

Issue No. 29 JULY - AUG 2018

NewAcropolis

Philosophy and Education for the Future

Bi-Monthly Magazine

SOCIETY

The Future Starts
Where, Exactly?

ESOTERICA

Rome and its Esoteric
Origins - Part II

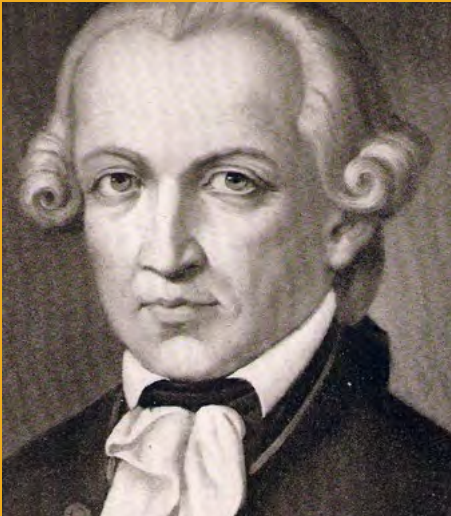
SCIENCE

Viktor Schauberger and
the Living Energies of
Water

PHILOSOPHY

John of Salisbury:
Idealism in the Middle Ages

Upcoming Events



**TALK - TUESDAY 24 JULY,
AT 7.00 PM**

Immanuel Kant – Certainty in an Uncertain World

This talk will look at Kant's ideas on morality and moral law. It will explore the question of whether morality is relative or unconditional, and how this might influence our daily actions.

Admission £5 (£3 concs)

All the events are taking place at:

NEW ACROPOLIS

19 Compton Terrace,
Islington,
London,
N1 2UN

www.newacropolisuk.org

To keep up to date with our latest events:

Facebook : New Acropolis UK

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Meetup: Practical Philosophy of
East and West



**WORKSHOP - SATURDAY
4TH AUGUST, 11 AM - 5 PM**

Textile Upcycling Workshop

'Upcycling' is the art of transforming old or waste items/ materials into something new, adding value through creativity and design. Items are redirected from landfill, extending their life, creating new purposes and stories in the process.

The day will be made up of 2 parts – a lively talk that aims to connect this modern-day practice of upcycling to timeless philosophical ideas of transformation/alchemy, "Cradle to Cradle" learning, modelling from nature and perceptions of beauty. Following the talk (and a break) we will put some of the concepts into practice in a creative sewing session (bring along some old clothes for rejuvenation!) No experience is needed.

The workshop is brought to you by Barley Massey, owner of Fabrications in Broadway Market.

Fees: £35 (£25 concs)



**TALK - FRIDAY 17 AUGUST,
AT 7.00 PM**

The Quest for Spirituality in Modern Art

The spiritual quest is deeply embedded in the adventurous paths pursued by a number of artists during the 19th and 20th centuries.

From Novalis, with his all-embracing concept of poetry, to surrealism with its discovery of the world of dreams, we find artists attempting to explore the mysteries of the night, as a symbol of the infinite.

We will explore this deep quest for spiritual meaning in some of the works of Novalis, Kandinsky, Dali, Caspar David Friedrich and the Pre-Raphaelites.

Admission £5 (£3 concs)



About Us

NEW ACROPOLIS is an international organization working in the fields of philosophy, culture and volunteering. Our aim is to revive philosophy as a means of renewal and transformation and to offer a holistic education that can develop both our human potential as well as the practical skills needed in order to meet the challenges of today and to create a better society for the next generation.

For further details please visit :
WWW.NEWACROPOLISUK.ORG

Editorial Team

Sabine Leitner - Director

Julian Scott - Editor

Agostino Dominici - Project
Manager and Designer

Natalia Lema - Public Relations

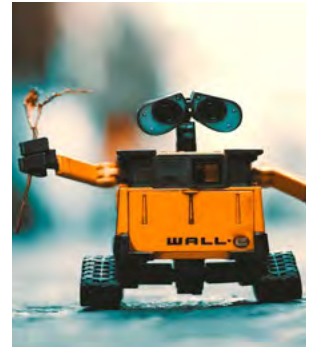
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NEW ACROPOLIS

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Editorial

Do we REALLY think?

“There is a strange interdependence between thoughtlessness and evil”, wrote Hannah Arendt who, according to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, was one of the most influential political philosophers of the 20th century. “The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil”, she reported from the trial of the Nazi Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961 to the New York Times. “This inability to think created the possibility for many ordinary men to commit evil deeds on a gigantic scale, the like of which had never been seen before.”



Hannah Arendt (1906-1975)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, her book about the trial, “Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil”, received not only praise but also much criticism for portraying Eichmann as just someone ordinary, a ‘thoughtless’ functionary who organised deportations of Jews to the concentration camps with no evil intent but, rather, just to follow orders. Critics pointed out that to attribute the enormity of the Nazi crimes to an inability to think was a trivialisation of evil.

However, I do think that Hannah Arendt has a point. It is, of course, true that thinking is something that we all do automatically, and we normally never stop having thoughts move through our minds. But are there not different kinds of thinking? Is thinking about everyday matters the same as thinking deeply

about something? Surely, thinking exists for different purposes and in different degrees, like every other human activity.

We have to ask ourselves whether we make full use of our faculty to think. Do we really think when we vote for populist governments? Do we actually think when we buy things we don’t really need? Did we really think when we invented plastic (an artificial material designed to last and therefore to break down very slowly) and introduced it in incredibly vast quantities into our lives and our waste? Are we really thinking now when we race ahead to introduce AI or make ourselves more and more dependent on ever more fragile systems of connectivity?

For the philosopher Hannah Arendt, the ability to think was inextricably linked to the ability to tell right from wrong. I would also add that only a deep kind of thinking can lead to profound insights, a better understanding and, above all, to wisdom which we surely need to make the right decisions. Unfortunately, we are not really taught how to think deeply and properly. For our output-oriented educational system, for instance, thinking about the essential nature of the human being, about whether our actions are right or wrong or about whether life has a meaning, is a waste of time.

But in view of the dangerously powerful means we have created and the complex challenges we face today, we cannot afford not to think deeply. We all need to become philosophers in the original sense: lovers of wisdom. Otherwise, we will again and again pay a painful price for our inability to think. Confucius said: “By three methods we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is the noblest; second, by imitation, which is the easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.” Do we really have to repeat mistakes over and over again and cause tremendous suffering before we can learn?

Sabine Leitner

John of Salisbury

Idealism in the Middle Ages

In medieval philosophy one always finds a tension between faith and reason. To put it simplistically, reason comes from the philosophers of classical antiquity, while faith comes from the Christian doctrine. The philosophers of the Middle Ages were constantly trying to reconcile these two facets: on the one hand the divine revelation, and on the other the arguments of human reason which might sometimes be at odds with revelation.

Thus, there tended to be philosophers who were more on the side of faith and others who were more on the side of reason. John of Salisbury was

one of the latter. Born somewhere between 1115 and 1120 in Old Sarum, the forerunner of the modern Salisbury, he went to France at the age of 16 in order to study with the great masters of the time, such as the rationalist Peter Abelard, many of whose works were branded heretical.

He had a particularly close connection with the so-called 'School of Chartres', a centre of enlightened thinking. One of his mentors was the Neoplatonist scholar, Bernard of Chartres, whose famous phrase quoted by John of Salisbury was also later used by Isaac Newton: "We are like dwarfs sitting on the shoulders of giants so that



A medieval scholar-monk at work. Detail from a Medieval Manuscript.

we are able to see more and further than they, not indeed by the sharpness of our own vision or the height of our bodies, but because we are lifted up on high and raised aloft by the greatness of giants.”

John also travelled to Sicily, where an enlightened court existed under the patronage of its Norman king, Roger II. Scholars from all over Europe would travel there and many works of antiquity were translated. All this points to the international nature of European culture at this time, which is sometimes referred to as the ‘medieval renaissance’.

Another of his influences was Bernard of Clairvaux, the French abbot who played an active part in establishing the Cistercian order. Even though Bernard was against Abelard’s teachings, he supported John of Salisbury and



Detail of mosaic with Roger II receiving the crown from Christ.

helped him to become a clerk of the Church. John then went on to become part of the household of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, where he was not only a secretary, but also a legal and political advisor. He wrote his first philosophical work at this time – the *Entheticus* – which later became the model for his major works, the *Metalogicon* and the *Policraticus*. These books were published in 1159 and dedicated to Thomas Becket, chancellor of Henry II, who became archbishop of Canterbury three years later.

The *Metalogicon* was written in defence of Aristotelian logic. But the author he cited and followed most was Cicero, whose style and anti-dogmatic attitude he tried to imitate. At the same time, he was clearly a Platonist (he refers to himself as an ‘Academic’, by which he meant a follower of Plato’s Academy), even though only the *Timaeus* was known in Europe at that time. However, he was aware of the existence of Plato’s *Republic* and it seems that his ethical and political theories are based on that work.

In the *Policraticus*, he compared the health of the state to the health of the human being. Like Plato, he states that man is a microcosm, in which the parts work together for the common goal. In the state that goal is the common good. The head of state – the prince – is the head of the body, who is responsible for reaching this common good, while the other members of the body politic – the priests (soul), the soldiers (arms), the merchants (stomach) and the farmers and craftsmen (legs) – help to make it real. Also like Plato, John was against tyrants, who think they are above the law and act selfishly, but end up in a tragic way. He dreamed of an ideal community, where theocratic and political dimensions could co-exist.

John died in 1180 at Chartres, where he was bishop in his last years. The following phrase from his writings might perhaps be his epitaph: “Justice consists chiefly in this: do not do harm and prevent the doing of harm out of duty to humanity.”

Istvan Orban

THE FUTURE STARTS WHERE, EXACTLY?

The current exhibition at the V&A museum in London – *The Future Starts Here* – is a showcase of the latest technology that is set to transform our lives and the world around us. Divided into four categories, the exhibition poses separate questions in each area, such as: Self – What makes us human? Public – Does democracy still work? Planet – Should the planet be a design project? And Afterlife – Who wants to live forever?

Some of the questions such as *What makes us Human?* are, of course deeply profound, whereas others – ‘Should the planet be a design project?’ or ‘If Mars is the answer, what is the question?’ – seem bafflingly obtuse. When sober consideration of the future is sequentially interrupted with jaunty phrases and hyperbole ad-speak, it summarises exactly the

difficulty we face in making progress.

There are notable highlights in the exhibition, such as an exoskeleton suit aimed at helping people struggling with mobility by responding to and aiding their muscle function; temporary shelters which are undoubtedly needed as we encounter increased environmental crises, and search & rescue drones able to stay for hours at sea looking for survivors. However, by contrast a lot of what was on offer felt like a TV super-villain’s volcano lair – strangely dated and clichéd. Driverless cars, coffee machines in space (yes really), cryogenic freezing and Cedric, a driverless car that (in one simulation) takes children to school, telling them anecdotes about dinosaurs. Infuriatingly personal and over-familiar, an acceptance of computers as responsible adults



or, worse, as 'friends' is disturbing. There is a dull reality that underpins technology: data entry, targeted advertising, incompatibility and (like the opening exhibit of the exhibition) inexplicable breakages. Greeting punters is a cardboard sign explaining that 'the laundry robot is broken' and that 'the technical team in California are working on it, hoping to have it back online soon'...

Another area in the exhibition looks at the potential opportunities of crowd-funding models. One exhibit suggests 'if a city is crowd-funded is there any need to pay tax?' And whilst there is obvious merit in looking at this, the lack of a critique or practical assessment is, at the very least naive and at worst contrived; because if residents want things such as public services, schools or health, for example – then of course there are potentially reasons to pay tax. It is largely impossible then to be inspired by the ideas presented or consider them as potential realities because counter ideas are glaringly absent.

The late London-based culture theorist Mark Fisher wrote about 'the slow cancellation of the future'. His theory argues that capitalism has created a situation where it is not possible to imagine a future different to what we already know. The curious thing about the term 'future' is that its semantic meaning has remained largely stuck in the 'space age' and no longer evocative of new potential. In a similar line of thought, political theorist Fredric Jameson says, "The historical dynamic of capitalism ceaselessly generates what is new while regenerating what is the same. This dynamic both generates the possibility of another organisation of social life and yet hinders that possibility from being realised." Summarising the essential concerns of both Fisher's and Jameson's work, publisher Zero Books explains that "By losing our notions of universality, transcendence and ultimately the notion

of the real, we have also lost our ability to change."

The pyramid of civilisation is a perennial symbol which takes the fundamental elements of human consciousness, such as Religion, Art, Science and Politics, and places them at the four sides of a square-based pyramid. The harmonious combination of these fundamental elements then enables an ascent upwards, the rise of a civilisation or culture. The absence of one or more of these sides leads to a structurally unsound pyramid and the inability to ascend.



Image References : shutterstock.com/Marko Bradic

Science sits opposite and in balance to Religion and Art sits opposite and in balance to Politics and like a ship, both bow and stern should remain level.

The over-emphasis and worship of technology today is a signal of a sinking civilisation. Unable to ascend, our unbalanced culture repeats tired ideas with the same disastrous environmental consequences and mental health implications. We need a renewal of Art to innovate our expression and forms and a renewal of Religion (understanding religion as union with the causes of things) to foster a technology that is harmonious with nature and the human being. The future will begin wherever we are able to re-establish universality, transcendence and our understanding of the real.

Siobhan Farrar

ROME

AND ITS ESOTERIC ORIGINS – PART II

In my first article, *Rome and its Esoteric Origins – Part I* (see Issue 28), I highlighted some features of Roman symbolism that showed that the greatness of Rome could not have arisen from a profane way of living, but must have had a meta-historical and spiritual dimension.

In his *Life of Romulus*, Plutarch writes: “Rome would not have risen to such power had it not had, in any way, a divine origin, such as to offer to the eyes of men something great and inexplicable.” Cicero, writing in *On the Nature of the Gods*, repeats the same thing, then goes on to say that Roman civilization, through its sacred knowledge, surpassed every other people or nation. While the historian Sallust (86-35 BCE) defines the ancient Romans by the expression *religiosissimi mortales* (the most religious mortals).

Rome’s origins are deeply embedded in this religious and sacred vision; we need only look at one of its main myths, the myth of Romulus and Remus, to see this. The ‘story’ tells of the union of a god with a mortal woman, of Mars with Rhea Silvia, from which union the twins were born. Mars is an element from above, that is, the divine representation of the principle of warrior *virility* (derived from the Latin root *vir* = man and also *virtus* = virtue). This Mars ‘force’ is then symbolically associated with those who were the guardians of the sacred flame of life: the vestal virgins (Rhea Silvia).

The twins Romulus and Remus are abandoned to the waters but are saved. As we saw in the first article, the waters are a symbol of the passionate



Venus and Mars-
170 CE, Roman National
Museum, Rome.

and fleeting side of life. The hero is saved from the waters, or is capable of standing on the waters, or of not sinking in the waters.

The twins find refuge near a fig tree (*Ficus Ruminalis*) and are suckled by a she-wolf. The fig tree, which features in various sacred traditions (from the Bible to Buddhism), symbolizes the tree of the world, an expression of the universal life from which Gods and Heroes draw 'nourishment' (related to *ruminus* and *ruminalis*). The she-wolf plays a dual role, being a symbol of both a luminous and a ferocious and 'dark' nature.



This dichotomy is reflected in the nature of the mythical twins. Romulus is the one who marks out the borders of the city through a sacred rite that expresses the principle of limit (of order and law). Remus – as the principle of chaos (man's unrestrained and anarchic nature) – is instead the one who violates such a limit and that is why he is killed. Through this act, the primordial forces of Roman origins are differentiated and, by destroying the “dark shadows” (Remus) that were contained within it, its luminous aspect (Romulus) of order and purified warrior force can come to the fore.

Hermetically speaking, any traces of iron (connected with the Kali Yuga) are removed from the Martial nature, which is therefore transmuted into the gold of a *Solar Mars*, herald of a new Golden Age. The emphasis here is on those warrior qualities which characterize the

conquering spirit of Rome. Not as an act of brutal force but as symbol of self-mastery, which allows light and order to manifest in the world. Paradoxically, this is also an act of Love (Venus/ Amor, the polar opposite of Mars), that 'force' which will seek to unite human beings into an organic whole (i.e. first through the Roman Republic and then through the Empire). This *coincidentia oppositorum* (between Martial and Venusian principles) is also to be found in a famous legend about the secret name of Rome.

According to this legend, Rome is only the exoteric name of this ancient city.

As found in the tradition of the *Indigitamenta*, the ancient Romans believed that the name of a 'thing' contains the very power and essence of that 'thing'. Therefore, by knowing its 'true' name (*nomen*), the invisible power (the being) of any city can be invoked and brought under control. There are still records of this magical-operation as the Romans performed it in order to take advantage of their adversaries. Following these invocations, the essential power (*numen*) of a newly conquered city would then be 'transferred' (in the form of a 'foreign' god), into a Roman pantheon. Once there, special priests would perform rites of appeasement and conciliation towards that god. These views are at the basis of the mystical and secret name of Rome itself and the reason why it was kept secret.

According to John Lydus (5th century CE) the city had three names, a political name (*Rome*), a hieratic name (*Flora*), and a ritual name (*Amor*). Only the *pontifex* (highest priest) was permitted to know and pronounce, during the sacred rites, the ritual name.

We also know that in the Roman Forum there was a joint worship of *Venus Genetrix* (the mother of Aeneas, ancestor of Romulus and Remus) and *Mars Ultor*.

Rome has actually been given many names, but whether its forbidden name is *Amor*, *Angerona* or *Ruma* does not really matter; what matters is that this sacred dimension was the true essence of Rome and, since it is timeless and universal, it is still accessible today.

Agostino Dominici

ART AND BEAUTY IN GARDEN DESIGN

The beauty of gardens is the beauty of nature and the beauty of artists' expression of ideas which reflect the philosophy of their time. Gardens are an indispensable part of our living and they provide us with a sensual experience of the world. Every culture and civilisation has presented its world view and philosophical ideas in a unique way.

In ancient Egypt, for example, the earthly world was seen as an expression of the world above, of a celestial order. Sacred groves and lakes were created within temple compounds, which were used in ceremonies during the festivals and celebrations in order to connect with the heavenly world above.



An example of a French formal garden in the Loire Valley

The ancient Greeks may not have inspired us with their garden designs, but they did contribute to the way we have seen the garden in other influential ways. Firstly, the Greek countryside embodied the idea of beauty, with sites of ancient temples and theatres chosen for their scenic splendour and panoramic views. These views and sacred groves became the backdrop to later portrayals of Greek myths and created an awareness of the beauty and mystery of natural scenery. Through the paintings of Claude Lorraine (1600-82) and Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) the Greek and Roman countryside became the models for the 18th century English



(above)The *Stourhead garden* in Southern England.

(below)The *Eram Garden*, Shiraz, Iran.

Landscape Movement. The style rejected the geometry and regularity which was so strongly emphasized in the Baroque era and its most famous example, the Palace of Versailles, with its huge garden expressing the absolute power of Louis XIV, also known as the Sun King.

In the eighteenth century, the British aristocracy started to invest in trade and consequently became even richer. To reflect Britain's new role as a powerful empire, they looked back to ancient Rome and Greece, therefore also implying that Britain was the new Rome. With more money coming in, the British aristocracy started to redesign their estates. Many of them were friends of Alexander Pope (1688-1744), who was not only a poet but also a source of inspiration for landscape designers, being a keen gardener himself. In an essay in the *Guardian* (1713), he urged a return to the "amiable simplicity of unadorned nature" in place of the formal garden; and he proclaimed, "In all, let nature never be forgot . . . Consult the genius of the place."

Islamic philosophers, influenced by Plato and Aristotle, argued that the more perfect something is, the more beautiful it is and the more pleasure it yields. The most beautiful of all is God's beauty, therefore it yields the most pleasure. The function of artists was to express those metaphysical ideas and to communicate the truths of religion and philosophy. Making a perfect place, or paradise, became the aim of Islamic garden design. Thus, in a sense, gardens could be designed as an earthly representation of the Paradise described in the Koran, depicting its fountains, rivers and four gardens.

Beauty is there to remind us of our values which are our guide through life, an inspiration to attain a more moral and fulfilling life. All the expressions of the arts at the peak of the cultural and civilisational cycle are aligned with that idea. Gardens are a brilliant example of that, speaking as they do of our relationship with nature and with ourselves.

Miha Kosir

The Need for *RITUALS* in Modern Society

“Since the earliest times, human beings have practised rituals and ceremonies in different forms.”



I recently came across a business which provides personalised ceremonies for any life event. From weddings to funerals you can have your own ceremony designed for you. This demand for tailor-made ceremonies raised a question in my mind about the need for rituals in our modern societies. Where does this need come from and why?

Since the earliest times, human beings have practised rituals and ceremonies in different forms. In 2006, a team of archaeologists discovered a remote cave in the Tsodilo hills, Botswana which provided evidence of the oldest known ritual of humankind. It was dated to around 70,000 years ago, but perhaps such rituals are as old as humanity itself.

Rituals have many benefits both psychologically on an individual level and socially on a collective level.

“Apart from all these benefits, rituals also correspond to a natural need in the human being: connection with the sacred.”

According to Dr. Tom F. Driver, rituals help us to feel and become the way we want to be, by the power of action. He adds that human lives are shaped not only by the ideas we have in our minds but even more by the actions we perform: we constitute ourselves through actions. This can be seen in the pre-match rituals of top sports players. In order to get into the winning mindset, it is not enough to prepare a strategy or undergo physical training; an engagement of the whole self in a ritual act is also a major contributing factor.

A widely known form of ritual is the initiation ceremony or rite of passage. According to the historian of religious ideas Mircea Eliade, initiation is equivalent to a basic change in the existential condition: the novice emerges from his ordeal endowed with a totally different being from that which he possessed before his initiation; he has become another. Traditional initiation ceremonies do not simply include instructions about the next phase, they are both a preparation for the next cycle of life and for a new role in society. What makes the novice become a new person is the experience rather than the instructions. In traditional societies, passing from childhood to adulthood usually includes an experience of fear of death. For a new beginning or a new form of being to emerge, the old form of existence must die. It is this experience on a deeper level in a human being that enables the candidate to attain a new form of existence.

Rituals have also a great impact on society. Sociologist Alex Law states that communicating the same thought and participating in the same action through rituals allows a society to recharge its batteries and reaffirm its moral unity. Although Christmas, for example, has lost much of its original meaning, it still partially fulfils the function of making people feel united, developing



compassion for the less fortunate and allowing some respite from the mundane activities of everyday life.

Apart from all these benefits, rituals also correspond to a natural need in the human being: connection with the sacred. For Mircea Eliade, even the most avowedly non-religious man still shares in his deep being a sense of religiously oriented behaviour. The non-religious person still seeks rebirth, renewal or some other important marking of a point of time in different forms. He may not call these things sacred, but he would define them as special or significant.

The renowned sociologist Emile Durkheim predicted that “a day will come when our societies will once again experience times of creative effervescence and new ideas will surge up, new formulas will arise to serve to guide humanity for a time.”

Whether we will see new formulas arising to guide our societies or not, we can see that we are looking to satisfy this innate need for connection with the sacred. The seeking of new forms of rituals corresponds to this need to reconnect with the sacred in a more authentic form.

Pinar Akhan

Viktor Schauberger and the Living Energies of Water

Viktor Schauberger was an Austrian forester of the early to mid-20th century, who made some extraordinary discoveries about the nature of water. His interest in water began when one day he was watching the water in a river and suddenly found his consciousness being transported by the water, so that he ‘became’ the water and underwent all its experiences. It is an old technique of knowledge, the basis of which is: only by identifying with the object of knowledge can one know it in its essence. It is the opposite of the orthodox scientific approach which is based upon ‘objective’ observation. As Schauberger pointed out, to observe something in the laboratory is often to observe it in a completely artificial setting which would never occur in nature and is therefore false and unreal.

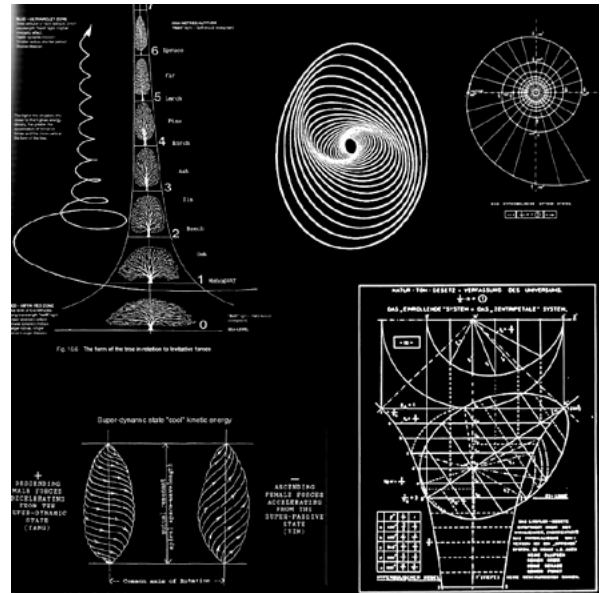
Here are Schauberger’s own words on the subject: “... running water attracts our consciousness and draws a small part of it along with it in its wake... I realised that one could detach one’s own consciousness from the body and attach it to that of the water. When my consciousness eventually returned, the water’s most deeply concealed psyche often revealed the most extraordinary things to me...”



When hearing someone speaking of the ‘psyche’ of water, one might be inclined to think the author is slightly unhinged. Indeed, Schauberger was forcibly taken to a psychiatric hospital by the Nazis and was about to be certified as insane, when an influential friend rescued him from an almost certain death.



(left) Viktor Schauberger with his home powered generator.



(right) Drawings related to the *The trout turbine* and the production of 'free' energy by implosion.

But he was doing no more than assert what all cultures have believed before our own: that nature is a living being, with a body, a soul and a spirit. And within the great body-soul of nature, each of its parts is also a living being. In this sense, the idea of 'river-gods' and 'water-sprites' would not be the product of primitive fantasy, but the reflection of a reality, which Schauberger and other people of awakened sensitivity have been able to perceive.

The heart of his discoveries with regard to water is that it moves in an undulating motion, like a snake. You can verify this for yourself by looking at any natural stream: it never travels in a straight line but will always follow a serpentine course. This natural movement allows the accumulated speed of water to be slowed down to manageable proportions so that it does not unduly erode the banks, a fact which you can also verify for yourself by observing any fast flowing water, especially mountain streams. He also realised that water is capable of producing some truly remarkable effects, which seem to contradict standard theories of physics.

Early one morning, Schauberger came to a stream. There he saw beneath the surface a number of heavy logs that had sunk to the bottom, which began to perform a kind of dance, culminating in some of them standing up vertically in the water. This was then followed by the same kind of dance

being performed by a number of polished stones on the river-bed. One of these, the size of a head and shaped like an egg, began to rotate slowly in circles and then rose directly to the surface, where it became coated in ice.

Heavy stones rising to the surface, logs standing upright... how are these things possible? Another extraordinary, but natural, example will help us to understand this and see its significance.

One day, as part of his job as a gamekeeper, Schauberger was lying in wait for a poacher beside a pool beneath a waterfall. Suddenly, he saw all the little fishes scatter as a huge trout came into view. It headed straight for the base of the waterfall and began to swim round it in an egg-shaped motion, as if performing a kind of dance. "All at once", says Schauberger, "it disappeared under the fall of water, which fell like liquid metal into the pond. The trout suddenly stood up on its tail and, in the conically converging stream of water, I perceived a wild movement like a spinning top, the cause of which was not immediately apparent. Having temporarily disappeared, the trout then re-emerged from this spinning movement and floated effortlessly upwards. Upon reaching the underside of the topmost curve of the waterfall, it did a quick somersault in a high curve upstream and, with a loud smack, was thrown beyond the upper curvature. With a powerful flick of



its tail-fins, it disappeared.”

What these examples show is that there are natural, and very powerful, levitational forces in water, based on the spiral motion and the shape of an egg, which can overcome the force of gravity. Schauberger’s eventual conclusion from this was that if we could understand and harness these forces, not only in relation to water, but in other areas as well, we could develop a non-polluting, free form of energy which would immensely improve our quality of life, without damaging nature.

His ideas are based upon the idea of working with Nature, rather than exploiting her. This, too, is an ancient idea which can be found, amongst other places, in Tibet. A work called the *Voice of the Silence* states: “Help nature and work with her, and she will obey you and regard you as one of her creators”.

How far this is from the phrase which Schauberger says he heard from the great physicist Max Planck: “Science has nothing to do with nature.” But the word ‘science’ simply means knowledge, so how can it have nothing to do with nature, if nature is the All? Unfortunately, it is the prevailing belief that there is no order or intelligence in nature, which is supposed to have evolved purely by chance, and that as a result, man can manipulate it to his heart’s content without being subject to any consequences. In medicine, a drug for a particular ailment will

practically always have side-effects, but this does not seem to alter the scientists’ view. We will be able to ‘conquer’ these side-effects too!

Schauberger’s view was summed up in his mantra: ‘Comprehend and copy nature.’ He applied his knowledge to many practical inventions, including research into new forms of energy. But it seems that humanity is not ready to make use of the beneficence of nature without exploiting it, a fact which caused Schauberger much disappointment in his life.

As a forester, he also had much to say about the natural growth of trees and forests, and, of course, the link between natural water and natural forests, but this would have to be the subject for another article. Instead, I would like to end with another pearl of Schaubergian wisdom, which sums up his understanding of nature, based on his experience:

“Nature is simpler in her effects and more complex in her functions than our rational minds can conceive.”

Julian Scott

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STAR WARS

and the Ancient Wisdom



The direct inspiration for writing this article came from watching *The Last Jedi*, the eighth and final episode of the *Star Wars* saga, released in December 2017. Even though one can find countless references in the entire series to universal myths and archetypes, this culminative finale seems to be a true epitome of universal ancient teachings.

In her article on *Modern Mythology*¹, Sabine Leitner makes the point that there has been a steady revival of myths in art, music, literature and film ever since the 19th century - Star Wars being one of the best examples. It is easy to recognize some elements common to all myths, such as the battle between good and evil (the war between the Resistance and the First Order) or the journey of the hero (Luke Skywalker). We also see an allusion to the traditional chain of Masters and Disciples (Yoda and Obi-wan Kenobi training the new generation of Jedi) and the significance of prophecy (it is said that Luke will overthrow the emperor). Ultimately, a true hero always undergoes a profound transformation, gains mastery over himself and develops virtues - the outcome which we fully witness in the *The Last Jedi*.

Let us unravel the hidden references in Star Wars to the perennial wisdom of all times. The Force can be read as a synonym of the universal Spirit or Life Force that has been there ever since the beginning of time. "The Force is what gives a Jedi his powers. It's an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds

us, penetrates us, binds the whole galaxy together,” we hear in *The Force Awakens*.

According to H.P. Blavatsky, writing in her monumental *Secret Doctrine*, the knowledge of such secrets of Nature was once used for the good of mankind by highly evolved human beings whom she referred to as “Initiates” and “Adepts”. But as time went on, the knowledge fell into the hands of those whom the Initiates called the “Brothers of the Shadow”, who used it for their own personal gain.

As Chancellor explains to Anakin: “For over a thousand years the Jedi knights were the guardians of justice and peace in the Old Republic before the Dark Times, before the Empire.” In the *Secret Doctrine*, this fall of humanity into a lower kind of consciousness corresponds to the the legendary times of Atlantis, the lost civilization first brought to the attention of the Western world by Plato in his works *Timaeus* and *Critias*. Some of these “Atlanteans”, so the story goes, having developed their mental faculties, gradually fell deeper and deeper into materialism, forgetting about the spiritual unity of all beings. The great Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, also describes humanity’s colossal struggle to restore spirituality and respect for universal law against the forces of evil and dark magic.

The plot of Star Wars, in all its simplicity, has the ultimate teaching in store for us. The key to winning

the inner battle lies in the quality of the heart, the readiness to sacrifice one’s personal desires and dedicate oneself to serving humanity. Who knows, perhaps this action-packed saga is not merely entertainment, but has been designed to help awaken



the Force within every single one of us, to pull us out of our slumber and make us act. “Remember, a Jedi can feel the force flowing through him” so he aspires to know how to use it for the benefit of all.

Ania Hajost

(1)<http://www.newacropolisuk.org/resources.php>

