

The Model of Orthography or The Modest Newsletter Under the Influence of Editors . . .

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Some Bosch . . .

It seems appropriate, at this juncture, to bring up the topic of Hieronymous Bosch. Please click on the Hieronymous Bosch link on the following web site and take a tour. Make sure your tour is not entirely unalloyed by delight!

<http://www.abcgallery.com/index.html>

There are two things, with regard to Bosch, that we wish to address at the Basch. 1 What was he doing?

2 What is our evaluation of him? To the end that we may accomplish this you are begged and urged to consider and describe the work of this wealthy fellow and form opinions for or against. If you are ambivalent, you must be able to articulate some reasons for this alleged ambivalence . . . at least three or so. Should the opportunity arise, please feel free to paint your own imitation of Bosch –he is as famous for inspiring imitations as he is for his own work. We will be happy to view your work and to form opinions of it, or simply to form opinions of it. Here are some probing questions to guide your thoughts about Bosch into areas not entirely devoid of merit.

1 Why do you like Bosch? or Why does Bosch bother you so much?

2 How is Bosch a good or a bad painter?

3 What about Bosch and the Moral Imagination?

4 What can you begin to surmise about Bosch's ideas of music? See the Haywain and the Garden of Delights

¹Our lady of perpetual misgivings.

² The idea for this is that I was going to call him Little Baby Hitz, but then thought to abbreviate. Well, that is something quite different, as you can see, but still good.

especially.

Fable

by Ryan Martin

This is the story of a quiet people called the Sophrons. They resided in a secluded fertile valley practicing their religion and cultural idiosyncrasies. They had neighbors on the other side of the hills to interact and trade with. The Sophrons had an interesting look about them. They were thin and pale, with modest strength and of medium stature, an appearance that was caused, according to Sophronian legend, by their unique diet.

For many ages, the Sophrons had a peculiar bread which their entire diet revolved around. Sophronian legend held this sweet, special bread in great significance, and the folklore had it that if one continued to eat this bread, it not only kept them in perfect physical condition, but prolonged their very life. The entire cultural system of the Sophrons revolved around this bread. It was never taught that they were to eat only the bread, but, that above all other foods, only the bread was necessary, and, if other things were eaten, they were to supplement the bread and never distract from it. Of course, as is the case in all cultures, these customs would at times be broken by a few, but the majority of the Sophrons honored formalities and revered the bread in its proper place.

Now this custom was looked on as rather strange by the communities surrounding the Sophrons. The Plektan people, for example, to the south of the Sophrons, would often mock the centrality of the bread to their diet, and, when they had the rare opportunity to taste it, laugh at its funny taste. The Orgilon people to the north would reason that no bread had spiritual or significant power and deny its supernaturalism. These neighbors fared sumptuously on decadent treats and lived their lives for the sheer sake of eating. And their appearance mirrored this. The Plektans and Orgilons would grow large bellies and fat chins. Their noses would puff out and their fingers were like fat little Weiner sausages. And the Sophronian wise men would encourage their people to continue to eat the sweet bread, reminding them of its wonderful taste. "The Bread is not to be eaten merely for our benefit, but because the Bread is sweet," one elder had said. Other wise men would remind them of the ancient writings, and instruct the people on how to eat the bread. "Remember, we do not want to detract from the Bread," an elder commented, "but, as the ancient text says, 'when you feast on it, compliment it with other foods and thereby uplift that Bread—because proper foods used properly help show the supremacy of the Bread.'" The Sophrons continued to eat and enjoy the Bread.

Now, you should not think that the Sophrons were selfish with their bread. They shared it with their neighboring nations, as many who would come down and join them in the Sophronian Valley. These proselytes would be instructed by the older Sophrons how to eat and compliment the bread. They were encouraged by the Elders to share it often and to let others know the exquisite taste of the bread, as well as what it could do for their health and vitality.

After many years of continuing to live a quiet life, however, a problem began to creep into the region. More and more Sophrons were abandoning the Valley for the other side of the hill. They were beginning to notice that the Plektan and Orgilon delicacies had an unusual but pleasant taste of their own. Whole families who had lived in the Valley for years were beginning to move out. "We can still eat the Bread," they argued. And, in fact, they did. They would take the bread, break it apart, and mix it in to the Plektan and Orgilon treats. For example, the Plektans had one particularly pleasing dish they liked to call Philargyria. The transported Sophrons began to have a real affinity toward this dish, and invented their own version of it, mixing in crumbs from the bread. Still, these hybrid dishes would have a surprisingly high amount of the bread, even retaining to a great degree the sweet flavor. Many would still have whole meals reminiscent of their old Sophronian Valley days, eating the Plektan and Orgilon delicacies only occasionally. They noticed a small change in their external appearance, but they had begun feeling a bit out of place anyway, and welcomed the minor alterations of their physical condition.

Another problem for these transported Sophrons was the appetite of their children. Their young would taste the foreign foods in Plektan and Orgilon parks and schools, and found them much more appealing than the bread. This caused a great degree of concern for the transported Sophronic people. "They cannot go without the sweet Bread," they

reasoned, and they decided together to serve the children solely the hybrid dishes, while increasing the Plektan and Orgilon flavors. “This will appease them until their tastes have matured,” a leader among them concluded. Some expressed concern, but could not offer a more effective remedy for the problem.

You can probably predict what happened to the transported Sophrons and their children. The few still living back in the Sophronian Valley were able to! As time went on, the hybrid meals which mixed the Bread with the Plektan and Orgilon delights had to have more and more foreign seasonings to satiate the younger generation’s tastes. By the time these young Sophrons "matured," it was very easy for them to reject their parent’s simple bread meal, prepared according to the standards of ancient tradition. “Why should we?” they asked. “We are still eating the bread.” The parents, in turn, continued to give the hybrid meals to their own children, the taste of which increasingly resembled the taste of the Plektan and Orgilon treats. And their appearance slowly evolved to increasingly resemble the Plektan and Orgilon obesity. The Transported Sophrons, increasingly with each new generation, could not recognize this change, as they only had themselves with which to compare their appearance. Old Sophrons were rarely spotted, and the new believed they had not changed at all.

One day a man of the Transported Sophrons traveled over the hills back to the Sophronian Valley. He had grown fat and large. There were not many in the old city, and many of the houses were boarded up. As he walked its streets he soon found an old Feast House, where the families would often meet together to eat their sweet bread meals. He ventured inside, where he saw an old priest just putting a fresh loaf of the sacred bread on the central table. The priest turned to him, and said, “Sir, would like to try some of my Bread?” The man smiled at the novelty of the torn piece offered him. He looked at its simple appearance, took, and ate. And hated the taste.

A Certain Kind of Confusion

by Todd Mitchell

A certain kind of confusion, that is, perplexity, is a mark of the learner.

Learners, who understand truth is not of their own creation, embrace perplexing challenges to their ideas. They know the joy of epiphany, and are unsatisfied with mental stagnation. Fools, who believe they have already apprehended truth, avoid challenges to their ideas. They know the happiness of self-assuredness, and dislike perplexity.

Not confused about anything? Perhaps you are avoiding the most challenging questions. Now, not later, is the time to ask the tough questions, and to admit that you might not know it all.

When you have asked the tough questions, finding yourself in the throes of confusion, the worst thing you can do is to start flailing aimlessly. In so doing, careless and hasty, you might hit upon the wrong answer. Instead, methodically and relentlessly pursue truth:

1. **Embrace your confusion.** Not in defeated resignation, but in anticipation of understanding! As evidence of humility, it is a gift of God. And in contrast to the stale pool of mental stagnation, it is a refreshing stream of thoughtfulness that can inexorably bring you closer to God. Perplexity may be frustrating, but it has been well said, “That which frustrates you the most, you learn the best.”
2. **Pray.** This must never go without saying! He is a fool who leans unto his own understanding. Ask for wisdom, and God will give it to you. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” - James 1:5

3. **Devour Scripture.** The answer is not “out there” but “in there.” Do not rely *exclusively* on others’ opinion of Scripture, but read it carefully for yourself. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” - II Timothy 3:16-17
4. **Read.** Rest assured your confusion is almost certainly not new with you. Most likely others have already been where you are. Reading their work will not only help you in the pursuit of truth, but will also help you articulate your ideas in the framework they have constructed. (Now go back and reread point number 3.)
5. **Find a godly “Socrates.”** Avoid yes men, because they will not challenge you. Avoid no men, because arbitrary and capricious denial is a great way to lead a pig. Rather, find a godly, thoughtful person who will ask you the right questions, i.e. the most frustrating questions!
6. **Keep sight of the big picture.** It is tempting to become so focused on the source of your confusion that it looks more important than it really is. Your pursuit of truth should not cause you to sin. Never get so bogged down in your quest that you neglect your responsibilities!
7. **Be careful whom you share with.** Often those who fear confusion seek to drown out challenges with ever-louder (and more caustic) proclamation of their position. Fundamentalism bears the scars of this way of thinking. Such people scorn confusion as a sign of a weak or nonexistent faith. Don’t drop your guard around them, especially if they are in a position that can adversely impact your effectiveness in ministry!
8. **Keep a journal.** Confusion, properly conceived, may be likened to the travails of childbirth. The travails of perplexity are simply the necessary and expected pains of giving birth to new ideas. Looking back in time, to see where you have been in your thought, can really help. Make sure you record your thought processes, your loves, your hates, your consternation, and your joy. Sometimes the most productive confusion is the longest-lasting confusion - you might be delivering triplets instead of just one baby!

The pursuit of truth, itself a priceless treasure, is so immensely rewarding that learners may well wonder why anyone would avoid it. For those who enjoy this pursuit, they share in common that constant rumination of thought over whatever it is that confuses them at the moment.

A Reminder

Please read the chapter on friendship in *The Four Loves* by C. S. Lewis.

Please submit to me any ideas you may have that you would like to have in the newsletter.

Please think of possible things to talk about and do at the next bash.

Please remember to send what you agreed to send to the newsletter - such as information about the retreat . . .

Please consider what you would like to contribute to the big publication. It might help to mention that there are two things that go on here, because some of you seem confused. This here Newsletter is a preliminary to the bashes and serves to test run ideas for the main collection of really polished stuff we’d like to do in the fall. But that is different.

Please don’t be so muddle headed as to think that all we are doing with this is fooling around. It causes me no little exasperation when I consider that grown people can’t seem to get a deadline that is announced with plenty of advance notice. I realize all of us make mistakes, and that this is hardly the most important thing you have to do, but if

Ryan Martin can get things in on time, then so can you. If you can't send something, let me know in advance!

A Quotation

But let me narrate my wanderings in detail and the labors I endured, like a second Heracles, to confirm the oracle to my own mind. After the politicians I went to the poets, tragic, dithyrambic, and what not, making sure that in comparison with these I should detect myself in the very act of folly. I took their own poems which they had apparently elaborated with the greatest care, and with these in my hand proceeded to ask the authors what they signified, expecting, of course, to pick up some curious information at the same time. I am ashamed to tell you the truth, my friends, and yet it must out. Will you believe me, almost any one here in this court would speak more intelligently about these works than the authors themselves. I very soon learned of the poets that they compose not by wisdom but by a certain inspiration and gift of nature, like diviners and soothsayers, who in the same way utter many noble sentiments, yet understand nothing of what they say. Such appeared to be the state of the poets; yet I perceived that deluded by their poetic genius they deemed themselves the wisest of men in other matters also, wherein they were nothing. So I gave up the poets too, thinking I surpassed them in the same way as the politicians.

– Socrates.

Ride on, Ride on in Majesty

Observations by Andrea Brown

The influence of American populist movement on the music of the church is hardly to be denied. However, let it not be said that no good music has been written for use in worship since the advent of popular culture. Here and there one finds newer hymn tunes which do not attempt to make people feel better about sober texts.

One such tune is a beautiful setting of *Ride on, ride on in majesty* by Graham George (b.1912). I know nothing of Mr. George besides his year of birth, nor do I know when he composed this tune. But, his setting casts a new light on the text by Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868), which I think is entirely appropriate to reflect upon as Lent progresses.

To begin, Mr. George's tune is in f minor. F minor is not the darkest sounding key possible, but it can sound quite dark on an organ, depending on the registration chosen by the organist. The melody is simple, and melodic motion is mainly stepwise. Because of its stepwise motion and small range (F to E-flat), the melody is reminiscent of chant. Its resemblance to chant is actually quite strong. In addition to the melodic characteristics, the tune is sung in unison. All of the harmony is supplied by the organist. Also, there is no meter. There are measures of two, three, four, five, and six beats, which are arranged so that stress falls on the most important words of the text. The rhythm is very much like the rhythm of spoken English.

The harmony of the piece is also carefully crafted to bring out the meaning of the text. On the phrase "Hark! All the tribes Hosanna cry," the harmony modulates from f minor to A-flat major and cadences. The G-flat major chord leading to A-flat major with a suspension in the soprano is a special chord because G-flat is the Neopolitan chord, or one half-step above the tonic (tonic is the "home" key, f minor in this case). This chord is about as far away as harmonically possible from the tonic, and the 4-3 suspension adds much musical tension, which highlights the words that fall on these chords. My favorite example is the fourth verse, in which the word "expects" falls on the Neopolitan and suspension. The main point of a suspension is that one expects the resolution of the dissonance; this device is a great example of word-painting in hymns (word-painting occurs when the music illustrates the words set to it).

The musical devices mentioned here are just exactly the sort of thing that good hymns are full of. One more quick example (this one not so new): Have you ever thought about why the opening gesture of *Come Thou Almighty King* is a downward gesture? Consider that Jesus is now at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for the saints, and then consider that God is in heaven, which is *above* the earth. The first gesture is a downward gesture because Jesus must come *down* to earth from heaven when He returns to reign on earth. I pray that He will return soon, and that these observations will help us to choose good music for worshipping Him until then.