

# PHILOSOPHICAL WALKS

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UNKNOWN TERRITORIES

FONS ELDERS



# Why unknown?

We are in the middle of a paradigm shift of unknown dimensions: so-called 'unknown' with regard to the climate transformation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

And yet, knowledge is available:

*let's not walk backward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*





# UNKNOWN TERRITORIES

## WHY UNKNOWN?

Future and past are perceptions within the here-and-now.

Is Shell Clouding the Issue?

Quo Vadis?

Pure Beauty

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We are in the middle of a paradigm shift of unknown dimensions: so-called 'unknown' with regard to the climate transformation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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*Future and past are perceptions within the here-and-now.*

However, we act as if past and future are autonomous dimensions with a life of their own. But they are not; they are projections, **important as mirrors of the here-and-now**; articles of belief, if you like. Unavoidable for the state of mind of an individual and, most of all, for the communities and societies in which we live. **Past and future, signposts along the roads.**

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## *Is Shell Clouding the Issue?*

Decide for yourself...it is an example of the clash of insights and interests; 'profits and principles' in the limitless here-and-now. *For whom are the profits; for whom are the risks?*

**Who decides about justice, equality, freedom, and the well-being of NATURE?**



## *Quo Vadis?*

*Where are you going* is the prelude to questions about perceptions, needs and normative ideas.

In order to clarify the questions, I introduce eight 'subjects' for the journey of our LIFE: 'unknown territories', 'creative imagination', 'human condition', 'space-time', 'dreams and drugs', 'paradise/knowledge', 'pure beauty/esthetics' and 'ecological consciousness'.

The answers are mine, but each of you, reading *Quo Vadis?* may use it as a mirror for its own reflections, and wonder what follows from there. *Quo Vadis?* offers common ground for debates with opponents and dialogues with kindred spirits.

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## *Pure Beauty*

The essay derives its name *Pure Beauty* from the San Rocco Magazine, Spring 2017, Milan, Italy. *A commentary on 'Pure Beauty' in five parts, preceded by Quo Vadis?* <sup>4</sup>

## Part I.

Prelude on Pure Beauty: two dreams / two worldviews <sup>15</sup>

## Part II

Commentary on twenty contributions about PURE BEAUTY: *the intellectual fragmentation of an ancient aesthetic idea* <sup>6</sup>

## Part III

Genesis of the House of the Four Winds: *experimental housing project Amsterdam*.

At the request of Museum Les Turbulences, FRAC, Orleans <sup>27</sup>

## Part IV

*Iran and Paradise are still twins* – a travel letter <sup>34</sup>

## Part V The European Labyrinth: *paradigms of Europe*

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There is an intimate relationship between the five parts, due to a virtually unlimited space in which everything exists simultaneously within a variety of time-scales.

**Matter and Mind are One in permanent transformation.**

**Forward and backward are relative notions.**

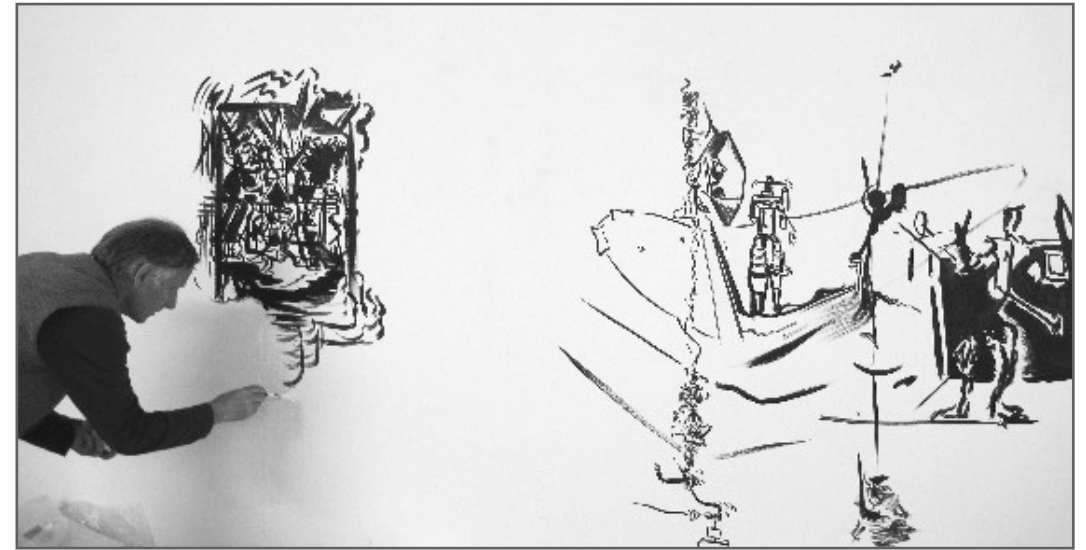
*History isn't a science, only an ongoing projection and interpretation of the here-and-now.*

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Drawing by Floor van Keulen – we are little atoms



Floor van Keulen aan het werk, Wandschildering, *Locus solus*, 2013



CLOUD THE ISSUE

OR CLEAR THE AIR?



PROFITS & PRINCIPLES

PERFORMANCE & CHOICES



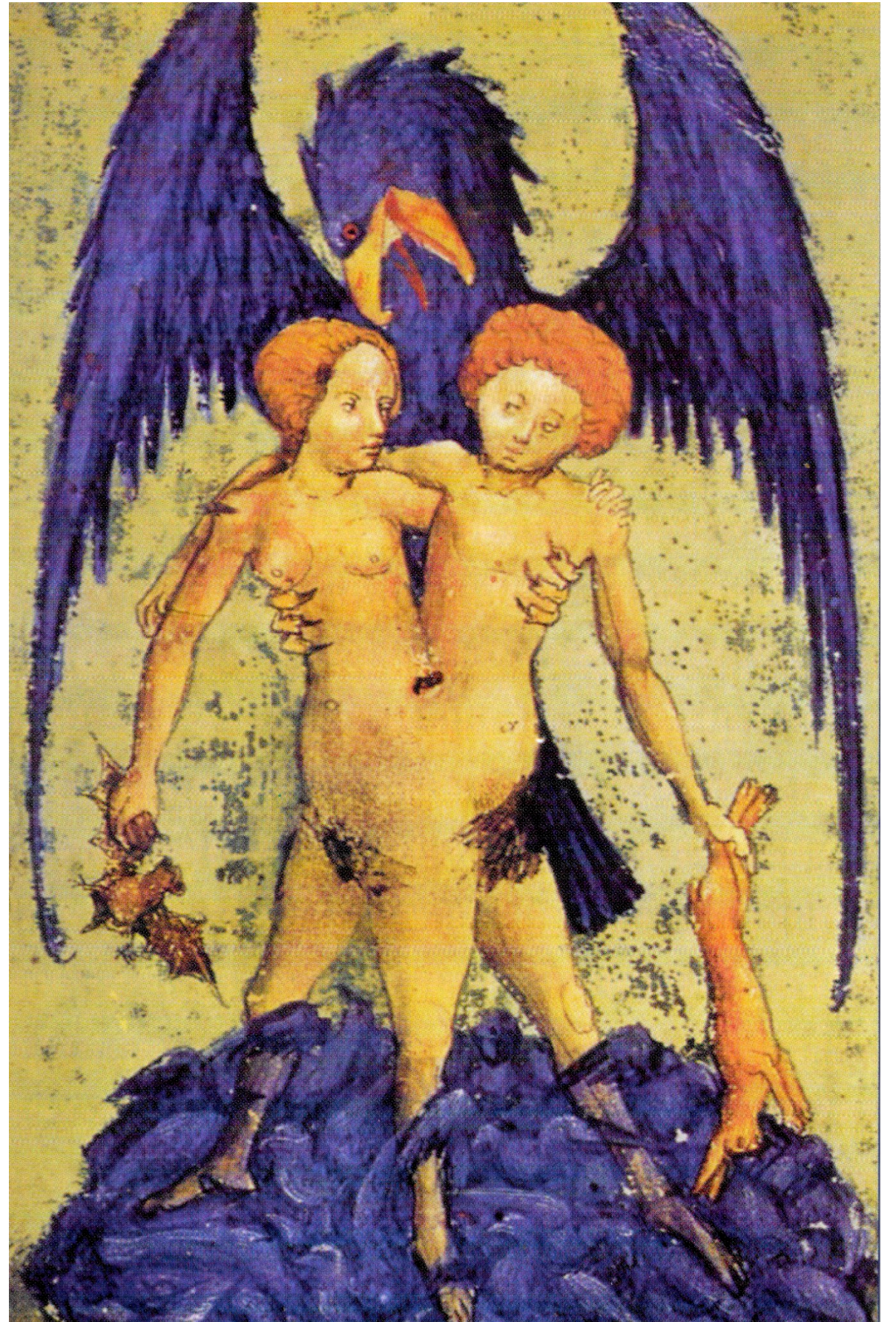
The serious issue of global warming has given rise to heated debate. The burning of fossil fuels and increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the air has the world running for cover and politicians running to make speeches. But promises are no substitute for real results.

You can't see tomorrow if your head is buried in the sand. Action needs to be taken now, by companies and consumers. So last year, Shell renewed our commitment not only to meet the agreed Kyoto targets on emissions, but to exceed them. We're working to increase the provision of cleaner-burning natural gas and encouraging the use of lower-carbon fuels for homes and transport. It's all part of our commitment to Sustainable Development, balancing economic progress with environmental care and social responsibility. Solutions to the future won't come easily, but you can't find them if you don't keep looking.



# Quo Vadis

Androgyne – Aura Consurgens late 14th c.





## QUO VADIS ?

### PRELUDE, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

The eight subjects form a circle of four polarities

*Ourobouros*

*Unknown Territories*

*Creative Imagination*

*Human Condition*

*Space-time*

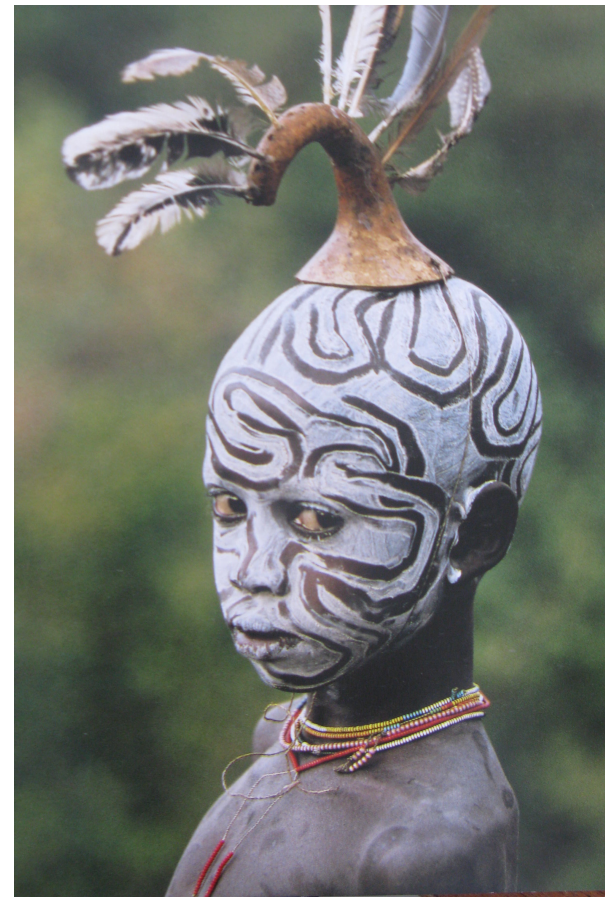
*Dream and Drugs*

*Iran and Paradise*

*Pure Beauty*

*Ecological Consciousness*

notes



Creative imagination

Heron

polarities



## Prelude

‘Where are you going’, the Latin *Quo Vadis*, is by far the oldest of all questions. That’s why cultures circle around *the art of living and the art of dying*. Both are one and the same: Tibetan Book of the Dead.

Humanity is crossing once more the boundary toward another era since the 12.000 years of its Neolithic Human Culture.

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The forces behind the radical transformation are Climate Change; ICT (Information, Technology, Communication); Monopoly Capitalism; Global Companies and Top-Down Hierarchies, with millions of youngsters and aging people living between hope and fear.

The global flow of people is just the beginning of massive migrations, if the clear signs of an *irresistible* climate change are not properly met.

Ancient cultures still embrace in their *Quo Vadis* the living dead, the yet to be born and the living-living ones; only the secular West and secularists in other continents don’t anymore, at least not explicitly. Ancient cultures are sensitive to their dreams, which they consider as ‘signs’ of an invisible-nearby world.

The Western world has a history of *Paradise lost* and *Paradise Regained*: Both are nightmares and dreams of its collective sub-consciousness.

[click and go](#)



*Quo Vadis?* exists of “*an unbroken material connection between every human alive today and every one of our ancestors – even to the very origin of living matter, to the very first primordial cell*”.<sup>2</sup>

*Quo Vadis?* summons up ‘unknown territories’, ‘creative imagination’, ‘human condition’, ‘space-time’, ‘dreams and drugs’, ‘paradise’, ‘pure beauty’ and ‘ecological consciousness’. The eight subjects form a circle of four polarities: unknown territories & dreams and drugs; creative imagination & Iran and paradise; human condition & pure beauty; space-time & ecological consciousness.

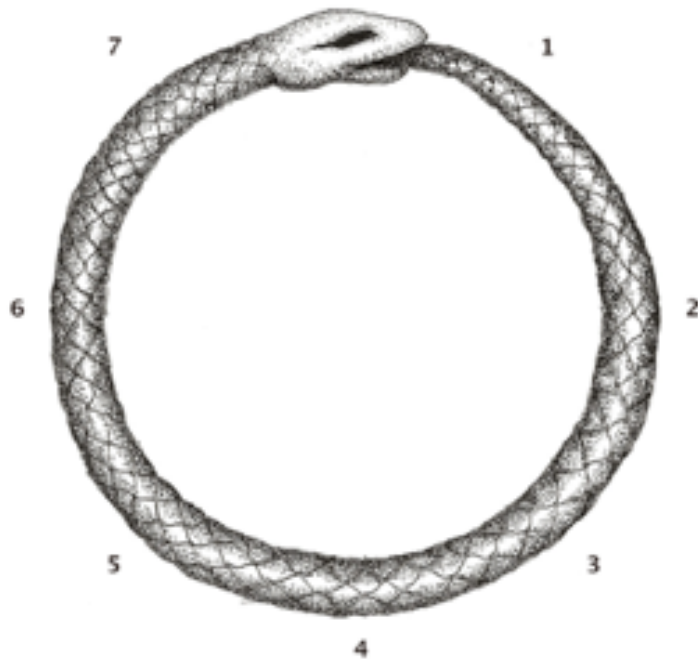
*Visualize the colors of the four polarities*: 1 & 5 as ‘deep blue’; 2 & 6 as ‘saffron yellow’; 3 & 7 as ‘warm red’; 4 & 8 as ‘green’ in human eyes and snake eyes.

**The four lines are the deep structure of any worldview:**

Content and meaning may radically diverge, but the subjects live on as timeless questions: *They bear witness of a common human nature*.



- 8. ecological consciousness
- 7. pure beauty
- 6. Iran & paradise
- 5. dreams & drugs
- 4. space-time
- 3. human condition
- 2. creative imagination
- 1. unknown territories



Egyptian-Greco-Latin snake Ourobouros: *Regeneration in a circular movement without beginning and end.*



click and go

## 1. Unknown Territories

Living from 11 till 17 in a boarding school like my older brothers and sisters did, I noticed that an intelligent remark was only meaningful when a friend or teacher was capable and willing – in that sequence – to understand what I meant to say. It led to the *discovery of the circle of consciousness*. Only what falls within my circle of comprehension is accessible to me, not what falls outside the circumference of my circle.

*This insight led to another one. The circle that surrounds another circle understands the smaller one plus something 'else', while that 'else' is not accessible to the smaller circle.*

The discovery of both circles became a source of uncertainty to me. I realized that my answers to questions about my behavior in the boarding school would fall short when my superior was unable or unwilling to understand me. His circle could be smaller than mine so that he wouldn't accept my answer, while having the power to judge me. Even worse! How more intelligent my answers were, how less trustworthy they became. *I only managed to master my uncertainty by trusting my parents.*

They would believe me and get me out of that boarding school if things went from bad to worse. Years later during my academic studies, the discovery about *the circle of consciousness* reminded me of the position of apostates, dissenters and free-minded people facing those which possessed religious, political, military and ideological power, or in-groups of all kinds that defend their positions with force, expulsion, prison, murder, anathema's, fatwas, burnings, water boarding and excommunication.<sup>3</sup>

To *unknown territories* belong not only the unknown effects of climate change, migrations, ICT and monopoly capitalism, but also those of collective dreams. *Everywhere in the world,*

people are longing for another world. **Newton's space-time paradigm severed the umbilical cord between nature and culture. Such a radical divorce did never happen before.**

*Quo Vadis?* implies research about perceptions, realizing that self-liberation can't be a self-centered issue. Why? The small 'self' comes from somewhere and goes 'somewhere'.

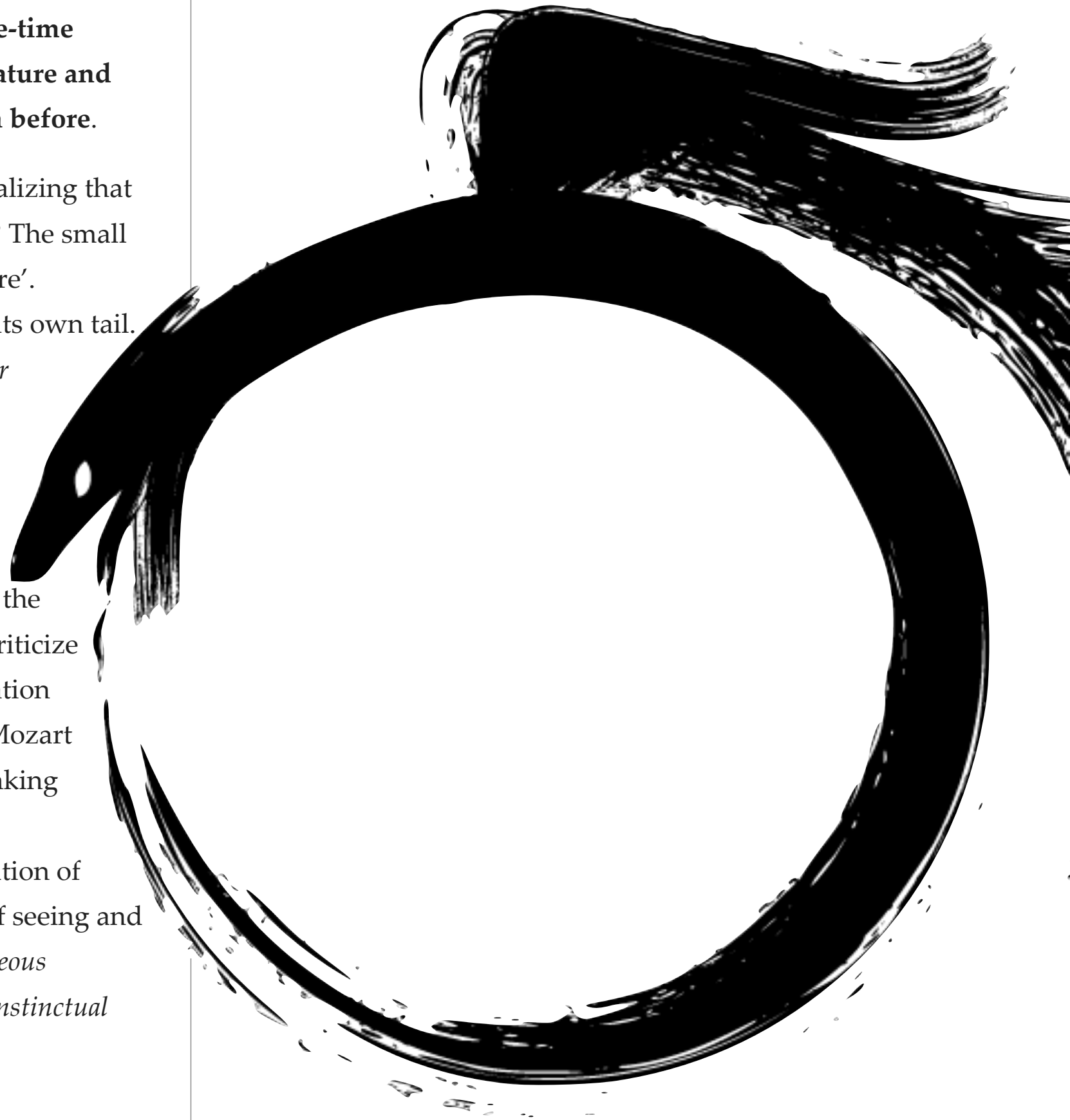
Ourobouros, the symbol of regeneration, bites in its own tail. *No salvation through ego and egocentrism. Let's act for the common good.*

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## 2. Creative Imagination

Creative imagination is not identical to fantasy in the ordinary meaning of the word. Empiricists may criticize imagination in favor of facts, but creative imagination in its full capacity like with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart or Niels Bohr, has nothing to do with wishful thinking or delusions.

Creative imagination is not a homogeneous operation of human intelligence. On the contrary! It is an act of seeing and grasping 'reality' simultaneously through *spontaneous intuition, abstract reasoning, pragmatic intelligence, instinctual knowledge, personal sub-consciousness and collective unconsciousness.*





The working of simultaneity presupposes fluidity between layers of human intelligence, especially between conscious and unconscious desires.

If so, human DNA feeds the act of 'seeing' with the act of creating. And each human DNA is slightly different from the other billions of treasure rooms.

A mental and emotional attitude that's both passive and active toward its environment and the 'self' stimulates the creative process.

*Creative imagination is the highest human faculty:* a source that never dries up thanks to innate intuitive aspirations and the fresh talents of the newly born. All human cultures are the products of their creative imagination: from the prophets for justice to the racist theories of the 19th and 20th centuries.

**The climate change is a sign at the wall that something has gone wrong: something more serious than probably anything else since the 12.000 years of Neolithic Human Culture. How is that possible?**

*The answer is - in essence - simple:* **Creative Imagination is limitless.**

Humans differ from anything else by their capacity to *self-reflection*. The 'rationality' of the *rational animal* of Aristotle doesn't have a built-in limit.

**Human mind is literally 'borderless'.** We consider 'self-reflection' as the greatest gift of Nature's evolution toward complexity and diversity, because '*self-reflection*' equals the *jump into transcendent consciousness*: cradle of philosophies, religions, sciences, arts and human artifacts.

***But being 'borderless' has two sides. The innate notion of truth implies the possibility of lying; the innate desire for beauty and empathy implies the possibility to go in an opposite direction. Humans are boundless animals.***

Cultures that lose their sense for the right balance between the individual and the community, and for the balance between the natural environment and human habitat, are turning the greatest gift of Nature into its opposite. They destroy the complexity and diversity in Nature and Culture, causing so much disruption that it threatens humans and nature alike.

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### 3. Human Condition

The last two paragraphs of *Creative Imagination* sketch the human condition in a nutshell. Let's compare the answers of Sir Alfred Ayer and Arne Naess when I asked them in a TV-debate to explain their task as philosopher.

*Ayer: I try to answer a certain quite specific range of questions... that, I think, have been asked since the Greeks, mainly about what can be known, how it can be known, what kind of things they are, how they relate to one another.*

*In general, I think of philosophy as an activity of questioning accepted beliefs, trying to find criteria and trying to evaluate these criteria; trying to unearth the assumptions behind thinking, scientific thinking and ordinary thinking, and then trying to see if they are valid.*

*Naess: Well, I see it a little different, because I would rather say that to philosophy belong the most profound, the deepest, most fundamental problems. They will change very little, and they have not changed much over the last two thousand years. But I think we agree that the epistemological questions such as 'what we can know?' and 'what stuff is? made of in the universe' would be such things which we consider the deepest questions.*

*Ayer: Yes, but how do you measure the profundity of a problem?...*

*Naess: How do we measure? Well, that's one of the most profound questions of all. How do we know?<sup>4</sup>*

It was 'fun' right away but serious fun because the difference between Ayer as an analytic empiricist philosopher, and Arne Naess, defending his total view, read: worldview, made the debate high-spirited.

*The main difference was about facts and values: Ayer drawing a sharp line between facts and values, while Naess argued that the mysteries of knowing include a link between the knower and the known. Do we really know who we are and do we really see what we see? Are there not many more aspects and possibilities than we assume? Where does the 'I' begin and where does the 'I' end?*

The last statement of Sir Alfred outside reach of cameras: "If you really press me hard, I have to admit that **unadulterated facts don't exist.**"

Noam Chomsky, classic rationalist, and Michel Foucault, radical positivist, debated about power and justice. Foucault argues for power as ultimate reality, while Chomsky rejects this in favor of justice as ultimate value.

*The root-cause of the final clash is a different understanding of human nature. Chomsky assumes the existence of human*



nature, while Foucault reduces human nature to an epistemological tool.

Interviewing Chomsky about 'the human mind' again in December 2007, his answer was unambiguous: "Well, we have to distinguish the two issues here; one is the belief that the human mind is empty. It could become or develop into anything. That's pure mysticism. If the human mind is empty, nothing can develop. We are then left with the question what is intrinsic human nature? You can't deny its existence coherently, any more than you can deny bee's inherent nature coherently.

So, we are left with the question, what it is. Are elements like sympathy, and compassion fundamental components of human nature or not? And that's a matter of inquiry." <sup>5</sup>

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#### 4. Space-time

Imagine a virtual unlimited space in which we are able to see - as if we are God's eye - whatever happens in that space. One discovers that all events in their successive sequences take place simultaneously. **Space as the womb of time.**

Isaac Barrow, the master of Isaac Newton, describes in *Geometrical Lectures* (1683) time as a unilinear, homogeneous line that stretches itself toward an infinite future. The straight

line can be divided into identical moments. The design of the digital watch visualizes this concept of time. It looks as if time is nothing else than a straight line of infinite brief moments. But what happens when we dissolve the notion of an independent, absolute, time-line in favor of an ongoing 'now', not defined by past and future?

Reflecting afterwards on the time of an ecstatic experience, anyone realizes that any notion of time was absent. The 'now' doesn't know about itself: it is just there, while the 'moment' is linked to a succession that dominates the consciousness.

*The important thing is to get away from the idea that time is something. Time doesn't exist. All that exists are things that change. What we call time is - in classical physics at least - simply a complex of rules that govern the change.*<sup>6</sup>

*The distinction between past, present and future is only an illusion, even a stubborn one. Albert Einstein.*

The paradigm shift in space-time began in Great Britain around 1700 but saw simultaneously the light in the struggle between Ancients and Moderns in France during the reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715). That struggle transformed the abstract geometrical description of time into so-called *real time* with *the future as the antipode of the past*. **Future time made it possible to transform a revolt into a revolution, by combining time with an idea and ideal.**

New concepts prevailed, transforming themselves into *living, guiding ideas*, such as History, Evolution, New Science, New World, Progress, etc.

*'There is no innocence in the concepts we are using' – Arne Naess*  
*Space-time categories determine how we perceive the world.*

*Space & Simultaneity: Source of 21st Ecological Consciousness.*

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## 5. Dream and Drugs

### A Ritual Dying Dream.

click and go



Tonight, I went through an exceptional experience during a crystal-clear dream. Location: somewhere in Japan; a simple large space - a dormitory with beds one above the other like in ferryboats. There were men in these beds, down and above but not that many, in white simple clothes. No sounds – no talking. The sphere was quiet like thin air.

Right in front of me, I saw Paul de Leeuw, Shinto master, walking like in a Shinto ceremony: in concentration, step by step in a regular rhythm, back and head upward. I followed without any thought, only space, no trace of fear that I was going to die. How, I didn't know nor did it matter, by the sword or... Paul had gone - I walked alone in the direction of a white wall with a tatami mat in front. I kneeled down with front and head in vertical position like in the Shinto exercises.

Not the sword but a bullet killed me. I fell to the ground, lying on my left side. From there I walked away knowing that I was in my after-life. The body was there and I went on.

La Source, Monday morning, September 25, 2017

Letter to the shaman A.A.,

When the 'spirit' of the ayahuasca-plant began to penetrate my brains and body, the effects were sensual and erotic...I approached Colette...her body was melting too, moving in and out my body. Also, other bodies moved in between as waves that mingled together in an open space, in a passive and yet spontaneous process. I don't know the time but it probably happened after midnight. When I told the story to Colette, she told me that she woke up at midnight 00.30 and felt me entering her body describing similar feelings as the ones I experienced. The distance between her and me was 90 miles. She couldn't sleep any more during most of the night—feeling sometimes confused about what happened with her and me.

I left the place to walk into the night, surrounded everywhere by patterns of flickering lights, as if the eye was able to see the energies of the leaves of the tree. Here and there people were leaning against a tree. Walking was difficult. I had to smile. The scene looked as a strange theatre play, a clinic or house



for elderly people. I had to shit behind a tall tree enjoying the earth would swallow whatever we secrete.

Back into the place, the statue of the jaguar in front of me went through a transformation. Its long neck became a snake moving up and down in spirals. Suddenly the music was everywhere. The drumming sounds, rhythms and lyrics by you, Sam and your friend entered my brains a way I had never experienced. Sometimes there were periods of deep silence till the music began to stream again. The beauty of the music was of a rare quality...never the same; an ongoing flow of continuous movements without any repetition, moving in and out each other, not different of the bodies before.

The intricate pattern resembled what I had read about physical and chemical structures or quanta whose positions are always floating with every atom in interaction with the other atoms, forming patterns in infinite spiraling movements.

Finally, I slept for a while.

Kapberg, summer, 2010

Deadly cancerous tobacco is allowed while psychedelic plants are forbidden.

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## 6. Iran and Paradise

April 25 - May 23, 2017

Dear family and friends,

This letter is my thanks for your presence, whether or not at a distance, at the festivity of July 23-24, 2016. That weekend you were told that we prepared a travel to Iran.

One of my dear memories about Iran is the evening, night and day, not far from the road to Mashhad and Herât, in the spring of 1973.

It was the year that we traveled during six months in a second-hand British Ford-transit: the first two months through North Africa and the Sahara, and from there to Asia, crossing Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India on our way to Lake Manasbal at the foot of the Himalaya in Kashmir, administered by India.

That evening, some men in a remote café invited us - Alma, David, Job, Adam and I, to enter. They poured tea, made music and sang. We smoked together a joint of a rare kind of hashish, while they were singing: *we shall bring you until the gate of paradise but you yourself have to enter.*

*To be continued: p. 35*

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## 7. Pure Beauty

The Sufi experience of millions of Iranians is special because it is not separated from their daily life: *it's a natural human condition.*

The longing for beauty is universal and indestructible, being an innate quality of the human DNA. ***This explains why aesthetics is central to any culture that seriously reflects and seriously deals with all aspects of everyone's Quo Vadis?***

*Western culture lost this capacity* because it lost its sense for 'wholeness' after the schism between its culture and nature. Cultural time diverged from the time cycles of nature.

*Its linear time became: Future equals Progress.*

The schism became more radical in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by logical positivism and radical empiricism due to their doctrine of the 'empty mind'. One no longer believed that the human DNA was a source of 'beauty' as well as 'goodness' and 'truth' with its innate intuitive desires, comprehension and empathy towards life, and whatever we sense in our environment. One doesn't realize that the doctrine of the 'empty mind' is nonsensical. It can't explain the learning capacities that reach further than our instincts. The human mind is self-reflexive and *thus* creative: capable to stretch from an intuitive notion of One(ness) toward an infinite plurality of forms, ideas, impressions and expressions.

The Iranian-Sufi experience got an impulse by the magazine SAN ROCCO – **Pure Beauty** # 13 Spring 2017. Rich in content and diverse in perception, the essays also reveal the dilemmas and assumptions of a space-time paradigm that isn't able to connect the human experience with nature at large. Actually, it is self-deception.

PURE BEAUTY itself evokes similar feelings in its Editorial: *Given the obsession with measuring the effectiveness of any given building's performance, the pre-modern ineffability of the investigation of beauty became obscene, as did its embarrassing permalink with the sphere of the sacer [holy].*<sup>7</sup> **From here follows a link toward the ineffability of Eros and the Holy inside the Christian faith.**

'Although it is not always noticed by modern philosophers, an important part of Western philosophy follows, in various forms, an erotic pantheism'. Pierre Klossowski advises us to read *The City of God*. Its author Augustine felt the need to reject the old religious, pagan ceremonies: "To him, the demon was at work here. These sexual images of God of the theologia-theatrica with their blasphemous obscenities were fraudulent *simulacra* to Augustine. In this pagan theology, the demon passes himself off as a God." 'What Klossowski rejects, is the a-sexual image of God that is worshipped in the Christian church'.<sup>8</sup>

Augustine's conviction of the relation between sex and sin, a belief shared by the Church Fathers, is in line with the Council of Nicaea (325). Belief in the mortal sin became a cornerstone of Christian orthodoxy, with the Church as the intermediary between sin and salvation. Pierre Klossowski calls its effect on the Western mind *a massive psychic destabilization*.

We need a renewed 'Renaissance'-paradigm in which an all-embracing Space transforms the time-line of the Enlightenment into Simultaneity: *the utmost creative principle*. Pure Beauty may re-appear on the scene, with in mind the remark of Paolo Sorrentino's **La Grande Bellezza**: *everywhere else It is otherwise*.

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## 8. Ecological Consciousness

Reaching point 8, feels like entering the Sahara as we did early spring 1973. Reggane was the last spot in this ocean of sand and rocks with a 'shop' where the traveler must sign 'the book of the dead', in case he wouldn't return alive. The sign 'MALI' was moving in the wind; distance: 2000 kilometers. This first sign was also the last one.

*Ecological consciousness* is the essence of animism and Zen Buddhism. From the Zen point of view, life-activity is



absolute and relative, silent and speaking, Godly and manly, placeless and everywhere, timeless and timeful.<sup>9</sup> Ecological consciousness existed all around the Earth before and after the rise of **Neolithic Human Culture**. Its name: animism (forget the usual connotations): *Nature is alive, being alpha and omega of whatever exists.*

The artist William Magelhaes from Brasilia, Brazil, asked Dolo Asegrama, our Dogon guide during a six week stay in the village Koundo Ando: *How does one recognize an animist?* Dolo smiled and said: *an animist is a human like everybody else, but you can recognize the animist by its willingness to offer.*<sup>10</sup>

To offer means an act of gratitude towards life; a recognition of AMMA, being Air, Water, Fire and Earth, representing cosmic wholeness and oneness.

The Africans are creatures of light, emanating from the fullness of the sun; Europeans creatures of moonlight: hence their immature appearance".<sup>11</sup>

*Ecological consciousness* is the apex of the circle where the mouth of the snake swallows anew 'unknown territory'. *Ourobouros'* consciousness perceives all reality simultaneously. Time doesn't exist as an independent category neither is there the usual distance between consciousness and matter. *Intelligence and material process have*

*thus a single origin, which is ultimately the unknown totality of the universal flux.*<sup>12</sup>

During a stay in Tamil-Nadu, our host invited me for a walk. We walked in silence. Near a tall tree, he paused and finally said: *not one leaf at this tree is the same.*<sup>13</sup>

*Ourobouros* realizes that whatever exists, exists forever although not in *identical forms*. Its ecological consciousness understands why Aristotle's principle of identity doesn't survive the disappearance of the Enlightenment paradigm. People finally realize that *identity* is an abstract logical symbol, functional in their algorithms but not in reality out there.

**With the disappearance of separate identities**, also Aristotle's principles of 'contradiction' and 'excluded third' are swept aside. One finally understands that 'either-or' excludes 'half' of reality. That's a great loss, thus stupid.

The liberating insights might open our eyes for a Renaissance that shows sincere interest in the cultures of other continents and cultures of the 'past' because of the wisdom of their elders.

*It seems clear, then, that we are faced with deep and radical fragmentation, as well as thoroughgoing confusion, if we try to think of what could be the reality that is treated by our physical laws. At present physicists tend to avoid this issue by adopting the*

*attitude that our overall views concerning the nature of reality are of little importance. All that counts in physical theory is supposed to be the development of mathematical equations that permit to predict and control the behavior of large statistical aggregates of particles.*<sup>14</sup>

Finally, one understands why *the mind is constructed in such a way that it can't grasp itself*, because the mind depends on *the unknown totality of the universal flux*. That's the reason why Arne Naess argues that *all things are somehow interconnected*; or Einstein says that *the mysterious is the most beautiful experience we can have... the emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science*.

The implications of a renewed space-time paradigm in the 21st century will transform 'history as science'. 'History' has never been a science, not even within the humanities, although important. History's assumption: *the straight Newtonian timeline in one direction*, is untenable. People will look at the blind woman of the *Statue of Liberty* with new eyes, wondering: *that straight arm, isn't that how one thought in those days?*

**Einstein realized that one never solves a problem from the level out of which the problem evolved. That problem is the divorce with nature: the divorce between matter and mind.**

Here ends my lecture. Give it some time to digest. If your endeavor for a *Global Renaissance Society* is sincere, its

philosophical foundation must embrace both the sacred as well as the profane dimensions of today's cultures. There isn't any intrinsic contradiction between the sacred and the profane. That would be a disregard of the universal values in both traditions. *The real political and psychological struggle is between an open and closed perception of the human condition.*

As said before, the warm red line between 3 & 7 refers to the source of human nature: its innate longing for pure beauty. So, does 1 & 5: the deep blue of the unknown, whether outside or inside. The difference between both is relative like in 2 & 6, the saffron yellow color in which 6 embodies the products of the creative imagination (2).

But the vertical line of 4 & 8, the green one, needs special attention because of the intimate relation between space-time and ecological consciousness. 4 & 8 is the line of perception, practice and kundalini-energy we all need for the journey ahead.

*A black chador in my letter 'Iran and Paradise'* symbolizes the many veils that obscure our ways of seeing, also mine, time and time again. People will laugh about our pretentious claim, and from their perspective they are right. We also don't know to which degree we are right. *However, something is rotten in the world of today*, causing a climate change and too



much misery, physically, mentally and emotionally, amidst the gigantic wealth of the one percent, and the sheer infinite possibilities for a better life for all.

There are enough reasons to work together toward a future for the next generations. And the word 'future' means nothing else than 'here-and now'.

All the best,

Fons Elders

emeritus professor 'theory of world-views' / dir. elders special productions bv  
[www.fonselders.eu](http://www.fonselders.eu)

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1 file:///Global international migration flows | Wittgenstein Centre.html

2 Albert Hofmann LSD My Problem Child – Insights / Outlooks tr. Jonathan Ott ed. Amanda Feilding Beckley Foundation Press Oxford University Press 2013, 177

3 Islam Unknown, Fons Elders meets Asma Barlas - Nasr Abu Zayd

Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im - Reza Aslan – Amna Nusayr – Anouar Majid

Ömer Özoy – Mehmet Asutay – Noam Chomsky

Preface by Mauritius Wijffels, Publisher: Elders Special Productions BV, Amsterdam 2013, xi-xii

4 Philosophers in Debate, Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault;

Sir Alfred Ayer and Arne Naess; Leszek Kolakowski and Henri Lefèbvre;

Sir Karl Popper and Sir John Eccles. Moderator and commentator Fons Elders

Publisher: Elders Special Productions BV, 2013, 47-8

5 Islam Unknown, ibid., 173-4

6 Julian Barbour, The End of Time. The Next Revolution in Our Understanding of the Universe. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1999, 137.

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13 Our host was the chairman of the Congress Party in Tamil-Nadu.

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Quo Vadis

[click and go back](#)





[click and go back](#)



unknown territories





1	2
3	4

[click and go back](#)

1 Sardijnse zon | 2 Auzonnet | 3 Waddenzee | 4 Schiermonnikoog



# Pure beauty





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# SAN ROCCO

# PURE BEAUTY

13 SPRING 2017

This essay is a commentary on Pure Beauty, in five parts:

- Part I. Prelude on Pure Beauty: two dreams / two worldviews 26
- Part II Commentary on twenty contributions about PURE BEAUTY:  
the intellectual fragmentation of an ancient aesthetic idea 32
- Part III Genesis of the House of the Four Winds: experimental housing project Amsterdam.  
At the request of Museum Les Turbulences, FRAC, Orleans 54
- Part IV Iran and Paradise are still twins – a travel letter 62
- Part V The European Labyrinth: paradigms of Europe 75

*History isn't a science, only an ongoing projection and interpretation of the here-and-now.*

[click and go](#)



# Part 1

## *Prelude on Pure Beauty*

### *two dreams / two worldviews*

During the night of July 24-25, a dream guided me through the underground channels of a city. I wasn't alone. I carried a huge map with countless references to books and encyclopedic articles, testimonies of a refined historical and aesthetic knowledge. The dream reminded me of a recent visit to Florence, Montepulciano, Casabianca and in particular Assisi, where Superstudio in the Temple of Minerva and Gian-Piero Frassinelli in the Municipal Library were honored for their contributions to architecture. LIFE was the backstage.

The night before, Julia woke up after a dream that resembled a ritual in ancient cultures, with sex as a sacred act like the sadhana in Tibetan Buddhism.

Louis, an older friend of the family, initiated Desirée, Julia's 12-year old daughter, in the presence of her mother. Louis, seated on a small box, his penis stiff and upright, invited Desirée to softly sitting down on it, and to move gently according to her own impulse. Julia took over and brought the copulation to completion.

The dreams represent two worldviews: the first one quite recent, not older than the *Crisis of the European conscience* [1680-1715] by Paul Hazard, but the second dream traces its memory to prehistoric times. Maria Gimbutas describes in *The Language of the Goddess* the village culture of the Goddess. She is the incarnation of the creative principle as Source and Giver of All, in Europe's civilization between 6500 – 3500, before the Greek or Judeo-Christian civilizations flourished.

Each question about **Pure Beauty** raises another one, as if we are orphans in the Garden of Paradise.

Editorial opens with a quote of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in the translation of Hannah Arendt. Why Kant? PURE BEAUTY, I guess, needs a strong statement about the possibility of an aesthetic a priori judgment that – in principle – is true for every human being. 'Under the *sensus communis* we must include the idea of a sense common to all, i.e. of a faculty of judgment which, in its reflection, takes account (a priori) of the mode of representation of all other man in thought, in order, as it were, to compare its judgment with the collective reason of humanity...' <sup>17</sup>

Although Kant tried to solve the moral question of his time, and seemingly succeeded, his a priori reasoning became part of the problem, not of the solution. **Kant confronts the question of squaring the circle: free will versus**

## **determinism.**

How to reconcile Newton's astonishing worldview: the first and final discovery of the absolute truth about the universe, with the autonomy, free will and moral responsibility of the human being?

"I do not define time, space, place, and motion, as being well known to all. Only I must observe, that the common people conceive those quantities under no other notions but from the relation they bear to sensible objects. And thence arise certain prejudices, for the removal of which it will be convenient to distinguish them into absolute and relative, true and apparent, mathematical and common.

I. Absolute, true and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external, and by another name is called duration: relative, apparent, and common time, is some sensible and external (whether accurate or unequable) measure of duration by the means of motion, which is commonly used instead of true time; such as an hour, a day, a month, a year.

II. Absolute space, in its own nature, without relation to anything external, remains always similar and immovable. Relative space is some movable dimension or measure of the absolute space; which our senses determine by its position to bodies; and which is commonly taken for immovable space;



such is the dimension of subterraneous, an aerial, or celestial space, determined by its position in respect to the earth. Absolute and relative space are the same in figure and magnitude; but they do not remain always numerically the same..."<sup>18</sup>

III. Space-time categories determine how we perceive the world.

‘There is no innocence in the concepts we are using’ – Arne Naess.

Space-time categories, whatever the meaning or content, determine any worldview, its notion of identity and how one perceives the interaction between knowledge and being. If we realize this proposition, we might be less amazed, why PURE BEAUTY in today’s Western culture seems out of reach and sight.

Isaac Barrow preceded Isaac Newton in his definitions of time and space in *Geometrical Lectures*, 1683, *with Time as a straight line that begins in the here-and-now, stretching itself into an infinite future. Time is by its nature homogenous and divisible in equal parts.*

**The definitions of time and space by Barrow and Newton severe for the first time in human history its umbilical cord**

**with Nature. Three centuries later Nature reacts with its climate change, of which we experience the beginning.**

The paradigm shift in space-time began in Great Britain but saw simultaneously the light in the struggle between the Ancients and the Moderns in France during the reign of Louis XIV. That struggle transformed the abstract notion of time into so-called real time with the future as the antipode of the past. Future time made it possible to transform a revolt into a revolution, by combining time with an idea and ideal. New concepts prevailed, transforming themselves into living, guiding ideas, such as History, Evolution, New Science, New World, Progress, Infinity etc.

Religious content transforms into ‘secular’ content along the path of Time. The creation myth and the belief in a Messiah, the Chosen People, the Promised Land or Heaven, in Judaism and Christianity, get initially a tremendous scientific, philosophical and psychological impulse by the linear notion of time that gradually replaces the cyclical notion of time. Natural sciences deliver the empirical and positivistic body of knowledge that step-by-step transforms religious notions of Messiah and Heaven into an everlasting Progress. The inevitable consequence of this process leaves the metaphysical and aesthetic implications aside. They take refuge in the ‘Romantic’ movements all over Europe since the

second half of the eighteenth century. Aesthetics gets its own domain due to Alexander Gottfried Baumgarten.<sup>19</sup>

As a response to Enlightenment, Christianity and more recently Islam and Judaism, develop (new) orthodoxies that mirror orthodox tendencies in the Enlightenment's tradition. All have their share in the claim on Absolute Truth.

The cultural and political consequences of the absolute and mathematical Newtonian time and space are rarely mentioned. Infinite TIME, not infinite SPACE, becomes the carrier of religious and secular dreams. Not having any essence or content of itself, Newtonian Time becomes a quality in itself, as the banner of Progress Degrading Space into an object, to be used and to be exploited in every thinkable way. While Time means quality, Space becomes quantity. Their intrinsic ontological interaction is broken: thus, also the ecological consciousness that everything exists simultaneously.

What people think, changes; *how* people think, changes only through a *paradigm* shift: *A profound change in a fundamental model or perception of events, even though Thomas Kuhn himself restricted the use of the term to the physical science.* wikipedia

PURE BEAUTY, more than ever, remains caught in the strings of Europe's body-mind split as remnant of its natural and

supernatural order that also downgraded the status of women and (their) sex. We forgot the ancient intuitive notion of Oneness that surrounds each child in its dreams. We left it too often as a refugee behind along the road.

If one visualizes how Space merges with the Earth and Cosmos at large, and how in such an unlimited space everything happens simultaneously, the divorce between Newtonian Space and Time becomes evident.

Linear time disappears: history versus future and future versus history lose their sharp edges because all that happens - happens in the Here-and-Now, whatever the scale of the experience.

Simultaneity opens our eyes for the infinite complexity of (the law of) permanent transformation: the dazzling dynamics of interactions between whatever exists. It implies and 'explains' the ultimate unity of all living beings (Arne Naess).

Space as the womb of time transforms the artificial divorce between environment and its development. It unveils the dramatic consequence of a worldview in which space and time are disconnected. The geological and climatological time-scales are intrinsically space-bound. What happens to our environment nearby or far away, is becoming relative in a world that goes through a climate change that's rocking the bottom, literally and figuratively, of oceans, vegetation, trees,

animals and billions of people, in the decades to come.  
The melting of the icecap at the North- and South pole is the  
'final' wake-up call.

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Pure Beauty

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[click and go back](#)



# Part 2

## PURE BEAUTY

*The intellectual fragmentation of an ancient aesthetic idea*

For instance: d) Beauty is the rediscovery of a pre-logical, pre-linguistic commonality, that is achieved through logical, critical, political work.<sup>20</sup>

*Such 'rediscovery', however, is only possible through an ecological consciousness in which space and time are re-integrated. From there follow achievements through logical, critical, political work.*

---

## ALL THOSE IN FAVOUR OF PROPORTION, SAY AYE

The cognitive dissonance of subjective and objective values in the human mind categorically denied a conclusive determination of the origin in beauty in architecture. Cohen's conclusion is clear. But 'the cognitive dissonance of subjective and objective values' isn't derived from the human mind as such, but a product of the human mind, like all theories of knowledge and methodologies. Alfred Ayer, a logical positivist, spoke the unforgettable words after his debate with Arne Naess: If you really press me hard, I have to admit that unadulterated facts don't exist.<sup>21</sup>

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## BEAUTY BY COMMITTEE

The inherent ambivalence between 'facts' and 'values' illustrates the observation of Fabrizio Gallanti: Every new building had to adhere to particular canons of aesthetic dignity, while projects and urban plans ...were meant to incarnate a new rationality with regard to the governance of the city, in the post-Napoleonic era. [15]

---

## NO EXPLANATION NECESSARY & DIPINGERE UN NASO / NON È COSÌ SEMPLICE

A striking difference between two worldviews are the contributions by David Himmelman, No Explanation Necessary, and by Stefano Graziani about Emilio Vedova's Studio Dipingere un naso / Non è così semplice.[19-24] Himmelman writes about Abbot Lanzi's eagerness to make a contribution to the nascent discipline of art history...to outline the rise and fall of each city's "school". The question is, why does this happen since the 18th century, and equally important: **how got the historical modus of thinking the status of 'evidence' since then?**

The answer: The 'discipline of art history' and 'history in general' became thinkable and therefore logically possible, by the autonomous linear timeline of Barrow and Newton. Without the divorce, as mentioned before, between an abstract time and an abstract space, history as a discipline in its own right, couldn't be imagined. Time acquires such an autonomous status with regard to space that Time becomes identical with the words 'Modern' and 'Future'. Even an anti-modern movement as Postmodernism, must carry on with the term 'modern', because the Newtonian Time notion cannot shift down. There is no way back. Time has become the nucleus of our collective and individual identity.



Emilio Vedova lives on a planet without hierarchy, neither between matter and matter, nor between mind and mind, or mind and matter. There are no walls, neither visible nor invisible in his inner world. He laughs at the 'cognitive dissonance of subjective and objective values'. He reminds me of a remark by Salvador Dali in his autobiography: the only difference between a madman and me is that I am not mad. Twenty-seven years after his death his baled body underwent an autopsy. The two ends of his moustache still show 10:10.  
**Pure Beauty:** surrealists think in non-linear, vertical time.

---

## GIOTTO; OR, BEAUTY IN SPACE

Pier Paolo Tamburelli's exquisite essay on Giotto; Or, Beauty in Space is beautifully written. I hesitate to comment on it. And yet, the begin and its end unveil assumptions that need to be addressed if we are serious in our quest of PURE BEAUTY. The title: Beauty in Space, is a jump into Newton's Absolute Space, because also Relative Space "is some movable dimension or measure of the absolute space; which our senses determine by its position to bodies...."

Tamburelli's first remark: Giotto painted facts, followed by the remark: "to paint 'facts' means to capture human actions in a fixed instant – because, of course, painting movements is simply impossible: in painting."

His second, that the facts of Giotto ... "do not follow what we, broadly speaking, call the 'laws of nature' and third, "the facts painted by Giotto are ones known to everybody" ... "The presupposition of all of this art is that everyone already knows everything", but the three assumptions are untenable. [33]

Tamburelli's interpretation of 'space' and 'facts' presupposes Newton's mechanical worldview with distinctions and certainties to a degree that his description of reality becomes exclusive and normative, and yet inspiring: "So, Giotto painted facts that happened, and happened in reality, even though they happened in reality as a suspension of reality." [33]

Tamburelli evokes a tension between the 'natural order' and the 'supernatural order'. His 'Newtonian' and empiricist approach fits needless in the orthodox dualist vision of the Catholic-Christian churches but also stems from a positivist theory of knowledge. A Taoist monk and painter wouldn't talk about 'facts' and 'space' in such a way. On the contrary: such a distinction between 'facts' and 'space' doesn't exist,

neither ontologically nor mentally, unless...our education goes in the inverted direction: narrowing down instead of enlarging our creative imagination that actually is limitless. **That's why sense and nonsense alternate daily.**

Gilles Quispel, expert in the domain of Gnosis and mysticism, and I assume that Giotto is a mystic, mentions that mystics don't have a well-defined image of the divine. If so, the question becomes: *If the divine has anything to do with PURE BEAUTY, and why not, then dualism in whatever modus; separation of space-time; so-called independent facts versus human mind and human perception, etc., etc., may not be the right orientation in the search for Ultimate Beauty.*<sup>22</sup>

Tamburelli writes in his last paragraph: Dante and Giotto chose to understand art as a strictly public activity (52). I have my doubt about the words 'chose' and 'strictly'. Also here speaks a modern man whose mind operates sharply, too sharply, with too strict criteria, while Dante and Giotto lived and worked in a world full of antagonisms, struggles and envies but it was One world, with different levels and layers, with a visible and invisible order, not so different of the world of the 'modern' Japanese women and men who live in the here-and-now with their ancestors as kami, and in the certainty that they return to that world as a stone, bird, human or anything else. They do realize that nobody falls out

of existence: the here-and-now or the beyond are interrelated. Shinto nor Zen Buddhism perceives facts and values or space and time as separate entities because mind is reality, and reality is mind. And so, do I.

---

Two quotations from MASSIVE CHANGE by Erez Golani Solomon may illustrate the last remark about Shinto and Zen. The disaster that occurred in Japan on 11 March 2011 was an event of "planetary" impact. Its enormity altered the earth's axial tilt by 25 centimeters, thereby shortening every day in the future by a fraction of a second. [54]

A century after the modernist movement began emancipating architecture from the natural ground through the establishment of an elevated horizontal datum, reliance on the natural ground nonetheless persists. The renewed emphasis on an even, horizontal ground level – and the optics associated with this – as the foundation for new life, together with the shift in the infrastructure's material properties by replacing steel and concrete with earth and recycled urban debris, produces a distinct sensory experience and a noteworthy infrastructural paradigm. [61]

The first and last sentences evoke something unique: unique with regard to Western culture and architecture. A disaster of

“planetary” proportion gets a response with a renewed emphasis on an even, horizontal ground level - as the foundation for new life.

Compare - as the foundation for new life, with the concept: ‘emancipation’:

A century after the modernist movement began emancipating [sic!] architecture from the natural ground through the establishment of an elevated horizontal datum ...

Here are two worldviews, the Western and the Japanese that collide like in an earthquake. They differ profoundly in their sense and sensitivity for space: Japanese consider the horizontal ground level as the foundation for new life. It means that space is not neutral or indifferent, as it is in Western eyes. Westerners talk instead of ‘emancipation’: Time equals Progress. The priority for space in Japan corresponds with my description of a virtual unlimited space in which everything happens simultaneously. The priority for time in the West corresponds with the description of the Newtonian time as a straight line in which time is Future, and space just useful. Japan’s respond to dangerous situations always was and still is by enlarging its sacred territory, to strengthen the tie with the invisible world: ancestors and kami.

The West has lost its sense for the sacred in the struggle to liberate itself of the supernatural order. The result is meagre,

at least till now: The intellectual fragmentation of Pure Beauty continues.

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## DUST AND FEVER DREAMS

Dust and Fever Dreams by Wayne Switzer about the ‘architectural projects’ by the artists Hannsjörg Voth and Ingrid Amslinger in the Sahara, evokes the interesting question: are we always perceiving with cultural eyes, i.e.: are we always self-projecting?

*No, not always, not in the Sahara!* In 1971, I invited Michel Foucault for a trip through the countryside to the northeast of Amsterdam. This environment has names like Waterland and Zeevang. Many names refer to the element ‘water’ because that part of the Netherlands is below sea level. The 800-year old dike of the former Suydersee, today a lake, is never far away. Driving through the polders, I asked Foucault whether he liked this type of landscape. He answered affirmatively, saying that he was looking at it through the eyes of the Dutch seventeenth landscape painters.

My response to him was that we always observe with cultural eyes. *No, not always*, he said, *not in the Sahara!*



I did not reply to his objection. I hadn't been in the Sahara. Sahara was just a name and a picture. Two years later, my wife, our three boys and I travelled through the Sahara in a camper for six weeks. Foucault proved to be right:

*No, not always, not in the Sahara!*

Its space, silence, sand, rocks and windy storms are so limitless that each comparison with whatever landscape, form or design breaks down. Travelling in solitude through the Sahara destroys one's culturally colored perception, even one's sense of hearing, due to the deep silence. Being long enough in the Sahara causes a 'destruction' of our common-sense impressions as well as our mental fixations. 'Not in the Sahara' became for me synonymous with space as sheer emptiness.<sup>23</sup>

The 'architectural projects' are a senseless fight with and against that emptiness. These words are mine.

Yet Voth's own words:

"One hour before daybreak, I left the Spirale and walked into the first light of dawn. The sky was still clear and pure.... In the West, exhausted from his chase, lay Orion, the great sky hunter, his head lowered. Overpowered by the sight of the cosmic landscape, of its endlessness and the immeasurable backdrop, I closed my eyes. A dizziness came over me. **The Orient project began to fall away from me, distancing**

**itself,"** [67] followed by Voth, distancing himself from his Orient. *That's the indestructible power of the Sahara, liberating us from our so-called identity.*

---

## BEAUTY IN NON-SPACES

Louis De Belle and Bentham Hughes in *Beauty in Non-Spaces* quote Michel Foucault's "*Des espaces autres*". [75]

Foucault negates Newtonian space and time. He is critical about its evolutionary, linear assumptions, and he is sensitive for the difference in spaces. Not one space is identical to another, unless the very ugly ones. They tend to converge, like the cruelties of dictatorial regimes all over the world, inclusive the cruelty of Europe's colonialist practices. They look similar or nearly similar.

Aimé Césaire compares the policies of Adolf Hitler with colonial procedures. Césaire remarks that Hitler and his fellows applied the colonial policies on their own citizens, and this was not done! This was his big affront, not what happened in the colonies.<sup>24</sup>

**Ugliness is not only an aesthetic but also an ethical experience.**

The same is true for the beautiful. How its beauty is experienced, differs from perspective till perspective. *That's the characteristic quality of a creative mind.*

---

#### THE BEAUTY OF THE CONQUERED TRACTOR: DINGPOLITIK IN 'DIE NEUE WELT'

Antoine Proklos' The Beauty of the Conquered Tractor: DingPolitik in "Die Neue Welt" quotes extensively Hannes Meyer's essay *Die neue Welt* (1926). [78]

I confine my comment to the logic of Meyer because this logic dominates the news and debates whatever the subject.

Compare his slogan: *Communal consciousness will not tolerate any individualistic excesses*; with common wisdom that sees and knows that BEAUTY CREATES DIVERSITY AND ITS COMPLEXITY NEW LIFE.

Meyer's statement is an example of a dualistic mind according Aristotle's third logical principle: *either p or non-p*, the excluded third. This principle follows logically the first two: the principle of identity: *if p, then p*, as well as the principle of contradiction: *not both p and non-p*, that itself is an application and elaboration of the principle of identity.

Thinking in identity-terms, contradictions and 'either-or', dominates increasingly the Western mind. *We seem not to understand that its 'logic' isn't the logic of physical and biological laws and ought not to be the 'logic' of urban design and architecture, not to speak of landscapes or industrial design.*

---

#### THE BRIEF GARDEN OF BEVIS BAWA IN SRI LANKA

Marie-Louise Lillywhite and Sebastiano Giannesini in *The Brief Garden of Bevis Bawa* in Sri Lanka [116] praise Bevis' Garden: "Bevis's garden was a fulcrum of creativity in which his friends and confidants made significant contributions throughout the years. It is thus imbued with a cooperative atmosphere that enriches its special beauty." [121]

Actually, the opposite of Meyers remark: 'Communal consciousness will not tolerate any individualistic excesses'. The 'individualistic excesses' during the life of Bevis Bawa resulted in a Garden that the authors describe as one of the most acclaimed small gardens in Asia due to 'its tropical modernism' / 'a hybrid of the classical and the indigenous' / 'a fusion of unexpected Eastern and Western elements'. [121, 117, 118 respectively]



Accepting the way /  
It is and is not and both /  
And not both, It is.

Haiku 23.<sup>25</sup>

And yet, the difference between Nature and Society, in the wording of the founder of the Deep Ecology Movement, Arne Naess, is nothing less than the difference between 'complex' and 'complicated'.<sup>26</sup>

Proklos therefore may argue in his conclusion in favor of Meyer's work, "namely, the understanding that the proliferation of things is neither an accident nor tragic catastrophe, but rather the inevitable hybrid construction of the collective construction. *This construction can be controlled, and this is done by way of a conquest of promise, a full-fledged project for beauty* [italic FE].

In this context, Meyer's legacy is the possibility of understanding architecture as an element of propaganda – as the backside of the billboard whose front declares a proposal for a politics of things. [87]

## THE PROMISE OF HAPPINESS: ON BEAUTY IN OSCAR NIEMEYER'S ARCHITECTURE

The Promise of Happiness: *On Beauty in Oscar Niemeyers's Architecture* by Ludovico Centis and Daniele Pisani, follows an own discourse and ditto logic: **The essay comprises four parts:** 1. Beauty: A Means or an End [125-126]; 2. A morphological Interpretation of Niemeyer's Work [127-128]; 3. Recurrence of a Theme: From the MAM to the Mac 128-137; 4. From Abstraction to Empathy; or, of a Broken Promise [137-143].

The image, a black mirror [124], looks at the viewer as if it knows the riddles - no reason to be scared, but yet: not promising.

The Promise of Happiness hangs above Niemeyer's head as Damocles' sword.

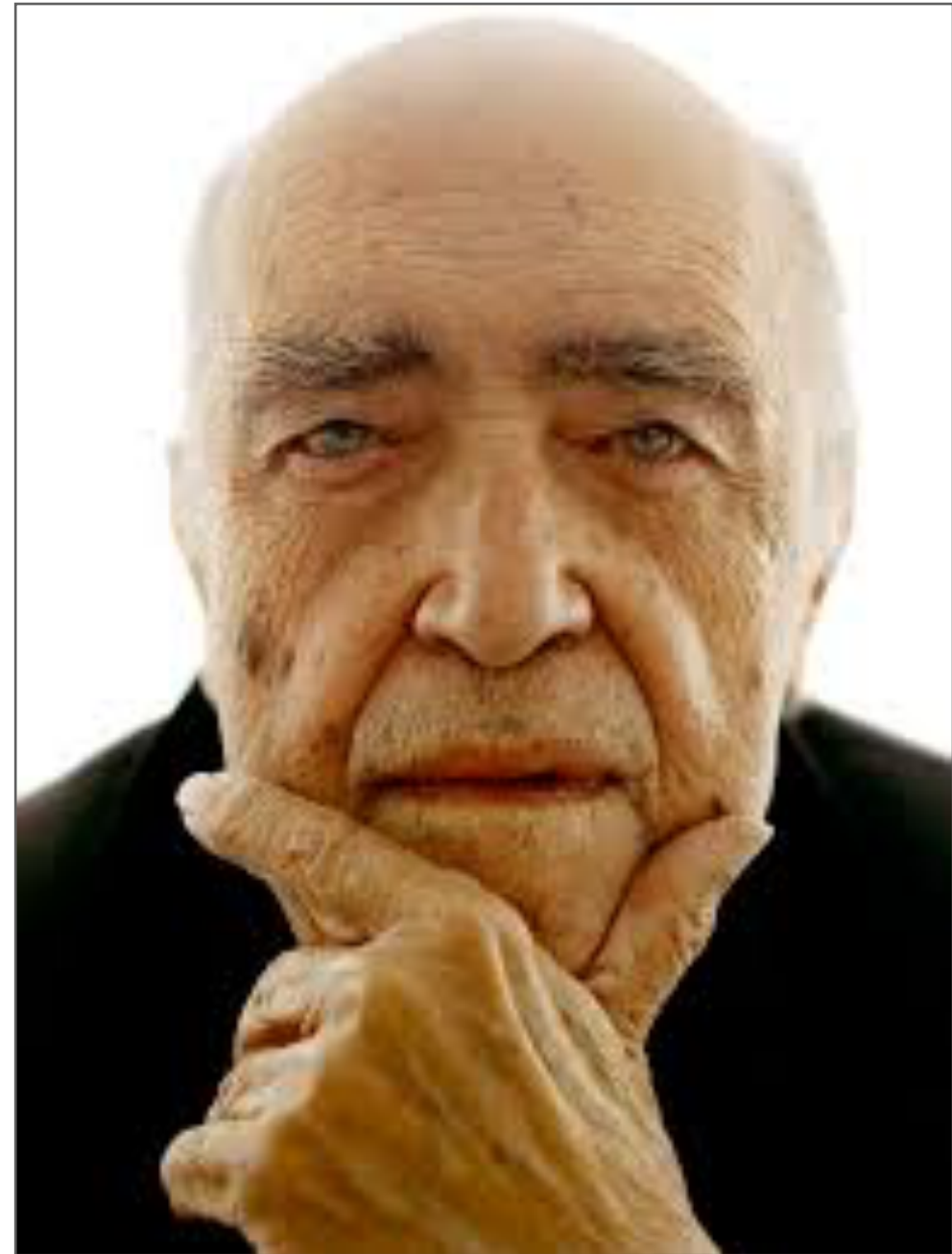
Writing about Oscar Niemeyer, is writing about a man who is colossal in love, talent, strength, commitment and age. That's what I taste between the lines in an impressive essay by Ludovico Centis and Daniele Pisani.

**Oscar** Ribeiro de Almeida **Niemeyer** Soares Filho (December 15, 1907 – December 6, 2012. The contact with the monuments of the old world had a lasting impact on Niemeyer's (architecture)... and allowing the space underneath to be free and integrated with **nature**. [[https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar\\_Niemeyer](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Niemeyer)]

**The first question of the authors is about Beauty: A means or and End?** They frame the question from a twofold perspective: being a communist and a tireless advocate of the need for a juster world, and at the same time he was an architect and a creator of a figurative universe of rare grace and richness.

Before commenting on the logic of the question: *Beauty: A means or and End?* I wish to answer explicitly the implicit question about the origin, similarity and difference of Beauty, the *raison d'être* of this edition of San Rocco.

The source of 'beauty' as well as 'goodness' and 'truth' is the human DNA with its innate intuitive desires; empathy towards life and the need to comprehend whatever we sense in our environment. **The doctrine of the 'empty mind' is nonsense.** Such a doctrine doesn't and can't explain the learning self-reflexive capacities that reach further than the instincts we share with animals.



His mouth looks as his sketch: Hymn to Nature Monument [136].



I love to be an animal with the genetics of the vegetative life, including its minerals and so on, but the capacity to self-reflection, just one word, is our mirror - for better and worse - in a life that belongs to Timeless Being, like it or not.

The human mind is creative: his deepest and highest faculty its limitless creative imagination evolving and stretching from an intuitive notion of Unity and even Oneness, itself the source of an infinite complexity of impressions and expressions, forms and ideas. Nature is the source for whatever exists and evolves since three and half billions of years. From there, is one-step to Heraclitus' acumen: The straight way and the crooked way are the same. That's in a nutshell human life, in its collective and individual appearance.

The next question is the similarity and/or difference between the aesthetic and ethical impulses. Both are important for Niemeyer and the authors.

**The aesthetic experience arises from the experience of 'being':** the striking amazement in the eyes of the newly born child. The aesthetic impulse is positive: YES – Existence – It's beautiful. Let's call it '*aesthetic consciousness*'.

**The ethical impulse arises from a negative experience:** A CRY - NO. This can't be true, while it is true; it happens. This is '*ethical consciousness*'.

I call it the 'zero' experience: what could exist and ought to be, doesn't. The **Ten Commandments fill since immemorial times the zero-gap but often to no avail.**

If the aesthetic and ethical impulses relate to each other as one to zero, they share a common origin while their experience shows a difference. Also, the ethical cry arises from the bottom of (the intuitive notion) 'goodness', called 'empathy', but with empty hands. This is why I made a similar remark in *Beauty in Non-Spaces: Ugliness is not only an aesthetic but also an ethical experience*. The same is true for the beautiful. How beauty is experienced, differs from perspective till perspective. That's the characteristic quality of a creative mind...it goes on and on, more in deep rest than in action: heart and mind - breathing together.

Niemeyer's dilemma of 'one to zero' is more fundamental than the question: A Means or an End with regard to Beauty as well as Justice. Both arise since Parmenides and Heraclitus from the same source: the all-embracing One. In Greek: to (H)EN.

Nevertheless, the differences between Means and End in aesthetics and ethics remain important. Form, Design, Style, Writing, Speaking and Mime are the aesthetic means 'par excellence'. Octavio Paz: "The real ideas of a poem are not

those that occur to the poet before he writes his poem, but rather those that appear in his work afterward, whether by design or by accident...Form has meaning; and, what is more, in the realm of art only form possesses meaning. Content stems from form, and not vice versa."<sup>27</sup>

When Paz writes that *Content stems from form*, he equals Noam Chomsky's linguistic distinction between the surface of a sentence and its deep structure: the semantic level.

The surface of a sentence is its grammatical form that 'reveals' and 'hides' the meaning [its deep structure] simultaneously.

Why simultaneously? A sentence is never unambiguous. Even when we assume that it is, the one who reads or hears the sentence: *Beauty: A Means or an End*, responds in various ways.

It follows from here that means determine – in aesthetics and ethics, e.g. in the aesthetic and ethics of politics, *the qualities* of its End; not the other way around. Never trust someone solely for its End or Purpose because its MEANS tell the real story. Beauty and Justice are present in the DNA of each human, but in some like Niemeyer extremely strong and in some practically absent. What architecture and city planning might be able to effectuate depends on Niemeyer, but even more on the system above and around him. That system around Niemeyer belongs to extreme difficult ones: selfish elites,

ingrained colonial attitudes and American capitalism & imperialism. Capitalism entered Middle- and South America through the door of the Monroe-doctrine [1823], superseding the former colonization practices. Here lies the core of the conflict that no one can solve through only aesthetics of (PURE) Beauty, although Niemeyer grasped and experienced Beauty via the Sublime as the supra-dimension of Beauty. His struggle for justice (the zero order) and his endeavor to create absolute Beauty are deeply united, but different in scale and reach of power.

**Niemeyer's** architecture allows 'the space underneath to be free and integrated **with nature**' [11]. **This isn't only aesthetics; this is ethical too: the amalgamation of architecture, life and nature.**

*Beauty: Means or an End?* The logic of the excluded third might be the logic of the authors, but it is not the logic of Niemeyer: "More important than architecture is life itself, and friends; this is an unjust world that we must transform". 126 From here follows an oscillation between two incompatible positions. Sometimes beauty was the solution, while at other times the architect felt this solution was elusive or illusory.' [126] That's a realistic conclusion. But incompatibility is not the same as 'either-or': "Once he no longer believed in the revolutionary qualities of beauty, he no



longer believed in architecture". That conclusion is premature.

Niemeyer is consistent in his attitude towards One and Zero, and so are Ludovico Centis and Daniele Pisani in their use of 'either-or'.

#### Chapter 4. From Abstraction to Empathy; or, of a Broken Promise.

"While the MAM terrifies, the MAC winks – abstraction versus empathy", resp. Museum of Modern Art, Caracas 1954 – Museum of Contemporary Art, Niterói 1991

The authors write respectfully about the Man and his work, meanwhile confronting the reader with an interesting question: "We are satisfied if it is now possible to discern a small moral in this story. We will leave it to you to decide if the young Niemeyer was mistaken in believing that the world's magnificent and progressive destiny could be realized through architecture's contribution (that beauty, in short, offered a promise of happiness that could actually have been kept)", to conclude that after the failure of this perspective "having been extraordinary in the first decades of his career, later became a tedious reworking of shallow formulas in an increasingly predictable rejection of predictable solutions." [142].

The authors' evaluation of the architectural quality of Niemeyer's oeuvre over more than a lifetime, may be right or not. That's not the point I am able to make or want to make.

**'Beauty', as the alpha and omega of this essay like in all contributions, begins to oscillate, as soon as we introduce the 'Sublime' as its superlative 'or' as its opposite pole like in Greek tragedies.** I write 'or' in italics, because this time it refers not to 'the excluded third, but functions as 'and', capable to embrace the opposites.

'Beauty' might negate or reject *The Alchemical Beauty of the Banal* by 2A+P/A, while 'Sublime' embraces its 'Design' as a joyful deconstruction of an infinite amount of identical consumer goods. The Sublime is a Janus head! [97]

My contribution to the *Alchemy of philosophy* was an educational TV-course on systematic philosophy in fourteen chapters, entitled: *Analyse-Decondition*. 28 Aesthetics and ethics preceded social and political philosophy.

We announced Analyze-Decondition on Dutch TV in a Japanese bath with three women, three children and two men, all nude. <sup>29</sup>

Ancient Greek culture didn't like the notion of 'infinity' – it was a barbaric notion, lacking 'form' and 'border'.

Christianity on the contrary, embraces 'infinity' as the highest stage of being and experience because God is infinite while

humans are 'finite' and 'infinite' i.e. the soul. The Sublime as the superlative expression of BEAUTY dominates the Christian imagination until the 18th century, when the 'Sublime' again transforms into the exact opposite.

Stockhausen's statement about 9/11: *the greatest work of art*, refers to the destructive side of the Sublime.

"While the MAM terrifies, the MAC winks – abstraction versus empathy", respectively Museum of Modern Art, Caracas 1954 – Museum of Contemporary Art, Niterói 1991

What would happen to the evaluation of Niemeyer's oeuvre, if we introduce the notion of the Sublime? The Amazonas is beyond imagination. Brazil evokes the Sublime but, in both directions, like in Greek culture. *Is abstraction versus empathy the right term?* Doesn't Oscar Niemeyer belong more to the Sublime than to Pure Beauty?

The authors' question "whether the young Niemeyer was mistaken in believing that the world's magnificent and progressive destiny could be realized through architecture's contribution (that beauty, in short, offered a promise of happiness that could actually have been kept", can now be answered.

My answer: Yes, of course. The promise of contributing to happiness is always there, but extremely difficult within a

system of collective indifference and systematic injustice.

Is Martin Luther King wrong because he got killed?

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## ONTOLOGICAL PLANS: THE PURE BEAUTY OF ARCHITECTURE

To be able to write about Pure Beauty and architecture, Eric Lapierre introduces a threefold distinction: Drawing/Project, Analogical Plans and Ontological Plans. The three levels link 'reality and the ideal', thus expressing the pure beauty of the architecture of today's ordinary condition'. [96].

Mies van der Rohe's brickhouse and Borromini's Sant'Ivo alle Sapienza "share the fact that they are interesting as much for their plans as for their built reality (or in the case of the brick house, what the latter would have been, had the project actually been built). These floor plans have a genuine ontological dimension of their own...they themselves are an end, not just a means: they represent nothing but themselves, and this is their prime and essential *raison d'être*..." [Idem 11], like a dream that is more important to have imagined than to have actually realized."

Means and end evolve intrinsically. [95] Either – Or is not the case!



Lapierre attributes to 'analogical plans' not only an intrinsic meaning, the indicator of its self-sufficiency, but also a graphical artefact, its symbolic value and reference. His examples: the plan of a house of Dogon people (Mali) that represents the drawing of a human being, or the Latin cross of Christian churches with its shape of the instrument of Christ's martyrdom. [90]

But the drawing as idea has a special beauty in relation to buildings: *It distances the idea of the object from the object itself.* [88]. This explains Lapierre's admiration for Boullée and Piranesi. There is no greater distance possible between idea and reality than in the statement of Piranesi: 'I need great ideas, and I think if I would get the assignment to design a new universe, I would be crazy enough to start working on it'. Crazy and Architecture as twins.

Lapierre's ontological plans are a sign at the wall about the estrangement between architecture and human habitat. His distinctions, although clarifying, reveal a sense of space that is impersonal like Newton's Absolute Space.

The difference between Lapierre's analogical and ontological plans might be best explained with the Oikéma temple of Claude Leloux at the end of the 18th century. The temple was designed in the shape of a phallus with testicles, "dedicated to the lust of the city's male youths, who, after having

indulged in licentious pleasures, were supposed to concede themselves to the enduring bonds of marriage". [92]

*From the sexual analogy of the Oikéma temple to the objectivity of Modernity, is not a 'historical' process along a straight Newtonian time-line.*

What it shows is the transformation of a vertical dualism rooted in Christian orthodoxy, its sex-and-sin tradition visible in Carnival, sado-masochism and monogamy.

**Christianity's belief in a supernatural everlasting order made it possible to project and 'design' a similar order via Absolute Space and Absolute Time.** Christian/Cartesian mind-body dualism manifests itself via the estrangement between Space and habitat.

The 'objectivity' of Lapierre's *ontological plans* is the 'objectivity' of neutral Space and Time and, as purely abstract ideas, beautiful! But the concrete space of the Dogon in Mali tells another story as we have experienced by living with them in Kundo Ando.<sup>30</sup> The animist worldview of the Dogon implies an on-going experience between the living dead, the yet to be born, and the living-living ones. Space-time for the Dogon is a continuum in the here-and-now. *Whatever they build is part of a greater space, visible and invisible.* Their 'living space-time' has nothing in common with Lapierre's

distinctions between Drawing/Project, Analogical Plans and Ontological Plans, because they *are one and the same*.

Lapierre's distinctions are useful as a methodological tool in Academies of Architecture to initiate the actual design process. The 'tool' presupposes an abstract philosophy of Space and Time, in which architecture exists as idea, invention and construction.

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I like to believe that Piranesi's *Carceri d'invenzione* are inspired by Pascal's thought: *the infinity of space frightens me*. Eric Lapierre also focuses on Space in its pure appearance – not like a BOX in which something exists, but Space in its own right.

However, **there is a world of difference between Newton's Space-Time, still the dominant paradigm of many architects and urban designers, and the Space-Time paradigm of David Bohm in *Wholeness and its Implicate Order*.**

Quantum physician Bohm uses the metaphor of a streaming river to explain **what space-time looks like in quantum physics**: whatever one sees at the surface of the river is a permanent transformation of patterns of ripples, waves, etc., which clearly don't have an independent existence. **Bohm transforms the abstract Newtonian space and time into an**

**unlimited Space & Simultaneity, closer to Mondrian's Boogie-Woogie or the animist worldview of the Dogon than to a three-dimensional space where time [rhythm, light, movement] has to be added as the fourth dimension.**<sup>30</sup>

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### *Superstudio*

The question of Rem Koolhaas' to the architects of Superstudio in the Temple of Minerva, Assisi, July 21, 2017 at 10 pm, revealed the abyss between him and Superstudio.

Not knowing what to think of their non-pragmatic answers to the usual riddles of architectural practices, Koolhaas asked: what did you want to achieve? What was your alternative? Gian-Piero Frassinelli made a rejecting gesture, not willing to answer; the eyes of Toraldo di Francia looked at the ceiling with an expression: *what kind of question is that?* Adolfo Natalini did what was expected. The abyss remained deep. There was insufficient common ground.

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*We have to face a similar abyss if we compare:*

SCAMOZZI IS ALMOST ALRIGHT by Kersten Geers and ON BODY BUILDING by Anneke Abhelakh and Pascal Flammer.

However, here is the difference 400 years, and two Continents. Kersten Geers is down to earth and clear: Architect's communications about their own work are notoriously deceptive, and Palladio's Four Books, perhaps the first monograph, are no exception. No site, only principles, architecture reduced to its simplest incarnation. [113] She calls the Four Books: *a posteriori idealization*, while she compliments Scamozzi, because "his treatise The Idea of a Universal Architecture (1615) represents his projects within their actual contexts." [115]

The Catholic Church, under stress by the Reformation, continues to preach the importance of a supernatural Neo-Platonist order. What Geers writes about Scamozzi fits this trend: "Lacking explosive talent but methodically to a fault, Scamozzi devised solutions that visualized the clash between an ideal plan and the contingencies of the site...Scamozzi almost alright.

ON BODY BUILDING is the antipode of idealizations and ideal plans. A difference in space-time of four centuries and

two continents, and Merleau-Ponty's philosophy *that the body inhabits space rather than just being in it*, is enough to personalize architecture by giving the client all the honor. The authors chose the architecture of John Lautner, a student of Frank Lloyd Wright, because they wanted to reflect upon what they admired in it.

"In Lautner's works from the 1950s, '60s and '70s, we see a shift away from our understanding of European architecture, which we would describe as anti-body, anti-lust and rational, in the sense that its beauty is first and foremost perceived via the brain." Lautner "proposes a holistic response to each client" ...not only in terms of his budget, "but rather private space in terms of his direct relationship to the sun, moon and stars, the trees, stones and terrain" ..." walking through these houses is like walking through a kind of animated or hyperreal world." [109]

The authors conclusion: "his is an architecture that not only is pleasing to the brain, but also incorporates physical and emotional responses to our own body in order to offer an answer to the most basic questions of architecture." [111]

The authors choose the words 'body-mind' and speak of a holistic approach, while their presentation remains caught in



a body-mind dualism, and a highly personalized space.

Wholeness implies more than that.

But if we compare the endeavor by Anneke Abhelakh and Pascal Flammer to develop and articulate a potential theory of beauty in architecture [108] we are closer to The Brief Garden of Bevis Bawa in Sri Lanka than to Eric Lapierre's ontological plans.

Reflect about the sentence: "His work does not espouse an idea or concept of walking, but it is about walking." [109] 'About walking' implies the oneness of space-time, a precious insight for urban planning. **Here begins the philosophy of architecture and landscape for the 21st century, closer to the Dogon and the Japanese than to Barrow and Newton.**

But...are we also closer to Oscar Niemeyer's endeavor "allowing the space underneath to be free and integrated with nature"?

**Yes, at first sight; No, in the sense of radical privatization. Niemeyer's ambition was 'cosmic', 'ecological' and 'public'! Nature and Justice belong to every human being. However, this 'Yes and No' is no formal contradiction.**

**Once more Anneke Abhelakh and Pascal Flammer: Lautner in Los Angeles seems less dogmatic and rooted than European architecture and therefore more liberated, free from conventions and civic codes, reveling in the freedom to invent without seeming to base this creativity on any previous tradition. [108]**

The remark makes sense because it manifests itself in many ways in California. Hollywood is never far away. It is not only the freedom to invent, but also the freedom to spend.

Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) introduced the notion **conspicuous consumption** of the very rich, the desire that often plays a role in the design of villas for the very rich.

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SCHÖNHEIT! SCHÖNHEIT! BEAUTY WITHOUT TASTE  
Sussy Hobiger Feichtner Irénée Scalbert

*Another comparison*

SCHÖNHEIT! SCHÖNHEIT!

Sissy Hobiger Feichter: "Adolf Loos (1870-1933) had no recipe or manual that encapsulated his idea of beauty, nor did he follow any given set of rules...He believed that his era's

virtue was that it seemed incapable of proposing a new ornamental language;

it was finally time for an age without ornament [italic fe].

Loos saw beauty in a variety of architectural aspects – mood, atmosphere, authenticity – but for him, functionality was of utmost importance, and decoration and ornament lacked this entirely. He consequently detested it deeply.” [71]

Hobiger Feichter describes in detail the painful debates about Loos’ first project, a commercial building on Michaelerplatz in 1911. It echoes the debates in Milan hundred years earlier: BEAUTY BY COMMITTEE by Fabrizio’s Gallanti [13].

The ‘solution’ in Milan was the neoclassical rationality, a notion of “beauty”, dear to Stendhal, but never mentioned explicitly [18], this in contrast to Vienna: “There had been a great deal of discussion about the building’s undecorated façade, and this had driven Loos from the city for a break.” [72]

Different elites in both cities between 1810 and 1910 might explain the difference in context on a deeper level. The Napoleonic era wasn’t a break with Milan’s tradition, while Vienna in 1910 ‘burned’ as an athanor of ideas and experiments, source of a new sensitivity in visual arts and psychology; an outburst of ideas, and clash between tradition and modernity. WW, I would follow soon.

**Who could imagine that this decade would see and experience the dissolution of the empires Russia, Germany and Austria? Impossible, and yet, it happened.**

Architectural changes rarely fall out of heaven, rather out of hell and purgatory. Adolf Loos understood and appreciated his time, while understanding and appreciating its past. His space-time frame was inclusive: a free mind.

Underneath was something else going on. The tensions between so-called ‘past and future’, with other word: the here-and-now in terms of feudalism, capitalism and socialism, Christianity and secularism, classicism and romanticism, class struggles and nationalisms, became more and more intense, during the Belle Époque.

**Writing these sentences about 1910, feels as if we are writing about 2010-20.** “At the end of his creative life, Loos would remark: “Aus dreissigjährigem Kampf bin ich als Sieger hervorgegangen. Ich habe die Menschheit vom überflüssigen Ornament befreit. Ornament was einmal das Epitheton für ‘schön’. Heute ist es dank meiner Lebensarbeit ein Epitheton für ‘minderwertig.’”

Adolf Loos died August 23, 1933; Adolf Hitler won the elections March 5, 1933. Another kind of ‘ornament’ and ‘symbolism’ took possession of the collective mind.

## BEAUTY WITHOUT TASTE

Irénée Scalpert: Human life unfolds in endless cycles of soiling and cleaning, but she herself has no interest in the small changes of life, quoting Goethe: “one can only write well about the thing one loves”. So, she did, and chose: **Stansted Airport** challenged all the rules of airport terminal design. ... **Stansted Airport** is a rational response to the requirements of air travel. ... Norman Foster.

Her detailed description of the treatment of passengers is more than cynical; it is hilarious. “To insult, one must add a few minor injuries. At any time, one or two balloons are always caught under the roof, irretrievable until deflated, when they descend of their own accord. In the portes cochères on either side of the terminal, rust shows on the steel diagrids of the domes. But Foster’s shed is proving remarkable resilient to the corrosion of everyday life.

Wallowing inside the MAG’s [Manchester Airports Group] mucus, I can still survey the full extent of the roof, its beauty made purer and more affecting by the foul processes playing out beneath it.” I can still survey the full extent of the roof... 146-7]

Irénée Scalbert is in love with the LIGHT of Stansted: “I have seen the terminal at dawn, when the sun strikes the booms horizontally from one end of the shed to the other, I have seen

it at most times of the day, actually, with the sun dappling the sides of the domes or, more rarely, casting pools of light on the floor... [153]

“Fundamentally at odds with the picturesque, Stansted’s beauty is abstract, logical and impersonal...Stansted...has its roots in classicism...Beauty in the Stansted terminal depends less on the blunt axioms of classicism than it does on making things well: good design in the office, skilful craft in the workshop, precision manufacturing in the factory, exacting construction on the building site. [154] Scalbert raises difficult questions but the right ones: “As always, life forces itself into the work and imposes pragmatism upon all aspects of design, including its aesthetic. ...More than a few of my learned friends see nothing in Stansted but a pandemonium of commercial deals and passport security gates. I, however, look up in amazement at the forbearance of its great roof. [155]

Her defense of beauty in architecture is unambiguously: San Rocco is right to press the case of beauty; in architecture, beauty must be a project. Ugly architecture is a contradiction in terms. [155] Pity enough, the last sentence isn’t true. A circular definition sounds nice but convinces only those who already are convinced.



Talking in 2008 with Robert Venturi in Venice about the Grand Canal and Main Street, USA, implying that both begin to look ‘almost alike’, he didn’t respond to her ironic question, implying “the need for a distinct approach in each context.”

She was disappointed: a theory accepting different standards in different situations is not a proper theory at all.” [155] This statement is true because without a minimal consistency, a theory becomes self-contradictory. If architects defend it anyway, they adopt the Market as highest value, and cut the umbilical cord between life and its intuitive values. That’s what actually happens in our times.

Irénée Scalbert occurs to reach a similar conclusion when she compares her dear Stansted roof with some rare individuals, e.g., Anne Frank and Nelson Mandela, whose souls are unaffected by the conflicts of life, and therefore beautiful and pure. [156]

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## A BUILDING AND AN IMAGE: THE TAKIYEH DOWLAT

Golnar Abbasi and Mobasher Niqui

No comment needed: Kamal-ol-Molk, Takiyeh Dowlat, 1892, presents and represents more than an idea [88]. It evokes the virtual unlimited Space & Simultaneity of both ancient and

actual holistic worldviews, in contrast to SANTA MARIA DEI MIRACOLI in VENICE, the essay of Paul Carpi.

Paoli Carpi himself is critical: “...the church’s design is a real brain-teaser. In fact, its space is so complexly articulated that it is even difficult simply to identify the different elements of which it is composed.” [3.17] Also here, no comment needed.

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Having read and commented all the essays, I apologize for the few words on The Alchemical Beauty of the Banal by 2A+P/A.

In retrospect, I dedicate the first two sentences of Lecture 11 on Aesthetics in *Analyze-Decondition, a course on systematic philosophy*, to 2A+P/A, while standing in jacket surrounded by cows in the meadow next to the farm [Casa Piranesi]: <sup>31</sup>

“When one tries to look for about half an hour at a jacket in a meadow, and to analyze one’s own reactions, then you have a chance to answer the questions that are dealt with in this chapter. This morning-coat (jacket) in a meadow presents all the problems that have to do with an aesthetic judgment, i.e. a judgment concerning beauty and art.”

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Thanks to the Editorial of SAN ROCCO that formulated such an inspiring title, seducing Authors and Readers alike to start a serious dialogue. The chance to comment on the Idea of Architecture and PURE BEAUTY, is an event in itself.

A transformation of the 'logic' and 'mode of perception' – in our (post-modern) mind and feelings, means a paradigm shift away from Newtonian Space-Time towards an Ecological Space-Time: *Nature becoming again a 'chador' for all forms of life, because: Nature likes to hide itself* (Heraclitus).

Fons Elders

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## SAN ROCCO – PURE BEAUTY 13 - SPRING 2017

15 Editorial 5

16 Connie Van Pelt, Pierre Klossowski and the Two-Faced Goddess, in *Mythological Europe Revisited, Humanism and the Third Millennium III*, Fons Elders (ed.), VUBUniversityPRESS, Brussels 2000, 105.

17 Editorial 3

18 Sir Isaac Newton, *PRINCIPIA Vol.I The Motion of Bodies*. Motte's Translation Revised by Cajoru, University California Press, Berkeley 1962, 6

19 In 1781, Kant declared that Baumgarten's aesthetics could never contain objective rules, laws, or principles of natural or artistic beauty. The Germans are the only people who presently (1781) have come to use the word aesthetic[s] to designate what others call the critique of taste. They are doing so on the basis of a false hope conceived by that superb analyst Baumgarten. He hoped to bring our critical judging of the beautiful under rational principles, and to raise the rules for such judging to the level of a lawful science. Yet that endeavor is futile. For, as far as their principal sources are concerned, those supposed rules or criteria are merely empirical. Hence, they can never serve as determinate a priori laws to which our judgment of taste must conform. It is,

rather, our judgment of taste which constitutes the proper test for the correctness of those rules or criteria.

20 Editorial 6

21 <http://www.fonselders.eu/product/philosophers-in-debate/ayer-naess>

22 Hanne Obbink, *Utrechts Universiteitsblad* 29-10-1992

23 [www.fonselders.eu/blog/documents/books/michel](http://www.fonselders.eu/blog/documents/books/michel) foucault

24 [www.fonselders.eu/blog/documents/books/Islam](http://www.fonselders.eu/blog/documents/books/Islam) Unknown/Anouar Majid 110

25 <http://www.fonselders.eu/haiku/>

26 <http://www.fonselders.eu/walks/the-tao-of-arne-naess/01>

27 Octavio Paz, *Alternating Current*, The Viking Press, New York, 1973, 6

28 <http://www.fonselders.eu/analyze-decondition>

29 <http://www.fonselders.eu/analyseer-deconditioneer-commercial>

30 [www.fonselders.eu/projects/.../a-journey-to-the-dogon-in-mali/](http://www.fonselders.eu/projects/.../a-journey-to-the-dogon-in-mali/)

31 <http://www.fonselders.eu/projects/architecture/huize-piranesi/>

Postscript: Academia.Edu comprises SAN ROCCO – PURE BEAUTY 13

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Prospettiva Vierwindenhuis



# Part 3

THE GENESIS of the HOUSE  
of the FOUR WINDS

Experimental housing project in  
Amsterdam

Les Turbulences, FRAC Orléans

On the cover of the May 1973 issue of the magazine Casabella is a group photo of 31 architects of the newly founded group Global Tools.

“Among the members of this new group, one finds all the representatives of the various movements which made up the radical architecture avant-garde of the sixties and the early seventies. Besides Archizoom, UFO and Ziggurat, there were five architects from Superstudio, including the founder, A. Natalini, and the youngest member, the architect G.P. Frassinelli.”<sup>32</sup>

May 1973 was the third month of a six-month journey with my family, including my sons Adam (7), Job (9), and David (11), in a second-hand British Ford Transit. After travelling six weeks through the Sahara, we were on our way to Lake Manasbal in Kashmir, at the foot of the Himalayas, via Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

The Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape allowed me some time off. The sky was our limit; our dream of another society, and sources of inspiration from non-Western cultures.<sup>33</sup>

In an interview, Michel Foucault mentioned the possible effects of psychedelic drugs: “In actual fact, what is the experience of drugs if not this: to erase limits, to reject divisions, to leave aside all prohibitions, and then ask oneself

the question, what has become of knowledge? Do we then know something altogether different...?”.<sup>34</sup>

1976-1977

This time we travelled with a group of twenty people, including five boys and our daughter of two years, to the Land of the Dogon in Mali.

Dutch architects like Herman de Haan and Aldo van Eyck had raised my interest in the Dogon cosmic and architectural culture, and not in vain.

The Dogon culture was elevating in spite of difficult life conditions and meagre resources.

What struck me the most were the relations between women, between men, between women and men, and between adults and young children. Very early on, the adults teach the youngsters’ patience and wisdom, to share and to give. Why? When William Magelhaes, from Brasilia, asked our guide, Dolo Asegrama, how we could recognize an animist, Dolo answered: **An animist is a human being, like everyone else, but you can recognize the animist by a willingness to offer.**

Would we Westerners have given a similar answer to the question of identity? *Mentioning that we all share one human nature, before naming the cultural differences?*

Those six weeks inspired me to devise an environment with similar spatial and social relations as I had observed in Kundo

Ando and in the house of Mamadou Traore, in Mopti: each person their own room, a room for the family, and a courtyard and halls for the larger community. The Dogon proved to be the seed for the HOUSE of the FOUR WINDS.<sup>35</sup> How to reconcile the need for an individual lifestyle and privacy for the family with a network of social contacts? How to evoke, in the heart of the city, a sense of nature and an orientation toward the cosmos? How to symbolize the four cosmic elements - Air, Water, Fire, Earth? These questions required a poetic and sensitive designer for whom a building is more than X cubic meters. They required a five-dimensional vision.

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## BETWEEN DREAM and DEED

*Résumé of a talk with Fons Elders, by Rainer Bullhorst*

“Any housing plan which deviates from the established patterns is, certainly in the Netherlands, difficult and problematic, because every housing plan, especially in the social sector, has to undergo the test of government norms and regulations.”<sup>36</sup>

While Elders’ goals are already known, he begins to reveal his motives: the need for new, different forms of living set in an urban cultural milieu; answering the need for more, smaller households; calling a halt to the unlimited over-construction of the country.

Beauty embodies an important source of inspiration, stemming from the conviction that it can influence life positively. Complexity of space and building allow the inhabitants to trust their surroundings. Organic patterns of plants, on the one hand, and the pure mental source of the geometric tradition, on the other, are the fundamental pillars of the experience of beauty. The connection between the symbolism of numbers, the golden mean or laws of proportion, for example, and organic structures, give back to architecture its double polarity.

Another incentive to develop the plans for the House of the Four Winds lies in the high degree of conviction and the internal certainty about achieving quality, aided by the elementary, self-evident and especially important value of patience.

Thanks to this virtue, individual and collective, the Great Wall of China was built. Architecture would greatly benefit from this phenomenon.



The realization of unorthodox projects requires an adequate organization. In the first place, it needed a foundation whose most important task was the realization of the project.

At a later stage, an association of future owners could profit from the experience of the foundation in bringing the plans to fruition. The procedure which was followed was realistic: first develop goals and architectural conception, develop a concept from a philosophy and not from the group, and then let the group, in this case the association, react. In addition, it is important to stick to the 'red line' and ensure that the participants don't get bogged down in practical problems.

The Foundation was created in 1979. In 1981, after it had brought the plan to maturity and produced the design, the association could be established. The social-political system, external forces and factors can be brought under a common denominator with five aspects. These are:

- The cultural influences in the Netherlands, both positive and negative.
- The role of the institutional and government machinery.
- The influence and power of the official world via corporations, housing associations and project developers.

- The interests of the industry and building contractors as well as potential sponsors.
- The role of chance. One can only say something about this if it has crossed one's path. The originator of the plan doesn't believe in it.

*R. Bullhorst*

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## SUPERSTUDIO: A RADICAL AVANT-GARDE

*by Umberto Barbieri*

"The development of Superstudio is aimed at the construction of a stricter design methodology, which leans on architectural tradition but forces it at the same time. The straightforward logic of technique and functionality is clearly rejected and a new connection is constructed between type, image and metaphor: a plethora of different 'potential' relationships between present, past and future.

"This interaction between architectonic research, designs and metaphoric expression and representation are characteristic of the work of Superstudio in the seventies. Frassinelli, with his proposal *Da Le Dodici Città Ideali – Premonizioni della Parusia Urbanistica*, offers the example par excellence of this intellectual practice where textual inventions and image processing play a central role." <sup>37</sup>

Visiting a Superstudio exhibition in Florence in 1981, my son David asked my attention for a housing project in Val d'Elsa, designed by Gian-Piero Frassinelli. When seeing it, I thought: This architect might be able to draw what's in my head. We went to the reception; asked for his address and phone number; called the studio, and got an appointment for the next morning. There we were, warmly received by his trainee, Michele Sae, who asked Gian-Piero to listen to us... That's how it happened.

It was the beginning of a new phase. The board of the Foundation Sphere House, and its designer, architect Bert van Hulst, would change its name to "Foundation House of the Four Winds". But the triad 'cosmology, social behavior and architecture' continued. Because the design by van Hulst also pursued a cosmology, inspired by his anthroposophical vision.<sup>38</sup>

In *Illustrative Relation*, Gian-Piero Frassinelli writes:

"We will take possession of the site on a sunny day. We will indicate on the ground the direction of our shadow when it is shortest. With this very old rite, the construction will begin. Having chosen the direction, we must determine the dimensions; for this we take as a parameter our loneliness, which is sometimes small as a millet seed and at other times, so large that the universe cannot contain it. It is measured in

our culture by about four steps by four... The module of the structure chosen is 4 m x 4 m. These columns rise to various heights forming the spider's web upon which our house will be woven, and the spider's web will be oriented towards the pole star."<sup>39</sup>

Piero Frassinelli revised his original design six times, starting from the summer of 1982, when he drew the first one. The changes were the consequence of the wishes of the future inhabitants; criticism from city civil servants; financial problems and last, but not least, a growing insight into how the original program could be optimally reconciled with the urban environment. In spite of the fact that Plan VI is much less expensive than plan III, all the original design choices have been maintained. However, in Plan VI, bearing walls of poured concrete will take the place of the original column structure, which had been desirable because of the flexibility it lent to the building. This change was prompted by financial necessity.

The House of the Four Winds in its sixth version is a mature plan: design, construction and various functions have grown simultaneously. But orientation, light and movement – the time factor in architecture – can be shown to full advantage only when the terraces and roofs are being used; when people are dining in the West Hall as passers-by far above them are

on their way to or from their home; when the neighbors of the House of the Four Winds stroll through the courtyard to walk along the banks of the canal in the evening; when the cafe becomes a meeting place for the whole neighborhoods; when the courtyard is bustling on a Saturday with an art fair.

Only daily life can show the real beauty of the House of the Four Winds.

E. Van Thijn, Mayor of Amsterdam, wrote in the preface to the brochure: “The building is oriented with its four corners and communal halls towards the north-south and the east-west axes. It contributes herewith to the symbolism of East Church situated at the entrance to the peninsula Wittenburg. The recently restored East Church belongs, with South Church, West Church and North Church, to the old treasured monuments of Amsterdam; together, for hundreds of years, they symbolize the openness of the city to all the four winds.”<sup>40</sup>

Even when Gian-Piero Frassinelli didn't believe anymore that his design would ever see the light, he continued the cooperation, saying: “the production process is more interesting than the plan itself”.

Writing the story, *The Philosopher's Walk*, he left some blanks for me to fill in. Here I only quote the last sentences, not being sure exactly who wrote what: “He thought about the boy's question: ‘Am I dreaming or can I believe my eyes?’ and he smiled, for he understood that the only illusion is time. The philosopher decided to be on his way.”<sup>41</sup>

*G Piero Frassinelli, Florence, 3 March - Fons Elders, Amsterdam, 17 March 1985.*

Our secret: total trust, working together without even a contract.

1985-1989/90

There followed four years during which project developers and building companies worked at the project, withdrawing one after the other. The support by developer Klaas de Ruiter, the De Nijs Company, alderman Schaefer, Hedy d'Ancona, Joop ten Velden, members of the Association like David Elders, Olaf Hoonhout, John de Weijer and all the names at the back of the drawing of the House of the Four Winds, testify to a collective aspiration to realize something special. The rituals at the beginning and the festivities after completion are unforgettable events for the participants and their children.

[www.vierwindenhuis.nl](http://www.vierwindenhuis.nl) - [www.fonselders.eu/projects/architecture](http://www.fonselders.eu/projects/architecture)

Fons Elders

La Source, St. Jean de Valérisle, Gard, France - spring 2017



House of the Four Winds

32 Umberto Barbieri, April 1985

33 [www.fonselders.eu/projects/travels](http://www.fonselders.eu/projects/travels).

34 Michel Foucault, Freedom and Knowledge – interview by Fons Elders; tr. Lionel Claris; Introduction by Lynne Huffer. Elders Special Productions BV, Amsterdam, 2013 – cf. 2/sales.

35 A travel to the Land of the Dogon: cf. 2/travels/Africa/Dogon

36 Right from the beginning, we rejected the usual regulations. Eventually we obtained an official exemption from these regulations, except those for fire and power.

37 G.P.Frassinelli, Le Dodici Citta Ideali, Casabella 361, 1972.

38 Cf. the model Sphere House (metal).

39 G.P.Frassinelli - Superstudio, a publication of the Foundation Sphere.

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G.P.Frassinelli





[click and go back](#)

Prospettiva Vierwindenhuis



# Part 4

## IRAN and PARADISE are still twins

*April 25 - May 23, 2017*

*Dear family and friends,*

*This letter is my thanks for your presence, whether or not at a distance, at the festivity of July 23-24, 2016. That weekend you were told that we prepared a travel to Iran.*

*One of my dear memories of Iran is the evening, night and day, not far from the road to Mashhad and Herât, in the spring of 1973.*



Dear family and friends,

This letter is my thanks for your presence, whether or not at a distance, at the festivity of July 23-24, 2016. That weekend you were told that we prepared a travel to Iran.

One of my dear memories of Iran is the evening, night and day, not far from the road to Mashhad and Herât, in the spring of 1973.

It was the year in which we travelled during six months in a second-hand British Ford-transit: the first two months through North-Africa and the Sahara, and from there to Asia, crossing Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India on our way to Lake Manasbal at the foot of the Himalaya in Kashmir, administered by India. That evening, some men in a remote cafe invited Alma, David, Job, Adam and me. They poured tea, made music and sang. We smoked together a joint of a rare kind of hashish, while they were singing: “we shall bring you until the gate of paradise but you yourself have to enter.”

[click and go](#)



The next morning Adam (7), Job (9) and David (11) got a free ride with their truck to return after a few hours. There was no hair in my beard or on my head that doubted their safe return.

After 44 years we return to that Iran. I may be cursed, if it isn't true: Iran and Paradise are still twins. Not only gardens, mosques, calligraphic texts, Sufi poets like Omar Khayyam, Sa'di, Rumi, Hafez and Attar, religious feasts, music and Sufi-congregations - often suspect in the eyes of ulema, testify of that relationship, but the hearts and minds of countless Iranians. The poor more than the rich.

The first two weeks I didn't know whether I could trust my eyes or not. This sentence you have to interpret literally in contrast to the verses of the Koran that enclose several layers, like all 'holy' books.

Your eyes are honest, Mohammed Jamshidi, our guide, said. He brought us to the Qashqaei nomads, among whom he grew up as a child. The nomad way of life is exceptionally tough, made so especially by the continuous threat of drought. There are one million nomads in the south of Iran. Two days before our arrival his family installed a large tent, while another family with hundreds of goats continued its tour another three 24 hours' day before settling down. Jamshidi knows everyone of both families by name. Saying

goodbye to the father of a family showing their carpets and offering tea and sweets, I felt a little burdened. Because right from the beginning, it was clear that we didn't want to buy anything, whatsoever.

Mohammad: *No, it was good; your eyes are honest, and people see that. The eyes tell the story of the heart.*

From that moment on, I dared to trust the eyes of men and women, and those of myself. I learned to look straight into their eyes, to discover that they allowed me to do so. Women even more than men.

It is a wonderful experience to SEE how women, of course not all, look at you; and accept and understand that you look back with a glance of respect and appreciation. Actually, I have to use the word 'love', for that It is! The eyes tell the story of the heart, like the poetry of Hafez Shirâzi recites the triad: Love, Lover and the Beloved One. Hafez is still alive; he never died in the heart of millions of Iranians.

The string between heart and mind opens the gate of paradise. Therefore, the men in the cafe were singing: "we bring you until the gate of paradise but you yourself have to enter." The Beloved One lives in the garden with flowers, trees and birds, but also in the cafe and in the wine.

Wine in Muslim countries without a drop of alcohol like in Iran, is nevertheless the metaphor for God and God is Everywhere.



[click and go](#)

*Friday morning, May 19, 2017*

Shahram Pazouki, Miryam his wife and Ameneh, who is the assistant of dr. Pazouki, collect Colette and me. We exchanged letters before our travel. Pazouki: "we might share our ideas with each other, because there are many common subjects." My answer: "we both have a personal interest in what really counts in philosophy: wisdom and insight." The contact occurred thanks to a common Iranian friend.

*The Khânâqah*

Shahram Pazouki invited us for a ceremony in the place where Sufis meet. Miryam and Ameneh bring a chador for Colette. Women and men enter the Khânâqah through a different entrance as in all public places. The building is immense. A high central hall is surrounded by spaces at different levels and corridors, with a view at the center where hundreds of Sufis gather. The building reminds me of the

famous fresco of Rafael: *The school of Athens* (1509), because also there an immense space with a central place for Plato and Aristotle. Together they represent the relation between the human being, heaven and earth. Aristotle the earth; Plato the heaven, domain of transcendent reflection and transcendent reality, beyond any form.

Pazouki sits down on a stairway in the corridor, I next to him, while he explains what's going to happen. At the beginning a singer recites the Irak (Masters) of the Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Alishi Orde' with the prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah as first name, followed by the twelve Imams; seventeen Sheikhs; ten Shahs; two Sheikhs; and eleven times Hadrath...Hazrat Hajj Dr. Nur 'Al Tabandeh Majd Hub Alishah', as the last one. Then back to the first human: Adam.

The treatise by the head of the Sufi-order has been cancelled because of illness (read: ulema). The precentor begins to sing poems of Hafez Shirâzi, while hundreds of Sufis meditate in the high hall, galleries and corridors. Reciting and singing the names of the Masters and ending with Adam while everyone listens in silence, unites all those names and Hafez' poetry. Space and sound evoke their presence. They are predecessors in space and time, having lived an exemplary way of life.

*Sufism refutes the linear time-line of Barrow and Newton*

The worldview of Sufis implies an unlimited space in which whatever exists, is in the here-and-now. Their view transforms the straight linear time-line of Isaac Barrow (1683) and Isaac Newton into an upward or downward spiral. **The difference in space-time perspective between East and West becomes evident.**

*Justice, liberality, modesty, contentment*

The poet Sa'di writes in Bostan (1257), the Orchard, in verses about the classic virtues of a Muslim: **justice, liberality, modesty, contentment.**

A year later Sa'di hears from eyewitnesses the stories about the destruction of Bagdad by the Mongolian Ilkhanate invaders under command of Hulagu. The Crusaders in Acre captured Sa'di. He toiled seven years as slave in the trenches outside the Ford till the Mamelukes payed a ransom to free the Muslims in the dungeons of the Crusaders.

Sa'di wrote in Persian and Arabic.

*Mongols in the 13<sup>th</sup> century; the West in the 20<sup>st</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century*

I am writing about Sa'di's experiences because the history of the Mongols in the thirteenth century repeats itself in our time. Bagdad suffers 750 years later on April 9, 2003, a similar fate through the hands of G.W. Bush and Tony Blair. Both lied about Irak in the face of their own people, causing wreckage

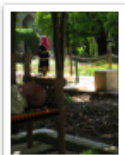


in Irak that needs 100 years to recover, according to Amna Nusayr. The attack on Irak took place after Saddam Hussein attacked Iran in 1980 to suppress the 'Islamic revolution' by Imam Khomeini (1979), herein supported by the USA, while Israel secretly sold weapons to Iran.

The Irak-Iran war ends in 1988. The civil war in Syria (2011...) is a new chapter in the tragic fate of the Middle-East, where the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 entails the forced exodus of more than 700,000 Palestinians: the ethnic cleansing of Palestine by Jewish Zionists. The name for the catastrophe: *Al-Naqba*. A peaceful settlement in the interest of both Jews and Palestinians seems further away than ever.

*I cried inside myself of emotion*

After the ceremony Shahram asks Colette about her experience. Her answer: "I cried inside myself of emotion." The sphere between the women was of a rare beauty. A comparable experience I felt about the men. They greeted each other with openness, friendliness and kisses. No question of macho-behavior. The contrary. Some men, their hands together, are kissing each other's hands and heads, and this several times, like little birds nod their heads to each other.



click and go

*Migrations from the North of India: six- till four thousand BCE*  
For the first time, I see and understand another side of the patriarchal way of life that entered Iran, Middle East and Europe. Thousands of years ago via migrations from the North of India. The prehistoric matriarchal culture in Iran, Middle East and Europe mixes itself since 2000 BCE with the patriarchal culture of the migrants. **Earth goddesses initially share their place with male gods and forces, until they have to relinquish their place to the god(s) of heaven of the monotheistic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam.**  
The idealistic brotherhood of men in Sufism and Freemasonry speaks to the imagination if there is real openness and friendship like on this Friday, the first day in the Islamic week. That intense bond is also tangible among the women. Colette experienced it more than once. All women are beautiful, tells the guide in chador during a visit to the great, congregational mosque of Shiraz. The culture of Shiraz is pervaded by beauty. The large portal of the Kasiem Mosque only shows flowers and geometrical patterns. If mosques, mausoleums, palaces, traditional houses and gardens are already so beautiful, then also the women and men living there.

Monday, May 22, 2017. Pazouki orders a taxi to our hotel for a meeting in the 'Iranian Institute for Philosophy'. The first we see at arrival is a garden, carefully designed and maintained.

**The garden: a metaphor for paradise.** The transition from a frenzied traffic bustle in which buses, trucks, taxis, lorries, motors and passengers move slowly but without any hesitation through each other, filling every hole there is, to the silence of a garden, couldn't be more drastic.

I enjoy the traffic, although it is frightening. Most amazing is how everyone watches everything. Not traffic rules or traffic lights determine the state of affairs but the unlikely flexibility of drivers and pedestrians. Women are the best. The traffic manifests an absurd kind of beauty, if one disposes of enough anarchistic sentiment.

*Such a society defeats any tyrant or dictator*

Only a society in which people daily communicate and are always prepared to help each other, is able to deal with such an 'organized chaos'. The urban traffic in Iran is a permanent demonstration of Ilya Prigogine & Isabelle Stengers' *Order Out of Chaos*. Such a society defeats any tyrant or dictator, if state repression lasts too long and when its violence becomes too brutish.

The last Shah of the Pahlevi dynasty (1925) leaves 'silently' the country in the middle of January 1979. He makes place for Ayatollah Ruhulla Khomeini who after fifteen years of exile returns to Teheran on February 1. Michel Foucault was at Orly among the crowd for his farewell. Khomeini arrives on the waves of a million demonstrators in the streets of Teheran to become the head of the government. After a start with several political parties, a referendum about the formation of an 'Islamic Republic of Iran' is accepted with an overwhelming majority of the votes in April 1979. Since then, the power is legally in the hands of the clergy. **The political context changes from secularism to religion but within a similar pattern as before.**

**Institutions don't change easily.** Both secularists and ulema (Muslim lawyers and scribes) don't dare to trust the human heart. Therefore, religious authorities distrust Sufis.

Shahram Pazouki invited his colleagues for a meeting that would last two-and-half hour. He introduces us with the remark that we travelled more than three weeks without a guide: Tehran-Qom-Yadz-Kerman-Shiraz-Esfahan-Tehran: circa 2800 kilometers: This happens rarely, he says.

Various subjects are exchanged: 1. How space and time determine a worldview; 2. There are no logical contradictions within physical and organic realities; 3. Iran between East and

West; 4. The gap between secularism and religion. Especially this subject raises many questions. My colleagues are more skeptical than I am. They see no or hardly any way out. I consider the contrast between secularism and religion not as contradictory but as a polar yin-yang relation. The Renaissance in Europe's Quattrocento (15th century) developed a fruitful dialogue between the ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Islamic cultures, and Christianity in the late Middle Ages. But it is also true that since 1492, the Spanish Reconquista, things changed dramatically: Protestant Reformation, and Catholic Counter-Reformation showed a different face.

The University for Humanist Studies in Utrecht, the Netherlands, where I occupied the chair 'Theory of worldview's and systematic humanism', chose after its establishment in 1989 for the Enlightenment (read: secularism) as ideological foundation. I argued in favor of the Renaissance as a source for research.

**Why? Precisely for reasons that cause in today's world a breach between the two domains of human intelligence and human needs: secularism and religion.**

*The straight way and the crooked way are the same*

Blaise Pascal, philosopher and mathematician (1623-1662):  
"the heart has reasons which reason doesn't know at all" - (le

coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point'), is the key to meaningful answers about the gap between both domains. Our argument: human nature is 'divine' by origin, because it is capable by its creative imagination to explore nature; to pose to itself the most divergent questions, and finally to reach a similar insight like Heraclitus (circa 540-480): *the straight way and the crooked way are the same*.

Shahram Pazouki and I share a similar vision of human nature with its intuitive desire for beauty, truth and goodness. Each child radiates this endeavor, and is capable to adapt itself to any culture. Children are the answer to the problems of the adults.

Their intuition is aware of the *Oneness and Wholeness of all that exists*.

David Bohm (1917-1992) describes the interactive exchange between all that exists in *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*: "I would say that in my scientific and philosophical work, my main concern has been with understanding the nature of reality in general, and of consciousness in particular as a coherent whole, which is never static or complete but which is an unending process of movement and unfoldment..."

Albert Einstein named Bohm as his successor, because he realized that one could never solve a problem from the level out of which the problem had evolved.

If we don't realize this elementary truth, the stalemate



between religion and secularism will continue until the players on the chessboard of politics and worldwide competition understand that secularism and religion are in need of similar rights and chances as the chess players on the chessboard.

#### *Islam has a problem*

We came in our hotel across a French Muslim with great interest in Christianity. He tells about his encounter with an educated Salafist who told him decidedly: *it is better for you and also for me that I would kill you; it is even better that you go to Israel than to Iran*. So, great is the hate of this Salafist towards Iran and apostate Muslims. Islam has a problem if there are many Muslims with similar ideas. The same is true for all believers who don't understand what Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd (1943-2010) teaches about humans and religions: *Religion is what people make of it. Truth with a capital T is the most dangerous concept that allows people to kill each other*. [Islam Unknown, 61] Again, no single problem can be solved unless we understand that we humans are the root cause of our problems: *not Nature or God*.

#### **Sufism: a bridge between East and West, and between heart and reason.**

*A black chador.*

Our last bus travel from Esfahan to Tehran ends in South-

Tehran. I ask a man in the bus how we can reach the Khomeini Square in the center. He takes his iPhone as everyone does, searching for the answer. A woman in a black chador suddenly puts her mobile in my hand. I listen: a man tells me in English that the metro is the best way to Khomeini square. We shall find the metro station in the corner of the Southern bus station. I thank him and return the mobile to the woman who looks friendly to me. The woman in her black chador had been quietly sitting in the bus, not far from us, for six hours.

#### *Two women: shall we vote – yes or no*

A manager of Lufthansa whom we meet accidentally, offers to help us with the flight back to Amsterdam. She knows everything about procedures of Turkish Airlines, although the company doesn't belong to her office. If we enter her office, she says: "I expected you already." It is the day after the presidential elections in Iran. The actual president dr. Hassan Rohani (68) won the elections with 58 percent of the votes. She says: "I didn't vote; I haven't voted for years because one promises all kinds of things before elections, but one forgets the promises immediately after the elections." Her English is perfect. She asks me whether I would accept an invitation to visit Iran again. Her question surprises me. I nod 'yes'. Three hours later we visit 'Malek National Library and

Museum', a gigantic building with an exceptional collection of coins; calligraphic texts and countless handwritings. We meet Roshanak, the curator. Also, she speaks good English. She didn't want to vote but friends convinced her to do so, after long deliberations and admonitions.

The open mind of both women is disarming. Atheism and religion don't exclude each other. Iran and Sufism are twins, notwithstanding the critical attitude of the clerics. The spontaneity, readiness to help and open attitude of Iranians, their love for Sufi poets, mosques and mausoleums, are the fruits of a deep religious worldview, in which also atheism has a place. Even Zoroaster is never far away.

Doesn't Hafez write in "The ocean of nothingness: 'What's the difference between the monastery and the convent of the magicians?' 'Pas grand chose!' Not much."

Millions of energetic, talented, young Iranians will break down the invisible walls that surround them, if their time has come.

Iran and Europe share a common history. Darius is the name of Jamshidi's son of three. European sons carry the name Alexander.



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**Europe's religions have their roots in Iran, Greece, Rome, Palestine and Mecca. Secular values stem from those sources. What's wrong? Might Iran and Europe inspire each other in the 21st century.**

With my best wishes,

Fons

Spring, 2017/8, La Source, St. Jean de Valérisclé, Gard, France





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The door of Paradise, Tehran, Islamic Museum





1	2	3	© cvl
4	5	6	

1 Kashan | 2 calligraphy | 3 passage Kashan | 4 models | 5 paradise garden | 6 mausoleum Hafez, Shiraz

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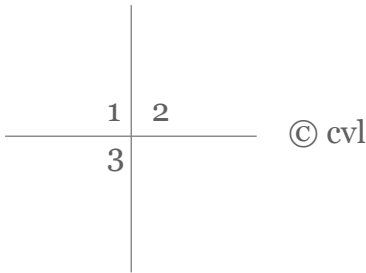


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landscape & nomads | corridor Shiraz | lute instrument | garden Esfahan  
façade-home Shiraz | bike Esfahan | Califat Museum | domino Esfahan

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# Part 5

## THE EUROPEAN LABYRINTH

entering a new paradigm: Quo Vadis?

by Fons Elders

*No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.*

Albert Einstein

## Foreword

To experience by *seeing* how a paradigm functions in practice, travel for the first time to cities such as New York and Los Angeles; from there to Tokyo and Osaka; Hongkong, Calcutta and New Delhi, and back home to Amsterdam. Actually, this was my journey in 1970, visiting philosophers for the International Philosophers Project of NOS, today's NPO.

USA struck me as a culture that differed radically from the European one(s), regardless which country in Europe you would choose. Entering Japan was another blow, but so different of the American sense of evidence that I realized why the Americans couldn't understand the Japanese, nor the Japanese the Americans. It happened again in India.

The word 'paradigm' refers to 'a pattern of guiding ideas and values'. Such a pattern is the mold in which children adapt themselves to a way of life and values, in short: their reality... Needless to say, there are many realities. Humans are creative.

There is no better way to learn about the limits of its own culture, the Dutch or French in my case, than to travel. You realize: *I am the stranger*. The same happens if you could walk around in Athens in 400 BCE (before common era) or in Rome

in the first century of the Roman Empire

<http://www.fonselders.eu/projects/travels/usa-japan-india/>

## Introduction

In the course of 12,000 years, Europe's 'worldviews' went through transformations, forming again and again a new 'layer' in top of the former one. Europe's culture in the 21st century is the last paradigm that began around 1700, after three other ones, including the prehistory of 'Europe'. Europe is the name that the ancient Greek gave to the unknown territories in the North.

*The former paradigms of Europe are its cultural layers like the geological layers of its earth.*

- (1) The Mother goddess, Earth spirits and rituals in Europe's prehistory made room to:
- (2) male Sky gods and deities of the Indo-European migrants, moving in waves from the North of India into Greek territories. It explains the amalgam of female and male goddesses in Greek mythology. This polytheistic culture migrated toward the South of Italy and Rome, to form again an amalgam with the cults of the indigenous people. The ancient cults were intrinsically linked to the living forces of nature, like the Eleusinian mysteries in Greece.



(3) Under its emperors Constantin (4<sup>th</sup> c.) and Justinian (6<sup>th</sup> c.), the Empire adopted Christianity as an exclusive monotheistic religion till Renaissance and Reformation became its fault lines (14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> c.).

*The Newtonian paradigm*

(4) From 1680 on, Europe's traditional respect for its past gradually changed, transforming itself into radical expectations about the Future to explode in the French (1789) and Russian (1917) revolutions as shocking and lightening highlights.

This all happened in the time that Europe, especially Western-Europe explored and conquered vast areas worldwide. Around 1900 it controlled through its colonies three-quarters of the world. Reaching the limits of the Earth, the hunger for more territory and power led to a German war against France. Two great European cultures were devastating themselves in two 'brother'-wars: 1914-1918, and 1939-1945.

The self-overestimation of Europeans knew no limit. The elites considered themselves far superior to the elites and the populations of the countries they colonized. Europeans had a civilization mission to fulfill. That mission also implied the propagation of Christianity, often in gruesome ways.

Europe's civilization, its bloody wars, its racist theories and nationalisms of all kinds, blinded the public opinion, again

and again. The actual tensions worldwide are no new phenomenon but closely linked to the power struggles of the last two centuries. The supremacy of Europe and the USA after WW II came with a price for millions of people.

As a consequence of WW-II, Europe was divided since 1944 by the Iron Curtain, Winston Churchill's term, till the Iron Curtain fell in 1989.

The division during half a century of Europe in a capitalist and communist bloc, left deep traces in its collective psychology. It continues to create tensions between East, Central and Western member states within the European Union.

After WW II, Europe transformed its 'brother'-wars into a *European Economic Alliance*, enlarging its Alliance after the breakdown of the Iron Curtain into the *European Union*.

A new era began under the military umbrella of the USA. Europe's dependence, however, is not everlasting, like nothing in its Faustian history. In retrospect, the attack of 9/11 2001 on WTC and the presidency under Donald Trump are rejuvenating forces toward a new chapter in the relation between Europe and the USA.

*The difference in Europe's position as the world power at the beginning of 1900 and hundred years later, couldn't be greater. And yet, the implications of such a transformation offer chances. The*

*Newtonian paradigm with its naive belief in a never-ending Progress finds many new countries and the climate change on its way. The increasingly larger gap between Western culture and nature needs to be reversed.*

Hans Rosling calls the *Straight Line* in *Factfulness* an *instinct*, a term he gives to all his subjects. The *straight time-line*, however, is an invention by Barrow and Newton. To call it an instinct, is a category mistake. Since 1900, signs are at the wall that we are at the threshold of a new paradigm: from theoretical physics till depth-psychology, from ontology to visual arts, technology and religious cults. The implications of these revolutionary developments may lead to a renewed balance between space-time, nature-culture, women-men, and more democracy at the base. The center of the new worldview is ecological consciousness. Humanity is crossing once more the boundary of an obsolete paradigm since Neolithic culture, 12.000 years BCE.

There is no other choice. Nothing equals the power of an all-embracing Nature, even not its offspring: powerful male heroes. We need something stronger and more intelligent. *To imagine what's at stake, we need to look in a new way at history: not from the perspective of a forward moving time-line, but from the insight that **this time-line is a historic myth**.* That's extremely difficult to realize. It requires to *perceive* another space-time, in

fact the space-time of quantum physics, and to live in another space-time experience amidst of great changes in technology, economics, political and religious traditions.

That's the meaning of *entering a new paradigm: Quo Vadis?* and of Einstein's remark: *No problem can be solved from the level of consciousness that created it.*

The rise of a new paradigm is difficult to recognize. David Bohm and Zygmunt Bauman saw it during their lives. Such a recognition requires a profound understanding of the actual culture and its underground transformations.

A comparison may help. Europe entered its Enlightenment during the reign of Louis XIV (1680-1715). It was a period of crisis. Europe's culture consisted of centuries-old religions and philosophies that were challenged by ideas and values of 'the Enlightenment'. It was a struggle between Old and New, a struggle that continues to this very day. This complex process explains the stratification of Europe's current cultures, and the resulting tensions between Christianity, other religions and secularism, but also between its classical and romantic paradigms.

If we look at Europe by the eyes of an architect and a historian, it may be clear that the uniform-linear, future-orientated timeline of Isaac Barrow and Isaac Newton can't be

the right guide for Europe's future, because it is based upon a cultural and ecological illusion. The mathematical timeline made it possible to imagine *absolute time as a reality that it isn't*, and subsequently that it could only move forward in a positive way, *which isn't the case*.

Nevertheless, the intellectual elite of Europe began to believe in an illusionary forward moving time, being identical with Progress. The question is: *what kind of Progress?*

Europe's 20th century belongs to the bloodiest of its history both inside Europe and outside Europe in its colonies.

Writing about Europe's belief in the idea of Progress, feels as if I am telling a tale in the tradition of *Thousand and One Night*.

*Les extrêmes se touchent*, 'the extremes touch each other'. A well-known French proverb is perhaps the explanation.

Europe remains the Continent that since immemorial times has been connected to the Mediterranean cultural space, and it remains the Continent that discovered the Americas, Australia, Asia and Africa in ways as never before or after. It stands at the cradle of today's world history. This Continent has a Faustian history that never cared about today's geographical definition of Europe. From this perspective, Europe meets itself in a transitional phase that's more abrupt than the previous transformations.

The core questions of *Quo Vadis?* are the perception of human nature; its logic and epistemology, briefly its way of thinking, and its concomitant values. Christianity and Enlightenment play a main role in the search for a new paradigm that transcends both.

*Christianity and the Enlightenment are religions of salvation*

My diagnosis of a declining confidence in European culture has nothing to do with the so-called demise of Christianity, but with a *persistent collective longing for salvation*. *Uniquely among world faiths, Christianity is a religion of salvation, and so is the European Enlightenment*.

The longing for salvation, colored by Christian notions of guilt and penance, dominates the European psyche. Under the influence of secularism, Christian guilt transforms into crime and punishment when Europe's 'consciousness' enters its 'evolutionary' phase. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) portrays Napoleon as the *Weltseele zu Pferde* ('the World Soul on horseback'). Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) undermines the literal interpretation of the Bible, especially Genesis, as never before.

This transition in Europe's consciousness is mirrored in the translation of the title of Dostoevsky's novel *Prestupleniye i nakazaniy*, by *Guilt and Penance* (Schuld en Boete, in Dutch) and *Crime and Punishment* (Misdaad en Straf, in Dutch). The



Russian title implies both. The second title mirrors the evolution from a Christian tradition towards a secular one. These titles show that Christianity and Enlightenment give a different answer to the question of how to achieve salvation. The difference and the uncertainty about both answers, gnaw at the confidence of European culture. Europe is uncertain about its orientation. *This uncertainty is crippling. Orientation is essential for both individuals and communities.*

### *Christianity*

Paul the Apostle; the First Council of Nicaea (325); Augustine; Luther; Calvin; Pascal; Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis believe that only God's mercy can free man from original sin. The sense of sin clings to man, inclined to evil (Luther). The sense of sin during so many centuries is responsible for a distorted inner psychology: sinful human nature is only capable to attain salvation by Jesus and his churches as intermediary.

### *Enlightenment*

Enlightenment frees the human of its original sin, but not from its 'accidental' existence. Belief in progress doesn't promise redemption in the afterlife but redemption in a future life, symbolized by a waving flag or Liberty Statue, embodied by a woman without name.

The Enlightenment transformed Descartes' definition of God as *Causa Sui* [the cause of itself] into the image of man as *the cause of itself*. Equally daring is Kant's *Aude sapere* – 'dare to think'; or Feuerbach's philosophy: *what we attribute to God, we have to attribute to Man*; Nietzsche follows with 'Superman'; Desmond Morris with *The naked Ape*; Sartre with *existence precedes essence*; Foucault with *the care for itself*.

One may interpret it as an evolution toward self-realization but if so, an evolution *within the patriarchal paradigm* of the last 4000 years: 'self'-realization with a small 's', predominantly male, isn't the sufficient answer.

There is another European tradition in self-realization in 15th century Renaissance with Pico della Mirandola, Ficino, the great artists and their undercurrents in the Romantic period since the 18th century. The ancient Greek vision of *man & culture* versus *woman & nature* undergoes a transformation with Hermes-Papageno-Papagena in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. The notion of human nature transforms itself towards a more open and flexible one. Hermes symbolizes the 'tertium datur': *there is always a third possibility*. Illumination in the 18th century refers to *the inner reality of human nature, free of sin and guilt, while Enlightenment refers to the sciences, politics, freedom, equality, brotherhood (!) and justice.*

<http://www.fonselders.eu/de-verzoening-van-prometheus-en-hermes/>

Freemasons live in both worlds: the inner and the outer one. They fulfill the Janus-role in the process of self-liberation, thanks to their positive attitude towards the wisdom of Antiquity, the alchemy of Middle Ages and Renaissance, and their confidence in an unknown future.

#### *Human nature*

Classical rationalism doesn't believe that human nature is 'empty'. On the contrary. Each child carries in its innate nature an intuitive desire to 'know', that implies 'truth', 'beauty', 'justice'. They are the elementary qualities of a human life. These qualities aren't inventions but deep longings.

*It is obvious that an unbroken material connection exists between every human being alive today and every one of our ancestors – and extends yet further back through evolution, even to the very origin of living matter, to the very first primordial cell. These reflections show that, as far as the material plane is concerned, we are all related to all of our fellow human beings and indeed, to all living organisms, both animals and plants.... the first cell was formed from lifeless matter, from dead atoms and molecules.*

Swiss scientist Albert Hofmann, 1906-2008

<https://vimeo.com/123868272>

This isn't wishful thinking but a discovery by one of the great scientists of the 20th century. It embodies an ecological worldview, so much richer than positivistic physicalism and psychological determinism that dominate the Western mind.

#### *Logic and epistemology*

Human nature and its possible logic are closely related although often misunderstood.

Aristotle (384-322) defined his logical ideas as purely abstract, mental principles:

1. *identity*: if p, then p; 2. *contradiction*: not both p and non-p; 3. *excluded third*: either p or non-p. These principles are purely *logical*, not principles about reality. There is no 'ontology', no 'reality outside the mind' involved. And yet, the fusion between these abstract principles, useful as 0 and 1 in algorithms, entered Europe's intellectual history via the orthodoxy of Christian monotheism with its dualistic vision on salvation.

Christian orthodoxy believes in a supernatural order and a natural one; in Fall and Redemption, and subsequently in true believers versus non- or wrong-believers. This orthodox vision became state policy during the Reconquista by the Catholic kings in Spain.

The Edict of Toledo (1448) proclaimed blood purity and orthodoxy of belief as fundamental principles of the new Spain. The Edict became the forerunner of racial-ethnic and nationalistic-religious ideas in Europe in the 19th and 20th century. Such a mindset is deeply dualistic or radically pluralistic, denying the simultaneous presence of whatever exists.

If humans begin to project these logical principles on each other, then everything becomes possible, including a holocaust or the negation of the rights of the Arab Jews; the destruction of the Tibetan culture in their own land, and so on, and so on. The list is endless.

*This application of this abstract logic on reality is a disaster.* It cuts reality in half or in infinite entities without any pre-existing existence like in nature, where everything is somehow interconnected as the climate change shows.

*'Totality': Life, Earth, Cosmos*

A theory of knowledge presupposes at least a certain notion of reality, not an indifferent number of quanta without any coherence. It presupposes a certain 'totality': Life, Earth, Cosmos. It presupposes something as the 'Wisdom of the Elders'...people with an intimate experience of Nature who live *the unbroken material connection between every human being alive today and every one of our ancestors...* in that sequence.

This consciousness is the living source for the universal declaration of human rights (1948).

*Monism, Dualism and Pluralism*

There are traditionally three metaphysical visions about the all-embracing reality or 'theory of everything': monism, dualism and pluralism.

Dualism and radical pluralism dominate European consciousness with the result: uncertainty and loss of perspective.

The liberating answer to desire and to deliverance entails a monistic pluralism in which Cosmos, Nature or God are experienced and understood as the encompassing oneness of all forms within Reality.

<http://www.fonselders.eu/d2m-sala-una/>

<http://www.fonselders.eu/the-rebirth-of-europe-la-rinascita>

Could ideas like Abu Bakr ibn al-Arabi's [1165-1240]: *there is no god but God; there is no other reality than Reality*; Spinoza's [1632-1677] *God, that is to say Nature*; Arne Naess' [1912-2009] *Ecology as the ultimate unity of all living beings*, could these ideas merge into a liberating vision for the 21st century?

Once more Albert Hofmann who formulates the core of ecological consciousness.

*It is obvious that an unbroken material connection exists between every human being alive today and every one of our*



*ancestors – and extends yet further back through evolution, even to the very origin of living matter, to the very first primordial cell.*

## Postscript

### *La Primavera*

*In order to visualize the difference between space-time in the Renaissance, and time-space in modern times, I add a description of La Primavera by Alessandro Botticelli, and a description of the Statue of Liberty, 400 years later in which linear time is the dominant feature, and the common experience of most people, at least in the West.*

*The Statue of Liberty represents the Newtonian worldview. Nature is absent.*

### **La Primavera** de Sandro Botticelli

In order to visualize space and time in the two paradigms, follows a description of *Primavera* by Sandro Botticelli. *La Primavera* ("Spring", 1477-1482) depicts a garden filled with trees, golden apples, moving figures as well as stationary figures. All is taking place in a quiet but intense atmosphere of waiting, dancing and ecstasy. The central figure is Venus with Cupid, a blind angel of love flying over her head. To the left of Venus, we see three figures: the hot wind, Zephyr, who is touching the innocent Chloris. Flora radiates self-awareness and beauty: she has just discovered and accepted her body.

Next to Venus' right hand are the three Graces: Beauty, Chastity and Pleasure. They are in a circle, hand in hand. Cupid above Venus' head is aiming his arrow at Chastity, who by the Grace of Beauty turns into Pleasure.

On the right of the three Graces is Hermes, who is looking up while his right hand is pointing to the sky above the leaves and golden apples. If we follow the movement of his eyes and his hand, we can easily imagine how this movement forms a circle that in turn descends from heaven upon the figure of Zephyr who seduces Chloris.

Venus stands in the middle as the balance between the left and right side of the painting. Her face radiates a dignified and calm expression, because she understands how and why our lives unfold as they do, especially in relation to the all-embracing Eros.

The Three Graces, which date back to the Triad that symbolizes the three faces of the moon in prehistoric Europe, are the three manifestations of the essence of Venus. Venus herself symbolizes Humanitas / Humanity. This means that the *Primavera* is a painting with the status of an initiation into the secrets of life: the relationship between the visible and the invisible; the power of Eros and the comprehension of Mercury that is identical to Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

Edgar Wind: “Since the breath and mind are one *afflatus* (the Latin word *spiritus* means both), Mercury and Zephyr represent two phases of a recurring periodic process. What descends to the earth like the breath of passion, returns to heaven in the spirit of contemplation”. The young Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco, for whom the painting was intended, is the prototype of this initiation into the mysteries of life.

#### *The Space-Time Dimension of The Primavera*

To respond briefly to my question about space and time, my analysis will only be understandable if we do away with the notion of Euclidean space and time as three-dimensional and one-dimensional respectively. Space and time are identical in *La Primavera*. The dynamic of Zephyr and Mercury symbolizes the fact that Eros is all present, not only in humans but also in the entire cosmos.

“This union of mutual love between the universe and its creator forces a powerful circle of love that sustains all elements of the cosmos, from the outer sphere to the rock within the earth, to the same living movement, blessed, from God to God. This central theme produces a remarkable stream of thoughts on many different subjects . . . a vision that embraces the spiritual and material world and its metaphysical goal.”

Hubert Dethier describes, without any derogatory meaning, the magical idea of space and time of the Renaissance. Since Kant it has become difficult to understand such a worldview, which had already been rejected by the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. The discourse of the Renaissance has become a closed book for the postmodern intellectual.

#### *The Statue of Liberty: Time, Progress and History*

In *Geometrical Lectures* (1693), Isaac Barrow, the mentor of Isaac Newton, formulated space and time as three-dimensional and one-dimensional respectively. In the Newtonian universe, time is no longer a function of the physical movement of the earth and the stars, but a straight line, which extends from the here and now to infinity.

This straight line can be divided into equal parts. From the 18th and 19th centuries onwards, this mathematical concept of time acquired an ontological status. Chronological time becomes an essence: the bearer of the sense of history. As a result, the idea of Progress became imaginable and subsequently visible in the Statue of Liberty. History becomes a ‘science’, based upon the myth of a straight or dialectical time-line.

The statue of the *Goddess of Liberty* in New York Harbor rises from the water, symbolizing the future while her right hand points to the Free Land in the West.

The inauguration of the *Goddess of Liberty* took place on October 28, 1886, 400 years after *La Primavera*. Her Liberty symbolizes the Future and the Promised Land. *The Statue of Liberty* forms a beacon for the thousands of people who aspire to freedom and a better life.

Its three-dimensional space is not different from the three-dimensional statue *The Orator* ("Aulus Metellus" or "L'Arringatore") from 150 BCE. Yet the difference with the statue from Roman antiquity is that *The Orator* radiates dignity, functionality and presence. The Orator is in the present, whereas the *Statue of Liberty* represents an idea, an ideal. She does not have a name or company. She appears in an abstract dimension of time, like Kant's *Das Ding an Sich* (the thing-in-itself), which also is abstract and unknowable. The *Statue of Liberty* evokes a promise of universal freedom, not a promise for the sky and the earth, but for the new land, the new earth and the new nation. Her radiant crown refers to the straight line of Progress. She does not embody the circle of Venus, but rather a never-ending future. Till today, the rhetoric of all American presidents is inevitably linked to a rhetoric about a better future.

The present counts less than the future. The *Goddess of Liberty* forms the expression of the romantic notion of unlimited freedom, the liberation from all limitation. She radiates deliverance from, but without indicating how to reach this liberation. She is represented as a blind Goddess and therefore nameless. Once we rotate the statue 180°, we discover the consequences of such a change of orientation. It would mean that travelers and migrants are returned to the sea, sent back to their past, to their country of origin, as it currently regularly happens with immigrants in Europe and the United States.

The blind *Statue of Liberty* knows only one direction. It left the circle movement of thousands of years, the former time perception, based on the seasons, in favor of a one-dimensional time-concept that separates humans from the ecological 'time' of nature. It symbolizes the distance between nature and culture, between women, men and their habitat.

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La Primavera, Sandro Botticelli

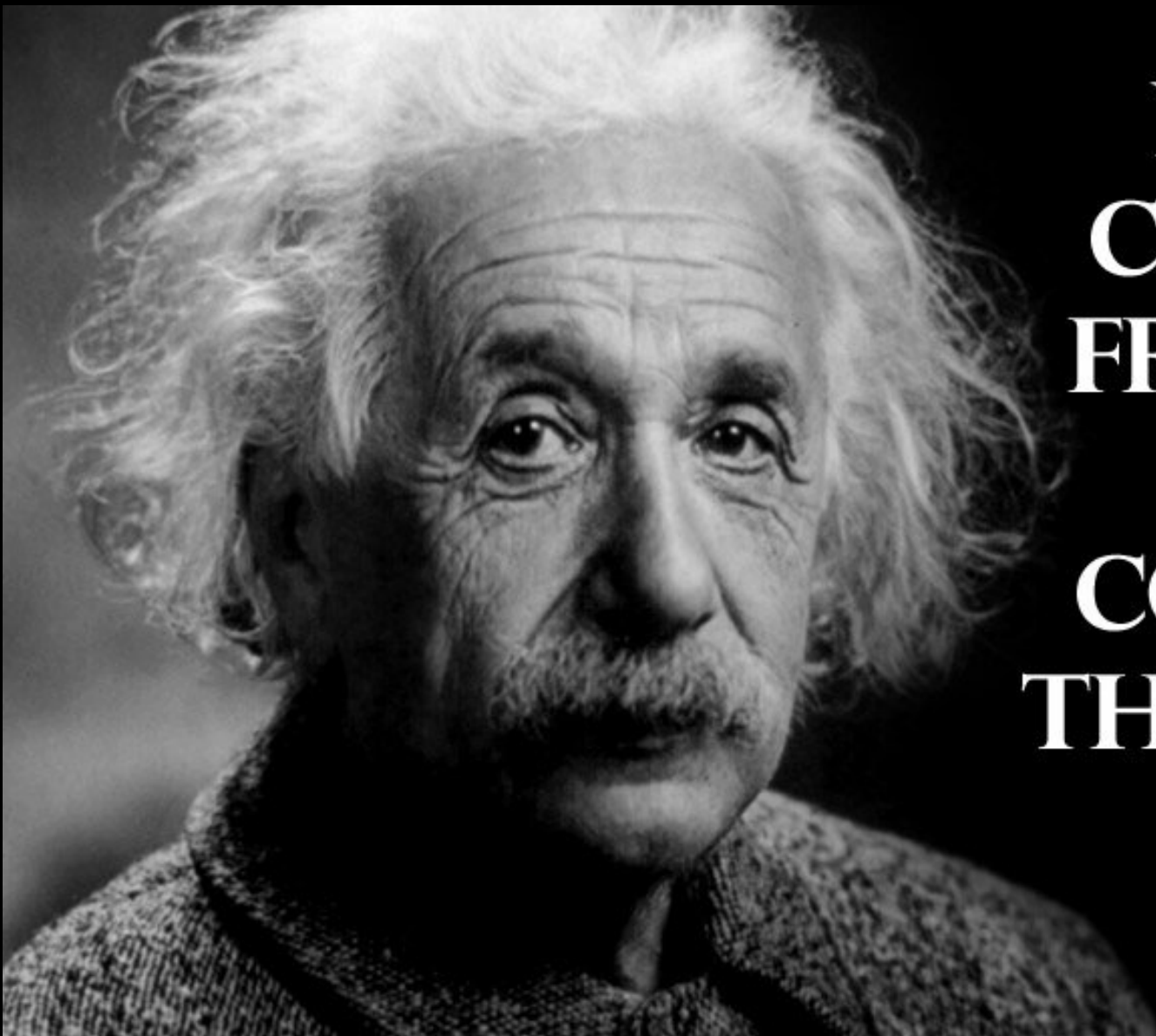




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Statue of Liberty



A black and white portrait of Albert Einstein, showing his characteristic wild, white hair and mustache. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

**NO PROBLEM  
CAN BE SOLVED  
FROM THE SAME  
LEVEL OF  
CONSCIOUSNESS  
THAT CREATED IT.**

*Albert Einstein*

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