



*World
Intelligence Network
ON-line Edition*

*"Whan that Aprille with his shoures sete
The dreghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,"
Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Canterbury Tales.'*

WJN ONE

Edition Number 6,

4th April 2011

Edited by Graham Powell



Welcome to the 6th WIN ONE.

Since the last Edition the WIN has changed a great deal. Now nearly thirty societies are members of the network. Special Interest Groups have been set up and the website has been visited by people from over 170 countries. Also, the languages available give the organization a truly global feel, plus the re-designed website imparts the multitude of exciting possibilities available to everyone who visits it. I thoroughly hope you will enjoy browsing this WIN ONE, and will be inspired to get involved in the activities offered to you by the World Intelligence Network.

Graham Powell

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Teaching the Visual-Spatial Learner, by Gwyneth Wesley Rolph.

My own training background in study technology taught that there were three primary causes of difficulty in comprehension during study: having insufficient real-life experience or observation of the subject matter (the “mass” of the subject), a learning curve that was too steep for the student’s level of ability, and insufficient comprehension of vocabulary and nomenclature. Of the three, the need to understand the vocabulary was stressed as by far the most important.

Being strict with students about clearing up their understanding of words while they study works well. Nevertheless, there were certain things I had observed during my own study, and in some students when I became a course supervisor and study debug specialist, which seemed to fly in the teeth of what I had learnt in my training.

For instance, I had been taught that whenever a person encounters a word, punctuation symbol or some other sign for which they did not have a full definition, comprehension and ability to use the data will be seriously impeded. Yet at a time before I learnt this study methodology, I had read and successfully applied the data from a long and technical instruction manual on a specific type of one-on-one therapy. I knew there was a very great probability that I had skipped over unfamiliar words in that book, yet my understanding of the procedure involved had been clearly demonstrated. Somehow, I was able to fill in the gaps. I clearly had strengths in some sort of ability that simply having a decent vocabulary alone could not explain.

My own supervisor training included understanding the difference between ordinary literacy and “superliteracy”. A literate person would read the word “house” and think, “Ah, yes, a building in which people live”. A superliterate person, on the other hand, would simply think of the *concept* of a house, perhaps seeing a picture of one in his mind’s eye.

I observed that many students would get in a horrible tangle with the words, spending ages with dictionaries trying to find definitions with which they were satisfied, and they needed a great deal of help to find what words they hadn’t understood in the text, and help clearing them up in the dictionary. It seemed that these students needed to understand the word in terms of a dictionary definition or dictionary-like definition. I would catch them sometimes spot-checking another student, and flunking them for explaining the term entirely acceptably, but using their own words. When the term was explained a different way to them, it was as if a sign went up saying, “NO MATCH”, and they couldn’t think with it.

Other students I supervised did not seem to get into difficulty with the language side of things, but would tend to go hunting through references and encyclopaedias for photographs, illustrations, diagrams and charts, and needed a lot of examples relating the material to real life before they would get it. They were the students who would need to sketch out ideas or physically demonstrate procedures until a light went on, and then they got it.

Linda Krueger Silverman (author, teacher, parent and psychologist), writes about these two learning preferences in her book "Upside Down Brilliance: The Visual-Spatial Learner". Silverman describes the two major learning styles as follows: the auditory-sequential learner (ASL), and the visual-spatial learner (VSL). Of course, it is highly unlikely that any given person is purely one or the other. Rather, it is a continuum, and everyone has a mixture of both to a greater or lesser degree. Many VSL's also have strong sequencing skills, and many ASL's also have strong spatial skills. Those people who are extremely strong in both obviously have the best of both worlds.

The traditional school curriculum caters well for the former. They tend to be the model students. Most of what is typically considered by schools to be "smarts" or "academic ability" tends to be the strengths of the auditory-sequential student. He, or she, learns well from hearing the teacher's explanation, is methodical, organized, good at verbal expression, and can follow and remember information presented as a series of steps.

The visual-spatial learner, on the other hand, tends not to fit the mould. He or she might have a high IQ, but the teacher may completely miss how smart such a student is, because traditional bookwork does not play to the student's strengths. Such a student thinks in 3D images, locations, context and the relationships between things. These students tend to be a big-picture thinker who get lost if they can't make a picture in their minds (as per the first barrier to comprehension I mentioned). They need an outline of that picture first to give them structure and context before they can start sketching in the details.

Silverman and the Gifted Development Center have collected vast amounts of test scores and other evidence over the years, and it is clear that about a third of all students are strongly visual-spatial dominant. The main characteristics she has identified are briefly discussed below.

(a) Thinking in images vs. thinking in words. When a person thinks in words, it enables swift processing of verbal information. They can carry on a rapid-paced verbal interchange, are good conversationalists, get their ideas heard in a debate or discussion, and can field questions easily from the floor when giving a speech or presentation. For the person who thinks in pictures, it may take longer to translate those pictures into words. In school, there is a great deal of emphasis on verbal fluency and speed. Even when a VSL has a large vocabulary, they may have to "talk around" the concept first. Spit-out answers do not always come easily.

As a course supervisor, I had to be careful to listen out for each student's natural speed of answering. Spot-checking of the words and materials is a key tool in a study tech classroom, and speed is emphasised: if the student doesn't answer up immediately, then it is assumed that the definition or information has not been learned well enough. This is pretty harsh on the VSL who in fact may have a superior understanding, but just needs a couple of seconds longer to articulate what is seen in the mind's eye. I still recall the frustration of being fairly new to the study tech methods, and getting flunked because I would suddenly have these glorious, full Technicolor™ 3D examples pop up when asked to define words (a

labyrinthine network of computers, printers and cables, for example, when asked to define “concatenation”) that could leave me momentarily tongue-tied because I needed to think how to expeditiously and effectively get this concept across in words to the other person. By the strict standards of this type of examination, however, that split second hesitation was a flunk. The standard remedy of telling the student to go and find what he or she didn’t understand and then reread the article or chapter may not make any difference to such a student’s understanding, but merely serve to impede progress. Judgement is required!

(b) Visual strengths vs. auditory strengths. Whereas ASL’s are comfortable with lectures and can take in vast amounts of information from them, VSL’s prefer diagrams, flowcharts, pictures and demonstrations. They tend to remember what they see better than what they hear. ASL’s find it easier than VSL’s to hear a voice in a crowd or noisy setting – it may be necessary to touch the VSL person on their arm to get their attention where there are a lot of other distracting sounds.

Obviously, this type of student will need to make more use of what study tech has to offer in terms of demonstration, sketching, watching demonstration films and video clips, practical exercises and going and observing the actual subject matter in a real-life setting. A properly set-up study area would have the theory and practical areas separate, so that students who are trying to read or listen to a taped lecture would not be distracted by other students doing practical drills.

It is worthy of note that musical ability is not a sign of being ASL – many musicians are VSL’s. This makes sense when you consider that we do not process music one note at a time or one instrument at a time, but integrate all the sounds and textures of the music as a complete experience – definitely a VSL strength.

(c) Awareness of space vs. awareness of time. In school or in the workplace, time is of the essence – being punctual, taking timed tests, finishing work on time, etc. Awareness of time comes easily to the ASL, whereas the VSL’s strength lies in their spatial thinking. Some VSL’s appear to be completely unconscious about time – they turn up late for school or work or lag behind in their projects with no idea as to why. Timed tests can be an absolute nightmare – one father reported that his eight year old son freaked out more at the threat of being timed than the threat of being grounded! Such a child could spend 20 minutes tying a shoe, having no concept of the passage of time.

Typical schooldays, which are divided up into a series of hour long lessons, annoys the VSL. Self-development author Tony Buzan even recommends in his study skills and memory skills books dividing up home study sessions into short periods. VSL’s require more time than that to delve deeply into a subject and explore, ponder, visualize and experience. In this regard, the study tech approach to scheduling with its intense courses and long study days suits the VSL well – I have studied, and supervised, 11+ hours a day with none of the “loss of comprehension” in the middle of a study period that Buzan worries about.

(d) Whole part vs. step-by-step thinking. Whereas $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$'s learn best when a task is broken down into a series of small steps and then mastered through practice and reinforcement, the $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ learns things holistically. They need to see the whole picture in their minds. Trying to teach something to a $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ without first thoroughly clearing up the purpose or goal of the subject means that they do not have anywhere to peg the details. They seem to run out of memory for the individual steps and get lost. Explaining the desired end result enables the $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ to mentally map the subject.

My training in study tech mentions "purpose not delineated" as one of the basic obstacles to learning. When tackling something for the first time, there is little point telling the student "Now we're going to..." without first ensuring the student understands why "..." is necessary. It is as bad as giving little bits and pieces and never explaining the final goal.

I had a computer manual that on the surface of it looked ideal for the $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ – full of screen shots, illustrations and diagrams. On working through it, however, I realised that these instructions had clearly been put together by an $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ trying to accommodate the $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ learning style, but without really getting it. Under a general heading, e.g. "Styles", the manual would walk the reader through various steps, but the effect of taking these steps could not be easily observed or appreciated until the final step had been taken. I have noticed that nearly all the IT classes I have attended teach this way as well. Having seen the result, and mentally "come alive", now I could see the use for what was being taught; I would then have to think backwards and try to retrace all the steps that got there. When I knew at the outset what I was trying to achieve, e.g. asking a colleague, "How do I format this heading?" I would never again have to be shown after the first time.

(e) All at once vs. trial and error. The trial and error approach is an $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ learning strategy. The $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ learns well by observation, and once he gets it, he gets it all at once. Understanding occurs in an all or nothing fashion. It may subsequently be impossible for the $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$ to explain how he arrived at that understanding.

Interestingly, introverted $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$'s seem to have the greatest capacity to mentally rehearse physical skills. It may explain why some musicians have the ability to pick up a new instrument and get a tune out of it on the first try.

(f) Easy is hard, and hard is easy. Nearly all school education is arranged to go from easy material progressively to harder material. However, $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{S}\mathcal{L}$'s are often able to go from the complex backwards to basics, but are turned off when made to go from basics first. Being made to learn the "basics" first can be frustrating for them, but their interest is engaged once the work becomes sufficiently challenging. Children with this learning style tend to make mistakes on easy test items but pass the harder ones.

Silverman suggests that this tendency is best understood by realising that what our education systems and society generally consider "easy" is usually sequential, and what they consider "hard" depends upon an ability to simultaneously co-ordinate and integrate many complex variables.

Particularly with gifted VSL's, the solution as an educator is to give them advanced work even if they haven't necessarily mastered the easier material. This may sound counter-intuitive, but the Gifted Development Center has demonstrated time and again that it works. A gifted child who hasn't memorized their arithmetic facts might easily grasp more complex mathematical concepts which can be more easily visualized. Many have advanced abstract reasoning strengths which may not be engaged by rote, sequential tasks. Teachers should bear in mind that the VSL often grasps simple concepts only against the background context of more complex ones.

The private college where I used to teach introduced a series of training drills for teaching certain types of procedure that, in my opinion, had a completely back to front learning curve. The last exercise I felt was the easiest, and the first the hardest. This made little sense until I realized that the last exercise involved putting all the steps together, while the first exercise consisted of just learning one part of it, out of context with the rest of the procedure.

(g) Synthesis vs. Analysis. The person who is good at analysis is good at comparing and contrasting the individual components of a whole. The VSL tends to be a synthesizing thinker, good at fitting all of the parts together, as well as creating something original. Once they find out what connects several things, they are able to simplify it into a more general rule. These abilities at synthesis are not only what underpins creativity in the arts, but all important inventions, research and discovery depend upon them.

(h) Big Picture vs. Details. Detail-oriented ASL's may be great at carrying out all the assigned work, but fail to grasp the implications of what they are learning. VSL's grasp the big picture and the significance of what they are learning, and preserve all the basic concepts in memory, but attention to detail may be a weaker point. Many know far more than they show on class assignments or on tests because of detail errors. If the information is dished out in a piecemeal fashion, the VSL may lose track.

There is little point giving the VSL the twigs and the leaves before the roots and trunk are in place. It is important for the educator, when trying to reach these "systems" thinkers, to construct a curriculum that goes from the general to the specific. Web-based courses tend to be very good as students can read the overview page, and if required, they can click the link with more information about a particular topic.

(i) Maps vs. oral directions to a destination. ASL's can easily follow left-right-straight on directions, and notice landmarks along the way. The VSL may lose track of these type of instructions, and instead tends to prefer the holistic overview of the area provided by a map in order to spatially locate himself in relation to where he wishes to go.

(j) Mathematical reasoning vs. arithmetical computation. Higher level mathematics such as geometry depend upon visualization skills. ASL's excel in arithmetic, algebra and timed calculation tests, but opt out of more advanced mathematics courses. VSL's have the opposite pattern, and often think of themselves as being poor at mathematics until they move onto these advanced topics. Unfortunately, some VSL's may have been so poor at

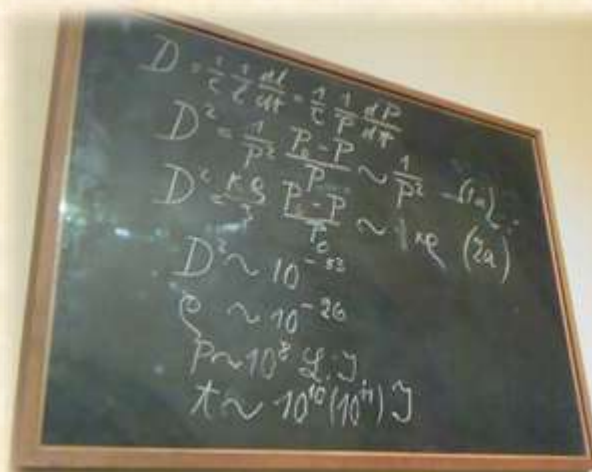
arithmetical computation in the early years that the school never permits them to move onto these advanced topics. They subsequently go through life believing that they are bad at mathematics, never realising how well they would have done once they got onto the “real” stuff!

There were a great number of students at my school who were in the lower sets for mathematics, despite being in high sets for other subjects. I wonder how many of these students might have excelled had the school been flexible enough to allow them to put the arithmetic to one side for a bit and introduce them to some higher mathematics topics instead, and see how they got on.

(k) Reading by sight vs. phonics, and visualizing spellings vs. sounding out words. Very young ASD children master phonics quite easily. VSL’s may find it easier to learn words by sight, recognising the “shape” of the words. It is important for a teacher to use a combination of methods in teaching children to read. In addition, a young VSL may not be able to phonetically sound out words that they have never seen in print.

(l) Typing vs. neat, fast handwriting.

There is very little correlation between general intelligence, and handwriting and spelling. Yet there are cases cited in articles on giftedness where a student’s capabilities have been dismissed because of poor spelling and writing. Silverman cautions against penmanship and spelling being considered as part of the grading in other subjects. She suggests that keyboarding should be taught for the purpose of note-taking. However, when writing is taught as an art form, such as in calligraphy, many VSL’s can develop beautiful handwriting.



(m) Organizationally challenged vs. well-organized. As well as untidy handwriting, the VSL is often the one with the messy desk, messy locker and disorganized filing system for their work. They may come up with their own unique organization methods. There is little point teachers or bosses nagging. “How could you ensure you don’t forget your ...?” is a more constructive approach.

(n) “Just knowing” vs. showing one’s work. Some educational theorists believe that if a student cannot explain precisely how they arrived at their answers, then they do not understand the concepts. This idea can only have been dreamt up by ASD educators who think in a step-by-step, linear fashion and assume that the rest of the world does too – or if they don’t, they should. The VSL often arrives at their conclusion all at once. They just know. They don’t know how they know and can’t explain the route they took to get there. This leads them to being penalised in classes which insist that they show a series of steps

that they never took. Teachers can't imagine how they "just know" and draw the conclusion that the student must be cheating. The ideal is to just allow the student to come up with their answers on their own, and accept that not everyone views the world in the same way.

(o) Seeing relationships vs. rote memorization. VSL's remember meaningful material but struggle with school exercises that they see as non-meaningful. They see the connections between things easily, and once a topic is learnt, they understand in terms of a complete network of relationships. A weakness, so far as school is concerned, is that while the VSL is able to figure out the answer, it can take longer than the teacher is prepared to wait. In a class quiz, teachers want answers rapidly spat out from memory. This rapid-fire verbal fluency is an ASL trait. Longer, project-based assignments that give students time to reflect, integrate ideas and tackle problems creatively may give these students more opportunity to show what they know and can do.

(p) Visual long-term memory vs. auditory short-term memory. The ASL may have the advantage in terms of ability to hold things in short-term memory, such as a set of instructions or directions, but VSL's seem to retain things visually in long-term memory. The VSL may find it difficult to take notes in classes and lectures, having to co-ordinate listening, extracting the key points and writing things down simultaneously. Some such students have said things like, "It either goes in or it doesn't."

The student who is able to cram for their exams, memorize and spit out the data on the day, but who has forgotten most of it a week later is exhibiting a typical ASL study pattern.

There is a way to help all students beyond this superficial, short-term memorization phenomenon into more of a conceptual grasp of the data. Whilst having some small objects on the desk, ask the student to demonstrate, using these real objects, the main rules and principles being covered in the lesson. The glib, rote approach tends to shatter when the student is asked to physically SHOW the principles and how they apply.

(q) A permanent picture vs. drill and repetition. The ASL depends on drill for concepts to stick, and it is quite possible that the amount of drill found in textbooks has been based upon a careful study of what is required for average students to grasp and retain the information. It could be that a certain amount of repetitive practice is necessary for the associative pathways to form. Bright students need considerably less drill than average students, and the gifted usually get the concept the first time it is presented.

For the VSL student who learns by creating pictures in their mind, those pictures are not improved in any way by practice. Exercises do not contribute at all to the student's understanding. This visual representation of the concepts is permanent. To insist that such a student repeatedly goes over the same ground is a waste of time and is off-putting for the student. The solution is for the teacher to give them a few of the hardest problems or exercises. If they succeed at those, then skip all the earlier ones.

(r) Developing own methods vs. learning from instruction. Whereas ASL's are good at mastering material the traditional way by copying the teacher's steps, a more productive

way to teach VSL's is simply by giving them the problems and seeing if they can figure it out on their own. If they succeed, give them more and see if their system consistently works. Learning is more likely to take place when the VSL can come up with their own problem-solving strategies.

Fortunately, our college's courses were structured so that each student had a copy of the curriculum, which they followed at their own speed, and the supervisor worked in a facilitator/advisory role rather than teaching the class as a body. This enabled students a great deal of latitude to work through the material in a way that worked for them.

(s) Learning dependent on emotions vs. learning in spite of emotions. VSL's are better equipped to compartmentalize their emotions. VSL's can be very sensitive to how they are perceived by the teacher or by other students. He becomes his emotions, and is very sensitive to the teacher's attitude. If the VSL believes the teacher doesn't like him, little learning may take place in that class. I have, unfortunately, worked with other supervisors who seemed to think that the way to get students through courses more expeditiously was to behave like a drill sergeant. Such colleagues were often disdainful of my more laid-back approach, but then wondered why it was that I could get more course progress out of certain students. These students were inevitably the more creative, sensitive students and in hindsight I am fairly sure they all had VSL tendencies.

(t) Divergent vs. convergent thinking. Teaching that leads to one right answer (convergent) is comfortable for the thought processes of the linear, sequential learner but stifling to the thought processes of VSL's. On standardized tests, VSL's may give insightful but unscorable answers, having seen possibilities that the test designer never imagined.

(u) Asynchronous development vs. even development, and erratic grades vs. consistent achievement. The average VSL child develops fairly evenly across various domains, and even when there is some discrepancy in the level of physical, emotional, and intellectual development, etc, this still tends to be within certain limits. The gifted often develop asynchronously, but the gifted VSL's developmental areas can be all over the place! Their test scores can vary by several standard deviations between subtests.

If VSL's are more successful academically in school, then it is because the school curriculum was designed to fit the developmental schedule that those students typically follow. VSL's can get an A with certain teachers, and an F with others, because they are not only sensitive to the relationship with the teacher, but their developmental progress can be extremely uneven.

One of the great problems with expecting a student to have achieved XYZ academically by a certain age is that sometimes extremely able students may fall through the educational gaps. The Open University in the UK got it right by making their courses available to mature students who did not necessarily have formal school qualifications. I believe more colleges and universities could benefit from this approach. A society that does not give adults a second bite at the educational cherry denies itself the contribution that they may have made, given appropriate opportunities.

(v) Immersion vs. Language Classes. ASL's seem to learn languages well in class. VSL's find that they master languages more efficiently when fully immersed in the country and culture and are constantly surrounded by the foreign language. Watching foreign language movies and TV may help. Perhaps the reason why total immersion works better for this type of student is because every time a piece of the language is presented to them, it comes with a real-life setting and context.

(w) Creatively gifted vs. academically talented. The student who demonstrates their abilities through high academic achievement is far more likely to be nominated for gifted programmes, where these exist. Those students who are highly creative, good with technology, mechanically capable, or highly attuned emotionally and intuitively may not find the traditional school curriculum relevant for the development of their strongest abilities.

(x) Late bloomers vs. early bloomers. ASL's tend to be the children who talk early, and show early promise. One reason VSL's may appear to be later bloomers might be because advanced work becomes more challenging and demands more abstract reasoning – a strong suit for bright VSL's. Other reasons could be that later work demands more ability to visualize, VSL's learn compensation techniques or study skills, or they have more choice later on which subjects to take. Or it could be that they learn to control their distractibility, become more determined to succeed, or mature later on. Perhaps all the above. I cannot reiterate in strong enough terms my view that colleges and universities should operate a more flexible admissions policy with older candidates.

There is a lot of latitude within the study tech ethos for those students who tend to have better-developed visual-spatial abilities. Perhaps we have misplaced too much emphasis on words and language, just because it is easy and only requires the use of a dictionary. Supplying real-life views and demonstrations of items and procedures, finding videos and film clips, or liberally illustrated encyclopaedic entries with photographs and diagrams is more work for the person running the course. However, the structure of these courses favours the self-starter, and these students can be encouraged to find such material on their own initiative, both in and out of class.

In the workplace, employers need to make use of the particular strengths of these employees, even when such an employee occupies a very junior or entry-level role. Giving them routine tasks may not be the best use of the resource that they are for the company.

A person with highly developed visual-spatial abilities is a gift, and they need to be developed and pushed forward, academic qualifications or not. These are the abilities of the great geniuses, of artists, inventors, innovators and makers of great scientific discoveries. When we waste the person, we waste the potential.

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WIN Sudoku

In homage to the founder of the World Intelligence Network, a man who can think 'outside the box', can you put 'Evangelos' inside some boxes?

E				G				S
	S			A			E	
	E		E			A	N	V
N		V						O
A			V	S		E	G	
	L	S					A	E
E				V	E	N		A
			G	E			V	
V				L	A			G

Art Gallery



A Peaceful Haven by Elizabeth Anne Scott.

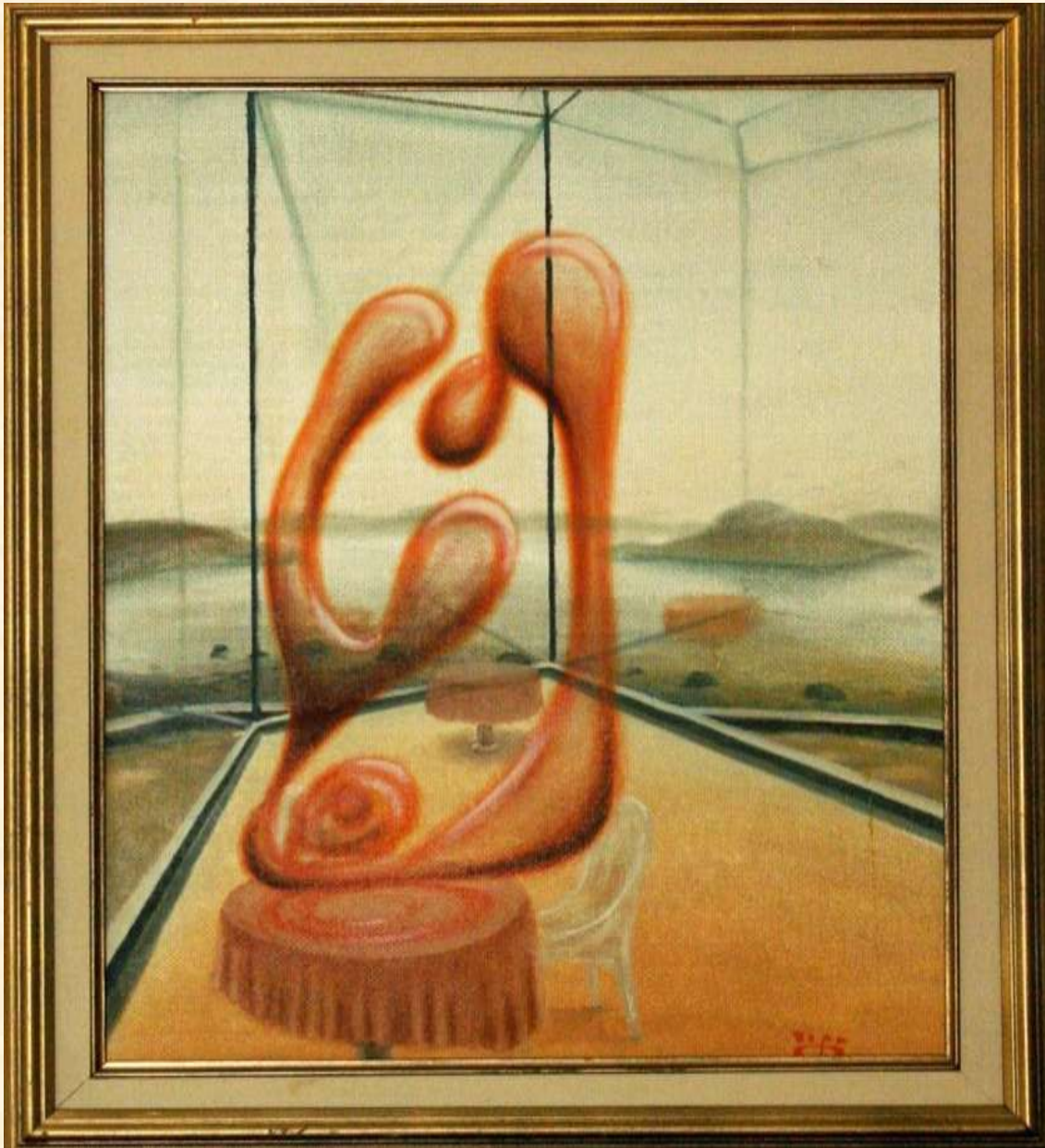
Paintings and Sculpture by Stan Riha:



Gold Fever



Stage



First Date



Ղոցւ



Sleeping Swan

WIN ArtistIQ Competitions and News

On 15th January the first WIN ArtistIQ competition started. The subject was "Music" and art pieces of different kinds were requested to visually show what "music" means to the participants.

The competition ended on 15th February and the winner was proclaimed on 5th march:

Greg Collins won the competition with his beautiful painting "Rachel with guitar". You can admire it on the home page of the ArtistIQ Special Interest Group: <http://artist.iqsociety.org/>

The ArtistIQ section of WIN is also an art gallery for all the members of WIN, so, if you wish to store and show your art pieces, send them to artist@iqsociety.org

A new competition will start on 15th April and end on 15th May. The subject of this new competition will be "Nature", so let yourselves be inspired by the beauty of landscapes, flowers and animals, then send your work to artist@iqsociety.org

Beatrice Rescazzi

Anthology of Poems by Tahawar Khan, PhD.

A Rain in Faisalabad

The city, freshly drenched by a winter
shower, glistens with a silvery sheen.

Garishly painted trucks blare their horns
through the streets, scaring scrawny cats.

Wheels of trucks and bicycles spray up
muddy water, rotate in a squishy mash.

A light wind flutters over a bicycling man,
creates ripples on his flowing baggy clothes.

Bearded Pathans clutch their wool hats
and resolutely stride through the mist.

With a wet fluorescent shine, guavas and
mangoes glow from rickety brown wood carts.

Water drops fall from rusted awnings,
splash into shallow asymmetric puddles.

On Visiting the Tomb of Jahangir

The falcon gracefully circles,
hovers on the winds of Hindustan.
Trained cheetahs chase their quarry,
claws digging the earth of the Deccan.

Magnanimous in your royal robes, you
reward the falconer and cheetah-keepers.
Like your soldiers, today the cheetahs
bring prizes for you.

Padshah Babur would be proud
of these conquests, you think.
“It was always in my heart
to possess Hindustan.”
His words intrigue you
as you travel to
the northern valleys.

“The gardens of Kashmir are beyond
counting and calculation.”
Intoxicated by the gardens of Kashmir,
reclining and resplendent, you
drink in the fragrance of Shalimar.

Thinking of how you enjoyed
those Kashmiri flowers,
I gaze at the flowers
of this garden in Lahore,
entranced by their colors
as I daydream
of the splendors
of your court.

Clifton Beach – A Petrarchan Sonnet

We drive on to Karachi's beach section,
somewhat tired from our bazaar visits.
On the roadside, a cobra bobs and flits
while a charmer swags wood flute with passion.
Further down, still another attraction –
a monkey begs, holds out primate digits
for a peanut while his master fidgets
with a drum, taps fingers with precision.
We get to the beach, call to the hawkler
and buy a camel ride, show fortitude.
Dromedary struts, starts speeding faster;
he steers us and asserts his attitude.
We reach the Arabian Sea water
and pause there to absorb the latitude.

Kazakh Falconer – A Shakespearean Sonnet

A pale link moon breaks the deep turquoise sky.
Mesmerizing grey-black clouds shift and swirl.
Across the steppe cuts a sharp shrieking cry;
an eagle screams and beats air in a whirl.
Strong wings flutter and stir leather tethers.
The Kazakh squints at his tamed sky creature.
Leaning back to avoid flying feathers,
he patiently waits out the skittish furor.
Anxious rustlings subside; heels dig in sides
of the stout Mongol pony munching grass.
Man, bird, and horse move forward in crisp strides
and wander the green plain of Zalanash.
Bouncing on gloved hand, the eagle eyes the man
as the trio moves across Kazakhstan.

Patang Jang: Kite War – A Villanelle

Kites dart with kinetic electricity.

Flocks of pigeons streak about.

The grey shy flutters with activity.

Shahid scans the sky, watches receptively.

He calmly awaits the next bout.

Kites dart with kinetic electricity.

A kite drifts over, shows aggressive propensity.

Masood challenges Shahid and lets out a shout.

The grey sky flutters with activity.

Shahid's string crosses Masood's, cuts viciously.

With alacrity and agility, it moves without doubt.

Kites dart with kinetic electricity.

Masood's kite drifts down dejectedly.

Shahid beams and calls Masood a lout.

The grey shy flutters with activity.

Masood buys a new kite, rejoins the festivity.

The day is young; no need to pout.

Kites dart with kinetic electricity.

The grey shy flutters with activity.

“Signification is the nigger's occupation.”
Parody and Ridicule in the Art of Ishmael Reed.

This is a summary of a thesis written in Italian by Dr.C.Basciu. This first part will discuss the development of a distinct Afro-American mode of literary expression, followed by an analysis of the Black Aesthetic and the Neo-Hoodoo Aesthetic that evolved in the work of Ishmael Reed.

The Black Aesthetic: the search for a typically Afro-American Literary Expression.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Afro-American intellectuals started to have a public domain and wanted to express an essentially Afro-American art form within the American literary canon. This was constrained by them belonging to a dual culture: an African one, and another culture represented via a dominant European literary model.

An example of the emerging expression of the Afro-American dilemma was the Talking Book, in which the disappointment and surprise at a book being mute is expressed, that is, the slave owner actually speaks, not the book:

“[My master] used to read prayers in public to the ship's crew every Sabbath day; and when I first saw him read, I was never so surprised in my life as to when I saw the book talk to my master, for I thought it did, as I saw him look upon it, and move his lips. I wished it would do so with me. As soon as my master had done reading, I followed him to the place where he put the book, being mighty delighted with it, and when nobody saw me, opened it, in great hopes that it would say something to me; but I was very sorry, and greatly disappointed, when I found that it would not speak. This thought immediately presented itself to me, that every body and every thing despised me because I was black.”⁽¹⁾

The Talking Book became a metaphor for the lack of African voice. This encouraged Afro-Americans to learn to read and write, to render themselves equal to the dominant White Literary canon and mode of expression.

During the early 1920s, the so-called Harlem Renaissance⁽²⁾ manifested two distinct attitudes: a moderate, inclusive one allied to the Anglo-American society; and another, more radical one, that tended to value the image of an Afro-American culture and to define its characteristics in order to give birth to a separate literary genre. Amongst these radical intellectuals emerged the figure of W.E.DuBois, a writer conscious of the lack of Afro-American intellectual identity. In 1926, in his essay Criteria of Negro Art (contained in the book, The Crisis) DuBois writes:

“All art is propaganda and ever must be, despite the wailing of the purists. I stand in utter shamelessness and say that whatever art I have for writing has been used always for propaganda for gaining the right of Black folk to love and enjoy. I do not care when propaganda is confined to one side while the other is stripped and silent.”⁽³⁾

- 1) A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African Prince, as Related by Himself. Quoted by Gates, H.L. in The Signifying Monkey (1989), p.136.
- 2) The Harlem Renaissance period was from the 1920s until the end of the 30s when a large number of Afro-American writers wrote about their lives for literary motives and as a form of propaganda.
- 3) DuBois, W.E., “Criteria of Negro Art”, in The Crisis, October 1926, pp 290-291.

DuBois refused to use dialect in his work because he considered that it would be misconstrued as Whites' stereotyping. He revolutionized through content, but remained a traditionalist as regards style. By the end of the 1920s, DuBois had opened a debate on how necessary it was to have an autonomous linguistic mode of expression. Hughes, Johnson and Locke shared DuBois's opinion on the conventional use of dialect, but felt the need to find a literary mode of expression that mirrored the Blacks' spoken language.

Another influential writer to emerge at this time was Zora Neale Hurston, her work being sustained by her anthropological and ethnological studies of the Afro-American population. Her novel Their Eyes Were Watching God is considered the first example within Afro-American literature of "speakerly text"⁽⁴⁾, that is, rhetoric that is constructed to emulate the grammar, lexis and phonetics of real discourse, and to produce the illusion of oral narration. According to Hurston, the search for an authentic, autonomous literary language was allied to the search for a true Black literary identity.

Fundamental to this was the typical verbal game of "Signifying", which will be elaborated upon with particular reference to Reed's literary canon, in part two of this essay. However, it's important to note that signifying is the linguistic game used in vernacular Afro-American language whereby diverse rhetorical techniques are used to allude to a subject, often in a humorous way. These techniques include the use of metaphor, hyperbole, metonymy and synecdoche.⁽⁵⁾ Hurston's novel is interesting because the omniscient narrator uses Standard English but the direct speech of the characters uses Black English, as well as the innovative use of 'free indirect speech' where the thoughts of the characters, especially the main one, are represented. This develops more and more during the denouement of the novel, and H.L. Gates in his book The Signifying Monkey (ibid,p.192) says that:

"Through the use of what Hurston called a highly 'adorned' free indirect discourse, Their Eyes Were Watching God resolves that implicit tension between Standard English and Black English, the two voices that function as verbal counterpoint in the text's opening paragraphs."

Hurston influenced many subsequent writers, the most important being Richard Wright with his work that brought out into the open how the ghetto was not a refuge for Black Americans but rather a socially and economically subversive environment in which Blacks were often trapped. Wright's main character Bigger Thomas in the novel Native Son recounts this experience in a Chicago ghetto; and Wright further expresses his intentions in his essay How Bigger Was Born:

"This association with white writers was the life preserver of my hope to depict Negro life in fiction, for my race possessed no fictional work dealing with such problems, had no background in such sharp and critical testing of experience, no novels that went with a deep and fearless will down to the dark roots of life."⁽⁶⁾

1) Gates, H.L., The Signifying Monkey, p 181.

2) These terms are explained on the LinguistIQ Special Interest Group pages on the WIN website.

3) Wright, R., How Bigger Was Born, in Native Son, NY, Harper Row, 1940, p.588.

As for writing styles, a major influence came from Ralph Ellison during the early 1950s, via the novel *Invisible Man* where the anonymous main character talks in the first person using dialect which has a particular musicality, and this use of musicality distinguishes the social hierarchy of the protagonists. This innovative use of language became a reference point for many subsequent writers within the genre, though the novel itself was very much “a conventional modern novel [...] much in the tradition of *Huckleberry Finn* or *A Portrait of The Artist as a Young Man*.” (7)

During the early 1960s, the political situation in America strongly conditioned Afro-American literary production. Although The Civil Rights Act (1964) and The Voting Bill (1965) hailed the end of legalized segregation, racism and segregation continued amid violence and assassinations - most notably the assassination of important leaders and politicians such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. and both John F. and Robert Kennedy. The ongoing Vietnam War was viewed as quintessentially racist in principle, recharging fierce nationalist tendencies, these aspects infusing the evolving Black narrative with a sense of pride in the use of dialect. A conscious move to incorporate musical rhythms within texts also developed via writers such as Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones), and, as Baraka states:

“The most apparent survivals of African music in Afro-American music are in its rhythms; not only the seeming emphasis in the African music on rhythmic, rather than melodic or harmonic qualities, but also the use of polyphonic or contra-punctual rhythmic effects.” (8)

A new aesthetic evolved which became known as the Black Aesthetic, distinctive writing with mainly an Afro-American readership in mind, and which followed a strong political line of reasoning. Maulana Karenga, another exponent of the Black Aesthetic, noted that:

“All art, regardless of any technical requirements must be functional, collective and committing [plus] must expose the enemy, praise the people and support the revolution.” (9)

So, by the time Ishmael Reed began writing, the Black Aesthetic had matured to a certain extent, and was grounded in confronting the rift within the African-American psyche, the aesthetic identifying itself with Black people's African roots, and having many representative subjects expressed in the Afro-American dialect.

Ishmael Reed and the Neo-Hoodoo Aesthetic with regard to the Black Aesthetic.

Reed represents a further development in the search for a typically Afro-American literary expression. For Reed, the components of African and American culture are both expressions of cultural experience and need to be related: to negate the Anglo-American aspects is to ignore reality. Yet, when he started writing, the quintessential problem was to tease out the African aspects from a Eurocentric culture, one that tended to suffocate expression by a perceived subordinate culture.

(7) Holton, S.W. *Down Home and Uptown*, p.175

(8) Jones, L.R., *Blues People*, William Morrow, NY, 1965, p.17

(9) Karenga, R., *Black Cultural Nationalism*, in *The Black Aesthetic*, Garden City, NY, Doubleday 1972, p.32.

In the novel Yellow Back Radio Broke Down the significant and curious dialogue between Loop Garou Kid and Bo Shmo gives an explicit example of the author's criticism of realism in the Black Aesthetic, represented by the opinions of Bo Shmo. Loop Garou says:

“ ‘What’s you beef with me Bo Shmo, what if I write circus? No one says a novel has to be one thing. It can be anything it wants to be, a Vaudeville show, the six o’clock news, the mumbling of wild men saddled by demons.’ ”

[Bo Shmo] ‘All art must be the end of liberating the masses. A landscape is only good when it shows the oppressor hanging from a tree.’ ” (10)

So, for Reed, the aim was to find a mode of artistic expression via which the Afro-American writer could freely overcome the state of division (11) that so marked the Afro-American literary canon at that time. (12) This was the origin of the Negro-Hoodoo Aesthetic.

The Characteristics of Negro-Hoodoo Aesthetic.

The slaves that were brought to America gave the name Hoodoo to the Voodoo religion that had developed in Haiti during the 17th Century. Slaves from eastern Africa had populated Haiti and had fused various aspects of the pagan rites incorporated within their religious practices. Of fundamental importance were the Vodou and the Loa. The Vodou were the forces of Nature; the Loa were the supernatural forces of the slaves' antecedents, of the dead voodoo priests and the saints from the Catholic religion. They were incorporated by the dancers while performing frenzied, rhythmical dances, during which the dancers entered a state of trance, thereby fusing the past and present. This unification of the past with the present was extremely important and was adjunct to the notion that each individual became part of a collective psyche.

Reed takes the two fundamental elements of Hoodoo as a point of departure in his aesthetic: synergism and the concept of diachronic analysis. In an interview in 1985, Reed said that:

“ I think there is a distinct approach that carries through in my fiction. It's a combination of different influences, you know; I try to combine elements from different arts, cultures and disciplines...My approach owes more to the Afro-American oral tradition and to folk art than to any literary tradition. The oral tradition uses techniques like satire, hyperbole, invective and bawdiness... I use a lot of techniques that are western and many that are Afro-American.” (15)

(10) Reed, L., *Yellow Back Radio Broke Down*, Avon Books, NY, 1977, p.44.

(11) The hyphen that separates 'Afro' from 'American' in 'Afro-American' was recognized and knowingly acknowledged by DuBois.

(12) Reed, L., *The Harlem Experience*, in *The New Times Book Review*, 29th August 1976, p.27.

(15) Watkins, Mel., *An Interview with Ishmael Reed*, *The Southern Review*, 21.5.1985, pp 610-611.

Examples of the plethora of linguistic expressions used in Reed's work are Standard English, Black English, New York dialect, the vernacular of cowboys, and linguistic styles taken from both television and comics. Reed also creates neologisms, or words that have no specific meaning.

The character Fannie Mae in *The Frezlanez Pallbearers* uses words that are written phonetically rather than spelled correctly; also, her substitution of 'th' for 'd' is a typically Black English mode of expression, that vocalized inter-dental fricative being the last sound to be learnt in Standard English:

"Mothafukaaaaaaaaa. What do you think I am, some kind of bowllegged pack animal who's gone empty your slop dat you can kek and give orders to?" (14)

The lengthening of the vowel sound on the word 'kek' is also used to render her relationship with her husband even more ridiculous.

Another character's use of advertising slogans outside his hotel relates a world full of hyperbole that is ludicrous. The narrator comments on that character, using made-up language to paradoxically invoke meaning via the use of nonsensical language:

"Harry Sam is something else. A big not-to-be-believd out of sight, sometimes referred to as O-BOP-SHE-BANG or KLANG-A-LANG-A-DING-DONG." (15)

In a later novel, *Mumbo Jumbo*, Reed intersperses chapters written about the past with those representing the present, to fuse the present and past as per the floodoo rituals:

"People go back in the past to explain the present or the future. I call this 'necromancy', because that's what it is [...] Necromancers used to lie in the guts of the dead or in tombs to receive visions of the future. That is prophecy. The Black writer lies in the guts of old America, making readings about the future. That's what I wanted to do in *Mumbo Jumbo*." (16)

More precisely, *Mumbo Jumbo* not only recounts the myth of the Egyptian god Thoth (the god of Scripture) but also the history of the Order of the Knights Templar - with a clear reference to the defence of Christian belief and the power of writing. These aspects to the novel are relayed by "Jes Grew". Also, the preoccupations of the Anglo-Americans during the 1920s are intertwined with the post-war concerns, i.e. the political scandals, and the re-birth of a specific Afro-American culture during that period. Additionally, this anticipates the similar cultural and political concerns in America during the 1970s. Again, according to Reed, the Afro-American writer is a necromancer:

"He is a conjurer who works juju upon his oppressors; a witch doctor who frees his fellow victims from the psychic attack launched by the demons of the outer and inner world." (17)

(14) Reed, L., *The Frezlanez Pallbearers*, Athenium, NY, 1988, p.24

(15) *ibid.*, p.1

(16) Reed, L., interviewed by John O'Brien, in Bellamy J.D., *The New Fiction, Interviews with Innovative American Writers*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, London, 1971-1975, pp.133-134.

(17) Reed, L., *19 Necromancers from Now*, Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1970, p XVII.

Reed attributes the power of words as something magical, something that accompanies a magical act. Only words have the power to change reality, to destroy the enemy. This idea is contained within the Afro-American culture via the oral tradition which Reed attempts to reproduce in his writing. Words have become his amulets which can change reality, or, like the Loa, they are things that possess readers and constrain them to question themselves and their value system.

The Hoodoo Aesthetic as the Reconstitution and Re-orientation of the Values within Afro-American Culture.

As previously stated, Reed is of the opinion that western culture is a totalitarian, euro-centric one that has suppressed minority cultures, especially the Afro-American culture. More specifically, according to Reed, Anglo-American culture is a part of a self-serving Christian one, something which confines and marginalizes voodoo, and therefore truncates the relationship between Afro-Americans and their traditions. (18)

Reed, via his hoodoo aesthetic, manages to give characteristic value to the hoodoo culture as intuition, as a creative source and invokes a degree of mystery, all elements that he considers opposite but complementary to the cold logic, materialism and insensitivity proposed by western culture. For Reed, as in the conception of hoodoo, 'opposition' is associated with 'vitality'. In the hoodoo religion, there is a god called Eshu-Eleggbara, one that is in fact the central figure in the hoodoo pantheon. Eleggbara is the figure of dualism: the 'opposites' reside within him:

"Eshu's two sides disclose a hidden wholeness; rather than closing off unity, through the opposition, they signify the passage from one to the other as sections of a subsumed whole." (19)

This deity is a point of reference for Reed's conception of reality and of art, something confirmed in Mumbo Jumbo which, beyond being a novel, can be considered a sage critique of traditional Afro-American literature and of the neo-hoodoo aesthetic. The main character in Mumbo Jumbo personifies Eshu-Eleggbara and seeks to explain the mysterious scourge that was infesting 1920s America: "Jes Grew" is none other than a parody of the spirit that animated the Harlem Renaissance. As H.L. Gates sustains:

"Jes Grew [...] is a clever and subtle parody of similar forces invoked in the black novel of naturalism, most notably in Wright's Native Son." (20)

(18) J.H. Bryant sustains that "Western rationalism has overthrown early man's practice of magic and worship of mystery, and consolidated its victory by associating the instinctual and spontaneous with everything that is evil. Through the Christian church and other organizations, it has killed off what is more vital in the healthy, living being: laughter, joy singing, dancing." Bryant, J.H., *Old Gods and New Demons. L.Reed and His Fiction*, in: *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, 4,2, 1984, p.198.

(19) Gates, H.L., *The Signifying Monkey*, p.50.

(20) *Ibid*, p.222.

Reed is therefore criticizing the writers of the Harlem Renaissance who claimed to have captured the true experience of their own people, whilst writing according to the western literary canon. In Mumbo Jumbo, Reed expresses originality via rhetorical games, the art of 'signifying' which, implying multiple voices and gross ambiguity, results in a multitude of meanings that render the uncertainty of interpretation. "Jess Grew" cannot be reduced to a unique subject. "Jess Grew" is dance, it is music, possession, syncretism and signifying. Essentially, the Negro-Hoodoo Aesthetic had finally found its expression in Mumbo Jumbo. (21)

In part two of this essay, what constitutes parody, plus the use of signifying as parody will be discussed, followed by an analysis of Reed's use of parody in the novel The Last Days of Louisiana Red.



(21) Reed, I., Mumbo Jumbo, Atheneum, New York, 1985.

Contemplation and Human Existence - by Paul Edgeworth.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle tells us that perfect happiness consists in *theoria* or contemplation, or what some others have referred to as study. It is the purpose of the present paper to analyze Aristotle's text carefully to arrive at an understanding of contemplation and the role that it should play in the life of a human being. It will be necessary to begin therefore by examining the key terms and criteria that secure the coherence of Aristotle's doctrine. The key terms and criteria that constitute Aristotle's doctrine are found primarily in Books I and X. We will also find that Book VI will come to afford considerable insight into our understanding of Aristotle's work.

1. *Eudaimonia* as the purpose of life

Eudaimonia occurs first in chapter four of Book I and is usually translated as "happiness." In this sense, it can be misleading as it connotes a somewhat static state. Perhaps a better translation would be "flourishing" which conveys a meaning of possessing and using one's powers over a considerable length of time, during which the future continues to look bright.¹ *Eudaimonia* for Aristotle is then achieving one's full potential, that is, what one has made of one's self and one's life.² *Eudaimonia* whether understood as happiness or flourishing arises in response to the question, "What do people aim for in life?" The response which Aristotle gives us thus becomes the ultimate end or *telos* which structurally constitutes the basic concept of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.³ As the ultimate end, it will also be the best good. For the good is what is aimed at. The ultimate end or best good will be the most complete end, and it will be sufficient of itself. It is the most complete, because it is for its own sake, and not for the sake of anything else.⁴ It is rather that for the sake of which everything else is done. "Hence an end that is always choiceworthy in its own right, never because of something else, is complete without qualification."⁵ Happiness, Aristotle tells us, is what seems to be complete more than anything else, and therefore it best meets this criterion.⁶ It is furthermore sufficient of itself in that there is nothing more required and no further end to be pursued.⁷ "Anyhow, we regard something as self-sufficient when all by itself it makes a life choiceworthy and lacking nothing; and that is what we think happiness does."⁸

¹John M. Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1975), 89.

²Gerard J. Hughes, *Aristotle on Ethics* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 22.

³Cooper, 91.

⁴Hughes, 31-32.

⁵Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. 2nd ed. trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999), 1097a34-36, 8. Hereinafter referred to as *NE*.

⁶Ibid., 1097b1, 8.

⁷Hughes, 32.

⁸*NE*, 1097b14-15, 8.

2. The *ergon* of a human being

Aristotle still feels that we need a clearer account of what the best good is, and he believes that we can find this if we can understand what the function or *ergon* of the human being is. We share the functions of living, nutrition, and growth with plants. Likewise, we share a life of sense perception with every animal. So the function of the human being must be found in the exercise of a capacity which is specifically human. This leads Aristotle to conclude that it must consist in intelligent action.

The remaining possibility, then, is some sort of life of action of the [part of the soul] that has reason. One [part] of it has reason as obeying reason; the other has it as itself having reason and thinking. Moreover, life is also spoken of in two ways [as capacity and as activity], and we must take [a human being's special function to be] life as activity, since this seems to be called life more fully. We have found, then, that the human function is activity of the soul in accord with reason or requiring reason.⁹

Therefore, it follows that the human good is to be found in the exercise of whatever is the best and most characteristic of the human soul's faculties. Moreover, this activity must occur over a complete lifetime. "For one swallow does not make a spring, nor does one day; nor, similarly, does one day or a short time make us blessed and happy."¹⁰ Aristotle at this point tells us that the foregoing account can serve as a sketch or outline of the good which he can then fill in afterwards.

3. The best objects of study

The function argument as delineated above later leads Aristotle to conclude in Book X, chapter 7, that happiness consists in *theoria*, that is, the activity of study or contemplation.¹¹ Following Aristotle's example, now would be a good time to provide a first sketch of what constitutes the act of contemplation. Broadly speaking, contemplation expressing wisdom must be of the most abstract things. It is an intellectual grasp of the most noble objects, and these are those which are said to be perfect and changeless.¹² The best objects of study for us would then be God's nature and that of the heavenly bodies, the first principles of metaphysics, all of which would be unchanging, and perhaps the unchanging principles of mathematics and physics as well.¹³ We can further distinguish and say that the study of God or theology is prior to and more exact than mathematics, and that the latter is prior to and more exact than physics.

⁹*NE*, 1098a5-7, 9.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 1098a19-20, 9.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 1177a15-18, 163.

¹²Hughes, 46.

¹³*Ibid.*

4. Framework in which to proceed

Aristotle also distinguishes between theoretical and practical reason. He is also quick to point out that the best use of our minds is *theoria*, for it is the exercise of what is divine in us. If we are to arrive at a more complete understanding of what Aristotle is talking about, it is apparent that we are going to have to come to terms with the following. We will have to examine practical knowledge or *phronesis*. We will need to look at Aristotle's picture of God so that we can better understand what constitutes a life devoted to *theoria*. We will need to understand the relationship between *phronesis* and *theoria*. Only then will we be able to arrive at a deeper understanding of *theoria* itself and of the role it should play in our life according to Aristotle.

5. The concept of *phronesis*

With this framework in place, let us examine at this time the concept of *phronesis*, a discussion of which occurs in Book VI. For Aristotle, it is the highest skill of the mind in relation to practical matters. Let us begin then, as he does, by distinguishing five states in which the soul possesses truth by affirmation or denial. These are: craft or *technē*, scientific knowledge or *epistēmē*, prudence or *phronesis*, wisdom or *sophia*, and understanding or *nous*. In *Metaphysics*, I, 1, Aristotle shows us how *sophia* grows out of experience and practical knowledge. All men, we are told, naturally desire knowledge, that is, they stretch out to pick up knowings. From first perceptions, we rise up to memory, which is a higher perception; hence, a movement upwards in knowledge. In *technē*, the craftsman comes to see the common form. He is able then to teach his craft to students. In *epistēmē*, you know the causes of things, and finally in *sophia*, you know the unchanging first principles, *archai*.¹⁴ This is not just more science, but something qualitatively different. You not only know you have principles, but you know that you know them. A reflection about *archai* has occurred. In the *Posterior Analytics*, II, the same path is traced. Out of sense experience comes memory. Experience develops out of frequently repeated memories of the same thing. There is a realization that there are objective facts that are the same for everybody. From experience, the skill of the craftsman develops, which



From experience, the skill of the craftsman develops, which

¹⁴As distinguished from *phronesis* wherein understanding grasps the changeable *archai* of action. These, in turn, are the last step in deliberation and the first step leading to the *telos*. See VI, 8, 1142a25-30 and 1143b1-15.

can be understood as a coming to be. Then follows the knowledge of the man of science; hence, an arrival at being. There is nothing truer than science, and *nous* or intuitive understanding grasps the original and most basic principles.

The most comprehensive form of scientific knowledge is *sophia*. It must be then *episteme* and not *techné*. It is *episteme* and *nous* together, that is, it consists of scientific knowledge and an intuitive grasp of first principles for a particular discipline. We can further distinguish *sophia* by saying that it cannot be otherwise. It is always the same and eternal. That is to say that *sophia* of a particular science will have the same universal nature since it will deal with phenomenon whose *archai* are unchanging. Such distinctions immediately enable us then to say the following about *phronesis*. It is not always the same. It can be otherwise. It is variable and consists of many kinds of knowledge. It is not only about universals, but must also acquire knowledge of particulars. It is the best good for a human being achievable in action. It is not the most excellent thing, for the best thing in the universe is not the human being. It is not a science, nor is it objective knowledge of doing. It is what is best for one's self. As such, it involves awareness and decision. We must determine the means to our right end, happiness. The choices that we make then can be seen to involve both *orexis*, desire of an end, and *prohairesis*, the choice of the best means to achieve the desired end. We can conclude our brief look at *phronesis* by saying that it consists in the observation of a mean which is defined by a *logos* such as a wise man would use to determine it. The *phronemon* therefore possesses certain general principles that he adeptly applies to particular circumstances.¹⁵ In doing so, the *phronemon* is concerned not in producing a product as in *techné*, but rather in making himself. In the final analysis, though concerned with things that are variable, *phronesis* is itself stable, but like any *hexis* or state it can be modified based upon our experience in life.

6. God is *nous*

We have said that if we are to arrive at a fuller understanding of *theoria*, we need to examine Aristotle's notion of God and the divine. Let us now proceed to do so. The activity of the divine is by a process of elimination determined to be contemplation or study as evidenced in the following:

In another way it appears that complete happiness is also some activity of study. For we traditionally suppose that the gods, more than anyone, are blessed and happy; but what sorts of actions ought we to ascribe to them? Just actions? Surely they will appear ridiculous making contracts, returning deposits, and so on. Brave actions? Do they endure what [they find] frightening and endure dangers because it is fine? Generous actions? Whom will they give to? And surely it would be absurd for them to have currency or anything like that. What would their temperate actions be? . . . When we go through them all, anything that concerns actions appears trivial and unworthy of the gods. Nonetheless, we

¹⁵Thomas M. Tuozzo, "Contemplation, the Noble, and the Mean: The Standard of Moral Virtue in Aristotle's Ethics," *Aristotle, Virtue and the Mean*, ed. Richard Bosgely, Roger A. Shiner, and Janet D. Sisson (Edmonton: Academic, 1995), 133.

all traditionally suppose that they are alive and active Then if someone is alive, and action is excluded, and production even more, what is left but study? Hence the god's activity that is superior in blessedness will be an activity of study.¹⁶

And what precisely constitutes God's study. Aristotle in the *Metaphysics*, XII, 9, tells us that God thinks of that which is most precious and divine, and is unchanging. Therefore God must think of God, and his thinking is a thinking on the thinking. Since God is simple and not composed of matter, the divine thought and its object will be one and the same.¹⁷ God is therefore freely and unbrokenly conscious of truth, beauty, reality, or whatever words we choose to express a thinking which is perfectly at one with its object, and hence thinks always and only itself.¹⁸ We can immediately see then that our problem will be one of how to approximate to this divine activity which we have seen to be eternal and to fill all of God's existence.¹⁹ For God then a life spent in *theoria* would be a life spent in *nous*. Heidegger tells us that *theoria* comes from the Greek verb *theōrein* which, in turn, comes from *thea* or theater and *horaō* or to look over something attentively. It can stand for the life of the beholder.²⁰ It is then one who in viewing, can take-in things. It is a pure relationship to what is being manifested. For God, this would be pure *nous*. There is an immediate grasp involved. It is not concerned with a *logos* or thinking through. But *theoria* for man involves a thinking through; consequently, it has *logos* in it.

7. Matterless and unmatted principles

We mentioned earlier that contemplation should entail a study of God and first principles of metaphysics, and the unchanging principles of mathematics and physics. But will it be necessary for us to revise this? *Nous* as we have said is a kind of intuition or a kind of seeing in which we grasp first principles, but for us it is one that will proceed from empirical research.²¹ As C.D.C. Reeve points out, to engage in *nous* as contemplation would be to study the matterless things that *nous* studies. As we have already seen, the science that is most of all God's is divine science. And this divine science is also the most valuable, for God is the most valuable thing. At the same time, God is the most abstract, for God is genuinely matterless. The best and most exact form of scientific study that we could engage in then would be one that studied God. For when *nous* studies God, it is like when God engages in thought about himself. But when a human being engages in the study of matterless universals, he is not studying himself, but rather what is most of all himself, that

¹⁶*NE*, 1178b9-23, 166.

¹⁷Aristotle, *Metaphysics*. trans. W.D. Ross. In *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. ed. with an intro. by Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 1074b25-1075a10, 885.

¹⁸H.H. Joachim, *The Nicomachean Ethics: A Commentary*. ed. by D.A. Rees (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), 286.

¹⁹Sarah Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991), 403.

²⁰Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. trans. with an intro. by William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 163-64.

²¹C.D.C. Reeve, *Practices of Reason: Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 64.

is, the divine part of himself.²² *Theoria* can be broadly construed then as any kind of detached, intelligent, attentive pondering, and would at this level include the absorbed uncovering of structures such as the eternal patterns of the universe, as well as an effort to arrive at a deeper understanding of mathematical relations and other forms of beauty and order to be found in the structures of plants and animals.²³ But this would not be the highest level of contemplation as would be found in *nous*. Indeed, to the extent that Aristotle's case for the supreme value of *theoria* rests on a kinship between a divine spark in man and the objects of theological and cosmological speculation, the exclusion of physics and of mathematics as well is inevitable.²⁴ Whereas God exercises theoretical wisdom in its best form, the natural philosopher or mathematician exercises a lower kind of theoretical wisdom.²⁵ The former wisdom is better because it is essentially matterless, whereas the latter is concerned with enmattered principles.

8. Theoretical and practical life

To arrive at a new level of understanding in what is happening, it is necessary at this point to look at the relation between the theoretical life and the practical life. When Aristotle discusses the two lives, it is not at first clear what the relationship between the two is. "First of all, let us state that both prudence and wisdom must be choice-worthy in themselves, even if neither produces anything at all; for each is the virtue of one of the two [rational] parts [of the soul]."²⁶ Is he saying that we should lead the theoretical life rather than the practical life? Or is he instead saying that we should try to combine the two and lead them both? These are questions which we shall soon have to address. In spite of this, there is no doubt whatever about the pronounced distinction Aristotle makes between practical and theoretical knowledge.

As Joseph Owens points out, the Aristotelian distinction between the former and the latter presents the morally good or the noble not as something already existent and thereby able to serve as the object of theoretical cognition, but as something to be chosen. Its truth is not found to correspond to what exists in reality, but rather to correspond to correct habituation in the doer. The theoretical, in turn, is measured by existent reality; the practical by correct personal habituation.²⁷

²²Ibid., 141-42.

²³Broadie, 400-401.

²⁴W.F.R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1980), 339.

²⁵Richard Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1989), 75.

²⁶NE,1144a1-3, 97.

²⁷"Value and Practical Knowledge in Aristotle," *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy IV: Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. John P. Anton and Anthony Preus (Albany: State Univ. of New York, 1990), 190.

²⁷Cooper, 144.

9. A symbiotic relationship

There is moreover a symbiotic relationship between the two. It follows directly from Aristotle's insistence on the means-ends structure of all practical reasoning that rational order can be adequately introduced into a person's life only if he sets up some goal for the good life, by which pursuing he will then do all his actions.²⁵ The active conditions of human existence make it necessary to acquire some determined character; and that, given the natural limitations on the types of character that can be acquired, the moral virtues taken in sum constitute the best available type of character to have from the perspective of the maximum realization of intellectual values.²⁹ It follows, therefore, that Aristotle must also hold that moral values are to be seen as effective means to the enhancement of one's intellectual life, and that the *phronimos*, who is a moral person par excellence, so discerns them.³⁰

As a correlative to this, we can also state that *nous* is related to *phronesis* in two ways. First, it provides the latter with knowledge of universals of the sort Aristotle believes it must have if it is to achieve *eudaimonia* as reliably as possible; second, the activity of *nous* is itself *eudaimonia* or the ultimate end at which *phronesis* aims.³¹

10. The best use of our mind is *theoria*

Having said this, it thus appears that in the constitution of human life the theoretical side is given a special weight since, within the fixed framework provided by the moral virtues, intellectual values will be pursued and promoted to the maximum degree possible.³² This indeed is brought out by Aristotle in the following passage:

Moreover, prudence does not control wisdom or the better part of the soul, just as medical science does not control health. For medical science does not use health, but only aims to bring health into being; hence it prescribes for the sake of health, but does not prescribe to health. Besides, [saying that prudence controls wisdom] would be like saying that political science rules the gods because it prescribes about everything in the city.³³

Based on the above, it appears that the superiority of philosophical wisdom is asserted. Nevertheless, *theoria* is wholly dependent in human existence on practical virtue for being realized otherwise than haphazardly or with no more security than would be

²⁷ *NE*, 1145a7-12, 99.

²⁷ Broadie, 389.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 393.

²⁷ Cooper, 119.nk, 1991), 146.

²⁵ Cooper, 96.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 108.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

³¹ Reeve, 190.

³² Cooper, 144.

³³ *NE*, 1145a7-12, 99.

shared by anything trivial enough to be left to chance or individual inclination.³⁴ Thus the full potential for *theoria* is abetted by good conduct which Aristotle's ethics is mainly about, together with the reflective mind that engages in this sort of study, under conditions permitting the activity of study to occur.³⁵

11. Constraints on *theoria*

It is now time to address a question we raised earlier, and that is, should we try to combine the two lives we have been discussing, one in accordance with *theoria*, the other in accordance with practical activity? Aristotle may be saying that although some kind of primacy should be given to the former, the best life will be one that combines it with the latter. By this is meant that a life organized around a single end consisting of both of them would seem to be structured more reasonably than one organized around either one alone.³⁶ As Nancy Sherman keenly observes, theoretical reason is not exclusively us, nor is its activity exclusively our happiness. There are other parts with which we are identified that are not co-extensive with *theoria*. These other grounds, especially, practical reason and moral virtue, are essential parts of us, and not merely conditions of our human condition. Thus, *eudaimonia* does not consist exclusively of contemplation, though contemplation may itself account for a superior kind of *eudaimonia*.³⁷ This reasoning is based upon Aristotle's injunction to us, "as far as we can, we ought to be pro-immortal, and go to all lengths to live a life in accord with our supreme element."³⁸ The implication here, Sherman tells us, is that there are constraints on how *theoria* must be pursued: not as God would, but as a mortal would, that is, within the boundaries defined by our human existence. To pursue *theoria* "as far as we can" would then mean as far as the circumstances of practical action permit.³⁹

Our lives are best when we neither underestimate nor overestimate the importance of human goods: we overestimate them if we engage in less theoretical activity than we might, but we can also underestimate the way in which health, wealth, friends, ethical virtue, and so forth contribute to a life that has *theoria* as its ultimate end.⁴⁰

12. What constitutes perfect *eudaimonia*?

We must therefore ask ourselves what exactly is the life expressing *theoria* for a human being? Is it one in which *theoria* alone can be expressed? The answer would appear to be no, for such a life would not be a human life at all.⁴¹ No human being can live a life in

³⁴Broadie, 389.

³⁵Ibid., 393.

³⁶Cooper, 119.

³⁷*The Fabric of Character: Aristotle's Theory of Virtue* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 101.

³⁸*NE*, 1177b34-35, 165.

³⁹Sherman, 101.

⁴⁰Kraut, 189.

⁴¹Broadie, 402.

which *theoria* alone is expressed, and none could then be *eudaimon* doing so. The *eudaimon* life would then appear to be one that is devoted both to contemplation and to the cultivation of practical reason and other human virtues.

Does then perfect *eudaimonia* consist in a life that is a compound of *theoria* and practical activity? This appears to be so, based on what was just stated, and indeed a case could readily be made that this is what the *Eudemian Ethics* concludes.⁴² But if we were to persist and affirm that this is what Aristotle holds in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, we would be committing an egregious mistake. For Aristotle categorically states that the life that consists in the exercise of understanding, the life of contemplation, is supremely the best and *eudaimon*.

Such a life would be superior to the human level. For someone will live it not insofar as he is a human being, but insofar as he has some divine element in him. And the activity of this divine element is as much superior to the activity in accord with the rest of virtue as this element is superior to the compound. Hence if understanding is something divine in comparison with a human being, so also will the life in accord with understanding be divine in comparison with human life. We ought not to follow the makers of proverbs and ‘Think human, since you are human,’ or ‘Think mortal, since you are mortal.’ . . . For what is proper to each thing’s nature is supremely best and most pleasant for it; and hence for a human being the life in accord with understanding will be supremely best and most pleasant, if understanding, more than anything else, is the human being. This life, then, will also be happiest.⁴³

13. Contemplation is the best human good

According to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, understanding is the most supreme virtue, and the activity which is the exercise of understanding, that is to say, *theoria*, is what constitutes perfect *eudaimonia*. Aristotle then goes on to show that *theoria* possesses all the qualities which, in Book 1, were shown to be properties of happiness, namely, that it is the most complete, sufficient of itself, for its own sake, and the operation of what is the best in us. The evidence which Aristotle amasses that contemplation is the best single good among human activities is considerable: It is the activity of the supreme virtue, *sophia* (1177a12-13); it is the supreme activity for *nous* is the supreme element in us (1177a19-20); its objects of understanding are the supreme objects of knowledge (1177a 20-21); it is the most continuous activity, since we are more capable of continuous study than any continuous action (1177a22-23); it is the most pleasant (1177a23-25); it is more self-sufficient than practical activity (1177a27-28); it is liked because of itself alone, since it has no result beyond itself (1177b2-3); moreover, each person seems to be his understanding (1178a3-4); and the part of the human soul that is its understanding is what is best and most akin to the gods (1179a26-27).⁴⁴

⁴²See for instance, I, 7, 1217a21-24; VIII, 15, 1249b5-25.

⁴³*NE*, 1177b27-1178a9, 164-65.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 163-67.

14. To contemplatē is to flourish

Thus, it is abundantly clear that Aristotle endorses the contemplative life as the premier life. In so doing, he consigns the practical life of ethical virtue and practical reason to a second best. “The life in accord with the other kind of virtue [i.e., the kind concerned with action] is [happiest] in a secondary way, because the activities in accord with this virtue are human.”⁴⁵ The practical life, Aristotle is implying, will be a means to contemplative activity. Happiness thus consists in just one good, and this is the exercise of *theoria*. And when we make *theoria* our ultimate end, we become engaged in Godlike activity, for the gods also contemplate. In resembling the gods in this manner, we can attain perfect happiness. Hence to be flourishing, *eudaimon*, is to be theorizing excellently.⁴⁶ Since the gods do not engage in *phronēsis*, those who do so engage, will find themselves more distant from the gods, and can only be happy in a secondary way.

15. Passive and active *nous*

From the foregoing, it is evident that Aristotle’s account of theoretical activity is bound up with the idea that *nous* is the best thing in us. It is the divine, or most divine element in our nature and if small in bulk by much more it surpasses everything in power and worth. *Nous*, we have said, is that which immediately and intuitively apprehends the first principles or *archai*. Since we have encountered this term quite frequently, it will be time well spent if we take a moment to expand upon what we already know about *nous*.



Perhaps the distinction that will help us to understand better the importance Aristotle attaches to theoretical reason is the one he makes between passive and active *nous*. Since in every class of objects, just as in the whole of nature, there is something which is their matter,

⁴⁵Ibid., 1178a8-9, ¹⁴⁵Cooper, 100.

⁴⁵Aristotle, *On the Soul*, trans. W.S. Hett (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1936), 430a10-25, 171.

⁴⁵Cooper, 176.

⁴⁵Joachim, 288.65.

⁴⁶Cooper, 100.

i.e., which is potentially all the individuals, and something else which is their cause or agent in that it makes them all--the two being related as an art to its material--these distinct elements must be present in the soul also. Mind [*nous*] in the passive sense is such because it becomes all things, but mind has another aspect in that it makes all things; this is a kind of positive state like light; for in a sense light makes potential into actual colors. Mind in this sense is separable, impassive and unmixed, since it is essentially an activity; for the agent is always superior to the patient, and the originating cause to the matter. Actual knowledge is identical with its object. Potential is prior in time to actual knowledge in the individual, but in general it is not prior in time. Mind does not think intermittently. When isolated it is its true self and nothing more, and this alone is immortal and everlasting (we do not remember because while mind in this sense cannot be acted upon, mind in the passive sense is perishable), and without this nothing thinks.⁴⁷

According to this passage, we cannot think of the human being as a single complex entity possessing physical, emotional, and intellectual characteristics; all bound together and unified as parts of the soul which, being his form, makes him the creature that he is; instead the highest intellectual power, that is, the active *nous*, is split off from the other powers and made to constitute a soul all on its own.⁴⁸ So in a sense, we can say that this active *nous* is in us without being of us.⁴⁹

However as human beings, we are also passive *nous*, and having bodies and sense organs, we can study embodied universals.⁵⁰ But what actually enables us to engage in such studies is the *nous* which makes all things and this *nous* is separable, impassive, unmixed, and never not thinking. It alone is immortal and everlasting. And it is this *nous* which is the divine in us. When this *nous* studies matterless objects, it becomes those objects. Hence, when we study theology, the active *nous* in us is most of all God.⁵¹

We are also told that passive *nous* is perishable. The consequences of this is that when we die, judging, reasoning, remembering, loving and hating are all impossible, for they are functions of the embodied soul.⁵² Though the active *nous* remains, it is not individual or personal but rather exists as impersonal, abstract universality, since it was apart and independent of bodily conditions.⁵³

The technical psychology delineated above and as found in *On the Soul* thus encourages the idea that a human being is essentially Godlike in its best part, and it appears

⁴⁷Aristotle, *On the Soul*. trans. W.S. Hett (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1936), 430a10-25, 171.

⁴⁸Cooper, 176.

⁴⁹Joachim, 288.

⁵⁰Reeve, 146.

⁵¹Ibid., 148.

⁵²Joachim, 290.

⁵³Ibid.

that Aristotle works out the consequences of this idea in his theory of *eudaimonia*.⁵⁴

16. Relationship of key terms in theoretical reason

In bearing in mind our discussion thus far, it has not always been easy to keep straight the various terms Aristotle uses in articulating his analysis of theoretical reason. Richard Kraut provides a valuable service in this regard by making clear the way these terms relate to one another.

When one engages in contemplative activity, one activates the virtue of theoretical wisdom, *sophia*. This virtue, as stated above, is a composite of understanding or *nous* and scientific knowledge or *episteme*. Thus to possess *sophia* is to be able to grasp the first principles of certain theoretical disciplines by means of *nous*, and to be able to derive conclusions from those principles in these same disciplines by way of *episteme*. When we engage in the exercise of these intellectual virtues, we contemplate the necessary and unchanging truths of a theoretical discipline that we have mastered.⁵⁵ Ideally, the best theoretical discipline would be the one in which we would contemplate the first cause of the universe, the unmoved mover.⁵⁶

The term *theoria* is not always easy to understand. In its broadest sense, it describes a person engaged in closely studying something, whether it involves a craft whereby a contingent object comes into being through a process of production, or whether instead it involves the *phronimos* studying how he is responsible for developing his own self. This broad notion can be contrasted to a stricter notion discussed by Aristotle in Book X, 7-8, involving the activation of theoretical wisdom. *Theoria*, whether in this stricter sense or in its broader sense, always involves one directing his attention to something. It is therefore an activity and not merely a capacity. To activate contemplation is not to seek knowledge laboriously, but rather to bring to mind, that is, to reflect upon what one already knows as found in a system of truths and principles one already possesses.⁵⁷

17. Contemplation is perfect happiness

Contemplation is *eudaimonia*. It is perfect happiness even though the time we can spend in it is short compared to the gods. But we should engage ourselves in it as much as we can, for there is no such thing as excessive contemplation. Indeed, it is what the gods occupy themselves with uninterruptedly for all eternity. And if we engage ourselves in contemplation Aristotle tells us that the gods will look favorably upon us. We will be most loved by the gods for attending to what is most beloved by them.⁵⁸ For what is divine and *nous* are one and the same.

⁵⁴Cooper, 17.

⁵⁵Kraut, 15-16.

⁵⁶Ibid., fn 1, 15.

⁵⁷Ibid., fn 2, 15-16.

⁵⁸*NE*, 1179a25-30, 167.

Recalling what was said earlier, *theoria* is arrived at not by a discursive thinking, but rather by an intuition, a kind of seeing.⁵⁹ It is like being present in a theater or at a spectacle and letting things manifest themselves to you. Discursive thinking would be something that is not immediately present to the mind. It is a knowledge of what is absent and consequently that man can engage in longer than in any other activity. This, of course, would represent *theoria* in an idealized manner and would not be fully realizable for us as human beings. *Theoria* always involves us actively and critically viewing what we know so as to arrive at a scientific understanding of a particular area of interest as far as we are able to do so.

Nevertheless as Aristotle has made clear, contemplation is superior to practical activity. All practical activity from the practice of the ethical virtues to gaining the means of livelihood serves something other than itself.⁶⁰ All of moral virtue makes arrangements for something else, which shows that its purpose does not lie with itself, and therefore cannot constitute the ultimate purpose of life.⁶¹ In this sense then, contemplation is a superlative to the practical life. In closing the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle is turning next to a study of political life, and it bears remembering on our part that the whole of *Politics* is ordered with a view of attaining the happiness of contemplation.⁶²

18. A life of contemplation is the ideal life

Now if Book X seems to be an abrupt change to everything that has gone before in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, so be it. For it can be said that what Aristotle was doing in the bulk of the *Ethics* was addressing what was applicable to humanity in its ordinary or everyday existence. But here, Aristotle is addressing what we may consider to be his ideal, what we should all ultimately strive to become and that is to be divine in so far as we can, which is to say to be superhuman.⁶³ That Aristotle would so hold should not be construed as elitist, but

⁵⁹One is reminded that in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle says that we prefer seeing to all else.

⁶⁰Josef Pieper, *Happiness and Contemplation*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, with an intro. by Ralph Melnormy (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 1998), 93.

⁶¹Ibid., 92.

⁶²Ibid., 94.

⁶³This in no way is meant to imply that we can grasp the universe in the same way God can. It does imply, however, that we can try to see things as God does. If God's mind (And here we have already become anthropomorphic) can be said to consist of the first principles of all things we can then come to a realization that the universe itself must reflect the limits prescribed by eternal reason. We can further reflect as to whether these first principles exist separate from God or are internally constituted as part of his nature. If they are part of his nature, what further things can we say about ourselves in an analogous manner. All of which is indicative of what we may be able to arrive at in our reflection as finite beings. See G.W. Leibniz, *Theodicy*, ed. with an intro. by Austin Farrer. trans. E.M. Huggard (Chicago: Open Court, 1985), 30.

rather as involves a laborious effort to achieve.⁶⁴ On the other hand, contemplation is not laborious and is something appropriate for us to aim at, for is not the whole cosmos striving to be Godlike, starting with the first heaven and the heavenly bodies. And in the hierarchy that thus ensues, we can see that on earth only the good of human beings is sufficiently similar to the good that is divine to deserve the name *eudaimonia*.⁶⁵

In studying the *Nicomachean Ethics*, we have come to realize what the best life for man consists in, that man's supreme flourishing is to be found in contemplation, the intellectual vision in which the thinker becomes absorbed in the reality which he grasps, and in so grasping, is.⁶⁶ If then human existence is one of embodied *nous* striving to grasp all that reality is, it is the best part in us, the divine part, that enables us to do so. The activity of contemplation therefore opens this best part to its fullest realization. The best way to improve one's human existence then is to add a greater amount of theoretical activity, understood as contemplation, to one's life, and the more often we can do so the better, for such activity most properly honors what is best in us.



⁶⁴An interesting analogy would be to compare the difference in reading in English, and in looking at a Chinese ideogram. In the former, we must labor in the sense that we must proceed from left to right in a logical manner to obtain the meaning of the sentence. In the latter, in gazing upon the ideogram, the whole of the meaning is grasped at once. In that sense, it is more intuitive than logical. See Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, intro. by Lewis H. Lapham (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1955), 84-5.

⁶⁵Kraut, 57.

⁶⁶Joachim, 297.

Answer to the sudoku in this issue.

E	V	A	N	G	E	L	O	S
O	S	N	L	A	V	G	E	E
L	E	G	E	O	S	A	N	V
N	E	V	A	E	G	S	L	O
A	O	E	V	S	L	E	G	N
G	L	S	E	N	O	V	A	E
E	G	L	O	V	E	N	S	A
S	A	O	G	E	N	E	V	L
V	N	E	S	L	A	O	E	G

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Thank you again for reading this WIN ONE,

Graham Powell, Editor.