei-mathos is of fundamental importance in understanding both our physis (φύσις) - and thus our relation to Being and to beings - and Being, the numinous, itself. [6]

To illustrate the dialectic of denotata and the subsequent suffering caused there is the National Socialism of Germany between 1933 and 1945. This was a way of life centred around denotata such as kampf, nation, and ethnic identity, with individuals judged by, and expected to judge others by, the primary criterion of ethnicity, with particular ethnicities assigned a certain value (high or low), and each individual judged by how well they adhered to the duty they were expected to do in respect of their nation (their land) and the ethnicity they were said to belong to or believed they belonged to. In addition, kampf between individuals, ethnicities, 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.

This German National Socialist way of life was therefore a collective, supra-personal, one with the empathy and pathei-mathos of individuals, and the personal judgement and compassion derived from them, ignored or suppressed in favour of obedience to the 'will of the collective' (the folk, the nation) embodied by Der Führer and through the führerprinzip and with disobedience not only disapproved of but liable to be punished. This dialectic of opposites - of certain types of individuals or ways of behaviour being better than others and with The Third Reich having a particular destiny achievable through kampf - naturally led to the impersonal harshness of the Nürnberger Gesetze, as well as to the invasion of Poland and thence to the Second World War with the attendant deaths and suffering of millions of human beings. German National Socialism was thus from its beginnings to its ending in 1945 an extremism whose principles, causes, and characteristics promoted and incited harsh, uncompassionate, actions.

In contrast, the personal empathy and pathei-mathos of individuals provides a natural balance devoid of denotata, expressed or implied, and can only promote individual actions consistent with compassion. It cannot be extrapolated from the individual lexeriencing to form anything supra-personal expressed by a denotatum or by some denotata such as an -ism or an -ology be such religious, ideological, or political or otherwise, since in doing so its individual physis, its natural nameless balance, is replaced sooner or later by a dialectic of opposites.

In practical terms this implies the mortal individual could, at best, be a fallible example or inspiration for some others, since to claim or to be perceived by others as other than fallible and mortal, and other than a possible and personal inspiration, is ὕβρις (hubris) and a contradiction of the nameless balance that for centuries we have, according to my

understanding, erroneously denoted by appellations such as θεός, ὁ θεός, and God with the inevitable dialectic of exegesis and conflict and of suffering.

In relation to hubris,

> σὺ δ᾽ ἄκουε δίκης, μηδ᾽ ὕβριν ὄφελλε:
> ὕβρις γάρ τε κακὴ δειλῷ βροτῷ: οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλὸς
> ῥηιδίως φερέμεν δύναται, βαρύθει δέ θ᾽ ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς
> ἐγκύρσας ἄτῃσιν: ὁδὸς δ᾽ ἐτέρηφι παρελθεῖν
> κρείσσων ἐς τὰ δίκαια: Δίκη δ᾽ ὑπὲρ Ὕβριος ἴσχει
> ἐς τέλος ἐξελθοῦσα: παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω
>
> Hesiod, Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, vv 213-218
>
> 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. [7]
>
> ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσίς ἐστι τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν. Anaximander [8]
>
> Where beings have their origin there also they cease to exist: offering payment to balance, one to another, their unbalance for such is the arrangement of what is passing. [9]

David Myatt
July 2023

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[1] I expounded on the matter of the word sin in *Interpretation and The Question of Sin* which forms part of my 2013 essay *Exegesis and Translation, Some Personal Reflexions*. https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/exegesis-and-translation-partsone-two.pdf

[2] My translation, from *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf

[3] From *Mythoi To Empathy: A New Appreciation Of The Numinous*, appendix II of *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

[4] In Part Seven, *The Abstraction of Change as Opposites and Dialectic*, of *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf; and in the essay *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/03/dwm-denotata-empathy-v1b.pdf

[5] In *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism* I defined extremism and an extremist thus:

> "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.
>
> In the philosophical terms of my weltanschauung, an extremist is someone who commits the error of hubris."
> https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/david-myatt-rejecting-extremism.pdf

[6] My conclusions are outlined in two works: *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf, and *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism,* https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/david-myatt-rejecting-extremism.pdf

[7] Notes on my translation:

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 ἄτῃσιν 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 ἀπαλλαγή (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).

[8] Diels-Kranz, 12A9, B1

[9] In respect of χρόνος, it is not here a modern abstract measurable 'time' but 'the passing' of living or events as evident in the Agamemnon:

> ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις 278
>
> Then - how long has it been since the citadel was ravaged?
>
> τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν ἅπαντ᾽ ἀπήμων τὸν δι᾽ αἰῶνος χρόνον 554-5
>
> Who - except for the gods - passes their entire life without any injury at all?

In respect of ἀδικία, here it simply implies unbalance in contrast to the balance that is δίκη. The translation 'disorder' - like 'order' for δίκη - is too redolent of some modern or ancient morality designed to manifest 'order' in contrast to its dialectical opposite 'disorder'.

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All translations by DW Myatt

Fifty-Five Years Ago

On July 20th, 1969, during the Summer Vacation, I among millions of others around the world watched live transmissions from the surface of the Moon as an American astronaut became the first human being to step onto the surface on an extra-terrestrial object. In common with many people then I believed it was a momentous event that heralded a new human era when we, placing aside divisions and differences internal and external, would together as a species co-operate and venture forth toward the common goal of exploring and having settlements on extra-terrestrial worlds thus having a supra-national goal that would inspire our peoples and possibly help us move toward solving at least some of our internal problems.

How naive I was. Fifty-five years later we as a species are as divided, internally and externally, as we were, perhaps more so, with America for instance spending far more on defence and supplying military and other aid to their 'allies' in conflict zones and elsewhere than they do on funding NASA and the exploration of Outer Space. We also have failed to solve many if not most of our internal problems, such as in the case of America and Britain, poverty, homelessness, the drug-addiction that engenders crime, and the social misbehaviour, the disrespect, born of a lack of personal honour.

I also, for decades, naively believed I had found some answers to such internal problems, first in National Socialism and then in a particular interpretation of Islam. But hard-learned lessons, often occurring against my will tempered as it was by an inner fanaticism, slowly, very slowly, engendered a learning. Of how all I and similar arrogant others were doing was contributing to divisions, engendering suffering, and committing the error of hubris. A learning I have, and perhaps out of a still-lingering vanity, strived to express through my Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos. [1]
Not that I now expect it to make any difference whatsoever. But it is all I seem to have to offer in expiation. As Hesiod wrote over two and a half thousand years ago:

> 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 ἄτῃσιν: ὁδὸς δ᾽ ἐτέρηφι παρελθεῖν
> κρείσσων ἐς τὰ δίκαια: Δίκη δ᾽ ὑπὲρ ΄Υβριος ΐσχει
> 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. [2]

David Myatt
July 20th, 2024

[1] https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

[2] ΄Έργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, vv 213-218. Some notes on my translation:

a. δίκη. The goddess of Fairness/Justice/Judgement, and - importantly - of Tradition (Ancestral Custom). In this work, 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 ἄτῃσιν 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, ΄Ατη) 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 ἀπαλλαγή
> mortals cannot be delivered from the misfortunes of their fate

c. δίκαιος. My reading of the text suggests that '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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A Note Concerning Aristotle, Reason, And Virtue

It was after recently reading a passage from Sententia libri Ethicorum by Thomas Aquinas [1] that I returned to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics and found the appropriate section:

> εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἔργον ἀνθρώπου ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον ἢ μὴ ἄνευ λόγου, τὸ δ' αὐτό φαμεν ἔργον εἶναι τῷ γένει τοῦδε καὶ τοῦδε σπουδαίου, ὥσπερ κιθαριστοῦ καὶ σπουδαίου κιθαριστοῦ, καὶ ἁπλῶς δὴ τοῦτ' ἐπὶ πάντων, προστιθεμένης τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν ὑπεροχῆς πρὸς τὸ ἔργον· κιθαριστοῦ μὲν γὰρ κιθαρίζειν, σπουδαίου δὲ τὸ εὖ· εἰ δ' οὕτως, ἀνθρώπου δὲ τίθεμεν ἔργον ζωήν τινα, ταύτην δὲ ψυχῆς ἐνέργειαν καὶ πράξεις μετὰ λόγου, σπουδαίου δ' ἀνδρὸς εὖ ταῦτα καὶ καλῶς, ἕκαστον δ' εὖ κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν ἀποτελεῖται· εἰ δ' οὕτω, τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθὸν ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια γίνεται κατ' ἀρετήν, εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην καὶ τελειοτάτην. 1.7 1098a7-18 [2]

In the context of the comments by Aquinas, and later translations of the Nicomachean Ethics, it was interesting how certain English words had and have been used to translate particular Greek terms and thus imbue the text with particular meanings not necessarily relevant to an understanding of Aristotle's philosophy. Such as, in the above lines, ψυχή as 'soul', ἀρετή as 'virtue', and ἔργον as 'work' or 'activity', with words such as 'soul' and 'virtue' now often associated with Christianity.

My interpretation of meaning of those lines from Aristotle is somewhat different:

> Thus if the goal of humans is to actualize the Quidditas through reason or at least not disconnected from reason, and if we also say that regarding the goal of an artist and of a skilled artist of the same genre - of a Kithara player and one more skilful, and to all genres - the goal of humans with a certain type of living, of a goal to actualize the Quidditas through reason, then according to such premises it would be proper for a skilled human to act excellently in accord with reason, and if there be several such human excellences, in accord with the most meritable and accomplished of them.

Where and for example there is 'merit' in place of 'virtue' and Quidditas in place of 'soul', with Quidditas (scholastic Latin) used by Thomas Aquinas and still a somewhat neutral world which can suggest several philosophical, non-religious, meanings according to context, such as the physis - character; nature; noumenon; intangibility - of a being or existent, as in Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α:

> ἐκ δὴ τῶν εἰρημένων ἡ πρώτη φύσις καὶ κυρίως λεγομένη ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία ἡ τῶν ἐχόντων ἀρχὴν κινήσεως ἐν αὐτοῖς ᾗ αὐτά: ἡ γὰρ ὕλη τῷ ταύτης δεκτικὴ εἶναι λέγεται φύσις, καὶ αἱ γενέσεις καὶ τὸ φύεσθαι τῷ ἀπὸ ταύτης εἶναι κινήσεις. καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως τῶν φύσει ὄντων αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐνυπάρχουσά πως ἢ δυνάμει ἢ ἐντελεχείᾳ.
>
> Given the foregoing, then principally – and to be exact – physis denotes the quidditas of beings having changement inherent within them; for substantia [materies, ὕλη] has been denoted by physis because it embodies this, as have the becoming that is a coming-into-being, and a burgeoning, because they are changements predicated on it. For physis is inherent changement either manifesting the potentiality of a being or as what a being, complete of itself, is.

For me, the above example from Nicomachean Ethics relates to what I still find to be the vexatious issues of exegesis, of intangibility, of naming or of not naming, since what a name, a denotata, denotes, not only can and does change from century to century, from one no longer existing society to another newer one, but also has a tendency to separate and divide one being or existent from others leading to the development of categories.

According to my understanding an enigmatic quotation attributed to Anaximander expresses this:

> ἀρχὴ <...> τῶν ὄντων τὸ ἄπειρον <...>
>
> ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσίς ἐστι τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν [Theophrastus/Simplicius]

As described in my essay *Anaximander, Imbalance, And Opposites* [3] I interpreted this as:

> < [the] source ... of beings is the un-definitive [4] ...>
>
> Where beings have their origin there also they cease to exist: offering payment [5] to balance, [6] one to another, their unbalance for such is the arrangement of what is passing. [7]

Which understanding is that once what was or appeared to be intangible is denoted by a name it is considered to be a particular being, a 'thing', or existent, and thus becomes distinguishable from other beings, we have concealed, covered-up, its physis, and as Heraclitus described Polemos is pervasive bringing-into-being discord because the process of naming is the genesis of what is perceived to be the opposite of that now named 'thing' or existent, which as Anaximander implied it ceases, for us, to be what it was, something of an intangible mystery. [8]

Something, perhaps, that is numinous or which presences the numinous. Hence why, in the weltanschauung of pathei-mathos, [9] the wordless human faculty of empathy is considered to be a way to know and understand the physis of

human beings sans denotata, for it is:

> "our faculty of empathy which provides or can provide an individual intuition - a wordless-knowing or awareness - of the numinous, and as a personal human faculty empathy has a personal horizon and thus cannot be extrapolated from such a personal knowing into some-thing supra-personal be this some-thing denotata, including an ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος, or an axiom (ἀρχή) or a source (αἴτιος) for some 'revelation' or ideology or similar manifestations constructed by and dependent on appellation. In the case of a 'revelation' the source is often named as God or a god/the god (θεὸς, ὁ θεὸς) who or which are often described by a myth or mythoi. [10]

But such extrapolation, by an δέᾳ/εἶδος or by an axiom or by a or *the* source of a 'revelation', by the very nature of - the causality inherent in - denotata results in ἔρις, a discord of opposites: for every denotatum has or developes an opposite and thus can cleave physis, as a fragment attributed to Heraclitus poetically expressed.

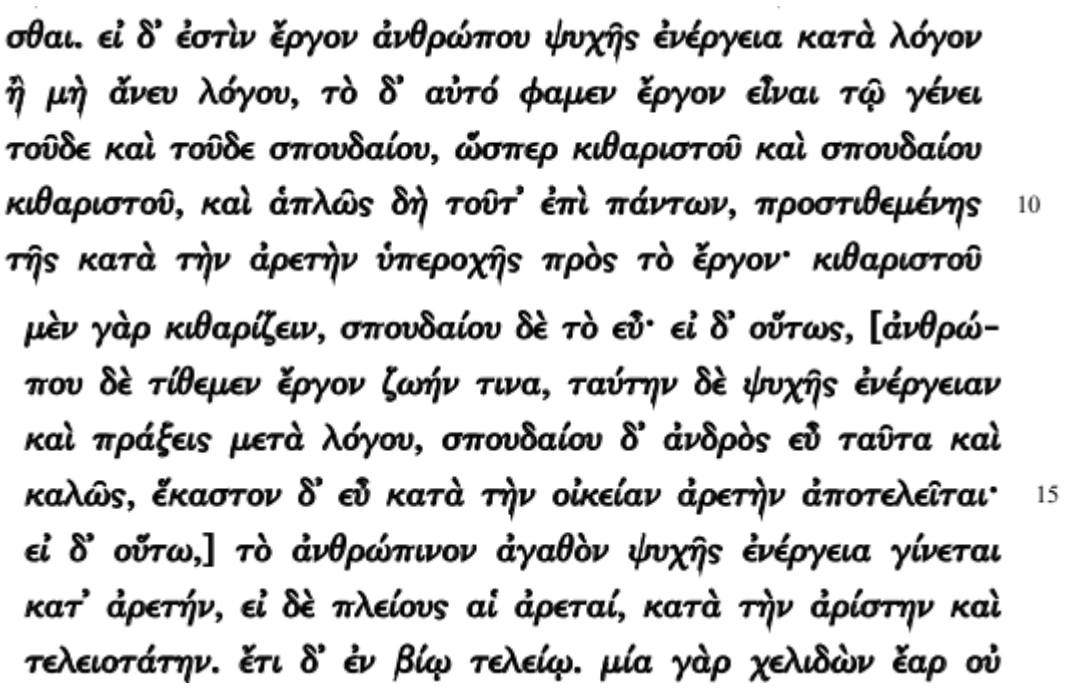
> εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ΄ ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα <χρεών>
>
> One should be aware that Polemos pervades, with discord δίκη, and that beings are naturally born by discord. [10]

David Myatt
March 10th, 2024

===

1. Primo igitur accipit ex praemissis quod proprium opus hominis sit operatio animae, quae est secundum ipsam rationem, vel non sine ratione. Liber 1, Lectio 10.

2.


σθαι. εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἔργον ἀνθρώπου ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον
ἢ μὴ ἄνευ λόγου, τὸ δ' αὐτό φαμεν ἔργον εἶναι τῷ γένει
τοῦδε καὶ τοῦδε σπουδαίου, ὥσπερ κιθαριστοῦ καὶ σπουδαίου
κιθαριστοῦ, καὶ ἁπλῶς δὴ τοῦτ' ἐπὶ πάντων, προστιθεμένης 10
τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν ὑπεροχῆς πρὸς τὸ ἔργον· κιθαριστοῦ
μὲν γὰρ κιθαρίζειν, σπουδαίου δὲ τὸ εὖ· εἰ δ' οὕτως, [ἀνθρώ-
που δὲ τίθεμεν ἔργον ζωήν τινα, ταύτην δὲ ψυχῆς ἐνέργειαν
καὶ πράξεις μετὰ λόγου, σπουδαίου δ' ἀνδρὸς εὖ ταῦτα καὶ
καλῶς, ἕκαστον δ' εὖ κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν ἀποτελεῖται· 15
εἰ δ' οὕτω,] τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθὸν ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια γίνεται
κατ' ἀρετήν, εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην καὶ
τελειοτάτην. ἔτι δ' ἐν βίῳ τελείῳ. μία γὰρ χελιδὼν ἔαρ οὐ

3 https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/dwmyatt-anaxmander.pdf

4. Because the beginning is fragmentary it is difficult to provide a satisfactory explanation of what is meant, although many explanations have been suggested over many centuries including the speculation that 'apeiron' is the first principle, the ἀρχὴ, of beings, with ἄπειρον almost invariably translated by words such as the boundless, infinity, the limit-less.

However, ἄπειρον is a privation of πεῖραρ, a lack of completion; a lack of a verdict; or, often overlooked, a lack of a means, a method, an instrument, to reach a particular conclusion or of a tool do a particular task, qv. Odyssey: 3.431-435, and my translation:

> ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἐποίπνυον. ἦλθε μὲν ἂρ βοῦς
> ἐκ πεδίου, ἦλθον δὲ θοῆς παρὰ νηὸς ἐίσης
> Τηλεμάχου ἕταροι μεγαλήτορος, ἦλθε δὲ χαλκεὺς
> ὅπλ' ἐν χερσὶν ἔχων χαλκήια, πείρατα τέχνης,
> ἄκμονά τε σφῦραν τ' ἐυποίητόν τε πυράγρην,
> οἷσίν τε χρυσὸν εἰργάξετο

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 vigourous 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.

Hence my suggestion here that what Anaximander might have implied is that the source of beings is 'un-definitive', incapable of resolution because we do not posses the tools, such as words, to resolve it. Which explains why he goes on to contrast δίκη with ἀδικία, which balance and unbalance I explain below.

5. Payment as in a debt owed or because of some personal need or mistake, as in our relatively recent phrase 'debt of honour'. The debt may be to a person or persons or as in ancient times to a deity either in expiation or in the hope of avoiding a misfortune wrought by some deity, for example by the "Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies" of the gods, Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ᾽ Ἐρινύες.

The suggestion therefore might be that the offer of payment relates to those who, despite the fact that source of beings is 'un-definitive', having tried to define it and in the process constructed a dialectic of opposites, and thus brought conflict, realize their error. As Heraclitus noted:

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

6. In respect of δίκη it here simply implies balance in contrast to the unbalance, the privation of balance, that is ἀδικία. The translations 'order' or justice or 'fitting' - like 'disorder' or injustice or 'unfitting' for ἀδικία - are too redolent of some modern or ancient morality designed to manifest 'order' or justice or what is considered fitting in contrast to their assumed dialectical opposites.

7. In respect of χρόνος, it is not here a modern abstract measurable 'time' (in ancient times by a sundial; in later times by a mechanical clock) but 'the passing' of living or of events as evident in the Agamemnon:

ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις 278

Then - how long has it been since the citadel was ravaged?

τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν ἅπαντ᾽ ἀπήμων τὸν δι᾽ αἰῶνος χρόνον 554-5

Who - except for the gods - passes their entire life without any injury at all?

8. Compare the expression κεκρυμμένον μυστήριον from tractate One, v.16 of the Corpus Hermeticum, and Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ from Heraclitus fragment 123. The former suggesting "a mysterium esoteric" even to this day - https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf - and the latter suggesting that the natural companion of Physis is concealment, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/heraclitus-fragment-123.pdf

9. qv. *Introduction: Physis And Being* in *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, 2022, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

10. *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/dwm-denotata-empathy-v1b.pdf

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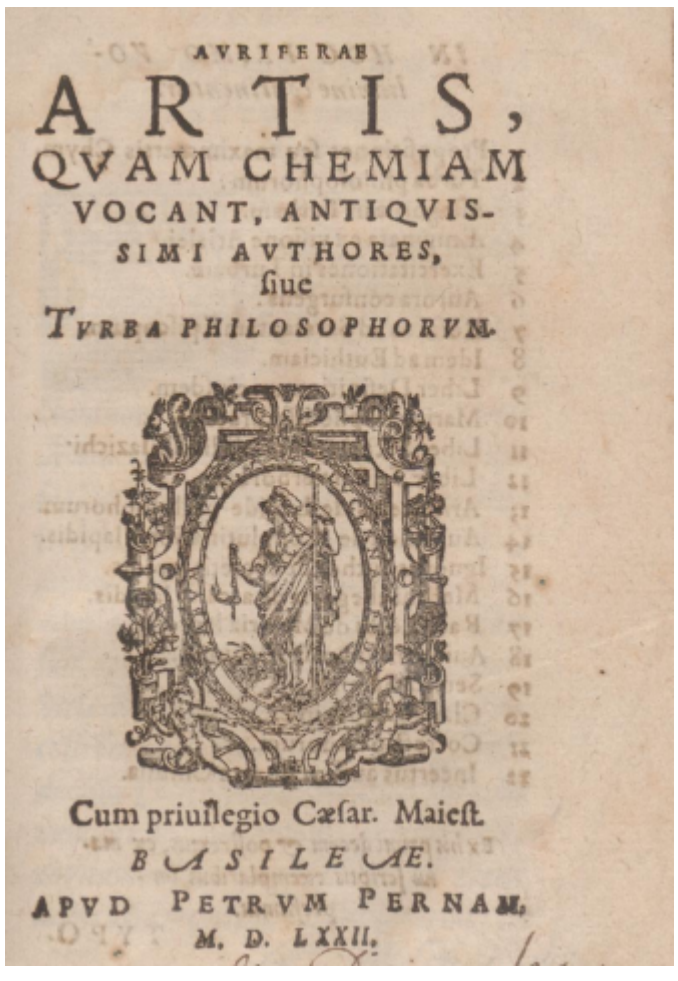
Anaximander, Imbalance, And Opposites

Three quotations attributed to the Greek philosopher Anaximander (c. 610 – c. 546 BCE) one quotation in Greek and two in Latin, have been much debated over the centuries with all three suggesting an ancient weltanschauung which resonated with later weltanschauungen such as hermeticism and alchemy, which is possibly why the two Latin quotations were included in a 1572 CE compendium on alchemy in the section titled *Turba Philosophorum* itself a Latin translation of an earlier Arabic text by Muḥammad ibn Umayl al-Tamimi (c.900–960 CE).


AVRIFERAE
ARTIS,
QVAM CHEMIAM
VOCANT, ANTIQVIS-
SIMI AVTHORES,
siue
TVRBA PHILOSOPHORVM.
Cum priuilegio Cæsar. Maiest.
BASILEAE.
APVD PETRVM PERNAM.
M. D. LXXII.

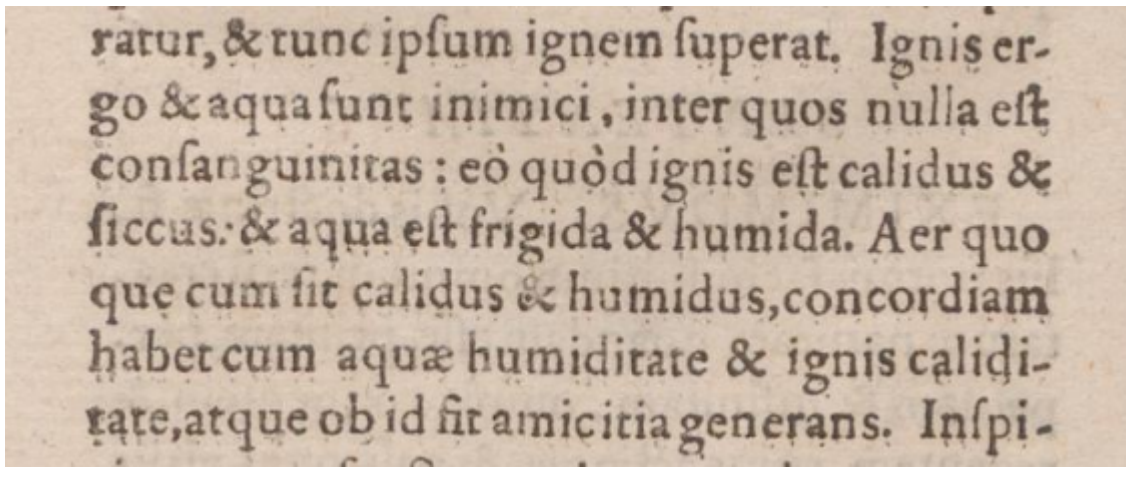
My methodology in interpreting these quotations derives from my understanding that certain Latin and Greek words as originally used by their authors represent philosophical, or hermetic or alchemical, principles or substances or what we now term 'archetypes', and that it is therefore erroneous to translate them by English words which over centuries may and often have acquired ordinary meanings, such as air', 'water', 'fire'.

The question of such principles is, as Aristotle wrote in his Metaphysics, (3.996a) an interesting and complex question answered by many in certain ways with others proposing as first principles Fire, Water, and Air - ἄλλος δέ τις πῦρ ὁ δὲ ὕδωρ ἢ ἀέρα - which leads him to the question of whether or not such principles are universal or individual.

The Latin Texts

The Latin of the first quotation in Turba Philosophorum is:

> ignis ergo et aqua sunt inimici, inter quos nulla est consanguinitas, eo quod ignis est calidus et siccus, aqua vero frigida et humida


ratur, & tunc ipſum igneim ſuperat. Ignis er-
go & aqua ſunt inimici, inter quos nulla eſt
conſanguinitas: eò quòd ignis eſt calidus &
ſiccus: & aqua eſt frigida & humida. Aer quo
que cum ſit calidus & humidus, concordiam
habet cum aquæ humiditate & ignis calidi-
tate, atque ob id fit amicitia generans. Inſpi-

Auriferae artis, quam chemiam vocant, antiquissimi authores, sive turba philosophorum
Basileae, 1572

My interpretation of meaning:

> Ignis [1] and Acua [2] are not friendly for there are no ties of kindred among them: Ignis is fiery and resolute while Acua is cool and moistening. [3]

1. Retaining the Latin rather than simply translating here as 'fire' because Ignis (πυρὸς) is a philosophical, hermetic and alchemical, principle (or substance or archetype) as in the Corpus Hermeticum. For example:

> σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός. ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος ταῦτα βοᾷ διὰ πυρός, δι΄ ἀέρος, διὰ γῆς, διὰ ὕδατος, διὰ πνεύματος, διὰ τῶν κτισμάτων σου
>
> You are theos. Your mortal loudly calls out: through Ignis [Fire, πυρός], through Air, through Earth, through Water, through Pneuma, through your created beings.
>
> > Logos Δ. The Esoteric Song, Tractate XIII, 20. Myatt, *Corpus Hermeticum*, 2017. ISBN 9781976452369

Compare also a fragment attributed to Heraclitus:

> ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα συνεστάναι εἰς τοῦτο ἀναλύεσθαι πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ᾽ εἱμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα καὶ πάντα ψυχῶν εἶναι καὶ δαιμόνων πλήρη [Diogenes Laertius, 11:7]
>
> 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 filed/suffused/vivified with/by ψυχή and Dæmons.

2. Acua. I have opted for a somewhat obscure regional (Sardinian) variant of aqua rather than simply retaining the Latin or translating as 'water' because aqua is now a somewhat commercialized word with the Greek ὕδωρ, like Pyros, a hermetic and alchemical principle, qv. Corpus Hermeticum, Tractate IV, 1:

> τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι τὸ σῶμα ἐκείνου, οὐχ ἁπτόν, οὐδὲ ὁρατόν, οὐδὲ μετρητόν, οὐδὲ διαστατόν, οὐδὲ ἄλλωι τινὶ σώματι ὅμοιον· οὔτε γὰρ πῦρ ἐστιν οὔτε ὕδωρ οὔτε ἀὴρ οὔτε πνεῦμα, ἀλλὰ πάντα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. ἀγαθὸς γὰρ ὢν, μόνωι ἑαυτῶι τοῦτο ἀναθεῖναι ἠθέλησε καὶ τὴν γῆν κοσμῆσαι,
>
> That Being has no body that can be touched or seen or measured or which is separable or which is similar to any other body: not of Fire [pyros] or Water [ὕδωρ] or of Pneuma even though all such things are from that Being. (Myatt, op.cit.)

3. (i) qv. "moistness and consistency" in the second quotation, below. (ii) cf. William Caxton: "one somer is softe and moyste, and another is drye and wyndy." Myrrour of the Worlde, 1481 CE.

°°°

The Latin of the second quotation in Turba Philosophorum is:

> doceo autem vos stellas esse igneas et aera ipsas continere et quod si aeris humiditas et spissitudo non esset, quae solis flammam separaret a creaturis, omnia subsistentia sol combureret.

The Arabic of Muḥammad ibn Umayl al-Tamimi (c.900–960 CE) from *Kitab al-ma 'al-waraqi* containing the quotation is:

> قال أكسميدوس الجرعاني [. . .] فالماء والنار عدوان ليست بينهما قرابة واشجة لأن النار حارّة يابسة والماء بارد رطب فأمّا الهواء فحارّ رطب فأصلح ما بينهما برطوبته مع حرارته فصار الهواء مصلحا بين الماء والنار. والأرواح كلهم من لطيف بخار الهواء تكون لأنه إذا اجتمعت السخونة مع الرطوبة فليس لهما بد من أن يخرج من بينهما لطيف يصير بخارا أو ريحا لأن حرارة الشمس تُخرج

My interpretation of meaning:

> I inform you that stars are Igneous, that Aeros [1] bounds them, and it is the moistness and consistency [2] of Aeros which keeps the flames of the Sun separate from created beings for otherwise the Sun would consume them.

1. Aeros. Here as in hermeticism and alchemy, ἀὴρ is a particular philosophical principle, substance, or archetype. As in Poemandres tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum, for example v.5:

καὶ ὁ ἀὴρ ἐλαφρὸς ὢν ἠκολούθησε τῶι πνεύματι, ἀναβαίνοντος αὐτοῦ μέχρι τοῦ πυρὸς ἀπὸ γῆς καὶ ὕδατος, ὡς δοκεῖν κρέμασθαι αὐτὸν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ

Since Air [ἀέρος, Aeros] is agile, it followed the pnuema, up and above Earth and Water [Acua] and as far as Fire [Pyros], to be as if it were hanging from that, there.

2. spissitudo from spissus, qv. σπιδής and cf. πυκνός. Here 'consistency' rather than 'broad' or 'dense'.

The Greek Text

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Who - except for the gods - passes their entire life without any injury at all?

Imbalance And Opposites

What I find in these fragments attributed to Anaximander is germane to our perception of our human physis and of how we have tried to understand it through words - denotata - and thus by certain named 'principles', and that ultimately we have to accept that we cannot, should not, attempt to understand it through words which bring-into-being a named opposite and thus a conflict between those perceived, believed in, and conflicting dialectical opposites with their attendant strife, discord, enmity, hatred, and suffering. That such a wordful perception is un-definitive because the tools we have hitherto manufactured and rely on are useless.

Thus, my own fallible answer to Aristotle's question of whether or not such principles are universal or individual is that they are ineluctably personal, with all we can presently hope do is use the wordless knowing of our empathy, and of our own pathei-mathos, as a guide.

David Myatt

21st February 2024

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Summary Of The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos

§ Physis And Being
§ The Way Of Pathei-Mathos - A Précis
§ Glossary Of Terms
§ Appendix: Notes on Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α

Physis And Being

The numinous way - the philosophy - of pathei-mathos is based on four principles: (i) that it is empathy and pathei-mathos which can wordlessly reveal the ontological reality both of our own physis [1] and of how we, as sentient beings, relate to other living beings and to Being itself; (ii) that it is denotatum [2] – and thus the abstractions deriving therefrom [3] – which, in respect of human beings, can and often do obscure our physis and our relation to other living beings and to Being; (iii) that denotatum and abstractions imply a dialectic of contradictory opposites and thus for we human beings a separation-of-otherness; and (iv) that this dialectic of opposites is, has been, and can be a cause of suffering for both ourselves, as sentient beings, and – as a causal human presenced effect – for the other life with which we share the planet named in English as Earth.

In respect of the term numinous, it

> "derives from the classical Latin numen and denotes 'a reverence for the divine; a divinity; divine power' with the word numen assimilated into English in the 15th century, with the English use of 'numinous' dating from the middle of the 17th century and used to signify 'of or relating to a numen; revealing or indicating the presence of a divinity; divine, spiritual.'
>
> It thus has a wider meaning than that ascribed to it by Rudolf Otto in his Das Heilige. For him, it was manifest in the written words - 'the revelation' - of the Old and New Testaments of Christianity (qv. Das Heilige, chapters X, XI) as well as in Christian exegesis manifest in the preaching of individuals such as Martin Luther (Das Heilige, chapter XII) and in religious terms it involved 'worship' (Das Heilige, chapter XIII ff) and in philosophical terms was described by Kant's *a priori* (Das Heilige, chapter XVII). Yet Otto also wrote that is was sui generis, a personal emotion or feeling.
>
> The wider meaning of the numinous results from our faculty of empathy which provides or can provide an individual intuition - a wordless-knowing or awareness - of the numinous, and as a personal human faculty empathy has a personal horizon and thus cannot be extrapolated from such a personal knowing into some-thing supra-personal be this some-thing denotata, including an ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος, or an axiom (ἀρχή) or a source (αἴτιος) for some 'revelation' or ideology or similar manifestations constructed by and dependent on appellation. In the case of a 'revelation' the source is often named as God or a god/the god (θεὸς, ὁ θεὸς) who or which are often described by a myth or mythoi." *Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition,* 2022

In respect of empathy and pathei-mathos, they

> "incline us to suggest that ipseity is an illusion of perspective: that there is, fundamentally, no division between ‘us’ – as some individual sentient, mortal being – and what has hitherto been understood and named as the Unity, The One, God, The Eternal. That ‘we’ are not ‘observers’ but rather Being existing as Being exists and is presenced in the Cosmos. That thus all our striving, individually and collectively when based on some ideal or on some form – some abstraction and what is derived therefrom, such as ideology and dogma – always is or becomes sad/tragic, and which recurrence of sadness/tragedy, generation following generation, is perhaps even inevitable unless and until we live according to the wordless knowing that empathy and pathei-mathos reveal." [4]

In essence, empathy and pathei-mathos lead us away from the abstractions we have constructed and manufactured and which abstractions we often tend to impose, or project, upon other human beings, upon ourselves, often in the belief that such abstractions can aid our understanding of others and of ourselves, with a feature of all abstractions being inclusion and exclusion; that is, certain individuals are considered as belonging to or as defined by a particular category while others are not.

Over millennia we have manufactured certain abstractions and their assumed opposites and classified many of them according to particular moral standards so that a particular abstraction is considered good and/or beneficial and/or as necessary and/or as healthy, while its assumed dialectical opposite is considered bad (or evil), or unnecessary, or unhealthy, and/or as unwarranted.

Thus in ancient Greece and Rome slavery was accepted by the majority, and considered by the ruling elite as natural and necessary, with human beings assigned to or included in the category ‘slave’ a commodity who could be traded with slaves regarded as necessary to the functioning of society. Over centuries, with the evolution of religions such as Christianity and with the development in Western societies of humanist weltanschauungen, the moral values of this particular abstraction, this particular category to which certain human beings assigned, changed such that for perhaps a majority slavery came to be regarded as morally repugnant. Similarly in respect of the abstraction designated in modern times by such terms as "the rôle of women in society" which rôle for millennia in the West was defined

according to various masculous criteria – deriving from a ruling and an accepted patriarchy – but which rôle in the past century in Western societies has gradually been redefined.

Yet irrespective of such developments, such changes associated with certain abstractions, the abstractions themselves and the dialectic of moral opposites associated with them remain because, for perhaps a majority, abstractions and ipseity, as a criteria of judgment and/or as a human instinct, remain; as evident in the continuing violence against, the killing of, and the manipulation, of women by men, and in what has become described by terms such as "modern slavery" and "human trafficking".

In addition, we human beings have continued to manufacture abstractions and continue to assign individuals to them, a useful example being the abstraction denoted by the terms The State and The Nation-State [5] and which abstraction, with its government, its supra-personal authority, its laws, its economy, and its inclusion/exclusion (citizenship or lack of it) has come to dominate and influence the life of the majority of people in the West.

Ontologically, abstractions – ancient and modern – usurp our connexion to Being and to other living beings so that instead of using wordless empathy and pathei-mathos as a guide to Reality [6] we tend to define ourselves or are defined by others according to an abstraction or according to various abstractions. In the matter of the abstraction that is The State there is a tendency to define or to try to understand our relation to Reality by for example whether we belong, are a citizen of a particular State; by whether or not we have an acceptable standard of living because of the opportunities and employment and/or the assistance afforded by the economy and the policies of the State; by whether or not we agree or disagree with the policies of the government in power, and often by whether or not we have transgressed some State-made law or laws. Similarly, in the matter of belief in a revealed religion such as Christianity or Islam we tend to define or understand our relation to Reality by means of such an abstraction: that is, according to the revelation (or a particular interpretation of it) and its eschatology, and thus by how the promise of Heaven/Jannah may be personally obtained.

Empathy and pathei-mathos, however, wordlessly – sans denotatum, sans abstractions, sans a dialectic of contradictory opposites – uncover physis: our physis, that of other mortals, that of other living beings, and that of Being/Reality itself. Which physis, howsoever presenced – in ourselves, in other living beings, in Being – is fluxive, a balance between the being that it now is, that it was, and that it has the inherent (the acausal) quality to be. [7]

This uncovering, such a revealing, is of a knowing beyond ipseity and thus beyond the separation-of-otherness which denotatum, abstractions, and a dialectic of opposites manufacture and presence. A knowing of ourselves as an affective connexion [8] to other living beings and to Being itself, with Being revealed as fluxive (as a meson – μέσον [9] – with the potentiality to change, to develope) and thus which (i) is not – as in the theology of revealed religions such as Christianity and Islam – a God who is Eternal, Unchanging, Omnipotent [10], and (ii) is affected or can be affected (in terms of physis) by what we do or do not do.

This awareness, this knowing, of such an affective connexion – our past, our current, our potentiality, to adversely affect, to have adversely affected, to cause, to having caused, suffering or harm to other living beings – also inclines us or can incline us toward benignity and humility, and thus incline us to live in a non-suffering causing way, appreciate of our thousands of years old culture of pathei-mathos. [11]

In terms of understanding Being and the divine, it inclines us or can incline us, as sentient beings, to apprehend Being as not only presenced in us but as capable of changing – unfolding, evolving – in a manner dependant on our physis and on how our physis is presenced by us, and by others, in the future. Which seems to imply a new ontology and one distinct from past and current theologies with their anthropomorphic θεὸς (god) and θεοὶ (gods).

An ontology of physis: of mortals, of livings beings, and of Being, as fluxive mesons. Of we mortals as a mortal microcosm of Being – the cosmic order, the κόσμος – itself [12] with the balance, the meson, that empathy and pathei-mathos incline us toward living presenced in the ancient Greek phrase καλὸς κἀγαθός,

> "which means those who conduct themselves in a gentlemanly or lady-like manner and who thus manifest – because of their innate physis or through pathei-mathos or through a certain type of education or learning – nobility of character." [13]

Which personal conduct, in the modern world, might suggest a Ciceronian-inspired but new type of *civitas*, and one

> "not based on some abstractive law but on a spiritual and interior (and thus not political) understanding and appreciation of our own Ancestral Culture and that of others; on our ‘civic’ duty to personally presence καλὸς κἀγαθός and thus to act and to live in a noble way. For the virtues of personal honour and manners, with their responsibilities, presence the fairness, the avoidance of hubris, the natural harmonious balance, the gender equality, the awareness and appreciation of the divine, that is the numinous." [14]

With καλὸς κἀγαθός, such personal conduct, and such a new civitas, summarising how such a philosophy based on empathy and pathei-mathos might, in one way, be presenced in a practical manner in the world.

David Myatt
2019

This essay is a revised and edited version of a reply sent to an academic
who enquired about the philosophy of pathei-mathos

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Notes

[1] I use the term physis – φύσις – ontologically, in the Aristotelian sense, to refer to the ‘natural’ and the fluxive being (nature) of a being, which nature is often manifest, in we mortals, in our character (persona) and in our deeds. Qv. my essay *Towards Understanding Physis* (2015) and my translation of and commentary on the Poemandres tractate in *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates* (2017).

[2] As noted elsewhere, I generally use the term denotatum – from the Latin denotare – not only as meaning “to denote or to describe by an expression or a word; to name some-thing; to refer that which is so named or so denoted," but also as an Anglicized term implying, depending on context, singular or plural instances. As an Anglicized term there is generally no need to use the inflected plural *denotata*.

[3] In the context of the philosophy of pathei-mathos the term abstraction signifies a particular named and defined category or form (ἰδέᾳ, εἶδος) and which category or form is a manufactured generalization, a hypothesis, a posited thing, an assumption or assumptions about, an extrapolation of or from some-thing, or some assumed or extrapolated ideal ‘form’ of some-thing.

In respect of denotatum, in Kratylus 389d Plato has Socrates talk about ‘true, ideal’ naming (denotatum) – βλέποντα πρὸς αὐτὸ ἐκεῖνο ὃ ἔστιν ὄνομα, qv. my essay *Personal Reflexions On Some Metaphysical Questions*, 2015.

[4] *Personal Reflexions On Some Metaphysical Questions*.

[5] Contrary to modern convention I tend to write The State instead of “the state" because I consider The State/The Nation-State a particular abstraction; as an existent, an entity, which has been manufactured, by human beings, and which entity, like many such manufactured ‘things’, has been, in its design and function, changed and which can still be changed, and which has associated with it a presumption of a supra-personal (and often moral) authority.

In addition, written The State (or the State) it suggests some-thing which endures or which may endure beyond the limited lifespan of a mortal human being.

[6] ‘Reality’ in the philosophical sense of what (in terms of physis) is distinguished or distinguishable from what is apparent or external. In terms of ancient Hellenic and Western Renaissance mysticism the distinction is between the esoteric and the exoteric; between the physis of a being and some outer form (or appearance) including the outer form that is a useful tool or implement which can be used to craft or to manufacture some-thing such as other categories/abstractions. With the important ontological proviso that what is esoteric is not the ‘essence’ of something – as for example Plato’s ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος – but instead the physis of the being itself as explicated for instance by Aristotle in Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α,

> ἐκ δὴ τῶν εἰρημένων ἡ πρώτη φύσις καὶ κυρίως λεγομένη ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία ἡ τῶν ἐχόντων ἀρχὴν κινήσεως ἐν αὐτοῖς ᾗ αὐτά: ἡ γὰρ ὕλη τῷ ταύτης δεκτικὴ εἶναι λέγεται φύσις, καὶ αἱ γενέσεις καὶ τὸ φύεσθαι τῷ ἀπὸ ταύτης εἶναι κινήσεις. καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως τῶν φύσει ὄντων αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐνυπάρχουσά πως ἢ δυνάμει ἢ ἐντελεχείᾳ
>
> Given the foregoing, then principally – and to be exact – physis denotes the quidditas of beings having changement inherent within them; for substantia has been denoted by physis because it embodies this, as have the becoming that is a coming-into-being, and a burgeoning, because they are changements predicated on it. For physis is inherent changement either manifesting the potentiality of a being or as what a being, complete of itself, is.

That is, as I noted in my essay *Towards Understanding Physis*, it is a meson (μέσον) balanced between the being that-it-was and the being it has the potentiality to unfold to become.

In respect of “what is real" – τῶν ὄντων – cf. the Poemandres tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum and especially section 3,

> φημὶ ἐγώ, Μαθεῖν θέλω τὰ ὄντα καὶ νοῆσαι τὴν τούτων φύσιν καὶ γνῶναι τὸν θεόν
>
> I answered that I seek to learn what is real, to apprehend the physis of beings, and to have knowledge of theos [qv. *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates*, 2017]

[7] Qv. *Towards Understanding Physis*, 2015.

[8] I use the term *affective* here, and in other writings, to mean “having the quality of affecting; tending to affect or influence."

[9] Qv. footnote [6]. In terms of ontology a meson is the balance, the median, existing between the being which-was and the being which-can-be.

[10] This understanding of Being as fluxive – as a changement – was prefigured in the mythos of Ancient Greece with the supreme deity – the chief of the gods – capable of being overthrown and replaced, as Zeus overthrew Kronos and as Kronos himself overthrew his own father.

[11] As explained in my 2014 essay *Education And The Culture of Pathei-Mathos*, the term describes

> "the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals, world-wide, over thousands of years, as (i) described in memoirs, aural stories, and historical accounts; as (ii) have inspired particular works of literature or poetry or

drama; as (iii) expressed via non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and as (iv) manifest in more recent times by ‘art-forms’ such as films and documentaries."

This culture remembers the suffering and the beauty and the killing and the hubris and the love and the compassion that we mortals have presenced and caused over millennia, and which culture

> "thus includes not only traditional accounts of, or accounts inspired by, personal pathei-mathos, old and modern – such as the *With The Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* by Eugene Sledge, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and the poetry of people as diverse as Sappho and Sylvia Plath – but also works or art-forms inspired by such pathei-mathos, whether personal or otherwise, and whether factually presented or fictionalized. Hence films such as *Monsieur Lazhar* and *Etz Limon* may poignantly express something about our φύσις as human beings and thus form part of the culture of pathei-mathos."

[12] κόσμον δὲ θείου σώματος κατέπεμψε τὸν ἄνθρωπον, "a cosmos of the divine body sent down as human beings." Tractate IV:2, Corpus Hermeticum.

Cf. Marsilii Ficini, *De Vita Coelitus Comparanda*, XXVI, published in 1489 CE,

> Quomodo per inferiora superioribus exposita deducantur superiora, et per mundanas materias mundana potissimum dona.
>
> How, when what is lower is touched by what is higher, the higher is cosmically presenced therein and thus gifted because cosmically aligned.

Which is a philosophical restatement of the phrase "quod est inferius est sicut quod est superius” (what is above is as what is below) from the Latin version, published in 1541 CE, of the medieval Hermetic text known as *Tabula Smaragdina*.

[13] The quotation is from my *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos*, 2017.

[14] The quotation is from my *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua: Christianity, The Johannine Weltanschauung, And Presencing The Numinous*, 2017.

The Way Of Pathei-Mathos - A Précis

Exordium

What I have previously described as the 'philosophy of pathei-mathos' and the 'way of pathei-mathos' is simply my own weltanschauung, a weltanschauung developed over some years as a result of my own pathei-mathos. Thus, and despite whatever veracity it may or may not possess, it is only the personal insight of one very fallible individual, a fallibility proven by my decades of selfishness and by my decades of reprehensible extremism both political and religious.

Furthermore, and according to my admittedly limited understanding and limited knowledge, this philosophy does not - in essence - express anything new. For I feel (and I use the word 'feel' intentionally) that I have only re-expressed what so many others, over millennia, have expressed as result of (i) their own pathei-mathos and/or (ii) their experiences/insights and/or (iii) their particular philosophical musings.

Indeed, the more I reflect upon my (perhaps pretentiously entitled) 'philosophy of pathei-mathos' the more I reminded of so many things, such as (i) what I intuitively (and possibly incorrectly) understood nearly half a century ago about Taoism when I lived in the Far East and was taught that ancient philosophy by someone who was also trying to instruct me in a particular Martial Art, and (ii) what I as a Catholic monk felt "singing Gregorian chant in choir and which singing often connected me to what JS Bach so often so well expressed by his music; that is, connected me to what – in essence – Christianity (the allegory of the life and crucifixion of Christ) and especially monasticism manifested: an intimation of some-thing sacred causing us to know beyond words what 'the good' really means, and which knowing touches us if only for an instant with a very personal humility and compassion", and (iii) what I learnt from "my first few years as a Muslim, before I adhered to a harsh interpretation of Islam; a learning from being invited into the homes of Muslim families; sharing meals with them; praying with them; learning Muslim Adab; attending Namaz at my local Mosque, and feeling - understanding - what their faith meant to them and what Islam really meant, and manifested, as a practical way of living", and (iv) of what I discovered from several years, as a teenager, at first in the Far East and then in England, of practising Hatha Yoga according to the Pradipika and Patanjali, and (v) of what I intuited regarding Buddhism from over a year of zazen (some in a zendo) and from months of discussions with Dom Aelred Graham who had lived in a Zen monastery in Japan, and (vi) what I so painfully, so personally, discovered via my own pathei-mathos.

As a weltanschauung derived from a personal pathei-mathos, my 'philosophy/way of pathei-mathos' is therefore subject to revision. Thus this essay summarising my weltanschauung includes a few (2013-2014) slight revisions - mentioned, or briefly described, in some of my more recent effusions - of what was expressed in previous works of mine such as *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos* [1] and *Religion, Empathy, and Pathei-Mathos: Essays and Letters Regarding Spirituality, Humility, and A Learning From Grief*. [2]

David Myatt
September 2014
Revised 2022

[1] https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

[2] https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/religion-and-empathy.pdf

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The Way Of Pathei-Mathos

1. Ontology

The ontology is of causal and acausal being, with (i) causal being as revealed by phainómenon, by the five Aristotelian essentials and thus by science with its observations and theories and principle of 'verifiability', and (ii) acausal being as revealed by συμπάθεια - by the acausal knowing (of living beings) derived from faculty of empathy [1] - and thus of the distinction between the 'time' (the change) of living-beings and the 'time' described via the measurement of the observed or the assumed/posited/predicted movement of 'things' [2].

2. Epistemology

a. The primacy of pathei-mathos: of a personal pathei-mathos being one of the primary means whereby we can come to know the true φύσις (physis) of Being, of beings, and of our own being; a knowing beyond 'abstractions', beyond the concealment implicit in manufactured opposites, by ipseity (the separation-of-otherness), and by denotatum.

b. Adding the 'acausal knowing' revealed by the (muliebral) faculty of empathy to the conventional, and causal (and somewhat masculous), knowing of science and logical philosophical speculation, with the proviso that what such 'acausal knowing' reveals is (i) of φύσις, the relation between beings, and between beings and Being, and thus of 'the separation-of-otherness', and (ii) the personal and numinous nature of such knowing in the immediacy-of-the-moment, and which empathic knowing thus cannot be abstracted out from that 'living moment' via denotatum: by (words written or spoken), or be named or described or expressed (become fixed or 'known') by any dogma or any -ism or any -ology, be such -isms or -ologies conventionally understood as political, religious, ideological, or social.

c. Describing a human, and world-wide and ancestral, 'culture of pathei-mathos' [3], and which culture of pathei-mathos could form part of Studia Humanitatis and thus of that education that enables we human beings to better understand our own φύσις [4].

3. Ethics

a. Of personal honour - which presences the virtues of fairness, tolerance, compassion, humility, and εὐταξία - as (i) a natural intuitive (wordless) expression of the numinous ('the good', δίκη, συμπάθεια) and (ii) of both what the culture of pathei-mathos and the acausal-knowing of empathy reveal we should do (or incline us toward doing) in the immediacy of the personal moment when personally confronted by what is unfair, unjust, and extreme [5].

b. Of how such honour - by its and our φύσις - is and can only ever be personal, and thus cannot be extracted out from the 'living moment' and our participation in the moment; for it is only through such things as a personal study of the culture of pathei-mathos and the development of the faculty of empathy that a person who does not naturally possess the instinct for δίκη can develope what is essentially 'the human faculty of honour', and which faculty is often appreciated and/or discovered via our own personal pathei-mathos.

4. One fallible, personal, answer regarding the question of human existence.

Of understanding ourselves in that supra-personal, and cosmic, perspective that empathy, honour, and pathei-mathos - and thus an awareness of the numinous and of the acausal - incline us toward, and which understanding is: (i) of ourselves as a finite, fragile, causal, viatorial, microcosmic, affective effluvium [6] of Life (ψυχή) and thus connected to all other living beings, human, terran, and non-terran, and (ii) of there being no supra-personal goal to strive toward because all supra-personal goals are and have been just posited - assumed, abstracted - goals derived from the illusion of ipseity, and/or from some illusive abstraction, and/or from that misapprehension of our φύσις that arises from a lack of empathy, honour, and pathei-mathos.

For a living in the moment, in a balanced - an empathic, honourable - way, presences our φύσις as conscious beings capable of discovering and understanding and living in accord with our connexion to other life; which understanding inclines us to avoid the hubris that causes or contributes to the suffering of other life, with such avoidance a personal choice not because it is conceived as a path toward some posited thing or goal - such as nirvana or Jannah or Heaven or after-life - and not because we might be rewarded by God, by the gods, or by some supra-personal divinity, but rather because it manifests the reality, the truth - the meaning - of our being. The truth that (i) we are (or we are capable of being) one affective consciously-aware connexion to other life possessed of the capacity to cause suffering/harm or not to cause suffering/harm, and (ii) we as an individual are but one viator manifesting the change - the being, the φύσις - of the Cosmos/mundus toward (a) a conscious awareness (an aiding of ψυχή), or (b) stasis, or (c) as a contributor toward a decline, toward a loss of ψυχή.

Thus, there is a perceiveration of our φύσις; of us as - and not separate from - the Cosmos: a knowledge of ourselves as the Cosmos presenced (embodied, incarnated) in a particular time and place and in a particular way. Of how we affect or can affect other effluvia, other livings beings, in either a harmful or a non-harming manner. An apprehension,

that is, of the genesis of suffering and of how we, as human beings possessed of the faculties of reason, of honour, and of empathy, have the ability to cease to harm other living beings. Furthermore, and in respect of the genesis of suffering, this particular perceiveration provides an important insight about ourselves, as conscious beings; which insight is of the division we mistakenly but understandably make, and have made, consciously or unconsciously, between our own being - our ipseity - and that of other living beings, whereas such a distinction is only an illusion - appearance, hubris, a manufactured abstraction - and the genesis of such suffering as we have inflicted for millennia, and continue to inflict, on other life, human and otherwise.

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Notes

[1] Refer to: (i) *The Way of Pathei-Mathos - A Philosophical Compendiary* (Third Edition, 2012), and (ii) *Towards Understanding The Acausal*, 2011.

[2] Refer to *Time And The Separation Of Otherness - Part One*, 2012.

[3] The culture of pathei-mathos is the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals, world-wide, over thousands of years, as (i) described in memoirs, aural stories, and historical accounts; as (ii) have inspired particular works of literature or poetry or drama; as (iii) expressed via non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and as (iv) manifest in more recent times by 'art-forms' such as films and documentaries.

[4] Refer to *Education and The Culture of Pathei-Mathos*, 2014.

[5] By 'extreme' is meant 'to be harsh', unbalanced, intolerant, prejudiced, hubriatic.

[6] As mentioned elsewhere, I now prefer the term effluvium, in preference to emanation, in order to try and avoid any potential misunderstanding. For although I have previously used the term 'emanation' in my philosophy of pathei-mathos as a synonym of effluvium, 'emanation' is often understood in the sense of some-thing proceeding from, or having, a source; as for example in theological use where the source is considered to be God or some aspect of a divinity. Effluvium, however, has (so far as I am aware) no theological connotations and accurately describes the perceiveration: a flowing of what-is, sans the assumption of a primal cause, and sans a division or a distinction between 'us' - we mortals - and some-thing else, be this some-thing else God, a divinity, or some assumed, ideated, cause, essence, origin, or form.

Glossary

Abstraction

An abstraction is a manufactured generalization, a hypothesis, a posited thing, an assumption or assumptions about, an extrapolation of or from some-thing, or some assumed or extrapolated ideal 'form' of some-thing. Sometimes, abstractions are generalization based on some sample(s), or on some median (average) value or sets of values, observed, sampled, or assumed.

Abstractions can be of some-thing past, in the present, or described as a goal or an ideal which it is assumed could be attained or achieved in the future.

All abstractions involve a causal perception, based as they are on the presumption of a linear cause-and-effect (and/or a dialectic) and on a posited or an assumed category or classification which differs in some way from some other assumed or posited categories/classifications, past, present or future. When applied to or used to describe/classify /distinguish/motivate living beings, abstractions involve a causal separation-of-otherness; and when worth/value /identity (and exclusion/inclusion) is or are assigned to such a causal separation-of-otherness then there is or there arises hubris.

Abstractions are often assumed to provide some 'knowledge' or some 'understanding' of some-thing assigned to or described by a particular abstraction. For example, in respect of the abstraction of 'race' applied to human beings, and which categorization of human beings describes a median set of values said or assumed to exist 'now' or in some recent historical past.

According to the philosophy of pathei-mathos, this presumption of knowledge and understanding by the application of abstractions to beings - living and otherwise - is false, for abstractions are considered as a primary means by which the nature of Being and beings are and have been concealed, requiring as abstractions do the positing and the continuation of abstractive opposites in relation to Being and the separation of beings from Being by the process of ideation and opposites.

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.

Aristotelian Essentials

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, our faculties – that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; 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.

In addition such essentials now include Isaac Newton's first *Rules of Reasoning* which is that

> "We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearances. To this purpose the philosophers say that Nature does nothing in vain, and more is in vain when less will serve; for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and affects not the pomp of superfluous causes."

Hence why it is often considered that there are five Aristotelian Essentials

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.

The philosophy of pathei-mathos adds the faculty of empathy - and the knowing so provided by empathy - to these essentials. Part of the knowing that empathy reveals, or can reveal, concerns the nature of Being, of beings, and of Time.

ἁρμονίη

ἁρμονίη (harmony) is or can be manifest/discovered by an individual cultivating wu-wei and σωφρονεῖν (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement).

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.

Denotatum

The term denotatum - from the Latin, denotare - is used in accord with its general meaning which is "to denote or to describe by an expression or a word; to name some-thing; to refer that which is so named or so denoted."

Thus understood, and used as an Anglicized term, denotatum is applicable to both singular and plural instances and thus obviates the need to employ the Latin plural denotata.

Descriptor

A descriptor is a word, a term, used to describe some-thing which exists and which is personally observed, or is discovered, by means of our senses (including the faculty of empathy).

A descriptor differs from an ideation, category, or abstraction, in that a descriptor describes what-is as 'it' is observed, according to its physis (its nature) whereas an abstraction, for example, denotes what is presumed/assumed/idealized, past or present or future. A descriptor relies on, is derived from, describes, individual knowing and individual judgement; an abstraction relies on something abstract, impersonal, such as some opinion/knowing/judgement of others or some assumptions, theory, or hypothesis made by others.

An example of a descriptor is the term 'violent' [using physical force sufficient to cause bodily harm or injury to a person or persons] to describe the observed behaviour of an individual. Another example would be the term 'extremist' to describe - to denote - a person who treats or who has been observed to treat others harshly/violently in pursuit of some supra-personal objective of a political or of a religious nature.

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 Δίκην 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).

In the philosophy of pathei-mathos, the term Δίκα - spelt thus in a modern way with a capital Δ - is sometimes used to intimate a new, a particular and numinous, philosophical principle, and differentiate Δίκα 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.

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 (a revealing of) 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.

Empathic knowing is different from, but supplementary and complimentary to, that knowing which may be acquired by means of the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science.

Empathy reveals or can reveal the nature, the ontology (the physis) - sans abstractions/ideations/words - of Being, of beings, and of Time. This revealing is of the the a-causal nature of Being, and of how beings have their genesis in the separation-of-otherness; and thus how we human beings are but causal, mortal, fallible, microcosmic emanations of ψυχή.

Enantiodromia

The unusual compound Greek word ἐναντιοδρομίας occurs in a summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius.

Enantiodromia is the term used, in the philosophy of pathei-mathos, to describe the revealing, 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, that is, beings are understood in their correct relation to Being, beyond the causal abstraction of different/conflicting ideated opposites, and when as a result, a reformation of the individual, occurs. A relation, an

appreciation of the numinous, that empathy and pathei-mathos provide, and which relation and which appreciation the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals over millennia have made us aware of or tried to inform us or teach us about.

An important and a necessary part of enantiodromia involves a discovery, a knowing, an acceptance, and - as prelude - an interior balancing within individuals, of what has hitherto been perceived and designated as the apparent opposites described by terms (descriptors) such as 'muliebral' and 'masculous'.

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

ἔρις

Strife; discord; disruption; a quarrel between friends or kin. As in the Odyssey:

> ἥ 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 is meant 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.

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 terms of the philosophy/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. The genesis of extremism - be such extremism personal, or described as political or religious - is when the separation-of-otherness is used as a means of personal and collective identity and pride, with some 'others' - or 'the others' - assigned to a category considered less worthy than the category we assign ourselves and 'our kind/type' to.

Extremist ideologies manifest an unbalanced, an excessive, masculous nature.

εὐταξία

The quality, the virtue, 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... [My translation]
>
> De Officiis, Liber Primus, 142

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

In the philosophy of pathei-mathos, the personal virtue of honour is considered to be a presencing, a grounding, an expression, 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. That is, as a means to live, to behave, as empathy intimates we can or should in order to avoid committing the folly, the error, of ὕβρις, in order not to cause suffering, and in order to re-present, to acquire, ἁρμονίη.

Humility

Humility is used, in a spiritual context, to refer to that gentleness, that modest demeanour, that understanding, which derives from an appreciation of the numinous and also from one's own admitted uncertainty of knowing and one's acknowledgement of past mistakes. An uncertainty of knowing, an acknowledgement of mistakes, that often derive from πάθει μάθος.

Humility is thus the natural human balance that offsets the unbalance of hubris (ὕβρις) - the balance that offsets the unbalance of pride and arrogance, and the balance that offsets the unbalance of that certainty of knowing which is one basis for extremism, for extremist beliefs, for fanaticism and intolerance. That is, humility is a manifestation of the natural balance of Life; a restoration of ἁρμονίη, of δίκη, of σωφρονεῖν - of those qualities and virtues - that hubris and extremism, that ἔρις and πόλεμος, undermine, distance us from, and replace.

Ideation

To posit or to construct an ideated form - an assumed perfect (ideal) form or category or abstraction - of some-thing, based on the belief or the assumption that what is observed by the senses, or revealed by observation, is either an 'imperfect copy' or an approximation of that thing, which the additional assumption that such an ideated form contains or in some way expresses (or can express) 'the essence' or 'the ethos' of that thing and of similar things.

Ideation also implies that the ideated form is or can be or should be contrasted with what it considered or assumed to be its 'opposite'.

Immediacy-of-the-Moment

The term the 'immediacy-of-the-moment' describes both (i) the nature and the extent of the acausal knowing that empathy and pathei-mathos provide, and (ii) the nature and extent of the morality of the philosophy of pathei-mathos.

Empathy, for example, being a natural and an individual faculty, is limited in range and application, just as our faculties of sight and hearing are limited in range and application. These limits extend to only what is direct, immediate, and involve personal interactions with other humans or with other living beings. There is therefore, for the philosophy of pathei-mathos, an 'empathic scale of things' and an acceptance of our limitations of personal knowing and personal understanding. An acceptance 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/beyond the scope of our pathei-mathos.

Morality, for the philosophy of pathei-mathos, is 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. Thus, morality is considered to reside 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 - such as such as compassion and fairness, and εὐταξία - that arise or which can arise naturally through empathy, πάθει μάθος, and thus from an awareness and appreciation of the numinous.

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.

Masculous

Masculous is a term, a descriptor, 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 Schiboleth." *True Happines, or, King Davids Choice: Begunne In Sermons, And Now Digested Into A Treatise*. Edinbvrgh, 1633

Muliebral

The term muliebral derives from the classical Latin word muliebris, and in the context the philosophy 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.

Numinous

The numinous is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) the natural balance of ψυχή; a balance which ὕβρις 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 predisposes us not to commit ὕβρις, and thus what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our developed 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.

Pathei-Mathos

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.

When understood in its Aeschylean context, it implies that for we human beings pathei-mathos possesses a numinous, a living, authority. That is, 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 relevant, more meaningful) than any doctrine, than any religious faith, than any words/advice one might hear from someone else or read in some book.

Thus, pathei-mathos, like empathy, offers we human beings a certain conscious understanding, a knowing; and, when combined, pathei-mathos and empathy are or can be a guide to wisdom, to a particular conscious knowledge concerning our own nature (our physis), our relation to Nature, and our relation to other human beings, leading to an appreciation of the numinous and an appreciation of virtues such as humility and εὐταξία.

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.

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 ὕβρις (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)

The term physis - φύσις - was used by Heraclitus, Aristotle, and others, and occurs in texts such as the Pœmandres and Ιερός Λόγος tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum.

Physis is usually translated as either 'Nature' (as if 'the natural world', and the physical cosmos beyond, are meant) or as the character (the nature) of a person. However, while the context - of the original Greek text - may suggest (as often, for example, in Homer and Herodotus) such a meaning as such English words impute, physis philosophically (as, for example, in Heraclitus and Aristotle and the Corpus Hermeticum) has specific ontological meanings. Meanings which are lost, or glossed over, when physis is simply translated either as 'Nature' or - in terms of mortals - as (personal) character.

Ontologically, as Aristotle makes clear [1], physis denotes the being of those beings who or which have the potentiality (the being) to change, be changed, or to develope. That is, to become, or to move or be moved; as for example in the motion (of 'things') and the 'natural unfolding' or growth, sans an external cause, that living beings demonstrate.

However, and crucially, physis is not - for human beings - some abstract 'essence' (qv. Plato's ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος) but rather a balance between the being that it is, it was, and potentially might yet be. That is, in Aristotelian terms, it is a meson - μέσον - of being and 'not being'; and 'not being' in the sense of not yet having become what it could be, and not now being what it used to be. Hence why, for Aristotle, a manifestation of physis - in terms of the being of mortals - such as arête (ἀρετή) is a meson, a balance of things, and not, as it is for Plato, some fixed 'form' - some idea, ideal - which as Plato wrote "always exists, and has no genesis. It does not die, does not grow, does not decay." [2]

[1] Refer to the Appendix: Notes on Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α
[2] πρῶτον μὲν ἀεὶ ὂν καὶ οὔτε γιγνόμενον οὔτε ἀπολλύμενον οὔτε αὐξανόμενον οὔτε φθίνον (Symposium 210e - 211a)

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.

Separation-of-Otherness

The separation-of-otherness is a term used to describe the implied or assumed causal separateness of living beings, a part of which is the distinction we make (instinctive or otherwise) between our self and the others. Another part is assigning our self, and the-others, to (or describing them and us by) some category/categories, and to which category/categories we ascribe (or to which category/categories has/have been ascribed) certain qualities or attributes.

Given that a part of such ascription/denoting is an assumption or assumptions of worth/value/difference and of inclusion/exclusion, the separation-of-otherness is the genesis of hubris; causes and perpetuates conflict and suffering; and is a path away from ἁρμονίη, δίκη, and thus from wisdom.

The separation-of-otherness conceals the nature of Beings and beings; a nature which empathy and pathei-mathos can reveal.

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).

σωφρονεῖν

I use σωφρονεῖν (sophronein) in preference to σωφροσύνη (sophrosyne) since sophrosyne has acquired an English interpretation – "soundness of mind, moderation" – which in my view distorts the meaning of the original Greek. As with my use of the term πάθει μάθος (pathei-mathos) I use σωφρονεῖν in an Anglicized manner with there thus being no necessity to employ inflective forms.

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/clique/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 Good

For the philosophy of Pathei-Mathos, 'the good' is considered to be what is fair; what alleviates or does not cause suffering; what is compassionate; what is honourable; what is reasoned and balanced. This knowing of the good arises from the (currently underused and undeveloped) natural human faculty of empathy, and which empathic knowing is different from, supplementary and complimentary to, that knowing which may be acquired by means of the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science.

Time

In the philosophy of pathei-mathos, Time is considered to be an expression of the nature - the φύσις - of beings, and thus, for living beings, is a variable emanation of ψυχή, differing from being to being, and representing how that living being can change (is a fluxion) or may change or has changed, which such change (such fluxions) being a-causal.

Time - as conventionally understood and as measured/represented by a terran-calendar with durations marked days, weeks, and years - is therefore regarded as an abstraction, and an abstraction which tends to conceal the nature of living beings.

ὕβρις

ὕβρις (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 ἁρμονίη [harmony] – and often results from a person or persons striving for or clinging to some causal abstraction.

According to The Way of Pathei-Mathos, ὕβρις 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

The philosophy of pathei-mathos makes a distinction between a religion and a spiritual Way of Life. One of the differences being that a religion requires and manifests a codified ritual and doctrine and a certain expectation of conformity in terms of doctrine and ritual, as well as a certain organization beyond the local community level resulting in particular individuals assuming or being appointed to positions of authority in matters relating to that religion. In contrast, Ways are more diverse and more an expression of a spiritual ethos, of a customary, and often localized, way of doing certain spiritual things, with there generally being little or no organization beyond the community level and no individuals assuming - or being appointed by some organization - to positions of authority in matters relating to that ethos.

Religions thus tend to develope an organized regulatory and supra-local hierarchy which oversees and appoints those, such as priests or religious teachers, regarded as proficient in spiritual matters and in matters of doctrine and ritual, whereas adherents of Ways tend to locally and informally and communally, and out of respect and a personal knowing, accept certain individuals as having a detailed knowledge and an understanding of the ethos and the practices of that Way.

Many spiritual Ways have evolved into religions.

Wisdom

Wisdom is both the ability of reasoned - a balanced - judgement, σωφρονεῖν, a discernment; and a particular conscious knowledge concerning our own nature, and our relation to Nature, to other life and other human beings: rerum divinarum et humanarum. Part of this knowledge is of how we human beings are often balanced between honour and dishonour; balanced between ὕβρις and ἀρετή; between our animalistic desires, our passions, and our human ability to be noble, to morally develope ourselves; a balance manifest in our known ability to be able to control, to restrain, ourselves, and thus find and follow a middle way, of ἁρμονίη.

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.

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

Notes on Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book 5, 1015α

Text

ἐκ δὴ τῶν εἰρημένων ἡ πρώτη φύσις καὶ κυρίως λεγομένη ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία ἡ τῶν ἐχόντων ἀρχὴν κινήσεως ἐν αὐτοῖς ᾗ αὐτά: ἡ γὰρ ὕλη τῷ ταύτης δεκτικὴ εἶναι λέγεται φύσις, καὶ αἱ γενέσεις καὶ τὸ φύεσθαι τῷ ἀπὸ ταύτης εἶναι κινήσεις. καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως τῶν φύσει ὄντων αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐνυπάρχουσά πως ἢ δυνάμει ἢ ἐντελεχείᾳ.

Translation

Given the foregoing, then principally - and to be exact - physis denotes the quidditas of beings having changement inherent within them; for substantia has been denoted by physis because it embodies this, as have the becoming that is a coming-into-being, and a burgeoning, because they are changements predicated on it. For physis is inherent changement either manifesting the potentiality of a being or as what a being, complete of itself, is.

Commentary And Notes

physis. φύσις. A transliteration, since (i) this is a fundamental philosophical principle/term that requires contextual interpretation, and (ii) the English words 'nature' and Nature not only do not adequately describe this principle but also lead to and have led to certain misunderstandings of Aristotle in particular and of classical Greek culture in general.

quidditas. οὐσία. Quidditas - post-classical Latin, from whence the English word 'quiddity' - is more appropriate here than 'essence', given the metaphysical (ontological) context and given that 'essence' now has so many non-philosophical connotations. An interesting alternative would be the scholastic term haeceitty. As with physis, quidditas is a philosophical term which requires contextual interpretation.

changement inherent. The expression ἀρχὴν κινήσεως is crucial to understanding what Aristotle means in respect of physis. In regard to κίνησις, since Aristotle here does not mean 'motion' or 'movement' in the sense of Newtonian physics (with its causal concepts of force, mass, velocity, kinetic energy), and since such physical movement is what the English words 'motion' and 'movement' now most usually denote, then alternatives must be found. Hence the translation 'changement'.

For what Aristotle is describing here is 'change', as for example in the natural development, the unfolding, the growth, of some-thing living that occurs because it is living; because it is possessed of Life and which Life is the ἀρχή of the changement, the 'original being' (the φύσις) from whence being-becomes to be often perceived and classified by us in orderly ways.

What is described is an a-causal change, of being-becoming - of being unfolding - and thus fulfilling the potentiality of being within it. Hence why here Aristotle writes ἀρχὴν κινήσεως, which describes the potential changement inherent in certain beings. [1] That is, the a-causal origin of beings-becoming, or having become, and which beings (having changed, developed, unfolded) we then perceive and classify in orderly ways [2], such as by shape or usefulness to us, or by a notion such as causality: in terms of physical- 'movement'. Which is why, in Aristotle, there is a relation between φύσις, μορφή, and εἶδος - εἶδος in the sense of 'perceiveration' and not, as in Plato, denoting an abstract 'form' or an 'ideal' - διὸ καὶ ὅσα φύσει ἔστιν ἢ γίγνεται, ἤδη ὑπάρχοντος ἐξ οὗ πέφυκε γίγνεσθαι ἢ εἶναι, οὔπω φαμὲν τὴν φύσιν ἔχειν ἐὰν μὴ ἔχῃ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὴν μορφήν.

Thus φύσις is what is a-causal in beings and which acausality is the origin of the 'natural' order that unfolds because of the potentiality of being to become, to presence in the causal, whence to be perceived by us in various orderly arrangements and/or arranged in terms of usefulness, and which arrangements/usefulness include τὸ καλόν - and thus schemata, τάξις [3] - and ἀρετή.

substantia. ὕλη. I have chosen to use the etymon of the English word 'substance' - qv. substantia in Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Metaphysicae* - to again (i) emphasize the need for contextual interpretation in respect of a specific philosophical term, and (ii) to avoid whatever misunderstandings may arise from the modern (non-ontological) connotations of words such as 'matter' and 'substance'.

as have the becoming that is a coming-into-being, and a burgeoning, because they are changements predicated on it. καὶ αἱ γενέσεις καὶ τὸ φύεσθαι τῷ ἀπὸ ταύτης εἶναι κινήσεις. The sense of γένεσις here implies a 'coming-into-being' rather than just 'generation', just as φύω implies a being 'burgeoning' - unfolding, revealing itself (its physis) - rather than just 'growing'.

the potentiality of a being or as what a being, complete of itself, is. The Greek word ἐντελεχείᾳ is compounded from ἐν ελει ἔχει and the sense here - in relation to ἐνυπάρχουσά - seems to be twofold: of a being as an unchanged being, and of what a being has become (or is becoming) as a result of a change, for both types of being actually exist, are real. One exists as a being as it is and has remained, and one exists as the being it has become (or is in the process of becoming) through the potential for changement inherent within it. Thus, for Aristotle, physis denotes the being of both types of being.

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[1] In respect of ἀρχὴ as implying what is primarily inherent, qv. 1012b-1013a.

[2] As Thomas Aquinas wrote: "Sciendum est autem, quod principium et causa licet sint idem subiecto, differunt tamen ratione. Nam hoc nomen principium ordinem quemdam importat; hoc vero nomen causa, importat influxum quemdam ad esse causati." *Sententia libri Metaphysicae*, liber 5, lectio 1, n 3.

[3] Regarding 1078a, τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἴδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὡρισμένον (the most noticeable expressions of kalos are schemata and harmony and consonancy), my view - given the context - is that τάξις here is best translated as "schemata", rather than "order" or "arrangement" both of which are vague, open to mis-interpretation, and unrelated to the context, which context is mathematical beauty. Similarly, ὁρίζω (to me) suggests consonancy, echoing as that (now somewhat obscure) English word does both by its use by, among others, Shakespeare (Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 2, 286) and also by its relation to the almost 'mathematical beauty' of some music (as evident for example in the counterpoint of JS Bach).

Furthermore, just because the Greek has συμμετρία it does not necessarily follow that the English word 'symmetry' is an appropriate translation, considering how the word symmetry is now used and has been used, in the West for many centuries, and especially in relation to art (in terms, for example, of objects and the human body).

Given that Aristotle in 1078a is referring to geometry in particular and mathematics in general, then an appropriate translation is 'harmony' - as in "a collation of representative signs or marks, so arranged that they exhibit their agreement and account for their discrepancies or errors." A harmony, in other words, that is most evident (as I mentioned in my essay) in Euclid's Elements, as schemata and consonancy are therein evident, most of the contents (theorems) of which book - deriving from people such as Pythagoras - were known to Aristotle.

Thus, a translation such as "the chief forms of beauty are order and symmetry and definiteness" can in my opinion lead to projecting onto Aristotle what he may not necessarily have meant; and projecting onto in respect of how we now, over two thousand years after Aristotle, understand and use such common English terms. Hence, also, why I sometimes use obscure English words (which may suggest a relevant meaning) or transliterations (as in physis).

David Myatt
March 2015

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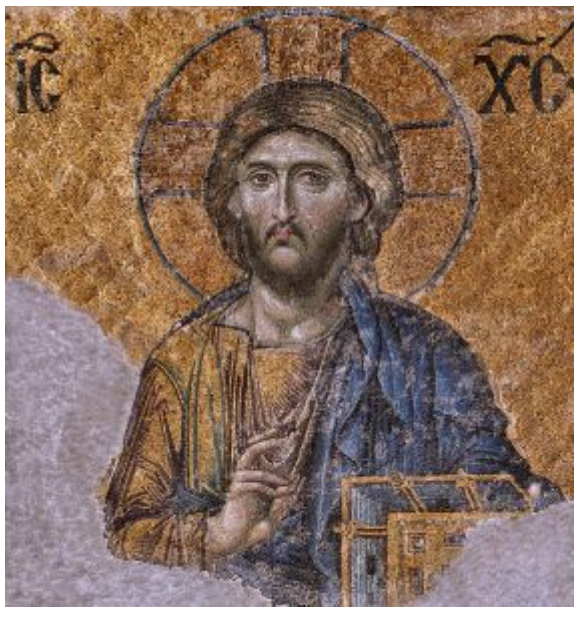

This Modern World

This modern world is no longer my world. A modern world of continuing conflict based on various abstractions, such as 'our nation-State' verses 'your nation-State', and also on our personal emotions leading us to deceive others, cheat others, dominate others, be violent toward others, and kill others for whatever emotive or personal or believed in purpose. A modern world where 'our nation-State' provides so many with a sense of identity and purpose and where actively or by default we accept this or that government with a political ideology or some idea or agenda so that we because of supra-personal propaganda, or otherwise, do nothing to prevent or end this or that invasion or armed conflict, and the killings and the destruction inevitably associated with it, which invasion or armed conflict our nation-State supports or causes because we are informed once again that 'we' and thus our nation-State are right and that 'they', the others somewhere else, are wrong.

But, yes, that - this - modern world was indeed my world for decades of my adult life. Yet slowly, so slowly, I discovered another world within and external to me; a very personal world uncovered through pathei-mathos. A world expressed through various religions which in their origins seemed to me to express a similar Weltanschauung before the wordful exegesis of later times reinterpreted the original message.

A personal world expressed, at least according to my fallible interpretation, by The Beatitudes:

1 Observing the multitudes, he ascended the hill and, having sat down, his disciples approached him.
2 Then, a revelation, for he instructed those there by saying this:
3 Fortunate, those humble with spiritus, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean.
4 Fortunate, those who grieve, for they shall have solace.
5 Fortunate, the gentle, for they shall acquire the Earth.
6 Fortunate, those who hunger and thirst for fairness, for they shall be replete.
7 Fortunate, the compassionate, for they shall receive compassion.
8 Fortunate, the refined of heart, for they shall perceive Theos.
9 Fortunate, the peaceable, for they shall be called children of Theos.
10 Fortunate, those harassed due to their fairness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean. [1]

But have such expressions of this other world affected us or can affect us in our majority so much that we can still change our modern world and prevent the killings and the destruction? In all honesty I have to admit I do not know.

David Myatt
November 2024

Extract from a missive to a friend

Ξ Ξ Ξ

[1]

Text: The Gospel According To Matthew, 5:1–10

1 Ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ προσῆλθαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ·
2 καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς λέγων·
3 Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
4 μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.
5 μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.
6 μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.
7 μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.
8 μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.
9 μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.
10 μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Commentary on my translation:

1. ὅρος. Here a hill, rather than a mountain.

2.

ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ. I take this metaphorically as in a disclosing or a revealing, not literally as in "opening his mouth."

those there. Although the Greek text does not explicitly state the fact, the context suggests that Jesus addressed both the multitude and his disciples.

3.

μακάριος. A difficult word to translate since "blessed" has acquired particular (sometimes moralistic) meanings as a result of nearly two thousand years of exegesis, while "happy" is rather prosaic. The context - as in ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν - suggests "fortunate".

πτωχός. Usually translated as "poor" which however has too many exegetical and modern connotations, and does not express the metaphorical sense here which implies being "humble" in respect of τὸ πνεῦμα.

τῷ πνεύματι [...] τῶν οὐρανῶν. In respect of τὸ πνεῦμα as the spiritus (rather than as the Spirit) and οὐρανός as Empyrean (rather than Heaven), qv. my commentary on John 1:32, [2] from which this an extract:

> οὐρανός here is always translated as 'heaven' although the term 'heaven' - used in the context of the Gospels - now has rather different connotations than the Greek οὐρανός, with the word 'heaven' now often implying something explained by almost two thousand years of exegesis and as depicted, for example, in medieval and Renaissance Christian art. However, those hearing or reading this particular Greek gospel for the first time in the formative years of Christianity would most probably have assumed the usual Greek usage of "the heavens" in the sense of the "the star-filled firmament above" or in the sense of "the sky" or as the abode of theos and/or of the gods, ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοί
>
> [...]
>
> It therefore seems apposite to suggest a more neutral word than 'heaven' as a translation of οὐρανός and one which might not only be understood in various 'classical' ways by an audience of Greek speakers (such as the ways described above) but also be open to a new, and Christian, interpretation consistent with the milieu that existed when the Gospel of John was written and first heard. That is, before the exegesis of later centuries and long before post-Roman Christian iconography. Hence my suggestion of the post-classical Latin term Empyrean, which can bear the interpretation of the abode of theos and/or of the gods, of "the sky", of the "the star-filled firmament above"; and a Christian one suggested by Genesis 2.8 - παράδεισον ἐν Εδεμ (the Paradise of Eden) - and also by shamayim.

5. πρᾶος. Gentle - in the sense of mild, balanced, temperament - rather than "meek".

6. δικαιοσύνη. Fairness. Not some abstract, legalistic, "justice", and not "righteousness" which word has over centuries acquired sometimes strident and disputable moralistic meanings as well as implying a certain conformity to accepted (and disputable or dogmatic) standards.

7. ἐλεήμων. The classical Latin term misericordia - used by Jerome, and the origin of the English word misericordious - expresses the sense well, which is of συμπάθεια (sympatheia, benignity) resulting in compassion. Cf. Luke 11.41 (πλὴν τὰ ἐνόντα δότε ἐλεημοσύνην, καὶ ἰδοὺ πάντα καθαρὰ ὑμῖν ἐστιν), Acts 10:2, κτλ.

8.

οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ. Literally, those whose hearts are clean, in the physical sense, as in having undertaken a ritual cleansing of the body. Cf. Corpus Hermeticum, Poemandres 22, [2] where as in Luke 11.41 - qv. ἐλεήμων in v. 7 here - it occurs in relation to compassion, the compassionate:

> παραγίνομαι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ὁ Νοῦς τοῖς ὁσίοις καὶ ἀγαθοῖς καὶ καθαροῖς καὶ ἐλεήμοσι, τοῖς εὐσεβοῦσι, καὶ ἡ παρουσία μου γίνεται βοήθεια, καὶ εὐθὺς τὰ πάντα γνωρίζουσι καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἱλάσκονται ἀγαπητικῶς καὶ εὐχαριστοῦσιν εὐλογοῦντες καὶ ὑμνοῦντες τεταγμένως πρὸς αὐτὸν τῇ στοργῇ
>
> I, perceiveration, attend to those of respectful deeds, the honourable, the refined, the compassionate, those aware of the numinous; to whom my being is a help so that they soon acquire knowledge of the whole and are affectionately gracious toward the father, fondly celebrating in song his position.

In respect of καθαροῖς, I prefer refined here - as in the Corpus Hermeticum - rather than 'pure' given the disputable nature of the term 'pure' and the connotations acquired over centuries be they religious, sanctimonious, political, or otherwise.

θεὸς. For reasons explained in my commentary on verse I of chapter one of The Gospel According To John - and in my commentaries on tractates from the Corpus Hermeticum [3] - I transliterate θεὸς.

9. οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί. The peaceable ones, which includes pacificators - those who are pacificatory, and thus who are conciliatory and who actively seek peace - and those who have a peaceable disposition.

10. διώκω. Harass, rather than "persecuted" which has acquired too many modern and especially political connotations. Cf. John 5:16, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐδίωκον οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ὅτι ταῦτα ἐποίει ἐν σαββάτῳ, "and thus did the Judaeans harass Jesus because he was doing such things on the Sabbath."

My interpretation, based on John 5:16, is that those who are harassed are so on account of (ἕνεκα) their fairness, not because those who are harassing them disparage or hate fairness in general.

[2] My translation and commentary - of chapters 1-5 - is available at https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/myatt-gospel-john-1-5.pdf

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Image credit:
Icon of Jesus Pantocrator, Δέησις Mosaic
Hagia Sophia, c. 1260 CE

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One Tree Among Many

Beside the stone wall that marks one of the boundaries of what has for several years been my home is an evergreen Oak; almost a dome of spreading branches and so tall it might well be an hundred or so years in age. The tallest tree around from near where several other and various and tallish specimens of arboreal life provide perches for those whose Dawn Chorus becomes, was, is, a hymnal to such natural Life as has for centuries pleased us.

Two months ago, the Oak was sad; with leaves dry and dying and infested. But now, as clouds break to reveal sky-blue, bringer of early Summer warmth: the tree has that light green of leaf rebirth, and catkins heralds of acorns an English season hence. So there is joy within as this aged man “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.” [1]

Would that he might hear one more Dawn Chorus to so remember those, these, simple natural beauties of life which he as so many others so easily forgot enwrapped as he, they, were in believed in, in felt, selfish concerns which all will, must, die with us while the Sun again warms each year as it warms and life-sprouting rain seeds rebirth without any interference from us at all.

So I sit, windows of sky and trees to enlighten again my life, listening to a heartbreaking, suspended moment in my measured out so very limited timespan of causal life: the 12th century Cistercian *Répons de Matines pour la fête de sant Bernard*.

DW Myatt
6th June 2023

[1] τό θ᾽ ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἤδη κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοὺς στείχει, παιδὸς δ᾽ οὐδὲν ἀρείων ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 79-82. My translation.

The Hour Before Dawn

It is the hour before Dawn on the Spring Equinox, dark outside, with the Blackbird in the tree at the edge of the garden already singing. No other sounds, as yet, and there arises within me questions I have felt several times in the past few years.

Which are: is what we in a land such as this – a modern Western land such as England as Spring dawns even within, upon, urban conurbations – have acquired, developed, manufactured over the past few hundred years worth the suffering that has been inflicted upon other human beings, upon our forebears, and upon Nature? Is that suffering the price of such societies as we have developed and now seek to maintain?

Numerous overseas conflicts; two World Wars with millions upon millions dead, injured, traumatized, and cities, towns, Nature, destroyed. Numerous invasions and wars since then. Poverty, homelessness, injustice, inequality, crime, still within our lands. Has anything in terms of our humanity, of we being self-controlled, rational, honest and honourable – of ourselves as causes and vectors of suffering – really changed?

It is not as if I am exempt from having caused suffering. My past decades long suffering-causing deeds are my burden and will be until I die.

My personal, fallible, answers born of my pathei-mathos, is that unfortunately we as individuals have not as yet *en masse* changed sufficiently so as to cease to be a cause and a vector of suffering. Tethered as we still apparently are to causal abstractions, to -isms and -ologies, and thus to denotata and the dialectic of opposites, to the conflict that such denotata is the genesis of.

Perhaps we need another hundred, two hundred, or more years. Our perhaps we will continue, *en masse*, are we mostly now are, the eventual extinction of our sometimes stable causal societies of human beings acausally inevitable, fated; until the planet we call Earth finally meets its Cosmic end as all planets do, with we human beings never making real the visionary dream of a few to venture forth and colonize the stars. And even if we did somehow realize that dream, would we venture forth as the still savage, dishonourable, war-mongering species we still are?

Yet all I have in answer, in expiation for my own past suffering-causing deeds, is my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos; [1] so insufficient in so many ways.

David Myatt
March 2023

[1] The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

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Tenebrae

The liturgical season of The Passion is upon us again and I find myself appreciating once more how the numinous allegory of The Passion was presenced in liturgical music from the Graduale *Christus Factus Est* to Vittoria’s *Populo meus, quid feci tibi* – Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, Ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, Ἅγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς – to Scarlatti’s Stabat Mater to JS

Bach’s St John and Matthew Passions. And I reminded so movingly of – when a monk – singing Tenebrae amid the flickering then extinguished light of candles…

So much human suffering for so many millennia which the allegory of The Passion of Jesus of Nazareth reminded so many of, century after century; as it reminded me several times in the depths of my decades of extremism. In comparison with such numinous music, liturgical and otherwise, what is my own wordy weltanschauung of pathei-mathos worth?

Very little it now seems to me, if anything at all.

DWM
April 2023

Some 2023 Wordful Vignettes

DW Myatt

A Rare Moment

There are few moments that I believed could surprise this somewhat world-weary man beyond his three score and ten mortal years. But some information received from a middle-Eastern friend was one of them.

Knowing my love of classical Arabic music and of how I used to (badly) play the Persian Daf, the information was regarding the Syrian Takht Ensemble whose beautiful traditional music – many employing Maqam modes – and their innovations of such music; which music brought memories of a different plane of existence, far removed from the turmoil, the Machiavellian machinations, the egoism, the materialistic, and often godless, modern Western world.

I was back in the Sahara Desert where as I once said I wordlessly had intimations of Being, of The Acausal, of The-Unity, of The One-The Only (τὸ ἓν), of The Monas (μονάς) which 'acausal' Being Muslims called Allah and Christians called God. I was back in Arabic – Muslim – lands where I had travelled and stayed and learnt. I was back as a novice in a Catholic monastery, wandering outside the Abbey in the contemplative period between chanting Matins and Lauds.

Such a waste for over forty years of such experiencing, of such wordless knowing. There are no excuses; for the fault, the hubris, was mine. All I have to offer now in recompense, in expiation, is my wordful weltanschauung of pathei-mathos, which compared to such wordless personal experiencing and such Arabic music seems so woefully inadequate.

August

Memory Of A Beautiful World

One of the pleasures I have found in old age – beyond my three score years and ten – is recalling alone or reminiscing to others about times past. One especial memory is of when a younger version of me was cycling home from work one Summer in Shropshire [1] when I chanced upon someone – a celebrated cycling time-trial champion whom I seem to recall at one time held almost every RTTC record from 25 miles to 12 hours – while he was out training. We chatted as the comradeship of cycling decreed, and together cycled along together for many miles at over 20mph. A pace I intuitively knew from years of competing in local club and RTTC Time Trials.

But then he gradually increased the pace up to almost 30mph until after a few miles I made some excuse and turned left onto some minor road to collapse onto the grass verge. But it was wonderful, lying there, in the quiet isolation of a country English lane with only the breeze rustling trees and birdsong for company. Then, in those moments, that was my simple, my entire, life. If only – if only – it had lasted; if only – if only – I had somehow in some way managed to make it last so that it and similar moments became my life thereafter.

But it was not to be, for I soon, so soon, returned to the world of extremism, of causal abstractions with its dialectic of opposites which so engendered a supra-personal certitude of knowing and the inevitable suffering of others. And it would take some twenty years for me to recall that – and similar – moments again following the most traumatic incident of my life: the unexpected suicide of my then fiancée, forming as it did part of the genesis of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos.

Mea Culpa; Mea Culpa, Mea Maxima Culpa. But even now saying that, and Κύριε ελέησον, out loud does not help in these twilight years of my life. For there seems to be no causal expiation for my extremist past with its certitude of knowing. A certitude of knowing which is glorified even unto this day by others with their -isms and -ologies and the causal abstractions, the often suffering causing dialectic, on which they are based.

May

1. I was riding my hack work-bike: Mercian 531 frame and forks, Cinelli bars and stem; TA double-chainset; Mavic G40 rims with Campag Record hubs; and – a concession to comfort – a well-broken in Brookes leather B17 saddle from which hung a Carradice 'cotton duck' saddlebag.

Missa Pro Defunctis

What have we in over four and a half centuries to compare, in terms of presencing the numinous, with Missa pro defunctis by Francisco Guerrero? Perhaps some music by JS Bach?

Here I am almost half a century since I as part of a choir sang in a public performance of Mozart's Requiem having possibly in those intervening years learnt some things about myself and about our human nature. Who reads, who even cares about such pathei-mathos? Yet such numinous music remains to remind, if only a few, while we en masse as a species seemingly move on to new diversions which betake us further and further from such presencings of the numinous as may ineluctably change and rebirth us as individuals.

September

Not For Myself

It is not for myself that I am sad as I listen to the slow movement of Albinoni's Oboe Concerto in D minor but for all those others who over centuries have suffered and died for whatever reason, personal health-wise, or because of some person or persons motivated enough to kill them, or because of some conflict based on whatever some leader or some government of some causal abstraction such as a 'nation-State', or some potentate or monarch, declare or declared was necessary at the time.

Today: Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine, Syria, Somalia, et cetera. Is there any difference to what has so often occurred in the past? The same suffering; the same destruction; the same killing; the same belief that 'we' are right and 'they', our declared enemy, are wrong. The same impersonal chain-of-command where individuals voluntarily abandon their personal judgement.

Here, in the homeland of my ancestors, a government spends billions of pounds on the pretence that 'we' as a nation are an armed force to be reckoned with while gifting others, such as the current government of some east European land, with aid and military supplies because 'we', or so our government say, have a common enemy. Meanwhile, they do not seem to have the financial resources to heal a failing health system or end the poverty or the homelessness of many of their citizens. For their priority as in decades past is to project an image of their 'nation-State' as some important player on some 'world-stage'.

Yet whether it is the United States, the United Kingdom, or some other 'nation-State', it makes no difference when considered in a Cosmic, supra-Galactic, perspective. For such entities are only temporary, always over decades in flux; a new President, a new government; a new or even an old or an internal enemy to be dealt with almost always at the cost of suffering, violence, and death.

But all that now seems to me to be important, and important to many others throughout the world, is the cessation of suffering human and otherwise. Of how we might alleviate such suffering, be the cause personal or because of something impersonal such as a posturing 'nation-State'.

My weltanschauung of pathei-mathos [1] is my own feeble answer, although I have doubts whether this and other such answers, [2] past and present based on humility and compassion will make any significance difference to us as a species.

November

1. https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

2. Such as *The Johannine Weltanschauung*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/johannine-weltanschauung.pdf

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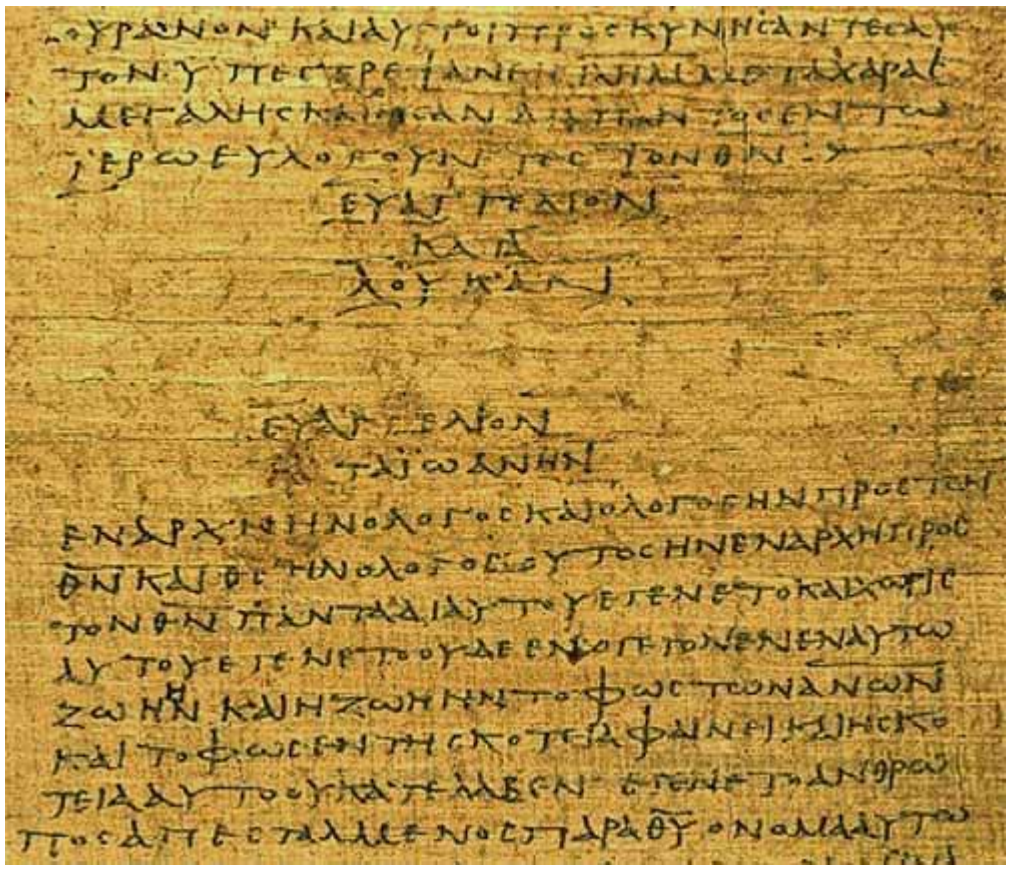
One Dawn In England

It is Dawn, breaking, in June in England as I, now an old man with tree feet to guide him on his walks, look out from an open window to hear the Blackbird beginning its song when the modern clock-time is around four o'clock in the morning. A song whose beginning varies as measured by such a modern human-manufactured time but whose genesis is the natural, unmeasured, rhythm of Nature. For only a month or so ago it was at a different clock-measured hour.

The Dawn, here in a county of England, is a natural unmeasured event, as was the work when we remaining few, now or in memory, go or used to go out in all weathers, to collect, contain, the milk that our Cows, on farms, produced and which milk so many consumers in towns and cities still seemed to need or to enjoy.

There was, or seemed and even now seems to me to be, a natural rhythm there, in such personal manual outdoor toil ofen begun with the first light of day. A somewhat calmer and slower way of living that apparently has no or little place in the modern world that evolved around us. But perhaps this is just nostalgia from a now geriatric man remembering former joys, which though sometimes forged in trying times, became for him at least the genesis of a supra-personal perspective that needed few or no words to describe it.

David Myatt
June



Papyrus Bodmer XIV-XV (P75). c. 175-225 CE.
Gospel of John, vv.1 ff. Vatican Library

Ξ Ξ Ξ

Religion, Exegesis, And The Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority

One of the many questions I have saught to answer over the past decades concerns religion, exegesis, and the Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority; and in particular regarding religions which rely on written texts such as in the matter of Christianity the texts of the New Testament, the oldest of which were written in Hellenistic Greek. [1]

However, and again in the matter of Christianity, most of the followers of that religion depended on, and depend upon, translations of such written texts with, for example, Ministers and preachers and others quoting whatever translation(s) they accepted or accept when sermonizing about Christianity. In effect, therefore, they were mostly unknowingly committing the Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority [2] with regard to the translation or translations they accepted or accept as their authority. In effect, their faith, their belief, was and is rooted in others, not in their own research using primary sources and on logical deductions based on that research.

in the matter of Christianity this committance of the Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority resulted in accusations of heresy, in schisms, in reformation, counter-reformation, with the attendant conflicts, intolerance, personal suffering, imprisonment, and deaths. Basically because one side believed (often fanatically, as in the matter of Cromwellian English Puritans) that they were 'right' and doing God's work. Was Cromwell, for example, or any of his followers, familiar with the Hellenistic Greek text of the New Testament and did their own translations of those texts and thus made decisions based on such translations? Or did they simply accept some translation or translations as their authority and thus committed the Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority?

Which questioning was one reason I developed my individualistic philosophy (pedantically, weltanschauung) of pathei-mathos where it is personal empathy, pathei-mathos, and personal research using primary sources, [3] which inform and guide us. In the matter of Christianity my research inclined me to conclude that Johannine Christianity as evident in τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγέλιον (the Gospel according to John) was "the way of humility, of forgiveness, of love, of a personal appreciation of the divine, of the numinous; and a spiritual, interior, way somewhat different from past moralistic interpretations," [4] with my interpretation of τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον (the Gospel according to Matthew) chapter 5, verses 1-10, [5] also suggesting similar sentiments.

In addition, in the 2024 text *The Johannine Weltanschauung* [6] I went so far as to suggest that there were several passages in the Gospel of John which inclined me to answer a question I had posed in my 2017 monograph *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, of whether:

> "a Christianity based only on the Gospel According to John - τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγέλιον - [would] be different from, more numinous than, the Christianity derived from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the other texts included in what has become known as the Canonical New Testament, Καινὴ Διαθήκη? A Johannine Christianity where the Greek texts known as LXX, the Old Testament, were not regarded as 'the Word of God' - as divinely inspired and canonical - but rather as providing some historical background to the old, superseded, logos of Mosaic law and of 'the Prophets'. Would such a Johannine Christianity be a Weltanschauung - a particular and individual apprehension or interpretation of Reality - rather than a religion with all that a religion implies in terms of hierarchy and dogma? With the contrast being, in the words of

> Tertullian, Post vetera exempla originalium personarum aeque ad vetera transeamus instrumenta legalium scripturarum." [7]

I then proceeded, in that 2024 text, to analyze those passages in detail, providing in the footnotes the Greek texts and commentating on my translation of those texts, such as οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ κρίνει οὐδένα, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ from v.22 of chapter five.

However, these and other such interpretations were and are only my personal fallible ones and therefore have no authority external to me. Which is one reason why my preferred way of life now is a personal, wordless, contemplative, appreciation of the numinous in the immediacy of the living moment, and not the wordful way of religions, of ideologies, of causal abstractions, of ideas, contemporary, organized, or otherwise.

David Myatt
November 2024

1. For instance, Papyrus Bodmer XIV-XV (P75) dating from c.175-225 CE, qv. https://www.vaticanlibrary.va/moduli/BodmerVoicu_ing.pdf

2. qv. *Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/myatt-a-neglected-aspect.pdf

3. As I noted in *Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos*, op.cit,

> "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 opinions and conclusions about that work are secondary sources."

4. *The Johannine Weltanschauung*, included in *Selected Writings 2012-2024*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/dwm-selected-writings-second-edition.pdf

5. The Beatitudes, included in *Selected Writings*, op.cit

6. The work sans the Appendices and with a correction to the footnotes - the omitted footnote [2] has been added - is included below as an Appendix. The essay with Appendices and corrected footnotes is available at https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/johannine-weltanschauung.pdf

7. Tu Es Diaboli Ianua, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/tua-es-diaboli-ianua.pdf

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Appendix

The Johannine Weltanschauung

Preface

In verse 26 of Chapter Four of The Gospel of John (τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγέλιον) Jesus, speaking to a Samarian woman, is recorded as saying: Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ λαλῶν σοι.

The first part - Ἐγώ εἰμ - literally means "I am." Most translations insert 'he' - "I am he" - which in my view seems to somewhat lesson the impact of what Jesus says, which is that he just "is", beyond causality itself and thus beyond any manifestation of Being - on Earth - as "a being", be such a 'being' the mortal Messias or some other mortal. Expressed less philosophically, Jesus says that it is the divinity who is speaking to her: "it is *I AM* who is speaking to you," which expression is what I, during my short perambulation as a Catholic monk wrote, near the verse in the margin of my copy of τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγέλιον.

Revisiting such marginalia decades later during my translation of and commentary on eight tractates of the Corpus

Hermeticum, I began to translate the Gospel itself and which translation and the accompanying commentary [1] given the relevance of the Gospel to particular verses in some of those tractates, for example φῶς καὶ ζωή ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ ἐγένετο ὁ Ἄνθρωπος (phaos and Life are the theos and the father from whence the human came into being) from the Pœmandres tractate and ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν (Who was Life and which Life was the Phaos of human beings. And the Phaos illuminates the dark and is not overwhelmed by the dark) from Chapter One of John.

This led to further questions some of which I discuss here.

David Myatt
Feria sexta in Parasceve
2024 CE

[1] Volume One: *The Gospel According To John*, Chapter 1 -5, Translation and Commentary, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/myatt-gospel-john-1-5.pdf

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A Rhetorical Question

In my 2017 monograph *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua* I asked if:

> "a Christianity based only on the Gospel According to John - τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγέλιον - be different from, more numinous than, the Christianity derived from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the other texts included in what has become known as the Canonical New Testament, Καινὴ Διαθήκη? A Johannine Christianity where the Greek texts known as LXX, the Old Testament, were not regarded as 'the Word of God' - as divinely inspired and canonical - but rather as providing some historical background to the old, superseded, logos of Mosaic law and of 'the Prophets'. Would such a Johannine Christianity be a Weltanschauung - a particular and individual apprehension or interpretation of Reality - rather than a religion with all that a religion implies in terms of hierarchy and dogma? With the contrast being, in the words of Tertullian, Post vetera exempla originalium personarum aeque ad vetera transeamus instrumenta legalium scripturarum." [1]

The origin of such a questioning was threefold: (α) my translation of the Gospel of John [2], (β) what individuals such as Julian of Norwich, George Fox, and William Penn wrote and said about Jesus, such as the expression "let us then try what love can do" from William Penn's *Some Fruits of Solitude*, with all three, according to my reading, emphasizing the importance of love; and (γ) what I sometimes felt as a monk in Choir when passages from the Old Testament regarding 'fire, brimstone, vengeance' - which seemed to me to be discordant with love - were chanted as part of Liturgia Horarum or, often as part of a Mass, read out.

Apropos (α) there were several significant passages from that Gospel which inclined me to consider whether the life and the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth annulled the Old Testament both as a guide to understanding and appreciating Theos, the supreme deity, and as a guide to daily life and remembrance through ritual and prayer, with the proviso that my answers were and are just my fallible answers just as my translation, or rather interpretation of meaning, of that Gospel was fallible and neither possessed nor professed any authority.

The first significant passage was from Chapter Five, with the Greek text and my commentary on the passage provided in footnote [3], with my use in my translation of the term Judaean, rather than the traditional 'Jews', explained in Appendix One.

> 18 The Judaeans were even more determined to kill him since not only had he annulled the Sabbath but also because he spoke of Theos as his Father, presenting himself as equal to Theos.
> 19 In response, Jesus said to them: "Verily, verily, I say unto you that the son is not able to do anything on his own: only that which he observes his father doing. For whatever the father does, the son also does,
> 20 For the father loves the son and reveals to him all that he does. And, beyond this, he will reveal to him greater works which shall astonish you
> 21 Since just as the father awakens the dead, and gives life, so also the son gives life by design to whomsoever,
> 22 For the father does not choose anyone, having accorded all choosing to his son
> 23 So that all might honour the son as they honour the father. And whoever does not honour the son, does not honour the father who sent him.
> 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you that whomsoever hears my Logos, and trusts who sent me, has life everlasting and is not entered into the choosing but passes from death into life.
> 25 Verily, verily, I say unto you that a season is arriving, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Theos and those who listen shall live.
> 26 Just as the father possesses Life within himself so he gifted the son with Life within him,
> 27 And also gifted him - as the son of a mortal - with the authority of choosing.

Are the following phrases indicative? "He annulled the Sabbath", "for the father does not choose anyone, having accorded all choosing to his son", "whoever does not honour the son, does not honour the father who sent him",

"whomsoever hears my Logos, and trusts who sent me, has life everlasting", "gifted him - as the son of a mortal - with the authority of choosing".

The second passage was from Chapter Three, with the Greek text and my commentary on the passage provided in footnote [4],

> 16 For Theos so loved the world that he offered up his only begotten son so that all those trusting in him would not perish but might have life everlasting.
> 17 For Theos did not dispatch his son to the world to condemn the world, but rather that the world might be rescued through him.
> 18 Whosoever trusts in him is not condemned while whomsoever does not trust is condemned for he has not trusted in the Nomen of the only begotten son of Theos.
> 19 And this is the condemnation: That the Phaos arrived in the world but mortals loved the darkness more than the Phaos, for their deeds were harmful.
> 20 For anyone who does what is mean dislikes the Phaos and does not come near the Phaos lest their deeds be exposed.
> 21 But whomsoever practices disclosure goes to the Phaos so that their deeds might be manifest as having been done through Theos.

Of significance here are: "so that all those trusting in him would not perish but might have life everlasting", "their deeds were harmful","anyone who does what is mean", and "lest their deeds be exposed".

As noted in my commentary [4] this expresses something somewhat different from the conventional translations of this passage such as this from the King James Bible:

> God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

There is a personal trust instead of a believiing; harmful deeds instead of 'evil' deeds; being mean instead of being 'evil', and being manifest instead of being 'exposed'.

The third passage returns us to Chapter Five, with the Greek text and my commentary on the passage provided in footnote [5]

> 1 Following this, there was a Judaean feast and Jesus went to Jerusalem.
> 2 And there is in Jerusalem by the place of the sheep a pool, named in the language of the Hebrews as Bethesda, which has five colonnades
> 3 In which were a large number of the infirm - the blind, the limping, the withered - awaiting a change in the water
> 4 Since on occasion an Envoy of Theos descended into the pool, stirring the water, and whomsoever after that stirring of the water was first to enter became complete, the burden of their affliction removed.
>
> 5 And there was a man there who for eight and thirty years had been infirm.
> 6 Jesus, seeing him lying there and knowing of that lengthy duration, said to him: "Do you seek to be complete?"
> 7 The infirm one replied: "Sir, I do not have someone who when the water is stirred could place me in that pool, and, when I go, someone else has descended before me."
> 8 Jesus said to him: "Arise. Take your bedroll, and walk."
> 9 And, directly, the man became complete, took up his bedroll and walked around. And it was the day of the Sabbath.
>
> 10 Thus did the Judaeans say to the one who had been treated: "It is the Sabbath and it is not permitted for you to carry your bedroll."
> 11 To them he answered: "It was he who made me complete who said for me to take my bedroll and to walk around."
> 12 So they asked him: "Who is the man who said for you to take the bedroll and walk around?"
> 13 But the healed one did not know, for there was a crowd there with Jesus having betaken himself away.
>
> 14 Following this, Jesus discovered him in the temple and said to him: "Behold, you are complete. No more missteps, lest something worse befalls you."
> 15 The man then went away and informed the Judaeans that it was Jesus who had made him complete.
> 16 And thus did the Judaeans harass Jesus because he was doing such things on the Sabbath.

Again, and as noted in my commentary, [5] this expresses something somewhat different from the conventional

translations of this passage such as this also from the King James Bible:

> After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
>
> Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.
>
> The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.
>
> And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

There is, most noticeably, Envoy of Theos (ἄγγελος γάρ κυρίου) instead of 'angel', 'no more missteps' instead of 'sin no more' and harass (διώκω) instead of 'persecute' with my interpretation of ἁμαρτία as 'error' or 'mistake' or here as 'misstep' rather than 'sin' explained in the Introduction of my translation:

> (i) In 8.7 I have eschewed the common translation of ἁμαρτία by English word 'sin' and which English word, through centuries of Christian exegesis and preaching, has become a theological abstraction and a pejorative term, whereas the original meaning of the English word syn imputed the sense of doing what was wrong, of committing an error, of making a mistake, of being at fault; of in some way overstepping the bounds or transgressing limits imposed by others, and thus of accepting responsibility for such an infraction, a sense which the suggested etymology of the word syn implies: from the Latin sons, sontis.
>
> While my translation of 'mistake' (in 8.7) and 'error' (in 1.29) may well be controversial, to me it imparts something important regarding the teachings, and the life, of Jesus of Nazareth: something quite human, something rather different from a stern preacher preaching about 'sin'; something which seems to express what the Beatitudes express, [6] and something which individuals such as Julian of Norwich, George Fox and William Penn many centuries later tried to say and write about Christianity and about the teachings and the life of Jesus of Nazareth.
>
> Thus the interpretation of this particular verse is "So, as they continued to ask he straightened himself, saying to them: Let he who has never made a mistake throw the first stone at her."
>
> (ii) In 1.10 - ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο - I take the sense of ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν as suggesting not that "he was in the world" but rather that he was "of the world", among - with - those of the world, with his mortal body subject to pain and bodily death, with καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο thus implying not that "the world was made/created through him" but that the world was presenced in him, past, present, and future, with the English word 'presenced' - etymon: Latin praesentia - suggested by how he came to be embodied, presenced, in the Eucharist (qv. the phrase "This same presence may be called moste fitly, a reall presence, that is a presence not fained, but a true & a faythfull presence," in John Foxe's *The first volume of the ecclesiasticall history: contaynyng the Actes and monumentes of thynges passed in every kynges tyme in this realme*, 1570).

Vexata Quaestio

The question is one of not only the interpretation of particular Hellenistic (κοινὴ) Greek words, such as ἁμαρτία, which over centuries have acquired various meanings not necessarily germane to the milieu of the author of the Gospel attributed to John, but also the authority of the ancient Church which pronounced what constituted Christian belief and doctrine and thus what was considered to be heresy. Thus, to provide just one example, the Alexandrian priest Arius (born c.250, died 336 AD) who voiced an interpretation of the difference between the denotatum θεὸς and the denotatum ὁ θεὸς in the Gospel of John, leading to that interpretation being denounced as heretical.

In this context my interpretation of John, evident in the above three passages, may well be heretical because it presents both a different Jesus and a different teaching where he annuls not only the Judaean Sabbath but also the authority of the Old Testament since he is gifted by Theos "with the authority of choosing" with anyone trusting in him having "life everlasting".

Thus, it could be argued that Jesus abrogates the Old Testament because it is no longer needed since "whomsoever

hears my Logos, and trusts who sent me, has life everlasting," with the Logos as expounded in the Gospel of John:

> Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος [Chapter One, v.2]
>
> In primacy was the logos, and the logos was with Theos, and the logos was Theos.
>
> καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός), πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας [Chapter One, v.14]
>
> And the Logos became corporeal and dwelt among us and we perceived his numinosity, the numinosity of the only begotten of the Father, abounding in veritas, benevolence.

Apropos authority and Christianity, and the 'heresy' or unorthodoxy of various interpretations of texts, the schisms, the reformations and divisions, over the past two millennia, my answer derives from one of the the axioms of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos: that it is the empathy and the pathei-mathos of individuals which can wordlessly reveal the ontological reality both of our own physis and of how we, as sentient beings, relate to other living beings and to Being itself. Which, given the personal and the individual nature of empathy and pathei-mathos, implies that it is for us as individuals to decide.

My own pathei-mathos inclines me to favour the message of personal love, of humility, of trying not to repeat our mistakes, of appreciating that there is some-thing, a type of Being, beyond and more powerful that us and whatever we bring-into-being be it an idea, an ideology, a creed, a nation, a State, a jurisprudence, or an Empire. Some of us may name this Being as 'God'; or θεὸς or 'the gods' to which they give personal names. Some may describe it, as many hermeticists do, as The One, The Monas, The Father who is both male and female: ἀρρενόθηλυς. [7]

I have discovered this message in the Gospel of John; in the Corpus Hermeticum; in many of the writings of Cicero; in the poetry of Sappho and TS Eliot; in the music of JS Bach; and in many other writings and Cræfts ancient and modern. [8]

Notes

[1] *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/tua-es-diaboli-ianua.pdf

[2] https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/myatt-gospel-john-1-5.pdf

[3]

Text:

18 διὰ τοῦτο οὖν μᾶλλον ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι, ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἔλυε τὸ σάββατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεόν, ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ Θεῷ. 19 Ἀπεκρίνατο οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐ δύναται ὁ υἱὸς ποιεῖν ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ οὐδέν, ἐὰν μή τι βλέπῃ τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα· ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ποιῇ, ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ. 20 ὁ γὰρ πατὴρ φιλεῖ τὸν υἱόν, καὶ πάντα δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ ἃ αὐτὸς ποιεῖ· καὶ μείζονα τούτων δείξει αὐτῷ ἔργα, ἵνα ὑμεῖς θαυμάζητε. 21 ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐγείρει τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ ζωοποιεῖ, οὕτω καὶ ὁ υἱὸς οὓς θέλει ζωοποιεῖ. 22 οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ κρίνει οὐδένα, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκε τῷ υἱῷ· 23 ἵνα πάντες τιμῶσι τὸν υἱόν, καθὼς τιμῶσι τὸν πατέρα. ὁ μὴ τιμῶν τὸν υἱόν, οὐ τιμᾷ τὸν πατέρα τὸν πέμψαντα αὐτόν. 24 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων, καὶ πιστεύων τῷ πέμψαντί με, ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον· καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται, ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωήν. 25 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστιν, ὅτε οἱ νεκροὶ ἀκούσονται τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ οἱ ἀκούσαντες ζήσονται. 26 ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἔχει ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, οὕτως ἔδωκε καὶ τῷ υἱῷ ζωὴν ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ· 27 καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ καὶ κρίσιν ποιεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστί.

Commentary:

18. *annulled the Sabbath*. ἔλυεν τὸ σάββατον. They were more determined to kill Jesus not because he himself had 'broken' the Sabbath but because they believed he had publicly 'annulled' (λύω) the Sabbath by telling someone to do what the Judeans regarded as impermissible, and thus, by now equating himself to Theos, seemed desirous of replacing their Judaean laws with new laws of his own.

19. *on his own*. ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ. Literally, of/from himself. The verse itself is evocative of a human son learning by observing what his father does.

21. *awakens*. Given the following ζῳοποιέω - 'make alive, give life' - I am inclined to take the general sense of ἐγείρω - 'wake' - rather than the specific 'raise up' and which "raising up of the dead" now implies certain post-Hellenic iconographies.

22. *For the father does not choose anyone, having accorded all choosing to his son*. οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ κρίνει οὐδένα, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ. The preceding θέλει and the context suggest κρίνω as 'choose' not 'judge', and which interpretation imparts a somewhat different meaning from the conventional one which involves Jesus giving life to 'whomsoever he wishes' and judging them; and a different meaning given how the term 'judgement' has for over two thousand years been interpreted in relation to the Old and the New Testaments.

Instead of such later interpretations, the Evangelist describes how Jesus simply gives life by design because his father - Theos - has given the task of choosing to his son. Which is why Jesus previously said (4:34)

> Ἐμὸν βρῶμά ἐστιν ἵνα ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με καὶ τελειώσω αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔργον
>
> My food is that I undertake the design of the one having sent me and accomplish His work.

Thus here Jesus is affirming that he is indeed annulling the laws of the old covenant: it is he who now chooses who has life everlasting. Cf. Deuteronomy 32:39, 2 Kings 5:7, et seq.

24. *not entered into the choosing*. εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται. Literally, "does not go to Choosing" - in conventional terms, does not go into judgement - because having heard, and trusted the father through the son, they already have the gift of life everlasting and thus pass straight from death to that new life.

25. *shall hear ... have listened*. ἀκούσουσιν ... ἀκούσαντες. The literal "shall hear" and "that hear" does not clearly express what is meant.

27. *and also gifted him - as the son of a mortal - with the authority of choosing*. καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν. Literally, "and he gifted him with authority to undertake choosing because he is the son of a mortal." Which explains the following μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο, "be not astonished at this". In regard to υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου as 'son of a mortal' instead of Son of Man, qv. the comment on 1:51. Also, cf. 9:35, Σὺ πιστεύεις εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, which makes perfect sense if Jesus is asking "Do you trust the son of a mortal?" but is somewhat problematic if conventionally interpreted as "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

[4]

Text

16 Οὕτω γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν
μὴ ἀπόληται, ἀλλ’ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 17 οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν
κόσμον, ἀλλ’ ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ. 18 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται· ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται, ὅτι μὴ
πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ. 19 αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ κρίσις, ὅτι τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν
κόσμον, καὶ ἠγάπησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον τὸ σκότος ἢ τὸ φῶς· ἦν γὰρ πονηρὰ αὐτῶν τὰ ἔργα. 20 πᾶς γὰρ ὁ φαῦλα
πράσσων μισεῖ τὸ φῶς, καὶ οὐκ ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα μὴ ἐλεγχθῇ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ. 21 ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν
ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα φανερωθῇ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα, ὅτι ἐν Θεῷ ἐστιν εἰργασμένα. 22 Μετὰ ταῦτα ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ
μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν γῆν· καὶ ἐκεῖ διέτριβε μετ’ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐβάπτιζεν. 23 ἦν δὲ καὶ Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν
Αἰνὼν ἐγγὺς τοῦ Σαλείμ, ὅτι ὕδατα πολλὰ ἦν ἐκεῖ· καὶ παρεγίνοντο καὶ ἐβαπτίζοντο.

Commentary

19-20. ἦν γὰρ αὐτῶν πονηρὰ τὰ ἔργα. For their deeds were harmful; that is, caused pain and suffering. To impute to πονηρός here the meaning of a moral abstract 'evil' is, in my view, mistaken. Similarly with the following φαῦλος in v.20 which imparts the sense of being 'mean', indifferent.
Since the Phaos is Jesus, those who are mean, those who do harm, avoid Jesus because (qv. 2.25) he - as the only begotten son of Theos - knows the person within and all their deeds. Thus, fearing being exposed, they avoid him, and thus cannot put their trust in him and so are condemned and therefore lose the opportunity of eternal life.

21. ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Literally, 'they practising the disclosing.' That is, those who disclose - who do not hide - who they are and what deeds they have done, and who thus have no reason to fear exposure. Here, as in vv.19-20, the meaning is personal - about the character of people - and not about abstractions such as "evil" and "truth", just as in previous verses it is about trusting in the character of Jesus. Hence why here ἀλήθεια is 'sincerity', a disclosing, a revealing - the opposite of lying and of being deceitful - and not some impersonal 'truth'.

[5]

Text

Μετὰ ταῦτα ἦν ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ ἀνέβη ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς Ἰεροσόλυμα. 2 Ἔστι δὲ ἐν τοῖς Ἰεροσολύμοις ἐπὶ τῇ
προβατικῇ κολυμβήθρα, ἡ ἐπιλεγομένη Ἑβραϊστὶ Βηθεσδά, πέντε στοὰς ἔχουσα. 3 ἐν ταύταις κατέκειτο πλῆθος πολὺ
τῶν ἀσθενούντων, τυφλῶν, χωλῶν, ξηρῶν, ἐκδεχομένων τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος κίνησιν. 4 ἄγγελος γὰρ κατὰ καιρὸν
κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ κολυμβήθρᾳ, καὶ ἐτάρασσε τὸ ὕδωρ· ὁ οὖν πρῶτος ἐμβὰς μετὰ τὴν ταραχὴν τοῦ ὕδατος, ὑγιὴς
ἐγίνετο, ᾧ δήποτε κατείχετο νοσήματι. 5 ἦν δέ τις ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ τριάκοντα καὶ ὀκτὼ ἔτη ἔχων ἐν τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ.
6 τοῦτον ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς κατακείμενον, καὶ γνοὺς ὅτι πολὺν ἤδη χρόνον ἔχει, λέγει αὐτῷ, Θέλεις ὑγιὴς γενέσθαι;
7 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ ὁ ἀσθενῶν, Κύριε, ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἔχω ἵνα, ὅταν ταραχθῇ τὸ ὕδωρ, βάλῃ με εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν· ἐν

ᾧ δὲ ἔρχομαι ἐγώ, ἄλλος πρὸ ἐμοῦ καταβαίνει. [8] λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἔγεῖραι, ἆρον τὸν κράββατόν σου, καὶ περιπάτει. [9] καὶ εὐθέως ἐγένετο ὑγιὴς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἦρε τὸν κράββατον αὐτοῦ καὶ περιεπάτει. Ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ. [10] ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τῷ τεθεραπευμένῳ, Σάββατόν ἐστιν· οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι ἆραι τὸν κράββατον. [11] ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς, Ὁ ποιήσας με ὑγιῆ, ἐκεῖνός μοι εἶπεν, Ἆρον τὸν κράββατόν σου καὶ περιπάτει. [12] ἠρώτησαν οὖν αὐτόν, Τίς ἐστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ εἰπών σοι, Ἆρον τὸν κράββατόν σου καὶ περιπάτει; [13] ὁ δὲ ἰαθεὶς οὐκ ᾔδει τίς ἐστιν· ὁ γὰρ Ἰησοῦς ἐξένευσεν, ὄχλου ὄντος ἐν τῷ τόπῳ. [14] μετὰ ταῦτα εὑρίσκει αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἴδε ὑγιὴς γέγονας· μηκέτι ἁμάρτανε, ἵνα μὴ χεῖρόν τί σοι γένηται. [15] ἀπῆλθεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἀνήγγειλε τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὸν ὑγιῆ. [16] καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐδίωκον τὸν Ἰησοῦν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν ἀποκτεῖναι, ὅτι ταῦτα ἐποίει ἐν σαββάτῳ.

Commentary

2.

the place of the sheep. Since the Greek προβατικός means "of or relating to sheep" and there is no mention of a 'gate' (or of anything specific such as a market) I prefer a more literal translation. It is a reasonable assumption that the sheep were, and had in previous times been, kept there prior to being offered as sacrifices, as for example sheep are still so held in particular places in Mecca during Eid al-Adha, the Muslim feast of sacrifice.

named in the language of the Hebrews. ἐπιλεγομένη Ἑβραϊστὶ.

3.

the infirm. The Greek word ἀσθενέω implies those lacking normal physical strength.

awaiting a change in the water. Reading ἐκδεχομένων τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος κίνησιν with the Textus Receptus, omitted by NA28, but included in ASV, Tyndale, and Wycliffe.

4. Reading ἄγγελος γάρ κυρίου κατά καιρών κατέβαινεν (qv. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on John, Book II, V, 1-4, Migne Patrologia Graeca 73) and ἐν τῇ κολυμβήθρᾳ, καὶ ἐτάρασσεν τὸ ὕδωρ· ὁ οὖν πρῶτος ἐμβὰς μετὰ τὴν ταραχὴν τοῦ ὕδατος, ὑγιὴς ἐγίνετο, ᾧ δήποτε κατειχετο νοσήματι with the Textus Receptus. Although the verse is omitted in NA28, and generally regarded as an interpolation, I include it since it is in ASV, Tyndale, Wycliffe, KJV, and Douay-Rheims.

a) *envoy*. As noted in the commentary on 1:51, interpreting ἄγγελος as 'envoy' (of theos) and not as 'angel', particularly given the much later Christian iconography associated with the term 'angel'.

b) *Theos*. Regarding ἄγγελος γάρ κυρίου, qv. Matthew 28.2 ἄγγελος γὰρ κυρίου καταβὰς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, "an envoy of [the] Lord/Master descended from Empyrean/the heavens." Since here κύριος implies Theos (cf. John 20.28 where it is used in reference to Jesus), an interpretation such as "envoy of Theos" avoids both the phrase "envoy of the Master" - which is unsuitable given the modern connotations of the word 'master' - and the exegetical phrase "angel/envoy of the Lord" with all its associated and much later iconography both literal, by means of Art, and figurative, in terms of archetypes and one's imagination. An alternative expression would be "envoy of the Domine," with Domine (from the Latin Dominus) used in English both as a respectful form of address and as signifying the authority of the person or deity.

c) *became complete*. ὑγιὴς ἐγίνετο. The suggestion is of the person becoming 'whole', complete, *sanus*, and thus ceasing to be 'broken', incomplete, infirm.

8. *bedroll*. κράβαττος (Latin, grabatus) has no suitable equivalent in English since in context it refers to the portable bed and bedding of the infirm. The nearest English approximation is bedroll.

9. *And, directly, the man became complete*. καὶ εὐθέως ἐγένετο ὑγιὴς ὁ ἄνθρωπος. Metaphysically, the Evangelist is implying that 'completeness' - wholeness - for both the healthy and the infirm (whether infirm because of sickness or a physical infirmity) arises because of and through Jesus.

10. *treated*. Taking the literal sense of θεραπεύω here. Hence: cared for, treated, attended to. As a healer or a physician might care for, treat, or attend to, someone.

14. *no more missteps*. μηκέτι ἁμάρτανε. That is, make no more mistakes in judgement or in deeds. Qv. the Introduction regarding translating ἁμαρτία in a theologically neutral way as 'mistake' or 'error' instead of by the now exegetical English word 'sin'. Cf. 1.29, 8.7, et seq.

16. *harass*. διώκω. Cf. the Latin *persequor*, for the implication is of continually 'following' and pursuing him in order to not only try and worry or distress him but also (as becomes evident) to find evidence against him in order to have him killed, qv. 5.18, 7.1, 7.19 et seq.

[6] My translation of The Beatitudes is available at https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/the-beatitudes-v1.pdf.

[7] qv. my *A Note On The Term Noesis In Tractate XIII*, included in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf

[8] Cræft: "this older spelling in an esoteric context implies [...] a particular Arte, the application of particular abilities, skills, and knowledge, especially abilities, skills, and knowledge learned or received in the traditional manner from a master of the Arte or Arts in question. In this esoteric sense, theos is the Master Craftsman, with Palingenesis being a Cræft, an Arte that "is not taught; rather, it is presenced by and when the theos desires". *A Note On The Term Noesis In Tractate XIII*, included in *Hermetica And Alchemy*, op.cit.

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The Centuries, Not The Decades

Ξ Ξ Ξ

Over fifty years ago, in the 1970s, my concern was the next political confrontation, the next street fight with political opponents, the next piece of propaganda I would produce, motivated as I was by a Certitude-of-Knowing, a fanaticism, born of the belief that I had found the right answers, the right solutions, to certain problems of a political and social kind.

Now, after decades of practical experience which included two terms of imprisonment, the loss of two loved ones, travels in various foreign lands, and a decade and more of working with my hands in rural occupations, my concern has become my Uncertitude-of-Knowing: of how and why my earlier hubris has, mostly against my will, somehow given way to an often wordless appreciation and a wordless knowing of Nature and of my place as one fallible mortal temporarily living, for only some decades, on one planet orbiting one Star in one Galaxy among a Universe of billions of Galaxies. Of how I owe a debt, have an obligation, to Nature - Debitum Naturæ - and almost certainly a debt to whatever is or was the genesis of Nature, of the variety of life, here and possibly elsewhere in the Cosmos.

There thus has developed in me a perspective far beyond politics and far beyond the years and the decades where those with a political or a religious Certitude-of-Knowing try from whatever motive, or some scheming, to change what-is to what they, or others whose authority they accept, believe should-be based on some personal or adopted political or religious or social certitude. For all they seem to have done or do is perpetuate the cycle of suffering as I perpetuated it during my decades as a political and then as a religious fanatic.

This new perspective of mine is of the centuries yet to be and of how we as individuals can cease to interfere, from whatever motive, in the world beyond our own personal world because while such interference may in some circumstances change and often has changed our and other societies temporarily 'for the better' such change does not, in the perspective of centuries, last. A revolution here; a change of government; a war there; an invasion of this or that land; repressive laws; the extra-judicial killing or assassination of this or that official or leader...

There are so many examples over so many centuries. Did the brutality of ancient Rome - the slaughter of Boudica and her followers not long after her victory over the Ninth Legion; the killings, including the murder of Cicero, during the Second Triumvirate; the crucifixion of thousands of followers of Spartacus along the Appian Way; the crucifixion of Jesus and the killing of many early Christians - prevent the fall of the Roman Empire? Did the First and Second World Wars, with their millions of people killed, solve the internal problems of, for example, America and Britain: the poverty; the deprivation, the inequality that still haunts them? Et cetera.

Yet we always find excuses for ourselves, for others: that 'next time it will be different' and that some existing government or some newly declared enemy foreign or domestic 'must be opposed and defeated' by whatever means because 'we' are right and 'they' are wrong. Thus does the internal violence, the hatred and often the internal repression, and the foreign killing and the destruction, continue decade after decade, century following century.

Is this all that we are or all we can be? Decades ago in one of those rare perceptions of acausal Time, I vainly tried to express in words that fleeting perception of another world, of another way of living. [1] But as so often between 1968 and 2006 it was, as other such moments were, forgotten in the maelstrom formed by still believed-in causal impersonal abstractions and by my arrogant belief that I should, must, change what-is to what I hubriatically believed it should-be.

I needed to resist, then; I should have resisted, remembering. But remembering and resisting what? Remembering the deeds done; the suffering caused; resisting the hubris that vivified my personal life, manifest as my hubris was in a personal Certitude-of-Knowing. Now, almost every day, I strive to remember in words such as this the long and difficult journey from city-street to farm-field, from battle-song to plainchant to rural silence, conveyed as I seem to have been to move beyond causal impersonal abstractions to a consideration of the centuries not the decades.

> 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. [2]

David Myatt
August 2024

Ξ Ξ Ξ

[1]

Snow, hill-whitening, while a cool Sun journeys
Slowly
Beyond the cloud
That touches the Mynd in a slow dance
Of beauty.

There is a moment, of youthful hope:
A Thrush to descend down to pick
The storm-red berries from a grey-green tree
Of holly
Stout, strong, from more than ten-score Sun-warmed
Summers.

It is the twilight time, of life:
There is no music, no painting, no books in preparation
For this
As if the labours of those who artfully laboured
Went unremarked, misunderstood
Thousand year upon thousand year:
Few seeds sown, as berries sow new life.

Yet I heard them call out, once, often, in a dreamful youth
When hilltop viewing at night beneath
A night of stars
Knowing no difference because I had yet to learn
As adults learn
To constrict the flow of Thought:
One individual, striving, among so many
With so many needs
To feed our flow of life.

But there is a learning here
As a breeze, gusting cold, moves cloud
To free the blue-beauty which is our planet's sky:
A remembering
Of the empathy
Which is, should be, our individual evolution
Of life.

c.1980

[2] TS Eliot: Little Gidding

Ξ Ξ Ξ

Image credit:

Travelling home after a day working on a farm near Malvern.
Surveillance photograph, Spring 2000,
by a Private Investigator hired by the BBC

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Recusants

Reared as a Roman Catholic, I well remember the history we English Catholics received, initially in my case at a Catholic Preparatory School, about a thief, a bully, a tyrant, named Henry and his descendant Elizabeth Tudor who made England a place where practising Catholics faced the daily fear of persecution, imprisonment and execution. A period perhaps exemplified, presenced musically, by William Byrd's motet *Ne Irascaris Domine*, a part of his Liber Sacrarum Cantionum.

Is that transient history which I was taught relevant today? I believe it is, as one example over so many centuries of how the authority of some potentate, some King or Queen, or latterly some government of some nation-State, with their or its demands, that we, their subjects - their citizens - obey whatever laws and diktats they or it decrees, and thus that our own judgement, our own pathei-mathos, our own beliefs and learning, are irrelevant - or possibly subversive or illegal - compared to their laws and diktats based as such laws and diktats always are on some causal abstraction that they insist is or are necessary for the preservation of the status quo. But which causal laws or diktats always, over centuries, become exposed for what they really are: temporal.

Which is one of the lessons that our ancestral, our human culture of pathei-mathos, [1] teaches or can teach us: that such impersonal, supra-personal, authority with its embedded laws and diktats, does not and cannot, in the time-scale of millennia, endure, and that wisdom lives within us by virtue of our individual life experiences or by such living as can, often against our will and thus contrary to our certitude-of-knowing, presence such a wordless personal understanding.

David Myatt
JD 2460552.5

1. The culture of pathei-mathos is the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals, world-wide, over thousands of years, as (i) described in memoirs, aural stories, and historical accounts; as (ii) have inspired particular works of literature or poetry or drama; as (iii) expressed via non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and as (iv) manifest in more recent times by 'art-forms' such as particular films and documentaries.

A Fundamental Question

Quid Est Veritas?

A fundamental question now as in centuries past is what is the 'truth' about a person, about an event, or about some-thing supra-personal such as some -ism or -ology or group or movement which several or many persons believe in, or accept, or belong to, or adhere to.

The English word 'truth' suggests conformity with fact, agreement with reality, accuracy of representation; with the Latin veritas and the Greek ἀλήθεια (alétheia) suggesting a similar sense but also and importantly, in regard to the Greek, of what is disclosed having been previously concealed for whatever reason or from whatever cause, as for example in the following:

(i) vv. 5-6 of tractate XIII of the Corpus Hermeticum,

> Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ψεύδῃ· τὸ γὰρ θνητὸν εἶδος καθ´ ἡμέραν ἀλλάσσεται· χρόνῳ γὰρ τρέπεται εἰς αὔξησιν καὶ μείωσιν, ὡς ψεῦδος.
>
> Τί οὖν ἀληθές ἐστιν, ὦ Τρισμέγιστε
> In that you have been deceived, for the form of the deathful alters every day: changed by the seasons, it grows then withers and so deceives.
>
> What then - Trismegistus - is the actuality? [1]

(ii) v. 1567 of the Agamemnon,

> ἐς τόνδ᾽ ἐνέβης ξὺν ἀληθείᾳ χρησμόν
> until now, what the oracle revealed has been followed

(iii) In 3: 21 in the Gospel of John,

> ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν
> literally, "they practising the disclosing". [2]

Replacement And Concealment

The quotation from tractate XIII of the Corpus Hermeticum expresses something of the reality of the change that occurs in Nature and in ourselves as children of Gaia, [3] and also in those constructs we mortals manufacture be these constructs material or based on denotata but which denotata like material ones do not embody what is living and part of Nature. Instead, denotata express an idea, an ideal, which can and often do form the basis of some -ism or some -ology. [4] That is,

> πάντα γὰρ σώματα ζῶντα ἔμψυχα, τὰ δὲ μὴ ζῶντα ὕλη πάλιν καθ' ἑαυτήν ἐστι
> all living beings presence life while the non-living are substance only
>
> Tractate XI, v.10, Νοῦς πρὸς Ἑρμῆν. [5]

For all denotata by their physis [6] are substances which require mortals to embody and transmit them verbally or by writing (be it handwritten, printed, or in digital form) and given the physis of mortals both the embodiment and the transmission will naturally change, vary, over causal time. Hence why a denotata such as a specific 'national identity' will vary as the population within a specifically named 'nation' changes over decades and centuries as a result of various factors be they immigration, emigration; invasion, occupation, by others; economic decline; environmental factors; education; or through the zeitgeist of that 'nation' changing or being changed as for example by an internal revolution which replaces one -ology or religious belief with another.

Hence why a certain 'truth' accepted somewhere for a while, be it decades or centuries, can and does change, or is or becomes concealed and replaced with another 'truth'. Most ideas, ideals, -isms and -ologies present or are said or believed to present a certain 'truth' or certain 'truths', for example about ourselves, or about some-thing such as 'happiness', or about some existence after death, or about some type of apparently needed or 'better' governance.

How then can we discover, reveal, the truth about a person, about an event, or about some-thing such as some -ism or -ology or group or movement?

It is my view, derived from personal experience, from considering questions of exegesis, and from translating and commenting on Greek texts such as the Corpus Hermeticum and the Gospel of John, that pathei-mathos, empathy, and personal research over an extended period of time using primary sources, [7] are a means whereby we as individuals can answer the question of what is the truth about someone, some event, or about some-thing such as some -ism or -ology or group or movement; and that if we do use such means then it is incumbent on us, as mortal fallible beings capable of reason and possessed of the ability to apprehend the numinous and thus the error of hubris, [8] to refrain

from commenting on what we have not personally discovered.

For,

> οὐκ οἶδ᾽: ἐφ᾽ οἷς γὰρ μὴ φρονῶ σιγᾶν φιλῶ
> I do not know: about things I cannot judge for myself, I prefer to be silent. [9]

Similarly,

> σοφία νοερὰ ἐν σιγῇ
> noetic sapientia is in silence [10]

David Myatt
Spring Equilux
2025

Ξ Ξ Ξ

1. DWM, *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates*, Translation and Commentary, p.148. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf

'Deathful' is my translation of θνητός used in several tractates, qv. Poemandres 14, tractate VIII:1, and tractate XI:7ff, inspired as it was by Chapman's poetic translation of the Hymn to Venus from the Homeric Hymns: "that with a deathless goddess lay a deathful man".

I also used it in my rendering of an enigmatic verse attributed to Heraclitus:

> ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι, ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες. (Fragment 62, Diels-Krantz)
>
> The deathless are deathful, the deathful deathless, with one living the other's dying with the other dying in that other's life.

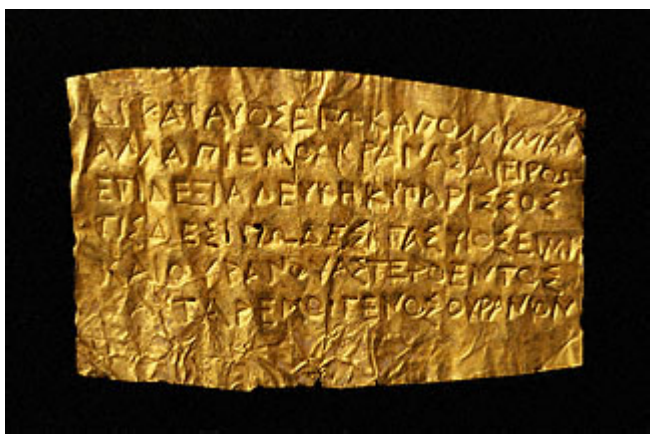
2. Translated by DWM, *The Gospel According to John,* Translation And Commentary, Volume I, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/myatt-gospel-john-1-5.pdf

The context is:

> 16 οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ᾽ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
> 17 οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ᾽ ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος δι᾽ αὐτοῦ.
> 18 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται· ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται, ὅτι μὴ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ.
> 19 αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ κρίσις ὅτι τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον καὶ ἠγάπησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον τὸ σκότος ἢ τὸ φῶς· ἦν γὰρ αὐτῶν πονηρὰ τὰ ἔργα.
> 20 πᾶς γὰρ ὁ φαῦλα πράσσων μισεῖ τὸ φῶς καὶ οὐκ ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα μὴ ἐλεγχθῇ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ·
> 21 ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα φανερωθῇ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα ὅτι ἐν θεῷ ἐστιν εἰργασμένα.
>
> Theos so loved the world that he offered up his only begotten son so that all those trusting in him would not perish but might have life everlasting. For Theos did not dispatch his son to the world to condemn the world, but rather that the world might be rescued through him. Whosoever trusts in him is not condemned while whomsoever does not trust is condemned for he has not trusted in the Nomen of the only begotten son of Theos. And this is the condemnation: That the Phaos arrived in the world but mortals loved the darkness more than the Phaos, for their deeds were harmful. For anyone who does what is mean dislikes the Phaos and does not come near the Phaos lest their deeds be exposed. But whomsoever practices disclosure goes to the Phaos so that their deeds might be manifest as having been done through Theos.

3.

Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
I am a child of Gaia and the starry heavens



Gold funerary tablet (c. 200 BCE) found at Eleutherna, Crete,
of the kind presumed to be associated with an aural ἱερός λόγος (esoteric mythos),
all of which funerary items have inscriptions similar to the above.
qv. Tractate III, Ιερός Λόγος, Corpus Hermeticum

4. In regard to abstractions, qv. (i) *Developing The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, pp.530-534 of *Selected Writings 2012-2024*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/selected-writings-dwm.pdf and (ii) *Numinosity, Denotata, Empathy, And The Hermetic Tradition*, pp.6-12 of *Selected Writings*, op.cit.

5. As noted in my commentary on tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum: (i) *substance*, ὕλη, the materia of 'things' and living beings, contrasted with οὐσία, essence. qv. Pœmandres 10, (ii) *presence life*, ἔμψυχος.

6.

> "Physis is usually translated as either 'Nature' (as if 'the natural world', and the physical cosmos beyond, are meant) or as the character (the nature) of a person. However, while the context - of the original Greek text - may suggest (as often, for example, in Homer and Herodotus) such a meaning as such English words impute, physis philosophically (as, for example, in Heraclitus and Aristotle and the Corpus Hermeticum) has specific ontological meanings. Meanings which are lost, or glossed over, when physis is simply translated either as 'Nature' or - in terms of mortals - as (personal) character.
>
> Ontologically, as Aristotle makes clear, physis denotes the being of those beings who or which have the potentiality (the being) to change, be changed, or to develope. That is, to become, or to move or be moved; as for example in the motion (of 'things') and the 'natural unfolding' or growth, sans an external cause, that living beings demonstrate.
>
> However, and crucially, physis is not - for human beings - some abstract 'essence' (qv. Plato's ἰδέᾳ/εἶδος) but rather a balance between the being that it is, it was, and potentially might yet be. That is, in Aristotelian terms, it is a meson - μέσον - of being and 'not being'; and 'not being' in the sense of not yet having become what it could be, and not now being what it used to be. Hence why, for Aristotle, a manifestation of physis - in terms of the being of mortals - such as arête (ἀρετή) is a meson, a balance of things, and not, as it is for Plato, some fixed 'form' - some idea, ideal - which as Plato wrote "always exists, and has no genesis. It does not die, does not grow, does not decay."
>
> According to my understanding of Heraclitus, physis also suggests - as in Fragment 1 - the 'natural' being of a being which we mortals have a tendency to cover-up or conceal."
>
> *The Concept Of Physis*, pp.500-502, *Selected Writings*, op.cit.

7. In the matter of exegesis refer to (i) *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God*, pp.406-432 of *Selected Writings*, op.cit. (ii) *Religion, Exegesis, And The Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/dwm-religion-exegesis-fallacy-1.pdf (iii) *Exegesis And Pathei-Mathos*, pp.52-54 of *A Child Of Gaia*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/dwm-child-of-gaia.pdf

In the matter of pathei-mathos and empathy refer to *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*, pp.459-524, of *Selected Writings*, op.cit.

In the matter of personal experience refer to *Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos*, pp.794-5, in *Selected Writings*, op.cit.

In the matter of primary sources:

> "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 opinions and conclusions about that work are secondary sources."
>
> *Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos*, pp.794-5, in *Selected Writings*, op.cit

8. An awareness of the numinous is what predisposes us not to commit the error, the folly, of ὕβρις.

> "The numinous is θειότης, divinity-presenced, as in tractate XI v. 11 of the Corpus Hermeticum, θειότητα μίαν, and as in Plutarch, De Pythiae Oraculis, 407a, 398a-f. The numinous is essentially what is, or what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) that which is felt, experienced, or understood as

> sacred, numinal, sublime, divine, awe-inspiring, beautiful, and beyond our ability, as mortals, to control or meaningfully express through the medium of words. For Christians, it is considered to be God; for Muslims, Allah; for the Romans, divinitas; for others ancient and modern, it was and is considered to be expressible, or intimated, by mythoi and presenced in ὁ θεὸς, the deity, and/or by θεοί, the gods."
>
> Notes On War, Suffering, And Personal Judgement,
> pp.19-22 of *A Child Of Gaia*, op.cit.

The numinous is also presenced in an awareness of Gaia (Nature) as a living being which we are mortal emanations of.

9. Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 569.

10. Corpus Hermeticum, tractate XI, v.2

From my commentary on that tractate:

> *noetic sapientia*. For a variety of reasons, I have used the term *noetic sapientia* to denote σοφία νοερὰ.
>
> i) The metaphysical terms νοῦς νοερός, νοῦς οὐσιώδης, and νοῦς ζωτικός occur in Proclus, qv. *Procli Diadochi In Platonis Timaeum Commentari*, Volume 5, Book 4, 245-247; *Procli in Platonis Parmenidem Commentaria*, II 733 and IV 887. Interestingly, Proclus associates νοερός with the three 'septenary planets' Mercury, Venus, and the Sun.
>
> Here, σοφία νοερὰ may well suggest a particular hermetic principle which requires contextual interpretation.
>
> ii) As noted in my commentary on Poemandres 29 - where I used the Latin *sapientia* in respect of σοφία - in some contexts the English word 'wisdom' does not fully reflect the meaning (and the various shades) of σοφία, especially in a metaphysical (or esoteric) context given what the English term 'wisdom' now, in common usage and otherwise, often denotes. As in the Poemandres tractate *sapientia* (for σοφία) requires contextual - a philosophical - interpretation, as Sophia (for σοφία) does in tractate XI where it is there suggestive, as with Aion, Kronos, and Kosmos, of a personified metaphysical principle.
>
> iii) In respect of νοερός, the English word 'intellectual' has too many irrelevant modern connotations, with phrases such as 'intellectual wisdom' and 'the wisdom that understands' - for σοφία νοερὰ - unhelpful regarding suggesting a relevant philosophical meaning. Hence the use of the term 'noetic' which suggests a particular type of apprehension - a perceiveration - whereby certain knowledge and a particular understanding can be ascertained.
>
> Thus, *noetic sapientia* implies that the knowledge and understanding that is noetically acquired transcends - or at least is different from - that acquired both (a) through observation of and deductions concerning phenomena and (b) through the use of denotatum whereby beings are given 'names' and assigned to abstractive categories with such naming and such categories assumed to provide knowledge and understanding of the physis of those beings. [In respect of physis, qv. the comment on φύσεως μιᾶς in section 12.]
>
> In addition, given what follows - ἐν σιγῇ, 'in silence' - such knowledge and understanding does not require nor depend upon words whether they be spoken or written or thought. Hence, the 'source' of mortals is in, can be known and understood through, the silence of noetic sapientia.
>
> *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates*, op.cit.

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Some Questions About Poetry

Rufus M:

The questions about your poetry relate to some of your poems which were not included in published collections such as *One Exquisite Silence* {1} in which you wrote that your poetry

> "was composed between the years 1971-2012, and is of varying quality. Having undertaken the onerous task of re-reading those poems that I still have copies of, there are in my fallible view only around a dozen that I consider may possibly be good enough to be read by others," {2}

However, many of these rejected poems are still available in archive versions (3} and include poems such as *Women, War, And Work*; others include *Dirty Work* and *As An Example Barbir*. {4} All of which seem very much at odds with most of your other poetry.

My question is in two parts. First, are such poems semi-autobiographical or autobiographical as are the ones you have published in 2013 in the collection titled *One Exquisite Silence* {1} and *Some Poems Of A Vagabond;* {5} and second, are you dismayed that your self-discarded poems are still available?

DWM:

In reply to the first part of your question, no, such poems as those are neither semi-autobiographical nor autobiographical but were my feeble attempts (i) to express the feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and the occasional regret, of various types of activists, extremists and fanatics I had encountered during my time as a National-Socialist extremist, and (ii) express the raison d'etre of those who upheld the hubriatic doctrine of 'might is right', and (iii) some were, in a failed imitation of TS Eliot's The Waste Land to act, as in the poem *As An Example Barbi*r, as an observer to or as a narrator of a flow of events.

Thus the following lines from *Dirty Work* were a recalling of part of the essence of what one Second World War combat veteran had told me:

> The choice was never hard
> Since Thought can never act
> And in Action without Thought
> Lies a perfect bliss.
>
> But the Dragon stayed
> While only I moved on:
> They - the politicians - could still cry
> For they forget our memories,
> The things that we did in their name.
>
> Yet our eyes betray our loss
> For we few who survived are forever
> And always
> Alone.

Similarly, the poem *In Memoriam Camerone* attempted to recount the feelings and experiences of an office worker, having an affair with a fellow employee, who while at work received two telegrams, the second almost immediately following the first, about the illness and then the death of his daughter. Having had some para-military training, he made an impetuous decision to go to France to join the Foreign Legion.

In reply to the second part of your question, no I am not dismayed for two reasons: (i) because most of my published works are not copyright in the conventional sense of somehow 'guarding' my so-called 'intellectual property', but were and are published under a liberal raison d'etre which a license such as the Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International one now well-describes; and (ii) because for better or for worse - and mostly worse - they may in some manner and for some others document or be a witness to aspects of my life which I personally would often rather forget even though many of these aspects are a reminder of my hubris, my fallibility, and thus for me have served and may still serve an expiative purpose.

Rufus M:

Would you agree that your poetry, including the rejected poems, provide an insight into your character and personal experiences and therefore metaphorically vaporizes the politicized collage of you that various and often ideologically motivated persons with their dehumanizing slogan of "Never Forget, Never Forgive" have cobbled-together over the decades in order to portray you as both a latter-day Trickster-figure and a die-hard nazi?

DWM:

Yes, and it is a perceptive if not in these times a heretical comment. As I noted above, for others the poetry may document or be a witness to aspects of my life, especially in regard to feelings and perceiverations of Nature and of individuals personally known. It thus provides a balance, and in some ways is a map to the changes wrought within me

through an adult experiential life and thus through pathei-mathos.

This balance is possibly evident in several included poems, such as the one, based on personal experience, titled *One Answe*r, which poem to be honest I had forgotten about:

> 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.

But should the poetry perhaps also be viewed in a wider context of my post-2011 writings? For example, about extremism, such as *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism*, {6} and what some have described as my 'intellectual' writings: about the Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos, my translations in the *Hermetica And Alchemy* compilation, {7} and, though still a work in progress, my translation of and commentary on the Gospel of John. {8}

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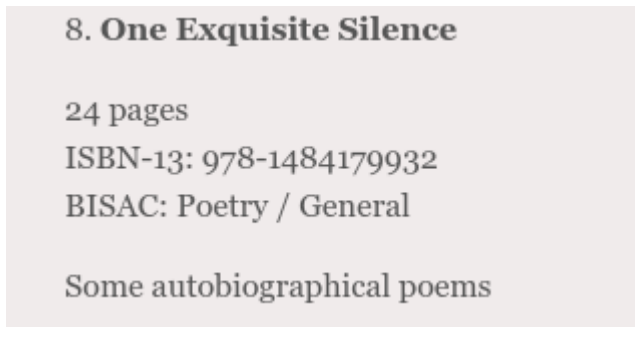
{1}



Source: https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/2017/10/30/david-myatt-collected-works/

{2} https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/poetry/

{3} (i) https://web.archive.org/web/20040419194930/http://www.geocities.com/davidmyatt/www.html (ii) https://web.archive.org/web/20050122123137/http://www.geocities.com/davidmyatt/plink.html

{4} Barbir was a hospital in Beirut where in 1986 a bomb exploded killing 32 people.

{5} https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/some-old-poetry.pdf

{6} https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/david-myatt-rejecting-extremism.pdf

{7} https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/dwm-hermetica.pdf

{8} Volume One: https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/myatt-gospel-john-1-5.pdf

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A revised extract from some personal correspondence with DWM, December 2024.

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Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos

A rather neglected aspect of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos derives from the second of the seven axioms that form its foundations, which axiom is that the knowing, the perception of a personal pathei-mathos 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." [1]

Appendix VII, *Glossary of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*, of *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos* enumerate these essentials:

> (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, our faculties – that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; 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.
>
> In addition such essentials now include Isaac Newton's first Rules of Reasoning which is that
>
> > "We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearances. To this purpose the philosophers say that Nature does nothing in vain, and more is in vain when less will serve; for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and aspects not the pomp of superfluous causes."
>
> Hence why it is often considered that there are five Aristotelian Essentials.
>
> 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.
>
> The philosophy of pathei-mathos adds the faculty of empathy - and the knowing so provided by empathy - to these essentials. Part of the knowing that empathy reveals, or can reveal, concerns the nature of Being, of beings, and of Time. [1]

Context

In the 2012 text *A Matter of Honour* I mentioned primary, secondary and tertiary sources, [2] and the logical fallacy of incomplete evidence and expressed the view that the criteria of scholarship

> "is essentially two-fold: (i) of detailed, meticulous, unbiased research on and concerning a specific topic or topics or subject undertaken over a period of some considerable time, usually a year or more in duration, and of necessity involving primary source material; and (ii) a rational assessment of the knowledge acquired by such research, with such conclusions about the topic, topics, or subject therefore being not only the logical result of the cumulative scholarly learning so acquired but also possessing a certain gravitas." [3]

In the same work I also mentioned knowledge and that

> "those who use [the] Media, and/or unscholarly books/essays, as sources of allegedly reliable information, as a guide, as a or as the basis for their judgement about and knowledge of someone or some many, are being unfair and uncultured because lacking in the following necessary virtues: (i) a reasoned, balanced, and thus ethical, judgement; (ii) the empathy of manifold direct personal contacts; and (ii) a scholarly research and/or a personal knowing extending over many years. Virtues which are the genesis of a genuine understanding of, and thence an unbiased knowledge of, another human being; and virtues which rapid, impersonal, mass means of modern communication actively discourage and which virtues are seldom, it seems, cultivated and employed by those involved with and who use and who rely on such modern means for information."

In *A May Day Interview* (2024) I expressed the perhaps elitist view that if such types who use the Media, and/or unscholarly books/essays, as sources

> "had received in their youth a 'classical education', a learning of Ancient Greek, Latin, and a study of works such as Hermeneutica Analytica Elenctica and Euclid's Στοιχεῖα, they would not commit such errors [of reasoning]. Personally, I well remember the joy I had as a schoolboy in reading the set text *The Elements of Euclid For The Use of Schools and Colleges*, and in solving the geometrical problems we were given based on that text." [4]

Thus I regarded and regard reason, logical reasoning, and scholarship using primary sources, as essential human virtues.

Primary Sources And Fallacies Of Reasoning

Some of the textbooks read in the late 1960 when in the Sixth Form included now almost forgotten works such as *Elementary Lessons in Logic* by W. Stanley Jevons (1889 edition) and *Logic* by Richard F. Clarke, SJ, which was part of the nineteenth century *Manuals Of Catholic Philosophy* series.

These books led the reader through the basics of classical logic and helpfully gave and explained fallacies of reasoning such as fallacies *extra dictionem* and common fallacies such as the now pervasive *argumentum ad hominem* and *argumentum ad verecundiam*, the appeal to authority.

What is noticeable is that in recent decades there have been attempts to redefine certain fallacies, an example being the appeal to authority, which is citing or quoting a person or persons who is of who are regarded, by the person citing or quoting or by others, as an authority on a subject with the implicit assumption or an overt spoken or written assertion that such an authority should be respected because, for instance, the 'authority' is an academic while the disputant is not and therefore the opinion or statement by the 'authority' is the correct one.

In the matter of the fallacy of appeal to authority the re-definition is along the following lines: that the fallacy is when the opinion of a non-expert on a topic is used as evidence; which statement is, while appearing to be a decisive statement concerning 'authority', is not so for two reasons. First, because the presumption is that the opinion or statement by a 'non-expert' is inferior to the opinion or statement of an 'expert'; second, there is the question of what criteria is used to define 'an expert' as distinct from a 'non-expert' and thus from whence or from whom or how the 'expert' derives their presumed authority on a particular subject; presumably by an appeal to others who are regarded, at the time, as 'experts' themselves, or by an appeal to the 'authority' of an academic institution or some conclave or institution of 'experts' on the subject in question.

This presumption regarding expert knowledge or expertize is contrary to both experimental science and scholarship, for both can and have been used to overturn accepted, and current or past 'expert', opinion.

David Myatt
June 23rd 2024

Ξ Ξ Ξ

1. *The Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, Part Two of *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*, https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

2. 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 opinions and conclusions about that work are secondary sources.

3. *A Matter of Honour*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/a-matter-of-honour.pdf

4. *A May Day Interview*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/davidmyatt-may-day-interview.pdf

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America: A Reinterpretation

In a 2015 missive titled In *Praise Of America And Britain* I temerously attempted to eulogize both America and Britain writing apropos America that:

> "Not that such a land is perfect, paradisal. Far from it: for we humans in our individuality can still be so selfish, so unempathic, so wrong, so murderous. But on balance – in the supra-personal perspective of decades and centuries – it is most certainly preferable to what exists and has existed elsewhere; offering as it does a freedom, a diversity, a tolerance, a goodness, a dream, that (at least in my decades-long experience and studies) exists (and has never heretofore existed) nowhere else on planet Earth. Except, perhaps (and again in my experience), in Britain."

In the intervening almost-decade much in that land has changed, just as my perception of it, born of an almost-decade of pathei-mathos, study, and reflexion, has somewhat changed; presenced as that fallible and personal learning is in recent essays such as *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering* [1] and *Notes On War, Suffering, And Personal Judgement*.[2]

The learning, as noted in *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering*, concerns three related issues: (i) the question of suffering and what empathy and our human culture of pathei-mathos inform us about suffering; (ii) the temporal nature of all human manufactured abstractions; and (iii) the question of authority.

For modern nations such as America and Britain still rely on supra-personal authority with individuals persuaded to forsake their own judgement, their conscience, when for instance (i) the government of the day decides it is going to invade another land, alone or jointly as in case of Afghanistan and Iraq, or (ii) the government of the day decides to support and arm one side in a foreign war or conflict as in Ukraine and as in the invasion and bombing of Gaza. In both instances the governments invariably claim that what they are doing is necessary, 'just', and moral in order for the declared enemies to be defeated and/or in order for a certain way of life or a society to live or prosper. Furthermore, in both instances their armed forces and/or certain industries (such as those providing weapons) are required or persuaded to support the decision; the armed forces through a supra-personal chain-of-command and the industries through the promise of government funding, through job security, and other means such as propaganda which often invokes patriotism and thus a sense of duty. In practice, the personal suffering that modern nation-States cause or have caused over the past hundred not only continues the periodical pain, trauma, injury, grief, and death inflicted on often 'foreign' individuals over the past four thousand years or more, but increased the multitudes affected.

However, in my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos [3] it is our individual judgement, born of our individual empathy and pathei-mathos with its knowledge of the need for personal humility and the need to alleviate and prevent suffering, which is ethically important and necessary, and which being individual and a wordless appreciation of the numinous, should not be extrapolated by us and should not be extrapolated by others to form or to support anything supra-personal be it ideological, religious, political, military, or otherwise, since all such extrapolations involve denotata and thus the ideations, a dialectic of opposites, the exegesis, and the inclusion/exclusion, the separation-of-otherness, born from them because of their physis.

Since modern nation-States are a causal ideation they are, due to our human physis *en masse*, subject over centuries to temporal change such as successive often divergent governments or leaders, due to ameliorations, reformations, revolutions, and sometimes invasions or loss of territory; and always have an inevitable decline be it economic, and/or due to assimilation, and/or due to military causes.

My conclusion therefore is that I was mistaken almost a decade ago to attempt to eulogize those two nation-States, and will let that then and still public missive remain where it currently is, and perhaps may have migrated to, as a reminder for myself and for others of my continued uncertitude-of-knowing and fallibility.

David Myatt
October 2024

1. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/conflict-and-suffering-dwmyatt.pdf

2. https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/dwmyatt-notes-war-suffering.pdf

3. The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf

A Perception Of Time

There can arise a moment in our perception of ‘Time’ when we feel that we have been somewhere before as if there is some intangible connection between the ‘then’ and ‘the now’ be it a year or much longer.

For me one of these moments was the premature death of a beloved one with whom I had shared an appreciation of a certain piece music recalled over a quarter of a century later by a hearing of that music. A death which somehow in some ineffable way seemed to change me because it began to break-down my then Certitude-of-Knowing and all that Certitude-of-Knowing implied especially in terms of propagating to others what I then fanatically and politically believed.

Fast forward several decades, and there is a reminder of such music when reading some item by some person in some printed and Internet syndicated publication distributed nationally and internationally which mentioned me in a scurrilous way; a publication with a hitherto “solid reputation” among certain political circles. Which mention was so at odds with the reality of my past that I could only surmise that the author and the publisher(s) had done no research regarding me using primary sources and thus had unintentionally or otherwise committed the fallacy of appeal to authority.

Not that this was an isolated incident. Indeed, over the past three decades, it is at least to me and perhaps a few others all too familiar. For there seems to be, among such authors and publishers, a lack of certain civilized virtues: of fairness and thus of rejecting hearsay and of not committing the fallacy of appeal to authority to thus give a person the benefit of the doubt until probative evidence proves otherwise. For they, the author and publishers, either could not be bothered to do the necessary research or perhaps, in accord with the zeitgeist of our modern times, deemed it unnecessary.

Thus there is, and yet again, and at least for me, a certain knowing born of a personal sadness:

> She sleeps,
> Dreaming
> Of days past, journeys done
> While, within, her liver
> Slowly dies:
> I’m so sorry
> The Consultant said.
> It is very serious …
>
> Three weeks to dream
> As life ebbs as a life ebbs.
> I’m glad we went to Egypt –
> Her first words
> Following that fatal verdict.
>
> Now, forward four weeks,
> Her strength mostly gone,
> She sleeps as I remembering
> Watch
> Almost crying
> And yearning for times past
> Like those Summer days
> We remembered yesterday
> When we had sat together
> Amid the heat in our colourful garden
> At peace beneath a sky of blue.
>
> Now
> What to say? What to do?
> Except strive not to forget
> These precious hours before that final sleep.
>
> There is, of course, the complex question –
> Why?
> Having harmed no one, and forty years in age,
> She dies.
>
> From such suffering, perhaps an insight gained:
> Civilizations formed, kept alive
> By memories and meanings being born of this?

David Myatt
March 2025

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Reputation and Rumours

As someone who has acquired a particular (in my view, unwarranted) reputation regarding a particular matter, and been the subject of various rumours in respect of that matter and various other matters, I am rather reminded of a certain passage of *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* by Boethius:

> Plures enim magnum saepe nomen falsis vulgi opinionibus abstulerunt; quo quid turpius excogitari potest? [1]

Furthermore, and interestingly, in Chaucer's translation of Boethius that sentence leads on to one of the first recorded usages, in the English language, of the word rumour:

> For manye han had ful greet renoun by the false opinioun of the poeple, and what thing may ben thought fouler than swiche preysinge? For thilke folk that ben preysed falsly, they moten nedes han shame of hir preysinges. And yif that folk han geten hem thonk or preysinge by hir desertes, what thing hath thilke prys eched or encresed to the conscience of wyse folk, that mesuren hir good, nat by the rumour of the poeple, but by the soothfastnesse of conscience? And yif it seme a fair thing, a man to han encresed and spred his name, than folweth it that it is demed to ben a foul thing, yif it ne be y-sprad and encresed.
>
> Book III, vi, vv. 5-15. (Early English Text Society, 1868) [2]

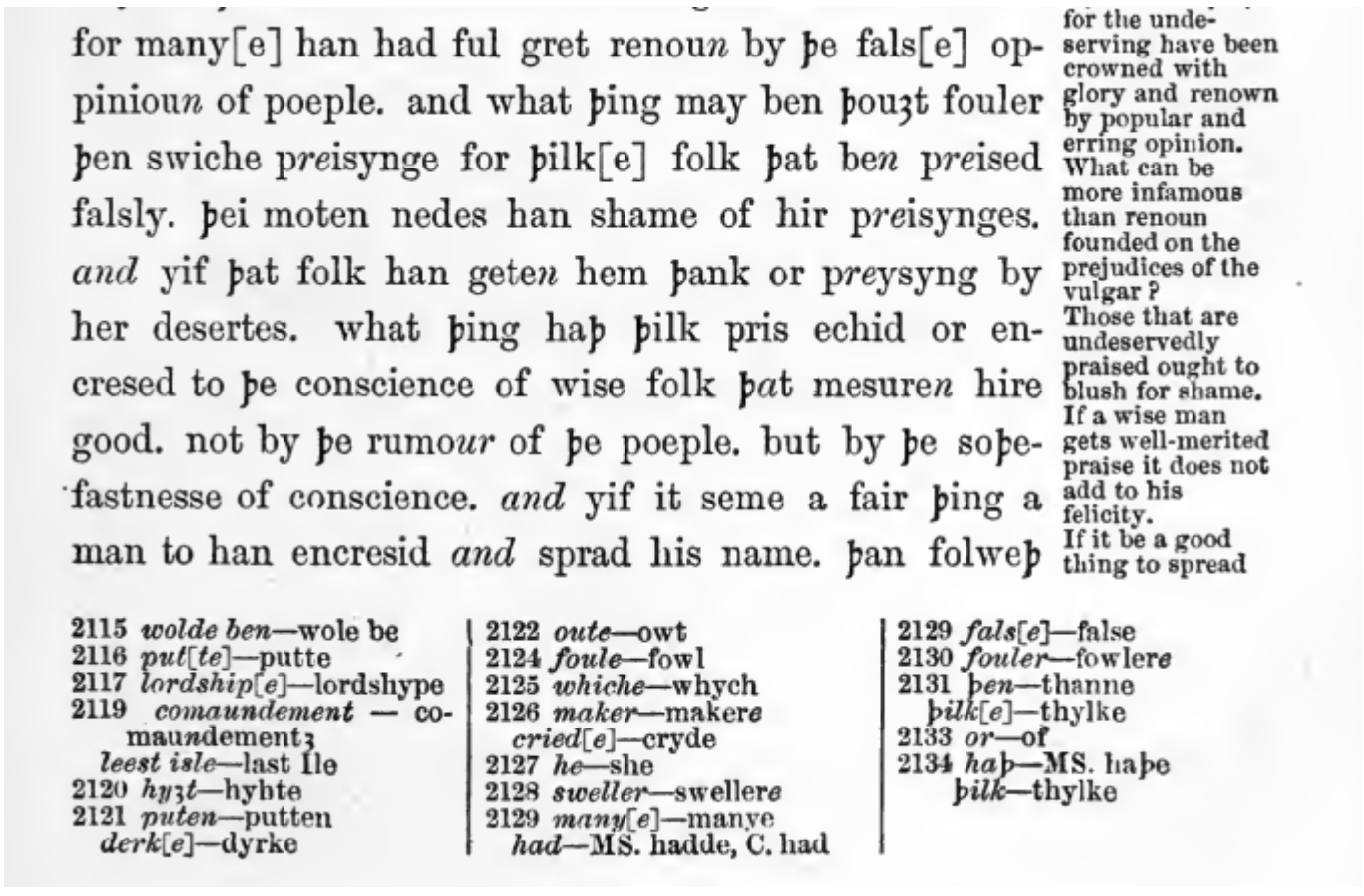
David Myatt
2015
Revised 2024

1. Gloria uero quam fallax saepe, quam turpis est! Vnde non iniuria tragicus exclamat:

> ὦ δόξα δόξα μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν
> οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὤγκωσας μέγαν.

Plures enim magnum saepe nomen falsis uulgi opinionibus abstulerunt; quo quid turpius excogitari potest?

2.



for many[e] han had ful gret renoun by þe fals[e] opinioun of poeple. and what þing may ben þouȝt fouler þen swiche preisynge for þilk[e] folk þat ben preised falsly. þei moten nedes han shame of hir preisynges. and yif þat folk han geten hem þank or preysyng by her desertes. what þing haþ þilk pris echid or encresed to þe conscience of wise folk þat mesuren hire good. not by þe rumour of þe poeple. but by þe soþefastnesse of conscience. and yif it seme a fair þing a man to han encresid and sprad his name. þan folweþ

for the undeserving have been crowned with glory and renown by popular and erring opinion.
What can be more infamous than renoun founded on the prejudices of the vulgar?
Those that are undeservedly praised ought to blush for shame.
If a wise man gets well-merited praise it does not add to his felicity.
If it be a good thing to spread

2115 *wolde ben*—wole be
2116 *put[te]*—putte
2117 *lordship[e]*—lordshype
2119 *comaundement* — comaundementȝ
leest isle—last Ile
2120 *hyȝt*—hyhte
2121 *puten*—putten
derk[e]—dyrke
2122 *oute*—owt
2124 *foule*—fowl
2125 *whiche*—whych
2126 *maker*—makere
cried[e]—cryde
2127 *he*—she
2128 *sweller*—swellere
2129 *many[e]*—manye
had—MS. hadde, C. had
2129 *fals[e]*—false
2130 *fouler*—fowlere
2131 *þen*—thanne
þilk[e]—thylke
2133 *or*—of
2134 *haþ*—MS. haþe
þilk—thylke

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A Personal Apology

Perhaps a personal apology is necessary for what follows, given that I have expressed the same sentiments many times over the past decade. Yet it is something I feel I must emote again given my own pathei-mathos and what our ancestral human culture of pathei-mathos seems to me to reveal. [1]

This is of how primitive we as a species still seem to be with our desire for conflict and our modern belief in and indeed loyalty to such causal abstractions as 'our nation' as opposed to some other nation or some group which our governments and the media condemn as opposed to, as a danger to, what they state or belief is our way of life.

Yet we are just one species on one planet in one galaxy among billions of Galaxies in the Cosmos. Are our terrestrial petty squabbles of Cosmic significance? Personally I do not believe so, and which answer is provided by our history and by our Cosmic insignificance.

Others, apparently, have posed the same question about our human condition and significance over millennia and provided their own answers: from the ancestral knowledge of community Elders, to Taoism, to Buddhism, to Jesus of Nazareth, to certain modern environmentalists and pagans. Which, in the matter of what became supra-personal religious weltanschauungen was the answer of 'God', or of a divinity or of the gods, or of some inscrutable mechanism such as Karma or a balance between the Ying and the Yang. But which answer in the matter of ancestral knowledge, of modern environmentalists, and of pagans, was presenced in an appreciation of, and/or a reverence for, Nature.

It thus seems to me that we humans have a choice. Between accepting and believing in causal abstractions presented to us by some ideology, or by some government or by some established religious or other, authority, or by finding our own Way through an acceptance of, or the discovery, via experience, of our own pathei-mathos, and/or through an appreciation of our human, centuries-old, culture of pathei-mathos.

David Myatt
2024

[1] Our ancestral human culture of pathei-mathos is the accumulated pathei-mathos of individuals, world-wide, over thousands of years, as (i) described in memoirs, aural stories, and historical accounts; as (ii) have inspired particular works of literature or poetry or drama; as (iii) expressed via non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and as (iv) manifest in more recent times by art-forms such as films and documentaries. It thus includes not only traditional accounts of, or accounts inspired by, personal pathei-mathos, such as Mozart's *Idomeneo*, and *With The Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* by Eugene Sledge, and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and the poetry of people as diverse as TS Eliot and Sappho, but also works or art-forms inspired by such pathei-mathos, whether personal or otherwise, and whether factually presented or fictionalized. Hence films such as *Monsieur Lazhar* and *Etz Limon* may poignantly express something about our φύσις as human beings.