

NewAcropolis

Philosophy and Education for the Future

The Crisis of the West and the Coming of the New Times

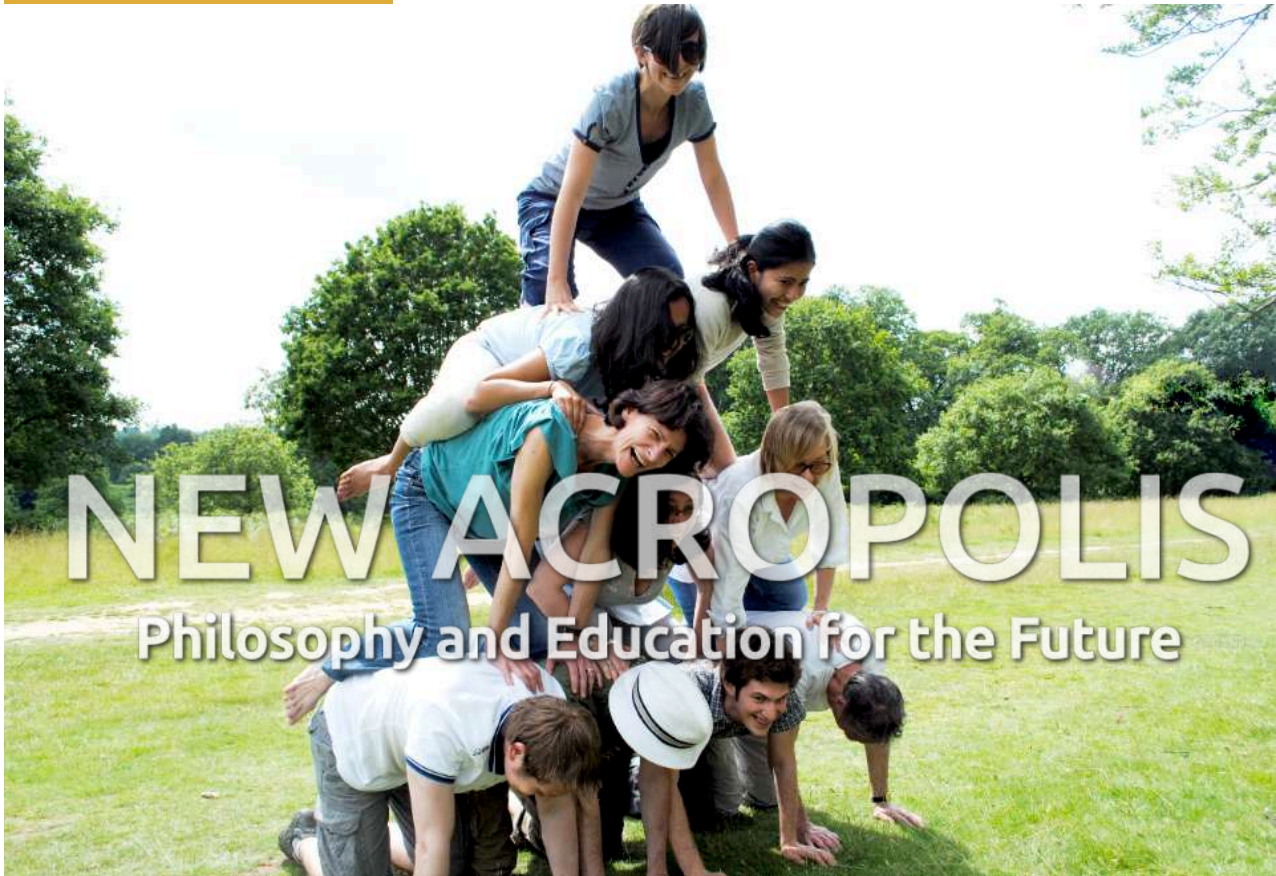
Beer, the Oldest Drink in the World?

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Philosophy and Poetry

Concentration: A Key to Awakening

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AND MORE



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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.

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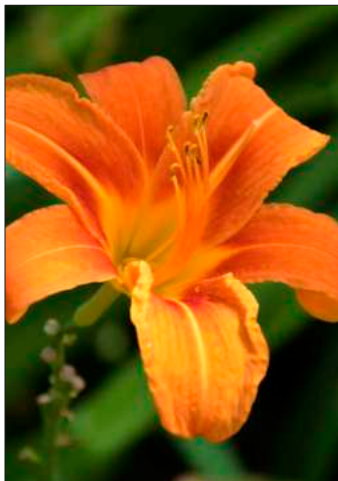
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Editorial

The Opposite of Every Great Truth is also True

What is philosophy? I have always defined it, as the etymology suggests, as 'love of wisdom' and as an inherent human characteristic. It seems that we humans have an inborn need to ask 'why?'. Animals seem to be far more accepting of 'what is' and that things just are the way they are. But we humans need to know and understand *why* things are the way they are. We are aware of causes and consequences, of the past and the future. And: we also have an intuition that there are answers to be found.

Philosophy is not just about searching for answers, but also about *finding* answers. What is the point of searching, if we never find anything? Even if we know that our answers are not final, only temporary, they are at least answers that help us make the next step. Rather like in science, where our current understanding of matter is superior to the understanding of preceding centuries, but inferior to what we will discover in the next decades, centuries and millennia.

However, recently a good friend of mine told me of a quote that inspired him greatly and which seems to completely contradict what I used to say. It goes roughly as follows: "Are you living your questions? Searching for answers is just trying to avoid the journey." When he said this, I could clearly see the meaningfulness of the Buddhist saying that 'the opposite of every truth is just as true'.

It is true that if we always want answers as quickly as possible, we are actually avoiding the journey. And that even if we did receive the answer, it might be utterly useless to us because we are not yet ready to integrate it into our lives. 'Living our questions' means to be able to bear the discomfort of 'not knowing' the right answer or which choice to make and to embrace 'what is' rather than run away from it. The German poet Rainer Maria Rilke suggests in *Letters to a Young Poet*: "Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. [...] Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, [...] you will gradually live your way into the answer."

Hans Bohr, the son of the famous scientist Niels Bohr, wrote in a chapter about his father: "One of the favourite maxims of my father was the distinction between two sorts of truths, profound truths recognized by the fact that the opposite is also a profound truth, in contrast to trivialities where opposites are obviously absurd."

The physicist Werner Heisenberg, the German writer Thomas Mann, Zen Buddhism and the German writer Hermann Hesse are also all credited with very similar quotes. It seems that we have long understood this 'truth' about the 'truth' and that, on an intuitive level, we do understand the difference between trivial truths and profound truths.

This is not about moral or cognitive relativism. It is about the understanding that our language and a large part of our mind are dualistic. We can only express one side of the coin at once. Hermann Hesse wrote in *Siddhartha*: "The opposite of every truth is just as true! That is to say, any truth can only be expressed and put into words when it is one-sided. Everything that can be thought with the mind and said with words is one-sided, it's all just the half of it, lacking completeness, roundness, or unity. When the exalted Gotama spoke his teachings about the world, he had to divide it into Samsara and Nirvana, deception and truth, suffering and salvation. It can't be done any differently, and there is no other way for the person who wants to teach. But the world itself that exists around us and inside of us is never one-sided."

Last weekend, I visited one of England's many stately homes with beautiful gardens where I discovered a sundial inscribed with the words 'It is later than you think'. This touched me and made me aware that we never know how much time we have left to do the things we really want to do. But, on the other hand, it is also true to say: 'It's never too late' or 'You have all the time in the world!' or 'When God made time, he made plenty of it'.

Dear reader, I wish you the discernment to differentiate between the trivial and the profound truths. And I also hope that you may discover many more truths of the profound kind.

Sabine Leitner

The Crisis of the West and the Coming of the New Times

[This article has been transcribed from a lecture given by the Founder of New Acropolis, Jorge A. Livraga, in Portugal in 1980]

Let us begin by saying that in Greek the word 'crisis' means, in addition to problem, change. So it is not only problems the West is facing today, but also a period of change.

To overcome this crisis stage, the first thing we must do is to recognize that our Western civilization is not unique. Throughout history there have been other civilizations that have also had their crises and problems. In general, we are like a young person who has problems, and thinks that nobody ever has had those problems before; this person doesn't take into consideration that his father and his grandfather also had the same problems. It is good, sometimes, to consult our parents and grandparents, to see how they have solved their problems.

Today we know, through the science of archaeology, that there have been great civilizations in the world, that humanity is very old, and that there have been many cultures. We know today perhaps only a small fraction of all this past; what we call history, that is, the part of our past that we have sufficient knowledge about. However, there is a proto-history and a prehistory that we do not know so well. All that remain are their ruins and monuments which testify to their greatness: the pyramids of Egypt, with a technology in some points superior to what we have today; the great civilizations of America: the Maya, Aztecs and Incas; China, India, Greece, Rome. All these were civilizations that achieved in their time a great summit of elevation.



Today, in the West, we sometimes think that these were primitive peoples because they didn't have aeroplanes or cars, or because they didn't have electric light; but we should take into account that each of us has a different disposition. For example, Kant dedicated himself to philosophy, and Curie dedicated herself to science. One thing is as valid as the other; they are different ways of approaching reality. These ancient civilizations – Egypt, Greece, etc. – were not inferior to ours, they simply approached reality in a different way.

Having made this introduction, we must now address our crisis in the Western world.

It is evident that we are in crisis right now, but it has been a long process. At this moment, we see a huge problem, but it's not a current problem; it is the result, the embodiment of something that originated long ago. Throughout the history of what we call the West, since the fall of the Roman Empire, Western man has sought to rediscover himself by different paths, and one of the great mistakes has been to develop a Cartesianism¹ that has separated things. Science, religion, politics, art, all follow different paths today. Thus, the human being began to think that everything is multiple and that there are many things, but this is not a vision of reality, a cosmivision. We can take, for example, the field of chemistry. It was thought in the 19th century that the elements were completely different; today we know there are a 105^2 of them. These elements, however, are not essentially different; their electronic charge endows them with different characteristics, but behind these differences they are the same. This takes us back to the idea of the "philosopher's stone", of a single, all-embracing element, of the Greek *a-tomos*, that which cannot be divided. The West has lost the sense of unity, and this has led to the serious problem of the confrontation between the different disciplines.

The crisis in the West has been gradually manifesting over the centuries. A series of scientific,

1. The philosophical tradition derived from the philosophy of René Descartes.

2. Editor's note: in 2021 there are already 118 elements in the periodic table.

political and economic experiments followed Cartesianism, and Western man fell into the error of believing that each of his affirmations is absolute, when in this world all things are relative. For example, if we say that this building is old, that it's ancient, it will be so in comparison with a newer one; but in comparison with the pyramid of Cheops, it is new. We can say that this hall is large, next to another that is smaller; but it is small next to another that is larger. So, the old, the big, the white, the black, the good, the bad, are all somehow relative, and when this relativity is not recognized, conflict breaks out.



After the French Revolution, for example, several changes in labour and the economy took place throughout Europe. Those changes, which had been brought about so that people could live better, led them, instead, to live worse. There were children as young as six years old, who worked 15 and 16 hours a day in the looms of the weaving mills of the 19th century, and the normal working day was 13 hours long. The machines, which were designed to liberate the human being, have enslaved him even more, leaving him without work, and making all things the same.

The world is beginning to feel a kind of boredom of being alive, because it no longer has creativity. In Pompeii, in that city submerged by lava, in Italy, I have seen little bread rolls that had the stamp of the person who made them. When we eat bread or when we use a chair or anything else, we have no idea who made it; it is not personalized, on the contrary, it has been depersonalized.

We also used to believe that when the Encyclopedia was compiled in France in the 18th century, it was the first time an encyclopedia had been made, with thousands of definitions referring to different



things. However, history today teaches us that the Chinese of the Song dynasty, more than a thousand years ago, had already created an encyclopedia of a thousand volumes – a thousand volumes (!) – and that a whole intellectual movement took place at the time. Why, then, did the Chinese empire fall into the hands of the Manchus after the Ming period? Because this intellectuality had divided men, had set them against each other; it had created a purely intellectual culture that did not really reach the heart of the human being and could not really express the desires of each person.

One of the great errors of our times, and of times gone by, has been to turn people into a mass. With the good intentions of protecting the people, they have been turned into masses instead. This is the problem now with the unions. A union is formed in order to protect working people, but it is so politicized and manipulated that it turns people into masses, preventing them from expressing themselves freely, and they begin to pay with "coins of freedom" for the protection offered to them. Man is increasingly less free in his creation, he is subject to a set of fashions, of elements that advertising is forcing us to follow.

Man is losing the ability to capture a rose or a woman in paint. Today, if we want to paint a rose, a woman, a mountain, a star, we make a triangle or a square or a dot. We have to intellectually interpret the piece in order to know what the painter intended. On the other hand, when we look at old paintings, even if we know nothing about painting, we can understand what the painting represents. But art today is so intellectualized, so subjectivized, that we cannot all understand what beauty in art is. The same happens with music, that music that lifts our hearts, that penetrates us, that gives us peace and harmony. Today a strange, odd music is made, music that requires interpretation as well.

Science has also made mistakes. For example, hypnosis had been forbidden in medicine until a few years ago, because it was thought to be a lingering superstition from primitive times. Today, however, it is used, and we know it's real. Another example is parapsychology, which had also been scorned, and today we see that it's real – that we humans, in addition to our known senses, have others; we can have a telepathic sense or an intuition of what is to come.

We have lost the human sense of things, and that is very important. We have given so much importance to the machine that, instead of using it, it is using us, and we feel that pressure inside our heart, we feel that we are pressured by the machine.

The different possibilities that have been put forward, whether it's capitalist materialism or dialectical materialism, have not been able to solve



this problem. We are still immersed in this material world. We have to put aside our best dreams, we cannot write our best verses. In general, we cannot say or talk about the best that we have in us. We have become completely mechanical, lacking an inner strength that allows us to express ourselves. Today, in this world of crisis where values are all fragmented, people have no faith in religion, in the family, in politics or in science.

This means that we are in a moment of great changes, a moment which would be a “turning point of history”, that is, where history makes a curve, a turn. And it is precisely the materialists who are moving away the most from the direction of history, because of their own specific weight, their own matter. Their own momentum is causing them to go off course and move towards a certain degree of subjectivity, that is, to great theories that cannot be applied in practice, that have nothing to do with the human being himself. Theories are not enough, shelter and food are not enough. The materialists have forgotten something fundamental: we need to dream, we need to have an ideal, an enthusiasm, an inner strength.

It is obvious that times have changed. Today we are no longer going to conquer other continents across the ocean. Today we have to conquer ourselves, to be able to know ourselves. We know very little, not

only of this world, but also of the subtle worlds. For example, when a man is sick and dying, he is told: "Well, you must have faith in God, you are going to die; have faith in God," but there is no instruction, no teaching. What awaits us beyond death? Where do we come from? Where are we going? Are we made only of physical matter? Or do we also have other bodies, other vehicles with which we can capture experiences? We must ask ourselves these questions for the new times. Open questions that can allow us to know not only the world we walk in, but also the world we are going to walk in in the future, and to know ourselves. Why do we react in one way or another? What are our emotions? How does our mind work? How does our whole psychological apparatus work? These are the new sciences we must approach to solve our problem.

On the other hand, there is a mindset in the world by which all of us can talk about everything, like politics for example. That is not true. Politics is a science like any other. If I fall and hurt my leg, we have to call a doctor, that is, someone who has studied medicine. By the same logic, if a country, if a nation falls, you have to call someone who has studied politics, because politics is a science and, therefore, it cannot be improvised. But people's vanity makes many think that everyone can talk about politics. If you ask a person: "Sir, can you tell

me what the valency of carbon is?" They will say: "I am not a chemist. Don't ask me." But if you ask them, "How should Russia or the United States handle their affairs?" then they talk and talk. Everyone thinks they know about politics, when in fact, it is something you have to study. This is another contribution for the new times: to study the relations between human beings, to study them deeply, in a scientific way.

Another contribution for the new times is to be able to recreate in us a certain individual spirit, not to allow ourselves to be turned into a mass, for each to have our own personality, not to let advertising take us wherever it wishes. We must understand that each one of us has the right to that little bit of freedom to be able to choose our way of living, and also the right to a little bit of dignity, a little bit of honour. We need to be respected as human beings. We are not just numbers in a notebook or on a piece of paper, we are human beings with all our uniqueness. We are not all the same; we are equivalent, but not equal. All of you here have different faces, you dress differently, you think differently. There are no two equal beings in the whole world. Equality among human beings is a myth. So, what we have to look for is not equality, but concord, to be heart to heart, to be able to deeply understand others and ourselves. That is also another contribution for the new times.

In New Acropolis we propose to make something new, an acro-polis, a high city, not of bricks or stone, but a moral, spiritual city.

The current crisis of the West is not about energy, it is moral and spiritual. When our ancestors needed something material, they went out to look for it and they got it. For example, if one of us needs oil, why don't we go out and look for it? Why don't we go out and get it? Because we no longer have that inner strength to be able to cross those oceans of difficulties, to solve our own problems. Today's education has taught us to avoid problems, not to face them.

The UFO phenomenon, for example — true or false, it doesn't matter — shows us that we are psychologically looking for a solution that will

come from the outside, from the stars, when the solution to our problems is in each one of us, in our will to endure here and now, in our arms, in our thinking, in our imagination, in our possibility of conceiving a world that is not only new but better; a human being who is new, different, who is not selfish, who is different from the animals and the plants, who is ecological, who recognizes himself as part of nature and who does not believe that he is the apex, the highest point of all evolution.

That human being has inner youth. It does not matter how old we are, what is important is our inner youth. There are young people in their twenties who are already old, all they have are

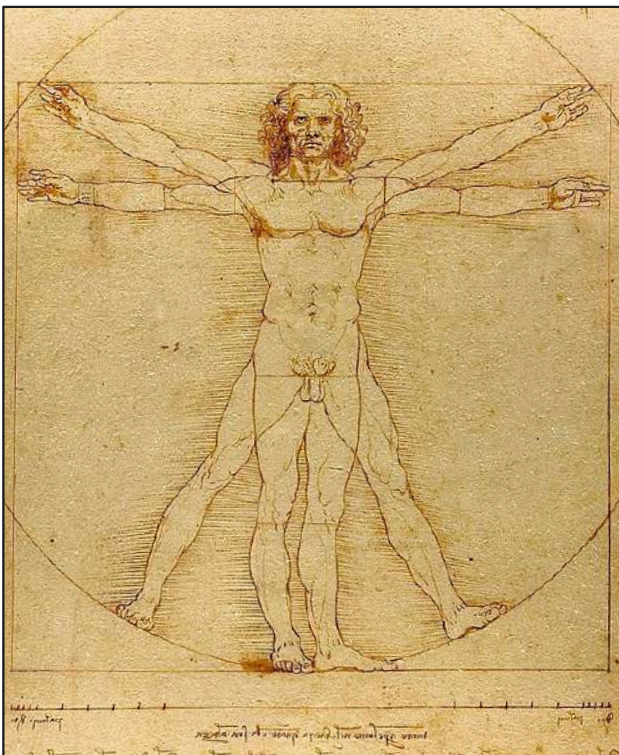


memories, longings; on the other hand, there are older people who have a strong will to do things. What we need, then, to make that new human being, are not miraculous gifts, but a good administration of what we already have materially, psychologically and spiritually.

The crisis of the West is not a catastrophe, it is an opportunity for change. We must be able to uproot ourselves from the problem in order to launch ourselves towards the solution; in this sense we

propose this change. Not a massive change; not changing everything so that everything remains the same. No, it is about an inner change, a different being, to be able to get up in the morning and see the trees, smell the fragrance of the roses, feel again love, the air, the song of the swallows, of the birds.

We need a human being who is really a human being again; who is not afraid of the rain; who is not afraid of the rivers; who is not afraid of another human being; who is not afraid of death – death does not exist, it is simply a change, it is like birth – a human being who can freely investigate ancient



Vitruvian Man by Leonardo da Vinci

civilizations and new sciences; who is capable of making a new art, of making a new music, who does not rely on fashions, on advertising, but on what they feel in their heart. That human being is the one we are looking for in this crisis of the West, in this coming of new times.

Usually, we don't have only one idea, but many; we all have lots and lots of ideas. What we want to bring is a will of perseverance, of spiritual conquest that is reflected in all things. We want to bring an inner youthfulness that will allow us to renew this collapsing world, and to have the strength to raise the walls of our world again, to have the strength to raise temples to God again. What differentiates us

from the animals, from the beasts, is our faith in God. The human being who does not believe in God – in any God: God, Cosmic Mind, That, or whichever name you choose – is like an animal, that is to say, he lives to eat, to clothe himself, and nothing more. So, that person becomes like an animal, he becomes increasingly smaller, increasingly more afraid; he is afraid when he is awake, and he is afraid when he is asleep. He goes to a psychoanalyst because he has problems, he takes pills....

It is necessary to recreate a more natural human being; we don't have to invent anything new, but to gather all the good that has already existed in the world, to put it in our heart, and to be able to say: "I have it in my heart". We also need to have the courage to investigate these things, to really ask ourselves: who am I, where do I come from, where am I going, was I in this world once before, do I reincarnate, is there a law of cause and effect – what in the East is called karma – does it exist, does it not exist? We have to question ourselves and dare to think about these things, dare to think about the different forms of reality.

In short, what we want to bring, my friends, is a new way of approaching life. Each one of you knows it, you all know it. All I am doing is reminding you of it, helping each one of you remember it and rediscover yourself, your brother, your sister, your father, your mother, your friend.

When that happens, we will be able to do what so many civilizations have done before: pass through this moment of crisis and launch ourselves forward so that young people, those who come after us, can smile, can be happy, can live life fully, can have their hands not only full of food or water, but have clean hands, with honour, a calm heart, a quiet and intelligent mind. Feet on the ground and arms to the sky, embracing all of humanity.

Jorge A. Livraga, Founder and First International President of New Acropolis

The Unintended Consequences of Progressive Ideologies: How Diversity Can Divide Rather Than Unite

When examining modern ideas of diversity we must take into account the reactive nature of the latter half of the 20th century. Reeling from the atrocities of the Second World War and struggling to redefine modern society as something civilized, western society in particular looked to an

in the last decade has become a dominant force in corporate, political and cultural spheres. As the debate has intensified we are now increasingly aware of a multitude of terms and concepts from Post-Modernism to Woke, Critical Race Theory to Intersectional Feminism, Social Justice Warriors to Cancel Culture.



By Catalin. From DeviantArt 24

While most positions of a progressive nature are intended to awaken a higher degree of social consciousness, responsibility and inclusion, the thesis contained in this article will suggest the contrary is the case. Despite the noble goals of the progressive movement, the forced and often violent imposition of diversity in all areas of society (from social media, to employment, to popular entertainment) has dramatically failed to bring unity among people. Instead we have been even further polarized and isolated, driven into tribes of political correctness that have trapped humanity in stifling echo chambers of ignorance.

overarching concept of 'progress' so as to assert that we would be leaving behind the ills of the past. The subsequent decades would see a gradual merging of so-called progressive values with the liberal democratic idea of the sovereign individual. Strongly influenced by French Post-Structuralism, this movement has permeated academia, most notably in North America. From there it has impacted most currents of intellectual discourse and

Beginning with its roots in Post-Structuralism, let us examine the foundational ideas of modern progressive thinking. It is impossible to explore such strains of thought without key thinkers like Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze and their arguments around the nature of power.

Michel Foucault (1926-1984) argued that social power is not just a repressive force exerted by institutions or individuals, but is also productive and operates through discourse – systems of thought, knowledge, and language¹.

Discourse, according to Foucault, creates and shapes the reality we live in. It defines what is considered true or false, normal or abnormal, acceptable or

1. Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (Foucault, 1975)

unacceptable. Institutions such as schools, prisons, hospitals and governments produce and reproduce dominant discourses that regulate behaviour and shape social norms. Foucault rejected the idea of fixed, essential identities, arguing instead for a more fluid understanding of subjectivity.

He critiqued traditional categories such as 'madness', 'criminality' and 'sexuality', asserting that these were historically constructed and subject to change².

This critique of essentialism challenges the idea of fixed truths about human nature, emphasizing instead the historical, contingent, and contextual nature of knowledge and identity.

The moral relativism implied in Foucault's mental contortions laid the groundwork for the emergence of several sub-movements which would further this insistence on power dynamics. It has become a staple of modern thought, a Neo-Marxist position of oppressor and oppressed, a lens through which all things are now being considered and through which history itself is being rewritten.

One such sub-movement is Critical Race Theory (CRT) which originated within legal studies in the United States during the late 20th century. It emerged as a response to the perceived limitations of traditional civil rights approaches to addressing racial injustice. CRT seeks to examine and understand how race and racism are embedded in the structures of society, particularly within legal systems and institutions. Layered with dubious assumptions, issues quickly arise.

A central concept of CRT is that race is a 'social construct', suggesting the notion that race is not a natural, biological category, instead viewing it as a socially constructed concept that has been used to perpetuate inequality and justify discrimination.

CRT posits that racism is not just the result of individual prejudices or biases, but rather is systemic and ingrained in the fabric of society. It focuses on understanding how institutions, laws, policies, and practices perpetuate racial inequalities. CRT tends to view racial issues through a lens of permanence, portraying racism as an inherent and unchanging aspect of society. This viewpoint naturally overlooks the progress that has been made

in addressing racial inequalities and the potential for further advancements³.

It encourages a critical examination of history, particularly how historical injustices such as slavery, colonialism, segregation, and discrimination continue to impact contemporary society. It also scrutinizes how power structures operate to maintain racial hierarchies. This emphasis on power structures perpetuates a sense of victimhood and disempowerment.



Proponents of CRT seek to challenge dominant narratives about race and racism, including the idea of colour-blindness – that is, the notion that we can consider each other without 'seeing race'. Indeed, the very dream of being judged by the content of our character rather than the colour of our skin has been deemed erroneous. The movement calls attention to the ways in which racism persists, often in subtle or hidden forms. This focus on narratives, easily leads to subjective interpretations that may not fully capture the nuances of racial dynamics. The idea of 'lived experience' becomes something total and impenetrable. Increasingly people reject the viewpoint of others as they do not share that

2. The History of Sexuality (Foucault, 1976)

3. The Problem with Critical Race Theory: An Introduction by Kevin Slack, published in *Society* in 2020

women and an emboldening of the masculinized female who simultaneously denounces all masculinity as toxic while exhibiting its worse traits.

In the realm of popular entertainment, the occurrence of the Mary Sue character trope has become more prevalent than ever as a superficial attempt to establish female dominance in modern Western culture. A Mary Sue is a female character presented to be stronger, smarter and more accomplished than all male counterparts. She displays exceptional abilities and talent without explanation (often without earning them) and she possesses nothing in the way of meaningful character flaws. Apart from being a product of lazy writing, the lack of a character arc or journey is unrealistic to discerning audiences and misleading to young people looking for a model of development to identify with.

What began as wish fulfilment in fan fiction has become an expected aspect of most major mainstream productions over the last decade. Some feminist scholars see the Mary Sue as a form of resistance against restrictive gender norms, while others critique it for reinforcing unrealistic behaviour standards⁷. The already superficial superhero genre has been distilled into the feminist equivalent of grunting and beating one's chest, removing even the slightest semblance of heroism in exchange for petty and vapid social commentary.

The silver screen is where we see the results, but behind the camera is where the policies striving for inclusion are wreaking havoc. To be eligible for an Academy Award nomination, film productions now need to follow determined criteria of representation, to ensure that a minimum number of minorities are included in the movie or in numerous positions in the production team⁸. The naïve assumption that including more under-represented groups as a matter of quota, rather than of merit, will somehow impose fairness is undermining the artistic integrity of storytelling all around the world.

DEI – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – is the policy in operation, not only in the movie business but across all industries. This reactionary measure was designed to right many wrongs in the workplace,

but is applied as a box-ticking exercise, forcing situations that seem to produce no meaningful change other than an increase in self-censorship. In order not to appear bigoted, and to protect their position, many people are living in quiet fear, allowing a very vocal minority to dominate the discussion about what is morally acceptable or even true.

Whether we call it identity politics, political correctness, Neo-Marxism, post-modernism, or 'Woke' we are faced with the same challenge. Values of inclusion, diversity and justice, values to which we all aspire, have been co-opted and twisted into a contrived amalgam of dialectical buzzwords used to dazzle well-meaning people into submission. The intellectual gymnastics used to prop up these fallacies rarely hold up to the slightest logical scrutiny and despite positive intentions, are clearly bringing us no closer to greater fraternity among people. A glance at the levels of vitriolic virtue signalling on social media is evidence enough of the lack of progress, aside from the examples cited above.

In the end, as philosophers, we seek unity through diversity. There will always be an external distinction between each of us, but that is the multiplicity which expresses an underlying unity. To come together around a universal ideal of fraternity, to embody values of sharing and solidarity, is the only way to move towards true unity. From that higher vantage point we can enrich our culture from all the beautiful differences among us. Lost in the weeds of those differences alone, it seems impossible to find a path to unity.

This is the paradox that modern thinking cannot reconcile. While we can and must celebrate the diverse aspects of culture, gender, race and beliefs, we also can and must see them from the perspective of a greater unity. The progressive ideals have failed because they have elevated the individual need over the common good, ego over humility, transaction over connection, intolerance masquerading as inclusion over understanding of the heart. The Acropolitan Ideal proposes a different approach, which we try to live, albeit imperfectly, in the world.

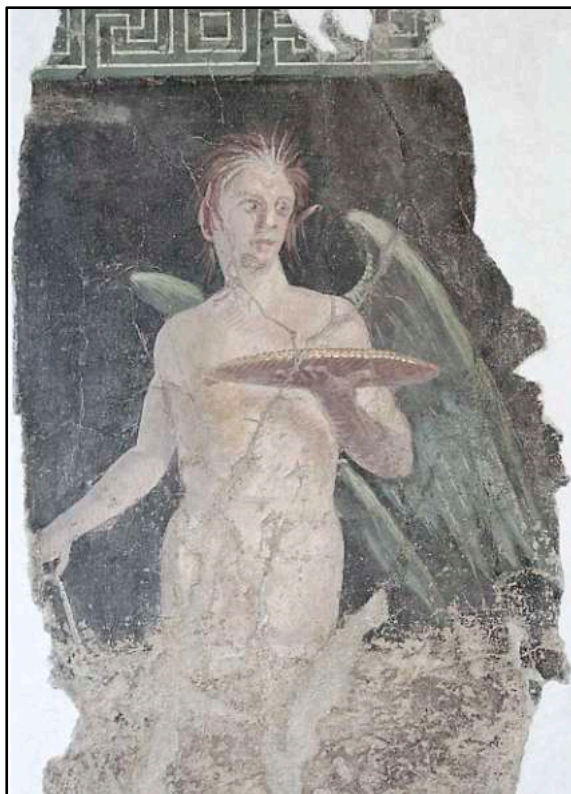
Aidan Murphy (Director of New Acropolis in Cork, Ireland)

7. The Edge of Reason: Women in the 21st Century (Mary Ellen Curtin 2002)

8. Representation and Inclusion Standards – Oscars.org

About *Daimones* and *Fate*

While studying Traditional Astrology, I came across two abstruse concepts which are always interrelated together, that of *daimon* and *fate*. I was surprised to discover how important these concepts were for the astrologers of the past. The topic would be too technical if discussed from an astrological perspective but as it pertains to the so called 'Western Mystery Tradition', I thought it would be interesting to present some basic ideas.



Winged genius fragment from the peristyle of the villa of P. Fannius Synistor near Pompei.

In antiquity, the daimon was often seen as a mediator or agent of fate, guiding people according to a predetermined destiny¹. Fate was perceived as an impersonal and immutable force that determined the course of events in the universe. In Homer's poems, for instance, the daimones (plural of daimon) are described as supernatural forces or minor deities who influence human life, sometimes acting as protectors and at other times as agents of Fate. The daimones thus represented a wide range of spiritual forces that could either help or hinder people depending on the circumstances.

The pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus gave to the daimon a more personal dimension, linking it to individual destiny. In one of his enigmatic phrases he said: *ethos anthrōpōi daimōn*. This has been translated both as *a man's character is his daimon* and *character is man's destiny*, thus emphasizing the importance of the daimon as an inner guiding force rather than some external spiritual entity². The idea is that the daimon is not a 'fated gift' allotted by the gods, but an intrinsic part of a person's inner

1. The terms *Fate* and *Destiny*, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, have become synonymous, but in antiquity they had quite different meanings. For sake of simplicity I am using them almost interchangeably.

2. *Character* here doesn't have the meaning given to it by modern psychology. It must be understood as an 'inner quality' or 'inner nature'. Or the 'way of being' of an individual, his virtue, or *Te* (in Chinese). This 'inner quality' is a luminous power that directs man's destiny. *Daimon* therefore is a numinous force that accompanies the human being. Quoted in *Eraclito. Dell'Origine* by Angelo Tonelli.

character. This character (*ethos*) partakes of a *daemonic* force, and the unfolding of life depends on it. Therefore, each person is responsible for his or her own destiny through both the relationship to his daimon and the unfoldment of his character. From a more metaphysical point of view, Heraclitus also seems to suggest that the daimon is like a fragment or a spark of light descending from the *Cosmic/Primordial Fire*. This *spark* lies hidden within the unconscious of each individual. Later on the Stoics, using the concept of *Logos* (Divine-Cosmic Reason), spoke of the daimon as the means to live in tune with the *Divine Plan* and the *Order of Nature*.

Plato elaborated a complex vision of the daimon. Like his predecessors, he sometimes described it as an intermediary spirit connecting the divine and the human. In the *Symposium*, for instance, Diotima explains that daimones facilitate communication between gods and humans, allowing divine influences to flow into the human world, thus bringing prayers and sacrifices upwards and divine messages downwards. In the *Myth of Er* in Plato's *Republic*, Socrates describes how souls choose their next lives. After choosing, 'they go to Lachesis, and she assigns them their daimon as guardian of the life they have chosen. This daimon then guides the soul to Clotho to confirm the chosen destiny, and then passes under the hand of Atropos to make the destiny irreversible'³. In this passage from the *Republic*, the daimon is portrayed as a personal guide that accompanies the soul throughout its life, linking it to the individual's destiny, not as the creator of destiny, but as a guide that helps realize the soul's chosen destiny. In this view, the structure of life is fated, but there is still room for choice, and the daimon helps to follow the chosen path.

The most 'personal' conception of daimon in Plato's works is related to the figure of Socrates, who presents it as an *inner voice* that guides him in his search for truth and justice, warning him against wrong actions. This voice represents the highest

3. See Plato's *Republic* (620d-e). Note: Clotho (the spinner), Lachesis (the allotter), and Atropos (the inevitable) are known as the Moirai, the three aspects of Fate.

aspect of the soul, which like a charioteer controls the instinctive and irrational parts of the person (the horses), guiding him towards the *Good*⁴. Finally, in the *Timaeus*, Plato expresses an idea similar to Heraclitus's, suggesting that every soul has a divine aspect, a "higher soul"⁵, which seeks to guide the individual towards the contemplation of eternal forms (or divine archetypes) and away from the distractions of the physical world.



Roman coin, with the depiction of Agathos Daimon.

In Christianity, the ancient concept of daimon was reinterpreted through Christian theology, which had adopted a dualistic view of *good* and *evil*. Many of the spiritual beings of Greco-Roman polytheism were seen as evil entities, and both in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament the Greek term *daimon* was often used to describe evil spirits or demons. The Church Fathers argued that the daimones worshipped in pagan religions were actually fallen angels, who deceive human beings

4. See Plato's dialogues *The Apology of Socrates* and *The Phaedrus*.

5...and as regards to the most lordly kind of our soul, we must conceive of it in this wise: we declare that God has given to each of us, as his daemon, that kind of soul which is housed in the top of our body..." (*Timaeus* 90a).

and lead them away from the 'true' God. In the late Middle Ages, daimones (now regarded as allies of the Devil) were seen as responsible for leading people towards heresy or witchcraft.

However, even in the Christian world, the ancient idea of benevolent spiritual intermediaries did not disappear entirely. In fact, the concept of a personal daimon was adapted to the Christian figure of the



guardian angel, in which it is believed that each person is assigned an angel from Heaven to protect and guide them. This more 'positive' view of the daimon became more popular with the advent of the Renaissance. Marsilio Ficino, for example, did not see *Fate* as a rigid force, but as something that can be influenced by divine grace, free will and the mediation of the daimon. The latter can help us realize our life purpose or *vocatio*. Ficino believed that each person has a unique *daimon* or *genius*, an 'inner inspirer' which guides artists, writers and thinkers in their quest for knowledge and beauty.

In the 19th century, Carl Gustav Jung re-evaluated the concept of daimon (without using the actual

term), placing it in the context of psychological integration and the exploration of the unconscious, where dreams, intuitions or symbolic images are seen as messages from the daimon. In more recent times, James Hillman re-introduced the older, soul-centred approach, assigning to the daimon a crucial role. Hillman argued that each person is born with a unique daimon, which encapsulates the essence of their character and potential, propelling individuals towards greater self-awareness and authenticity. However, Hillman's daimon is not, as it were, a 'benevolent' guide. It can be demanding, difficult and even disruptive, pushing the individual to follow a path that could be at odds with social expectations or personal comfort. In short, a true 'inner teacher' interested only in our spiritual evolution. This is an interesting view which I particularly like.

In conclusion: 1) the daimon is that portion of 'divine fire/light' that has been 'assigned' to us, in this incarnation, to find the way out of the labyrinth of life. 2) as we find ourselves navigating in the open sea (the unpredictability of life), we need an 'invisible rudder' to show us the best course to follow and to get 'home' safely; this task is 'assigned' to the daimon. 3) the daimon is like a secret (sacred) code or diskette to be decrypted. It contains the data bank, i.e. the spiritual potential of this incarnation⁶. 4) The process by which this daimon is first awakened, then nurtured and developed, so that our soul can establish an increasingly more stable contact with it, corresponds to the initiatory process.

Agostino Dominici

6. In my view, the daimon is not to be confused with the 'higher Self' (called Spirit or *Atman*) which is merely a witness (the 'silent watcher') and therefore it does not deal with a particular individual but with an 'infinite' series of incarnations. In the Western Tradition the 'higher Self' was often referred as the *Numen*.

Philosophy in Poetry

It could be argued that poetry, as an intuitive art, goes beyond the limits of philosophy, because it manages to express the ineffable in a way that philosophy cannot. But this is only so when we define philosophy as a purely rational practice, as it is usually understood today. But if we define philosophy in its etymological sense, that is to say, as ‘love of wisdom’, we can understand that wisdom is not necessarily limited to the rational mind. A grandmother, a poet, even an illiterate person can be wise. As the Egyptian sage Ptah-hotep wrote: “The perfect word is as rare as an emerald, yet it can be found among the maidservants working at the millstone.”

So I would like to put forward another definition of philosophy which bridges this gap between reason and poetry, from the writings of the philosopher Jorge A. Livraga, the founder of New Acropolis: “Philosophy is a music made by the soul, in the silent dimension of the invisible.”

The word ‘music’ evokes beauty, harmony, healing and many other things besides; ‘the silent dimension of the invisible’ evokes mystery, something we can only imagine with our intuition.

In a similar way, Shakespeare’s Hamlet says: “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than

are dreamt of in your philosophy” (referring to philosophy in its rationalistic sense).

It is difficult to make generalisations about poetry, because poetry comes in many different forms. For example, there are poems which are quite rational in their content, as in the following lines from Alexander Pope:

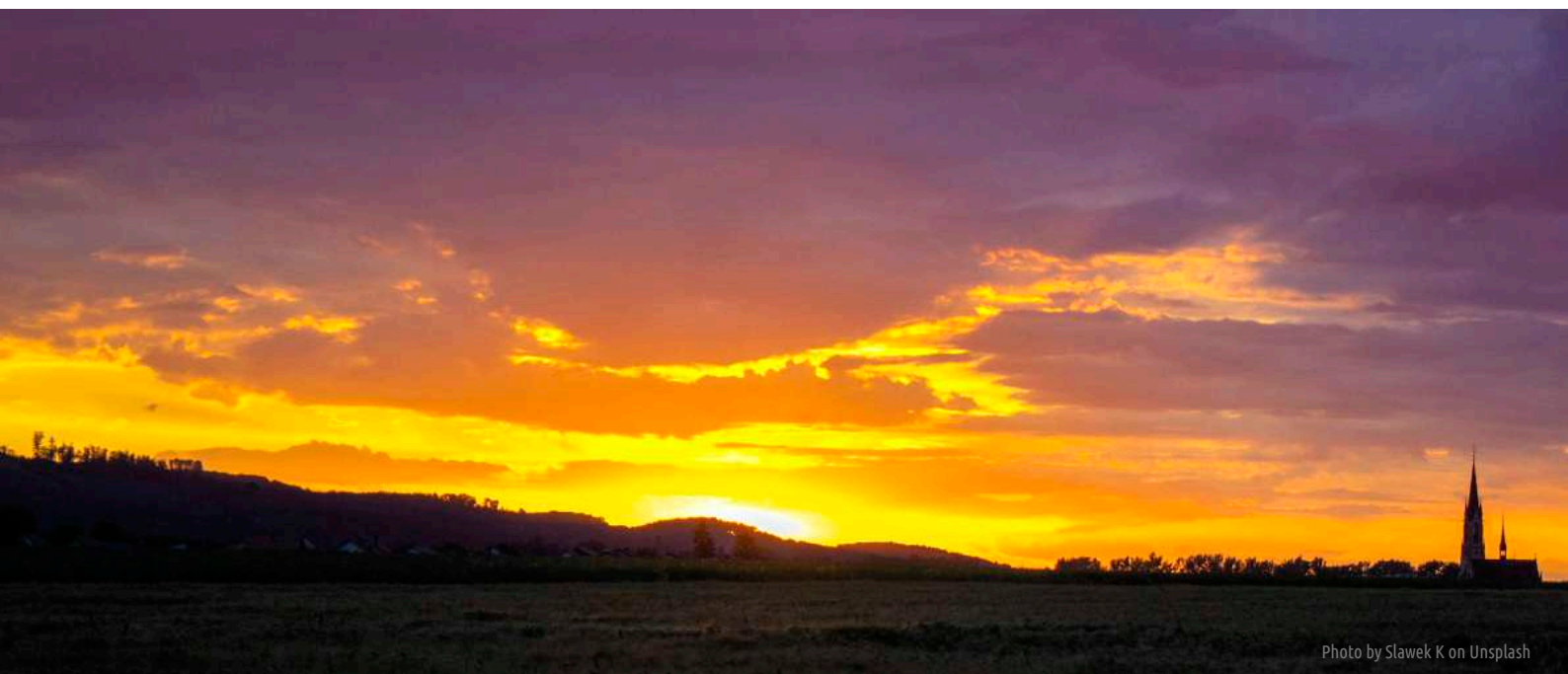
*Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is Man.*

(From An Essay on Man)

It is a message of humanism, similar to that of Confucius, who urged his followers not to worry too much about serving the gods and spirits, but to focus on serving their fellow human beings.

Pope’s poem continues with a poetic description of the human condition – a higher nature and a lower nature, perpetually at war:

*He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;*



And ends this section with the lines:

*Sole judge of truth, in endless error
hurled,
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!*

Now let us look at another more mystical kind of philosophy, from the 18th-19th century poet William Blake:

*To see a World in a Grain of
Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your
hand
And Eternity in an hour.*

(From *Auguries of Innocence*)



This expresses the ancient idea of the correspondence between the Macrocosm and the Microcosm, the infinitely large and the infinitely small, expressed in the Hermetic aphorism 'As above, so below.' The universe is a living being, with an essential unity. This idea, which would take many words and examples to explain, Blake condenses into these four evocative lines, full of concrete images which everyone can understand. We have all seen sand and flowers, we all know the palm of our hand and we are absolutely familiar with the concept of an hour. How does he do this? It's a kind of magic, to express a complex idea so completely in such a short space. As well as the words themselves, rhythm and rhyme have an important part to play. In this case they create a

kind of childlike quality that epitomises the beautiful simplicity of nature and life.

Perhaps somewhere in between Pope and Blake are the romantic poets. Shelley's poem Ode to the West Wind, for example, ends with these famous suggestive lines:

*O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far
behind?*

In this poem, Shelley describes in highly imaginative terms the destructive effects of the autumnal west wind in Italy, comparing its effects to the blows of life and ending with the above stirring phrase, which he refers to as 'the trumpet of a prophecy', and the whole poem as an 'incantation'.

It reminds us that in ancient times poets were seers and poetry was deemed to have a magical effect. Some of the Vedas, the religious scriptures of Hinduism, are in verse form and were sung as incantations. Poetry and magical incantation were also very important in Celtic culture. Poetry has always had this function of awakening the soul through the magical combination of content, rhythm and rhyme. The 19th century occultist H.P. Blavatsky wrote the following words about the power of sound:

"...the spoken words have a power, which is not only unknown, but is not even suspected... Sound and rhythm are closely linked to the four elements of the ancients; ... a particular vibration in the air is sure to awaken the corresponding Powers, and the union of these produces good or bad effects depending on the case."

(*Secret Doctrine*, Volume II)

We can see this in the incantations which Shelley uses in the same poem at the end of each verse, for example:

*Wild Spirit, which art moving
everywhere,
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!*

If we wanted to relate it to the explanation given above, we could speculate that these words relate to

the element Air, as they sound like the wind to which the poet is referring.

However, not all poetry is magical and mystical, and some modern poetry has a tendency to focus more on the mundane, like this poem by the former Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy:

Valentine

*Not a red rose or a satin heart.
I give you an onion.
It is a moon wrapped in brown paper.
It promises light
like the careful undressing of love.
Here.
It will blind you with tears
like a lover.
It will make your reflection
a wobbling photo of grief.
I am trying to be truthful.
Not a cute card or a kissogram.
I give you an onion.
Its fierce kiss will stay on your lips,
possessive and faithful
as we are,
for as long as we are.
Take it.
Its platinum loops shrink to a wedding ring,
if you like.
Lethal.
Its scent will cling to your fingers,
cling to your knife.*

But this poem also uses imagery and analogy, it has a logic, but it is not a rational logic; it is more intuitive, which is one of the characteristics of poetry. It also has a message, perhaps summed up in the line "I am trying to be truthful." But the poem is also pointing out how a commonplace thing can be seen as something of value. It is interesting that the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda also wrote a poem about an onion, so perhaps the onion is a symbol of the unseen beauty of ordinary things:

Ode to The Onion by Pablo Neruda

*Onion,
luminous flask,
your beauty formed
petal by petal,
crystal scales expanded you
and in the secrecy of the dark earth*

*your belly grew round with dew.
Under the earth
the miracle
happened
and when your clumsy
green stem appeared,
and your leaves were born
like swords
in the garden,
the earth heaped up her power
showing your naked transparency,
and as the remote sea
in lifting the breasts of Aphrodite
duplicating the magnolia,
so did the earth
make you,
onion
clear as a planet
and destined
to shine,
constant constellation,
round rose of water,
upon
the table
of the poor.*

*You make us cry without hurting us.
I have praised everything that exists,
but to me, onion, you are
more beautiful than a bird
of dazzling feathers,
heavenly globe, platinum goblet,
unmoving dance
of the snowy anemone*

*and the fragrance of the earth lives
in your crystalline nature.*

(Translated from the Spanish by Stephen Mitchell)

And this, perhaps, sums up the important role of poets, they enable us to see life from a different, enchanted point of view. The poet sees the details of ordinary things and sees them as extraordinary, enabling us, for brief moments, to see life with fresh eyes, with eyes of wonder; and wonder is, in the words of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, the beginning of philosophy.

Julian Scott

Beer, the Oldest Drink in the World?

Beer is one of the oldest, if not the oldest alcoholic drink. Ever since mankind began cultivating cereals, beer has been produced as well. The first beer-like drinks were not the same as today's lagers, stouts or ales, manufactured in technicized breweries. Their tastes were different, and their manufacturing methods too.

The main components of beer are water, carbohydrates and ethanol. Cereals contain sugar that can go through a fermentation process with the help of water and yeast. But this process can be controlled or adjusted in many ways by adding different cereals, yeasts, flavours, etc. So, the results can be very varied.

The first barley beers were produced in Mesopotamia, around 5,000 B.C. Beers were recorded in ancient Egypt and China as well. Those beers were more thick than today's beers, their protein levels were higher, but their alcohol levels were lower. Not bitter, like lagers, but sweet. In Egypt beer was part of the diet of the pharaohs, in Nubia it was used as a medicine.

There were even gods dedicated to beer and poems and songs were written to them. Ninkasi was the Sumerian goddess of beer and brewing, revered by the brewers, who were mostly women. Her name meant 'mistress of beer', and she was often depicted





with a cup in her hand. She was associated with both the good and the bad effects of this alcoholic drink. In Egypt, the beer goddess was called Tenemit, in the Norse cult, Aegir. Aegir was famous for hosting the gods with ale in his hall.

Though the Greeks mainly drank wine, they knew about beer and made it as well, as Polybius mentions in *The Histories*. In the Middle Ages, beer was a very common drink across all classes, especially in Northern Europe, where grape cultivation was impossible due to the cold weather. It is not proven that people drank more beer than water as some historians have stated, but it is a fact that the first beers flavoured with hops come from this time. Until the 13th century, beer was brewed at home, but as the population and consumption grew, production followed demand. Monasteries also played an important role in the preparation of beers for the public.

In England, the first small breweries started to operate in the late 15th century. Originally, ales were beers without hops, just made of water, malt and yeast. But as hop cultivation spread, ales were hopped too and the term 'ale' referred to strong beers. Today, the hop is a basic ingredient of beer. Most beers until recent times were 'top-fermented'. 'Bottom-fermented' beers were discovered

accidentally in the 16th century after beer was stored in cool caverns for long periods. Today, way more bottom-fermented beers are produced. Typical of these are the pils and lagers. The invention of hydrometers and thermometers also changed the brewing process significantly, allowing producers to be more flexible and efficient. For example, they did not need to use single malt any more.

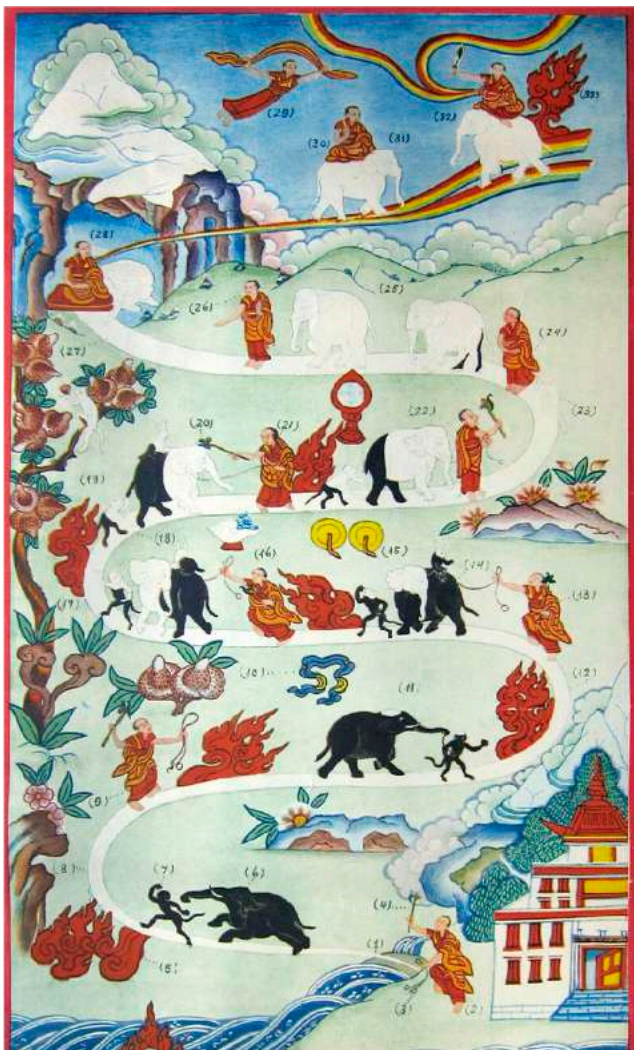
Beers are very popular all over the world. Though it has a toxic part – the ethanol, which can cause drunkenness and liver problems – it is rich in protein, amino acids and it contains some vitamin B, along with traces of vitamins A, C, D, E and K. It is a liquid source of calories and a great source of energy. But it has less calories than the same amount of juice or milk. If it is consumed in moderation and with awareness, it can be a good accompaniment for food and chatting with friends. Probably, for as long as mankind exists, beers will stay with us.

Istvan Orban

Concentration

A Key to Awakening

More than thirteen years ago, while travelling in India, I found myself in front of a captivating image during a retreat at a Buddhist Monastery in Dharamsala. The same image – although rendered in vivid colours – appeared before me again years later in London. Little did I know then that this image was profoundly connected to the art of concentration, a tool that has been cultivated and refined since ancient times.



Shamatha meditation image. Source www.himalayanart.org

This image represents Shamatha, a concept familiar to those who practise mindfulness or meditation. Shamatha, often translated as “peaceful abiding or tranquillity”, embodies the journey that human beings, as seekers, undertake in the process of awakening. The engraving, created by the Tibetan Master Blo Bzang Don Yod in the 17th century, symbolically illustrates the complex workings of the human mind and how this tool of concentration can be developed and mastered through disciplined practice. If concentration is defined as the power or action of focusing one’s attention, the question arises: how is this tool meant to be utilized?

In both psychology and philosophy, and across many other fields of knowledge, the act of concentration is considered essential. It helps us transcend our own projections and attachments, somehow unlocking the door to wisdom. If we imagine concentration as a light, the more we focus, the clearer we see things as they truly are, rather than how we wish them to be. Unfortunately, due to our inherent human subjectivity, we often perceive the world through the tinted lenses of our past experiences, history, prejudices, and judgements. Buddhist teachings remind us that much of our suffering stems from a distracted mind that dwells between the past and the future, preoccupied with what has happened or what could happen, instead of being fully present in the moment. Nowadays, it seems like many of us are attempting to become more mindful while navigating a hectic life, and this topic has gained popularity in recent years.

To understand the power of concentration, consider challenging yourself to focus on a single object or thought for just a few minutes. You will quickly

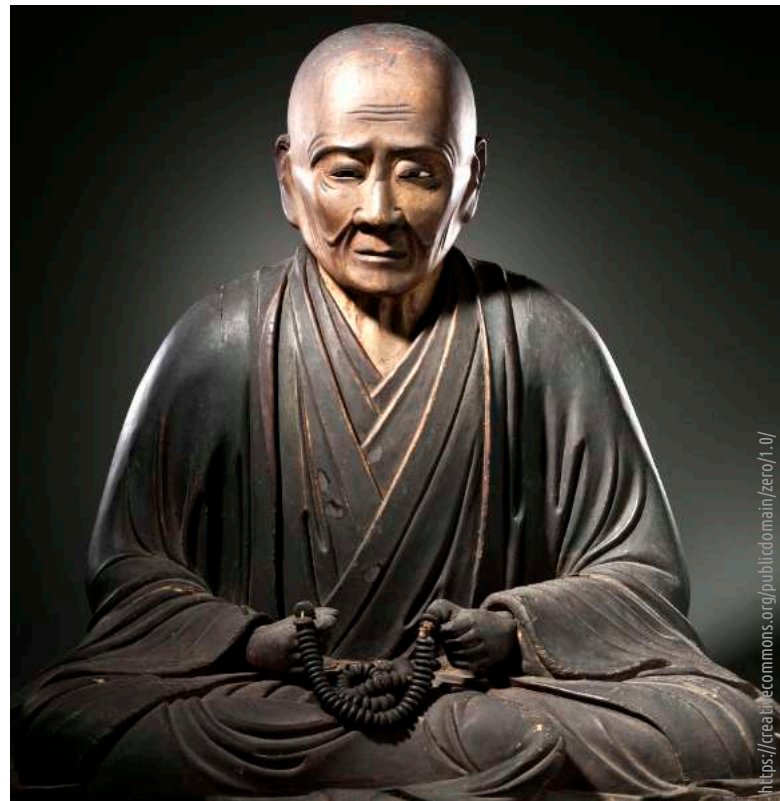
notice how fleeting concentration can be. Try posing a question to yourself, then allow yourself the time and space to delve deeply into exploring possible answers. Many ancient philosophers have commented on the dual nature of the mind: it can be incredibly powerful, yet equally destructive, depending on how it is used. Our mind is in constant activity, rarely resting, not even when we sleep. However, like any other skill or muscle, it is possible to train the mind and become better at maintaining focus. Perhaps one day, through dedicated practice, we can achieve a sense of oneness akin to that of a sculptor deeply immersed in shaping a piece of clay, where the artist and the medium become indistinguishable.

Our distractions, both external and internal – symbolized by the restless monkey – present significant obstacles in the process of mastering our mind. Without developing the skill of concentration, it becomes difficult to find our centre and make conscious choices, rather than reacting impulsively. We all recognize the difference between moving through life from a place of centredness and alignment with our true essence, and living with the burden of not being able to align our actions with our inner truth. As mentioned in the book *Concentration and Inner Awakening* by Fernand Schwarz, “Deep concentration opens access to wisdom, frees up our energy, and gives us the clarity essential to fulfilling our true destiny.”

The journey of the elephant depicted in the image serves as an allegory for the journey towards self-discovery and the rediscovery of our true identity. It represents the process of becoming more authentic and recognizing who we truly are. If the goal of concentration is to overcome the obstacles that prevent us from merging with our object of focus, what other psychological tools might help us in this endeavour? Attention and memory are two such tools. When we harness our voluntary attention, guided by our will, we are more likely to become aware of our thoughts, emotions and actions. When we lack attention, we simply go through life behaving like robots that know how to do things because of habits, but are rooted in automatism. By choosing to be vigilant and attentive more often, we can remember our true selves, remain mindful of

our goals, and stay true to our inner purpose. And this is how we will learn and remember our insights and reflections, instead of falling again and again into the same hole.

As we walk this path, we must be prepared to face three primary obstacles: the body’s tendency towards inertia or the pursuit of pleasure; the dominance of emotions, allowing them to dictate our actions; and the confusion that often clouds the mind. That is why it is important to do some concentration exercises in daily life, because they will help us to overcome the obstacles and lead us to a better experience of life itself. Just think about the daily tasks you do and how much concentration is required. A good starting point is to notice when



you concentrate and notice when you get distracted, and gently, with love, we bring our concentration back out of our own choice by using the power of will. It is said that spiritual development is only achieved by means of concentration. And over the past years I have also found that developing consciousness and concentration – both useful and relevant tools – can support us in making wiser choices.

Natalia Lema

Two Tales of Surrender



In India there is a story about a powerful elephant king called Gajendra. He was strong, had many wives and led a large herd of elephants. He was very proud and he demonstrated his strength by trampling over shrubs and trees. One hot day he was passing a wonderful lake and ordered his elephants to stop there so that he could refresh himself. While he was drinking water, he became very playful and while splashing the water he disturbed the crocodile Makara sleeping at the bottom of the lake. Makara got annoyed with Gajendra, bit him and held onto his leg. Gajendra pulled with all his might to release himself, but the more he resisted the deeper Makara's teeth bit into him. He was in pain and anguished. All of

his wives and the whole herd tried to help him, but nobody could pull him out, as Makara was too strong. Eventually they all gave up and left him alone in the clutches of Makara. Many years passed and all of Gajendra's efforts to set himself free were in vain. After one thousand years in the struggle, he had spent all his energy and realized that all was lost, so he raised a lotus flower into the air as an offering to the god Vishnu and called for help. In an instant Vishnu came to the rescue and killed Makara. This became a liberation not only for Gajendra, but also for Makara.

A second interesting story we have is from ancient Rome in a book called *The Golden Ass*. It is a story of a young man named Lucius, who in his curious pursuit of knowledge became entangled with magic and by mistake turned himself into a donkey. This was the beginning of a long and arduous journey. He was told that the antidote to the spell was to eat a rose, but as he was just a working animal, he was at the mercy of many keepers, who mostly treated him badly and put him in the most absurd situations. One night he

escaped from a house and ran towards the sea, where he fell asleep. He woke up around midnight with the full moon rising and realized that the only one who could help him was the goddess Isis, protector of all life. He uttered a prayer to Isis to help him end this misery and find his human self again. That night he received a vision of Isis rising from the waters, who told him to attend a ceremony where one of her priests would be carrying the garlands, one of which would be made of roses. She reassured him that he would encounter no difficulties in trying to eat the roses from the priest. It all happened as she said and Lucius regained his human form again. From then onwards he became a priest in the cult of Isis and dedicated his life to her service.

The first story is from the corpus of the *Bhagavatam Purana* in praise of the god Vishnu, depicting how he descended to Earth many times as an avatar to bring justice and liberation. The second story was written by Apuleius in the 2nd century A.D. He studied Platonic philosophy in Athens and was a priest of

Asclepius. He was interested in the ancient Egyptian cult of Isis and was initiated into various mysteries. To clearly express how Lucius's adventure is the journey of the soul, the book contains the myth of Cupid and Psyche.

The message of both stories is very similar, they speak of a surrender and the transformation that happens with it. But surrender, despite looking very simple, is difficult to achieve, as we have seen with the characters in both stories. For transformation to take place, surrender to something higher than our ego, to a divine aspect, has to happen. When the ego controls our life, it is like a king with inflated pride, as in the case of King Gajendra, but the clutches of material entanglement traps one into a lonely and ultimately hopeless place. The attachment to the material world is the beginning of sorrows. Material attachment is not only about possessions and wealth, but ideas we have of ourselves and the world, the sense of how great and important



A portrait of Apuleius flanked by Pamphile changing into an owl and the Golden Ass. Wikimedia.

we are. The attachment is so subtle that we hardly see it. The ego masterfully disguises itself as spiritual pride, which seems already detached from the material world, and it can take a long time to realize that. One can overcome the state of pride with humility, which becomes an integral part of the spiritual journey to cross the delusion.

In the case of Lucius, an immature and untrained mind without discrimination, which has no power to find its rightful place, can also lead one into a tragic and hopeless situation. Unwise decisions bring bitter experiences. We often prefer to victimize ourselves; the negative mind takes over and we truly begin living in the worst possible world.

To be truly human is a state of consciousness, not a matter of birth. As long as we prefer to stay within the limits of our comfort, change doesn't happen, no matter how loud and often we say that we really want to change. Life brings us many opportunities to awaken to a new state of consciousness, but we resist and try to avoid any change, we see those opportunities as problems and calamities. So unfortunately, our main driver to raise our consciousness and to change is the state of pain and unhappiness, which motivates us to move up and look for possibilities that we couldn't see before. Change is not just a matter of decision, but rather a state of being, that makes what once was impossible possible, and we have to work for that.



Both transformational moments in stories happened when the ego realized it was hopeless. But true surrender is not giving up, but a profound remembrance of the inseparable link of our soul with the divine and aligning with it. Connection is always there, but it is not actualized in our consciousness, there is a veil we have placed over it. As we can't neglect the nature of our true being, there is an underlying longing that we feel occasionally, a sense that keeps reminding us that there is still something important that we can do with our lives. It is a shift from a state of fear and insecurity to a state of trust and love.

These two stories tell us that the ego needs humility and the intellect needs discernment so that our soul can be liberated. Human potential will be fulfilled with love and wisdom in the service of a higher order. This is the happy ending of all stories.

Miha Kosir

