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Image:

Aquelarre (Witches' Sabbath) by Francisco de Goya (1798)

Museo Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid, Spain

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THE JOURNAL OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHIATRY

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Editor's note

Towards Humanism in Psychosis

Etymologically, “psychosis” comes from the Greek word “psyche” (soul) and “-osis” (abnormality). In medicine, the term psychosis refers a loss of contact with reality. Reality is the state of things as they actually exist. Contrasting reality are fantasies, imagination or delusions. While a person without psychosis would be able to differentiate reality from fiction or imagination, a person with psychosis will have that capacity impaired. Psychotic symptoms have been classically divided between positive (present in someone with psychosis) such as delusions, hallucinations, disorganized thinking and behavior and negative (lacking in a person with psychosis) like alogia, anhedonia, avolition and affect flattening. Psychosis manifests in many different clinical settings including dementia, delirium, mood disorders, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorders, personality disorders and a number of medical conditions.

Following Emil Kraepelin, one of the major contributors to the understanding of the psychotic phenomenology was Eugen Bleuler. In 1911 he wrote “Dementia Praecox oder die Gruppe der Schizophrenien,” in which he analyzes the phenomenology of schizophrenia. Later, In 1958, Klaus Conrad published “Die beginnende Schizophrenie,” where he describes the initial presentation of the disease.

Over the last few decades, researchers have gradually began to approach psychosis more biologically. Multiple studies have explored the role of blood vessels, genes, infections and antibodies in the pathogenesis of schizophrenia. Scholars are today more

inclined to accept a neurodevelopmental rather than neurodegenerative model of disease for schizophrenia. At the same time, there has been increasing evidence on the importance of the social context, culture and country of residence in the prognosis of psychotic illnesses. For instance, in countries where schizophrenia is understood as a spiritual problem, people afflicted with it deteriorate less and are more integrated in the community.

Today, in the United States, most psychiatrists treat psychotic disorders with medication. Psychotherapy for the treatment of patients with psychotic disorders has been seen with skepticism by clinicians. However, while psychopharmacology is still likely the single most effective therapy for acute and maintenance treatment of psychotic disorders, psychopharmacology and psychotherapy are not mutually exclusive treatments. Psychotherapy can, in fact, prove quite helpful to patients coping with psychotic illness. A study published by Keshavan and colleagues showed that cognitive behavioral therapy can prevent grey matter loss of patients with psychotic disorders. Although hallucinations and delusions may not be best treated with psychoanalytic interpretation, patients with schizophrenia, like all people, may benefit from other humanistic therapies to improve their quality of lives, relationships and ultimately help prevent relapse and further deterioration. After all, everyone, including patients who suffer psychotic disorders, benefit from an optimal and well-balanced biopsychosocial model of patient care.

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D.

Icons of Psychiatry

Aquelarre (Witches' Sabbath)

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, The University of Chicago



In the Middle Ages, a fervent witchcraft hysteria grew within the population. Authorities blamed sorcery, black magic and witchcraft for plagues and many other misfortunes in society, including mental illness. During early Renaissance, Henry Kramer released the *Malleus Maleficarum* (Hammer of Witches). In his book, witches are denounced due to practicing public nudity, infanticide, cannibalism and stealing penises. Allegedly, witchcraft practice involved the invocation of the Devil, who could manifest in the form of a goat. Hallucinogens obtained from toads or herbs could be used for the rite. (1)

In 1610, The Spanish Inquisition tribunal at Logroño (La Rioja), accused up to 300 people in Basque country, Navarre, Soria and Burgos of practicing witchcraft. Among the accused people were women and children, but also some men and catholic priests. As a result, between 6 and 12 people were executed by burning. The following year, junior inquisitor and lawyer, Alonso de Salazar, traveled to

Zugarramurdi (Navarre) in the search of evidence of witchcraft practice. He investigated a cave with a water stream in the area which was said to be a witches meeting point. He gathered almost 2000 individuals and took testimonies while at the site. Most of the accounts were made by children and adolescents, accusing up to 5000 people. (2) Due to the popularity of the event, the Basque word for Sabbath, “Akelarre” was used all over Spain to designate witchcraft.



Image: Gathering at the Zugarramurdi Caves commemorating Witchcraft, 2011. Source: wikipedia

Despite the popularity of the Spanish events, in Europe, most witch hunts took place in Germany, Switzerland and France. In the United States, the most popular witch trials took place in Salem, Massachusetts between 1692 and 1693. Overall, between the XVI and XVIIIth century, thousands of people were executed in western countries for allegations witchcraft practice. (3) These accusations have often been pointed out as being one of the

greatest examples of mass hysteria or shared psychosis.

In 1798, Francisco de Goya depicted his version of the Akelarre. In the image, Satan is represented as a great He-Goat surrounded by a group of witches in an open field. As, in Spain, it was believed that the practice of witchcraft would happen in fields or caves. The witches are offering children to the devil. (Front Image)

A more contemporary depiction of the Akelarre can be appreciated in the Spanish film “The Day of The Beast (El Dia de La Bestia)” (1995), directed by Alex de La Iglesia. In this dark comedy, a Basque catholic priest, a death metal salesman from Carabanchel, and an Italian presenter of a paranormal phenomena television program invoke the He-Goat by using the blood of virgin, a pentagram and LSD.



Image: Father Angel, Jose Mari and Professor Cavan invoking the devil.

source: enclavedecine.com

Though there are some occasional and rare assertions of witchcraft and satanic cults, scholars now argue that, there is not enough historical evidence of significant witchcraft practice. These accusations were likely used as a scapegoat to displace attention. Generally, the most vulnerable people such as women, children

and the mentally ill were common victims of these false accusations.

Today, the term witch-hunt can be used for any mass hysterical prosecution of people who have a different point of view. In these scenarios, people can be accused and punished even without consistent evidence. The prosecution of communists in the United States between 1950 and 1956 carried by Wisconsin senator Joseph McCarthy has historically been referred to as a witch-hunt. In the present tense, Columbia professor of psychiatry Richard Krueger points out the demonization of sexual offenders and the increasing punitive approach, even when there is not enough evidence, as the new American witch-hunt hysteria. (4) A recent Danish film “The Hunt” by Dogme 95 co-founder Thomas Vinterberg, narrates the story of an innocent man who, after being falsely accused of a sexual offense, becomes the target of a mass hysteria prosecution.

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1. Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *Malleus Malleficarum*, Cosimo, Inc., New York, NY, 2007
2. *The Salazar Documents: Inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frias and Others of the Basque Witch Persecution*, Edited by Gustav Henningsen, Brill, Leiden, The Netherlands, 2004
3. Wolfgang Behringer, *Witches and Witchhunt: A Global History*, Polity Press, Malden, MA, 2004
4. <http://www.latimes.com/la-op-krueger11mar11,0,5644913.story#axzz2pqURs9cG>

Essays

Linking Artistic Creativity and Psychosis

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Creativity and art are intertwined. Without creativity, perhaps there could be art, however it would likely be boring, something that perhaps a computer can generate with logic circuits as being the primary creative force. What can be considered as art varies and produces unique experiences to those exposed to it. Even art that is produced by a computer or nature itself by random processes also requires a mind and imagination to interpret and appreciate as being a work of art in the first place. Human beings have a unique capability of both creating and appreciating art that, as far as we know, is not appreciated by other living organisms.

Not everyone who appreciates art has the natural ability to conceive it. Many artists say that the art they produce is not done so with conscious thought. It is as though their mind is being guided by an outside force which they have no control over. Many successful musicians have said they have been blessed in that the music they are known for is transmitted spontaneously to them and they simply wait for inspiration to happen. They relate this inspiration as though some supernatural being or perhaps God himself speaks to them and the words just appear from thin air. Could this be a supernatural force? Perhaps. Or perhaps there could be other factors present in the artist's mind that are essential to the creative process.

It is also an interesting thought that one can make comparisons between spontaneous creation of art within the mind of an artist and that of the spontaneous creation of abnormal thought and hallucinations in those with extreme cases of psychosis.

The hallmarks of schizophrenia include characteristic symptoms of hallucinations, delusions, disorganized thinking and speaking. It is a process that occurs within the mind of the affected individual and is expressed outwardly. In many cases, the severity of these symptoms is such that it interferes with the ability to function effectively. Society interprets these individuals as having lost contact with reality and require medical treatment. Those who have experienced these symptoms may be paralyzed by disturbing hallucinations. Ms. Weinreich, an artist who suffered from severe schizophrenia was quoted in an article in the New York Times[1], "psychosis" can be seductive, with its illusion of enhanced creativity, but that ultimately it interfered with her ability to produce artwork." "It is seductive as a highly accentuated experience," she said. "Colors were intensified, there were auras, and it gave me the sense that I was all powerful, that I could see through walls and people and that I could look deeply into things. But at the same time, the acute awareness that I thought I was feeling and experiencing was also very psychically painful"

Ms. Weinreich eventually recovered after a battle of many years and is now producing artwork once again. The severity of her illness incapacitated her from being productive in her artistic field.

Studies have been performed in an attempt to establish a link between schizotypy (a mild form of schizophrenia) and creativity. Nelson and Rawlings [2] enrolled 100 artists who were subjected to a variety of questionnaires. These included: The Experience of Creativity Questionnaire (ECQ), The Big Five Inventory, Unusual Experiences Questionnaire, and Boundary Questionnaire. One of the results of the study was a link between schizotypal traits in their subjects and association to components in the ECQ (distinct experience, absorption and power/pleasure), which are directly related to the creative flow. This theory of flow, as proposed by Mihály Csíkszentmihályi [3], is the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement and enjoyment in the process of the activity. Flow is essential for the creative process to exist. It is as important for artists as it is for scientists and others requiring deep concentration and organization of abstract thought.

In the past, researchers made a link between schizophrenia and reduced latent inhibition. This concept of reduced latent inhibition, as denoted by Kaufman [4], “represents an inability to screen out from awareness stimuli that have previously been tagged as irrelevant”. These individuals are exposed to a world of wonderment. Instead of perceiving what others would as ordinary and mundane, these individuals view the ordinary

with a sense of awe and novelty. This can be likened to first exposures in childhood. Resultantly, a significantly greater quantity of information is required to be processed by an individual with reduced latent inhibition. While many others can cope successfully, individuals suffering from psychosis are overwhelmed by the continuous bombardment of thoughts and concepts which otherwise is normally filtered out, eventually leading to dysfunction.

Those with high executive function on the other hand are able to cope with this information overload, utilizing it in an organized manner, leading to creative and novel thought. Nelson and Rawlings, having established a link between characteristics of schizotypy and artistic flow argue that the common link is reduced latent inhibition. While those with higher executive functioning may have access to artistic flow, those lacking this element are unable to achieve it and resultantly struggle with disorganized thought. Reduced latent inhibition can be likened to a canoe on a river with rapids (flow). Those with good skill to control the canoe (higher executive function) are able to ride on the rapids effectively. Those with poor skills (poor executive functioning) however may find themselves having sunk in the river.

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3. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. Harper & Row
4. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/beautiful-minds/201006/schizotypy-flow-and-the-artist-s-experience>

Articles

The Origin and Causes of Schizophrenia and Madness in Greek Culture

Jorge Tomás García, Ph.D., Department of Art History, University of Murcia, Spain

Ancient Greek medicine was a complex practice perceived as something between myth and reality, as an expression of a magical divinatory, and an empirical technical practice. Consequently, ancient medicine is linked with ancient mythology. Some authors assert that schizophrenia as it is known now existed in the Graeco-Roman world¹. Others argue schizophrenia may have changed its manifestation, even within the last 50 years, and that different cultures exhibit symptoms which vary so markedly it is questionable whether they all refer to the same condition. Medicine, as the science aimed at treating pain and illness, has always represented a core aspect of all societies. While among most ancient civilizations no difference occurred between medicine, mythology, and religion², a separation of these

entities seems to be a contemporary concept. A characteristic feature of Hippocratic medicine is the notion that healthy and pathological processes in the human body are the result of natural conditions, and that diseases should be treated by rational means. The Hippocratic physician considers the patient an equal partner, whose dignity is to be protected in all respects. The ethical principles of Hippocratic medicine remain relevant even today.

The word “schizophrenia” is derived from two Greek words: “schizo,” which means to tear or to split, and “phren,” which means “the intellect” or “the mind,” and was sometimes used to refer to emotional functions. Thus, the word schizophrenia is defined as the splitting or tearing of the mind and emotional stability of the patient. According to Greek mythology, the experience of hysteria was at the base of the birth of psychiatry³. The portrayal of psychotic illness in ancient Roman and Greek

¹ Roccatagliata G. Classical concepts of schizophrenia. In: Howells J.G. (ed.), *The concept of schizophrenia: historical perspectives*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, 1991; 1–27.

² Nilsoon, M.P. *A History of Greek Religion*, The Norton Library, 1964, Lyssa the goddess of madness drives the dogs of Aktaion to tear their master apart. She is depicted as a Thracian huntress, similar to Bendis, with a fox-head cap, short skirt, and skin vest. Lyssa was a figure of Athenian tragedy. In Aeschylus she appears as the agent of Dionysos sent to drive the Minyades mad; and in Euripides she is sent by Hera to inflict Herakles. Greek vase-paintings of the period also confirm her appearance in plays about Aktaion, the hunter torn apart by his madenned hounds. In this scene she appears a women dressed in a short skirt, and crowned with a dog's-head cap to represent the madness of rabies.

³ The Argonaut Melampus, a physician, is considered its founder: he placated the revolt of Argo's virgins who refused to honor the phallus and fled to the mountains, their behavior being taken for madness. Melampus cured these women with hellebore and then urged them to join carnally with young and strong men. They were healed and recovered their wits. Melampus spoke of the women's madness as derived from their uterus being poisoned by venomous humors, due to a lack of orgasms and “uterine melancholy”. Vernant, J.P. *Mortals and Immortals (Collected Essays)*, Princeton University Press, 1991.

texts has been cited to support a range of epidemiological and phenomenological theories. For example, Roccatagliata reports substantial similarities in descriptions of schizophrenia in the Graeco-Roman times vs. modern times, and an apparent stability in prevalence of schizophrenia over time. Rosen believed that the explanations for mental derangement, divine intervention, and natural causes that disturb psychic activity represented, respectively, the popular and the medical attitudes towards mental abnormality prevalent in Graeco-Roman culture⁴. The humoral theory ordained that mental disorders and physical diseases were influenced by the humors. When internal or external factors disturbed the balance of blood, phlegm, yellow bile, or black bile in the body, the imbalance led to insanity⁵.

While the term mania covers a fascinating range of multifarious conditions, the words ‘madness’ or ‘frenzy’ used in modern English translations fail to encompass: in Greek manía also implies divine inspiration or revelation⁶. Madness is represented as a

primeval being whose existence began long before there were men on earth. They did not invent her but she invented the madman, a most common character who fully owes the turmoil of his soul to her. As “a demon” she is less distinct than a god and obeys the designs of more powerful deities, being rather the actual manifestation of their will. This variety of meanings reflects a wide range of experiences, each of them determined by both cultural factors and neuropsychological causes⁷. Plato, in his discussion on the origin of mania, distinguished between divine enthusiasm and pathological madness (Phaedrus 265a). The Peripatetic discussion of this topic not only takes a much larger range of mental and physical afflictions into consideration, but also relates them all to one physical condition, and within this explanation all divine influence is disregarded. The juxtaposition of depression and manía seems to be manifest in the belief that “in some also untimely laughter has to be put a stop to by reproof and threats; in others, melancholy thoughts are to be dissipated...”⁸

The Ancient Greeks formed many postulations about mental disorders including diseases recognizable as schizophrenia⁹. They believed in the humoral theory that stated that when internal or external factors disturb the balance of blood, phlegm, yellow bile, or black bile in the body, the imbalance lead to insanity. Bile and phlegm were seen as being very

⁴ Rosen G. *Madness in society: chapters in the historical sociology of mental illness*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968.

⁵ In ancient Greek writings an explicit reference to “mental disorder” was made by Galen who wrote in his commentary on Hippocrates (Of the Epidemics): if the “spirit becomes corrupt” or its natural “blend” with the “substance of the brain” is “redirected” then “mental disease or death” will ensue. Christodoulou, G.N. (ed.), *Anthology of Greek Psychiatric Texts*, Athens, 2011, p. XXIV.

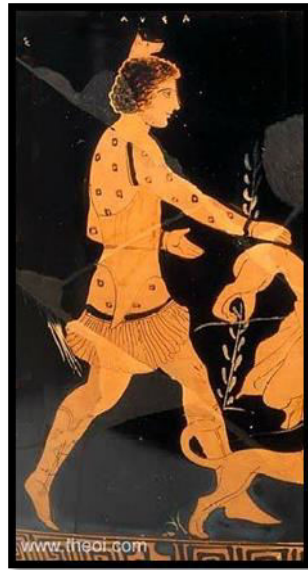
⁶ In Greek mythology, the Maniae (singular: Mania) are a spirit or group of spirits personifying Insanity, madness and crazed frenzy. They operate closely with Lyssa, the spirit of mad rage, frenzy and rabies; and, like, Lyssa, are presumed to be daughters of Nyx. They are also associated with the Erinyes, the three fearsome goddesses of vengeance. In Roman and Etruscan mythology, Mania (or Manea) was a goddess of the dead. She, along with Mantus, ruled the underworld. She was said to be the mother of ghosts, the undead, and other spirits of the night, as well as the Lares and the Manes. Her name links her to the Manes, Mana Genita, and Manius

⁷ Evans K. *Representations of mental illness in the classical texts*. Queensland: University of Queensland, 2000.

⁸ Celsus. Volume III. *De Medicina* (Translated by W.G. Spencer). London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1935.

⁹ Evans, K.- McGrath, J.- Milns, R. (2003): “Searching for schizophrenia in ancient Greek and Roman literature: a systematic review” *Acta Psychiatr Scand* 107: 323–330.

important factors for mental disorders¹⁰. It was believed that people's brains affected by bile were noisy and hyperactive, whereas those with brains affected by phlegm were very quiet. The Ancient Greeks also thought that the severity of mental illnesses was affected by the weather in terms of humidity and temperature¹¹.



Lyssa, 440 BC, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts.

They also believed that individuals were born with certain predispositions to illness, including mental illnesses, which is a highly regarded belief even today¹². Nowadays, we think of predisposition to illness in terms of genes. Recent evidence suggests that schizophrenia runs in families as family and

twin studies show that schizophrenia is primarily a genetic disorder.

By analyzing ancient Greek and Roman literature it becomes evident that although the general population probably had an awareness of psychotic disorders, there was no condition that would meet the modern diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia in these societies. The ancient Greeks took great interest in the human psyche, and especially in madness. Plato, who lived in the 5th and 4th centuries BC, spoke about two kinds of madness; one with a divine origin and another with a physical origin. According to Plato, madness from divine origin could create prophets, relieve the generation of impurity, inspire poets, or provoke an intense desire for beauty¹³. The idea of divine madness was firmly rooted in Greek culture even before Plato. It also appears in Greek tragedies, such as in Euripides' 5th century BC tragedy *Heracles*. In this tragedy madness ends in catastrophe. Hippocrates wanted to build his theories on a rationalistic and empirical basis. In that he continued the tradition of the ionic Greek philosophers who wanted to explain nature in a rational way¹⁴. Hippocratic medicine draws a sharp line between knowledge and belief. It clearly criticizes the methods of magicians and quacks even in the treatment of mental diseases, which are considered to be biologically rooted. However, no official view existed on the origin of diseases in antiquity, and there were often other opinions among the laymen than among the academics. The belief that mentally ill

¹⁰ Ustinova, Y. (2012): "Madness into Memory: Mania and Mnēmē in Greek Culture" *SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA XXXI*, 109-133.

¹¹ Walker, E.- Kestler, L.- Bollini, A.- Hochman, K. (2002): "SCHIZOPHRENIA: Etiology and Course" *Annual Review of Psychology Vol. 55*: 401-430.

¹² Kyziridis, Th. Ch. (2005): "Notes on the History of Schizophrenia" *German Journal of Psychiatry*, 8(3), 42-48.

¹³ Fornaro, M. (2009): "Medicine and psychiatry in Western culture: Ancient Greek myths and modern prejudices" *Annals of General Psychiatry* 2009, 8:21.

¹⁴ Lee, Ch. (2013): "Schizophrenia: Then and Now" *Sound Neuroscience: An Undergraduate Neuroscience Journal Vol. 1, Iss. 1, Art. 15*.

persons were possessed by devils was widely spread.

In several Greek tragedies, we see people being helped out of madness, or helped to accept the consequences of their madness, and that this help is sometimes given sensitively and effectively¹⁵. In two notable scenes, in Sophocles' *Ajax* and Euripides' *Heracles*, we see the portrayal of a man who is now sane coming to terms with what he did when he was mad. In both cases, his first instinct is to kill himself out of a sense of shame; this instinct is opposed successfully by Theseus in the *Heracles*, and unsuccessfully by Tecmessa in the *Ajax*. Apart from the fact that his psychological methods, given their limitations of aim, seem reasonable ones, he has a clear and consistent view of the nature of madness and the treatment appropriate to it. He sees madness as a physical illness with mental or psychological side effects. Both body and mind should be treated altogether. Since body and mind interact the treatment of one aspect of insanity may help to cure the other. This reflects the fact that the Stoics, like Plato, did not proceed by accepting the notions of madness and sanity that were current in their society, and then attempting to find a psychologically richer account of these¹⁶.

¹⁵ Oyeboade, F. *Madness at the Theatre*, London, 2012, "Greek tragedy and models of madness" 1-15.

¹⁶ Simon, B. *Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece: The Classical Roots of Modern Psychiatry*. Cornell University Press, 1978, 45-67.

Medieval Monsters and the Anxiety towards the Alien

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Humans have always been afraid of those that are different to us. We have feared extraterrestrial life ever since we are aware of its possible existence. In Ancient Greece, that same fear towards what was alien to their culture was related to the lack of knowledge of the Far East. Two ancient Greek travellers allegedly visited India and described these remote places and its customs: Ctesias of Cnidos in the 5th century BCE and Megasthenes in the 4th century BCE. Very little of their descriptions have been preserved, but their works were available to Pliny the Elder and he was able to compile all this documentary material in his *Natural History*. In the work of the Roman writer a wide range of monstrous races are described that differ from western people in their physical appearance and customs. Most of the monstrous races described by Pliny will be later included in medieval encyclopedias and bestiaries, therefore the *Natural History* is the main source.¹ Some medieval monsters resemble our current monsters, e.g. the cynocephalus is a monster with the head of a dog that physically is not very different from our werewolves, but their origin and role is quite diverse (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Cynocephali. *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. 15th century. British Library, London. MS Harley 3954, fol 40v

Similar to many monsters or aliens in our current science fiction culture, some medieval monsters could be dangerous and life threatening. A good example of this sort is the donestre, a monster from the legends of Alexander, that speaks the language of any traveller and when he comes across with them, pretends to know their relatives to gain their trust. Once the traveller thinks he has found a kind host, the donestre eats him and mourns over his head. An 11th century codex of the *Marvels of the East* shows the donestre at work.(fig.2)

¹ John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000 (1981), pp. 5-8.



Fig. 2 Donestre. Marvels of the East. 11th century. British Library, London. Cotton Tiberius B. v., fol. 83v

The ferocity of the donestre has turned him into a man with lion's head that first talks to the random traveller to be able to devour him and finally weep over his head.² Cannibalism is likewise attributed to other monsters: the antropophagi (man-eater) were monsters supposed to live in Scythia (central Asia) or Africa that drank blood from human skulls and would eat even their own parents.³ Anthropophagia was also a custom attributed to real people such as the so-called tartars, i.e. Mongols that invaded Europe in the Middle Ages. After they conquered Poland in the 13th century, they were feared to the extent that they got their name from Tartarus, since it was believed that they came from hell. On a miniature of a 13th century codex of the *Chronica Majora* by Matthew Paris a tartar is beheading a man close to another companion, who is eating two human legs (fig. 3).

² Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants. Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 1-3; Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, p. 15.

³ Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, pp. 10-11.

Another tartar sits on a heap of dismembered corpses while he is roasting a whole man in a fire. A woman has been tied to a tree and she will be insatiably raped by these "human monsters".⁴ Besides tartars, Jews were a minority accused of killing Christian children to drink their blood and be cured from male menstruation and their natural pestilence.⁵



Fig. 3 Tartars. Matthew Paris. *Chronica majora*, 13th century. Corpus Christi College. Ms 16, fol. 167.

Medieval monsters are characterized by malformation. Their deformity is presented either as a human with an exaggerated anatomical member or as a human-animal. During the Middle Ages physiognomy was supposed to resemble the status of one's inner soul; thus, a deformed body could be related to an impious personality. The inclusion of monsters in church portals and cloisters could be thereby interpreted as an admonition to

⁴ Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews. Making Monsters in Medieval Art*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, pp. 192-195.

⁵ Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany*, New Haven y Londres: Yale University Press, 1988; Alan Dundes, ed. *The Blood Libel Legend. A Casebook in Antisemitic Folklore*, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1991; Rainer Erb, ed. *Die Legende vom Ritualmord. Zur Geschichte der Blutbeschuldigung gegen Juden*, Metropol, Berlín, 1993; Susana Buttaroni y Stanislaw Musial, eds. *Ritualmord. Legenden in der europäischen Geschichte*, Viena: Bohlau, 2003.

Christians to follow a righteous life.⁶ Nevertheless, it has also been argued that the depiction of monsters in religious buildings was necessary to divide and connect the realms of the profane and the sacred.⁷

The distortion of the human body is likewise closely related to Greek humoral and climatic theories. Just as the world was composed by four basic elements – air, water, fire and earth- the human body, according to Hippocrates and Galen, was also constituted by four elements: blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm. An imbalance in the combination of these four elements would produce a disease or a deformation. In the Middle Ages monsters were believed to dwell on the edge of the world where the climatic conditions were unbearable for normal men. This radical climate would have caused a disproportion in the combination of the four elements and the apparition of monstrous races.⁸ Ethiopians, a term used for black people in general, were therefore monsters whose black skin was due to the fact that their face had been burnt by the hot sun of sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, “Aethiops” literally means a burnt face person.⁹ As the distance from Europe increased, races were always more exotic. This idea is perfectly illustrated on the map of the codex of the Commentary on the Book of Revelations by Beatus of Liebana made in 1086 in Sahagún and preserved in the cathedral of Burgo de Osma, Spain (fig. 4).

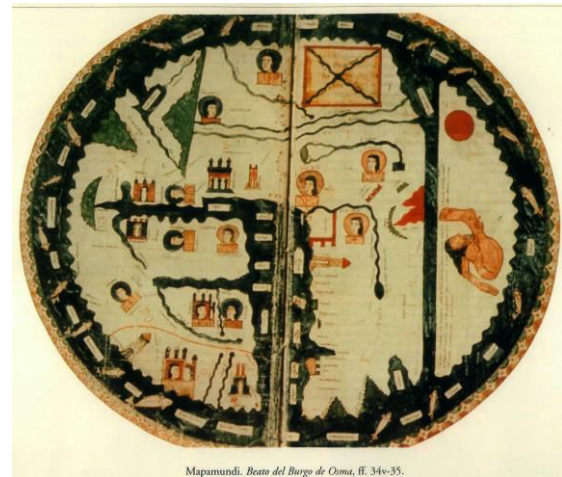


Fig. 4 Mapamundi. Beato del Burgo de Osma (cathedral). 11th century. fols. 35v-36.

The world is circular and it is divided in three parts by the Mediterranean sea, and the rivers Tánais and Nile to distinguish the three known continents at the time: Europe, Africa and Asia. Besides this classical division, there is an austral continent in the Far East with very hot weather, as the big hot sun indicates. This remote place of the earth is populated by a single sciopod (shadow-foot), a monster believed to dwell in India, who had just one foot and spent the day lying on his back with his foot up to protect himself from the sun.¹⁰ Even if nobody had ever seen a sciopod, medieval men believed in their existence, just as they believed in the existence of griffins, dragons or real animals like lions that were almost impossible to see in medieval Europe. Sciopods are one of the most popular monstrous races in medieval art and populate the margins of medieval manuscripts, sometimes with a satirical intention. On the 13th century Rutland Psalter

⁶ Thomas E. A. Dale, “Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa”. *The Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 402-436.

⁷ Jean Dangler, *Making Difference in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia*, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005, pp. 117-120.

⁸ Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews*, pp. 30-37.

⁹ Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, p. 15.

¹⁰ Serafin Moralejo, “El mundo y el tiempo en el mapa del Beato de Osma”, en *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia y otros estudios*, Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 2004, pp. 239-243 (originally in *El Beato de Osma. Estudios*, Valencia: Vicent García, 1992, pp. 151-179). See also Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, pp. 40-41.

there is an image of a triton-sciopod in his traditional position lying on his back. An Ethiopian has taken advantage of his situation and has thrown an arrow directly towards his anus (fig. 5). The arrow flees directly from letter “p” of the Latin word *conspectu* that literally means “see or penetrate visually”.¹¹



Fig. 5. Ethiopian shooting a sciopod. Rutland Psalter., 13th century. British Library, London. Add. MS 62925, fol. 87v.

Other medieval maps depict a wider array of monstrous races. Probably the most richly illustrated is the 13th century Hereford map, preserved in the homonymous cathedral. The Hereford map presents the traditional round map divided in three parts by the Mediterranean and the two rivers. Fifty-three monstrous races have been included in the map. Very curious monstrous races populate the margins of the world at the Far East. Among many others, there are abarimon (people without ears), amyctyrae (people with very large lip to protect their bodies from the sun), hermaphrodites (bisexual people) or himantopodes (people that

crawl instead of walking). On a detail of the map we can see how the hermaphrodite has both female breasts and penis and the himantopode is moving using both his arms and legs, curiously wears a Jewish funnel hat, a derogatory symbol that often appears in monsters and other pernicious characters (fig. 6).¹²



Fig.6 Hermaphrodite and Himantopode. Detail of the Hereford map (cathedral of Hereford). 13th century.

Bestiaries offer also a good source of images of monsters. The late 13th century Westminster Abbey Bestiary contains an image with a giant that points toward a pygmy (fig. 7).

¹¹ Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge. The Margins of Medieval Art*, London: Reaktion Books, 2003 (1992), pp. 21-22. For a similar marginal image of anal penetration see, *ibid.*, pp. 43-46.

¹² Naomi Reed Kline, “The World of Strange Races”, in *Monsters, Marvels and Miracles. Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages*, Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2005, pp. 28-38; Friedman, 9, 15-16. For monsters and maps see *idem*, “Monsters at the Earth’s imagined Corners”, in *Monsters, Marvels and Miracles*, pp. 41-61; Bettina Bildhauer, “Blood, Jews and Monsters in Medieval Culture”, in Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills, eds. *The Monstrous Middle Ages*, Toronto: University of Toronto press, 2003, pp. 77-85.



Fig. 7 Giant, Sciopod, Pymy, Bragmanni.
Westminster Abbey Bestiary. 13th
century. Westminster Abbey, London, MS 22, fol. 3.

According to the tradition, giants had been encountered and defeated by Alexander the great in India, whereas pygmies were tiny black men that lived in Africa. The pygmy of the illustration is white and the giant has three faces. They are both monsters because they differ from common men in their size. Below the giant there is a sciopod, both monsters have a Jewish funnel hat. Finally on the lower right corner there is a group of bragmanni, a monstrous race of wise men that lived naked in the caves of India.¹³ The Sion College bestiary, manufactured in the 13th century, has a wonderful miniature of four of the most common monstrous races (fig. 8). On the lower right corner there is a good depiction of an amycytrae, a monster that was also present in the Hereford map and had a huge lower lip that protected him from the sun. Two monsters of this page share the feature that their heads are inside their chests: the blemmyae on the lower right corner and the epiphagi on the upper right,

the only difference between them is that the epiphagi have the eyes on their shoulders. On the upper left corner there is a troglodyte riding a deer to catch game with his sword. Although the troglodyte of this image is white, this monstrous race came from the deserts of Ethiopia. Troglodytes were very fast, lived in caves and were unable to speak.¹⁴

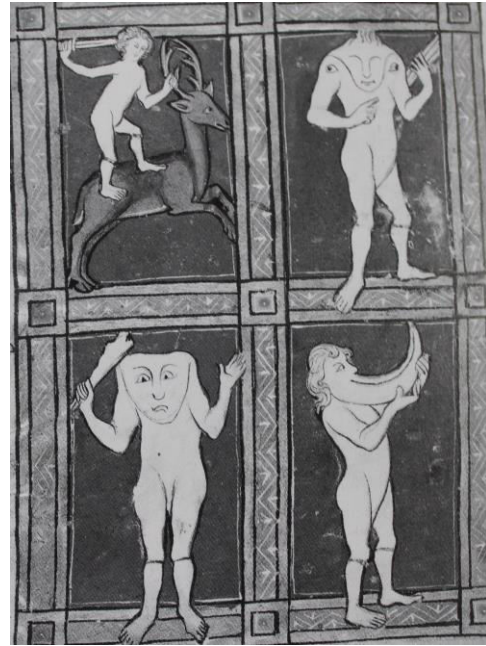


Fig. 8 Troglodyte, Epiphagus, Blemmyae,
Amyctyrae. Bestiary, Northwestern
France, 13th century. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los
Angeles, MS Ludwig
XV/4, fol. 117v.

Even if monsters could be threatening and scary, they were part of the creation and as such they deserved an opportunity to hear the Christian message to be redeemed. These would mean that, unlike animals, monsters were human and didn't lack reason. That the souls of monsters could be saved can be deduced from the tympanum of the abbey church of La Madeleine at Vézelay, executed in 1125 (fig. 9).

¹³ Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, pp. 12, 15, 18; Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews*, p. 134.

¹⁴ Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, pp. 9-10, 12, 15, 18; Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews*, pp. 46-48.

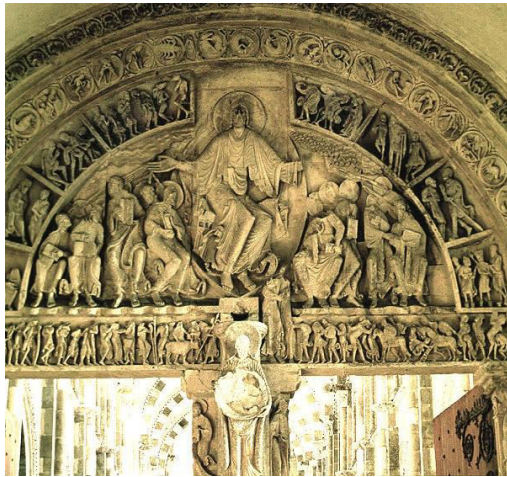


Fig. 9 Tympanum, Abbey Church of La Madeleine, Vézelay, 12th century.

It depicts the subject of Christ's mission to the Apostles; among the beneficiaries of his message there are cynocephali, pigmies, panotii (people with huge ears that could be used as blankets and to fly) (fig. 10) and sciritae (noseless and flat-faced men).



Figure 10. Panotii. Detail of image number 9

Many sources indicate that cynocephali lived in the far north; but they were also believed to be Saracens or Jews that worshipped idols, as we can see them on a 15th century codex of the Travels of Sir John Mandeville

(fig. 1).¹⁵ Even if they were monstrous, ugly, deformed and practiced heresies, by their inclusion in the Pentecostal message of the portal of Vézelay, the cynocephali, as well as the other monstrous races, were considered worth of being evangelized and consequently deserved a place in heaven.¹⁶

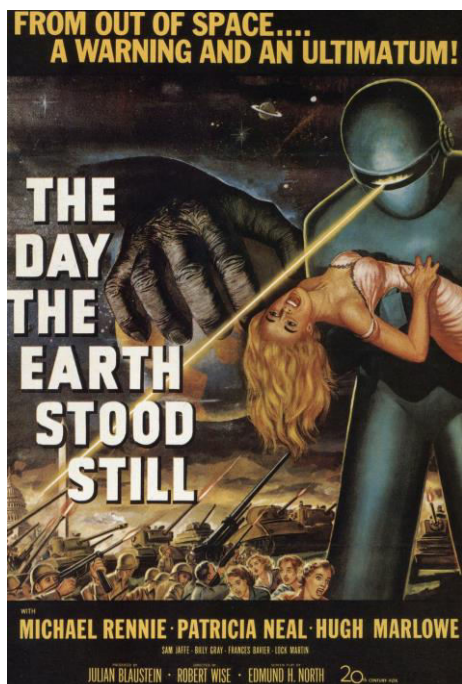
¹⁵ Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews*, p. 204. See also Sarah Salih, "Idols and Simulacra: Paganity, Hybridity and Representation in Mandeville's Travels" in *The Monstrous Middle Ages*, pp. 113-133.

¹⁶ For Vézelay see Peter Low, "You Who Once Were Far Off": Enlivening Scripture in the Main Portal at Vézelay". *The Art Bulletin* 85 (2003): 470, 477-480; Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews*, pp. 50-51, 157-158.

Aliens from Outer Space: The Human Obsession with the Search of Life on Other Planets and Its Existential Consequences

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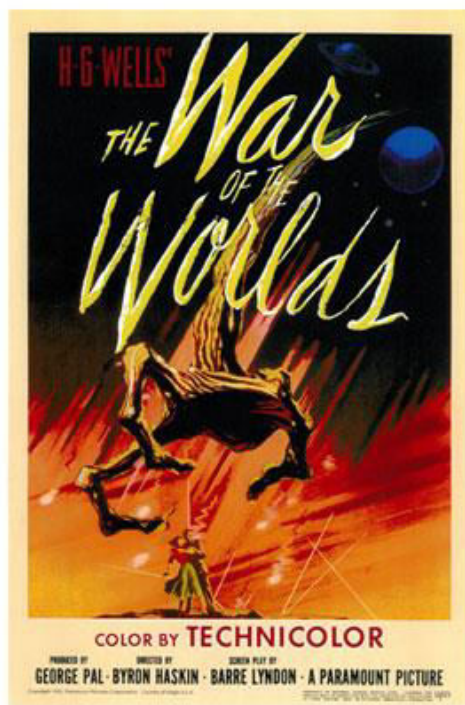
Throughout history, human beings have questioned the possibility of life on other planets. The search for extraterrestrial life grew greatly in the 1950s. After the catastrophes of World War II including the discovery of the atomic bomb and the potential devastating consequences of atomic power, an increased feeling of paranoia grew in American society. (1) In parallel, a new wave of the so-called science fiction films was born. In these movies, aliens from outer space visit our planet guided by a harm principle. In 1951, Robert Wise directed “The Day the Earth Stood Still.”



In the film, an alien named “Klaatu” visits planet Earth in a flying saucer to warn humans about recent concerns in the universe regarding the amount of violence on Earth. Klaatu informs scientists that an army of robots will destroy the Earth to prevent the spread of violence to other planets. The same year, “The Man from Planet X” and “The Thing from Another World” were released redounding on similar topics. (2)



In 1953, an important scientific discovery took place. Stanley Miller and Harold Urey, while working at The University of Chicago, were able to produce amino acids from methane, water and ammonia (the molecules believed to be the components of primitive Earth's atmosphere) by running a continuous electric current (simulating the hypothetical lightning storms believed to be common in early Earth). (3) This finding brought hope in the scientific community about the possibility of extraterrestrial life. That same year, in the artistic scene, the films "Invaders from Mars" and "The War of Worlds" saw light in the theatres.



Coincidentally with society's increased interest in extraterrestrial matters, a growing number of people began to claim to have suffered alien abductions. After decades of reluctance to study the phenomenology of alien abductions in the psychiatric community, John Mack, while still a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School began interviewing

individuals who claimed to have suffered alien abductions. In general, most abductees shared a similar narrative: a capture by the alleged alien space craft; a performance of scientific procedures on the abductee; a communication with the abductee; a tour in the space craft; and a perception of losing track of time during the event and a return to Earth. Often, abductees would experience mystical feelings. Mack concluded that if the phenomenology of alien abduction could be explained by any mental pathology, it would be post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). (4) In this clinical scenario, the abduction phenomena could be explained as a result of dissociative experiences, which are commonly seen in traumatized patients. However, in psychiatry, it is not un-common to see patients who report experiences with aliens in different clinical settings. For instance, delusions consisting of a belief that aliens are invading us are common in the context of paranoid schizophrenia. As a result, from a psychiatric perspective, we could establish a distinction between neurotic and psychotic alien abduction related symptomatology.



Congruent with this wave of extraterrestrial interests, in 1952, scientific writer L. Ron Hubbard funded “Scientology” in Camden, New Jersey. According to Hubbard, 75 million years ago, “Xenu”, the dictator of the “Galactic Confederacy” brought billions of his people to Earth in a huge space-craft, and with the help of psychiatrists, stacked them around volcanoes in Hawaii and the Canary Islands and killed them. According to Hubbard, the souls of these people still remain on Earth and create a bad energy that affects humans. (5) From a psychiatric viewpoint, this theory could be seen as bizarre or psychotic, an example of *folie a pluisire* or shared psychosis. In fact, there seems to be some increasing evidence suggesting that Hubbard had psychiatric problems himself and was under the effect of amphetamines and alcohol when he wrote his theses. (6) However, after scientology was recognized as a religion in the United States in 1993, it was more difficult to make such a statement. According to the American Psychiatric Association practice guidelines, it is not recommended that psychiatrists deal with spiritual problems. Interestingly, in other countries such as Ireland, Netherlands and Germany, scientology is not a religion and a different approach could be taken, actually, in the latest, scientology is considered an anticonstitutional sect formed by extremists that threaten the freedom of democracy. (7) On the other hand, a scientologist could also argue that all religions have bizarre ideas. For example, Muslims and Christians believe that Jesus was born from a virgin, something that is scientifically not possible.

In 1958, the United States Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space

Administration (NASA) with the purpose of coordinating aeronautical and space activities in the U.S. One of NASA’s programs is charged with the search for life outside our home planet. In 1976, NASA landers Viking I and II failed to find life in Mars. The dramatic fall in temperature at night was thought to be a possible explanation. (8) However, in 1996, a meteor from Mars discovered in Antarctica had some possible fossils of bacteria and complex organic molecules. (9) Though still in debate, some scientists believe this meteor was the first evidence of life on another planet.

The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) project began applying its scientific methods. One of its major advocates was Carl Sagan. In 1977, while working on a SETI project at the Big Ear radio telescope in Ohio State University, John Ehman detected a 72 second extraterrestrial and non solar signal. Ehman printed the signal and wrote the comment “Wow” which became the name of the signal. (10)

It is possible that the discovery of extraterrestrial life could lead to a global existential crisis. In that case, our current spiritual belief system would be challenged and tested. Similarly to what occurred when Spanish conquistadors arrived in the New Land, it would be logical to speculate that if invaded by a more technologically advanced alien civilization from outer space, their belief system would be somehow imposed on us. Similarly, the opposite would happen if terrestrials became instead the invaders.



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Note: Source of movie posters wikipedia.org

Yoga and Psychosis

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Schizophrenia is defined as a disorder of perception and content of thought, manifesting in psychotic symptoms. Increasing evidence suggests that childhood trauma is associated with psychosis (1). Positive symptoms of schizophrenia are primarily treated with second generation antipsychotic medication, which have alarming physical side-effects such as obesity, cardio-vascular disease and diabetes 2 - known as metabolic syndrome.

Coping Strategies

Adjunct Treatments, such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and supportive therapies have shown positive effect in reduction of symptoms of schizophrenia. Moreover, mindfulness interventions have been trialled successfully with anxiety in schizophrenia (2) as well as psychosis, specifically auditory hallucinations (hearing voices), assisting people in making sense of their experience (3). However, when experiencing psychotic symptoms, not only mind and emotion are affected, but the whole body. Traumatic memories may be stored as somatic sensations (4). Some psychosocial interventions for psychosis and schizophrenia offer involvement in physical activity for weight management and confidence building (5). Physical activity not only addresses serious physical problems, but also contributes to increased self-esteem, motivation and global functioning (6). Yoga offers physical activity, breath-awareness and relaxation, which enhance

inner and outer strength, restore balance of body, mind, emotion, and promote clarity in approaching life.

Origins of Yoga

Yoga is one of the ancient wisdom traditions, believed to be 5000 years old, originating from India, and brought to the West during the mid 19th Century. Similar to other native traditions, Yogic understanding of health and unwellness is based on the interrelatedness of body, mind, emotion and spirit.

Philosophy of Yoga

Traditionally, Yoga practices were parted from Guru (spiritual teacher) to disciple. Later, written scriptures emerged, as in the revered Bhagavad Gita, (500 – 600 B.C.) which describes the process of personal transformation in the story of the warrior Arjuna and his teacher Lord Krishna on the night before the battle at the banks of the Ganges River. The psychology of Yoga views life as a continuous process of consciousness raising and consequently conducting oneself in a kind manner (ahimsa = non-violence) towards all beings. However, inner conflicts, arising from samskaras (mental impressions) are processed through becoming aware of one's conduct in day-to-day activities (7)

The word Yoga means to 'unite' or to 'yoke', indicting the active process of bringing the different dimensions of human existence into

harmony. The Yoga Sūtras believed to be written around 200 CE by the Indian sage Patañjali describe “The Eight Limbs of Yoga”, meaning all Yoga branches leading towards self-realisation, the ultimate goal of Yoga (8). The physical form of Yoga is viewed as a preparation for advanced practices aspiring deep transformation (9).

Yoga, Meditation and Mindfulness

There are two basic forms of meditation: observation or attentive awareness, the first stages of pratyahara (sense withdrawal), also known as mindfulness (*smṛti* or *sati*), and concentration (*dharana*). Deep concentration meditation presupposes Ego strength and the capacity to hold multiple realities when moving through psychological processes. Mindfulness, a meditation practice inherent in Yoga and developed further in Buddhism, cultivates the ability to observe non-judgementally one’s own inner processes and respond mindfully to day-to-day experiences. Mindfulness meditation as practiced in recent psychological modalities and the MBSR program (10) has been integrated into psychological interventions for psychosomatic disorders (11) and associated psychological issues (12) Mindfulness practices enhance qualities of self-observation, capacity to describe internal experiences, acting with awareness, non-judgement of and non-reactivity to inner experiences (13).

Hatha Yoga

The most popular Yoga in the West since the 1970’s is Hatha Yoga, whose focus and instrument of inner transformation is the body. It is commonly believed that Hatha Yoga is an ancient tradition, involving 84 basic Yoga postures as described and pictured in the Hatha

Yoga Pradipika, written by Svāmi Svātmārāma (16th Century). However, scholars De Michelis (14) and Singleton (15) challenge origins and development of modern postural Yoga and place them in the early twentieth-century in the context of the Indian independence movement, 19th century physical health movements in Europe and India, and the reformist programs of Indian Yoga teachers like Sri T. Krishnamacharya. However, the transformative aspect of Yoga continues to engage Westerners, with 15 million Americans practicing some form of Yoga. Practicing Hatha Yoga induces an immediate relaxation response as well as a state of alertness (16), which serves as motivation for continuing. Contrary to exercise, although sometimes mistaken for this, Hatha Yoga effects apart from building physical strength, flexibility and stamina, the nervous system in subtle and profound ways (17).



Krishna guiding Arjuna in the battle field.
(Source: davidderrick.files.wordpress.com)

Yoga and mental health

Yoga anatomy defines the body beyond the physical, acknowledging different dimensions of existence in the five Koshas

(physical body, prana (life energy/ breath), mental-emotional, cognition (intellect-intuition), spiritual), which, when in imbalance, can be addressed through Yoga and Ayurveda (Indian medicine). The three main doshas (constitutions) determine the type of intervention. Yoga therapy is a more modern invention responding to the needs of Western lifestyle, which appears to produce emotional states of anxiety, depression, trauma based psychosis, and the physical manifestations of these imbalances. Psychotherapeutically, high arousal states suggest body/ mind oriented approaches by firstly assisting the person to become grounded. The physical practice of Yoga and breathing help induce a sense of calm and control, providing a safe platform for self-development. Research shows that Yoga is effective as an adjunct therapy in managing psychiatric disorders (18), i.e. anxiety (19), depression (20).

Yoga and Psychosis

When psychotic, sensory perception can be distorted and feel disturbing, in particular when trauma is the background experience (4). Earlier literature warns of triggering psychotic episodes with people who have a vulnerability to psychosis (21, 22). However, when psychotic and not able to manage overwhelm, grounding practices are appropriate, such as simple asana (Yoga postures) and pranayama (breathing practices) which allow for musculoskeletal improvement and increased, thus calming parasympathetic nervous system functioning. The therapeutic relationship with a Yoga-skilled clinician would be paramount as with any clinical intervention.

Yoga and schizophrenia

Clinical application of Yoga with psychosis is body focused to engage the person in grounding and sensual perception of their surroundings. For example, redirecting focus to the soles of the feet induces a sense of groundedness and connectness (23). Yoga, applying both physical and mental practices, has proven to be beneficial in managing positive and negative symptoms of schizophrenia in two Randomised Controlled Trials with schizophrenia (24, 25). PANNS (Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale) and WHOQOL (World Health Organisation Quality of Life) scores showed significant improvement. In two recent pilot studies (26, 27) we explored mindful Hatha Yoga with psychotic and psychiatric forensic populations. Although small sample sizes, qualitative results suggest significant improved mental state, increased relaxation, body-awareness and motivation to engage in life.



(Source: www.theyogapose.com)

Yoga as Metaphor for Life

One Yoga posture, the Tree Pose (Vriksasana) presents a metaphor for standing on earth and connecting to spirit. The tree trunk represents the spine, standing tall and secure on the earth, while centred in the inner self. Branches and leaves are like thoughts and activities we can get lost in or utilize to

continuously grow. The experience of psychosis, when guided through with grounding awareness, can potentially be life-transforming, and bring the person to a place of self-awareness, uniting dissociated aspects of the person; reflecting the true meaning of Yoga, and consequently increasing their capacity to make positive choices in life.

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Cinema and Psychiatry

Zerkalo (The Mirror) and Psychosis

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The Mirror (Russian: Зеркало) directed by Andrei Tarkovsky (1932–1986) is an autobiographical film narrating the story of Alexei, through memories and dreams linked to him in a disorganized timeless pattern. Psychosis-like frames of memories and flashbacks probably correspond to 40 year old Alexei, whom we see lying on his deathbed at the end of the movie with no cause of illness besides poor conscience. Meanwhile, the movie depicts flashbacks of distinct generations and occasionally blends them together expressing how the characters might be innately connected to each other. One of the most famous scenes is Alexei's dream of her mother floating in weightlessness (Fig. 1), where she metaphorically transforms into Alexei's wife in the following scene, watching her own reflection in a mirror (Zerkalo). Alexei's dreams are depicted in black and white, while real time events are generally filmed in color, allowing a sensible transition between conscious and unconscious states of the mind.



Fig.1: Floating Marousya (Alexei's mother) with Andrei Tarkovsky (Snapshot from Andrei Tarkovsky's "The mirror", behind the scenes)

In another scene, Ignat (Alexei's child) falls into a memory, where he feels a sense of Deja vu; Ignat literally walks into a memory, visits the past, and speaks to an older lady (perhaps an old relative of Alexei), and then returns to the present frame of time. Another famous scene depicting the ongoing timeless coexistence is the final scene where an elderly Marousya (the mother) is walking with her young children while the young adult version of herself (Fig. 2) watches them passing by, laughing and crying simultaneously.



Fig. 2: Marousya (the mother) watching elderly Marousya walking by with her 2 children (Snapshot from Andrei Tarkovsky's "The mirror")

Seamlessly interweaving between various timeframes, dreamlike flashbacks similar to the stream of consciousness pattern in literature, and merging various characters as if they harmonically coexist, makes this film a perfect example of psychosis in cinema. Accompanied by photographic scenery, real wartime footage, and occasionally narrated through Arseny Tarkovsky's surreal poetry, this film perfectly subjects the audience to experience a floating state of the mind between real and surreal.

Time Travel And Frank The Bunny: Donnie Darko by Richard Kelly (2001)

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Kelly's cult classic narrates the fantastic story of Donald (Donnie) Darko, a very intelligent teenager who struggles with mental illness. At the beginning of the film, the viewer witnesses a jet engine crash in Donnie's room, miraculously harming no one. At the time it happened, Donnie was actually riding his bicycle. As explained before, Donnie has unclear psychological problems and sees a psychiatrist, Dr. Thurman, for talk therapy and medication management. Donnie feels chronically inadequate to his peers and family. Donnie has both visual and auditory hallucinations and communicates with Frank, an anthropomorphic monstrous bunny who prophesies the world's end in 28 days.



Image: Frank the Bunny.

Source: adventuresinpoortaste.com

In traditional psychoanalysis, hallucinations and other psychotic symptoms are seen as manifestations of the unconscious mind. Dr. Thurman tries hypnosis to further understand the nature of Donnie's problems. In one scene, commanded by his hallucinations, Donnie damages the water main with an ax causing a flood in school. On a different day, while watching "The Evil Dead" with his girlfriend, Gretchen, Frank orders Donnie to burn the house of an eccentric motivational speaker that is touring in town.

Through his science teacher he discovers a book about philosophy of time travel. Donnie becomes obsessed with time travel and wormholes. This book had been written by a now demented woman, Roberta Sparrow, a former nun, who abandoned her vows and became the science teacher in his school years before. Donnie begins to see vectors appearing from the chest of people, which he believes can lead him to portals that may allow time travel.



Image: Donnie can see vectors from his chest that lead him to time portals. Source: dramafever.com

Later in the film, Dr. Thurman meets with Donnie's parents and inform them about Donnie's lack of contact with reality and the possibility of having paranoid schizophrenia. Dr. Thurman increases the dose of medication

and suggests he continues with hypnotherapy. In a later session, Donnie confesses having flooded the school and burning down the house. He says that his friend Frank will soon kill someone. Concerned, Dr. Thurman calls Donnie's parents but cannot reach them because they are in New York. During the parents' absence, Donnie and his sister throw a Halloween Party. At the party, Donnie remembers that there are only a few hours left before Frank's prediction of world's end and anxiously goes with his girlfriend Gretchen and two friends to visit Roberta Sparrow. When they arrive at the house, two school bullies attack them. During the altercation, a car passes by, driving uncontrollably, and kills Gretchen. The driver is Frank (Donnie's sister boyfriend) who wears the same bunny costume that Donnie had seen in his hallucinations. Donnie shoots and kills him with his father's gun. After that, somehow, Donnie manages to travel back in time right at the moment that the plane was about to crash in his room and sacrifices his life to avoid the forthcoming tragedy.

This film is likely the greatest depiction of a teenager struggling with psychosis. Most child psychiatrists would benefit from watching it. Kelly's work also offers a caricaturesque representation of American suburban life and puritan thinking. Despite his psychosis, Donnie seems to be socially smarter than his peers. As opposed to other characters, he is able to see the "whole picture." In that sense, Donnie seems to be resilient, he is always a step ahead everyone else.

The Addicted Wolf

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The Wolf of Wall Street (2013), directed by Martin Scorsese starring Leonardo DiCaprio, is based on the true story of Jordan Belfort (DiCaprio), from his rise to a wealthy stockbroker living the filthy rich high life to his downfall after being involved in drugs, sex, crime and the FBI. As one would expect of a Martin Scorsese flick, this movie is permeated by drugs, profanity, nudity, sex and humor. This article highlights the drug, its intensity and the consequences depicted in the movie.

Perhaps it was Mark Hanna (Matthew McConaughey) who trained him to use alcohol, other drugs and masturbation to become a successful stock broker. He further goes on to explain how each drug helps him to relax and focus in this chaotic profession. No sooner he gets into business and starts earning money, he hits on drugs as he states “He does enough drugs to sedate the majority of New York’s population”. More than drugs, he is addicted to money and thinks that it is one drug that can make a man conquer the world as he snorts a line of coke with a hundred dollar bill subsequently crumpling it up and throwing it into a dustbin.

In spite of being married Jordan goes on to have an affair with an insanely gorgeous wife Naomi Lapaglia (Margot Robbie). He takes her out to dinner and on returning he is invited by her apartment for some tea. Extremely

tempted Jordan ends up having sex with her that lasted for full 11 seconds. This short-lived sexual encounter could be attributed to the use of drugs which causes many sexual dysfunctions like Erectile Dysfunction and Premature Ejaculation.

Ludes

The film depicts the use of Ludes (Quaaludes). Donnie (Jonah Hill) brings Jordan a strong brand of Ludes called Lemmon 714. Just to have a full-fledged experience of this drug, Jordan tries to get rid of old drugs in his body by puking and by using enema. Even 35 minutes after taking the pill they experience no effect. So they take more and still experience no effect. They find out that the pills had expired in 1981 itself. Jordan goes out to make a phone call on the pay-phone just when he starts having the effect of the Lemmons. His face starts distorting, his speech slurred, unable to stand upright and collapses on the floor personally experiencing as a child with cerebral palsy. Somehow he manages to crawl himself into the car and drive back home in his Ferrari. At home, Donnie who is also under the effect of Ludes, tries eating and chokes on himself fortunately rescued by Jordan. Jordan was able to do this only after he sniffs a whole little vial of coke to get himself out of the effect of Ludes. On waking up the next morning, Jordan finds Police in his house and is shown his Ferrari with

a multiple dents and scratches. Despite John thinking that he drove his car safe and slow he had managed to bump into every vehicle and sign boards on his way back home. Ludes had left him with a blackout of what had happened the previous night.



Image: The two characters under the influence

Source: vibe.com

Methaqualone, notoriously known as Quaaludes or Ludes, is a sedative-hypnotic. It was first synthesized in India by Indra Kishore Kacker and Syed Hussain Zaheer (1). It was originally intended to be used as an anti-malarial agent. It was patented in the USA by Wallace and Tiernan (2). As a hypnotic, sedative and muscle relaxant, its use peaked in the early 1970s. It has also been used illicitly as a recreational drug. Being a central nervous depressant, it increases the activity of GABA

receptors which leads to drops in pulse and blood pressure, decreased breathing effort leading to deep relaxation. It has a half-life of around 6-8 hours and has ample dependence potential. Overdose can lead to marked inhibition of nervous system resulting in coma and death. It became increasingly popular in late 1960s and 1970s known variously as ludes/sopers/disco

biscuits/soapers/mandrake/mandies. There were bars in Manhattan called Juice Bars which only served non-alcoholic drinks that catered to people who liked to dance to the tunes of Ludes.

Substance use and its deleterious effects have been depicted in many movies. Perhaps, cinema can act as a tool to educate the masses about the various effects of such substances and hence the need to stay away from them.

1. Kacker IK, Zaheer SH. Potential Analgesics. Part I. Synthesis of substituted 4-quinazolones. J. Ind. Chem. Soc 1951;28:344-6.
2. US Patent 3135659 - Hydroxy and Alkoxy Aryl Quinazolones.

Future Issues

- Spring Issue 2014: Love
- Summer Issue 2014: Music and Dance

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