

**THE PERPETUAL MYSTERY OF EXISTANCE**

Why are we alive? What are the hidden truths that give meaning to our whole existence? Such questions sprouted in the human mind time and time again, planting the seed of doubt in a psyche made fertile by the expert hand of death.

Many tried their hand with this colossal labyrinth, writing pages of poetry, essays and studies; giving life to death's appearance through tormented strokes of colour. But this is not a Greek myth, there's no red string to guide them and the minotaur can be hidden behind every shadow as much as it may not even be inside the Daedalus. It's a tedious battle of trial and error, many lost their way and whatever glimpse of progress must be interpreted in its own way. But one thing in this fog of doubt is certain: the human mind is the only one who dares to adventure into this labyrinth.

Before standing in front of the looming entrance though one must ask themselves another, no less important, question: Why us humans? In nature's vast domain no creature can escape the inevitable silence of death and yet no bird, fish or mammal seems tormented by the reasoning behind their destiny nor its finality. Each and every entity which isn't human seems perfectly content in just fulfilling their role in the grand scheme of things and then perish, as if their life never even mattered in the first place. Therefore there must be something unique to the human mind that snaps when faced with the transmutation of the living into the inanimate, that marvels itself when put in front of concepts bigger than it, that it's able to find meaning even into the smallest of details.

That something has been interpreted in many different ways during the flow of history: decadents, for example, thought that it was the innate ability of the poet of identifying himself with nature, thus having full access to its inner mechanisms and correspondences. Psychologists call it conscience, the part of ourselves that is aware of the world around us and capable of processing data coming from it to transform them into something more complex, sometimes even completely unrelated to what it came from.

And yet a simple conscience is not enough to even begin to scratch the surface of the problem: it has to go through a deep and complex journey of auto discovery and comprehension; to remove, layer by layer, the natural instincts that obscure its vision. Only when the more materialistic aspects of human existence are cast aside the mind can try to follow the deeply tangled string that, cautiously hidden behind the veil of the unknown, tugs at one's existence to give it meaning. Let's just stop and think for a second: it's a warm day in ancient Greece, a soldier trains under the sun. As sweat beads on his neck his mind reels on what to do, how to defeat the Trojans. All his life trained him for this moment, his muscles sculpted for this very reason. Why should he worry about why is he doing it when he's used to just put into action the orders he receives?

The common man cannot even get near the doors of the metaphysical labyrinth of the meaning of life when he's too busy losing himself into smaller, more practical, matters.

Only a conscience ready to strip itself of all its beliefs at a moment's notice is able to marvel in front of the majestic yet evanescent metaphysical world.

Once the subject of the action is revealed everything seems to be ready for the much awaited entry of our hero into the labyrinth. Again another question stops him dead in his tracks: why is he doing this? What brings him to embark into unknown territory when life could be just as fulfilling without knowing what's hidden behind it?

The answer is written on papyrus, on paper, clay and stone; it's painted on every canvas and carved into marble. The answer is the blood that soaks a sword, the last fleeting scream of the victims of the crusades, the tears of innocent lives being taken in the name of a cause. History is the permanent testament of why it's necessary to dig into the unknown until a glimpse of the inner workings of the universe are revealed:

human evolution is deeply rooted in pain and brains, as marvellous as they can be, in the end are a product of nature and as such they have an intrinsic defence mechanism that can't be avoided. Beautiful, devastating pain is the reason why we grieve, why our bones ache even though we're not hurt. Pain is the biggest motivator and the most self-destructive emotion. Its complexity is dark and alluring, reason for corruption and daughter of death.

Pain is also the very reason why men embark in this journey of philosophical speculation: in a perfect world, where everything is in perfect stasis and harmony why would anyone want to reveal the inner workings of an already perfect system?

But when thinking about how history unravelled one observation is painstakingly obvious: pain is man-made. As such what men are really looking for when navigating the labyrinth is the confirmation that all the evil that humanity soaked the earth with can be the pretext of the birth of something good.

Let's examine, for example, Hegel. As the representation of the perfect idealist he made reality coincide with rationality, therefore justifying all the pain men caused as something inevitable and functional to the development on the conscience.

Then there's death herself. The mother of sufferance and the wall that will forever divide what's alive and what isn't, the divine and the mortal. The real reason why men venture into philosophy. Understanding what lies beneath reality is just the desperate attempt of giving to such a fragile concept like the cycle of life the immense weight of being meaningful on a spiritual level.

It's the necessity of exorcising death through what man does best: brute force and rationalization. And it's not just philosophy the mean to this end: literature of all ages is overflowing with the ink of broken souls trying to lessen the sting that death's kiss left on them.

Take Shakespeare for example: in "Shall I compare thee" he explicitly stated that literature was his attempt of saving the essence of the person he's dedicating the sonnet to. He pours his words onto the paper, defying death in any way he possibly can, looking for a chance of taking something destined to die and give it a taste of immortality.

Now the hero is aware of what's behind him, the only option left is going forward and let himself be absorbed by the darkness. Each and every soul that ventures into the labyrinth isn't guaranteed the success of their mission, and yet on they go; generation after generation of brilliant minds submerge themselves in hopes of finding what's left to the unknown. All of them both fuelled by and feeding the flames of desperate curiosity that spurred them to take the chance. They're destined to be defeated, leaving the world they so much adored and studied with brand new

questions in need of answers. By doing so they're quietly absolving another, fundamental task: keeping alive the innate human capability of being mesmerized by both the macroscopic and microscopic aspects of life. In fact, every time a new philosophy comes to life the world suddenly morphs into a brand new image, as if it were an immortal phoenix rising from its own ashes. We may never come to find the definitive answers to the questions that opened this reflection, probably we'll self-destruct way before that point. But this insatiable process already gave us a partial answer to the problem: pain is what move us and is something that we're acquainted with, while the true meaning of our existence sill lurks in the dark, which means that pain cannot be made into the meaning of the presence of humanity on Earth.