



Prolegomenas to The Philosophy of The Numinous Way

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Preface

This selection of recent (2010-2011 ce) essays of mine provides a reasonable overview of my *weltanschauung* - deriving from my *pathei-mathos* of some forty years - which *weltanschauung* I have termed both The Numinous Way and The Philosophy of The Numen, given that, perhaps somewhat pedantically, I use the term philosophy to refer not to some modern academic subject or subjects but rather to the learning and knowledge of and acquired by a philosopher, where a philosopher, as the etymology of

the word suggests, is someone who is a friend of - whose companion is, who seeks to find, to acquire, to follow - σοφόν. Thus in this sense, a philosopher is someone seeking to acquire both a certain skill and a particular knowledge, and a skill and a knowledge acquired through both learning and from practical experience, from life; a dual sense evident from the meaning and usage of σοφός.

The particular knowledge - as Cicero mentioned in *De Officiis* (Liber Secundus, 5) - is of Being and beings (rerum divinarum et humanarum) and their genesis; and the certain skill is σωφρονεῖν - of having a reasoned, a balanced, a prudent, a wise, personal judgement and thence a balanced, a wise, personal character; a skill acquired, quite often, from pathei-mathos.

In many of the essays included here, as elsewhere, I have sometimes used terms from Ancient Greek because such terms, in my view, are informative and comparative, with there thus being a link between the philosophy of The Numen and the *weltanschauung* of early Hellenic culture, embodied in and manifest as this was by the works of Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Heraclitus, Sappho, and many others.

Thus, it would be fair to assume that the ethos of my *weltanschauung* is both indebted to and a development of the ethos of that Hellenic culture; an indebtedness obvious in the centrality, in the Numinous Way, of personal honour and notions such as δίκη, and a development manifest in notions such as empathy.

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Image credit:
Attic Vase c. 480 BCE, depicting Athena (Antikensammlungen, Munich, Germany)

In Pursuit of Wisdom

For thousands of years, we human beings have been aware - or could discover, for ourselves - a certain wisdom, a particular conscious knowledge concerning our own nature.

From Aeschylus to Sophocles to Siddhārtha Gautama, from the mythos of the Μοῖραι [1] to the postulate of samsara, from the notion of Fate to the Sermon on the Mount, and beyond, we have had available to us an understanding of Δίκη [2]: of how we human beings are often balanced between honour and dishonour; balanced between ὕβρις and ἀρετή; between our animalistic desires, our passions, and our human ability to be noble, to achieve excellence; a balance manifest in our known ability to be able to control, to restrain, ourselves, and thus find and follow a middle way, of ἀρμονίη.

For several Aeons, this understanding, this middle way, was of two essential things. First, of how such a middle way enabled us to avoid causing or contributing to that suffering which our own *πάθει μάθος* - our learning from the sorrows of personal experience - informed us was unwise because contrary to the natural balance (the numinosity) that such *πάθει μάθος* intimately revealed to us. Second, of how this balance - this self control - was preferable for us, as individuals, since to upset this balance - for example to go beyond the limits established by our ancestral customs - was: (1) to invite a personal retribution (or misfortune) from the gods; or (2) to invite punishment from a supreme deity; or (3) condemn us to be reborn again and thus have to toil yet again to obtain reward (karma) enough to progress in accord with the *bhavacakra*.

As Sophocles wrote, over two thousand years ago - *ὑβρις φυτεύει τύραννον* [3]. That is, *ὑβρις* (hubris) plants the *τύραννον*, although the sense of *τύραννος* here is not exactly what our fairly modern term *tyrant* is commonly regarded as imputing. Rather, it refers to the intemperate person of excess who is so subsumed with some passion or aim or a lust for power that they go far beyond the due, the accepted, bounds of behaviour and thus exceed the limits of or misuse whatever authority they have been entrusted with. Thus do they, by their excess, by their disrespect for the customs of their ancestors, by their lack of reasoned, well-balanced, judgement [*σωφρονεῖν*] offend the gods, and thus, to restore the balance, do the *Ἐρινύες* take revenge. For it is in the nature of the *τύραννος* that they forget, or they scorn, the truth, the ancient wisdom, that their lives are subject to, guided by, *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες*.



Λυκούργος and the Ἐρινύες

Apulian Red Figure vase, c. 330 BCE (Antikensammlungen, Munich, Germany)

Thus the knowledge that our pride, our arrogance, our uncontrolled desires, our lack of *σωφρονεῖν*, are the genesis of the disruption of the natural balance - both within ourselves, and exterior to ourselves.

Or, as Dante Alighieri expressed it in the terms of one particular mythos:

The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,

Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind.

The received wisdom was personal avoidance of the error of ὕβρις because we, we individuals and possibly our immediate family, would suffer: either in this life (by for example receiving bad luck, inviting misfortune, or having some tyrant foisted upon our community) or in some afterlife we believed in. Hence what we would now describe as ethical behaviour, for individuals - our control of our instincts, our desires - essentially derived from something supra-personal, such as ancestral customs, some belief in some gods, some faith in some supreme deity, or acceptance of some postulate such as karma or nirvana. In the terms of Christian theology, the belief being that we need to replace the guidance, the temptations, the guile, of The Infernal Serpent with the guidance, the love, of Christus Redemptor.

More recently, we human beings have committed a new kind of ὕβρις. Or more correctly perhaps, our ὕβρις has acquired a new form, new manifestations. That is, we have manufactured causal abstractions - ideals, ideas, *-isms* and *-ologies* - which we have identified with and/or striven to attain, both for ourselves, and for others; so that it has become apposite to write that causal abstractions are the genesis of suffering, for both ourselves, and for others. because such abstractions disrupt the natural balance of Life [ψυχή]: the life within us, within other sentient beings, and the Life that is presented to us as Nature, leading thus to a loss of ἀρμονίη. This kind of ὕβρις also plants the τύραννος, but the impersonal kind of τύραννος that lives in the practical implementation of such abstractions, internally and externally - so that, for instance, we allow ourselves to become subjects of some *-ism* or some *-ology* (whether described as or deemed to be political, social, or religious) or we become actual subjects of some impersonal entity such as a State, controlled, constrained, by laws, taxation, and the ever-present threat of the use of force by the 'officially appointed' minions of such an entity, so that such an impersonal entity has, in all but name, usurped our older gods, our Μοῖραι, our God, our karma.

Thus, the reality now is often of either (1) obedience to the *dictat* of some entity such as The State, our government, or the mandates of some supra-national body such as the United Nations, because to dissent would render us liable to punishment; or (2) a belief in - an acceptance of - such entities as the provider of 'good fortune', of 'justice' [4], and of prosperity, for us and our family.

Here, the threat of exterior, practical, punishment - the always present threat of imprisonment, the use of force against us by such entities as the Police, and ultimately the armed forces - has largely replaced the interior threat we hitherto might have imposed upon ourselves by our acceptance of such things as retribution from the gods, or punishment from some supreme deity. That is, ethical behaviour, for individuals still essentially derives from something supra-personal involving an *us* and *them*, the others.

The Pursuit of Wisdom

Despite these approaches, ancient and modern - that is, despite the ethical behaviour these two approaches encouraged and even demand, or tried to encourage - human

beings, *en masse*, do not seem to have significantly changed. Thus, the world is still replete with individuals who cannot control their desires and who thus commit dishonourable deeds, the error of *ὑβρις*. For every minute of every day, year following year, human beings are murdered, brutalized, bullied, raped, injured, tortured, humiliated, abused - just as deception, theft, robbery, fraud, and malfeasance, occur with monotonous regularity.

The world is still rife with bloody murderous conflict, except that new causes of conflict have been added to the ancient ones of personal greed, personal dishonour, and the desires of some *τύραννος* or other. For the new entities that we have manufactured - such as nation-States - have themselves caused suffering, of a magnitude arguably greater than caused by some *τύραννος* and far greater than could be caused by individuals unable to control their dishonourable urges, their greed. For example, conflicts between the modern nation-States of the West, and internal conflict within such States, have resulted in the deaths of an estimated one hundred million human beings in just over a century [4].

Thus, it seems as if the ancient wisdom of *Δίκη* has remained the preserve of a minority, and thus that the accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of millennia - manifest in such things as literature, Art, music, ancestral culture, and spiritual Ways of Life - has little or no relevance for or been a significant influence upon the majority, even in those modern States which have had, for nigh on a century, compulsory education for children. [5]

Since murderous conflict, the error of *ὑβρις*, and a lack of reasoned judgement, and thus suffering, remain - despite a variety of middle ways over millennia to divert us from such things, and despite numerous individuals over millennia, in their own ways, understanding *Amr bil Maroof wa Nahi anil Munkar* [6] - it is perhaps pertinent to consider if there is, or might be, a better expression of that wisdom, that particular conscious knowledge, concerning our own nature and how we might find and express that balance which enables us to restrain ourselves and avoid the error of *ὑβρις*.

That is, is there a Way which does not mean or imply a belief in some ancient mythos, or demand of us some faith in some supreme deity and some afterlife, or involve us in obedience to some supra-personal entity whose authority ultimately derives from the threat or the use of force or acceptance of some suffering-causing *-ism* or *-ology* whose nature is enshrined in the cliché that the abstraction of happiness, the abstraction of the welfare, the abstraction of the security, the abstraction of the prosperity, of the majority is more important than the fate of some individuals, and that thus for such abstractions to be obtained, in some (mythical) future the suffering of some or even of many individuals is an 'acceptable price' to pay?

In brief, a Way which does not of necessity involve us in considering matters as we have hitherto almost invariably done: by whether or not we, as individuals, are rewarded or punished (in this life, or in some believed in afterlife). That is, which does not of necessity posit some personal abstraction for us to accept or believe in - be such an abstraction some personal prosperity or some peace (in this or some next life such as Heaven or Jannah), or some supreme deity, or some notion such as nirvana or even some mythos such as *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονες τ' Ἐρινύες*.

For such things - and the middle ways derived from them in the past - are, correctly appreciated and thence understood, only pointers toward a deeper truth, which is that of the error of the self, and an error revealed by the nature of the causality implicit in this individual desire to seek some reward and avoid punishment, or, in Buddhism, avoid the periodicity of samsara.

Even in Buddhism, where this truth concerning the self has been discovered, revealed, in a rather rational manner, the practical reality for the majority is of *individual* striving, and the assumption of a goal for individuals. Hence the reason of the individual doing what they do - meditation, giving alms, striving to avoid causing suffering, for example - because they themselves seek liberation, nirvana; because they are concerned about *their* karma. Thus there is still a judgement based on the concept of individual reward. Hence, also, the striving for a posited goal, a striving exemplified by the *bhavacakra*.

The Error of The Self and The Natural Balance of Empathy

The error of the self is the error of a simple cause-and-effect predicated on the separation of living beings and upon a separate goal which the separated individual could attain by a given causal process.

Thus, and for example in Buddhism, the goal is nirvana and the process the Eight-Fold Path; in Christianity the goal is Heaven and the process is acceptance of Christus Redemptor; in Islam the goal is Jannah and the process is complete submission to Allah (and acceptance of Quran, Sunnah, and Shariah); in Hellenic culture the goal was *ἀρετή* (and thence a good place in Hades) by means such as avoidance of *ὑβρις*. In modern times, for the plethora of agnostics and atheists, the goal is happiness/prosperity by means such as The State, whether actively or passively accepted [7].

This assumption of self - of the separation of living beings, and such a causal process - is inherent in most if not all hitherto spiritual Ways which posit and require a praxis, and in the modern abstraction of The State, and also forms the basis of the ethics deriving from such Ways as well as the ethics of that modern abstraction. That is, either (1) The State defines what is moral, by means such as enforceable laws, or (2) such spiritual Ways posit what is moral based on their particular given goal and their given causal process and praxis of achieving that goal.

Why is this assumption of self an error? Because of empathy, which uncovers the nature of Being and beings that has hitherto been obscured by such spiritual Ways and by abstractions such as The State. For empathy - the innate (if still little used and underdeveloped) human faculty of *συμπάθεια* [*συν-πάθος*] - reveals the separation of living beings for the assumption, the limitation, it is.

For empathy reveals the *a-causal* nature (the numinous nature) of living beings - and the nexions that they are to Being, thus establishing a human ethics independent of the hitherto assumed cause-and-effect of separate human beings striving for some assumed goal by means of some given causal process.

Empathy thus establishes a new (or possibly a re-expressed older) understanding of our human nature - both existing and potential - and a new (or possibly a re-expressed older) knowing of how we might avoid *ὑβρις* and thus the suffering that *ὑβρις* brings. This understanding and knowing is of the numinous manifest in the indivisibility of living beings: of how the joy, the pain, the sorrow, the suffering, the very life, of what has hitherto been causally perceived as *the-separate-others* is in essence our joy, pain, sorrow, suffering, and life. For this, this natural balance, this *ἀρμονία*, is what empathy, in the living moment, reveals - or rather what empathy by its very nature naturally and wordlessly and effortlessly moves us toward: what empathy brings-into-being.

Hence the empathic human being avoids Al-Munkar (and thus avoids causing suffering), and inclines toward Al-Maruf, just by being human - by using the faculty of empathy in the same way the faculties of sight, smell, taste, touch are used. That is, naturally as wordless perceptions of what-is, and not of what is assumed or believed. There is thus no naming and no ideation necessary or involved in this use of empathy; only a living in the transient moment. For it is not correct to give names to - to denote by names and terms - some-things, some existents; since such naming, such denoting, implies the causality of separation between subject and object, and it is this causality that empathy transcends.

There are therefore no given or assumed causal means - no techniques, methods, or teachings, no praxis, no texts, no faith in some-thing or some-one - as there is no goal, assumed and/or to be striven for. There is only empathy, and its development and use: only the empathy of the living changeful transient moment, and *us-as-Being* (The Numen, the acausal Unity, The Cosmos) presenced, temporarily, as one living nexion (*one being*) on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy.

How then to develop, to cultivate, empathy? By letting-go of all abstractions (all *-isms* and all *-ologies*). By ceasing to denote living beings by causal terms but instead perceiving them wordlessly in the moment of our perception. By ceasing to prejudge other human beings, either by some outer perceived form/appearance or by some assumption or assumptions manufactured or made by others - and instead relating to them as hitherto newly-known beings in the natural immediacy of the moment of our meeting with them. By placing ourselves in The Cosmic Perspective - that is, by an acceptance of ourselves as but one fragile fallible microcosmic nexion only temporarily presenced on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of Galaxies. This is the essence of *wu-wei* - a knowing, a feeling, of Being; a knowing, a feeling, of The Numen, the acausal Unity, the Cosmos itself; and a knowing, a feeling, once described in that ancient wisdom termed Tao, and yet which even then, as now, could not and cannot be described by or contained within that one, or any, particular term.

David Myatt
2011 CE

Notes

[1]

τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστρόφος.
Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες

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

Aeschylus (attributed), *Prometheus Bound*, 515-6

[2] In respect of Δίκη, cf. *The Principle of Δίκη* (included below).

[3] *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 872

[4] The modern notion of an impersonal abstract 'justice' - said to be obtainable by the making and enforcement of laws - has replaced the older, wiser, personal notion of the natural balance which was manifest in Δίκη and in the Ἐρινύες.

[4] For example, sixty million people in the Second World War, sixteen million in the First World War, and over twenty million in the Soviet Union mostly as a result of Stalin. Estimates of the number of people killed by the Mongol tyrant Genghis Khan range from a possible fifteen to twenty million, to a speculative eighty million.

[5] For an overview of the modern State, refer to my essay, included below, *Authority and Legitimacy in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way*.

[6]

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

(Quran, 3:104) " Let there rise among you a group Calling others to Al-Maruf [the honourable] and forbidding Al-Munkar [what is dishonourable], for these are the ones who will achieve success [Jannah]." Interpretation of Meaning

[7] Such happiness/prosperity of the majority - together with what is termed their 'security' - may be said to be the stated or the assumed *raison d'etre* of The State. Given that in modern times most human beings live in areas where States have assumed or obtained 'authority' over them, by whatever means, it might well be argued that The State with its aims and goals (based on some and various *-isms* and *-ologies*, including that of *δημοκρατία*) has, for those uncommitted to spiritual Ways, become an idealized *weltanschauung* supplanting more spiritual Ways, and a *weltanschauung* when not actively affirmed is at least passively accepted by a majority of such uncommitted, non-religious, ones - and even by many religious ones in agreement with that modern abstract division between State and Religion which many supporters and/or theorists of The State assume exists or believe should exist.

The Principle of Δίκη

Δίκη is that noble, respectful, balance understood, for example, by Sophocles (among many others) - for instance, Antigone respects the natural balance, the customs and traditions of her own numinous culture, given by the gods, whereas Creon verges towards and finally commits, like Oedipus in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the error of *ὑβρις* and is thus "taught a lesson" (just like Oedipus) by the gods because, as Aeschylus wrote [1] -

*Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσ-
ιν μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει*

In respect of *Δίκη*, I write - spell - it thus in this modern way with a capital Δ to intimate a new, a particular and numinous, philosophical principle, and differentiate it from the more general *δίκη*. As a numinous principle, or axiom, *Δίκη* thus suggests what lies beyond and what was the genesis of *δίκη* personified as the goddess, Judgement - the goddess of natural balance, of the ancestral way and ancestral customs.

Thus, *Δίκη* implies the balance, the reasoned judgement, the thoughtful reasoning - *σωφρονεῖν* - that *πάθει μάθος* brings and restores, and which accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of a particular folk or *πόλις* forms the basis for their ancestral customs. *δίκη* is therefore, as the numinous principle *Δίκη*, what may be said to be a particular and a necessary balance between *ἀρετή* and *ὑβρις* - between the *ὑβρις* that often results when the personal, the natural, quest for *ἀρετή* becomes unbalanced and excessive.

That is, when *ἔρις* (discord) is or becomes *δίκη* - as suggested by Heraclitus in Fragment 80 [2] -

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

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

David Myatt
2011 CE

Notes

[1]

Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσ-

ἰν μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει

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

Aeschylus: Agamemnon, 250-251

[2] Refer to my essay *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80*.

A Brief Numinous View of Religion, Politics, and The State

The Numinous View

The essence of the numinous view - of the ethical way posited by the Philosophy of The Numen - is empathy and thus the acausal (the affective and effecting) connexion we, as individuals, are to all life, sentient and otherwise, with empathy being the foundation of our conscious humanity.

The practical criteria which empathy implies is essentially two-fold: the criteria of the cessation of suffering, and the criteria of the individual, personal, judgement in the immediacy of the moment. For the Philosophy of The Numen, these two criteria manifest the natural character of rational, conscious, empathic, human beings and thus express the nature of our humanity and of human culture, and which nature is manifest in a practical way in compassion and in personal honour.

Hence these two criteria are used, by The Numinous Way - by the Philosophy of The Numen - to judge our actions, our personal behaviour, and also all the abstractions we manufacture or may manufacture and which thus affect us, as individuals. Among such abstractions are The State, organized religions, and those things that have been described by the term politics.

- The criteria of suffering directly derives from our natural, if still rather undeveloped and undervalued, *sympatheia* with other human beings and other life; for the nexion we are makes us feel, and aware of, the suffering we by our actions, our words, can cause to other life, with this feeling, this awareness - the translocation of ourselves into the being of other life - making the suffering of others our suffering. Thus, what contributes to or causes or which does not alleviate the suffering of any living being - sentient or otherwise - is morally wrong, and indefensible; with there being one exception - and one exception only - to this. This singular exception relates to the use of force - including lethal force - in defence of one's self, or others nearby, in a personal situation where one is dishonourably (unfairly) attacked or where those others, nearby, are unfairly attacked, with our empathy - our conscious humanity - revealing to us

the knowing and the nature of what is fair, and unfair.

- The criteria of the individual, personal, judgement in the immediacy of the moment derives from the nature of empathy itself. For empathy is only and ever direct, personal - only living, being presenced, in the personal moment; in one particular moment of causal Time where one is in close personal contact with another human being or another living being. Empathy cannot, by its very nature, be abstracted out from such a personal interaction in a particular moment. It cannot be objectified, for it is numinous - that is, organic; dependant upon an immediate interaction between two living beings.

Empathy thus has no rules; no dogma; no guidelines; as it cannot be or become the object of any "official" recognition, examination, certificate, or award - or be the subject of any academic study. For such things miss, or try to make abstract, what is always and only numinous and living and directly personal, since empathy - correctly understood - is a human faculty, like our sight and smell.

Empathy, therefore - and the *pathei-mathos* which derives from it [1] - establishes a new *weltanschauung*, a new perspective for individuals, and has important implications for the way individuals lead their lives and how they view and judge such human-manufactured things as The State, organized religions, and what has been described by the term politics.

A Numinous View of Politics

For The Numinous Way, politics is irrelevant - because (1) empathy does away with all artificial, human-manufactured, divisions and categories based upon a causal separation of beings, and (2) empathy itself, and the judgement arising from it, can only and ever be personal, direct, and in the immediacy of the living moment, and thus cannot be collective, or be organized in any supra-personal manner, with some other person or persons, or some group or organization (or whatever) making judgements on our behalf.

Politics, of whatever kind or orientation, is a process -

- which involves pursuing some abstract goal, objective or aim (designated as political and/or as social)
- which requires some or many individuals to deny their own empathy and judgement and instead rely on the judgement of others (some leader, organizer, or representative, elected or unelected)
- which entails some or many individuals individuals in exercising or exerting some kind of authority or control over other individuals.

The goals, objectives and aims of politics are, by their very nature, based on human-manufactured divisions and categories deriving from a causal separation of beings: that is, which involve denoting individuals on the basis of some principle of inclusion/exclusion, and which principle of inclusion/exclusion (of separation of human beings) is immoral because un-numinous.

This principle is un-numinous because at best it obscures the acausal connexions between human beings which empathy reveals, while, at worst, it severs that connexion and replaces living empathy with lifeless causal abstractions. [2]

Since the numinous view is, as mentioned above, that empathy is the basis, the measure of, the criteria for, our conscious humanity, so it is by means of empathy, in the immediacy of the personal moment, that we manifest our true human nature and our conscious, our sentient, humanity: that wisdom, that understanding, which pathemathos has revealed to us over millennia, and which wisdom, which understanding, we manifest when we use our conscious will, our faculty of reason, to act in a compassionate and honourable way.

Our true human nature, our sentient humanity, is not therefore manifest - and cannot ever be manifest - in any causal abstraction deemed political, such as the causal abstraction that has been termed "human (or unalienable) rights", which it has been said can be contained in some creed, pronouncement, declaration, charter, or laws. Instead, our humanity is manifest in our individual, our living, personal and direct interactions with other human beings and with other life - in our awareness of ourselves as one affective and effecting nexion to the living being or beings we so interact with.

Thus, to be human is to be empathic, in the immediacy of the living moment, and to act upon the knowing that empathy reveals to us and which is manifest in a practical way by means of compassion and personal honour. There is therefore no need for "political action", no need for emotive speeches, rallies, or political manifestos, or even for any political organizations or movements for "social change". All that is needed is the cultivation, and the practical application of, empathy, by individuals.

In effect, therefore, empathy renders politics, and all political asbrations, obsolete, and in place of the old, un-numinous, way of politics there is the numinous way of individuals developing and using their individual, unique, faculty of empathy, and thus using and relying on their own natural judgement and reason.

A Numinous View of The State

The State has been defined as:

" The concept of both (1) organizing and controlling - over a particular and large geographical area - land (and resources); and (2) organizing and controlling individuals over that same geographical particular and large geographical area by means of the use of physical force or the threat of force; by means of the central administration and centralization of resources (especially fiscal and military); and by the mandatory taxation of personal income." [3]

The State, by its very nature, is predicated upon the immoral (the un-numinous) principle of inclusion/exclusion of human beings. That is, it occupies, or claims to occupy, a certain designated territory (most often with defined borders), and which territory it seeks to control by the use of force or which territory it has come to control by the use of force, and which force almost without exception involves or has involved the suffering and the killing of human beings.

The State by its supra-personal nature usurps both empathy and our personal judgement, and thus is inherently immoral, unethical, and contra to our humanity.

For instance, and in respect of judgement, The State appropriates to itself - to its Institutions and its savants, its officials - the right to judge, to punish, and to inflict suffering on other human beings, as it also demands, on pain of the use of force, loyalty and obedience from its citizens, for its citizens are expected to obey the laws The State makes.

In brief, The State demands that individuals relinquish their own judgement and instead rely upon the judgement of others - that of some leader or dictator, or that of some representative, elected by vote or otherwise chosen; and which leader or dictator or representatives are said to embody or represent "the will of the people" or some such abstract nonsense.

In addition, The State is almost the complete antithesis of empathy - for its very *raison d'etre* is supra-personal organization, the control, of individuals, and a centralized planning imposed upon people.

In addition, The State - and the nation, preceding it [4], and the Tyrannos preceding the nation - has and have been responsible for appalling human suffering and deaths, from the horrors of the French revolution, to the brutality of the Russian revolution, to the nationalist First and Second World Wars, to the ideologically-driven Vietnam war and the recent invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Empathy, however, nullifies all causal abstractions, and in place of abstract supra-personal goals, manufactured or imposed by others, there is only the awareness of the personal moment, a personal dwelling in a particular locality, and the personal exercise of compassion and honour.

In effect, therefore, empathy renders The State (and by extension, the nation)

obsolete, and in place of the old, un-numinous, way of The State there is the numinous way of individuals developing and using their individual, unique, faculty of empathy, and thus choosing for themselves - based on a direct and personal knowing of people - how to interact with, and rely on, other human beings in a social manner.

Possibly one of the best ways for individuals to so numinously interact is by means of extended families co-operating in their own local areas - that is, by clans and tribes, and which clans and tribes are defined by a numinous dwelling in a particular locality, by living ties of kinship, and by a personal loyalty deriving from a personal judgement and a direct personal knowing of the individual so given such loyalty. For it is through such a local dwelling, such ties, and such a personal loyalty that we can best express - and have best expressed - our human nature.

A Numinous View of Religion

Just like The State, an organized religion by its very nature is predicated upon the un-numinous principle of inclusion/exclusion of human beings, with an individual human being relying on this organized religion for guidance (moral and otherwise); with the individual expected to conform in certain matters of personal behaviour, and belief; and with the individual expected to perform certain duties and obligations, often of a public or social nature.

In essence, an organized religion provides an individual with certain answers to questions about life - a means whereby individuals can view, and come to relate to, Reality; to understand themselves, and their relation to other human beings. It is estimated that almost three-quarters of all human beings rely on conventional organized religions (such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism) to provide some answers to fundamental questions about life and/or to provide them with some guidance on how to behave and interact with other human beings.

Organized religion is quite distinct from a particular localized and numinous Way of Life by virtue of such a Way of Life being based on a quite local distinction between what is regarded as sacred (the numinous) and the profane, with such a distinction involving Nature; that is, a certain area or areas of land where, or near to where, the folk upholding such a Way dwell or have dwelt for generations. That is, such a numinous Way of Life involves an individual and communal understanding - sometimes intuitive or empathic, and sometimes by means of myths, legends, and local ceremonies - of their connexion to Nature (manifest in the area or area of their dwelling), their connexion to other human beings, and often thence to the Cosmos beyond, with this understanding involving an awareness of the necessity for balance, for maintaining the natural harmony of Life. Often this awareness of balance becomes expressed in a reverence for ancestors who are considered to connect the individual, the family, the local community, to Nature (or to have become embodied in or become a part of Nature). To upset this natural balance is regarded as unwise, and the bringer of misfortune - either personal, or for one's descendants. For there exists a natural feeling of continuity with - a connexion to - one's descendants, with one's

ancestors, one's dwelling in a certain locality, and with the perceived cycles of natural phenomenon, such as weather, and with personal and communal good fortune and misfortune.

In contrast, an organized religion abstracts meaning and understanding into precepts and dogma, independent of a localized dwelling and a direct feeling for the numinous, as there is reliance upon and/or a veneration of texts, with the consequent need for such "sacred texts" - or some written words of guidance - to be interpreted.

Thus, instead of a personal engagement with the numinous - instead of the direct, and of necessity local and natural, knowing of our connexion to Nature, to other Life, to the Cosmos that empathy directly reveals - there is or there arises an attempt to explain or define or understand the numinous either by reference to some text (revealed or otherwise), or by means of some causal abstraction: that is, as being the effect of some posited and general cause. This attempt to so explain or define or understand the numinous either actually obscures the numinous, or abstracts it out of individual awareness, substituting instead precepts, dogma, and ritual - and thus obscures, or severs or comes to sever, the living connexion that the individual is to all other Life: to the acausal. In place of the numinosity of the personal acausal moment - the understanding of a personal and of an ancestral pathei-mathos founded in a local dwelling - there arises a lifeless cause-and-effect.

Hence, an organized religion such as Christianity posits God as the ultimate cause, with it being said that this cause led to the incarnation (the revelation) of Jesus to effect our salvation - that is, which enables we human beings to achieve the goal which is Heaven. To achieve this effect - of our salvation - we need only to follow or do what has been laid down or prescribed for us, by others: some guidelines contained in scripture; some prayers said or some ritual religiously undertaken; and so on. All this is entirely un-numinous because independent of both the pathei-mathos and the dwelling, ancestral or otherwise, of the believer. That is, the connexion to and the knowing of the numinous is or is required to be or is expected to be other than ours; other than deriving from our empathy, our personal experience, our intuitive knowledge derived from longevity of our local dwelling. Instead, the personal experience, the pathei-mathos, of the believer has to or should be related to the tradition or some tradition within or of such a conventional religion, so that, for instance, personal pathei-mathos has to be comparative, compared to similar experiences of past believers and accepted or rejected based on such a comparison.

Empathy, however, nullifies this lifeless cause-and-effect and such an un-numinous impersonal required comparison. For empathy by its acausal immediacy of nature reveals the numinous to us directly. There is no need for some posited cause-and-effect, or some posited causes-and-effects - for there is only our personal awareness of ourselves as an acausal connexion to other Life: to the locality of our human, terrestrial, dwelling; to other human beings known and interacted with in the immediacy of the personal moment; to our own pathei-mathos, and to the pathei-mathos of our ancestors, our folk.

What thus becomes numinously revealed by such connexions is the simple need for a personal balance, for the compassion and the personal honour which manifest such a balance and which are always, by their very numinous nature, direct, personal, and of the immediacy of the interacting moment.

In effect, therefore, empathy renders organized religion obsolete, and in place of the old, un-numinous, way of such religions there is the numinous, empathic, way of individuals and the learning deriving from pathei-mathos: our own, and that of others.

Conclusion

Politics, The State, and religion have contrived, by their causal nature, their breeding of abstractions, to distance us from the immediacy of the numinous moment - from that intuitive and empathic knowledge derived from longevity of our local dwelling and from our own pathei-mathos, our own learning deriving from the personal experience of suffering and from sympatheia. Sympatheia makes us aware - makes us feel, know - the suffering of others, so that there is an acausal connexion between the pathei-mathos of our ancestors, manifest in a particular human culture, in human culture in general and our own pathei-mathos, so that such cultures can learn us, as our own pathei-mathos can.

Having this knowledge of culture, accumulated over millennia, having the gifts of such culture, and having the faculty of empathy which we can and should develop, we simply no longer need politics, The State, and religion.

The primal mistake of the past has been to seek to strive after illusive abstractions rather than to seek to change ourselves in the necessary numinous way, with such a striving after such abstractions being the primary cause of the suffering we human beings have inflicted upon others, upon ourselves, and upon the other life with which we share this planet.

To be human - to manifest the reasoned humanity that our pathei-mathos and the pathei-mathos of human cultures have revealed to us - is, quite simply, to be empathic in the immediacy of the living moment, so all that is needed is the cultivation, and the practical application of, empathy, by ourselves, as individuals. This is wu-wei: a living numinously, and a living which, over a certain duration of causal Time, will aid the cessation of suffering and bring-into-being new, more human, ways of living. To attempt to speed this process up - to abstract it - would only cause more suffering and undermine and then remove us from our numinous, human, essence. For the numinous future we so desire only and ever begins with and within ourselves.

Footnotes

[1] Pathei-mathos (πάθει μάθος) means a learning from adversity. That is, the personal learning and understanding that arises from direct, often harsh, personal experience - and which may also be numinously understood (felt), and thus appreciated, by some numinous work of Art or and importantly through some intuitive understanding of - a sympatheia with - the pathos-mathos of another human being, recorded or transmitted in some form or recounted by some means.

Pathei-mathos thus possesses a numinous authority over and beyond the supposed authority of conventional religions, and all other abstractions, such as politics.

For a brief overview of pathei-mathos, refer to my essay *Quid Est Veritas?* and my *The Classical Foundations of The Numinous Way*.

[2] For more in respect of the principle of inclusion/exclusion (a principle also prevalent in conventional philosophy) see, for example, my *Notes Concerning Causality, Ethics, and Acausal Knowing*, and also *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*.

[3] The definition is taken from my somewhat polemical article, *The Failure and Immoral Nature of The State*.

[4] The origin and nature of the modern Nation is outlined in *The Failure and Immoral Nature of The State*.

War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

The Morality of The Numinous Way

In order to understand the concepts of war and violence in terms of the philosophy of The Numinous Way, it is necessary to begin by outlining the morality of The Numinous Way, since war and violence are inseparably bound up with how one understands morality.

Morality is, for The Numinous Way, a consequence of individuals using the faculty of empathy [1] - that is, a consequence of the insight and the understanding (the acausal knowing) that empathy provides for individuals in the immediacy-of-the-moment. This insight and knowledge is of how we are not isolated human beings, but rather only

one fragile microcosmic nexion and thus connected to all Life, sentient and otherwise, human and otherwise, of this planet and otherwise. Consequently, there is a cosmic perspective - a cosmic ethic - and compassion: that is, the human virtue of having *συμπάθεια* with other living beings, and the feeling, the knowledge, that we should treat other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated: with fairness, dignity, and respect.

The morality of The Numinous Way is therefore defined by a personal honour, a personal compassion, and the personal virtue of justice. For justice is not some abstract concept, but rather a personal virtue, as *εὐταξία* [2] is a personal virtue. For justice is the personal virtue of fairness; the quality of balance, and is linked to other personal virtues as mentioned, for example, by Cicero:

"Aliis ego te virtutibus, continentiae, gravitatis, iustitiae, fidei, ceteris omnibus." [3]

This morality is therefore a personal one so that it is the living individual of honour - someone who possesses certain virtues - who represents, who is, the cosmic ethics of The Numinous Way. For,

"the Cosmic Ethic [...] cannot live in some law, in some Institution, in some Court, in some dogma or in some abstract theory. To be numinous, to presence the numinous, what is ethical requires a living honourable person, not some abstract theory of ethics." *The Natural Balance of Honour* (2011)

Thus the source of, the authority for - and the reason for choosing - such a morality is and can only be the judgement of the individual, deriving as this judgement does from their empathy and their unique *πάθει μάθος*.

The Source of Authority

For The Numinous Way, there is no authority other than that of personal empathy, personal honour and *πάθει μάθος*. That is, the source of authority is personal, and the bounds of this authority are defined by honour, with The Numinous Way thus being:

"the Way of the numinous and individual authority of *πάθει μάθος* where one's own empathy and one's own learning from practical experience take precedence and are considered a means for us to become *a friend of σοφόν* and thus acquire the virtue and the skill that has been termed wisdom."
Preface, *Selected Writings Concerning The Numinous Way* (2011).

In practical terms, this means that the individual following or being guided by this

Way relies on and is guided by their own judgement, their own experience, and a Code of Honour, and does not relinquish these in favour of some chain-of-command or in favour of accepting the authority of some supra-personal institution, of some law, or of some association, political party or whatever. In place of accepting and submitting to such external authority there is only the giving of personal loyalty according to a Code of Honour, with such giving by its honourable and personal nature never involving the individual in relinquishing their own judgement or acting contrary to that Code of Honour.

Violence, War, The State, and Leges Regiae

Used in its correct, original, non-pejorative way, violence is using physical force against another person sufficient to cause some physical injury. However, a fairly recent synonym for violence is *force* - a term often used by politicians and castellans and theorists of The State, among others, when they attempt to try and justify the use of violence by those persons (such as the police) such politicians and castellans (and others) believe have some 'lawful authority' to inflict injury on people.

The distinction that such politicians and castellans and others thus attempt to make between violence and force reveals their reliance, stated or unstated, known or unknown, on the principles of *Leges Regiae*. That is, on the principles used historically by kings and emperors and their courts where someone or some group assumes authority over others, and thus exercises command over them, makes decisions for or on behalf of them, and, ultimately, by the use of violence and the threat of punishment are able to force or persuade others to obey them and their commands.

Principles, for example, manifest in the ancient *Jus Papirianum* attributed to Sextus Papirius:

"After Romulus had distinguished the persons of higher rank from those of inferior condition, then he passed laws and apportioned the duties for each to do...

For the king, he chose the following prerogatives ... to maintain the guardianship of the laws and the national customs, ... to judge in person the greatest of crimes ... to have absolute command in war. " [4]

Notice how Romulus - the legendary King of ancient Rome - assumed the authority to divide individuals into categories - high and low - and how he manufactured laws, and told individuals what their duties would be, and assumed absolute command in war.

Modern nation-States have, via people such as Augustine of Hippo [5], simply replaced kings and emperors with Prime Ministers, Presidents, or representatives (or whatever) and covered or attempted to cover their use of violence (by their police

forces and armies) and the threat of punishment (such as prison) by rhetoric about 'law and order' and by social and political theories (such as that of democracy). But the demand that individuals accept some supra-personal authority remains the same, as does the threat or the use of violence against individuals by officials appointed and approved by such personal authorities, as does the demand that individuals forsake their own judgement and rely instead on the judgement of ministers, governments officials, and on the Courts of Law of The State. In addition - as it was for the Roman kings and Caesars - the individual is expected to obey the laws they manufacture, with such laws being regarded as 'just' and moral.

Thus justice - far from being a personal virtue, defined by honour - becomes what some king, some Caesar, some *τύραννος*, or some government decrees it is according to the laws they manufacture and which their officials and their Courts uphold and enforce, by violence (or the threat thereof) and by imprisonment (or the threat thereof). Hence all the rhetoric by castellans and officials of The State that individuals "should not take the law into their own hands", whereas true - natural, numinous, living - justice only exists in living honourable individuals and their actions.

This usurpation of personal judgement and natural justice is overtly manifest in war. War - the *bellum* of Latin writers such as Cicero and Livy - is armed conflict involving large opposing groups where there is acceptance, by those fighting, of some recognized chain-of-command and of some supra-personal commanding authority who or which is or are personally unknown to most if not all of those accepting such authority, and where the conflict is mostly if not entirely non-personal for all or most of those involved. That is, war mostly or entirely results from the pursuit of some abstraction, or from the desire, the beliefs, of some leader or commander, or from the political or social or religious agenda or policies of some supra-personal authority such as some government.

In The Numinous Way, a distinction is made between war and *combat* in that combat refers to *gewin* - similar to the old Germanic *werra*, as distinct from the modern *krieg*. That is, combat refers to a more personal armed quarrel between much smaller factions (and often between just two adversaries - as in single combat, and trial by combat) when there is, among those fighting, some personal matter at stake or some personal interest involved, with most if not all of those fighting doing so under the leadership of someone they personally know and respect and with the quarrel usually occurring in the locality or localities where the combatants live.

Thus, war is contrary to The Numinous Way - to the Cosmic Ethic - not only because of the impersonal suffering it causes, but also because it is inseparably bound up with individuals having to relinquish their own judgement, with them pursuing some lifeless un-numinous abstraction by violent means, and with the development of supra-personal abstract and thus un-numinous notions of 'justice' and law.

Hence, there is, for The Numinous Way, no such thing as a 'just war' - for war is inherently unjust and un-numinous. What is just and lawful are honourable individuals and their actions, and such combat as such individuals may honourably

and personally undertake, and such violence as they may honourably and of necessity employ in pursuit of being fair and ensuring fairness.

David Myatt
October 2011 CE

Notes

[1] For a basic explanation of empathy, see my essay *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*

[2] εὐταξία is what I would describe as the quality, the personal virtue, of self-restraint; of personal orderly (balanced, honourable, well-mannered) conduct especially under adversity or duress.

Regarding εὐταξία, Cicero wrote:

" Deinceps de ordine rerum et de opportunitate temporum dicendum est. Haec autem scientia continentur ea, quam Graeci εὐταξίαν nominant, non hanc, quam interpretamur modestiam, quo in verbo modus inest, sed illa est εὐταξία, in qua intellegitur ordinis conservatio. Itaque, ut eandem nos modestiam appellemus..." *De Officiis*, 1, 40, 142

[3] M. Tullius Cicero, *For Lucius Murena*, 10, 23. My translation is: 'For your other virtues of self-restraint, of dignity, of justice, of good faith, and all other good qualities...'

[4] The quotation is from the reconstruction of the texts given in: Allan Chester Johnson, Paul Robinson Coleman-Norton, and Frank Bourne. *Ancient Roman Statutes: A Translation with Introduction, Commentary, Glossary, and Index*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961

[5] The assumed need for individuals to accept supra-personal authority is much in evidence in Augustine, especially in his *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos* in which he champions a order, a hierarchy, with God its pinnacle and ordinary individuals at the bottom. In between are those appointed to oversee individuals and ensure 'order' with everyone in their rightful place: "Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio." (XIX, xiii)

As Augustine writes in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (XXII, 75): "The natural order, which would have peace amongst men, necessitates that the judgement about and the authority to declare war should reside in those who have authority over others [a

monarch/prince]."

In addition, his rhetoric regarding the necessity of waging war is remarkably similar to that of modern politicians:

"War is undertaken to bring about peace. Therefore, even during war, remember the value of peace so that when those you have fought are conquered you can show them the advantages of peace..." (*Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum ad Bonifacium Papam*, CLXXXIX)

He also, it seems, in writing about a 'just war', provided them with rhetorical justification for castigating their enemies as 'evil', as 'wicked' and they themselves, even though they may cause suffering and death, as doing what is 'right', what God decrees, as, for example, Bush and Blair did during the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and as with the desire of some nation-States to humiliate and vanquish those deemed as enemies. As Augustus wrote in *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos*:

"Nam et cum iustum geritur bellum, pro peccato e contrario dimicatur; et omnis uictoria, cum etiam malis prouenit, diuino iudicio uictos humiliat uel emendans peccata uel puniens." [For even when we wage a just war, our enemies must be sinners, for every victory then, even though gained by evil men, results from divine decree, with the vanquished humiliated and their sins either punished or wiped away.] XIX, 15

Authority and Legitimacy in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

The Legitimacy of Authority

Authority is: (1) the direct power to enforce compliance and obedience upon others, 'the subjects', or (2) the indirect power of (a) manipulating others so that they are compliant and obedient, or (b) having influence over others of such a sufficiency that others are compliant and obedient.

It is from such power - however obtained, presumed, or acquired - that someone, or some many, assume or claim they have a mandate to rule, govern, and command, and thence also claim that they, and those appointed by them, represent or are *an*, or are

the, legitimate authority, and thus claim to possess the moral right, the duty, to command, lead, and decide what is lawful and unlawful and punish those who do what that authority has decreed is unlawful.

Thus, what is legitimate and what is lawful is or become what those who have power decide or decree is legitimate and lawful, with there being the expectation, the assumption, or the demand, that 'the subjects' accept what is, in effect, this imposed legitimacy.

Before the rise of the now almost ubiquitous nation-State ^[1], power was most usually direct power, acquired by individuals and groups through physical force; for example, by victory in combat or war or by the violent removal of someone or some many who already had power over others in a certain geographical area or territory. Once obtained by such means, such power was often legitimized and transferred by those having power decreeing that their progeny - or those appointed by them - were 'the rightful rulers'/the legitimate authority, with such decrees, and the authority of the powerful, being enforced if necessary by the use of physical force, the threat of such force, and the punishment, by execution or imprisonment, of those actively opposed to such a transfer of power.

That is, those with the authority acquired by such force - initially or subsequently - relied both on their subjects being compliant and obedient, and on the use or the threat of physical force in order to enforce such compliance and obedience.

With the rise and the development of The State direct power has, for the most part, been replaced by indirect power; that is by some person or some minority influencing or persuading or manipulating a sufficient number of people to accept some leader/cliq/ue/minority/representatives as the legitimate authority. One of the mechanisms developed to enable some person or some minority to so gain and exercise power is the abstraction that is modern democracy where political parties compete for votes (from those entitled to and interested in voting) with such party representatives - said to be 'of the people' - being invested with power and influence usually by gaining the most votes, and with the leader of the political party that gains the most representatives usually assuming the primary role in governance.

However, the authority of those who acquire power by such indirect, non-forceful, means is - like the authority of those who acquire power through physical force - still an authority where there are subjects who are expected to be compliant and obedient to 'a higher authority', and where there is the use or the threat of physical force in order to enforce such compliance and obedience.

For elected governments always reserve to themselves, and their appointed officials or functionaries, the right, should they deem it appropriate, to use physical force, and imprisonment, as a means of curbing dissension and unrest among the subjects (the citizens) of The State. That is, those with such power regard themselves as the legitimate authority and thus as invested with the lawful and moral authority

necessary to use force to quell public disorder. In addition, they invest themselves with the authority to declare war on another State or States, so that a legitimate (or just) war is considered to be one declared and fought by such State authorities.

In effect, therefore, The State/the government is of necessity predicated on the assumption of the obedience/acquiescence of individuals; that is, on the assumption that individuals within the territory controlled by The State accept its authority and accept that such authority is legitimate - whomsoever is deemed to be or appears to be the government - even though most of the individuals in that territory have given no formal personal pledge of allegiance or pledge of loyalty to the ruling authority.

In practical terms, the subjects of The State - just as much as the subjects of some potentate, tyrannos, or some monarch - are expected to defer to those in authority in certain and important matters of judgement. Hence it is The State - on the assumption that the government is the legitimate authority of the territory of The State - which judges when the people should go to war or when its armed forces can use lethal force in some land in pursuit of some goal or aim. ^[2]

Indeed, The State increasingly expands the matters on which, and where which, it expects its authority to be obeyed (on pain of arrest and punishment). Thus in a modern State such as Britain the individual is expected to defer to the authority of the government in all manner of personal matters; for example, where, when (or even if) they can assemble to protest; in what places they can smoke cigarettes or a pipe of tobacco; in what and what is not 'an offensive weapon'; if and under what exact circumstances a parent or a teacher may discipline an unruly child or pupil; and so on etcetera.

Judgement, The State, And Authority

This usurping of individual judgement and this presumption or imposition of authority by others on individuals - be these others some government, some State, some monarch, some 'people's representative', some military commander, in the 'name of democracy' or whatever, and be such usurping, presumption or imposition done by direct or indirect power - is a perpetuation of a primitive way of life and a concealment and suppression of our true human nature.

It is a primitive way because it involves the control and manipulation of individuals by others, and the use of or the threat of using physical force and punishment in order to ensure or obtain compliance, obedience, or acquiescence. It is primitive also in that the main method of punishment employed is imprisonment and which imprisonment is the praxis of the bully and the abandonment of those imprisoned to a life governed by primitive instincts, brute force, intimidation, and physical restraint and control. All modern nation-States employ and indeed rely on imprisonment as a punishment, as a 'deterrent', and as a means of social control.

This usurping of individual judgement and this presumption or imposition of authority

by The State is a concealment and suppression of our true human nature because we possess the ability, the potential, to make our own decisions using our own judgement. To so make and to so exercise our own judgement, to act honourably, is the basis of our freedom as human beings: that is, of being free from servitude and being responsible for ourselves ^[3].

For, in practical terms, The State - as did potentates, monarchs, and others of that ilk - treat people, their subjects, as children. Restraining them; manipulating and influencing them; telling them what they can and cannot do; threatening to punish them if they misbehave; deciding how and in what manner they should be 'educated'; placing restrictions of where they can and cannot go; making judgements and decisions on their behalf; and so on. That is, it is those in authority who manipulate, influence, and who constrain us, and who decide what our liberties will be, and who possess the power to restrict or deny such liberties when it suits them or when their judgement (not ours) deems it necessary.

Abstractions As Manipulation

The indirect power of modern governments - and thus of nation-States - and thence their presumption of authority, is mostly the result of two factors: (1) the manipulation of people by a minority by means of causal abstractions ^[4]; (2) the influence of such causal abstractions on people. Once power is attained, such abstractions are used to enforce compliance and obedience; that is, to provide some sort of assumed moral legitimacy for the actions and the policies of those who have gained or assumed power.

Thus, abstractions are used to provide a pretext for authority, with some abstractions being regarded as having or as representing a certain moral worth which other abstractions do not possess.

Thus, the system of governance that is called democracy ^[5] is regarded, by its theorists and supporters, as possessing a certain moral worth and indeed as representing what is 'good' and allowing for, or producing, or promoting, a way of life which it is said is preferable to and/or better than that produced or promoted by others means of governance. Hence these theorists and supporters of democracy invest this system of governance with a higher moral value than, for example, what has been termed anarchism ^[6] with many further claiming that democracy is the only moral, legitimate, way of governance so that a nation-State with a democratic government has the moral authority to not only declare war (a 'just war') on those considered to be non-democratic but also a duty to instigate 'regime-change' and that such violence as is used, and such suffering and deaths as may be caused, are morally justifiable ^[7].

Basically, abstractions have been and are used as a means of control, as mechanisms of manipulation and compliance. Thus, instead of some person - some monarch,

prophet, or some tyrannos, for example - being said to have some 'divine right' or some 'destiny' to rule and thus being possessed of authority, it is said that some abstraction has worth and authority. Then it is assumed that those individuals striving to implement this abstraction are imbued with its authority so that what they do is 'right' and moral - provided their actions are in accord with, are a mimesis of, or approximate to this abstraction - and that they and others like them have a 'right' and a moral duty to lead and to govern and thus to exercise authority on behalf of this abstraction.

Among such moral-giving abstractions are and have been democracy, the *Führerprinzip*, capitalism, *socialisme* (society-before-self), communism (collective ownership), and religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

Authority In The Numinous Way

For The Numinous Way, it is the exercise of the judgement of the individual - arising from the use of empathy and the guidance that is personal honour - that is paramount, and which expresses our human nature.

That is, it is honour, the understanding that empathy provides, and the judgement of the individual, that are legitimate, moral, numinous, and thence the basis for authority. This means that authority resides in and extends only to individuals - by virtue of their honour, their empathy, and manifest in their own personal judgement, and therefore this always personal individual authority cannot be abstracted out from such personal judgement of individuals. In practical terms, this is a new type of authority - that of the individual whose concern is not power over others but over themselves, and which type of power is manifest in a living by honour, and thence in their self-responsibility and in how they interact with others.

Hence, The State, and all governments - elected or unelected - are not considered a legitimate authority since there can be no compliance to others other than that which is mutual, agreed, which arises from a personal knowing and a mutual personal respect, and which allow for the exercise of both empathy and personal honour.

For it is honour and empathy - not the authority, the laws, of some government or some State - which set the mode, the boundaries, for such agreement and such cooperation between individuals, and in practice this means a co-operation on a non-hierarchical basis, with empathy providing the personal knowing of another while honour determines how that knowing is made real through one's personal behaviour and interaction with others.

Thus The Numinous Way is the way of such numinous authority - of the individual authority of empathy, of personal judgement, of honour, and of personal responsibility. A way quite different from that of religions, States, governments, potentates, monarchs, and others of such ilk, who and which all expect and who and which often demand the compliance and obedience of individuals, on the threat of punishment; who and which expect/demand that individuals forsake their own judgement in favour

of that of some 'higher authority'; and who and which place their own manufactured un-numinous laws before the natural human and numinous principle of personal honour.

David Myatt
November 2011 CE

Notes

[1] The State may be defined as the concept of both (1) organizing and controlling - over a particular and large geographical area - land (and resources); and (2) organizing and controlling individuals over that same geographical particular and large geographical area by: (a) the use of physical force or the threat of force and/or by influencing or persuading or manipulating a sufficient number of people to accept some leader/cliq/ue/minority/representatives as the legitimate authority; (b) by means of the central administration and centralization of resources (especially fiscal and military); and (c) by the mandatory taxation of personal income.

The State thus divides people into those so governed and controlled - subjects - and those who govern or who are employed by those who govern to organize and control the subjects, with both subjects and those who govern or who are employed to organize and control the subjects being regarded as citizens of The State. In addition, The State designates and decides what is public and private (for example, in relation to land, or particular places) as it appropriates to itself the authority to control what it has so designated as public.

Given that the modern State controls and assumes authority over a certain geographical area, and given that these geographical areas are described by the term nation, a useful alternative term for The State is the nation-State.

[2] Thus do the politicians and functionaries of The State echo the sentiment and words of Augustine, written over one and half thousand years ago, in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (XXII, 75): "The natural order, which would have peace amongst men, necessitates that the judgement about and the authority to declare war should reside in those who have authority over others [a monarch/prince]."

[3] Honour is an expression of our nature as individuals, as free human beings. It is honourable to use our own judgement, be responsible for ourselves, and not to submit to those who would oppress or constrain us. It is honourable to defy those who use

force in an effort to obtain our obedience, and honourable to defend ourselves when attacked.

[4] An abstraction is:

"A manifestation of the primary error of conventional causal thinking; that is, of assuming only a causal linearity - of using causal reductionism: that simple cause-and-effect that excludes the acausal knowing that empathy provides and which knowing the numinous is a manifestation of. Implicit in abstractions is the notion of - the illusion of - the separateness of beings.

An abstraction is the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, "image" or category, and thus some generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals - and/or some being, some "thing" - to some group or category with the implicit acceptance of the separateness, in causal Space-Time, of such being/things/individuals. The positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Abstraction-ism - and the ideation that derives from it - can be philosophically defined as the implementation, the practical application, of ὕβρις." *A Glossary of Some Numinous Way Terms*. 2011 CE. Version 1.03

[5] The ideal of modern democracy is somewhat different from the reality as manifest in modern nation-States. In reality, it is not government by the people for the people, but rather government by a rather privileged oligarchy in the interests of that oligarchy, in the interests of implementing some dogma or some political programme, or in the interest of some vested often hidden lobby group.

It is not even a fair and reasonable vote, since topics the oligarchy, the privileged elite, and the Media and the vested interests do not want to discuss are not discussed, and voters are shamelessly manipulated, lied to, and shameless appeals are made to their instincts, their prejudices, their fears, with the elected government seldom if ever being truly representative of the people it governs (for example in terms of gender, occupation (or lack of it), ethnicity, standard of living) and most certainly most or all elected representatives being personally unknown to most of those who vote for them, and often or mostly voting 'along party lines' or according to what may benefit some interest group or lobby rather than according to the views of the majority of those who elected them.

It also happens that those who form the government - and thus who make decisions 'on behalf of the people' - do not represent the majority of voters, often receiving less votes than the combined votes of opposition parties.

In particular, all candidates of major parties liable to form a government have to undergo a rigorous 'selection procedure' by their already elected peers in order to ensure the loyalty of the candidate to the status quo. Thus, the candidates that the

people get to vote for have all or mostly been pre-selected according to criteria which ensures they will represent their party - or some vested interests - first, rather than the people.

[6] A loose definition of anarchism is that it is that way of living which regards the authority of The State as unnecessary and harmful, and which instead prefers the free and individual choice of mutual and non-hierarchical co-operation.

[7] This was the type of argument used by the governments of America and Britain for their invasions of and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Some Notes Concerning Causality, Ethics, and Acausal Knowing

The notion of causal separation - of the purely causal nature of Being and beings - is incomplete because of the acausal nature of livings beings. [1] Thus, livings beings are distinct in their being by virtue of possessing life, and this life which animates their matter, their causal being.

Hence my understanding of *Πόλεμος* as -

"...the whole, the complete, the natural, the cosmological, process which includes *ἀρχή*, *ψυχή*, *Αἰών*, and *Φύσις*, and our revealing or coming-to-know these through *λόγος*. That is, through that thoughtful reasoning [*σωφρονεῖν*], that balance (*ἀρμονίη*) of both a causal knowing and an acausal knowing." [2]

Conventional philosophy, with its ideation based on or derived from the causal separation of beings, is therefore incomplete, and expresses only a causal knowing. In addition, this causal knowing is one of ideation - of the process of *εἶδος* and *ιδέα* which involves (1) the assigning of individual beings (existents/things) to the categories and/or forms that have been so manufactured; (2) the process of inclusion/exclusion in the foregoing on the basis of some posited criteria; (3) the relation between the singular, separated beings, within and exterior to such categories and forms; (4) the relation, if any, between such posited categories and forms and thus the beings included or excluded from them; and (5) the assignment, by some posited criteria, of value and/or some attribute or attributes to both the beings included/excluded and to the forms/categories themselves, and which attributes may or may not be concerned with or involve degrees of separation, quantitative or qualitative,

As I have mentioned elsewhere [3] this is basically also the process of experimental science, differing from conventional philosophy by the use of and reliance on observational data, and often involving some abstraction symbolism, usually mathematical, to express or to define the subject-object relationship and inclusion/exclusion.

Knowledge becomes thus a subject-object causally-determined type of knowing, founded on the assumptions of causality and the observations of, or assumptions concerning, *Phainómenon* [4]. This type of knowing - especially that deriving from experimental science and especially that related to the observable Universe (including our own planet) - has proved insightful and valuable,

But I contend that it is limited, cannot therefore by itself be a guide to becoming *σοφός*, and that the fundamental mistake of conventional philosophy (and also of some speculative theories of experimental science) is to apply or strive to apply this process of causal knowing - the abstractions, the ideations - to living beings, especially human beings, especially in relation to understanding Being and beings. Furthermore, that the nature of Being and beings which such a causal knowing explains is incorrect, subjective, an illusion, by virtue of such knowing projecting causality, the ideation of separateness, of subject/object, onto Being and beings.

It is incorrect because living beings partake of the acausal nature of Being itself, and it is knowledge of this acausal nature - by the process of acausal knowing [5] - that uncovers the connected nature of not only living beings, but also of Being. Thus, *λόγος* is both this acausal knowing and also causal knowing - the process whereby we can discover *ἀληθεία*. [6]

I further contend that what is ethical - as with becoming *σοφός* - can only be based upon the complete knowing of Being and beings that this *λόγος* reveals or guides us toward. This complete knowing - partly revealed by empathy and partly by the numinous authority of *πάθει μάθος* [7] - is of what I have termed the the dependant nature of beings, in particular of living beings and of our connexion to Being and other living beings. This knowing, this uncovering of the acausality of Being, is of *Πόλεμος* as an expression of the acausality beyond our causal ideation, the acausal nature of which both *ψυχή* and *Αἰών* manifest to us, as thinking beings. [2]

This uncovering of and knowing of the dependant nature of beings - of ourselves as one microcosmic connexion to Life and thus to other living beings, human, sentient, and otherwise - thus establishes a new theory of ethics, based on the personal knowing deriving from a personal *πάθει μάθος* and on the empathy of the immediacy-of-the-moment [8]. Since, by its nature, empathy is personal, individual, and cannot be abstracted out from the personal immediacy-of-the-moment of that empathic knowing - away from a direct awareness of another living being - it follows that what is moral is not abstract, cannot be defined by any ideation, but instead is an expression of the numen, of *ψυχή*; that is, of acausal knowing and personal knowing; on the individual judgement of an individual who has the living quality,

ἀρετή.

For empathy and πάθει μάθος [9] enable us to be aware of, to know, *the numinous* - and thus predispose us to avoid the error, the disruption, that is ὕβρις, for such a knowing of the numinous includes an awareness and an understanding of Δίκη [10]. Thus, we make a distinction, based on the direct learning of our personal πάθει μάθος and on the acausal knowing of empathy, between that which inclines us, or could incline us, toward ἀρετή, and that which inclines us, or could incline us, toward ὕβρις [11]. This distinction is made in a practical way by a Code of personal honour, since it is such personal honour which - by means of the personal and the immediacy of empathy, and one's πάθει μάθος - is our guide to ἀρετή.

Hence, we are brought, by λόγος, by the process of thoughtful reasoning, σωφρονεῖν, to an awareness of Πόλεμος, of ἀρμονίη, of the balance that is Δίκη, and of τὸ καλόν. And this is a move toward becoming σοφός.

As Aeschylus wrote, over two and half thousand years ago:

ἰὼ βρότεια πράγματ' : εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν
σκιά τις ἂν τρέψειεν: εἰ δὲ δυστυχῆ,
βολαῖς ὑγρώσσω σπόγγος ὤλεσεν γραφήν.
καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτίρω πολύ. [12]

David Myatt
2011 CE

Notes:

[1] This is outlined in my *Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality* and also in *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*.

[2] *Heraclitus - Notes on Fragment 53*.

I incorporated part of the above notes in my essay, *Empathy and The Immoral Abstraction of Race*

In particular, ψυχή should be understood in relation to Αἰὼν, that is, ἀρχή is that changing, the presencing and re-presencing of being, that is ψυχή through Αἰὼν. Where of course Αἰὼν is to be understood in the Homeric sense as Life, that which animates us and gives us our mortal being.

[3] See for example *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way*.

[4] Refer to my *Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality*

[5] Refer, for example, to my *Acausality, Phainómenon, and The Appearance of Causality* and also *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change*

[6] See, for example, *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change* and also *Empathy and The Immoral Abstraction of Race*

[7] Refer to my *From Aeschylus To The Numinous Way* and other essays of a similar ilk.

[8] I have outlined my understanding of empathy in several essays, including *An Introduction To The Ontology of Being*, and *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*

[9] In an important way, a living culture transmits to us the remembered *πάθει μάθος* of our ancestors. See, for example, my *Numinous Culture, The Acausal, and Living Traditions*.

We can also, of course, learn from the *πάθει μάθος* of other cultures past and present, which live, still possess a numinous being, so long as we or others remember them and use them as one guide to becoming *σοφός*.

It is my contention that the Hellenic culture - with its insights into matters such as *ὑβρις* and *Δίκη* - is therefore now still a living culture; remembered, and presenced and transmitted, by those who having learned from those insights, treasure them. Thus, individuals such as Heraclitus, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and many others, transcending the practical milieu which brought their insights and their understanding forth, are still relevant and important.

*ὦ πόποι, ἦ δὴ πολλὸν ἀποιχομένου Ὀδυσῆος
δεύη, ὃ κε μνηστῆρσιν ἀναιδέσι χεῖρας ἐφείη*

Homer, The Odyssey, Book I, 253-254

Before the gods! How great is the need here for the absent Odysseus -
For him to set about these disrespectful ones with his fists!

[10] For some comments regarding *Δίκη*, see my *Quid Est Veritas?*

[11] In respect of *ὑβρις* see, for example, *Quid Est Veritas?*

[12] Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 1327-1330

*Alas! - for those concerns of mortals. A lucky fate
Is a shadowy thing that can change: and if an unlucky fate*

*Strikes, what is written about someone is destroyed by a moistened sponge;
And then there is much more to make lament for.*

The Natural Balance of Honour

Honour, Empathy, and Compassion in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

Some Definitions

Before proceeding to analyze the connexion between honour, empathy and compassion, it would perhaps be useful to give definitions of the terms themselves since such definitions (and etymologies, if applicable) might help to avoid confusion and mis-understandings in respect of the use of these terms in the philosophy of The Numinous Way.

Compassion

The English word compassion dates from around 1340 CE and the word in its original sense (and as used in the philosophy of The Numinous Way) means *benignity* [1]. Hence, compassion is being kindly disposed toward and/or feeling a sympathy with someone (or some living being) affected by pain/suffering/grief or who is enduring vicissitudes.

The word compassion is derived from *com*, meaning together-with, combined with *pati*, meaning to-suffer/to-endure, and thus useful synonyms for compassion, in this original sense, are *compassivity* and *benignity*.

Honour

The English word honour dates from around 1200 CE, deriving from the Latin *honorem* (meaning refined, grace, beauty) via the Old French (and thence Anglo-Norman) *onor/onur*. As used by The Numinous Way, honour means an instinct for and an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous. An honourable person is thus refined: that is, they are noble and cultured and hence distinguished by virtue of their character, which is one of manners, fairness, natural dignity, culture, and valour.

In respect of early usage of the term, two quotes may be of interest. The first, from c. 1393 CE, is taken from a poem, in Middle English, by John Gower:

And riht in such a maner wise
Sche bad thei scholde hire don servise,

So that Achilles underfongeth
As to a yong ladi belongeth
Honour, servise and reverence. [2]

The second is from several centuries later:

" Honour - as something distinct from mere probity, and which supposes in gentlemen a stronger abhorrence of perfidy, falsehood, or cowardice, and a more elevated and delicate sense of the dignity of virtue, than are usually found in vulgar minds." [3]

Empathy

Etymologically, this fairly recent English word, used to translate the German *Einfühlung*, derives, via the late Latin *sympathia*, from the Greek συμπάθεια - συμπαθής - and is thus formed from the prefix σύν (sym) together with παθ- [root of πάθος] meaning *enduring/suffering*, feeling: πάσχειν, to endure/suffer.

As used and defined by The Numinous Way, empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - is a natural human faculty: that is, a noble intuition about another human being or another living being. When empathy is developed and used, as envisaged by The Numinous Way, it is a specific and extended type of *συμπάθεια*. That is, it is a type of and a means to knowing and understanding another human being and/or other living beings - and thus differs in nature from compassion.

The Connexion Between Honour, Empathy, and Compassion

Compassion - the human virtue of having *συμπάθεια* with other living beings - often or mostly derives from, has its genesis in, our natural (and thus still undeveloped) faculty of empathy: from that translocation of ourselves that empathy provides. In essence, to be compassionate is to not cause or contribute to the suffering, or to aid in the alleviation of the suffering, of other living beings.

The Cosmic Ethic is the expression used to describe the ethics of The Numinous Way, and the Cosmic Ethic is essentially that presencing of ψυχή [Life] which occurs when the insight (the acausal-knowing) of a developed empathy inclines us toward a compassion balanced by and manifest in and through personal honour.

Thus, personal honour establishes both boundaries for and, to an extent, the content of compassion as compassion is understood by The Numinous Way, and thence represents the natural - the Cosmic - balance of human life. Or, expressed another way, honour manifests, presences, the numinous for us as human beings, and is a means whereby we can live in a more numinous way.

This natural human balance which personal honour presents is the principle of *Δίκη* - and the boundaries of compassion are most obvious in the principle of honourable self-defence. For The Numinous Way allows for the use of physical force sufficient to cause injury ('suffering') to another being- and allows for, if honourable, the use of lethal force - both in self-defence and (in the immediacy of the personal moment) in defence of someone close-by who is dishonourably attacked or threatened or bullied by others.

This use of force is importantly, crucially, restricted to such personal situations of immediate self-defence, and cannot be extended beyond that, for to so extend it or attempt to extend beyond the immediacy of the personal moment is dishonourable, contrary to the nature of honour itself.

Such individual action is the honourable - the fair, the valourous - thing to do so when faced with someone or some many acting dishonourably; when personally faced with someone whose nature inclines them toward, or subsumes them into, committing the error of *ὑβρις* thus upsetting the natural balance and undermining the numinous. Such a dishonourable person thus may be said to have a bad (a rotten) *φύσις* - that is, they lack or are deficient in *ἀρετή* and thus have little or no understanding of *Φύσις* [4] and do not possess the virtue, the skill, of *σωφρονεῖν*, of a reasoned, a balanced, judgement.

Hence, for The Numinous Way, compassion - benignity - is not (as it tends to be in some other Ways) unconditional, but rather must be balanced by and be in accord with honour. To so balance compassion by the ethical guidelines that honour provides is, from the perspective of The Numinous Way, the human thing to do; that is, consistent with our natural numinous nature, consistent with Nature, and thus with how *Φύσις* is revealed to us by both empathy and *πάθει μάθος*.

The connexion, therefore, between empathy, honour and compassion is the living human being, or rather a type of human being, for a well-manned individual adhering to what is fair, dignified, and valourous, presences the Numen [5], aids the cultivation and development of empathy (and embodies such empathy), and has benignity, that is, is compassionate in a manner consistent with the natural human balance that is *Δίκη*.

Expressed simply, such a type of human being is the Cosmic Ethic - and thus *Δίκη* - just as such an Ethic cannot live - exist, be found - in anything other than such a living being; that is, this Ethic cannot live in some law, in some Institution, in some Court, in some dogma or in some abstract theory. To be numinous, to presence the numinous, what is ethical requires a living honourable person, not some abstract theory of ethics.

Thus, in essence, it is the cultivation of such empathic, honourable, individuals - individually, and by, for example, a culture of *ἀρετή* - that is the simple praxis of The Numinous Way.

As mentioned elsewhere:

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

This *culture of ἀρετή* is thus a particular and an acquired balance - born from personal honour, from πάθει μάθος (from the personal knowing of the error, the unbalance, that is ὑβρις) and from using reasoned judgement (σωφρονεῖν), and both of which make us aware of the true nature of our φύσις [our own individual character] and of the nature of Φύσις itself." A *Glossary of Some Numinous Way Terms, Version 1.09*

David Myatt
October 2011 CE
(Revised JD2455975.101)

Notes

[1] The word benignity derives from the Latin *benignitatem* and the sense imputed by the word is of a kind, compassionate, well-mannered character, disposition, or deed. It came into English usage around the same time as compassion; for example, the word occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* [ii. 483] written around 1374 CE.

[2] John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*. Liber Quintus vv. 2997-3001 [Macaulay, G.C., ed. *The Works of John Gower*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1901]

[3] George Lyttelton. *History of the Life of Henry the Second*. London, Printed for J. Dodsley. M DCC LXXV II [1777] (A new ed., cor.) vol 3, p.178

[4] In respect of φύσις and Φύσις see, for example, my brief essay *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and Natural Change* [Some Notes on Heraclitus Fragment 123].

[5] That is, presences beauty - τὸ καλόν - culture, grace, a respect for 'the sacred', and imputes a knowledge of the need to avoid what is vulgar, dishonourable, and undignified.

In essence, what I have termed the acausal is not a generalization – a concept – deriving from a collocation of assumed, imagined, or causally observed Phainómenon, but instead that wordless knowing which empathy reveals and which a personal *πάθει μάθος* often inclines us toward. That is, the acausal is a direct and personal (individual) revealing of beings and Being which does not depend on denoting or naming.

What is so revealed is the acausal nature of some beings, and the connexion which exists between living beings. This particular revealing may be termed acausal-knowing, as distinct from the causal-knowing that results from observing Phainómenon.

Hitherto, beings and Being have been approached, understood, by means of our known physical senses – by Phainómenon – and by what has been posited on the basis of Phainómenon, which has often meant the manufacture of categories and abstract forms which beings are assigned to on the basis of some feature that has been outwardly observed or which has been assumed to be possessed by some beings or collocation of beings.

The new revealing of beings and Being means that our faculty of empathy – or more correctly, a developed faculty of human empathy – should be added to the five Aristotelian essentials, and which now six essentials enable us to come to know both the reality external to ourselves and the reality of ourselves, as individuals. That is, it is the combination of causal-knowing and acausal-knowing that can incline us toward a knowing of Reality and thus which manifests thoughtful-reasoning, a reasoned or balanced judgement [*σωφρονεῖν*].

Furthermore, when it is said that it is the acausal (or acausal energy) which animates physical matter, imparting to that matter what we observe as life [1], this animation is not some cause-and-effect (or even some assumed acausal effect) but rather the state of such matter being alive – that is, of there being a living-being (a biological organism) as distinct from a non-living being (ordinary physical matter). Furthermore, Life [*ψυχή*] does not exist as some causal form or abstraction *sans* beings, but is rather what we perceive as the nature of those beings which are observed to be alive, and which nature (or character) only empathy currently reveals to us.

Acausal Postulations

The nature of living-beings that empathy reveals is of acausal connexions between all living-beings, sentient and otherwise, and this leads us to the understanding that our own self-identity, our separateness and independence and even our assumed uniqueness in causal Time and causal Space, are causal presumptions. That is, a product of Phainómenon, of only causal-knowing. Since such causal-knowing is incomplete, lacking as it does acausal-knowing, it is thus not a sound basis to use in the matter of making ethical judgements.

Acausal-knowing leads us to some postulations regarding the acausal. One of these is that the acausal differs from the causal by reason of being a continuum of acausal Space and acausal Time, in contrast to the causal geometrical Space and linear causal Time of the causal continuum of Phainómenon. This in turn leads to the postulation of acausal energy, which is assumed to be 'that-which' might be a possibly observable attribute of a living-being having the hitherto causally-observed attributes of life. This then leads to the postulation of such acausal energy having certain attributes [2], of some or all of these attributes possibly being observable by the development of observational/experimental techniques perhaps partly based on acausal energy, and of such acausal energy therefore being manifest or capable of being manifest, as energy *sans* beings, in the causal continuum.

However, while these may seem reasonable assumptions about the nature acausal, about acausal Phainómenon, they are still only assumptions, and thus may not necessarily re-present that nature, accurately or otherwise. Indeed, such postulations concerning the nature of the acausal might merely replicate the error of imposing assumed causal forms upon that-which, being acausal, is formless.

For all that the acausal-knowing which empathy currently reveals to us is: (1) of a personal knowing of other living-beings and of ourselves in the immediacy-of-the-causal moment, and of (2) how the acausal itself is not some 'essence' behind or beyond the causal and beyond causal forms, since such an 'essence' is but itself a postulated ideation.

Or, expressed somewhat differently, our acausal-knowing is simply a revealing of the matrix of nexions which are living-beings, and thus of -

" The Cosmic Perspective - that is, [an] acceptance of ourselves as but one fragile fallible microcosmic nexion only temporarily presenced on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of Galaxies. This is the essence of *wu-wei* - a knowing, a feeling, of Being; a knowing, a feeling, of The Numen, the acausal Unity, the Cosmos itself; and a knowing, a feeling, once described in that ancient wisdom termed Tao, and yet which even then, as now, could not and cannot be described by or contained within that one, or any, particular term." [3]

David Myatt
2011 CE

Notes

[1] Currently, we observe or assume life by the following seven attributes: a living organism respire; it moves; it grows or changes; it excretes waste; it is sensitive to, or aware of, its environment; it can reproduce itself, and it can nourish itself.

[2] Some of the attributes of acausal energy, expressed in terms of acausal mass

(analogous to causal mass/energy) might be the following:

- (1) An acausal object, or mass, can change without any external force acting upon it – that is, the change is implicit *in* that acausal matter, by virtue of its inherent acausal charge.
- (2) The rate of change of an acausal object, or mass, is proportional to its acausal charge.
- (3) The change of an acausal object can continue until all its acausal charge has been dissipated.
- (4) Acausal charge is always conserved.
- (5) An acausal object, or mass, is acted upon by all other acausal matter in the cosmos.
- (6) Each acausal object in the cosmos attracts or repels every other acausal object in the physical cosmos with a magnitude which is proportional to the product of the acausal charges of those objects, and inversely proportional to the distance between them as measured in causal space.

[3] The quotation is from my essay *In Pursuit of Wisdom* (2011 CE).

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