

Meditations on Extremism, Remorse, and The Numinosity of Love

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Preface

The effusions in this compilation were the result of several years of interior reflexion - of meditation - upon my extremist past and my decades of selfishness; a reflexion which, from 2006 to 2012, led me to develope and then refine my 'numinous way' into the philosophy of pathei-mathos. Consequently, these effusions deal, in a quite personal way, with matters such as remorse, extremism, expiation, sorrow, and the reformation of individuals.

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

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

For this second edition, I have added a few more effusions and, for context,

included my essay *The Development Of The Numinous* as an appendix. I have also taken the opportunity to correct a few typos.

David Myatt
January 2016

The Suffering of Words

A warm morning in late May and I watched the green scenery pass as I sat in a train conveying me to the place which, except for the past six weeks, has been my home these last four years.

For those six weeks - emotional turmoil while I stayed with she whom I love and loved while the beauty and growth and spreading green of May passed me by as I lived, confined, within a city. So much emotion - too much; too much, sometimes, many times, as I went beyond the limits of what I in my arrogance had assumed was my calm, reflective, self to find such passion - and, sometimes, such anger and annoyance - as perplexed me. For days, a kind of restraint - but then feelings would burst forth to leave me wondering and, sometimes, ashamed. What was I to do as she in her inner pain and torment verbally lashed out? I know what I should have done - been more patient; more supportive; more loving; placing her feelings, her life, before my own. But I made excuses for my failings here, not knowing the depth of her despair even though I who loved her should have known this, felt this. I made excuses for my selfishness, and listened to her Doctor; to others; to my sometimes selfish desires, when I should have listened to her far more.

Thus do I feel and now know my own stupidity for my arrogant, vain, belief that I could help, assist, change what was. No blame for me, her relatives say - but I know my blame, my shame, my failure, here. Thus am I fully humbled by my own lack of insight; by my lack of knowing; by an understanding of my selfishness and my failure - knowing myself now for the ignorant, arrogant person I was, and am.

How hypocritical to teach, to preach, through writings, feeling as I do now the suffering of words, for she whom I loved killed herself only hours after I had left. Killed herself - only hours after I had left, despite her pleading for me to stay. There are no words to describe my blame; no words - for I had gone for a selfish break, to walk in the fields of the Farm.

So I am lost, bereft; guilty, crying, mourning the loss of her beauty, her life, her love, Never again to hold her hand; to embrace her. Never again to share a

smile; a peaceful moment; our dream of being together in our home. The fault is mine, and I have to carry this knowledge of unintentionally aiding the ending of a life, this burden, and the guilt, hoping, praying, that somehow, sometime, somewhere I can give some meaning to her life, and perhaps live without ever again causing any suffering to any living thing. Or should I, out of honour, ease this all-consuming pain and guilt by joining my beloved? I do not know; cannot decide. I miss her so much, so deeply, my mind suffused with images of what I did and did not do and should have done. If only I had not gone - or gone back to sit with her in that small garden as she wished.....

I shall never be the same again, deeply knowing that I do not understand.

30 May 2006

(In Memory of Frances, died Monday, May 29, 2006)

A Silent Dweller

Yet again I have spent an hour or so sitting in the hot Sun in the garden of this Farm, feeling and thinking many things, on a day before that day which marks a month since Fran's tragic death.

Something seems to have happened at, or because of, my brief stay at the monastery: something slowly grown, within me, as a result of being there, and I do not understand how or why this is so. Perhaps it was the time alone, in silence. Or the many attempts to pray, to believe. Or the knowledge of my failings, laid bare among such surroundings and among such people of genuine goodness. I do not know, and do not, really, even wish to work such things out. It just is what it is - a gentle, but wonderful, appreciation of the innate beauty and goodness of life, which I felt, and feel, is in some indefinable way a gift from Fran, something which gives her death some meaning, at least to me.

This feeling first suffused me a few days ago in the hills when, cycling along a quiet lane, I stopped on a warm and sunny morning to hear two Skylarks above a field of Poppy-filled wheat: life in all its quiet stillness was beautiful and good, then, and it was as if Fran, or something of her, was around, with her somehow and faintly smiling in that way she often smiled. So, on my return, I quickly wrote out my *The Ineffable Goodness* poem, as some attempt at a positive tribute for her.

Now, a few days further on, I am beginning to feel somewhat re-assured about life, again - remembering all the good times, the good days, Fran and I shared,

and feeling that she may at last have found the peace that certainly eluded her for most of the last two troubled years of her life. Thus, there are for me moments of happiness, again - and moments of sadness because she cut short her life even though so many people, myself included, loved her, and even though she had such beauty, such talents, such promise of happiness had she only been able to appreciate herself as others appreciated her. So, both the happiness and the sadness merge to form something, in me - something new; something deep, and strange, so that I am beginning again to sense that warm glowing goodness and beauty which is and can be presenced in some numinous music, in some Art, in good, compassionate deeds, in prayer, and especially in a noble personal love.

Where does this leave me, now? With a certain knowing of how Fran changed me for the better, and with a desire to remember this discovery, this insight: to transform myself, my life, through a calm, compassionate, acceptance and use whatever causal time remains to me to gently do what is right, to cease to cause suffering, to accept the beauty of each moment, in a numinous way, and to remember Fran with the dawning and the ending of each day.

There remains, of course, the difficult, perplexing, sometimes still troubling question of belief, of prayer - but I feel this is resolving itself, as such things often do, in its own slow, inner way. Not a sudden moment of insight, but instead a gradual dawning, as when Sun slowly breaks through a thin but total covering of cloud in Spring and Autumn to bring that blue I, we, so admire and which seems to express something of the wonder of life, of Nature, of the Cosmos. Hence, there is an increasing awareness, for me, of Nature, of us as one connexion; an awareness of The Numinous Way, manifest in compassion, empathy, gentleness and honour. Above all manifest in gentleness, in letting-be; in an appreciation of how the numen is and can be presenced, in us, in our lives.

Thus, I am calm again, for the moment, gently remembering the beautiful Frances, and hoping that I can live up to my own words, as a monk, or a nun, hope in silent, contemplative, prayer to live up to the Jesus within, and external, to them. Yet - there is still a vague, rather ill-defined yearning, to be part of something beyond me, which might aid me to remember, which might and which could and which should correct me, guide me. A yearning to surrender to the beauty, the presencing, that was and is manifest in early polyphony, in the Latin Opus Dei sung in some monastic Choir. A yearning to just be in such a place, without words, without thought - suffused with the centuries of being, with the goodness, the numinous silence, that pervades cloisters, a Choir, an Abbey. I did not find that at that monastery - at least outwardly - for there was the mostly English Office; the modern buildings. Perhaps it is the essence behind all such things that I feel, that I yearn for, that I seek - the essence beyond even the Latin Opus Dei; beyond the numinous office of Latin Compline, and beyond that beautiful silent, reverent prayer before a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The essence beyond the wheatfields where Skylarks sing; beyond the beauty of some women; beyond the sharing of exquisite moments with such

a woman. Beyond all such worldly things, all such causal manifestations. How to live always in and with the Essence itself? With, within, the Numen? Always in the presence of The Numen? To be at peace, and in silence, at last? I do not know - and perhaps I never will know. What I do feel, what I do believe I now know, is that all such manifestations of the Numen are important; that they all have their place, and all perhaps may serve the same ultimate purpose - that of bringing us closer to the ineffable beauty, the ineffable goodness, of life; that of transforming us, reminding us; that of giving us as individuals the chance to be good, to presence the good, to be part of the Numen itself.

Hence, there is now a real gentle tolerance in me - a silent dweller, who dreams. I just hope - desire - that this will last, although given my past multitude of mistakes, there is perhaps little for me to be optimistic about in this respect...

June 25, 2006

Such A Moment Of Tears

A short while ago I was listening to a recording of the Monks of the Abbey Saint-Maurice and Saint-Maur at Clervaux singing *Hodie Christus Natus Est*. I do not know why I wept on hearing this - except that perhaps the beautiful, numinous, divine-like music reached me, as such music often does, beyond that intellect whose pride and arrogance has often blighted my life.

There was such a purity in such music as if it takes away in some indefinable way the almost physical moments of despair when I remember the stupid deeds of my past. If only I had not done that - or said that... If only I could go back to some, many, moments in time. So much regret.

In such listening, in such a moment of tears, I seem to be so many places, so suffused with so many emotions - I am by the door, the last time I saw Fran, as I selfishly left to leave her, to leave her alone with her anguish, alone with that anguish which prompted her to take her own life, only hours later; I am back again in what seems to be the pure, gentle, days of my novitiate when in Choir I strive to praise through the Latin plainchant that which I felt, knew, then was the essence of the good.

And yet at the same time I am also. in such moments of tears, the pain, the suffering, of so many people for so many centuries - crying out without words for it to end; for the warm Sun of a wordless love to break forth from this sad Winter of darkness so that the suffering of so many for so long will end. Thus, there is again that straining yearning when we fall to our knees as tears stream

forth; hoping, hoping... For answers.

But, yet again, there are no answers; no answers are found, given, to us, now; no words in reply to such tears; no gentle comfort coming forth from - somewhere. We are alone, just alone, again, wiping the tears away from our eyes, our face, to slowly rise, and look out of the window toward the hills where the trees stand, Winter-bare, under a cloudy sky.

Such a desire to pray - to say some words for comfort; for myself; for the so many others who suffer; who have suffered; who will suffer, in anguish, despair, sadness, pain. But the words refuse to issue forth from lips, from the mind, as if I would be a hypocrite for saying them, without belief, without that heartfelt sincerity of faith. Perhaps that would after all be too easy; too soon. Too easy, too soon - for me who has caused so much suffering for so many people for so many years. And it seems somewhat strange that now, when I do not believe, but often desire to believe, that I read Saint Benedict's Rule regarding humility when - as monk who did believe - I did not read it, except in a cursory way. Then, the read words had no meaning - they were only words, of some book. Now: now, some of the words seem to have a life, a meaning: "...but then I was humbled and overwhelmed with confusion..." As if I am some learner of some lesson; a slow learner, who took decades to know, to truly feel, to fully understand, and so cease - or at least strive to cease - to cause suffering to any living thing.

So, now it is back to my life in this world - to the many things to occupy the time of day before the hours of sleep arrive to sometimes gracefully bring a certain peace.

December 2006
(Extract from a letter sent to a religious of OSB)

Between Dishonour and Desire

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

Thus does beauty live, again, and somewhere, here: as if I reaching out can almost touch its very being as one might reach to touch one's nearby gentle loving lover. But: there is instead only that ache, that sighing, that knowing of a loneliness, clinging - kept small, undepressing, by only memories of so many

times, pastly shared, which in their dwelling bring some solace, as out beyond such a presencing of beauty here we still in our, in this, moment feel so many people of this world subsumed in folly, lostness: hubris hiding compassion, a personal love hiding somewhere between dishonour and desire.

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

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

2007

One More Foolish Failure

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

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

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

No excuses - because from sorrow, from personal tragedy, I felt, dis-covered, the unethical nature of all abstractions, be they deemed political, religious, or social. And yet I always seemed, until a month ago, to gravitate back toward

them, as if there was some basic flaw in my personal nature, my character, that allowed or even caused such a return, such a stupid forgetting of lessons learnt; as if I was in truth an addict, addicted to challenges, to strife, to violent change, because such challenges, such strife, such violence brought or seemed to bring a vivifying existence, a sense of belonging, of being alive - and yes, a feeling of being different, special, in the sense of believing that one is able to make a difference, to the world.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But even this Numinous Way of mine seems incomplete, as it is only my own uncertain and possibly quite feeble answer. For even now I seem to have no means, in and through this Way of mine, to presence the Numen, on a regular

temporal basis to remind myself of the mistakes of my past, to feel again the living numinous Cosmos beyond that often mundane world which has now become the place of my daily living.

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

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

March 2010

Letter To My Undiscovered Self

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

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

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

Thus I as a neo-nazi, as a racist [2], would for some thirty years and by diatribes spoken, written, rant on and on about these alleged problems: about 'the Jewish/Zionist problem, about 'the dangers of race-mixing', about the need for 'a strong nation', about 'why we need a revolution', about 'the struggle for victory',

about 'the survival of the Aryan race', and so on and so on. Later on, following my conversion to Islam, I would - for some seven or so years - write and talk about 'the arrogance of the kuffar', about 'the need for a Khilafah', about 'the dangers of kufr', about 'the need for Jihad against the kuffar', and so on and so on.

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

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

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

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

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

being slaves to our personal desires, feelings, needs, we were enslaved to our ideals, our goals, our ideologies, our abstractions, and to the phantasmagorical problems we manufactured, we imagined, or we believed in.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

February 2012

Notes

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

reason, and honour.

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

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

[3]

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

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

Numinous Expiation

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

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

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

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

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

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

ich wat þar schal beo niþ & wrake

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In addition,

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

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

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

our humanity.

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

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

February 2012

Notes

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

[2] The quotation from Diogenes Laërtius is: *πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα* (ix. 7)

My translation is: *All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia.*

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

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

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

psychological balance within the individual.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pardonance

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

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

does cause further suffering.

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

A Personal Perspective - Dealing With Extremism

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

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

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

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

In all honesty, I have to answer no. For my personal experience over some forty years has unfortunately shown that some people (whether extremists or not)

are, or appear to be, just bad, rotten, by nature and thus possibly/probably irredeemable. I could be mistaken, as I hope that there exists some means to reveal, to nurture, the humanity of such individuals, although I do not know and cannot conceive of what such means might be. What I do intimate, however, is that such irredeemable individuals are, and probably always have been, a minority.

A Personal Philosophy

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

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

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

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

March 2012

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

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

So Much Remorse

(Extract from a letter to a friend)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Awed by her brightness
Stars near the beautiful Moon
Cover their own shining faces
When She lights earth
With her silver brilliance
Of love... ^[3]

February 2012

Some Notes (Post Scriptum)

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

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

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

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

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

And What You Thought You Came For Is...

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

TS Eliot: Little Gidding

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

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

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

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

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

I, now, someone - who unlike so many millions world-wide - fortunate indeed to have shelter, food adequate to feed his gauntness for a day; clothes sufficient to keep-in warmth; and health - though agely ageing, slowly fading - enough to keep him fending for, and fendful of, himself. There could be more; there was far more, but that seems long ago; unneeded now. For this is all that there is, this happiness in moments when - needs fulfilled - no lust for change, having laid in wait within, bursts forth bringing thus such breaking difference as so often causes two, more, far more, humans to break or drift apart.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

August 2011

Some Personal Perceiverations

Being, Death, Becoming

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

quietly, peacefully, preaches personal virtues such as empathy, gentleness, compassion, and *εὐταξία*, and who understands racism for the inhumanity it is?

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

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

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

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

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

Sorrow and Love

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

This instinctive heart-felt act following such a personal tragedy afterwards rather surprised me, an act perhaps brought forth by my upbringing as a Catholic and my time as a monk. Surprised me, for I was still then, nominally at least, a Muslim, and so in theory should have made dua to Allah or travelled to the nearest Mosque. Thus began an intense interior process of reflexion which

was to last some three years, and which was to lead to me developing, refining, my philosophy of The Numinous Way and thus to turning away from the way of al-Islam, away from all causal abstractions.

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

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

Furthermore:

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

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

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

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

important, the most human, the most numinous, virtue of all.

The Infortunity of Abstractions

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

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

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

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

"...fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is a manufactured abstraction, a great cause of suffering, and that nothing - no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty - is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others - based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived

duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction - which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being." *A Change of Perspective* (2010 ce)

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

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

A women, there, whose dog, disobeying,
Splashes sea with sand until new interest
Takes him where
This bearded man of greying hair
No longer reeks
With sadness.
Instead:
The smile of joy when Sun of Summer
Presents again this Paradise of Earth
For I am only tears, falling [2]

February 2012

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

Absque Vita Tali, Verbum Quoad Litteram Est Mortuum

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

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

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

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

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

*τό θ' ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἤδηκατακαρφομένης τρίποδας
μὲν ὁδοῦς
στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων
ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. [1]*

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

There has thus grown, within because of age, both a new knowing of how

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

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

December 2011

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

Aesch. Ag 79-82

So Many Tears

Here am I listening to JS Bach's *Erbarme Dich* and weeping, weeping, weeping: such tears of sadness as if all the pain, all the suffering of the past five thousand years has come to be within me, this selfish man who caused so much suffering, who once - long ago it seems - thought he knew and understood and who thus sent forth so many words.

So many words... Now there is only the pain of knowing; only the anguish of failure; only one allegory among so many to bring that feeling, that knowing, which is far beyond any words I know.

So much failure so many times, by me, by others. Why cannot we learn? Why have we not learnt? Why has not the simple love of one such simple numinous allegory come to stay with us, day after day, decade upon decade, century after century? Why did not the simple love of my own personal leaning born from the

tragedy of one beautiful woman's death stay with me through those so recent weeks of ignorance when I turned back toward a vainful striving?

Why have we always, it seems, regressed toward the mistakes of our past? The mistakes of suffering born from striving for - from adherence to - some abstraction which leeches away that personal love, that compassion, that empathy that is the very essence of our human being?

So and yet again I am humbled by my own knowledge of myself; by that love which has lived within so many others century century and which so briefly lived within me until I became distracted again by the passion of following some stupid inhuman abstraction.

Failure upon failure; death following death; suffering upon suffering. Why have we not learnt? Why have I not learnt? Or am I by my life - by the mistakes of my life, by my own stupidity, time upon time - just one more example among so many examples these past five thousand years?

So much promise - oh how so much promise! - that lives within us, that has lived within some of us but which so many, it seems, take or leech away through their own selfish passion or through their striving for some lifeless un-numinous abstraction, just as it lived within her, him, taken from them as it was taken from them by things not even now fully understood but only felt as when I as in the moment just now past bent down, weeping, weeping, weeping such tears of sadness as if all the anguish of the centuries was seeping out from the depths below.

So, the music ends, and I am once again one man veering toward old age, looking out toward the autumnal hill where the clouds of Dusk have come to cover the setting Sun as begins again one more dark night for this forgetful fool.

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Erbarne dich, mein Gott,
um meiner Zähren willen!
Schaue hier, Herz und Auge
weint vor dir bitterlich.
Erbarne dich, mein Gott.

Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen,
stell' ich mich doch wieder ein;

hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen
durch sein' Angst und Todespein.
Ich verleugne nicht die Schuld;
aber deine Gnad' und Huld
ist viel größer als die Sünde,
die ich stets in mir befinde.

Miserere Mei, Deus

Extract from a letter to a personal correspondent

In respect of religion, there seems to have grown within me, this past year, a feeling regarding prayer, especially contemplative prayer, or rather that quiet way of being when - with no expectation of or belief in God - no words are desired or required and one is aware of the numinous in such an unaffected way that there is a calmness emanating not from within - not caused by our knowing or feeling of self - but from that ineffable vastness beyond which includes us and all the life that seeps into us, there in our stillness: emanations, of not only the dreams, the hopes, the love, the sadness, the sorrow, the grief, the pain, the joy, the tragedy, felt, known, experienced by we humans millennia after millennia, but also of the being, the essence, of the other life around us, here as Nature, and elsewhere, which, as we, 'hath but a short time to live'.

A feeling, an intimation, of perhaps in some small way now understanding the Latin Opus Dei - Officium Divinum - as a needful daily reminder of our needful humility, as the plaintive cry Miserere Mei, Deus so reminds, and as the Namaz of Islam also so reminds with its Ruku, Sajdah, and recitation of Subhana Rabbiyal a'la. A needful daily reminder that we are transient beings, prone to dishonour, selfishness, and hubris, but who can be loving and kind, and beings prone to the charisma, the temptation, of words, either our own or those spoken or written by others. A reminder that we can so easily forget, have so often forgotten, "that gentleness, that modest demeanour, that understanding, which derives from an appreciation of the numinous and also from one's own admitted uncertainty of knowing and one's acknowledgement of past mistakes. An uncertainty of knowing, an acknowledgement of mistakes, that often derive from πάθει μάθος." [1]

A feeling, thus, of again understanding the necessitude we humans seem to have for prayer and for God, for Allah, for the gods, for the divine; and why this need, and its varied expression over millennia, should be respected and not profaned by that hubriatic personal certitude-of-knowing which enthralled, and has enthralled, so many especially in more recent times, making many of them prejudiced against organized religions and often against other expressions of

spirituality.

Personally, I have - fully knowing my past hubris, the suffering I have caused, and aware of my manifold errors and mistakes over four decades - a great respect for other religions and spiritual ways, and aware as I am how they each in their own manner, express, have expressed, or are intimations of, the numinous. For instance, I have come to appreciate, more and more over the past few years, the numinosity of the sacred music of the Christian Church (especially Catholicism), from before Gregorian chant to composers such as Byrd, Dowland, Lassus, to Palestrina, to Phillipe de Monte, and beyond. So much so that such sacred music is now the only music I can listen to, out of choice, redolent as it is, has become, for me, of the beautiful, of humility, of tragedy, of a sacred suprapersonal joy, of what is or can be divined through contemplative prayer. A remarkable treasure of culture, of pathei-mathos...

Without such religious, such spiritual, such organized, reminders, daily or weekly - that is, without prayer and without what is perhaps the best that religions and spirituality manifest - how do we balance another need of ours? That need to cause suffering and cry havoc, and a need whose genesis, perhaps, resides in our desire to be, to express, to re-affirm the separation-of-otherness, manifest as this is and has been in our own self-importance, our egoism, our greed; and in our belief that 'we', our assumed or our assigned category, are better than, superior to, 'them', the others: that 'we' are 'right' or have right on our side while 'they' do not and are wrong, leading as such belief so often does and so often has done to conflict and war and to us treating 'the others' in a dishonourable, uncompassionate, way because we, or those we follow and obey, have dehumanized 'them'. For I now incline toward the view that without such categorization, such assumptions - such a prejudice, such a belief - about 'us' and 'them', without such greed, such self-interest, and such a need to express, to manifest, importance, then war and suffering-causing armed conflict are not possible.

Is humility, therefore and as most religions and spiritual ways inform us, a necessity for us, as human beings? And if so, then how to manifest such humility, to be reminded of such a need, if we, as I now, personally have no expectation of or belief in God, or in Allah - in Heaven or Jannah - or in gods, or even in mechanisms such as rebirth and karma? Such questions have greatly occupied me for the past three years.

Given what I have intuited about our human nature - what many others have intuited or discovered over millennia - and what I believe I may have learned from my own pathei-mathos, I feel humility is indeed a necessity for us, as a means of guiding us toward avoiding causing suffering; as a means of placing our own life in the cosmic perspective of Life. That is, as a means of appreciating our nature as fallible, error-prone, beings who have the ability, the character, to not only refrain from committing the error of hubris but to also

rationally understand why hubris is an error and what the numinous may be, beyond ideations and beyond the myths, the allegories, the spiritualities, the words, that we have used and do use in order to try and express it.

As to how to manifest humility - sans religions, sans prayer to a deity or deities, (etcetera) - I admit I do not know, although my *Recuyle Of The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos* is my attempt to find, and to try and express, some answers [2]. Fallible answers such as the importance, the numinosity, of personal love; fallible answers such as empathy, and the knowing, the understanding, of others (and of ourselves) that empathy provides and of how such empathy and such empathic knowing is and can only be personal. Fallible answers such as an appreciation of - and the presumption of - innocence, understood as innocence is as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us - of whom we have have no empathic knowledge - are therefore unjudged by us and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt until direct personal experience and individual and empathic knowing of them prove otherwise; and fallible answers such as appreciating how the separation-of-otherness leads to, is the genesis of, hubris.

Which leads me, and has led me, to other related questions. Without religions or some form or forms of social spirituality - without a belief in Heaven or Jannah or in a promised afterlife, or in rebirth and karma - how can humans change and so avoid the rotten behaviour, the hubris, that causes or contributes to suffering, and should we, as individuals or collectively, even try to change others, or should we concern ourselves only with our own inner and outer reformation? Has The State [3] assumed such a moral rôle by means of laws, punishments, and other mechanisms of authority or persuasion, and should The State assume or be allowed to assume such a moral rôle? My own answers, fallible and such as they are [4], are that our change, our reformation, are personal; consequences of pathei-mathos, a balanced judgement, and of empathy, and thus involve an appreciation of the numinous; and that the only non-suffering, non-hubriatic, way to change or try to change, to reform, others is by personal, direct, example and by valourous deeds in the immediacy of the moment. These answers are thus spiritual, apolitical, and imply that

"...what matters [is] our own moral character, our interior life, our appreciation of the numinous, and the individual human beings we interact with on the personal level; so that our horizon is to refine ourselves into cultured beings who are civil, reasoned, empathic, non-judgemental, unbiased, and who will, in the words of one guide to what is moral, Ἀπόδοτε οὖν τὰ Καίσαρος Καίσαρι καὶ τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῷ Θεῷ." [5]

December 2nd, 2012

Notes, Post Scriptum

[1] *Toward Humility - A Brief Personal View*, included in *Pathei-Mathos: A Path to Humility* (2012)

[2] In addition to that recueil, the text *Conspectus of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos* provides a reasonable overview of such answers.

[3] As mentioned in *Politics, Society, Social Reform, and Pathei-Mathos*, The State is 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.

[4] Outlined in *Recuyle Of The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos* and *Conspectus of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*.

[5] The quotation is from my *Prejudice, Extremism, Islamophobia, and Culture*.

Appendix

Concerning The Development Of The Numinous Way

Background

What I term The Numinous Way, as a philosophy and as a way of life, was not the result of a few or many moments of inspiration striking close together in causal Time as measured by a terran-calendar and thus separated from each other by days, weeks, or even a few years.

Rather, it resulted from some nine years of reflexions, intuitions, and experiences, beginning in 2002 when - for quite a few months - I wandered as a vagabond in the hills and fells of Westmorland and lived in a tent, and during

which time I communicated some of my musings, by means of handwritten letters, to a lady living in Oxford whom I had first met well over a decade before.

These musings concerned Nature, our place - as humans - in Nature and the Cosmos; the purpose, if any, of our lives; whether or not the five Aristotelian essentials gave a true understanding of the external world; and whether or not God, or Allah, or some sort of divinity or divinities, existed, and thus - if they did not - whence came mystical insight, knowledge, and understanding, and what value or validity, if any, did such mystical insight, knowledge, and understanding, possess.

During the previous thirty or more years I had occasional intuitions concerning, or feelings, regarding, Nature, divinity, the Cosmos, and 'the numinous'; insights and feelings which led me to study Taoism, Hellenic culture, Buddhism, the Catholic mystic tradition, and become a Catholic monk. Later on, such intuitions concerning the numinous - and travels in the Sahara Desert - led me to begin a serious study of Islam and were part of the process that led me to convert to that way of life.

But these intuitions, feelings - and the understanding and knowledge they engendered - were or always eventually became secondary to what, since around 1964, I had considered or felt was the purpose of my own life. This was to aid, to assist, in some way the exploration and the colonization of Outer Space, and it was enthusiasm for - the inspiration of - that ideal which led me to seriously study the science of Physics, and then to seek to find what type of society might be able to make that ideal a reality, a seeking initially aided by my study of and enthusiasm for Hellenic culture, a culture - manifest in Greek heroes such as Odysseus and in the warrior society home to the likes of the sons of Atreus - which I came to regard as the ideal prototype for this new society of new explorers and new heroes.

After considering, and then rejecting, the communist society of the Soviet Union [1], an intuition regarding National-Socialist Germany [2] led me to seriously study that society and National-Socialism, a study ended when I peremptorily concluded that I had indeed found the right type of modern society. Thus I became a National-Socialist, with my aim - the purpose of my life - being to aid the foundation of a new National-Socialist State as a prelude to the exploration and the colonization of Outer Space, and thus the creation of a Galactic Imperium, a new Galactic, or Cosmic, Reich.

As I wrote in part one of some autobiographical scribblings issued in 1998 and which were based on some writings of mine dating back to the 1970's:

"It is the vision of a Galactic Empire which runs through my political life just as it is the quest to find and understand our human identity,

and my own identity, and our relation to Nature, which runs through my personal and spiritual life, giving me the two aims which I consistently pursued since I was about thirteen years of age, regardless of where I was, what I was doing and how I was described by others or even by myself..."

For it was this aim of the exploration and the colonization of Outer Space, and my rather schoolboyish enthusiasm for it, which - together with the enjoyment of the struggle - inspired my fanaticism, my extremism, and which re-inspired me when, as sometimes occurred during my NS decades, my enthusiasm for politics, for a political revolution, waned, or when my intuitions, my feelings, concerning the numinous and my love of women - the dual inspiration for most of my poetry - became stronger than my political beliefs and my revolutionary fervour.

The aim, the purpose, this idealization, regarding Outer Space even partly motivated my study of and thence my conversion to Islam in 1998. For example, not long before that conversion, in an essay entitled *Foreseeing The Future*, I wrote:

" I firmly believe that Islam has the potential to create not only a new civilization, governed according to reason, but also a new Empire which could take on and overthrow the established world-order dedicated as this world-order is to usury, decadence and a god-less materialism [...] I also believe that a new Islamic Empire could create the Galactic Empire, or at least lay the foundations of it. Perhaps the first human colonies on another world will have as their flag the Islamic crescent, a flag inscribed with the words, in Arabic, In the Name of Allah, The Compassionate, The Merciful."

Thus, as when a National-Socialist, I dedicated myself to my 'new cause', to an ideal I idealistically carried in the headpiece of my head: the cause of Jihad, of disrupting existing societies as a prelude to manufacturing a new one. In this instance, a resurgent Khilafah.

As with National-Socialism, it was the ideal, the goal, the struggle, which was paramount, important; and I - like the extremist I was - hubriatically placed that goal, that ideal, that struggle for victory, before love, fairness, compassion, reason, and truth, and thus engendered and incited violence, hatred, and killing.

In addition, I always felt myself bound by honour to be loyal to either a cause, an ideology, or to certain individuals and so do the duty I had sworn by oath to do and be loyal to those I had sworn to be loyal to. Hence when doubts about my beliefs arose during my decades as a nazi I always had recourse to honour

and so considered myself - even during my time as a monk - as a National-Socialist, albeit, when a monk, as a non-active one for whom there was ultimately no contradiction between the NS ethos and the ethos of a traditional Catholicism, for there was the Reichskonkordat and the agreement Pope Pius XII reached with Hitler.

During my Muslim years I felt bound by the oath of my Shahadah; an oath which negated my NS beliefs and led me to reject racism and nationalism, and embrace the multi-racialism of the Ummah; and which general oath, together (and importantly) with a personal oath sworn a few years after my conversion, would always - until 2009 - bring me back, or eventually cause me to drift back, to Islam and always remind me of the duty I felt I was, as a Muslim, honour-bound to do.

2002-2006

This drift back toward Islam is what occurred after my musings in 2002. I tried to forget them, a task made difficult when later that year I went to live on a farm and also work on another nearby farm. For that living and such work brought a deep personal contentment and further intuitions and feelings, and a burgeoning understanding, regarding the numinous, and especially concerning Nature; some of which intuitions and feelings I again communicated by means of handwritten letters, mostly to the aforementioned lady.

For a while I sought to find a synthesis, studied Sufism, but was unable to find any satisfactory answers, and thus began an interior struggle, a personal struggle I made some mention of in *Myngath*. A struggle, a conflict, between my own intuitions, insights, and burgeoning understanding - regarding the numinous and human beings - and the way of faith and belief; between what I felt was a more natural, a more numinous way, and the necessary belief in Allah, the Quran, the Sunnah that Islam, that being Muslim, required.

For a while, faith and belief and duty triumphed; then I wavered, and began to write in more detail about this still as yet unformed 'numinous way'. Then, yet again honour, duty, and loyalty triumphed - but only a while - for I chanced to meet and then fell in love with a most beautiful, non-Muslim, lady. And it was our relationship - but most of all her tragic death in May 2006 - that intensified my inner struggle and forced me to ask and then answer certain fundamental questions regarding my past and my own nature.

As I wrote at the time:

" Thus do I feel and now know my own stupidity for my arrogant, vain, belief that I could help, assist, change what was [...] I know my blame, my shame, my failure, here. Thus am I fully humbled by my own lack

of insight; by my lack of knowing; by an understanding of my selfishness and my failure - knowing myself now for the ignorant, arrogant person I was, and am. How hypocritical to teach, to preach, through writings, feeling as I do now the suffering of words."

I did not like the answers about myself that this tragedy forced me to find; indeed, I did not like myself and so, for a while, clung onto Islam, onto being Muslim; onto the way of faith, of God, of ignoring my own answers, my own feelings, my own intuitions. For there was - or so it then seemed - expiation, redemption, hope, and even some personal comfort, there. But this return to such surety just felt wrong, deeply wrong.

2006-2009

For there was, as I wrote in *Myngath*,

"...one uncomfortable truth from which even I with all my sophistry could not contrive to hide from myself, even though I tried, for a while. The truth that I am indebted. That I have a debt of personal honour to both Fran and to Sue, who died - thirteen years apart - leaving me bereft of love, replete with sorrow, and somewhat perplexed. A debt to all those other women who, over four decades, I have hurt in a personal way; a debt to the Cosmos itself for the suffering I have caused and inflicted through the unethical pursuit of abstractions.

A debt somehow and in some way - beyond a simple remembrance of them - to especially make the life and death of Sue and Fran worthwhile and full of meaning, as if their tragic early dying meant something to both me, and through my words, my deeds, to others. A debt of change, of learning - in me, so that from my pathei-mathos I might be, should be, a better person; presencing through words, living, thought, and deeds, that simple purity of life felt, touched, known, in those stark moments of the immediacy of their loss.

But this honour, I have so painfully discovered, is not the abstract honour of years, of decades, past that I in my arrogance and stupid adherence to and love of abstractions so foolishly believed in and upheld, being thus, becoming thus, as I was a cause of suffering. No; this instead is the essence of honour, founded in empathy; in an empathy with and thus a compassion for all life, sentient and otherwise. This is instead a being human; being in symbiosis with that-which is the essence of our humanity and which can, could and should, gently evolve us - far away from the primitive unempathic, uncompassionate, beings we have been, and unfortunately often still

are; far away from the primitive unempathic, uncompassionate, often violent, person I had been."

Thus I was prompted - forced - to continue to develop my understanding in what began to be and became my own 'numinous way' and which thus and finally and, in 2009 publicly, took me away from Islam and my life as a Muslim.

2009-2012

Given that the essence of The Numinous Way is individual empathy, an individual understanding, the development of an individual judgement, and the living of an ethical way of life where there is an appreciation of the numinous, the more I reflected upon this 'numinous way' between 2011 and Spring 2012, the more I not only realized my mistakes, but also that it was necessary to remove, to excise, the detritus that had accumulated around the basic insights and the personal pathei-mathos that inspired me to develop that 'numinous way'. Mistakes and detritus because for some time, during the development of that 'numinous way', I was still in thrall to some abstractions, still thinking in terms of categories and opposites, and still fond of pontificating and generalizing, especially about The State [3]. I therefore began to re-express, in a more philosophical manner, the personal, the individual, the ontological, the ethical and spiritual nature, of The Numinous Way, and thus emphasized the virtues of humility, love, and of wu-wei - of balance, of tolerance, of non-interference, of individual interior (spiritual) reformation, of non-striving, of admitting one's own uncertainty of understanding and of knowing.

The year-long [2011-2012] process of refinement, correction, and reflexion resulted in me re-naming what remained of my 'numinous way' the 'philosophy of pathei-mathos', and which philosophy I attempted to outline in the two texts *Requyle of the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos* and *Summary of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*, the latter of which was also published under the title *Conspectus of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*.

As I mentioned in *Society, Politics, Social Reform, and Pathei-Mathos* [Part Four of *Requyle of the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*] -

"Given that the concern of the philosophy of pathei-mathos is the individual and their interior, their spiritual, life, and given that (due to the nature of empathy and pathei-mathos) there is respect for individual judgement, the philosophy of pathei-mathos is apolitical, and thus not concerned with such matters as the theory and practice of governance, nor with changing or reforming society by political means [...]

This means that there is no desire and no need to use any

confrontational means to directly challenge and confront the authority of existing States since numinous reform and change is personal, individual, non-political, and not organized beyond a limited local level of people personally known. That is, it is of and involves individuals who are personally known to each other working together based on the understanding that it is inner, personal, change - in individuals, of their nature, their character - that is is the ethical, the numinous, way to solve such personal and social problems as exist and arise. That such inner change of necessity comes before any striving for outer change by whatever means, whether such means be termed or classified as political, social, economic, religious. That the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform is understood as the one that evolves human beings and thus changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate.

In practice, this evolution means, in the individual, the cultivation and use of the faculty of empathy, and acquiring the personal virtues of compassion, honour, and love. Which means the inner reformation of individuals, as individuals.

Hence the basis for numinous social change and reform is aiding, helping, assisting individuals in a direct and personal manner, and in practical ways, with such help, assistance, and aid arising because we personally know or are personally concerned about or involved with those individuals or the situations those individuals find themselves in. In brief, being compassionate, empathic, understanding, sensitive, kind, and showing by personal example."

The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos

It is the philosophy of pathei-mathos which represents my weltanschauung. For I now consider that most of my writings, my pontifications, concerning 'the numinous way' - written haphazardly between 2002 and Spring 2012 - are unhelpful; or of little account; or irrelevant; or hubriatic; or detract from or obscure the basic simplicity of my weltanschauung, a simplicity I have endeavoured to express in *Conspectus of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos*.

24th April 2012
(Revised November 2012)

Notes

[1] During this study of communism, in the 1960's, I began to learn Russian and would regularly listen to communist radio broadcasts such as those from Rundfunk der DDR, something I continued to do for a while even after becoming a National-Socialist. Indeed, on one occasion I wrote a letter to Radio Berlin which, to my surprise, was read out with my questions answered.

[2] As I have mentioned elsewhere - for example, in *Myngath* - this intuition regarding the Third Reich arose as a result of me reading an account of the actions of Otto Ernst Remer in July of 1944. For I admired his honour and his loyalty and his commitment to the duty he had sworn an oath to do. Here, I felt, was a modern-day Greek hero.

[3] These un-numinous, errorfull, hubriatic, pontifications about 'the state' included essays such as the reprehensible January 2011 text *The Failure and Immoral Nature of The State* and the February 2011, text *A Brief Numinous View of Religion, Politics, and The State*.

Among the abstractions (categories) which needed to be excised from a supposedly abstraction-less and empathic numinous way were 'the clan', and 'culture', and the divisive category 'homo hubris', a divisive category I hubriatically pontificated about in essays such as the 2009 text *Homo Hubris and the Disruption of the Numinous*, based as that text was on an earlier, 2002, essay.

cc David Myatt 2012, 2016
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