

## **The Way of Pathei-Mathos A Philosophical Compendiary**

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### **Preface**

The philosophy of *πάθει μάθος* (pathei-mathos) is my own weltanschauung, and may be said to represent both the essence and the substance of what I have retained after refining and reflecting upon 'the numinous way' I developed between the years 2006 and 2011.

This year-long process of refinement and reflexion [2011-2012] led me to not only discard most of that 'numinous way' but also to re-express, in a more philosophical manner, the basic insights and the personal pathei-mathos that initially inspired me to develop that 'numinous way', a re-expression contained in this recuyle and which recuyle contains all I feel is required for a reasoned understanding of my philosophy. This work should also (hopefully) serve to distinguish the philosophy of *πάθει μάθος* from The Numinous Way

This new philosophy, however, is not a conventional, an academic, one where a person intellectually posits or constructs a coherent theory - involving ontology, epistemology, ethics, and so on - often as a result of an extensive

dispassionate study, review, or a criticism of the philosophies or views, past and present, advanced by other individuals involved in the pursuit of philosophy as an academic discipline or otherwise. Instead, the philosophy of pathei-mathos is the result of my own pathei-mathos, my own learning from diverse - sometimes outré, sometimes radical and often practical - ways of life and experiences over some four decades; of my subsequent reasoned analysis, over a period of several years, of those ways and those experiences; of certain personal intuitions, spread over several decades, regarding the numinous; of an interior process of personal and moral reflexion, lasting several years and deriving from a personal tragedy; and of my life-long study and appreciation of Hellenic culture, an appreciation that led me to translate works by Sappho, Sophocles, Aeschylus and Homer, and involved me in a detailed consideration of the weltanschauung of individuals such as Heraclitus (insofar as such weltanschauungen are known from recorded sayings and surviving books).

Given this appreciation, and as the name suggests, the *philosophy of πάθει μάθος* has certain connexions to Hellenic culture and I tend therefore to use certain Greek words in order to try and elucidate my meaning and/or to express certain philosophical principles regarded as important in - and for an understanding of - this philosophy; a usage of words which I have endeavoured to explain as and where necessary, sometimes by quoting passages from Hellenic literature or other works and by providing translations of such passages. For it would be correct to assume that the ethos of this philosophy is somewhat indebted to and yet - and importantly - is also a development of the ethos of Hellenic culture; an indebtedness obvious in notions such as *δίκη, πάθει μάθος*, avoidance of *ὑβρις*, and references to Heraclitus, Aeschylus, and others, and a development manifest in notions such as empathy and the importance attached to the virtue of compassion.

In addition, and possibly somewhat unconventionally since in accord with the Hellenic etymology of the word and the Homeric sense of *φίλος* <sup>[a]</sup> I view a philosopher as someone who is a friend of - whose companion is, who seeks to find, to acquire, to follow, to befriend - *σοφόν*. Thus in this sense, a philosopher is someone seeking to acquire a certain skill (such as the learning/reasoning that is *λόγος*) and discover a particular knowledge, such as a knowledge regarding Being and beings, *rerum divinarum et humanarum*; a knowledge acquired or found by means of both using *λόγος* and from life itself via practical experience, practical learning; a dual sense evident from the meaning and usage of *σοφός*.

Thus my personal understanding of philosophy is that it is the result of the activity and the life of a philosopher; more correctly perhaps, it is both the written or the recorded or transmitted results of the lucubrations that such way of life (that such a following, such a seeking, of knowledge and wisdom)

engenders, and of what the living of such a life (that such befriending of σοφόν) brings-into-being and/or reveals. And it is in this sense that I consider my way of πάθει μάθος a philosophy.

All translations from Ancient Greek in this work are mine, and I have, at the suggestion of a friend, added an appendix giving some brief explanations and definitions of some of the Greek and English terms used, some of which explanations and definitions are taken either from the body of the text or from footnotes and/or which may expand upon the body of the text or footnotes.

David Myatt  
14<sup>th</sup> May 2012

[a] For example, *Odyssey*, Book I, v.301-302

καὶ σύ, φίλος, μάλα γάρ σ' ὀρώω καλόν τε μέγαν τε,  
ἄλκιμος ἔσσο', ἵνα τίς σε καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἐὺ εἴπη.

Thus should you, my friend - who I see are strong and fully-grown -  
Be as brave, so that those born after you will speak well of you.

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## I

### **Pathei-Mathos as Authority and Way**

The Greek term πάθει μάθος derives from The Agamemnon of Aeschylus (written c. 458 BCE), and can be interpreted, or translated, as meaning *learning from adversary*, or *wisdom arises from (personal) suffering*; or *personal experience is the genesis of true learning*.

However, this expression should be understood in context [1], for what Aeschylus writes is that the Immortal, Zeus, guiding mortals to reason, has provided we mortals with a new law, which law replaces previous ones, and which new law - this new guidance laid down for mortals - is pathei-mathos.

Thus, for we human beings, pathei-mathos possesses a numinous, a living, authority [2] - that is, the wisdom, the understanding, that arises from one's own personal experience, from formative experiences that involve some hardship, some grief, some personal suffering, is often or could be more

valuable to us (more alive, more meaningful) than any doctrine, than any religious faith, than any words one might hear from someone else or read in some book.

In many ways, this Aeschylean view is an enlightened – a very human – one, and is somewhat in contrast to the faith and revelation-centred view of religions such as Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. In the former, it is the personal experience of learning from, and dealing with, personal suffering and adversity, that is paramount and which possesses authority and 'meaning'. In the latter, it is faith that some written or transmitted work or works is or are a sacred revelation from the supreme deity one believes in which is paramount, which possess meaning and authority, often combined with a belief that this supreme deity has appointed or authorized some mortal being or beings, or some Institution, as their earthly representative(s), and which Institution and/or representative(s) therefore are believed to possess or are accepted as possessing authority or are regarded as authoritative.

Thus, the Aeschylean view is that learning, and hence wisdom, often or perhaps mostly arises from within us, by virtue of that which afflicts us (and which afflictions could well be understood as from the gods/Nature or from some supra-personal source) and from our own, direct, personal, practical, experience. In contrast, the conventional religious view is that wisdom can be found in some book (especially in some religious text), or be learnt from someone considered to be an authority, or who has been appointed as some authority by some Institution, religious or otherwise.

The essential difference between these two ways is therefore that *pathei-mathos* is the way of direct learning from personal experience, while the religious way is often or mostly the way of secondary or tertiary learning, from others; of accepting or believing what is written by or taught by someone else or laid down in some dogma, some creed, some book, or by some external authority, such as an Institution.

For The Way of Pathei-Mathos, it is the personal learning that *pathei-mathos* provides or can provide, combined with - balanced by - the insight, the knowing, that empathy provides, which are considered as possessing authority, and which can aid us to discover wisdom.

### **The Way of Pathei-Mathos**

The fundamental axioms of The Way of Pathei-Mathos are:

1) That human beings possess a mostly latent perceptive faculty, the faculty of empathy - *ἐμπάθεια* - which when used, or when developed and used, can provide us with a particular type of knowing, a particular type of knowledge, and especially a certain knowledge concerning the *φύσις* (the physis, the nature or character) of human beings and other living beings.

2) This type of knowing, this perception, is different from and supplementary to that acquired by means of the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science [3], and thus enables us to better understand *Phainómenon*, ourselves, and other living beings.

3) That because of or following *πάθει μάθος* there is or there can be a change in, a development of, the nature, the character - the *φύσις* - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this *πάθει μάθος*, and which appreciation of the numinous includes an awareness of why *ὑβρις* is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect or ignorance (of the numinous), of a going beyond the due limits, and which *ὑβρις* itself is the genesis both of the *τύραννος* [4] and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the modern extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate *ἔρις* [5] and thus are a cause of, or contribute to and aid, suffering.

4) This change, this development of the individual, is or can be the result of enantiodromia [6] and reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for *ψυχή* [7] to flourish - which natural balance is *δίκη* as *Δίκη* [8] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in *ἀρμονίη* [9], manifest as *ἀρμονίη* (harmony) is in the cultivation, in the individual, of *wu-wei* [10] and *σωφρονεῖν* (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement) [11].

5) The development and use of empathy, the cultivation of *wu-wei* and *σωφρονεῖν*, are thus a means, a way, whereby individuals can cease to cause suffering or cease to contribute to, or cease to aid, suffering.

6) The reason as to why an individual might so seek to avoid causing suffering is the reason, the knowledge - the appreciation of the numinous - that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* provide.

7) This appreciation of the numinous inclines or can incline an individual to living in a certain way and which way of life naturally inclines the individual toward developing, in a natural way - sans any methodology, praxis, theory, dogma, or faith - certain attributes of character, and which attributes of character include compassion, self-restraint, fairness, and a reasoned, a personal, judgement.

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## II The Nature and Knowledge of Empathy

Empathy is, as an intuitive understanding, what was, can be, and often is, learned or developed by *πάθει μάθος*. That is, from and by a direct, personal, learning from experience and suffering. An understanding manifest in our awareness of the numinous and thus in the distinction we have made, we make, or we are capable of making, between the sacred and the profane; the distinction made, for example in the past, between *θεοί* and *δαιμόνων* and mortals, and thus manifest in that understanding of *ὑβρις* and *δίκη* which can be obtained from the works of Sophocles, and Aeschylus [12], and from an understanding of *Φύσις* evident in some of the sayings attributed to Heraclitus [13].

Understood by reference to such classical illustrations, empathy is thus what naturally predisposed us to appreciate *δίκη* and be aware, respectful of, the goddess, *Δίκη* [14], and thus avoid retribution for committing the error of *ὑβρις*, for disrupting the natural balance necessary for individual and communal well-being.

That is, a certain empathy is, and has been, the natural basis for a tradition which informs us, and reminds us - through Art, literature, myths, legends, the accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of individuals, and often through a religious-type awareness - of the need for a balance, for *ἁρμονίη*, achieved by not going beyond the numinous limits.

As a used and a developed faculty, the perception that empathy provides is of undivided *ψυχή* and of the emanations of *ψυχή*, of our place in the Cosmic Perspective: of how we are a connexion to other life; of how we are but one mortal fallible emanation of Life; of how we affect or can affect the well-being - the very being, *ψυχή* - of other mortals and other life; and how other mortals and other living beings interact with us and can affect us, in a good or a harmful way.

Empathy thus involves a translocation of ourselves and thus a knowing-of another living-being as that living-being *is*, without presumptions and sans all

ideations, all projections. In a simple way, empathy involves a numinous sympathy with another living-being; a becoming - for a causal moment or moments - of that other-being, so that we know, can feel, can understand, the suffering or the joy of that living-being. In such moments, there is no distinction made between *them and us* - there is only the flow of life; only the presencing and the ultimate unity of Life itself.

This knowing-of another living-being and this knowledge of the Cosmic Perspective - this empathic awareness of Life - inclines us toward compassion; toward the human virtue of having *συμπάθεια* (sympatheia, benignity) with and toward other living beings. For such an awareness involves being sensitive to, respectful of, other Life, and not arrogantly, in a hubriatic manner, imposing ourselves or trying to impose ourselves on Life and its emanations. That is, there is the cultivation of the natural balance that is wu-wei because of our awareness of how other Life, other living-beings, can suffer, and how some-things, some actions, are unwise because they do or can cause suffering or have caused suffering.

In effect, empathy uncovers or can uncover the nature of our being and the nature of Being itself.

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### III

#### The Nature of Being and of Beings

Empathy uncovers the a-causal nature of Being; of how, as Heraclitus expressed it in fragment 53, beings have their genesis,

*Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.*

Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound. [15]

and how

*πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα*

All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia [16]

and why *σωφρονεῖν* is important:

*σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας*

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer. [17]

Empathy also reveals why the assumption that abstracted, ideated, opposites apply to or should apply to living beings - and that they thus can supply us with knowledge and understanding of living being - disrupts the natural balance, resulting in a loss of *ἀρμονίη* and *συμπάθεια* and is therefore a manifestation of the error of *ὑβρις*.

### **The Acausal Nature of Being**

The empathic perception of an undivided *ψυχή* and of living beings as emanations of *ψυχή*, and the knowledge of ourselves and one affective and effecting fallible mortal connexion to other life that such a perception provides, leads to an understanding of Being, of *ψυχή*, as a-causal: as beyond the linearity of a simple and direct cause-and-effect and beyond the supposition that we are separated beings. This perception - and this knowing of the acausal nature of Being deriving from it - is numinous; that is, of how beings are part of Being and of how they come-into-being, are affected and affecting, and so Change and are Change: of how Life flows and ebbs and continues undivided, unseparated, a-temporal, and is only temporarily manifest in particular beings only erroneously perceived by us as discrete entities, as separated beings.

As Heraclitus mentioned as recorded in fragment 52:

*αἰὼν παῖς ἐστὶ παίζων πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἡ βασιληίη*

For Aeon, we are a game, pieces moved on some board: since, in this world of ours, we are but children.

For the perception and the knowing of causality in respect of living beings is that of the-separation-of-otherness; a notion of causal and linear separation, of past-present-future, of independent beings that gives rise to two things. (1) Of



how we human consider we are different from or similar to other individual human beings. A difference or a similarity deriving from posited, manufactured, ideated, categories to which we assign others and ourselves and from which we often or mostly derive our identity, our self-assurance, and our belief about them and our φύσις, or at least what we assume is a knowledge of such things. (2) Of how such separately existing human beings are not subject to - or can and should make themselves not subject to or can overcome or ignore - any external supra-personal non-physical (non-temporal) force or forces, and thus of how these separated human beings have or can acquire the ability, the skill, to 'determine their own destiny/fate/life' by some means if the right method, or some methodology, or some tool - such as some idea or theory - can be found or developed, or if they develop their physical prowess/intelligence/cunning or acquire sufficient wealth/power/influence/followers.

Such a purely causal perception and causal understanding of living beings - lacking as it does an awareness of, an appreciation and a feeling for the numinous, or wilfully ignoring the numinous - is the genesis of ὕβρις and can thus bring-into-being the τύραννος [4].

An example of this reliance on causal perception and causal understanding is Oedipus, as described by Sophocles in *Oedipus Tyrannus*. In his singular desire to find the killer of Laius, Oedipus oversteps the due limits, and upsets the natural balance both within, and external to, himself. He is blinded by mere causality (a linear thinking) and subsumed by personal feelings - by his overwhelming desire for a simple cause-and-effect solution to the plague and his prideful belief that he, a mortal, a strong man, and master of the riddle of the Sphinx, can find or derive a solution. What results is tragedy, suffering, for himself and for others.

ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους ὄδε,  
ὅς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἤδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ,  
οὗ τίς οὐ ζήλω πολιτῶν ἦν τύχαις ἐπιβλέπων,  
εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν.  
ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντα κείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν  
ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν  
τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδέν' ἀλγεινὸν παθῶν.

You natives of Thebes: Observe - here is Oedipus,  
He who understood that famous enigma and was a strong man:  
What clansman did not behold that fortune without envy?  
But what a tide of problems have come over him!  
Therefore, look toward that ending which is for us mortals,  
To observe that particular day - calling no one lucky until,  
Without the pain of injury, they are conveyed beyond life's ending.

(Oedipus Tyrannus, vv. 1524-1530)

Another example is Creon, as described by Sophocles in his *Antigone*. Creon's pride and stubbornness, and his rigid adherence to his own, causal (temporal), mortal, edict - which overturns an ancestral custom established and maintained to 'please the gods' and implement a natural edict of the gods designed to give and maintain balance, harmony, among the community - leads to tragedy, to suffering.

The same thing occurred to Odysseus, who for all his prowess and mortal cunning could not contrive to return to his homeland as he wished nor save his friends, and

*κπολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθειν ἄλγεα ὄν κατὰ θυμόν,  
ἀρνύμενος ἦν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων.  
ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὡς ἐτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἰέμενός περ:  
αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὄλοντο,  
νήπιοι, οἱ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἥελίοιο  
ἦσθιον: αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.*

...whose vigour, at sea, was weakened by many afflictions  
As he strove to win life for himself and return his comrades to their homes.  
But not even he, for all this yearning, could save those comrades  
For they were destroyed by their own immature foolishness  
Having devoured the cattle of Helios, that son of Hyperion,  
Who plucked from them the day of their returning.

(Homer, *Odyssey*, vv.3-9)

Such emphasis by mortals on causality, arising from a lack of the acausal, the numinous, perspective that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* provide, is in effect an ignoring of, a wilful defiance of, or a forgetfulness of, the natural balance, of our own nature, and of the gods. Expressed un-theistically, it is a lack of, or a covering-up of, or an ignorance of, the the nature of Being and of beings, of who and why we are, and why wu-wei is a wise way to live.

Our nature - which empathy and *πάθει μάθος* can reveal - is that of a mortal being veering between *σωφρονεῖν* (thoughtful reasoning, and thus fairness) and *ὑβρις*.

As Sophocles expressed it:

*πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κούδ' ἐν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει...*

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

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

Antigone, v.334, vv.365-366

Yet as empathy and *πάθει μάθος* also reveal, our nature is such that we also have hope and a choice. We can choose to be fair, rational, beings who appreciate and cultivate *σωφρονεῖν*; who appreciate the numinous and *ἁρμονίη* and who understand *ὑβρις* for the error, the misfortune, the unbalance, it is. Or we can, like Oedipus, Creon, Aegisthus, and the comrades of Odysseus, foolishly, recklessly, veer toward and embrace *ἔρις* and *ὑβρις*.

We can appreciate the numinous - be wary of *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες*. We can kindle and rekindle the 'fire of reason', and appreciate that when 'more is obtained than is necessary it is not kept'. Or we can take short-cuts, foolishly overladen ourselves, and in our recklessness believe we are immune to injury:

τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὄμως ὑμνωδεῖ  
θρῆνον Ἐρινύος αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν  
θυμός, οὐ τὸ πᾶν ἔχων  
ἐλπίδος φίλον θράσος.  
σπλάγχνα δ' οὔτοι ματά-  
ζει πρὸς ἐνδίκους φρεσὶν  
τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκώμενον κέαρ.  
εὐχομαι δ' ἐξ ἐμᾶς  
ἐλπίδος ψύθη πεσεῖν  
ἐς τὸ μὴ τελεσφόρον.

μάλα γέ τοι τὸ μεγάλας ὑγείας  
ἀκόρεστον τέρμα: νόσος γάρ  
γείτων ὁμότοιχος ἐρείδει.  
καὶ πότμος εὐθυπορῶν  
ἀνδρὸς ἔπαισεν ἄφαντον ἔρμα.  
καὶ πρὸ μὲν τι χρημάτων  
κτησίων ὄκνος βαλῶν  
σφενδόνας ἀπ' εὐμέτρου,  
οὐκ ἔδν πρόπας δόμος

πημονᾶς γέμων ἄγαν,  
οὐδ' ἐπόντισε σκάφος.  
πολλά τοι δόσις ἐκ Διὸς ἀμφιλα-  
φής τε καὶ ἐξ ἀλόκων ἐπετειᾶν  
νῆστιν ὤλεσεν νόσον.

τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὸν ἄπαξ θανάσιμον  
πρόπαρ ἀνδρὸς μέλαν αἶμα τίς ἂν  
πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ἐπαείδων;  
οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῆ  
τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν  
Ζεὺς ἀπέπαυσεν ἐπ' εὐλαβεία;  
εἰ δὲ μὴ τεταγμένα  
μοῖρα μοῖραν ἐκ θεῶν  
εἶργε μὴ πλέον φέρειν,  
προφθάσασα καρδία  
γλῶσσαν ἂν τάδ' ἐξέχει.  
νῦν δ' ὑπὸ σκότῳ βρέμει  
θυμαλγής τε καὶ οὐδὲν ἐπελπομέν-  
α ποτὲ καίριον ἐκτολυπεύσειν  
ζωπυρουμένας φρενός.

And so, although I have no lyre, I sing:  
For there is a desire, within me - a self-taught hymn  
For one of those Furies,  
With nothing at all to bring me  
That cherished confidence - hope.  
And my stomach is by no means idle -  
In fairness, it is from achieving a judgement  
That the beat of my heart continues to change.  
And so there is this supplication of mine:  
For this defeat of my hope to be false  
So that, that thing cannot be achieved.

In truth, that frequently unsatisfied goddess, Health,  
Has a limit - for Sickness, her neighbour,  
Leans against their shared fence;  
And it is the fate of the mortal who takes the short-cut  
To strike the unseen reef.  
And yet if - of those possessions previously acquired  
A fitting amount is, through caution, cast forth by a sling,  
Then the whole construction will not go under -  
Injuriously over-loaded as it was -  
Nor will its hull be filled, by the sea.  
Often, the gifts from Zeus are abundant

And there is, then, from the yearly ploughing,  
A death for famine's sickness.

But if once upon the earth there falls from  
A mortal that death-making black blood -  
What incantation can return it to his arms?  
Not even he who was correctly-taught  
How to bring back those who had died  
Was allowed by Zeus to be without injury.  
Were it not that Fate was ordained  
By the gods to make it fated  
That when more is obtained it is not kept,  
My heart would have been first  
To let my tongue pour forth these things.

But now, in darkness, it murmurs,  
Painfully-desiring, and having no hope of when  
There will be an opportunity to bring this to an end,  
Rekindling the fire of reason.

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, vv.990-1033

### **The Error of The-Separation-of-Otherness**

The essence of the faculty of empathy is *συμπάθεια* with other living beings and which *συμπάθεια* involves a translocation of ourselves for a duration or durations of causal moments. There is thus a perception of the acausal, the numinous, reality underlying the causal division of beings, existents, into separate, causal-separated, objects and the subject-object relationship which is or has been assumed by means of the process of causal ideation to exist between such causally-separated beings. That is, and for instance, the implied or assumed causal separateness of living beings - *the-separation-of-otherness* - is causal appearance and not an expression of the true nature of Being and beings.

The-separation-of-otherness obscures and disrupts our relation to *ψυχή* and thus obscures the nature of our being and the nature of Being itself, and amounts to *ὑβρις*. For, in place of an understanding, a knowing, and thus an appreciation and acceptance of what is numinous - and thus of the natural balance and of what/whom we should respect - *the-separation-of-otherness* results in the positing of abstract categories/idealised forms to which we, as living beings, are assigned and which categories and forms are regarded as what we should aspire to and/or compare ourselves to and what we are judged by or judge ourselves by.

In classical terms, the natural balance and those whom we should respect - manifest in *ψυχή* and *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* and in those sacred places guarded or watched over by *δαιμόνων* - are arrogantly replaced by human manufactured, and fallible, ideations and which ideations do not in any way re-present the nature, the *φύσις*, of our being, the *φύσις* of other living beings, and *φύσις* of Being, and which *φύσις* is one of the living connexions, the numinosity, of *ψυχή* and thus of the Cosmic Perspective, a nature manifest, for we mortals, in an appreciation of the numinous and thus in living in a certain way because we understand the nature, the importance, of *δίκη*, of fairness, of not being excessive.

The result of such *ὑβρις* - of *the-separation-of-otherness* and of the arrogance assigning living beings to and judging them by lifeless abstractions, ideations; of neglecting *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* - is *ἔρις*: strife, discord, disruption, conflict, suffering, misfortune, and a loss of *ψυχή* and *ἀρμονίη*.

As Aeschylus mentioned, over two thousand years ago:

ἔστω δ' ἀπή-  
μαντον, ὥστ' ἀπαρκεῖν  
εὖ πραπίδων λαχόντα.  
οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἔπαλξις  
πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρῖ  
λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας  
βωμὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.

βιᾶται δ' ἀτάλαινα πειθῶ,  
προβούλου παῖς ἄφερτος ἄτας.  
ἄκος δὲ πᾶν μάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύφθη,  
πρέπει δέ, φῶς αἰνολαμπές, σίνος...

λιτᾶν δ' ἀκούει μὲν οὔτις θεῶν:  
τὸν δ' ἐπίστροφον τῶν  
φῶτ' ἄδικον καθαιρεῖ

For unharmed is the one  
Who rightly reasons that what is sufficient  
Is what is allotted to him.  
For there is no protection  
In riches for the man of excess  
Who stamps down the great altar of the goddess, Judgement,  
In order to hide it from view.

But vigorously endures Temptation -  
That already-decided daughter of unbearable Misfortune.

And all remedies are in vain.  
Not concealed, but conspicuous -  
A harsh shining light -  
Is the injury...

But not one of the gods hears the supplications:  
Instead, they take down those persons  
Who, lacking fairness, turn their attentions to such things.

Aeschylus, Agamemnon. vv.379-389, vv. 396-402

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#### IV

### An Appreciation of The Numinous

Empathy by its very nature - by its relocation, translocation, of ourselves into, and *συμπάθεια* with, *the living other* - naturally inclines us toward compassion, for to intentionally harm *the living other* is to feel, to know, that harm. Such harming might also upset, unbalance, hinder, or harm, the *ψυχή* we share with that and with other living beings and so in some way cause, or contribute to, or result in harm, suffering, or misfortune to us and/or to others now or on some future occasion or occasions.

In effect, compassion is a means to maintain *ἀρμονίη* and the natural balance of Life and thus to aid or contribute to our own *ἀρμονίη* and well-being as well as that of others.

Empathy - like *πάθει μάθος* - also inclines us toward treating other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated; that is it inclines us toward fairness, toward self-restraint, toward being well-mannered, and toward an appreciation and understanding of innocence, with innocence being regarded as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us, are therefore unjudged us by and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt. For this presumption of innocence of others - until direct personal experience, and individual and empathic knowing of them, prove otherwise - is the fair, the reasoned, the numinous thing to do.

Thus morality is, for The Way of Pathei-Mathos, a result of individuals using the faculty of empathy; a consequence of the insight and the understanding (the acausal knowing) that empathy provides for individuals in the immediacy-of-the-

moment. Or, expressed another way, morality resides not in some abstract theory or some moralistic schemata presented in some written text which individuals have to accept and try and conform or aspire to, but rather in personal virtues that arise or which can arise naturally through empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, and thus from an awareness and appreciation of the numinous. Personal virtues such as compassion and fairness, and *εὐταξία*, that quality of self-restraint, of a balanced, well-mannered conduct especially under adversity or duress, of which Cicero wrote:

Haec autem scientia continentur ea, quam Graeci εὐταξίαν nominant, non hanc, quam interpretamur modestiam, quo in verbo modus inest, sed illa est εὐταξία, in qua intellegitur ordinis conservatio

Those two qualities are evident in that way described by the Greeks as εὐταξίαν although what is meant by εὐταξία is not what we mean by the moderation of the moderate, but rather what we consider is restrained behaviour..

*De Officiis*, Liber Primus, 142

In practice, therefore, justice is not some abstract concept, some ideation, which it is believed can and should be administered by others and requiring the individual to accept, passively or willingly, some external authority. Rather, justice, like *εὐταξία*, like goodness, is numinous, living in the individual who - because of empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, awareness and appreciation of the numinous - is inclined to be fair, who is capable of restraint especially under adversity or duress; the individual of *σωφρονεῖν* who thus "can tell inner character from outer" and who thus has those personal qualities which can be expressed by one word: honour.

### **The Numinous Balance of Honour**

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

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

This balancing of compassion - of the need not to cause suffering - by *σωφρονεῖν*



and *δίκη* is perhaps most obvious on that particular occasion when it may be judged necessary to cause suffering to another human being. That is, in honourable self-defence. For it is natural - part of our reasoned, fair, just, human nature - to defend ourselves when attacked and (in the immediacy of the personal moment) to valorously, with chivalry, act in defence of someone close-by who is unfairly attacked or dishonourably threatened or is being bullied by others, and to thus employ, if our personal judgement of the circumstances deem it necessary, lethal force.

This use of force is, importantly, crucially, restricted - by the individual nature of our judgement, and by the individual nature of our authority - to such personal situations of immediate self-defence and of valorous defence of others, and cannot be extended beyond that, for to so extend it, or attempt to extend it beyond the immediacy of the personal moment of an existing physical threat, is an arrogant presumption - an act of *ὑβρις* - which negates the fair, the human, presumption of innocence [15] of those we do not personally know, we have no empathic knowledge of, and who present no direct, immediate, personal, threat to us or to others nearby us.

Such personal self-defence and such valorous defence of another in a personal situation are in effect a means to restore the natural balance which the unfair, the dishonourable, behaviour of others upsets. That is, such defence fairly, justly, and naturally in the immediacy of the moment corrects their error of *ὑβρις* resulting from their bad (their rotten) *φύσις*; a rotten character evident in their lack of the virtue, the skill, of *σωφρονεῖν*. For had they possessed that virtue, and if their character was not bad, they would not have undertaken such a dishonourable attack.

### **Wu-Wei and The Cultivation of Humility**

The knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous.

This knowledge and understanding, being of the wholeness, is that of the healthy, the interior, inward, and personal balance beyond the separation of beings - beyond *πόλεμος* and *ὑβρις* and thus beyond *ἔρις*; beyond the separation and thence the strife, the discord, which abstractions, ideations, encourage and indeed which they manufacture, bring-into-being. Among these ideations - and one which can often distance us from an appreciation of the numinous and thus from *ἀρμονίη* - is that of a measured Time of fixed durations; and one which thus has a tendency to both artificially apportion out our lives, urge us to hastily

strive for some ideation, and cause us to live and/or work at an artificial, un-harmonious, pace.

Empathy, wu-wei, *πάθει μάθος*, and a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous, also incline us toward the cultivation of humility as a prerequisite for us not to repeat our errors of *ὑβρις*, or the *ὑβρις* of others, and which mistakes of *ὑβρις* - ours and/or of others - we either are personally aware of or can become aware of through the recorded *πάθει μάθος* of our human cultures, manifest as this transmitted knowledge and personal learning often is in literature, Art, poetry, myths, legends, and music.

For our personal *πάθει μάθος* makes us aware of, makes us feel, know, remember, in a very personal sense, our fallibility, our mortality, our mistakes, our errors, our wrong deeds, the suffering we have caused, the harm we have done and inflicted; how much we personally have contributed to discord, strife, sorrow. Similarly, our appreciation of the numinous, together with empathy and the cultivation of wu-wei, makes us aware of, and feel, and understand, *ὑβρις* and the errors of *ὑβρις* in others past and present.

There is then, or there develops or there can develop, a personal inclination toward *σωφρονεῖν*; toward being fair, toward rational deliberation, toward a lack of haste, toward a living numinously. Toward a balanced judgement, and honour, and a knowing and appreciation of the wisdom that the only effective, long-lasting, change and reform that does not cause suffering - that is not redolent of *ὑβρις* - is the one that changes human beings in an individual way by personal example and/or because of *πάθει μάθος*, and thus interiorly changes what, in them, predisposes them, or inclines them toward, doing or what urges them to do, what is dishonourable, undignified, unfair, and uncompassionate. That is what, individually, changes or rebalances bad *φύσις* and thus brings-into-being, or restores, good *φύσις*.

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### **Conclusion - The Way of Pathei-Mathos**

It is the cultivation by individuals of empathy, of wu-wei, of a reasoned judgement, combined with (i) an appreciation of the numinous and of our accumulated pathei-mathos - evident, for example, in Hellenic culture, in other cultures, and often manifest in Art, literature, music, myths, legends, poetry - and (ii) the living of a compassionate life balanced by honour, which are the whole of The Way of Pathei-Mathos.

The Way of Pathei-Mathos is thus an ethical, an interior, a personal, a non-political, a non-religious, a non-interfering, way of individual reflexion and individual change.

There is nothing else. No given, no required, praxis. No 'secret wisdom' or 'secret teachings', no enlightenment to be taught. No methodology, no theology, and no need for faith or belief. There are no theories, no goals, no dogma, no texts and no one to be revered.

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## Notes

[1]

*Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων  
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν:  
ὄν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-  
σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος  
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.*

If anyone, from reasoning, exclaims loudly that victory of Zeus,  
Then they have acquired an understanding of all these things;  
Of he who guided mortals to reason,  
Who laid down that this possesses authority:  
*Learning from adversity.*

Aeschylus: Agamemnon, 174-183

[2] An awareness of the *numinous* is what predisposes us not to commit the error, the folly, of ὕβρις. As Sophocles wrote in *Oedipus Tyrannus*:

*ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον:  
ὕβρις, εἰ πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῆ μάταν,  
ἂ μὴ ἴπικαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,  
ἀκρότατον εἰσαναβάσ'  
αἶπος ἀπότομον ὤρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν,  
ἔνθ' οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ  
χρῆται*

Insolence plants the tyrant. There is insolence if by a great foolishness

there is a useless over-filling which goes beyond the proper limits. It is an ascending to the steepest and utmost heights and then that hurtling toward that Destiny where the useful foot has no use...  
(vv.872ff)

In respect of *the numinous*, basically it is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) the natural balance of *ψυχή*; a balance which *ὑβρις* upsets. This natural balance - our being as human beings - is or can be manifest to us in or by what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity and thus places us, as individuals, in our correct relation to *ψυχή*, and which relation is that we are but one mortal emanation of *ψυχή*.

We are reminded of this natural balance, of what is numinous - we can come to know, to experience, the numinous and thus can understand the nature of our being - by *πάθει μάθος* and empathy. That is, by the process of learning from personal adversity/personal suffering/personal grief and by using and developing our faculty of empathy.

An aspect of this learning is an appreciation, an awareness, of the Cosmic Perspective: of ourselves as one fallible, mortal, fragile biological, microcosmic, nexion on one planet in one Galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies; one connexion to, one emanation of, all other Life. In essence, *πάθει μάθος* and empathy teach us or can teach us humility, compassion, and the importance of personal love.

[3] The essentials which Aristotle enumerated are: (i) Reality (existence) exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (ii) our limited understanding of this independent 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (iii) logical argument, or reason, is perhaps the most important means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) the cosmos (existence) is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws.

Experimental science seeks to explain the natural world - the phenomenal world - by means of direct, personal observation of it, and by making deductions, and formulating hypothesis, based on such direct observation, with the important and necessary proviso, expressed by Isaac Newton in his *Principia*, that

"We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearance..... for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and affects not the pomp of superfluous

causes."

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

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

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

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

[5] Heraclitus, fragment 80:

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

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

See my *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεία in Heraclitus*.

In respect of the modern error of *ὑβρις* that is extremism, an error manifest in extremists, my understanding of an *extremist* is a person who tends toward harshness, or who is harsh, or who supports/incites harshness, in pursuit of some objective, usually of a political or a religious. See Appendix I - *Some Explanations and Definitions*.

[6] See Appendix II - *The Change of Enantiodromia*.

[7] The meaning here of *ψυχή* is derived from the usage of Homer, Aeschylus, Aristotle, etcetera, and implies Life *qua* being. Or, expressed another way, living beings are emanations of, and thus manifest, *ψυχή*. This sense of *ψυχή* is beautifully expressed in a, in my view, rather mis-understood fragment attributed to Heraclitus:

*ψυχήισιν θάνατος ὕδωρ γενέσθαι, ὕδατι δὲ θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι, ἐκ γῆς δὲ ὕδωρ γίνεται, ἐξ ὕδατος δὲ ψυχή.* Fragment 36

Where the water begins our living ends and where earth begins water ends, and yet earth nurtures water and from that water, Life.

[8] In respect of the numinous principle of *Δίκη*, refer to Appendix II - *The Principle of Δίκη*.

[9] Although *φύσις* has a natural tendency to become covered up (*Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* - concealment accompanies Physis) it can be uncovered through *λόγος* and *πάθει μάθος*.

[10] Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their *φύσις*, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the physis) of things/beings /ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not striving against it.

[11] Heraclitus, fragment 112:

σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθεῖα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

[12] In particular, *The Agamemnon* of Aeschylus; and the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and *Antigone*, of Sophocles. In respect of *Oedipus Tyrannus*, refer, for example, to vv.863ff and vv.1329-1338

In much mis-understood verses in *The Agamemnon* (1654-1656) Clytaemnestra makes it known that she still is aware of the power, and importance, of *δίκη*. Of not killing to excess:

μηδαμῶς, ὧ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἄλλα δράσωμεν κακά.  
ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ' ἐξαμῆσαι πολλά, δύστηνον θέρος.  
πημονῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει: μηδὲν αἵματώμεθα.

The aforementioned verses are often mis-translated to give some nonsense such as: 'No more violence. Here is a monstrous harvest and a bitter reaping time. There is pain enough already. Let us not be bloody now'.

However, what Aeschylus actually has Clytaemnestra say is:

"Let us not do any more harm for to reap these many would make it an *unlucky* harvest: injure them just enough, but do not stain us with their blood."

She is being practical (and quite Hellenic) and does not want to bring misfortune (from the gods) upon herself, or Aegisthus, by killing *to excess*. The killings she has done are, however, quite acceptable to her - she has vigorously defended them claiming it was her natural duty to avenge her daughter and the insult done to her by Agamemnon bringing his mistress, Cassandra, into her home. Clytaemnestra shows no pity for the Elders whom Aegisthus wishes to kill: "if you must", she says, "you can injure them. But do not kill them - that would be *unlucky* for us." That would be going just too far, and overstep what she still perceives as the natural, the proper, limits of mortal behaviour.

[13] Two fragments attributed to Heraclitus are of interest in this respect - 112, and 123. For 112 refer to my *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθεῖα in Heraclitus*. For 123, refer to my *Physis, Nature, Concealment, and*

*Natural Change.*

[14] Hesiod, Theogony v. 901 - *Εὐνουμίην τε Δίκην τε καὶ Εἰρήνην τεθαλυῖαν*

In effect, a personified Judgement is the goddess of the natural balance - evident in the ancestral customs, the ways, the way of life, the ethos, of a community - whose judgement, *δίκη*, is "in accord with", has the nature or the character of, what tends to restore such balance after some deed or deeds by an individual or individuals have upset or disrupted that balance. This sense of *δίκη* as one's ancestral customs is evident, for example, in Homer's Odyssey:

*νῦν δ' ἐθέλω ἔπος ἄλλο μεταλλῆσαι καὶ ἐρέσθαι  
Νέστορ', ἐπεὶ περὶ οἶδε δίκας ἠδὲ φρόνιν ἄλλων  
τρὶς γὰρ δὴ μὴν φασιν ἀνάξασθαι γένε' ἀνδρῶν  
ὥς τέ μοι ἀθάνατος ἰνδάλλεται εἰσοράσθαι*

Book III, 243-246

I now wish to ask Nestor some questions to find out about some other things,  
For he understands others and knows more about our customs than them,  
Having been - so it is said - a Chieftain for three generations of mortals,  
And, to look at, he seems to me to be one of those immortals

[15] *Πόλεμος* is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but rather that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being (the separation of beings from Being), and thus not only that which manifests as *δίκη* but also accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being, become bound together - be whole - again by *enantiodromia*.

Thus *πόλεμος* - like *ψυχή* and *πάθει μάθος* and *ἐναντιοδρομίας* and *ὑβρις* and *δίκη* as *δίκη/Δίκη/Δίκαια* - is a philosophical principle and should therefore in my view not be blandly translated by a single word or term, but rather should be left untranslated or be transliterated, thus requiring for its understanding a certain thoughtful reasoning and thence interpretation according to context.

In respect of such interpretation, it is for example interesting that in the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, and in circulation at the time of Heraclitus, a personified *πόλεμος* (as the *δαίμων* of kindred strife) married a personified *ὑβρις* (as the *δαίμων* of arrogant pride) and that it was a common folk belief that *πόλεμος* accompanied *ὑβρις* - that is, that *Polemos* followed *Hubris* around rather than vice versa, causing or bringing *ἔρις*.

[16] See Appendix II. The saying - attributed to Heraclitus - is from Diogenes



Laërtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (ix. 7)

[17] Fragment 112.

[18] For an explanation is what is meant here by innocence, see the entry in Appendix I, which entry is based on the brief mention of innocence in the first part of section IV - *An Appreciation of The Numinous*.

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## **Appendix I**

### **Some Explanations, Terms, and Definitions**

#### **Acausal**

The acausal is not a generalization - a concept - deriving from a collocation of assumed, imagined, or causally observed Phainómenon, but instead is that wordless, conceptless, a-temporal, knowing which empathy reveals and which a personal *πάθει μάθος* and an appreciation of the numinous often inclines us toward. That is, the acausal is a direct and personal (individual) revealing of beings and Being which does not depend on denoting or naming.

What is so revealed is the a-causal nature of some beings, the connexion which exists between living beings, and how living beings are emanations of *ψυχή*.

Thus speculations and postulations regarding the acausal only serve to obscure the nature of the acausal or distance us from that revealing of the acausal that empathy and *πάθει μάθος* and an appreciation of the numinous provide.

#### **ἀρετή**

Arête is the prized Hellenic virtue which can roughly be translated by the English word 'excellence' but which also implies what is naturally distinguishable - what is pre-eminent - because it reveals or shows certain valued qualities such as beauty, honour, valour, harmony.

#### **Compassion**

The English word compassion dates from around 1340 CE and the word in its original sense (and as used in this work) means *benignity*, which word derives from the Latin *benignitatem*, the sense imputed being of a kind, compassionate, well-mannered character, disposition, or deed. Benignity came into English

usage around the same time as compassion; for example, the word occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* [ ii. 483 ] written around 1374 CE.

Hence, compassion is understood as meaning being kindly disposed toward and/or feeling a sympathy with someone (or some living being) affected by pain/suffering/grief or who is enduring vicissitudes.

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

### **Cosmic Perspective**

The Cosmic Perspective refers to our place in the Cosmos, to the fact that we human beings are simply one fragile fallible mortal biological life-form on one planet orbiting one star in one galaxy in a Cosmos of billions of galaxies. Thus in terms of this perspective all our theories, our ideas, our beliefs, our abstractions are merely the opinionated product of our limited fallible Earth-bound so-called 'intelligence', an 'intelligence', an understanding, we foolishly, arrogantly, pridefully have a tendency to believe in and exalt as if we are somehow 'the centre of the Universe' and cosmically important.

The Cosmic Perspective inclines us - or can incline us - toward wu-wei, toward avoiding the error of hubris, toward humility, and thus toward an appreciation of the numinous.

### **δαίμων**

A *δαίμων* is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - *θεοί* - but rather a lesser type of divinity who might be assigned by those gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or watch over certain human beings and especially particular numinous (sacred) places.

### **δίκη**

Depending on context, *δίκη* could be the judgement of an individual (or Judgement personified), or the natural and the necessary balance, or the correct/customary/ancestral way, or what is expected due to custom, or what is considered correct and natural, and so on.

A personified Judgement - the *Δίκη* of Hesiod - is the goddess of the natural balance, evident in the ancestral customs, the ways, the way of life, the ethos, of a community, whose judgement, *δίκη*, is "in accord with", has the nature or the character of, what tends to restore such balance after some deed or deeds by an individual or individuals have upset or disrupted that balance. This sense of *δίκη* as one's ancestral customs is evident, for example, in Homer (Odyssey, III, 244).

The modern numinous principle of *Δίκη* - qv. Appendix III - suggests what lies beyond and what may have been the genesis of *δίκη* personified as the goddess, Judgement.

### **Empathy**

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

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

### **Enantiodromia**

The unusual compound Greek word *ἐναντιδρομίας* occurs in a summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius.

It is used here to refer to, to name, to describe, the process - the natural change, the reformation - that occurs or which can occur in a human being because of or following *πάθει μάθος*.

For further details regarding enantiodromia refer to Appendix II - The Change of Enantiodromia.

### **ἔρις**

Strife; discord; disruption; a quarrel between friends or kin. As in the Odyssey:

ἦ τ' ἔριν Ἀτρεΐδῃσι μετ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἔθηκε.

Who placed strife between those two sons of Atreus

Odyssey, 3, 136

According to the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, ἔρις was caused by, or was a consequence of, the marriage between a personified πόλεμος (as the δαίμων of kindred strife) and a personified ὕβρις (as the δαίμων of arrogant pride) with Polemos rather forlornly following Hubris around rather than vice versa. Eris is thus the child of Polemos and Hubris.

### **Extremism**

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

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

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

### **Honour**

The English word honour dates from around 1200 CE, deriving from the Latin *honorem* (meaning refined, grace, beauty) via the Old French (and thence Anglo-Norman) *onor/onur*. As used by The Way of Pathei-Mathos, honour means an instinct for and an adherence to what is fair, dignified, and valourous. An honourable person is thus someone of manners, fairness, natural dignity, and valour.

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

And riht in such a maner wise  
Sche bad thei scholde hire don servise,  
So that Achilles underfongeth  
As to a yong ladi belongeth  
Honour, servise and reverence.

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

The second is from several centuries later:

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

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

## **Innocence**

Innocence is regarded as an attribute of those who, being personally unknown to us, are therefore unjudged us by and who thus are given the benefit of the doubt. For this presumption of innocence of others - until direct personal experience, and individual and empathic knowing of them, prove otherwise - is the fair, the reasoned, the numinous, the human, thing to do.

Empathy and *πάθει μάθος* incline us toward treating other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated; that is they incline us toward fairness, toward self-restraint, toward being well-mannered, and toward an appreciation and understanding of innocence.

## **Numinous**

The numinous is what manifests or can manifest or remind us of (what can reveal) the natural balance of *ψυχή*; a balance which *ὑβρις* upsets. This natural balance - our being as human beings - is or can be manifest to us in or by what is harmonious, or what reminds us of what is harmonious and beautiful. In a practical way, it is what we regard or come to appreciate as 'sacred' and dignified; what expresses our humanity and thus places us, as individuals, in our correct relation to *ψυχή*, and which relation is that we are but one mortal emanation of *ψυχή*.

## **Πόλεμος**

Heraclitus fragment 80

*Πόλεμος* is not some abstract 'war' or strife or *kampf*, but rather that which is or becomes the genesis of beings from Being (the separation of beings from Being), and thus not only that which manifests as *δίκη* but also accompanies *ἔρις* because it is the nature of *Πόλεμος* that beings, born because of and by *ἔρις*, can be returned to Being, become bound together - be whole - again by *enantiodromia*.

According to the recounted tales of Greek mythology attributed to Aesop, *ἔρις* was caused by, or was a consequence of, the marriage between a personified *πόλεμος* (as the *δαίμων* of kindred strife) and a personified *ὑβρις* (as the *δαίμων* of arrogant pride) with Polemos rather forlornly following Hubris around rather than vice versa. Thus Eris is the child of Polemos and Hubris.

Furthermore, Polemos was originally the *δαίμων* (not the god) of kindred strife, whether familial, of friends, or of one's *πόλις* (one's clan and their places of dwelling). Thus, to describe Polemos, as is sometimes done, as the god of war, is doubly incorrect.

## **Physis (φύσις)**

*φύσις* suggests either the Homeric - *Odyssey*, Book 10, vv. 302-3 - usage of nature or character of a person, as in Herodotus (2.5.2):

*Αἰγύπτου γὰρ φύσις ἐστὶ τῆς χώρας τοιήδε*

or *Φύσις* (Physis) as in Heraclitus fragment 123 - that is, the natural nature of all beings, beyond their outer appearance, and which natural nature we, as human beings, have a natural [an unconscious] inclination to conceal; either because of *ὑβρις* or through an ignorance, an unknowing, of ourselves as an emanation of *ψυχή*.

In terms of the nature or the character of an individual:

*σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαίοντας*

Most excellent is balanced reasoning, for that skill can tell inner character from outer.

Heraclitus fragment 112

## **ὑβρις**

ὑβρις (hubris) is the error of personal insolence, of going beyond the proper limits set by: (a) reasoned (balanced) judgement - *σωφρονεῖν* - and by (b) an awareness, a personal knowing, of the numinous, and which knowing of the numinous can arise from empathy and *πάθει μάθος*.

Hubris upsets the natural balance - is contrary to *ἀρμονίη* - and often results from a person or persons striving for or clinging to some causal abstraction.

According to The Way of Pathei-Mathos, ὑβρις disrupts - and conceals - our appreciation of what is numinous and thus of what/whom we should respect, classically understood as *ψυχή* and *θεοί* and *Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες* and *δαιμόνων* and those sacred places guarded or watched over by *δαιμόνων*.

## **Wu-wei**

Wu-wei is a Taoist term used in The Way of Pathei-Mathos to refer to a personal 'letting-be' deriving from a feeling, a knowing, that an essential part of wisdom is cultivation of an interior personal balance and which cultivation requires acceptance that one must work with, or employ, things according to their nature, their *φύσις*, for to do otherwise is incorrect, and inclines us toward, or is, being excessive - that is, toward the error, the unbalance, that is hubris, an error often manifest in personal arrogance, excessive personal pride, and insolence - that is, a disrespect for the numinous.

In practice, the knowledge, the understanding, the intuition, the insight that is wu-wei is a knowledge, an understanding, that can be acquired from empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, and by a knowing of and an appreciation of the numinous. This knowledge and understanding is of wholeness, and that life, things/beings, change, flow, exist, in certain natural ways which we human beings cannot change however hard we might try; that such a hardness of human trying, a belief in such hardness, is unwise, un-natural, upsets the natural balance and can cause misfortune/suffering for us and/or for others, now or in the future. Thus success lies in discovering the inner nature (the *physis*) of things/beings /ourselves and gently, naturally, slowly, working with this inner nature, not

striving against it.

## **ψυχή**

Life *qua* being. Our being as a living existent is considered an emanation of *ψυχή*. Thus *ψυχή* is what 'animates' us and what gives us our nature, *φύσις*, as human beings. Our nature is that of a mortal fallible being veering between *σωφρονεῖν* (thoughtful reasoning, and thus fairness) and *ὑβρις*.

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## **Appendix II The Change of Enantiodromia**

### **The Meaning of Enantiodromia**

The unusual compound Greek word *ἐναντιοδρομίας* occurs in a summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus by Diogenes Laërtius:

*πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας  
ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα* (ix. 7)

This unusual word is usually translated as something like 'conflict of opposites' or 'opposing forces' which I consider are incorrect for several reasons.

Firstly, in my view, a transliteration should be used instead of some translation, for the Greek expression suggests something unique, something which exists in its own right as a principle or 'thing' and which uniqueness of meaning has a context, with both context and uniqueness lost if a bland translation is attempted. Lost, as the uniqueness, and context, of for example, *δαιμόνων* becomes lost if simply translated as 'spirits' (or worse, as 'gods'), or as the meaning of *κακός* in Hellenic culture is lost if mistranslated as 'evil'.

Second, the context seems to me to hint at something far more important than 'conflict of opposites', the context being the interesting description of the philosophy of Heraclitus before and after the word occurs, as given by Diogenes Laërtius:



1) *ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα συνεστάναι*

2) *εἰς τοῦτο ἀναλύεσθαι*

3) *πάντα δὲ γίνεσθαι καθ' εἰμαρμένην καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐναντιοδρομίας  
ἡρμόσθαι τὰ ὄντα*

4) *καὶ πάντα ψυχῶν εἶναι καὶ δαιμόνων πλήρη*

The foundation/base/essence of all beings [ 'things' ] is pyros to which they return, with all [of them] by genesis appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] to be bound together again by enantiodromia, and all filled/suffused/vivified with/by *ψυχή* and Dæmons.

This raises several interesting questions, not least concerning *ψυχή* and *δαιμόνων*, but also regarding the sense of *πυρὸς*. Is pyros here a philosophical principle - such as *ψυχή* - or used as in fragment 43, the source of which is also Diogenes Laërtius:

*ὑβριν χρὴ σβεννύναι μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν (ix 2)*

Better to deal with your hubris before you confront that fire

Personally, I incline toward the former, of some principle being meant, given the context, and the generalization - *ἐκ πυρὸς τὰ πάντα*. In respect of *ψυχῶν καὶ δαιμόνων* I would suggest that what is implied is the numinous, our apprehension of The Numen, and which numen is the source of *ψυχή* and the origin of Dæmons. For a *δαίμων* is not one of the pantheon of major Greek gods - *θεοί* - but another type of divinity (that is, another emanation of the numen; another manifestation of the numinous) who might be assigned by those numinous gods to bring good fortune or misfortune to human beings and/or who watch over certain human beings and especially over particular numinous (sacred) places.

Thus the above summary of the philosophy of Heraclitus might be paraphrased as:

The foundation of all beings is Pyros to which they return, with all by genesis appropriately apportioned to be bound together again by enantiodromia, with all beings suffused with [are emanations of] the numen.

Furthermore, hubris disrupts - and conceals - our appreciation of the numen, our appreciation of *ψυχή* and of Dæmons: of what is numinous and what/whom we should respect. A disruption that makes us unbalanced, makes us disrespect the numinous and that of the numinous (such as *δαιμόνων* and *θεοί* and sacred places), and which unbalance enantiodromia can correct, with enantiodromia suggesting a confrontation - that expected dealing with our hubris necessary in order to return to Pyros, the source of beings. Here, Pyros is understood not as we understand 'fire' - and not even as some sort of basic physical element among other elements such as water - but rather as akin to both the constant 'warmth and the light of the Sun' (that brings life) and the sudden lightning that, as from Zeus, can serve as warning (omen) and retribution, and which can destroy and be a cause of devastating fire and thus also of the regeneration/rebuilding that often follows from such fires and from the learning, the respect, that arises from appreciating warnings (omens) from the gods. All of which perhaps explains fragment 64:

*τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίζει Κεραυνός*

All beings are guided by Lightning

### **Enantiodromia in the Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos**

In the philosophy of pathei-mathos, enantiodromia is understood as the process - the natural change - that occurs or which can occur in a human being because of or following *πάθει μάθος*. For part of *πάθει μάθος* is a 'confrontational contest' - an interior battle - and an acceptance of the need to take part in this battle and 'face the consequences', one of which is learning the (often uncomfortable) truth about one's own unbalanced, strife-causing, nature.

If successful in this confrontation, there is or there can be a positive, moral, development of the nature, the character - the *φύσις* (physis) - of the person because of that revealing and that appreciation (or re-appreciation) of the numinous whose genesis is this pathei-mathos, and which appreciation includes an awareness of why *ὑβρις* is an error (often *the* error) of unbalance, of disrespect, of a going beyond the due limits, and which *ὑβρις* is the genesis of the *τύραννος* and of the modern error of extremism. For the tyrannos and the extremist (and their extremisms) embody and give rise to and perpetuate *ἔρις* [1].

Thus enantiodromia reveals the nature of, and restores in individuals, the natural balance necessary for *ψυχή* to flourish - which natural balance is *δίκη* as *Δίκη* [2] and which restoration of balance within the individual results in *ἀρμονίη* [3], manifest as *ἀρμονίη* is in the cultivation, in the individual, of wu-wei and *σωφρονεῖν* (a fair and balanced personal, individual, judgement).

### Notes

[1] Heraclitus, fragment 80: *εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεώμενα [χρεών]*

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

See my *Some Notes on Πόλεμος and Δίκη in Heraclitus B80* and also *The Balance of Physis - Notes on λόγος and ἀληθέα in Heraclitus*.

[2] In respect of the numinous principle of *Δίκη*, refer to Appendix III.

[3] Although *φύσις* has a natural tendency to become covered up (*Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ* - concealment accompanies Physis) it can be uncovered through *λόγος* and *πάθει μάθος*.

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### Appendix III The Principle of Δίκη

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

*Δίκη δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσιν  
μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει*

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

*Agamemnon, 250-251*

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

Thus, *Δίκη* does not mean nor imply something theological, but rather implies the natural balance, the reasoned judgement, the thoughtful reasoning - *σωφρονεῖν* - that *πάθει μάθος* brings and restores, and which accumulated *πάθει μάθος* of a particular folk or *πόλις* forms the basis for their ancestral customs. *δίκη* is therefore, as the numinous principle *Δίκη*, what may be said to be a particular and a necessary balance between *ἀρετή* and *ὑβρις* - between the *ὑβρις* that often results when the personal, the natural, quest for *ἀρετή* becomes unbalanced and excessive.

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

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

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

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**cc David Myatt 2012**

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