Letter to Aristotle

Alexandros

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My Dearly Beloved Aristotle,

Yesterday I met and discussed with a gymnosophist named Dandimus. He had a very simple and innocent wisdom which reminded me of some of our discussions, especially those pertaining to Socrates. Porphory also was there and he went back today to discuss again.

He began by saying “you Greeks didn’t invent science,” he preferred the simpler child-like version “you Greeks invented measurement.”

I suspected that Dandimus had his own rhetorical and philosophical reasons for the “elementary-particle” vocabulary that, still at this tender age, is beyond me. His analysis of certain internal “operations” of the noos seemed so simple that one wonders how, and when, we Greeks could have missed them.

For example, his teaching on that great enemy of the human mind: Time. He said: “It takes time to go from here to over there…to cover a certain distance…physically…it takes ( sidereal ) time. But the mind doesn’t stop there. It applies the same assumption to the movement of the self-image. For example, it takes time for myself to go from being a student of medicine to being a doctor of medicine and then even more ( sidereal ) time to buy a ship.”

The latter movement seems to be as physically real as the former, but actually, Dandimus was pointing out that it was not. In the former the recipient of the ‘movement of time’ is the physical body; in the latter the recipient is something imaginary…i.e. the self-image. One was in the field of the externally real, the other in the field of noetic thought ( regardless of how ‘real’ our status as a doctor with a real physical ship might feel from the community respect we get ).

Another example from his teaching on fear: “Aren’t you afraid not to climb the social ladder? Not to become somebody?” he asked the young yoginis in his ashram. “You all want to be ministers. What’s wrong with being a gardener?”

This was the anti-thesis of the attitude of most Greek parents who ask their children “what do you want to be when you grow up?” thereby starting the whole movement of the self- image through imaginary time, if not the very concept of the image itself. And this might give us a clue into where Dandimus went to retrieve his ‘primal’ understanding of the noos.

β.

Biologists like yourself, dear Aris, tell us that we loose half our energy not at 60 or 45 years of age, nor even at 32 when most soldiers retire, but at puberty. Something extraordinary happens at puberty that we cosmopolitan Greeks consider only from the pragmatic vantage point of ‘a plumbing of sexuality’. From the vantage point of traditional religious thought, a great tragedy occurs at puberty: the loss of virginity and the beginning of mortality. Biologists concur, that the cause of death ( and therefore the enemy of life ) is sexuality. Genetically, if we could remain in a pre-pubescent stage, we would also remain immortal ( accidents and illnesses notwithstanding ). This is why, in the deep recesses of consciousness, sexuality will get linked with sin and virginity with holiness when the Christians arrive on the scene.

Concomitant with the virginity of the body is the virginity of the mind devoid of a ( an erotically ) charged image ( Eros and Chronos being intimately linked )1. The mind unburdened with becomingis in a body unburdened with *ageing*. Hence, Dandimus went back to the origins of this problem in childhood consciousness, reversing the gears that propelled the original ‘mistake’——and, in a sense, became ( as Jesus will later recommended ) a child again.

Another feature of virginity is light. Not created starlight, but the ‘uncreated’ light, as some theologians will call it, of consciousness exhibited in the eyes of a newborn child. This light ( which Jehova ushered into being before he created the stars ) is profoundly dimmed at puberty where it starts its great descent towards extinction ( and death ). I’m sure there exist shamanistic doctors somewhere in Lybia who can presage a wo- man’s death by the absence of the light in their eyes. Ergo, the opposite condition of the saint sporting a *halo* which, by the way, shares the same semantic root with the words ‘heal’ and ‘whole’.

In light of the forgotten nature of this understanding in our time, it should come as no surprise that the Golem or Zombie has become such a prominent feature of our popular Helenistic culture; nor should we be surprised by the prevalent use of narcotics to s(t)imulate a life-pulse by our youth in Alexandria who are only too aware of how early they are becoming a “living” corpse.

Another great example from Dandimus in his child-like prose: “Have you ever observed the nature of desire…its structure…its origin? You look at a lovely scarf…oh, what a lovely colour…you feel the sensuous texture…and then, Contact! ‘I must have that scarf!’”

1 Hence, Zeus castrated ‘Time’ setting it in motion along with ‘sexuality.’

To see the primal origin of desire ( also sex ) in consciousness one must travel back to the original uncluttered consciousness from which it sprang and relive the sensuous pleasures at their very origins in our childhood. At the point of ‘contact’—— Dandimus’s word for the original link between desire and its object——a contaminant is created by the movement-of-the-self-through-time-to-possess-its-object, the memory of which, is replayed in a vicious feedback loop to repeatedly stimulate ( sexual ) desire. There could be no pornography and marketing industries were it not for the abstraction of the self through time and vice versa.

What Dandimus and others like him ( Siddhartha and Socrates come to mind ) did yesterday was the goal of the mystical wing of religions and bodywork ‘sciences’ like yoga and tai chi chuan but without the theological context ( theology will simply become the ancient word for psychology; *psyche* literally means a cold place not unlike the ice-pack in which Dante had stuck Satan ) they will make as little sense as the sacraments of the church.

Γ.

The contaminant alluded to above ( Dandimus’s word for it was conditioning) is real and not imaginary. We see it in a self-image that actually ages: our faces…brought about by the link between desire ( which is physical ) and the image ( which is imaginal ), i.e. the feedback loop. Obviously desireis also imaginaland vice versa for there to be a reciprocal effect. Pulling the propellant charge out of the feedback loop de-couples the image from the inner-body and we start ageing, like Dandimus, in our late fifties instead of our late twenties, when most of us, especially our women, start loosing their ‘virginal fat,’ and start looking like sexualized wo-men instead of children.

It should have come as no surprise then that the appropriate languages for this forgotten psycho-genic history will remain myth and poetry. Nor does one have far to go to find curriculum for children in our stories that tell our children their own personal history and link it up to the origins of their ancestors ( who are the race’s childhood ). Nor should it come as any surprise that our myths are historical as well as psychological by way of a fused narrative metaphorology impossible to divide into constituent pieces that could be M E A S U R E D !

Your beloved student,

alexandros