

On *Kairós*, Love and a Cup of Tea:

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“Yes, that's it,” said the Hatter
with a sigh: “it's always tea-time,
and we've no time to wash the
things between whiles.”

Lewis Carroll Alice's Adventure
in Wonderland

Asked about Time, I question Space. Why is it we freely question notions of Time yet we take Space for granted? It forms the basis for an untethered reality that in all our meandering we allow for one true Cartesian premise, that all that is known is known by Space. A locality. A place which is “capable” of holding all contents differed and deferred only by a Husserlian dance of perceptual non-entity: Time. Not since the words of Heraclitus, trounced Derrideanly, do we question, as Nietzsche did, the locale as much as what the locale held. This abysmal nonsense of decentered marginalia that prance lightly upon phallic linguistic thrones, is but one step towards true questioning, that is: what is the true relation between what we childishly call Space and so bravely tout as Time?

Consider how freely writers of all fields use the word “Time” in their titles as if ensnaring lustingly some elusive figure, a god or goddess (if not both, or neither),

remnant to an ideological nether world of convoluted spatiotemporal spasms. Quaintly we prance, tip toeing lightly over violated tulips to the tune of semiologically enhanced tomfoolery, spewing Southeast and Northwest notions from where none have ever lived, seen, nor smelled the illustrious coffee gingerly brewed from Juan Valdés proffered choice crops. For it is an adaptation of wanting: wanting to be, wanting to see, wanting to smell, to touch, to feel, even wanting to sleep with that which is not, nor ever should be, for its Space nor its Time is one's. It is what ethnicity, culture, gender, race, nationality, speech ... eventually; "Being" is all about. Who we are is what we make of when and where. Somalia, Hong Kong, Chile, Uruguay, Timbuktu, and even Puerto Rico, yes, even Puerto Rico is about when as much as about where. For it is this marriage of Time and Space which allows a what to question who. How? By becoming the perfect Space for the perfect Time to do so. Click. And here we are. Two pieces of a puzzle, a quantum puzzle of Einsteinian dimensions which naïvely comes together to allow questioning. Who questions? The Ego. What does it question? Who it is. Redundant, no? But this redundancy is, un/fortunately, life itself. It is the ever constant questioning of who by what can question in an everlasting act of re-affirmation.

Now, you might ask what this has to do with *kairós*. Ah! There lies the rub. It is exactly this which allows the questioner and the questioned to become, temporarily, One. For the locale of questioning and the act of questioning must come together creating questioning itself. Mumble jumble, you may say. True, but since it has already been established that knowledge is all mumble jumble anyway, I'll mumble a bit more.

Let me put this aside for a while and ask, rhetorically: Where does Love fit in? Ah! Young grasshopper. Love is the keystone to this artifice. For, as Empedocles noted long ago, it is Love which makes the world go around. Without love, nothing would come to be. And without its negation, nothing would be done away with. Love, my son, is Love, and it titillates as it nurtures our very existence. And I'm not talking about that sappy, mushy Love which we feel towards others, for that is unwholesome Love. Nor do I mean that high-o'-mighty, transcendental Love of that which we cannot partake, for that is a fool's Love. What I'm talking about is about a Love of the self, by the self, and for the self: an egotistical Love which, in the end, is the only true Love unto Being.

You see, we spend our lives looking for Love, and trying to give Love, in puppies, children, men, women, the latest issue of "Catwomen from Space", whatever. But this love is only a mirror of the Love we wish upon ourselves. It is a lustful, wanton Love; One that suffocates itself in its blinded, meaningless being. But one must be careful not to fall into a narcissistic Love, a Love of one's outer being, for that is also a shadow of its real potential. No. True Love of the Self forgets the "it" as it wanders aimlessly in the all.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I am not talking of a transcendental Love, either. Transcendental Love is static, dead. A weird remembrance of a forgotten utterance. It has no true feelings in its *thanatic* realm. It is too idealistic, a heaven for those weak of spirit. An anchor for deviant causes. It is no more than a bunch of gobbledy gook nonsense used by empty selves who do not truly search for meaning, but insist on it. My Love is True, centered in its marginality. For even my Self, in its infinite

marginality, must take positions in favor and/or against. And it is in those decisions that a locale and a moment must spring up to re/center a/the question. For tea, of course. For example: What tea do I want? Where can I get it? Is it real tea (the one that comes as whole leaves, and, PLEASE, not that herbal stuff people want to pass off as tea)? Or that tortured simulacra sold in bleached bags at the supermarket? Once I get the tea, do I want milk or sugar in my tea? Do I want both milk and sugar? Do I want neither? Where's the lemon? The honey? But that is not enough. True tea, to be truly enjoyed, must be concocted properly. A proper cup must be pre-warmed as a proper kettle must properly boil water for the proper duration of steeping to occur (none of that blasphemous cold tea for me, no sir-ree). Not to mention whether the water is properly oxygenated for tea. Add the proper accompaniments of milk and sugar (though I am a lemon and honey man myself. There is something about the acidity of lemon mingling with the earthy sweetness of golden honey to bring life to a robust cup of black chinese tea that But I digress. Yet, is this not what tea is all about? A ritual in which to digress in Time and Space allowing for non-spatiotemporal occurrences to occur? Is not tea-time a privileged moment in which so called normal Time and normal Space may be suspended in honor of a new experiential venture amidst the swiftly and savory curling tendrils of steam rising from the acidly-sweet laced hot cup of tea?). All this said, one must ask: Do I want tea at all?

Ladies and Gentlemen, at the moment you ask you place it. But moments and places must come together properly, or they just won't come at all. For the above questions make sense to me temporally, but not spatially. Why? Because it

may be tea-time, but who the hell drinks tea in Puerto Rico? At that locale, my moment for tea is nullified, and my being, as a teetotaler, suffers from spatiotemporal stillbirth.

Where does Love come in? Well, my “Love” for tea stems from my “egotistical love” for my-self, a Self which prefers tea to coffee. It brings forth a desire to construct a correct Space and a correct Time for tea so my Self may be ratified with a cup of properly brewed tea. So one looks for tea: in the supermarket, in specialty stores, in catalogs, and even in one's backyard. And, then, one scopes the scene, hoping for the proverbial hot water, carrying ceremoniously one's sacred tea sachet. And, if that becomes a burden, then one brews it and stows it away in a thermos, ready-to-drink.

True Love wanders below all that fluff. It lofts casually upon limbering egos that search unsearchingly between beings. True Love is felt and savored as a freshly brewed cup of tea, yet avoids becoming Being by being becoming, in essence, tea-time. This essence fluctuates in Time and Space, ordering it as it is ordered. Furthermore, this True Love makes you keep it hidden, away from other tea thirsting grubbers who would fall short of treason to snatch your last tea sachet away from you just for their own gratification. So you have to hoard it, and keep it a secret, lying constantly to your colleagues, friends, family, pet orangutan, about your sources, trying to keep your precious shipments safe from pilfering leeches who'll sell their soul, or at least their grandmothers, for the taste of a well brewed cup of lusciously scented black china tea.

Egotistical spatiotemporal manipulations, then, require a knowledge, whether innate or experiential, which allows for the enacting of Being, one fueled by an intentional self-serving act of Love. The same can be said of our being here discoursing

disparaging thoughts about Time, and I add Space. It forms from a junction of the proper Space for our encounter and the proper Time for its enacting with a touch of self-Love for the being of this collective. A collective which, as many know, did not come to be a while back. Kairotically, we must understand that that Time and that Space had not justly come together to the fruition of the then pretended collective maybe due to a lack of knowledgeable manipulations through true Love. As I said above, negation of Love allows for beings to come undone. It is this same manipulation of Time and Space through Love which has allowed me to create a Tea-Haven, a good, just, perfect, correct, proper Space where at the specified proper Time I may enjoy the luxuries of sipping a sensuously brewed cup of tea.

What fiends we are. Sad, but true. Of course, if you're wondering, no, ah, no, I don't have any, ah, tea with me. Sorry. ... Does anyone know where I can find some scones?

* This paper was originally intended for a conference on *kairós* in honor of Dr. Manfred Kerkhoff of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras, which, unfortunately, due to the lack of a proper Time and a proper Space, never came to be.