

Research, Primary Sources, And Pathei-Mathos

A rather neglected aspect of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos derives from the second of the seven axioms that form its foundations, which axiom is that the knowing, the perception of a personal pathei-mathos is

"different from and supplementary to that acquired by means of the Aristotelian essentials of conventional philosophy and experimental science and thus enables us to better understand Phainómenon, ourselves, and other living beings." ¹

Appendix VII, *Glossary of The Philosophy of Pathei-Mathos, of The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos* enumerate these essentials:

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

In addition such essentials now include Isaac Newton's first Rules of Reasoning which is that

"We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearances. To this purpose the philosophers say that Nature does nothing in vain, and more is in vain when less will serve; for Nature is pleased with simplicity, and aspects not the pomp of superfluous causes."

Hence why it is often considered that there are five Aristotelian Essentials.

Experimental science seeks to explain the natural world – the phenomenal world – by means of direct, personal observation of it, and by making deductions, and formulating hypothesis, based on such direct observation.

The philosophy of pathei-mathos adds the faculty of empathy - and the knowing so provided by empathy - to these essentials. Part of the knowing that empathy reveals, or can reveal, concerns the nature of Being, of beings, and of Time. ¹

Context

In the 2012 text *A Matter of Honour* I mentioned primary, secondary and tertiary sources, ² and the logical fallacy of incomplete evidence and expressed the view that the criteria of scholarship

"is essentially two-fold: (i) of detailed, meticulous, unbiased research on and concerning a specific topic or topics or subject undertaken over a period of some considerable time, usually a year or more in duration, and of necessity involving primary source material; and (ii) a rational assessment of the knowledge acquired by such research, with such conclusions about the topic, topics, or subject therefore being not only the logical result of the cumulative scholarly learning so acquired but also possessing a certain gravitas." ³

In the same work I also mentioned knowledge and that

"those who use [the] Media, and/or unscholarly books/essays, as sources of allegedly reliable information, as a guide, as a or as the basis for their judgement about and knowledge of someone or some many, are being unfair and uncultured because lacking in the following necessary virtues: (i) a reasoned, balanced, and thus ethical, judgement; (ii) the empathy of manifold direct personal contacts; and (ii) a scholarly research and/or a personal knowing extending over many years. Virtues which are the genesis of a genuine understanding of, and thence an unbiased knowledge of, another human being; and virtues which rapid, impersonal, mass means of modern communication actively discourage and which virtues are seldom, it seems, cultivated and employed by those involved with and who use and who rely on such modern means for information."

In *A May Day Interview* (2024) I expressed the perhaps elitist view that if such types who use the Media, and/or unscholarly books/essays, as sources

"had received in their youth a 'classical education', a learning of Ancient Greek, Latin, and a study of works such as *Hermeneutica Analytica Elenctica* and Euclid's *Στοιχεῖα*, they would not commit such errors [of reasoning]. Personally, I well remember the joy I had as a schoolboy in reading the set text *The Elements of Euclid For The Use of Schools and Colleges*, and in solving the geometrical problems we were given based on that text." ⁴

Thus I regarded and regard reason, logical reasoning, and scholarship using primary sources, as essential human virtues.

Primary Sources And Fallacies Of Reasoning

Some of the textbooks read in the late 1960 when in the Sixth Form included now almost forgotten works such as *Elementary Lessons in Logic* by W. Stanley Jevons (1889 edition) and *Logic* by Richard F. Clarke, SJ, which was part of the nineteenth century *Manuals Of Catholic Philosophy* series.

These books led the reader through the basics of classical logic and helpfully gave and explained fallacies of reasoning such as fallacies *extra dictionem* and common fallacies such as the now pervasive *argumentum ad hominem* and *argumentum ad verecundiam*, the appeal to authority.

What is noticeable is that in recent decades there have been attempts to redefine certain fallacies, an example being the appeal to authority, which is citing or quoting a person or persons who is of who are regarded, by the person citing or quoting or by others, as an authority on a subject with the implicit assumption or an overt spoken or written assertion that such an authority should be respected because, for instance, the 'authority' is an academic while the disputant is not and therefore the opinion or statement by the 'authority' is the correct one.

In the matter of the fallacy of appeal to authority the re-definition is along the following lines: that the fallacy is when the opinion of a non-expert on a topic is used as evidence; which statement is, while appearing to be a decisive statement concerning 'authority', is not so for two reasons. First, because the presumption is that the opinion or statement by a 'non-expert' is inferior to the opinion or statement of an 'expert'; second, there is the question of what criteria is used to define 'an expert' as distinct from a 'non-expert' and thus from whence or from whom or how the 'expert' derives their presumed authority on a particular subject; presumably by an appeal to others who are regarded, at the time, as 'experts' themselves, or by an appeal to the 'authority' of an academic institution or some conclave or institution of 'experts' on the subject in question.

This presumption regarding expert knowledge or expertise is contrary to both experimental science and scholarship, for both can and have been used to overturn accepted, and current or past 'expert', opinion.

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1. *The Way Of Pathei-Mathos, Part Two of The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*, <https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf>

2. Among primary sources are original manuscripts germane to the subject or to a historical person, such as in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, Papyrus Bodmer in the Vatican Library, and in the case of Sappho fragments of papyri such as P. Oxyrhynchus. XV, 1787 fr. 1 and 2; archaeological or fossil remains from an historical period; contemporaneous manuscripts, letters, diaries, memoirs, personal journals, interviews, speeches, and other materials which describe or relate (i) events in which a person or persons participated in or observers of, (ii) ideas or creations, such as music, a philosophy, works of literature, poetry, and art-work which a person was responsible for and also their published writings in their original language, and authenticated manuscripts published and unpublished.

The writings, opinions, and conclusions of others about such subjects or persons are secondary sources, with tertiary sources a collection or compendium of such secondary sources. In regard to the original language of primary sources, if a person venturing an opinion about such material cannot read the original language, and does not personally translate such a work or passages from such a work and thus has to use the translations of others then opinions and conclusions about that work are secondary sources.

3. *A Matter of Honour*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/a-matter-of-honour.pdf>

4. *A May Day Interview*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/davidmyatt-may-day-interview.pdf>