



## **One Viator Among So Many**

### **A Collection of Some Recent Essays**

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## **A Vagabond In Exile From The Gods**

In the garden, the tall, old, Cherry tree is once again in bloom: from bursting buds to a dome of white within three days. Such a reminder, each Spring, of how so very numinous so many aspects of Nature can be when we, reluctant, rise above such selfish self-absorption as keeps us beasts within. Such beauty, harming none.

Such beauty to pause my life at least for a moment: one moment of innarrable sadness brought forth by so many aspects of my past. The hubris; the selfishness; the fanaticism; the deeds done; the words written and spoken. So many, so very many such deeds and words - so much pain caused - that there is again that poignant dream of going back to some moment before such a suffering-causing deed was done; before emotive words were written or said; before some piece of propaganda was manufactured and distributed; before some person was hurt, injured, maimed, traumatised, or killed. A travelling back - somehow - to there be the different person I am now burdened by what I never knew, I could not know, I refused to know, then. An impossible journey, of course.

Thus I am obliged, yet again, to contemplate how our thousands of years old human culture of pathei-mathos - and why stupendously numinous music such as opening of JS Bach's St. John Passion, and the allegory of Jesus of Nazareth, and the perceiverations of Siddhartha Gautama, of Hillel The Elder, of Mohandas K. Gandhi, of so many others, and the honourable lives of people such as Edith Cavell - have not prevented, from each new generation of humans, a bringing-forth of those many who, like the extremist I was, incite hatred and intolerance; and those many who - subsumed by a hubriatic righteousness, an arrant certitude-of-knowing, and thus lacking in humility - spew forth rhetoric and propaganda in their crusade for some new war or some new conflict or for some new or old ideology; and those many who - subsumed with some dark personal desire or by a brutal egoism - rape, torture, deceive, manipulate, betray, steal, destroy, despoil.

It would be so easy, so very easy, so comforting, to take refuge, again - from the sadness that such an aeonic contemplation brings - in the promise of some-thing divine or suprapersonal beyond my - beyond our mortal - death. For that would at least make some sense of the continuing suffering that we mortals are subject to, often from others of our species but sometimes resulting from natural occurrences far beyond mere mortal control. A promise of, a belief in, some-thing divine or suprapersonal such as an after-life, or some sort of

nirvana, or even something akin to the voyage described by Empedocles:

ἔστιν Ἀνάγκης χρῆμα, θεῶν ψήφισμα παλαιόν,  
αἰδίον, πλατέεσσι κατεσφρηγισμένον ὄρκοις·  
εὖτέ τις ἀμπλακίησι φόνωι φίλα γυῖα μήνηι,  
νεΐκει θ' ὅς κε ἐπίορκον ἀμαρτήσας ἐπομόσσηι,  
δαίμονες οἶτε μακραίωνος λελάχασι βίοιο,  
τρίς μιν μυρίας ὥρας ἀπὸ μακάρων ἀλάλησθαι,  
φυομένους παντοῖα διὰ χρόνου εἶδεα θνητῶν  
ἀργαλέας βίοιο μεταλλάσσοντα κελεύθους.  
αἰθέριον μὲν γάρ σφε μένος πόντουδε διώκει,  
πόντος δ' ἐς χθονὸς οὐδας ἀπέπτυσε, γαῖα δ' ἐς αὐγὰς  
ἡελίου φάεθοντος, ὃ δ' αἰθέρος ἔμβαλε δίναις·  
ἄλλος δ' ἐξ ἄλλου δέχεται, στυγέουσι δὲ πάντες.  
τῶν καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν εἰμι, φυγὰς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης,  
Νεΐκει μαινομένωι πίσυρος. [1]

For me, there is a knowing of how limited and fallible my knowledge and understanding are, combined with an intangible intimation of some-thing possibly existing which is so abstruse that any and all attempts - at least by me - to meld it into words, and thus form and confine it into some idea or ideas, would miss or distort its essence. An intimation of what terms such as 'acausal' and 'numinous' (and even θεός/θεοί) do little to describe, hinting as such terms do of externalities - of an 'out there' - whereas this some-thing is an intrinsic part of us, connecting us to all life, human, terran, and otherwise, and thus reveals our φύσις - our relation to beings and Being - behind the appearance that is our conception of our separate self. An intimation thus of our brief causality of mortal life being only one momentary microcosmic presencing of that-which we it seems have a faculty to apprehend, and a that-which which lives-on both before and after our brief moment of apprehended causal life.

Yet this some-thing that I sense is no mystical divinity of a supra-personal love to be sought individually and which, if found or gifted to us, eremitically removes us from the mortal pains and joys of life. Suffering, and the pain so caused, are real; and if we ourselves are unafflicted, others are not and may never be so unafflicted if we humans do not or cannot fundamentally change.

But, for now and as a new Spring burgeons forth, all I in my unknowing and voyaging can do is hope for a better understanding, agreeing as I do with what the Chorus say at the very end of Oedipus Tyrannus:

ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντα κείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν  
ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν

τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάση μηδὲν ἀλγεινὸν παθῶν

Therefore look toward that ending which is for us mortals  
To observe that particular day - calling no one lucky until,  
Without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending.

David Myatt  
Early Spring, 2014  
In memory of Sue, died April 4<sup>th</sup> 1993

*Notes*

[1] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Diels-Kranz, B115. My translation is:

There exists an insight by Ananke, an ancient resolution  
Of the gods, immutable and sealed by vows,  
Regarding when one of the daimons - those whose allotted portion of life is long -  
Has their own hands stained from murder  
Or who, once having sworn an oath, because of some feud breaks that oath.  
For they shall for ten thousand tripled seasons wander away from the beautified,  
Begotten during that period in all manner of mortal form  
And exchanging during that voyage one vexation for another:

The fierce Ætherials chase them to the Sea,  
The Sea spits them out onto dusty ground,  
Gaia hurls them to the burning light of the Sun  
Who flings them back to those swirling Ætherials.  
Moved from one to the other, all detest them.

I am one of those, a vagabond in exile from the gods  
Who has to rely on strongful Disagreement.

Ananke (Ἀνάγκη) is the primordial goddess of incumbency; that is, of *wyrd* - of that which is beyond, and the origin of, what we often describe as our Fate as a mortal being.

Disagreement (νεῖκος) is - according to what we can adduce of the philosophy of Empedocles from the fragments of his writings that we possess - a fundamental principle, and one understood in relation to another fundamental principle, Φιλότης, expressive as they both are of the *logos* (λόγος) by which we can possibly apprehend the workings of the cosmic order (κόσμος). However, the common translations - of 'strife' and 'love' respectively - do not in my view express what Empedocles seems to be trying to convey, which is 'disagreement' and 'fellowship' (a communal or kindred working-together in pursuit of a

common interest or goal). For while disagreement sometimes disrupts fellowship, it is often necessary as the genesis of productive change.

Thus, just as Odysseus had to rely on the support of the goddess Athena, who disagreed with how Poseidon treated Odysseus, so does the 'vagabond in exile from the gods' - so expressively portrayed by Empedocles - rely on disagreements to end their own exile.

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### Some Questions For DWM

(March 2014)

Q. In the year 2000 you were accused by a reporter from the BBC Panorama television programme of being "the intellectual who shaped the ideas propelling Copeland on his road to terrorism" and of inspiring him to do what he did. When the reporter then asked whether you had any guilt regarding the loss of life and the horrific injuries caused by Copeland's nail bombs you replied that you had no comment to make and that what you felt was a private matter. So my question is, would you now be prepared to make a public statement and is there, or was there ever, any guilt regarding that or other things from your past?

If by guilt you mean responsibility for some event or act, then yes I accept I was responsible - both directly and indirectly - for causing suffering, during my extremist decades, by what I said, by what I wrote, by what I did, and by what and whom I incited and inspired. There is also regret for having so caused such suffering.

As I wrote a few years ago in the essay *Pathei-Mathos - Genesis of My Unknowing*,

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

In a very personal sense, my philosophy of pathei-mathos is expiative, as are my writings concerning extremism, such as my *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism: A Very Strange Peregrination* published last year. Also expiative is my reclusiveness. But such things - as is only just and fitting - do little to offset the deep sadness felt, except in fleeting moments; fleeting moments such as the

one so inadequately expressed in my poem Dark Clouds Of Thunder:

The moment of sublime knowing  
As clouds part above the Bay  
And the heat of Summer dries the spots of rain  
Still falling:  
I am, here, now, where dark clouds of thunder  
Have given way to blue  
Such that the tide, turning,  
Begins to break my vow of distance  
Down.  
A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,  
Splashes sea with sand until new interest  
Takes him where  
This bearded man of greying hair  
No longer reeks  
With sadness.  
Instead:  
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer  
Presents again this Paradise of Earth  
For I am only tears, falling

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Q. Will your answers tomorrow be different from your answers today, given how - when you were a neo-nazi - your answers were those of a neo-nazi, and when you were a Muslim your answers were those of a radical Muslim? I'm thinking of some previous, old, Q&A sessions with you in past - like the 'Cosmic Reich' one with Renaissance Press in the mid-1990s, the Combat 18 one with Steve Sargent in his White Dragon magazine, and the 'live dialog' you did with Muslims from around the world on 13 Safar 1427 (13 March 2006) for the IslamOnline site run by radical Muslim cleric Yusuf al-Qaradawi.

An excellent question. Around two years ago I re-read, for the first time in many years, some of the answers I gave to questions asked of me during such 'question and answer sessions', and one thing in particular was apparent: just how tediously hubristical I was. Who was that arrant arrogant pontificating ideologue?

In many ways, my answers then chronicle the first parts of my peregrination, some three decades as a fanatical neo-nazi, followed by around a decade as a zealous Muslim; while my answers now may well chronicle the latter and last part of my peregrination, as someone who, possibly learning from the diverse experiences of those decades and from recent pathei-mathos, may have at last realized his hubris and become aware of his multitudinous mistakes. Someone

who finally seems to have chanced upon such a wordless deep-felt apprehension of the numinous that he has been fundamentally and interiorly changed.

As to whether I really have reached my final mortal destination, I do not know; but I hope I have. For there is now such a non-terran, non-causal, perspective, and such a melding of much sadness with occasional joy, such a desire for a numinous non-religious expiation, as have engendered a strange tranquillity within. No desire, thus, to interfere in the lives of others or with the ways of the world, and no desire to pontificate about anything other than personal and scholarly matters, such as - and for example - the errors of judgement, the mistakes, that mark my past; my own personal feelings and apprehensions of-the-moment; the results of my retrospection; ancient Greek literature; and my own, new-found, weltanschauung. For there is a certain vanity even now, albeit tempered by an appreciation of an ancient pagan wisdom:

οὐκ ἐκ θεῶν τὰ μῶρα καὶ γέλοια χρῆ  
χανόντα κλαίειν ὕστερ' [1]

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Q. How would you summarize what you have learnt from your forty years as an activist?

One of the conclusions of such retrospection as I have undertaken in the past few years is of understanding the deeds and the intolerant striving of my extremist decades as reprehensible. Another conclusion concerns my own reprehensible character. Yet another concerns my hubris, or perhaps more correctly my stupidity born of arrogance and fanaticism resulting in a failure, a refusal, to learn from our thousands of years old human culture of pathemathos. For such a learning would have placed me and my extremism - me as a masculous talking-mammal - in a supra-personal context, providing a knowledge of those deeds and that striving as having the opposite effect of what I intended or arrogantly believed they would achieve, and of only inflicting, causing, more and more unnecessary suffering.

This supra-personal context is the Cosmic Perspective: of the reality of our individual selves as but one fragile mortal short-lived biological life-form on one planet orbiting one star in one galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies; of our nations, our national cultures - and everything we manufacture or bring-into-being or presence, from ideas to ideologies to religions to cities to industries to products to archetypes - being not only by their φύσις subject to change and transmutation but also having a certain limited life span, be such in terms of years, decades, centuries, or millennia; of how our pride in our achievements or in our presencings, individual or collective - and such

achievements/presencings themselves - should be considered in the context of the possibility of sentient life, some probably more advanced than us, on other planets in our own galaxy and in the billions of galaxies in the Cosmos; of how all life on our own planet, just like ourselves, is fragile, changing, and subject to extinction; and of how what we, as individuals, do or do not do affects or can affect other living beings.

For the Cosmic Perspective is an empathic awareness of not only our place in the Cosmos but also of the affective and acausal connexions that bind all life, on this planet and elsewhere in the Cosmos, and be such life sentient or otherwise. And it is this empathic awareness which, according to my mutable understanding, can provide us with a personal appreciation of the numinous sans the abstractions, the theology, the cosmogony, the dogma, and sans the God/gods, of an organized religion.

My hubriatic error in those extremist decades was essentially two-fold: (i) to aspire to bring-into-being some-thing that would not and could not, in centennial terms (let alone in millennial or cosmic terms) endure; and (ii) to use violence and incite hatred, intolerance, and killing, in order to try and presence that causal some-thing. My perspective, for example, during my neo-nazi decades was very limited, sometimes egoistical. Egoistical in that I enjoyed the striving, the conflict, the incitement, the excitement, and even the violence. Limited, in that my foreseeing was of the next meeting, the next fight, the next demonstration, the next piece of propaganda to produce, my next speech, and of the victory I and others dreamed of or believed in; a victory that would be at most a decade or two ahead. Of course, I believed that what we or others after us might bring-into-being would endure, most probably at the cost of further conflict; and endure for decades, possibly a century or more. But the reality always was of me and my kind striving to stop or somehow try to control, to shape, the natural flux of change; to preserve, whatever the cost, what we or others after us might bring-into-being. For we believed we would or could do what no one in human history had been able to do: make our presencings immortal, or at least immune to the natural cycle of birth-life-decay-death. A natural cycle so evident in the rise, the flourishing, the decline, the decay, the death, of empire after empire; national culture after national culture; city after city; language after language; and of a people of a particular size and in a particular area naturally changing, moving, emigrating, immigrating, and thus naturally melding with others. In brief, we (with our simple causal-only perception) hubristically believed or felt that we could, and would, not only master and control Nature and the very forces of the Cosmos but also that our interventions would endure far beyond our own lives. In retrospect, this was fantasy, with the rise and fall and destruction of The Third Reich being just one of the many examples from reality that should have informed us about that fantasy.

In contrast, my understanding now is that the Cosmic Perspective reveals a particular truth not only about the Anthropocene (and thus about our φύσις as human beings) but also about how sustainable millennial change has occurred and can occur. Which change is via the progression, the evolution - the development of the faculties and the consciousness - of individuals individually. This is the interior, the a-causal, change of individuals wrought by a scholarly learning of and from our thousands of years old human culture of pathei-mathos, by our own pathei-mathos, and by that personal appreciation of the numinous that both the Cosmic Perspective and the muliebral virtues incline us toward. This aeonic change voids what we now describe by the terms politics and religion and direct social activism of the violent type. There is thus a shift from identifying with the communal, the collective - from identifying with a particular contemporary or a past society or some particular national culture or some particular causal form such as a State or nation or empire or some -ism or some -ology - toward that-which has endured over centuries and millennia: our human culture of pathei-mathos. For the human culture of pathei-mathos records and transmits, in various ways, the pathei-mathos of individuals over thousands of years, manifest as this sustainable millennial culture is in literature, poetry, memoirs, aural stories, in non-verbal mediums such as music and Art, and in the experiences - written, recorded, and aural - of those who over the centuries have appreciated the numinous, and those who endured suffering, conflict, disaster, tragedy, and war, and who were fundamentally, interiorly, changed by their experiences. And it is this shared human culture of pathei-mathos that extremists of what kind, and those who advocate -isms and -ologies, scorn and so often try to suppress when, for however short a time, they have political or social or religious power and control over the lives of others.

It is this human culture of pathei-mathos which - at least according to my experience, my musings, and my retrospection - reveals to us the genesis of wisdom: which is that it is the muliebral virtues which evolve us as conscious beings, which presence sustainable millennial change. Virtues such as empathy, compassion, humility, and that loyal shared personal love which humanizes those masculous talking-mammals of the Anthropocene, and which masculous talking-mammals have - thousand year following thousand year - caused so much suffering to, and killed, so many other living beings, human and otherwise.

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Q. Someone last month republished a 2005 interview, allegedly with you, in which you apparently made the following statement - "In my own life, I have tried to create some things which can disrupt our societies and which can lead to the creation of strong, really dangerous, ruthless individuals - some things which are so subversive that no laws could ever outlaw them, and that attempts to restrain them, to outlaw them, would only make them more attractive to some individuals." Did you say that, and if so, does it refer to the occult group or groups you admitted -

in your 2012 article *Ethos of Extremism, Some Reflexions on Politics and A Fanatical Life* - to founding in the 1970s?

As I mentioned in an essay dated 20 Rajab 1427 and signed Abdul-Aziz ibn Myatt:

"I have written an enormous amount of articles, essays, dialogues and pamphlets. Even [in 1998], when I was arrested and questioned by Detectives from SO12 Scotland Yard, these writings were voluminous - for they showed me the thick lever-arch files containing some of my published writings which they had collected during the course of their investigation, wanting me to comment on some items which they had singled out, which I refused to do, politely pointing out that my articles were not copyright and that many of the items available, for instance, on the Internet might have been altered in some way, by a person or persons unknown, for a reason or reasons unknown. Since then, I have written an equal amount again, if not twice the amount available then [...] Suffice it to say that I cannot remember everything I have ever written, or which has been printed or distributed via mediums such as the Internet."

Thus, while I do not now - almost ten years later - remember doing the particular e-mail interview you refer to, I might have done, for some (although not all) of the comments therein do seem rather reminiscent of the pontifications of the arrant arrogant ideologue I was for so many decades. Certainly the passage you quote is so reminiscent, and it also rather well expresses the sentiments I remember from my subversive 1970's Column 88 days; sentiments of a fanatic motivated enough, and of a convicted criminal with underworld contacts enough, to found an underground group as a neo-nazi honeytrap "to attract non-political people who might be or who had the potential to be useful to the cause even if, or especially if, they had to be 'blackmailed' or persuaded into doing so at some future time [...] A secret Occult group with the 'offer', the temptation, of sexual favours from female members in a ritualized Occult setting, with some of these female members being 'on the game' and associated with someone who was associated with my small gang of thieves."

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Q. Given that you have as you wrote last year [2013] disowned all your "pre-2011 writings and effusions, with the exception of my Greek translations, the poetry included in the published collection *One Exquisite Silence*, some private letters written between 2002 and 2011, and those few items about my since revised 'numinous way' which are included in post-2012 publications such as *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*," does it annoy or bother you that some people keep republishing or referring to or quoting from some of those older writings, particularly your National Socialist ones? If you could, would you want to remove them from the internet?

No, such republishing and use does not annoy me. For such old writings are useful reminders - for me and for others - of my past stupidities, errors, and hubris. However, it would be good to expunge my extremist writings from that

medium were it feasible to do so (which to my knowledge it is not) given their extremist nature and thus given what they incite, propagate, and encourage.

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Q. Why should anyone take seriously what you now write when you have changed your views so often and so frequently in the past? Why then do you bother?

My writings, post-2011, were and are really dialogues: interiorly with myself and externally with a few friends or the occasional person who has contacted me and expressed an interest. They are just my attempts to answer particular philosophical and metaphysical questions which interest or perplex me; attempts to understand myself and my extremist past (and thus understand extremism itself), and attempts to express what I believe I have, via *pathei-mathos*, come to understand and appreciate. Thus, I make no claims regarding the worth or the importance of these personal and philosophical musings, with such dialogues, musings, and correspondence published mostly because expiatory but also because (being honest) of vanity in the hope that some of them may possibly, just possibly, be of some interest to a few individuals interested in such philosophical and metaphysical questions or interested in understanding extremism and its causes. But if no one takes them seriously, it does not matter, for they have assisted me in understanding myself, in recognizing and acknowledging my past mistakes and the suffering I have caused, and aided my move from extremism toward developing a mystical and personal *weltanschauung* imbued with a *muliebral* ethos.

Personally, I would not describe my peregrination as 'changing my views often and frequently', given only three permutations in forty years, two of which – being different varieties of extremism – could be considered, in some ways, as somewhat similar. For thirty of those years (1968-1998) I was a dedicated often fanatical National Socialist activist and ideologue, someone who placed 'the cause' before his own personal life and who was twice jailed for his political activism in the service of that cause, but who eventually – after those thirty years – became disillusioned (again) with the people involved; the first disillusionment having occurred in 1976 following my release from yet another prison sentence and which (temporary) disillusionment led to a few years as a Christian monk. In the Autumn of 1998 – as a result of travels and experiences in Egypt, the Middle East and elsewhere, undertaken between 1988 and 1998 – I became and remained for almost a decade a Muslim; someone who strove to honour his *Shahadah* even after a personal trauma but who finally – and only after some three years of interior conflict – placed the insights painfully wrought from that *pathei-mathos* before a stubborn adherence to something he no longer believed in because he had begun to develop his own *weltanschauung*.

Thus my own description of my peregrination would be something such as: 'a strange journey leading to a rather humiliating personal learning after some forty years of diverse experiences and hubris'.

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Q. In your book *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism: A Very Strange Peregrination* you wrote that extremists "have or they develop an inflexible masculine character, often excessively so; and a character which expresses the masculine nature, the masculine ethos, of extremism. A character, a nature, unbalanced by muliebral virtues. For it is in the nature of extremists that they disdain, and often despise, the muliebral virtues of empathy, sensitivity, humility, gentleness, forgiveness, compassion." Since what you call the muliebral runs through your philosophy of *pathei mathos*, would it be correct to say that you support feminism and reject the patriarchal ethos that feminists assert dominates the world now as in the past?

Given the masculine nature and the masculine ethos of extremism, it is no surprise that the majority of extremists are men; and given that, in my own opinion, the predominant ethos of the last three millennia - especially within the societies of the West - has been a masculine, patriarchal, one it is no surprise that women were expected to be, and often had no option but to be, subservient, and no surprise therefore that a modern movement has arisen to try and correct the imbalance between the masculine and the muliebral.

The masculine, patriarchal, ethos is manifest - at least according to my limited knowledge and my mutable understanding - in the following.

In the monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as in the myths of the classical Greek gods [2]. In the institutions, the governance, and in the economic and business structures, of the modern State. In the propensity for leaders, potentates, and States, and men in general, to resort to the use of force and to often use words spoken and written in justification of such force. In the principle of 'might is right' which is the *raison d'être* of the bully and the rapist. In the use of words to persuade, to rouse, to enthuse, to deceive, others and as propaganda in the service of one's egoism or in the service of some cause, ideology, or some political or religious *-ism* or dogma. In the acceptance of the necessity of competition in all or most spheres of life. In an arrogant personal pride and a certitude-of-knowing. In the favouring of abstractions and the notion of an idealized duty over empathy and compassion and the muliebral virtues in general. In the propensity that many men have, now as in the past, for manipulating, mistreating, and being violent toward, women; and in the tendency of so many men to instinctively place their own ambitions and physical desires - and/or the perceived obligations of some ideology or some faith or some cause - before the feelings, the needs, the happiness, of the woman they have declared that they loved.

Thus, given the dominance of this patriarchal ethos, our human history is

replete with speeches, exhortations, manifestoes, deceptions, and with the rhetoric, the activity, the propaganda (truthful, informative, or otherwise), and the often well-intentioned idealism, that almost invariably accompanies the formation and the existence of some organization, group, faction, or movement whose *raison d'être* is either to implement some principle or principles or some abstraction or some ideation, or to violently reform or change what-is. Furthermore, there also has been and still is a tendency to ignore what our human culture of *pathei-mathos* teaches us about the impermanence of whatever reform or change or implementation (of the new) that occurs; for it is in the very nature of whatever form which embodies or which is manufactured to embody some abstraction or some ideation or some principle or principles, that that form - over decades, centuries, or millennia - declines, decays, ceases to exist, or is itself replaced or overthrown.

That is, there has been, as there still is, at least in my view, a failure to appreciate two things. Firstly, the causal (the mortal) nature of all forms: from institutions, governments, laws, States, nations, movements, societies, organizations, empires, to leaders and those embodying in some manner the authority, the *volksgeist*, the ideations, the principles, the aspirations, of their time. Secondly, and possibly most important of all, that what is muliebral cannot be embodied in some organization or movement, or in some *-ism*, or in any causal form - and certainly cannot be expressed via the medium of words, whether spoken or written - without changing it, distorting it, from what it is into some-thing else. For the muliebral by its very φύσις is personal, individual, in nature and only presented in the immediacy-of-the-moment, and thus cannot be the object of a supra-personal aspiration and thus should not be 'idealized' or even be the subject of an endeavour to express it in some principles or principles (political or otherwise), or by some axiom or axioms, or by some dogma. For all such things - forms and words included - are manifestations, a presencing, of what is, in φύσις, masculous and temporal. Or, expressed more simply, the muliebral presences and manifests what is a-causal - what, in the past, has often inclined us to appreciate the numinous - while the masculous presences and manifests what is causal, temporal, and what in the past has often inclined us toward hubris and being egoistic.

Therefore, were I to 'support' some-thing - which, given my now reclusive nature and my awareness of my past mistakes, I am uninclined to do - it would be the personal, the individual, and the muliebral virtues in general. For my questional intuition inclines me to suggest that it is only by using and developing our faculty of empathy, on an individual basis, that we can apprehend and thence understand the muliebral; and that the muliebral can only be manifested, presented, individually in our own lives according to that personal, individual, apprehension. Presented, for example, in our compassion, in our honour, by a personal loyal love, and in that appreciation of innocence

and of the numinous that inclines us, as individuals, to reject all prejudice and to distance ourselves from that pride, that certainty-of-knowing about ourselves and those presumptions we make about others, which are so redolent of, and which so presence and have so presenced, the patriarchal ethos.

Personally, I feel that while there is much beauty presenced here on Earth, nothing can equal the beauty a woman can and does presence when we through love share a life with her.

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Q. How would you now describe your attitude to life? Does this attitude colour how you view what you describe as your extremist decades?

I would describe my attitude to life now as being somewhat - but only somewhat - reminiscent of the Taoism I studied, over four decades ago, while living in the Far East. An attitude which, with its particular supra-personal, millennial, perspective - and intuition regarding δίκη - is very personal and which, while rather mystical, is not religious in the conventional sense. It is an attitude, a personal way, which embraces and appreciates tolerance, kindness, compassion, honour, and humility.

A personal way of living, discovered by pathei-mathos, that brings an awareness of not only the numinous but also of the importance of love, and yet which awareness also imbues me with sadness because of my own past, because of my mistakes, because of the suffering I personally caused, and because of the suffering that we humans now as in the past inflict on both other humans and the other life which share this planet orbiting one star in one galaxy in a Cosmos replete with billions of other planet-bearing, life-bearing, galaxies. A way which has distanced me so far from involvement with politics - and from having any political views or being concerned about 'world events' - it is almost as if I exist in another era.

A way which hields me to appreciate the society in which I am fortunate to live. This is, at least according to my limited knowledge, a society which - as with most if not all other Western ones - provides for the majority a better, a more free, way of life than exists for the majority in most other non-Western societies. Naturally, even in Western societies there are problems, injustices, inequalities, poverty, people who despair and people who suffer because of the deeds, the selfishness, of others. But there are also so many good people in our societies - whether in the West or elsewhere - trying to alleviate such suffering, trying to fix such problems, trying to remove such inequalities and alleviate such

suffering, that I am gladdened, but also saddened because I remember how during my extremist decades I - preaching hate, intolerance, and espousing violence - despised such liberal-minded, compassionate, people and not only personally caused suffering but also sought to undermine, disrupt, and replace the society in which I lived - and the societies of the West in general - with a repressive one based on bigotry.

ooo

Q. What is your view now of Catholicism in particular and Christianity in general? I ask in relation to your upbringing as a Catholic, your experiences as a Catholic monk, your time as a Muslim, and in particular in relation to what appears to be - judging from some of your recent writings - your support for gay relationships. Is this support recent?

As with other religions, and spiritual ways of life, my attitude is one of tolerance and of appreciating how they all, in their varying ways, preserve and can provide others with that awareness of the numinous which humanizes us. They also can provide - and have provided for many over centuries - such expiation and such catharsis as often interiorly heals, or eases the burden of, those changed by pathos or suffused with grief.

My own experiences and pathos - and especially a recognition of my past multitudinous mistakes and hubris - have inclined me not to judge anything or anyone categorically, in an impersonal way, as one does if one has a certitude-of-knowing born of prejudice or from an arrogant belief that one 'knows' one is right, and so 'knows' either because of belief in some ideology or dogma, or because one is arrogant by nature or arrogant as compensation for an interior imbalance such as often found in those who are interiorly afraid or just too sensitive. Thus, I personally believe that Catholicism, and Christianity, have on balance made a positive difference in the world, and continue to make a positive difference, spiritually and socially, even though my experiences and my feelings mean that I personally disagree with, for example, the teaching of the Catholic Church - and the belief of many Christians, and the majority scholarly opinion in relation to the Muslim Deen - regarding those whose love is for someone of the same gender.

My personal experience of those whose love is for someone of the same gender dates back to my schooldays, and from that time on I have always had such friends, both male and female. During my brief time at University, during my violent, neo-nazi, 'street fighting days' in the early 1970's, during my marriages, even during my time as a monk. While I personally have always desired and shared a human love involving someone of the opposite gender, I never - even from my schooldays - made any kind of distinction between 'them' and 'us'. Rather, I just liked these people as individuals, and - as individuals often tend to do - we gravitated toward each other, and became friends, because we shared

similar interests or enthusiasms, especially literature, Art, and classical music, and often because of a certain sensitivity from whence derived those manners that we also shared in common.

One such friendship formed in the Sixth Form of the College where, in the late 1960's, I was one of the 'seven day boarders' and shared a kitchen and other facilities, on the top floor of our hall of residence, with five other schoolboys around my age, one of whom confided in me one Friday night, when we two as usual were playing poker for pennies while listening to a Savoy Brown LP, that he was - as we now say - 'gay', although of course he did not use that term, or indeed any other. Rather, he - trusting me - just talked of his feelings, his desires, his hopes, in a very awkward way as if he could not keep them within himself any longer. This was courageous of him, given the prejudice, the intolerance, toward those of his orientation that existed then, not long after the repeal in England of the laws which made homosexual acts a criminal offence. His preference, his nature, made no difference to me - I just liked him for who he was, and I have fond memories of helping him, later on, plan and organize the grandly named *The Greek, Fudge, Rock, Blues and Boogie Party* by which he desired to celebrate the end of our schooldays when we two, as part of that plan and with some other assistance, brought a Mini into the College hall to form the centrepiece for the dance floor, and which party proved a great success. Over the years I often, wistfully, wondered what became of him, hoping that he had found someone to love who loved him in the gentle, sensitive, way he needed.

Another such personal experience was when I, the monk, became friends with another monk whose love and desires were for someone of the same gender but who, because of his belief in Catholicism, had forsaken that personal love for another. I thus came to know of his prior interior struggles; of how his monastic vows helped him and of the expiation he sought in prayer when such feelings, in however small a way, came back to - in his words - torment him. And I must admit I admired the strength of his faith, the vigour of his determination, and perhaps most of all his humility, placing as he did a pure faith, inexpressible in words, before his own feelings, before his own thoughts, before his needs, before his very life. And, over the years, I wondered whether those feelings, those needs, had finally left him - perhaps so, for I have intermittently followed his career as a priest, knowing of his progression within the institution that is the Catholic Church. Perhaps he is also happy, or at least has found and is living the type of supra-personal happiness, that inner numinous peace, that I personally if only occasionally apprehended and felt during my time as a monk.

In terms, therefore, of how those whose love is for someone of the same gender relate to or believe in such religions as consider such love 'unnatural', my fallible view derived from my own experience and from my mutable

understanding is that it is a personal matter based on the importance of personal love to us as human beings and the unimportance of gender in matters of love. That, ultimately, it is a question of ontology, of how we personally answer the question regarding the nature of our existence as human beings. Of whether, for example, we believe such obedience is required in order for us to attain a promised after-life (be it in Heaven or Jannah or elsewhere) or required in order to enable us to attain enlightenment, nirvana, or be reborn to progress toward that posited state of being. Or whether we accept - as I am inclined to - a paganus, more metaphysical, answer: of ourselves as simply a temporary and conscious presencing of Life, an affective nexus between Life-before-us and Life-after-us and which temporary and conscious presencing afford us the opportunity of aiding or of negating the evolution and the future presencings of Life; which Life is vast as the Cosmos, and which Life we can aid by a loyal personal love, regardless of the gender of the person we love. For I personally find love to be more numinous - and more spiritual when loyally shared - more life-affirming, than any dogma, than any ideology, than any organized religion which demands we abandon such personal love for obedience to some interpretation of some faith.

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Q. I've read the extracts from your *The Physics of Acausal Energy* that have been published. When do you intend to publish the rest, and what experiments have you conducted or are conducting in connection with the theory?

The experiments, such as they were given various other commitments, were undertaken in the 1990's when I was fortunate enough to have an electronics workshop with space to conduct such experiments. One of my hobbies during that and the previous decade was repairing scientific instruments and electronic equipment of the kind used in schools and universities, and in the 1990's I occasionally did sub-contract work of a part-time nature for a firm (HSI) specializing in such repairs. I also repaired some physics and electronic equipment for an independent school, which repairs included their numerous old Radford Labpacks (a superb piece of kit) many of which no longer worked and all of which, when used under certain conditions, had a potentially serious fault - related to their high voltage DC output - which required fixing.

One field of experimental enquiry I pursued in the late 1990's concerned trying to ascertain whether it was possible to usefully measure some physical property of a living organism (of a macro or micro type). One such physical property I explored was electrical resistance, and thus involved measuring the resistance of an organism on the macro level (as for example in a growing plant) and on the micro level (as in plant tissue) and then trying to ascertain whether that resistance changed under various conditions, such as when in close proximity to another living organism of the same and of a different type, and if so, how does

that resistance vary with respect to the size or type of organism and to the distance between them. Of course, to be scientific each experiment had to be replicated, as exactly as possible, many times in order to ascertain if there were any consistent, reproducible, results.

That set of experiments was never fully completed, due to a change in priorities following my arrest - and the seven hour search of my home - in early 1998 by Detectives from Scotland Yard. Which arrest formed part of what turned out to be a three year long international investigation into my political (and alleged paramilitary and terrorist) activities.

In respect of the theory, I was working on going beyond my original idea of using tensor analysis to describe an acausal space, a description based on equations involving a tensor with nine non-zero symmetric components. Which original idea was of trying to describe acausal space in terms of something either akin to a Riemannian metric or which posited a new type of metric describable in such conventional terms. In effect, I was therefore albeit in a stumbling way trying to develop a new mathematical formulation to represent a-causal time and which formulation obviously could not involve (except possibly as a limiting case) equations involving some function (such as a differential) of the causal time of physics. However, I never got very far in developing this new formulation mostly because I lacked the mathematical skill and my feeble attempts to try and develop such new skills as would be required were, as with my experiments, interrupted by my arrest and by subsequent developments, such as my conversion to Islam later in 1998 and the travels in the Muslim world which followed.

The extracts you refer to were made around 1993, with copies sent to a few friends as well as - if my ageing memory is correct - being published some years later on JRW's then 'geocities' DM website. As for the complete first draft of *The Physics of Acausal Energy*, it was completed in late 1997 as \*wpd files on several floppy disks, and which disks were seized - along with my computers, other disks, documents, letters, and data CD's - during that 1998 dawn raid on my home. All these items were kept by the police and not returned to me until the Summer of 2001. In the intervening years a change of life-style and domicile, together with various travels and the breakdown of my marriage, combined to make me leave all such material (together with my favourite bespoke Tweed overcoat, a split cane fly-fishing rod, an exquisite moon-dial wristwatch, five notebooks containing my commentary of The Agamemnon, and other belongings) in storage in a shed in the garden of my former home where still lived my soon-to-be former spouse and her family, with my intention being to collect those belongings on my return from a trip to the Middle East. However, I never saw these belongings - nor my former spouse - again, and was told all those belongings had been disposed of. Thus, those extracts are all that

remain of *The Physics of Acausal Energy*. I corrected, by hand, a print-out of those extracts in the Summer of 2002 following some months dwelling upon the ideas therein while living as I did that Summer in a tent in the Lake District, posting my revisions to a friend who circulated a few copies. Not long after, I moved to live and work on a farm, and for years had neither the time nor the desire to further pursue that theory or those experiments, until around 2009 when I endeavoured to reproduce what I remembered of the rest of the text of *The Physics of Acausal Energy*. But I soon realized that not only was I writing a new text - and which new text would be incomplete without reproducing and continuing the experiments and developing the new mathematics required - but also that I was no longer interested in the physical, the experimental, and the mathematical, aspects of the theory. For I felt those aspects belonged to a different me, to the decades of my former self, and that it would moreover be better if someone who was interested, with better mathematical skills than I, took up the challenge. Thus, I issued a 'revised version' of those (2002 corrected) 1993 extracts, and left it at that.

My interest in the theory now, such as it is, is purely a metaphysical one, as part of my philosophy of *pathei-mathos*.

ooo

Q. You've published your translation of the first part of the Corpus Hermeticum and the beginning of the Gospel of John, translations which strike me as iconoclastic. Why did you translate those works in particular and in the way you did, and when are you going to publish your translation of the rest of those works? Do you intend to translate more of authors such as Sophocles and Aeschylus and finish your translation of The Odyssey?

My interest in translating the Gospel of John dates back to my time as a Catholic monk, and discussions there regarding the meaning of terms such as *λόγος*. It was those discussions that led me to read, for the first time and there in the monastery, the Latin text of the Corpus Hermeticum by Marsilius Ficinus. In respect of the Corpus Hermeticum, I have translated what I personally find is the most interesting part, the Poimander tractate, and presently have no interest in translating the rest. In respect of the Gospel of John, I am albeit somewhat slowly continuing to work on it, and do hope - *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι* *τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* permitting - to complete and publish my translation of the whole Gospel together with notes and commentary, although completion and publication are still several years away.

In respect of the other works you mention, the answer is that I have no current intention of translating any more such literature, not even the Homer. Those translations of mine were germane to a certain period of my life, a period of some four years of domestic happiness, a shared love, of no involvement with

politics or with activism of any kind; years full of exuberance and an arrogant belief in my abilities. A period of my life somewhat reflected in how I then approached the work of translation - exuberantly, confidently, and somewhat arrogantly. Thus the English style and the intuition I used then are the style and the intuition I used then. In addition, months before each translation I would immerse myself in the world of the author; reading in Greek all of the works of the author, and scholarly commentaries on them, I could obtain (which thanks to the Classics Bookshop, Thornton's Bookshop, and Blackwell's, in Oxford, were usually all of them); and reading as many other ancient Greek works as possible including Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, Euripides, etcetera. Thus that ancient world became, in many ways and during that time, more real than the modern world around me; an apprehension aided by being mostly free of daytime commitments and having a quiet study lined with bookcases replete with ancient texts; so that when I began the translation it just seemed to flow naturally.

Where I to translate those works again, or even attempt to revise them, my approach now would be very pedantic, very measured, very slow, as it was with the Poimandres tractate. In all probability, this would result in much being changed; something which became very apparent when last year I re-read The Odyssey again and then my translation of Books 1-3. Those translations of mine thus belong to that time of my life, over twenty years ago. [3]

David Myatt  
Spring 2014

### Notes

[1] Sophocles, *Ichneutae*, 369-370. "If what is of the gods amuses you, be assured that lamentation will follow your mirth."

[2] Even the Homeric hymn to the goddess Demeter is no paean to the muliebral virtues, to the freedom, to the equality, and to the importance of women. Instead, a certain masculine view of women pervades; for the primary role of women is to marry and bear children -

ἀλλ' ὑμῖν μὲν πάντες Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες  
δοῖεν κουριδίους ἄνδρας, καὶ τέκνα τεκέσθαι,  
ὡς ἐθέλουσι τοκῆες: ἐμὲ δ' αὖτ' οἰκτεῖρατε, κοῦραι -

with Demeter herself - Δημήτηρ' ὑκομον σεμνὴν θεάν, as described in a fragment of another hymn - expected to be subservient to the male Zeus: ὡς ἔφατ' οὐδ' ἀπίθησε θεὰ Διὸς ἀγγελιάων.

[3] Post Scriptum: That happy domestic time during which I undertook those translations ended with the tragic death of Sue in April 1993. In the following months and in her memory I managed to complete my translation of the Agamemnon, begun toward the end of 1992 and interrupted by her illness. It would be another seventeen years before I began translating ancient Greek texts again, with some of the fragments attributed to Heraclitus.

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### **Further Questions**

(May 2014)

1. What portion of your peregrinations have you learned the most from, via πάθει μάθος, and what did you learn? Having learned these things, is there a portion of your life you would change given the opportunity and if so what portion and how would you change it?

On reflexion, I feel I have learnt most from four things. First, and perhaps the most significant in terms of pathei-mathos, was the suicide of my fiancée in 2006. This revealed just how selfish and arrogant and harsh I was and had been; how disconnected I was from empathy, compassion, and humility; and just how illusive my understanding of myself was.

Second, I have learned the value, the importance, of personal love. Of how and why a loyal love between two human beings is the most beautiful, the most numinous, thing of all.

Third, I learnt much from my time as a Christian monk, for I always remember those occasions when I felt something quietly joyous and innocent. As when, for example, I recall 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.

Fourth, I learnt much 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 (it, in my view, manifests something good, numinous). A learning from travelling in Muslim lands as a Muslim, and the kindness and the

generosity shown, the many invitations to homes (I was once, albeit briefly, engaged to a Muslim lady in Egypt). These experiences purged me of every last vestige of racial prejudice, of believing - as I had for decades as a National Socialist - that 'Aryans' were superior, and Western 'civilization' the most advanced. These experiences revealed to me the irrelevancy of ethnicity, the irrelevancy of nationalism and of many other things I had believed in or had taken for granted.

In truth, however, all this learning amounts to one simple thing: my peregrinations taught me what being human means and can mean, and thus perhaps (and I hope) have made me a better human being.

As for doing or not doing something in my past given what I have learned - and assuming it was possible to so go back and so change one's life - there are so many things I would change that I would not be able to decide 'when' - on what date, what occasion - to begin. Back to my school-days in the Far East before I stupidly became a nazi? Back to the monastery, to stay there and so not cause the subsequent suffering I caused because of my selfishness and because of my return to political extremism (my NS writings; Combat 18; the NSM; Copeland) and because of my subsequent adherence to a harsh interpretation of some religion? Back to my first marriage to the time before my selfishness and betrayal caused such suffering to my wife? Back to when I first met Sue so that I might somehow try and prolong her life beyond the four short years we spent together and thus before she so tragically died of cancer? Back to that remorseful day in late May 2006 when I selfishly, so very selfishly, left Frances alone because I wanted to return to the peace of the farm because that farm had for many years nurtured my soul; and thus, instead of that leaving, stay with her there on that day and subsequent days so that she did not, could not, in her lonely despair take her own life?

So many mistakes, errors; so much selfishness, arrogance, harshness, and extremism, and for so many decades, that I cannot choose just one portion to change. But if I really had to choose - and could choose - one very specific moment, it would be to not leave Frances alone on that now so remorseful day.

As I wrote a few months ago in respect of my past:

"In a very personal sense, my philosophy of *pathei-mathos* is expiative, as are my writings concerning extremism, such as my *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism: A Very Strange Peregrination* published last year. Also expiative is my reclusiveness. But such things - as is only just and fitting - do little to offset the deep sadness felt, except in fleeting moments."

2. In the matter of honour, it seems to me that "having honour" is the natural consequence of a

certain type of Φύσις and that empathy and intuition are ready guides to honourable behaviour for a person of such Φύσις. What is the point of describing honour further in codes and rules and aren't such codes simply abstractions? Can a person change their Φύσις with regard to honour (the dis-honourable becoming honourable) in your opinion, and if so how? If not, why not?

The concept, and the question, of honour is perhaps the most constant thing in my life, from teenage years in the Far East learning a Martial Art with its unwritten code of personal conduct, through my NS decades, to my Muslim years, to my 'numinous way' and thence to my philosophy of pathei-mathos. What has changed is my interpretation of honour. Until recently, it was always, for me, an idea and an ideal; that is, an abstraction. Furthermore, an ideal is often codified, or expressed, by means of the written word - I certainly tried to codify honour during my NS decades - and codifications are usually the view of one person, and thus fallible, and often open to interpretation.

A recent interpretation of mine in respect of honour was in my philosophy of pathei-mathos:

"The personal virtue of honour, and the cultivation of wu-wei, are - together - a practical, a living, manifestation of our understanding and appreciation of the numinous; of how to live, to behave, as empathy intimates we can or should in order to avoid committing the folly, the error, of ὕβρις, in order not to cause suffering, and in order to re-present, to acquire, ἀρμονίη.

For personal honour is essentially a presencing, a grounding, of ψυχή - of Life, of our φύσις - occurring when the insight (the knowing) of a developed empathy inclines us toward a compassion that is, of necessity, balanced by σωφρονεῖν and in accord with δίκη."

That is, my understanding now is that, like empathy, honour can only be personal; an expression of our own φύσις; and a person either has this 'faculty of honour' or they do not. If they do not, can that faculty be developed, cultivated? Can honour be learnt? I admit I do not know, as I no longer presume to suggest any answers. I do know, however, that my current understanding is only my fallible understanding based on my limited knowledge.

3. What, would you say, differentiates the sort of ideation, the sort of "naming of things", that conceals Φύσις from that which uncovers Φύσις and would you say that employing that form of ideation is useful to presencing ἀρετή and Δίκη, and if so in what way/how?

My fallible view now is that it is a question of personal empathy and personal humility. That it is those personal qualities, in the-immediacy-of-the-moment, that can and wordlessly, sans all ideations, reveal φύσις: that can reveal the nature of our being, the nature of other beings, and how all beings relate to Being.

By the nature of empathy and humility, this revealing cannot be abstracted out from that personal knowing nor from the-immediacy-of-the-moment of the revealing.

Furthermore, and according to my limited understanding and knowledge, I am not expressing anything new here. Indeed, I feel (and I use the word 'feel' intentionally) that I am only re-expressing 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.

4. If you have the time for one more question then I would ask if you consider your Numinous Way a subversive philosophy (as some of your fans do) and if so if that was intentional and why?

What I previously called the 'numinous way' has, since 2011, been substantially revised by me with much excised, and was replaced by my philosophy of pathei-mathos (which I am even now in the process of revising). That 'numinous way' was slowly developed over a period of many years, beginning around 2002 while I was still a Muslim and during a period of questioning the Muslim Way of Life and all other Ways of Life and manifestations of spirituality. That 'numinous way' was basically just a collection of my personal answers - and my revisions of those answers - to certain philosophical questions I pondered on, with those answers based on, or derived from, my own experiences, my own intuitions and my own limited knowledge.

Thus, and for a while, it represented my weltanschauung, and therefore had no subversive intent whatsoever. Furthermore, it was asking certain philosophical questions, trying to answer them, and the trauma of, and the pathei-mathos resulting from, the suicide of my fiancée in 2006 that took me away from Islam and irretrievably changed not only my perception of myself but also my own way of life so that I now live reclusively and concern myself only with such unworldly philosophical speculations as interest me.

David Myatt  
May 2014

This text contains answers to some questions submitted to me through intermediaries in March and May of 2014

## **Appendix**

### **Some Terms Explained**

#### **Extremism and Extremist**

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

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

In the philosophical terms of the way of *pathei-mathos*, an extremist is someone who commits the error of hubris; and error which *enantiodromia* - following from *πάθει μάθος* - can sometimes correct or forestall.

#### **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 and Muliebral**

Masculous is from the Latin *masculus* and is a term used to refer to certain traits, abilities, and qualities that are conventionally and historically associated with men, such as competitiveness, aggression, a certain tendency toward harshness.

The term muliebral derives from the classical Latin word *muliebris*, and in the context my philosophy of *Pathei-Mathos* refers to those positive traits, abilities, and qualities - such as empathy, sensitivity, gentleness, compassion - that are conventionally and historically associated with women.

#### **Φύσις/φύσις (physis)**

Physis is a revealing, a manifestation, of not only the true nature of beings but also of the relationship between beings, and between beings and Being. Physis is often apprehended (and thus understood) by we humans as the nature, the character, of some-thing; as, for example, in our apprehension of the character of a person.

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## The Consolation Of A Viator

Gloria vero quam fallax saepe, quam turpis est.

Unde non iniuria tragicus exclamat:

ὦ δόξα, δόξα, μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν  
οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὠγκώσας μέγαν

For most of my life - and to paraphrase what someone once wrote - I have been a selfish being, prideful and conceited, and would still be so were it not for the suicide of a woman I loved. For not only did I often use words to deceive, to manipulate, to charm, but I also deluded myself, since I really, arrogantly, believed that I was not a bad person and could always find some excuse (for myself and for others) to explain away what in objective terms amounted to selfish behaviour, just as - by adhering to the idea of patriotism, or to some political ideology or to some harsh interpretation of some religion - I had a sense of identity, found a purpose, to vivify, excite, entice, and provide me with excuses to be deceitful, manipulative, prideful, conceited, and violent; that is, with a *raison d'être* for being who and what I was by instinct, by nature: a reprehensible arrogant opinionated person who generally placed his own needs, or the apparent demands of some ideology or some dogma, before the feelings - before the happiness - of others.

But am I, as one correspondent once wrote to me almost two years ago, being too hard on myself? I do not feel I am, for when she asked why I cannot "show the same compassion and forgiveness to your younger self that you could show to someone else who had made mistakes earlier in life," I (somewhat pompously) replied: "Because that would not - probably could never - be a neutral point of view, for there are memories, a remembering, of deeds done and a knowing of their suffering-causing effects on others. It is not for me to seek - to try - to forget; not for me to offer myself expiation. For I sense that to do so would be hubris and thus continue the periodicity of suffering."

For unfortunately I - with such a prideful, conceited, selfish nature - am no exception; just as the type I represented has been no exception throughout our history as sentient beings. Indeed, my particular type is perhaps more reprehensible than the brutish barbarian archetype that many will associate with those humans who survive by natural, selfish, instinct alone. For not only did I live in the prosperous West (or in colonial outposts of the West) but I had the veneer of culture - the benefits of a classical education, a happy childhood - and so could converse (although often only in my then opinionated manner) about such things as music, art, literature, poetry, and history. In many ways,

therefore, I was the archetypal paradoxical National-Socialist: a throwback, perhaps, to those educated, cultured, Germans who could and who did support and then fight for the demagogue Hitler and who, in his name, could and did commit, or ignore or make excuses for, nazi atrocities.

Most important of all, it was not something I did, not something I read or studied or thought, and not some sudden 'revelation' or epiphany related to some religion or to some belief, that fundamentally changed me. Instead, it was something entirely independent of me; something unexpected, traumatic, outside of my control and my experience, involving someone I personally knew, and indeed whom I loved, or as much as I - the selfish survivor - was capable of love.

For would I, without personally suffering that personal trauma, have changed? Would I, without such a personal trauma, have been even capable of discovering and then accepting the truth about myself and the truth about the harsh interpretation of a Way of Life I then adhered to and the truth about an ideology I had previously adhered to and believed in for some three decades? No, I would not. For I was too arrogant; too enamoured with my certitude-of-knowing; far too selfish, and far too vitalized by some ideology or by the dogmatism of a particularly harsh interpretation of some faith. It is little wonder, therefore, that since that personal trauma I have pondered, over and over again, on certain philosophical, ethical, metaphysical, questions; seeking to find at least some answers, however fallible.

Perhaps most of all - and especially in the past year - I have thought about the nature of suffering; its causes, genesis, and its possible alleviation through or because of such things as education, *pathei-mathos*, and a knowing of or assumptions concerning whether our sentient life has a meaning, and if so what this meaning might be.

In respect of causes, there is, for example, the question of good individual character and bad individual character, and how we can distinguish - or even if we can distinguish and know - the good from the bad. There is, in respect of possibly in some way alleviating or not causing suffering, the question of culture; and the question of whether culture can fundamentally change us in character - as a species gifted with the faculties of speech and reason - in sufficient numbers world-wide so that we cease the cause the suffering we inflict and have for millennia inflicted on our own kind and on the other life with which we share this planet. Which leads to questions regarding our future if we cannot so change ourselves; and to questions concerning laws and education and authority. And thence, of course, to the *raison d'être* of "the body politic as organized for supreme civil rule and government."

In respect of suffering, one of the questions we might ask is how much suffering have we humans, in the past year and around the world, inflicted on our own kind? How many murdered, how many injured and maimed? How many humiliated, subjected to violence? How many women raped, beaten, injured? How many human beings have been tortured or suffered injustice? How many human beings have been manipulated, deceived, exploited, lied to, or had possessions stolen? How many have died of preventable hunger or curable disease? How many have endured or been forced to endure poverty? How many homeless, how many made refugees? How much more of Nature have we destroyed or exploited in the past year in our apparent insatiable need for, or in greedy desire to exploit, Earth's resources, biological, physical, or otherwise?

Furthermore, how much of the suffering inflicted on our own kind is personal, the consequence of some uncontrolled or uncontrollable personal emotion, desire, or instinct? And how much inflicted is due to some excuse - some idea or abstraction - we as individuals use, have used, or might use: excuses such as some war, some armed conflict, some ideology, some political extremism, some interpretation of some religion? How much inflicted because of 'obeying some higher authority' or some chain of command? How much because 'we' had a certainty-of-knowing that we (or our cause, or our State, or our nation, or our faith, or our ideology, or our organization, or our government) were right and that 'they' (the others) were wrong and/or they 'deserved' it and/or it needed to or had to be done in the interest of some idea or some abstraction, such as 'our' security, 'our' (or even 'their') freedom or happiness, or because our laws made it acceptable?

We might go on to ask whether the personal suffering caused is greater this year than last. Whether the suffering caused by or on behalf of some excuse - some idea or abstraction - is greater this year than last. Greater than a decade ago? Less than that caused a century ago? A millennia ago? And would such a crude measure of suffering - were it even possible to ascertain the figures - really be an indicator of whether or not we as a species have changed? And have modern States and nations - with their armies, their governments, their schools, their universities, their culture, their forces and institutions and traditions of law and order - really made a difference or just caused more suffering?

But do - or should - these questions matter? Asking such questions returns me to the question of whether our sentient life has a meaning, and if so what this might be, and thence to questions concerning good and bad personal character, and thus to what it is or might be for us, as individuals, wise to seek and wise to avoid.

## Interpreting Life

Based on my limited knowledge, and according to my certainly fallible understanding, it seems to me that interpretations of our mortal life are often predicated on a specific cause or origin. For a religious interpretation, this is often God, or Allah, or the gods, or an inscrutable mechanism such as karma, with - it is claimed - such a 'first cause' revealing to us the truth concerning our existence. In the case of God, or Allah, it is that we were created and placed on this Earth as a way to attain immortality (Heaven, Jannah), and, in the case of karma, it is nirvana [the wordless nibbana], attainable for example by the Noble Eightfold Way as explained by Siddhartha Gautama.

For many non-religious, but material, interpretations the specific cause is our own perception, or consciousness, or feelings; with the truth concerning our existence then being, for example, (i) that it is only we ourselves who create or can create or who should create a meaning or give a value to our existence; or (ii) that what is most valuable is our personal happiness and/or our freedom, a freedom from such things as suffering, fear, and oppression.

For many non-religious, but spiritual, interpretations the specific cause is our 'loss of balance or our loss of harmony' with Nature and/or with existence itself; with the truth concerning our existence then being to regain that natural balance, that harmony (which it is assumed most of us are born with); and regain by, for example, a virtuous living respectful of others, or by acquiring - and living according to - reason, or by moderation in all things, or by trying to avoid causing suffering in other living beings, human and otherwise by, for example, embracing 'love' and 'peace' and thus being loving and non-violent.

Personally, and as a result of my *pathei-mathos* and several years reflecting on various philosophical questions, I favour a non-religious, but still rather spiritual, interpretation where there is no assumed loss of some-thing but rather where there is only that type of apprehension - that individual perceivation - which provides us as individuals with an often wordless but always numinous awareness of our own, individual, life in a cosmic (supra-personal) context. There is then no yearning or necessity to attain or regain some-thing because there is no-thing to attain or regain, and thus no techniques, no practices, no special manner of living, no journey, no *ἄνοδος*, from 'here' to 'there'. For such a yearning or assumed necessity - however expressed, such as in terms of Heaven, Jannah, nirvana, harmony, immortality, peace, and so on - implies or manifests or can manifest a separation of 'us' from 'them', manifest for example in 'those who know' (or who believe or who assert they know) and those 'others' who as yet do not know, giving rise to a certain hierarchy; of those who believe or who assert they can teach or reveal this

knowing - and the means to acquire or attain the assumed goal or regain what has been lost - and of those who are, or who can be, or who should be, taught or 'enlightened'.

Interestingly, this perceivration of ourselves in a cosmic context is acausal: there are no hierarchies, no posited primal cause, no-thing lost or to be acquired (or reacquired), and no-thing that needs to be (or which can be) described to others in any emotive manner or by means of some abstraction or some idea/form. There is only a particular and a personal and quite gentle awareness: of ourselves as a microcosmic, viatorial, fleeting, effluvium [1] of the Cosmos, but an effluvium which is not only alive but which has a faculty enabling us (the effluvia presenced as a human being) to be perceptful of this, perceptful of how were are connected to other effluvia and thus perceptful of how what we do or do not do can and does affect other effluvia and thus the Cosmos itself. For the perceivration is of our φύσις, of us as - and not separate from - the Cosmos; of living beings 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 non-harming way. An apprehension, that is, of the genesis of suffering and of how we, as human beings possessed of the faculties of reason and of empathy, have the ability to cease to harm other human beings.

In respect of the genesis of suffering, this particular perceivration provides an important insight about ourselves, as conscious beings; which insight is of the division we make, and have made, consciously or unconsciously, between our own being - our selfhood, ipseity - and that of other living beings, and of that personal ipseity having or possibly having some significance beyond our own finite mortal life either in terms of some-thing (such as a soul) having an opportunity to live on elsewhere (Heaven, Jannah, for example) or as our mortal individual deeds having had a long-lasting causal effect on others.

While it can be argued, and has been argued, that this division exists - is a re-presentation of the current (and past) reality of our existence as conscious, thinking, beings - what is important is not whether it does exist or whether it may be an illusion, but rather (i) that the perceivration of 'the acausal' is an intimation of what is beyond the current (and the past) personal ipseity (real or assumed), and (ii) that it is such personal ipseity (real or assumed) which is the genesis of suffering, and (iii) that this understanding of the genesis of suffering affords us an opportunity to consciously change ourselves, from our current (and the past) real/assumed personal ipseity, and thus, so being changed, no longer cause or contribute to suffering.

How then can we so consciously change? By cultivating and manifesting in our own lives the personal virtues of empathy, compassion, and humility. For it is

these virtues which, by removing us from our ipseity - by making us aware of our affective connexion to other life - make us aware of suffering and its causes and prevent us, personally, from causing suffering to other living beings, human and otherwise.

Thus, my personal answer to the question of good and bad personal character is that a person of good personal character is someone who is or who seeks to be compassionate, who has a numinous sympatheia for other living beings, and who is modest and self-effacing. And it is wise to avoid causing or contributing to suffering not because such avoidance is a path toward nirvana (or some other posited thing), and not because we might be rewarded by God, by the gods, or by some divinity, but rather because it manifests the reality, the truth - the meaning - of our being, and which truth is some consolation for this particular viator.

David Myatt

May 2014

In Loving Memory of Frances, who died May 29<sup>th</sup> 2006

#### *Notes*

[1] I have chosen to use the term effluvium here, in preference to emanation, in order to avoid any potential misunderstanding. For although I have often 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 perceiviation: 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.

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The title of this essay was inspired by a passage in the 1517 translation by William Atkynson of a work by Thomas à Kempis, a translation published as *A Full Deuout and Gostely Treatyse of the Imytacyon and Fologyng the Blessed Lyfe of Our Moste Mercyfull Sauyours Cryste*.

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## **Musings On Suffering, Human Nature, and The Culture of Pathei-Mathos**

In respect of the question whether I am optimistic about our future as a species, I vacillate between optimism and pessimism, knowing as I - and so many - do from experience that the world contains people who do good things [1], people who do bad things, and people who when influenced or led or swayed by some-thing or someone can veer either way; and given that it seems as if in each generation there are those - many - who have not learned or who cannot learn from the pathei-mathos of previous generations, from the collective human πάθει μάθος - a culture of pathei-mathos thousands of years old - which reveals to us the beauty, the numinosity, of personal love, humility, and compassion, and the tragic lamentable unnecessary suffering caused by hubris, dishonour, selfishness, inconsiderance, intolerance, prejudice, hatred, war, extremism, and ideologies [2]. A world-wide suffering so evident, today, for example in the treatment of and the violence (by men) toward women; in the continuing armed conflicts - regional and local, over some-thing - that displace tens of thousands of people and cause destruction, injury, and hundreds of thousands of deaths; and in the killing of innocent people [3] by those who adhere to a harsh interpretation of some religion or some political ideology.

Do good people, world-wide, outweigh bad ones? My experiences and travels incline me to believe they do, although it seems as if the damage the bad ones do, the suffering they cause, sometimes and for a while outweighs the good that others do. But does the good done, in societies world-wide, now outweigh the bad done, especially such large-scale suffering as is caused by despots, corruption, armed conflict, and repressive regimes? Probably, at least in some societies. And yet even in such societies where, for example, education is widespread, there always seem to be selfish, dishonourable, inconsiderate, people; and also people such as the extremist I was with my hubriatic certitude-of-knowing inciting or causing hatred and violence and intolerance and glorifying war and kampf and trying to justify killing in the name of some abstraction or some belief or some cause or some ideology. People mostly, it seems, immune to and/or intolerant of the learning of the culture of pathei-mathos; a learning available to us in literature, music, Art, memoirs, in the aural and written recollections of those who endured or who witnessed hatred, violence, intolerance, conflict, war, and killing, and a learning also available in the spiritual message of those who taught humility, goodness, love, and

tolerance. Immune or intolerant people who apparently can only change - or who could only possibly change for the better - only when they themselves are afflicted by such vicissitudes, such personal misfortune and suffering, as is the genesis of their own pathos.

Thus, and for example, in Europe there is a specific pathos that the years before the Second World War, and especially that war, wrought. A collective learning regarding intolerance, persecution, repression, hatred, injustice; a collective learning regarding the mass and the deliberate slaughter of people on account of their perceived or believed difference; and a learning, by a new generation, of the destruction, the suffering, the brutality, the horror, of a war where wretched machines and mass manufactured weapons played a significant role. Yet this specific pathos, containing the traumatic experiences of millions of people and forming as it now does an important part of the culture of pathos, has not prevented a resurgence in Europe of intolerance, prejudice, and a hatred based on perceived or believed difference; as witness my own doleful and suffering-causing decades of supporting and propagating the intolerance, the prejudice, the hatred, the violence, implicit in National-Socialism, and as witness the tens of thousands of others - perhaps the hundreds of thousands - in Europe who now support political organizations and movements which, while they are not overtly or even covertly National-Socialist, nevertheless seem to me to represent and propagate and encourage intolerance, and prejudice, and often the same type of hatred based on a perceived or a believed difference, be this difference a perceived ethnicity or a 'foreign religion' or a 'foreign culture' or a love for someone of the same gender. For it really seems as if the founders, the members, and the supporters, of such organizations and movements are, as I was for decades, immune to and/or intolerant of the learning that the culture of pathos makes accessible.

All this, while sad, is perhaps the result of our basic human nature; for we are jumelle, and not only because we are "deathful of body yet deathless the inner mortal" [4] but also because it seems to me that what is good and bad resides in us all [5], nascent or alive or as part of our personal past, and that it is just so easy, so tempting, so enjoyable, sometimes, to indulge in, to do, what is bad, and often harder for us to do what is right. Furthermore, we do seem to have a tendency - or perhaps a need - to ascribe what is bad to being 'out there', in something abstract or in others while neglecting or not perceiving our own faults and mistakes and while asserting or believing that we, and those similar to us or who we are in agreement with, are right and thus have the 'correct', the righteous, answers. Thus it is often easier to find what is bad 'out there' rather than within ourselves; easier to hate than to love, especially as a hatred of impersonal others sometimes affords us a reassuring sense of identity and a sense of being 'better' than those others.

Will it therefore require another thousand, or two thousand, or three thousand years - or more or less millennia - before we human beings en masse, world-wide, are empathic, tolerant, kind, and honourable? Is such a basic change in our nature even possible? Certainly there are some - and not only ideologues of one kind or another - who would argue and who have argued that such a change is not desirable. And is such a change in our nature contingent, as I incline to believe, upon the fair allocation of world resources and solving problems such as hunger and poverty and preventing preventable diseases? Furthermore, how can or could or should such a basic change be brought about - through an organized religion or religions, or through individual governments and their laws and their social and political and economic and educational policies, or through a collocation of governments, world-wide; or through individuals reforming themselves and personally educating others by means of, for example, the common culture of *pathei-mathos* which all humans share and which all human societies have contributed to for thousands of years? Which leads us on to questions regarding dogma, faith, and dissent; and to questions regarding government and compulsion and 'crime and punishment' and whether or not 'the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few'; and also to questions regarding the efficacy of the reforming, spiritual, personal way given that spiritual ways teaching love, tolerance, humility, and compassion - and virtuous as they are, and alleviating and preventing suffering as they surely have - have not after several thousand years effected such a change in humans en masse.

I have to admit that I have no definitive or satisfactory answers to all these, and similar, questions; although my own *pathei-mathos* - and my lamentable four-decade long experience as an extremist, an ideologue, and as a selfish opinionated inconsiderate person - incline me to prefer the reforming, spiritual, personal way since I feel that such an approach, involving as it does a personal study of, a personal transmission of, the culture of *pathei-mathos* - and a personal knowing and a living of the humility that the culture of *pathei-mathos* teaches - is a way that does not cause nor contribute to the suffering that still so blights this world. A personal preference for such a numinous way even though I am aware of three things: of my past propensity to be wrong and thus of the necessary fallible nature of my answers; of the limited nature and thus the long time-scale (of many millennia) that such a way implies; and that it is possible, albeit improbable except in Science Fiction, that good people of honourable intentions may some day find a non-suffering-causing way by which governments or society or perhaps some new form of governance may in some manner bring about that change, en masse, in our human nature required to evolve us into individuals of empathy, compassion, and honour, who thus have something akin to a 'prime directive' to guide them in their dealings with those who are different, in whatever way, from ourselves.

Were I to daydream about some future time when such a galactic 'prime directive' exists, directing we spacefaring humans not to interfere in the internal affairs of non-terrans who are different, in whatever way, from ourselves, then I would be inclined to speculate that unless we by then have fundamentally and irretrievably changed ourselves for the better then it would not be long before some human or some human authority, somewhere, manufactured some sly excuse to order to try and justify ignoring it. For that is what we have done, among ourselves, for thousands of years; making then breaking some treaty or other; making some excuse to plunder resources; having some legal institution change some existing law or make some new law to give us the 'right' to do what it is we want to do; or manufacture some new legislative or governing body in order to 'legalize' what we do or have already done. Always using a plethora of words - and, latterly, legalese - to persuade others, and often ourselves, that what we do or are about to do or have already done is justified, justifiable, necessary, or right.

Perhaps the future excuse to so interfere contrary to a prime directive would be the familiar one of 'our security'; perhaps it would be an economic one of needing to exploit 'their' resources; perhaps it would be one regarding the threat of 'terrorism'; perhaps it would be the ancient human one, hallowed by so much blood, of 'our' assumed superiority, of 'their system' being 'repressive' or 'undemocratic' or of they - those 'others' - being 'backward' or 'uncivilized' and in need of being enlightened and 're-educated' by our 'progressive' ideas. Or, more probable, it would be some new standard or some new fashionable political or social or even religious dogma by which we commend ourselves on our progress and which we use, consciously or otherwise, to judge others by.

The current reality is that even if we had or soon established a terran 'prime directive' directing we humans not to interfere in the internal affairs of other humans here on Earth who are different, in whatever way, from ourselves, it is fairly certain it "would not be long before some human or some human authority, somewhere, manufactured some sly excuse to order to try and justify ignoring it..."

Which mention of a terran 'prime directive' leads to two of the other questions which cause me to vacillate between optimism and pessimism in regard to our future as a species. The question of increasing population, and the question of the finite resources of this Earth. Which suggests to me, as some others, that - especially as the majority of people now live in urban areas - a noble option is for us, as a species, to cooperate and betake ourselves to colonize our Moon, then Mars, and seek to develop such technology as would take us beyond our Solar System. For if we do not do this then the result would most probably be, at some future time, increasing conflict over land and resources, mass

migrations (probably resulting in more conflict) and such governments or authorities as then exist forced by economic circumstance to adopt policies to reduce or limit their own population. Global problems probably exasperated still further by the detrimental changes that available evidence indicates could possibly result from what has been termed 'climate change' [6].

But is the beginning of this noble option of space colonization viable in the near future? Possibly not, given that a country such as America, for instance, while having the resources and the space expertise and the technology necessary - and the means to develop existing space technology - currently (2013) allocates only 0.5% of its federal budget to NASA while allocating over 20% to military expenditure [7].

Which leads we human beings, with our jumelle character, confined to this small planet we call Earth, possibly continuing as we have, for millennia, continued: a quarrelsome species, often engaged (like primates) in minor territorial disputes; in our majority unempathic; often inconsiderate, often prejudiced (even though we like to believe otherwise); often inclined to place our self-interest and our pleasure first; often prone to being manipulated or to manipulating others; often addicted to the slyness of words spoken and written and heard and read; often believing 'we' are better than 'them'; and fighting, raping, hating, killing, invading here, interfering there. And beset by the problems wrought by increasing population, by dwindling resources, by mass migrations, by continuing armed conflicts (regional, local, supranational, over some-thing) and possibly also affected by the effects of climate change.

Yet also, sometimes despite ourselves, we are beings capable of - and have shown over millennia - compassion, kindness, gentleness, tolerance, love, fairness, reason, and a valourous self-sacrifice that is and has been inspirational. But perhaps above all we have, in our majority, exuded and kept and replenished the virtue of hope; hoping, dreaming, of better times, a better future, sometime, somewhere - and not, as it happens, for ourselves but for our children and their children and the future generations yet to be born. And it is this hope that changes us, and has changed us, for the better, as our human culture of pathei-mathos so eloquently, so numinously, and so tragically, reveals.

Thus the question seems to be whether we still have hope enough, dreams enough, nobility enough, and can find some way to change ourselves, to thus bring a better - a more fairer, more just, more compassionate - future into-being without causing or contributing to the suffering which so blights, and which has so blighted, our existence on Earth.

Personally, I am inclined to wonder if the way we need - the hope, the dream, we need - is that of setting forth to colonize our Moon, then Mars, and then the

worlds beyond our Solar System, guided by a prime directive.

David Myatt  
2013

This is an extract from a written reply, in September 2013, to a personal correspondent. It has been slightly revised for publication, with some footnotes added, post scriptum, in an effort to elucidate some parts of the text.

### *Notes*

[1] I understand 'the good' as what alleviates or does not cause suffering; what is compassionate; what is honourable; what is reasoned and balanced. Honour being here, and elsewhere in my recent writings, understood as the instinct for and an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous.

[2] I have expanded, a little, on what I mean by 'the culture of pathei-mathos' in my tract *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God*.

[3] As defined by my 'philosophy of pathei-mathos', I understand innocence 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."

[4] Pœmandres (Corpus Hermeticum), 15 - διὰ τοῦτο παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς ζῶα διπλοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ ἄνθρωπος

As I noted in my translation of and commentary on the Pœmandres tract, "Jumelle. For διπλοῦς. The much underused and descriptive English word jumelle - from the Latin gemellus - describes some-thing made in, or composed of, two parts, and is therefore most suitable here, more so than common words such as 'double' or twofold."

[5] qv. Sophocles, Antigone, v.334, vv.365-366

πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδεν ἄνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει...

σοφόν τι τὸ μηχανόεν τέχνας ὑπὲρ ἐλπίδ' ἔχων  
τοτὲ μὲν κακόν, ἄλλοτ' ἐπ' ἐσθλὸν ἔρπει

There exists much that is strange, yet nothing  
Has more strangeness than a human being...  
Beyond his own hopes, his cunning  
In inventive arts - he who arrives  
Now with dishonour, then with chivalry

[6] Many people have a view about 'climate change' - for or against - for a variety of reasons. My own view is that the scientific evidence available at the moment seems to indicate that there is a change resulting from human activity and that this change could possibly be detrimental, in certain ways, to us and to the other life with which we share this planet. The expressions 'seems to indicate' and 'could possibly be' are necessary given that this view of mine might need to be, and should be, reassessed if and when new evidence or facts become available.

Also, there remains the possibility that some or even most of this climate change may be caused, or has in the past been caused, by extra-terrestrial factors we currently do not fully understand, such as the natural movement, the journey, of our solar system through the spiral arms of our galaxy [qv, for instance, Filipović, Horner, Crawford, Tohill. *Mass Extinction And The Structure Of The Milky Way*, Serbian Astronomical Journal. September 2013].

[7] The maximum ever allocated to NASA was 4%, during the Apollo programme. For recent figures, qv. 'Fiscal Year 2014 Budget of the U.S. Government' available at [whitehouse dot gov](http://whitehouse.gov)

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### **Education And The Culture Of Pathei-Mathos**

One of the many subjects that I have pondered upon in the last few years is the role of education and whether a learning of our thousands of years old human culture of pathei-mathos - understood and appreciated as a distinct culture [1], and thence as an academic subject - could possibly aid us, as a species, to change; aid us to become more honourable, more compassionate, less egoistical, less violent, as individuals, and thus aid us to possibly avoid in our own lives those hubriatic errors, and causing the suffering, that the culture of pathei-mathos reveals are not only unethical but also which we humans make and cause and have made and caused again and again and again. That is, can a knowledge and appreciation of this culture, perhaps learnt individually and/or

in institutions such as schools and colleges, provide with us with that empathic, supra-personal, perspective which I personally - as a result of my own learning and experiences - am inclined to feel could change, evolve, us not only as individuals but as a species?

### **Studia Humanitatis**

For thousands of years - from the classical world to the Renaissance to fairly recent times - *Studia Humanitatis* (an appreciation and understanding of our φύσις as human beings) was considered to be the basis of a good, a sound, education.

Thus, for Cicero, *Studia Humanitatis* implied forming and shaping the manners, the character, and the knowledge, of young people through them acquiring an understanding of subjects such as philosophy, geometry, rhetoric, music, and *litterarum cognitio* (literary culture). This was because the classical weltanschauung was a paganus one: an apprehension of the complete unity (a cosmic order, κόσμος, mundus) beyond the apparent parts of that unity, together with the perceivment that we mortals - albeit a mere and fallible part of the unity - have been gifted with our existence so that we may perceive and understand this unity, and, having so perceived, may ourselves seek to be whole, and thus become as balanced (perfectus) [2], as harmonious, as the unity itself:

Neque enim est quicquam aliud praeter mundum quod nihil absit quodque undique aptum atque perfectum expletumque sit omnibus suis numeris et partibus [...] ipse autem homo ortus est ad mundum contemplandum et imitandum - nullo modo perfectus, sed est quaedam particula perfecti. [3]

Furthermore, this paganus natural balance implied an acceptance by the individual of certain communal responsibilities and duties; of such responsibilities and duties, and their cultivation, as a natural and necessary part of our existence as mortals.

In the Christian societies of Renaissance Europe, *Studia Humanitatis* became more limited, to subjects such as history, moral philosophy, poetry, certain classical authors, and Christian writers such as Augustine and Jerome, with the general intent being a self improvement with the important proviso that this concentration on the advancement of the individual to 'noble living' by means of 'noble examples' (classical and Christian) should not conflict with the Christian weltanschauung [4] and its perceivment of obedience to whatever interpretation of Christian faith and eschatology the individual favoured or believed in. In more recent times, *Studia Humanitatis* has become the academic study of 'the liberal arts', the 'humanities', often as a means to equip an

individual with certain personal skills – such as the ability to communicate effectively and to rationally analyse problems – which might be professionally useful in later life.

However, the culture of *pathei-mathos* provides an addition to the aforementioned *Studia Humanitatis*, and an addition where the focus is not on a particular *weltanschauung* (paganus, Christian, liberal, or humanist) but rather on our shared *pathei-mathos*: on what we and others have learnt, and can learn, about our human φύσις from experience of grief, suffering, trauma, injustice. For it is such personal learning from experience, or the records of or the influence of the experiences of others, which is not only the essence of much of what we, and others for thousands of years, have appreciated and learned from some of the individual subjects or fields of learning that formed the basis for the aforementioned *Studia Humanitatis* – history, *litterarum cognitio*, and music, for example – but also what, at least in my view, provides us with perhaps the deepest, but most certainly with the most poignant, insight into our φύσις as human beings.

Thus considered as an individual subject or field of learning, academic or otherwise, the culture of *pathei-mathos* would most certainly help to form and shape the manners, the character, the knowledge, of young people, for it has the potential to provide us with a perception and an understanding of the supra-personal unity – the *mundus* – of which we are a mortal part, and thus perhaps can aid us to become as inwardly balanced, as harmonious, as the unity beyond and encompassing us, bringing as such a perception, understanding, and balance, does that appreciation and empathic intuition of others which is compassion and aiding as such compassion does the cessation of the suffering that an unbalanced – a hubriatic, egoistical – human φύσις causes and has caused for so many millennia.

Can we therefore, as described in the *Poemandre tractate*,

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. [5]

For is not to so journey toward the unity "the noble goal of those who seek to acquire knowledge?"

But if we cannot make that or a similar personal journey; if we do not or cannot

learn from our human culture of *pathei-mathos*, from the many thousands of years of such suffering as that culture documents and presents and remembers; if we no longer concern ourselves with *de studiis humanitatis ac litterarum*, then do we as a sentient species deserve to survive? For if we cannot so learn, cannot so change, cannot so educate ourselves, or are not so educated in such subjects, then it seems to me we may never be able to escape to the freedom and the natural evolution, the diversity, that await among the star-systems of our Galaxy. For what awaits us if we, the unlearned, stay unchanged, are only repetitions of the periodicity of human-caused suffering until such time as we exhaust, lay waste, make extinct, our cultures, our planet, and finally ourselves. And no other sentient life, elsewhere in the Cosmos, would mourn our demise.

David Myatt  
May 2014

From a letter sent to a personal correspondent. Some footnotes have been added, post scriptum, in an effort to elucidate some parts of the text and provide appropriate references.

### *Notes*

[1] I define *the culture of pathei-mathos* as 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.

The culture of *pathei-mathos* 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*.

[2] A pedantic aside: it is my considered opinion that the English term 'balanced' (a natural completeness, a natural equilibrium) is often a better translation of the classical Latin *perfectus* than the commonly accepted translation of 'perfect', given what the English word 'perfect' now imputes (as in, for example, 'cannot be improved upon'), and given the association of the word 'perfect' with Christian theology and exegesis (as, for example, in suggesting a moral perfection).

[3] M. Tullius Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, Liber Secundus, xiii, xiv, 37

[4] q.v. Bruni d'Arezzo, *De Studiis et Litteris*. Leipzig, 1496.

[5] My translation of the Greek text: *Poemandres - A Translation and Commentary*. ISBN 978-1495470684. 2013.

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