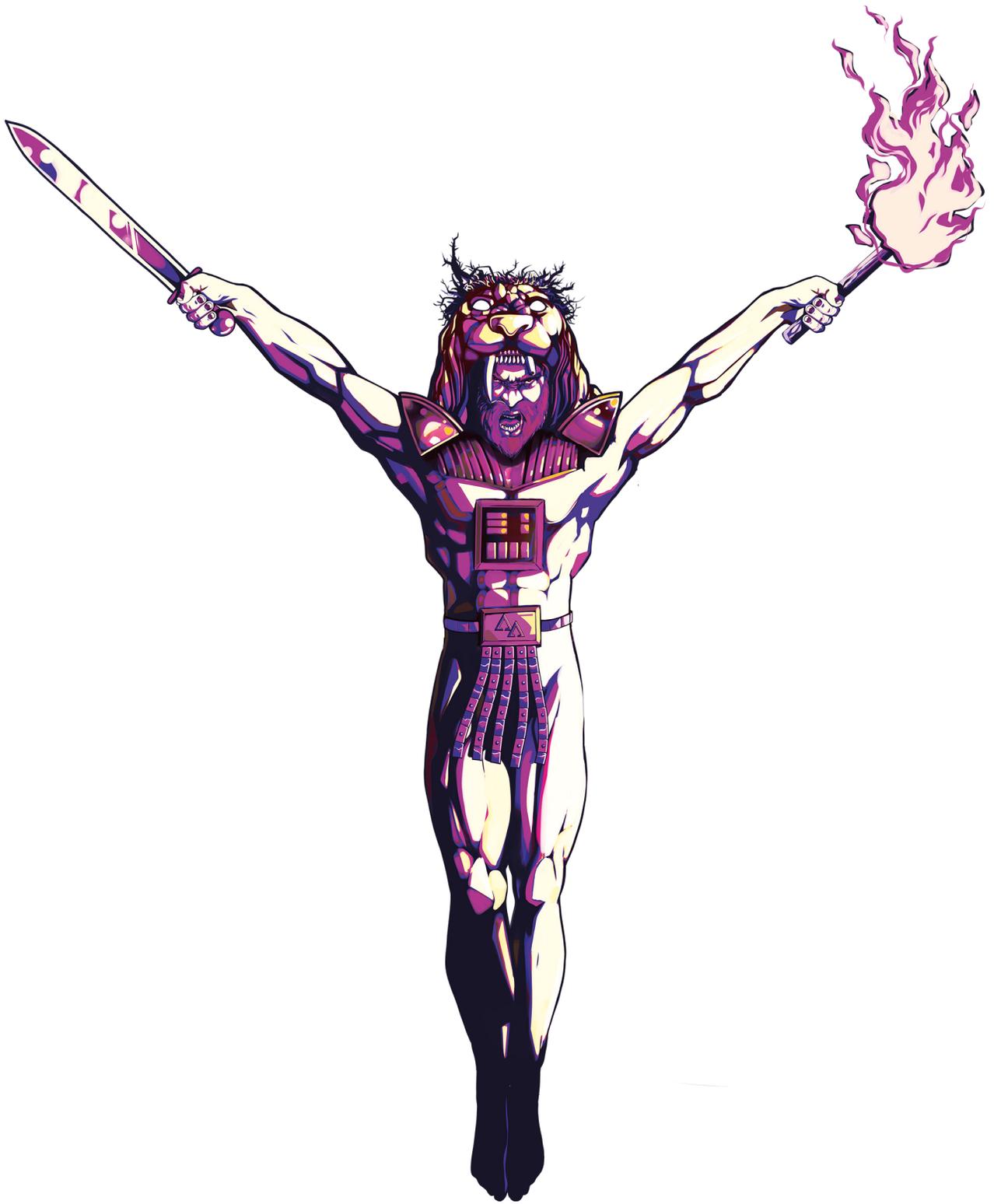




Jarosław Marek  
**Spychała**

**Heracles, Jesus Christ  
and Lord Vader  
at the Crossroads**





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**The ethical message of the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method**

Wydawnictwo TAKO  
Toruń (Poland) and Konstanz (Germany)  
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# Academy of Philosophy in Gdańsk

„Heracles, Jesus Christ and Lord Vader at the Crossroads  
The ethical message of the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method“  
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The above image shows a frame from the film “The Witches of Eastwick”. (dir. George Miller USA 1987). In this scene, a devil named Deryl (played by Jack Nicholson) talks to three women who tell him what they fear most in life (one fears loneliness, one fears old age, one fears pain). Having listened to the women, Deryl quells their fears with the sentence: “*Well, we don’t deal the deck down here. We just play the cards*”. His statement can be understood as a kind of conviction that people have no control over what happens to them in life, and whether they are happy or unhappy is completely out of their control.

When I watched the film for the first time over 30 years ago, I thought Deryl’s statement was just a catchy phrase from a Hollywood movie. In fact, it is a paraphrase of Arthur Schopenhauer’s words, which in German read as follows: “*Das Schicksal mischt*



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*die Karten, und wir spielen*”.<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer as a philosopher, despite his bitterness and pessimism, belongs to the “family” of philosophers, and it was the philosophers who brought to the Greek world a radical change in the imagination of what depends on the man.

Let’s look at this fragment of a Greek vase from the Vatican Museum. Our attention is focused on the figures of Achilles and Hector, and although we can see in the background the gods behind them, Athena and Apollo, we are inclined to think that it is the fighting heroes who are the most important here. The gods seem to have an ornamental function here, filling the empty space in the frame; their presence is not important for the understanding of the meaning of the scene. One of the reasons

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1) Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga und Paralipomena, Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit*, Frankfurt/M., Leipzig, 1976, p. 198.



is that we tend to think that Achilles won the duel because he was a better fighter than Hector. However, the duel was decided before it happened, and the strength and skill of the warriors were irrelevant. The decision of who would win was made on Olympus by Zeus:

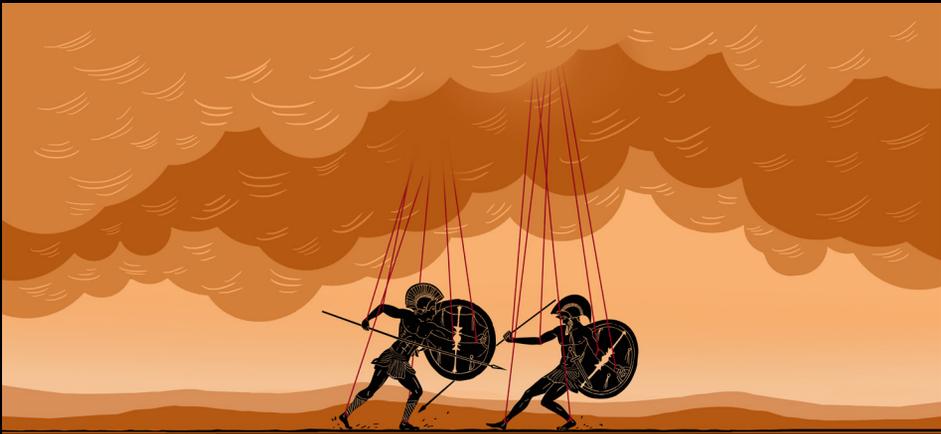
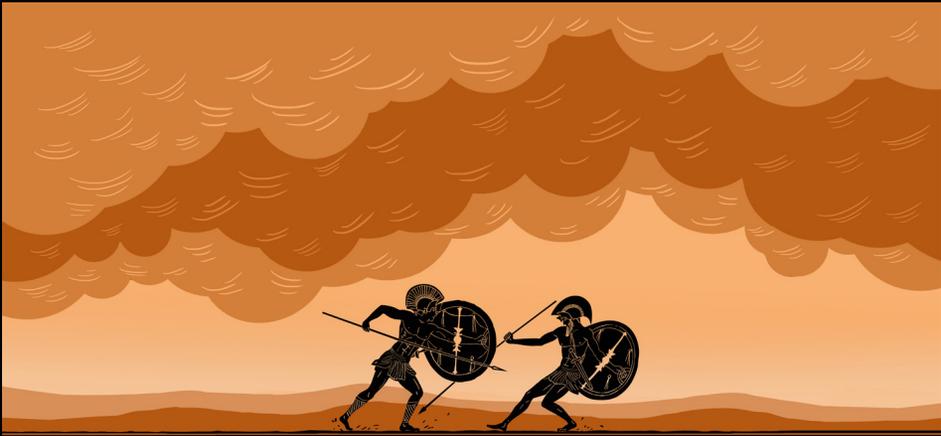
καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίθαιε τάλαντα, [210] ἐν δ' ἐτίθει  
δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο, τὴν μὲν Ἀχιλλῆος, τὴν δ' Ἑκτορος  
ἵπποδάμοιο, ἔλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβῶν: ῥέπε δ' Ἑκτορος αἴσιμον ἦμαρ,  
ᾧχετο δ' εἰς Αἴδαο.<sup>2</sup>

So then the Father lifted on high his golden scales, [210] and set therein two fates of grievous death, one for Achilles, and one for horse-taming Hector; then he grasped the balance by the midst and raised it; and down sank the day of doom of Hector, and departed unto Hades.<sup>3</sup>

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2) Homer, *Iliad*, XXII 209-213, [in:] *Homeri Opera* in five volumes, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1920.

3) Homer, *The Iliad*, with an English Translation by A.T. Murray, in two volumes, (Harvard University Press and William Heinemann Ltd), Cambridge and London 1924.



So, in order to get a good understanding of the vase scene let's look at these three graphics, which illustrate in a simple way the Greek mentality of the period before the birth of the philosophers. Although Achilles or Hector or any other Greek of the archaic period who practised fighting techniques may have had the subjective impression that his strength would determine his future victory, his future happiness, in reality behind every human action, behind every human fate, stood the will of the gods, who decided for a man his happiness or misfortune. One could even say, paraphrasing the title of the Metallica song, that the gods were "masters of marionettes" - humans are just marionettes that the gods play within the arena of life.

To understand this, one needs only note the etymology of the Greek word for happiness in the Greek language. The Greeks had several terms for happiness (for example *olbios*, *makarios*). However, the one term that broke through and made a philosophical career is the word *εὐδαιμονία*. The etymology of this word immediately shows us its meaning. The word *εὐδαιμονία* is a compound of the two members *εὐ-δαιμονία*, that is, the adverb *εὐ* = "well" and the noun *δαιμονία* = "gods". In other words, happy is the man who lives "well with the gods". If a person does "well" to the gods, then the gods may reciprocate. They may or may not. In general, it can be said that the happiness or unhappiness of any human being depends on the will of the gods. Man cannot in any way influence the will of the gods. It is not that if a man behaves "politely" the gods will reward him. This can be seen in the scene where Odysseus sees Menelaos staying in the fields of Eleusinion. Menelaos was the same „hooligan“ as Achilles, and yet the gods, for unknown reasons, sent one

“hooligan” after death to “paradise” and sent the other, as if as punishment, to Hades for torment.

In this perspective, therefore, man is only a toy of the gods, locked in the cage of life. Man’s powerlessness in the face of the fate bequeathed to him is clearly seen in the myth of King Oedipus. As soon as Oedipus’ parents as well as Oedipus himself learned the oracle about their future fate, they wanted to avoid this fate. However, with every step they took, the more they wanted to avoid this fate, the more it came true. Man of the archaic period had no choice but to accept his fate.

Only the philosophers changed this state of affairs. The first Greek philosophers, above all Pythagoras of Samos and his disciples, brought with them the idea of “freedom”, the idea of “choice”, “freedom of choice”. They proclaim their philosophical manifesto in the form of precisely the „myth of Hercules at the crossroads.“ Later in the book, I will discuss this myth in more detail, now I will mention in general what it is about. The myth tells the story of young Heracles, who was looking for a way to happiness. Heracles stood at a crossroads. On one of the roads, the wider one, stood a woman named Kakia. On the other road, the narrower one, stood a woman named Arete. Each woman encourages the young man to choose her path and promises that it is her path that will lead the young man to happiness. However, the women’s paths are fundamentally different - Kakia’s path is easy and pleasant at the beginning, but in the end, turns out to be difficult and bitter. Meanwhile, Arete’s path is difficult and challenging at first, but in the end turns out to be pleasant and happy. All Heracles has to do at this point is to choose the right

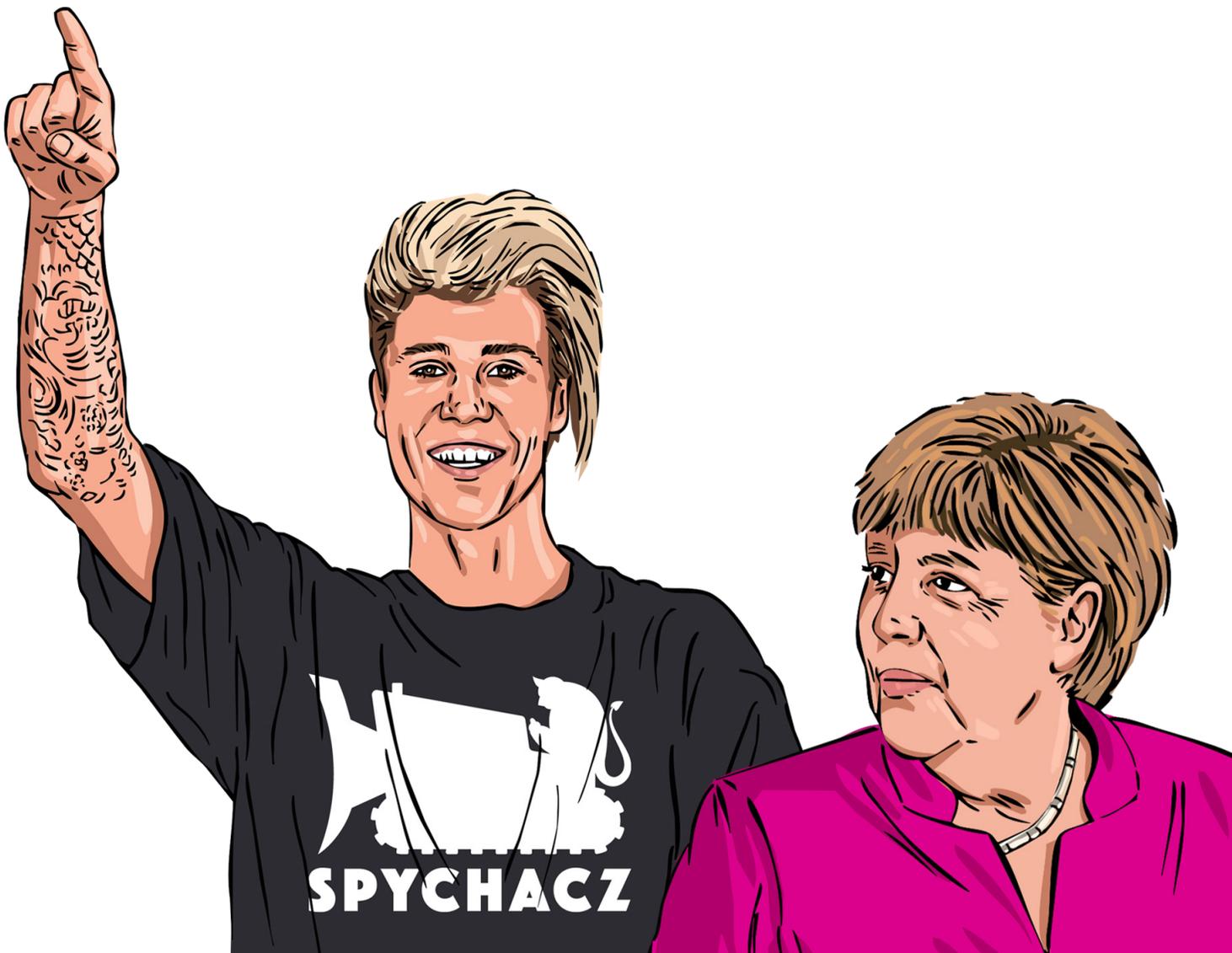
path that will lead him to happiness. With this myth, Pythagoras made the Greeks aware: your life, your happiness is dependent not on the gods, but only on you, on what you choose. Thus, the philosophers challenge the gods and say: we humans are the masters of our fate. It is we who decide about our happiness and unhappiness. We alone can achieve happiness. We can!

For modern man, nothing is surprising about these slogans - after all, he hears them almost daily everywhere: Barack Obama “**YES, WE CAN**”, Angela Merkel “**WIR SCHAFFEN DAS**”, Justin Bieber “**NEVER SAY NEVER**”. Each of these slogans sounds a little bit different, but they actually promise the same thing: “Yes, you too can be happy”, and the idea of this belief is already found in the myth of Heracles at the crossroads, which emphasises: “Yes, you too can be happy if you choose right”.



And it is on this philosophical message that the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method is built. The ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method makes students aware of the power of the freedom each person has and the importance of the choices they make. The ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method is not meant to tell a young person how to choose but is meant to make them realise that they can choose what kind of life they will live.

So, in the following section, I will talk about the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method (1. [The ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method](#)), and in the last section I will return to the myth of Hercules at the crossroads and talk about it in more detail (2. [Hercules at the crossroads](#)).



# 1. The ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method

The ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ (pronounced LEGO-LOGOS) method was formed in 2004 at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun. As its creator, I put forward the notion of the use of ludic activities of humans to teach philosophy and to philosophise, forming an exercise that fosters personal development and has profound meaning in our lives. The starting point of the method is the reading and analysis of classical philosophical texts, which the students later interpret in a form of construction. A more precise analysis of the buildings and their comparison to the source material helps the students arrive at a deeper layer of meaning in discussed philosophical texts, and also to create individual, philosophical and artistic interpretations of those texts.

Among the authors discussed during the classes are texts by philosophers of Antiquity - Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Marcus Aurelius - and also more contemporary thinkers - Leonardo Da Vinci, Descartes, Nietzsche and others.<sup>4</sup> The source material, however, is selected according to a defined philosophical key, with a strong ethical message in the background, constructed based on the myth of Heracles at the crossroads. It is precisely this idea that is expanded in the present text. Its meaning is illustrated with the help of classical philosophical literature, as well as modern cinema enriched with philosophical messages.

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4) More information about the method can be found in my other texts: Jarosław Marek Spychała, *Mali rebelianci*, (TAKO Press), Toruń 2020; Jarosław Marek Spychała, *DIE HÖHLE. Der Weg der Rebellen*, (TAKO Press), Toruń-Konstanz 2020; Jarosław Marek Spychała, *JASKINIA. Droga rebeliantów*, (TAKO Press) Toruń 2019; Jarosław M. Spychała, *LEGO-LOGOS: Dlaczego Tales patrzył w niebo?*, [in:] *Zeszyty Szkolne* 3/2007, (STENTOR Press) Warszawa 2007, pp. 24-28; Jarosław M. Spychała, *ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ: czytać, myśleć, mówić*, [in:] *Filozofia – edukacja interaktywna. Metody – środki – scenariusze*, edited by Aldona Pobojevska, (STENTOR Press) Warszawa 2012, pp. 217-223.

I would like to stress the fact that there is no direct factual relationship between the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method and the myth of Heracles at the crossroads. It is an indirect link - all texts for the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ classes are selected according to their compliance with the aforementioned myth, i.e., they are its reinterpretation, a paraphrase, or constitute a link to one of the aspects of the myth. To put it in other words, they are a line of arguments in favour of the “Arete way”, which have appeared during the history of philosophy.

The goal of this book is to tell the story of the myth of Heracles at the crossroads, to talk about the idea found within it, and to describe its presence in culture and its significance. And although I have mentioned only in passing that it is the ethical idea that consolidates the texts analysed during ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ classes, it is indeed a very important piece of information. To the best of my knowledge, these are the only philosophical workshops in Polish schools, which use the myth of Heracles as a criterion for the selection of texts. Hence the subtitle of the present article and the necessity - in my opinion - to mention the relationship between the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method and the myth of Heracles at the crossroads.

### **1. Description of the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method**

Typical ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ classes last 90 minutes and are comprised of two equal parts: during the first part, the participants read the text and later try to present its interpretation as a spatial construction using plastic materials; during the second part, the participants take turns in presenting their works and by discussing them they attempt to learn the arguments for individual interpretations.

## 1.1 Part one: reading and building - abstraction, metaphor, paraphrase

Groups taking part in the classes count 10 people (the groups can count between 8 and 12 people, however in practice groups of 10 participants are optimal). Each person takes a single place, next to the materials selected by the teacher, which are needed to construct the structure. Each participant receives a workshop questionnaire, which contains a copy of the text discussed. The participants are asked then to read the text quietly, on their own, and later to present it in the form of a construction, using materials suggested, thus expressing their understanding of the document.

As an example, I quote here the anecdote about Tales by Diogenes Laertios who lived between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, which served as the main topic of one of the classes:

It is said that once, when he was taken out of doors by an old woman in order that he might observe the stars, he fell into a ditch, and his cry for help drew from the old woman the retort, "How can you expect to know all about the heavens, Thales, when you cannot even see what is just before your feet?"<sup>5</sup>

A further example is the story by Stobaeus, which tells a similar anecdote about Bion, a member of the ancient circle of the so-called seven wise men (Greek *hepta sofoi*), alongside Thales:

Bion used to say, how ridiculous are those who dabble in astronomy, and speak of fish in the sky, while failing to see them at their feet on the shore of the sea.<sup>6</sup>

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5) Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, I 34, ed. R.D. Hicks, (Harvard University Press) Cambridge 1972.

6) Stobaeus, *Florilegium* (called also *Sermones* or *Anthology*), XCIII, 34 Bion = Frg. 11 [in:] Mulachius (Mullach), *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum*, Volumen 2, (Editore Ambrasio Firmin Didot, Instituti Imperialis Franciae Typographis, Via Jacob, 56), Parisiis 1881, p. 424.

A similar anecdote is contained within the collection of fairy tales by Aesop:

An astrologist would leave home each day and watch the stars. One day, as he walked towards the suburbs, his attention focused on the sky, he accidentally fell into a well. One of the passers-by heard his pleas for help, ran to him, and upon seeing what happened said: You want to watch the stars on the sky, yet do not see what is here, beneath your feet.<sup>7</sup>

In scientific research the anecdote about Thales, and indeed many similar stories, remains of great interest.<sup>8</sup> This is due to the fact that they were commonly accepted as an element of Hellenistic biographies, whose representatives excelled at putting together different interesting, often funny and unusual stories, and using them to embellish the lives of their famous contemporaries. These three stories, though originating in different times and varying in detail, appear to contain a similar message and have a common narrative structure. One could indeed say that

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7) Aesop's Fables, XL.

8) Lev Shestov, *In Job's Balances: A collection of essays*, (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform) 2016, pp. 32-55; Rafał Michalski, *Rozważania wokół platońskiej koncepcji śmiechu*, [w:] „Studia z historii filozofii” nr 4 (5) 2015, s. 158–159; Artur Przybysławski, *Astrologia Talesa*, Acta Universitatis Lodziensis, Folia Philosophica nr 16 (2004), pp. 3-21; Artur Przybysławski, *Tales i początki refleksji europejskiej*, (Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego) Kraków 2016; Jarosław Marek Spychała, *Mali rebelianci*, (TAKO Press), Toruń 2020, pp. 67-72;. See also: William Keith Chambers Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Volume I: The Earlier Presocratics and the Pythagoreans, (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge – London – New York – Melbourne 1962, pp. 45-72; G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers. A Critical History with a Selection of Texts*, (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge 1971, pp. 74-98, especially p. 78-79: “Neither of these stories (= Plato, *Theaetetus*, 174 A; Aristotle, *Politics*, A11, 1259 A 9 - JMS) is likely to be strictly historical, even though they originated in the fourth century B.C. at the latest, before the great period of fictitious biography in the third and second centuries. They well demonstrate how at a comparatively early date Thales had become accepted as the typical philosopher: though 74 (= Plato, *Theaetetus*, 174 A - JMS), one of the oldest versions of the absent-minded professor theme, would have had more point if applied to someone not so notoriously practical in his interests as Thales. The detail of the witty slave-girl is added to make the whole situation more piquant; possibly it is a vestige of a separate and mildly malicious joke at the philosopher's expense. Plato liked making fun of the Presocratics, a truth frequently overlooked in the interpretation of certain less obvious passages”.

they only needed to change the name, and then the whole story could be “pasted” into the biography of a different person. These similarities led historians to believe that the stories had literary value only and contained nothing of interest – they offered no philosophical message and were useless as a historical source for research on the life of Thales and other characters depicted in them.

The students are tasked with illustrating the text, using a structure made of materials provided, according to their comprehension. The participants are not limited in any way, but also receive no hints regarding construction. They do not know “how” [hos] or “what” [ha] they should be building – to use Plato’s notions regarding form and content (“what one should say and how to say it” – in Greek: ἅ τε λεκτέον καὶ ὡς λεκτέον).<sup>9</sup> It takes about 45 minutes to complete the construction, or longer if the participants require it. Naturally, a shorter time limit is acceptable as well. The teacher should match the length of the first part of the class to the speed, with which the group works, which is often influenced by the age of the participants, their maturity and previous creative experiences.

## **1.2 Part two: analysis and dialogue – surprise, enthusiasm**

After the work is finished, the participants gather together by one table and present their constructions one by one. The author of the work being presented remains silent and does not express his opinion, neither by word nor gesture, on the interpretations offered by other participants. He or she does not guide towards

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<sup>9</sup>) Plato, *The Republic*, 392 C, [in:] *Platonis Opera*, Volumen 4: Tetralogiae VIII, ed. John Burnet, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1903.

the “proper” meaning and retains neutrality. The rest of the group has to identify the “shape” of the work and understand its “message”, i.e. how the text was interpreted and represented.

The discussion about the meaning of the text becomes faster and more dynamic as we move on to subsequent artistic works when the participants can already notice differences in each interpretation. Suddenly, it becomes clear that one short text, or one sentence to be precise, considered as straightforward and obvious, now offers multiple interpretations. This situation results in surprise, which turns into interest and enthusiasm. The participants are surprised not only by the fact that each of them understands the text differently, but also that it can be expressed by different means. The participants benefit from this during subsequent workshops when it is already clear that there are no restrictions as far as understanding and presentation are concerned. With time the openness, which resulted in surprise and astonishment, becomes a standard approach to every task.

Below are examples of the interpretations of the story about Thales, which will help understand the essence of the classes. I wrote them in my own words, trying not to change any thoughts or intentions of authors.

[1] Man succumbs to the might of the sky, crushed with its magnificence and beauty; he looks at it but sees nothing. This happens, because the man is not able to concentrate. Everything is interesting to him, everything is awesome and captivating, but at the same time, one cannot stop and take a closer look. The only way to know the secrets of the cosmos is to restrict oneself to watching its fragment, so as not to be distracted by the magnitude of the phenomena. This way, by concentrating on a part, step by step, the man can learn it all. Thales, therefore, does not fall into the pit by accident, but in reality, enters into it on purpose, to limit his perspective and allow himself to experience. The old lady, however, is a personification of common mentality, ridiculing philosopher's actions. For people are much like the old woman, who keeps speaking on and on, not understanding the intentions of the philosopher, showing only ignorance.

[2] Thales appears in the story in the form of a young man taking his first steps in the realm of philosophy. Full of youthful enthusiasm and ambition, he reaches immediately for the skies themselves, for knowledge. However, without experience he faces defeat. The old lady, a mentor with years of experience, an old philosopher, speaks to the young adept, saying that if he wishes to reach the peak, he must start with the basics. Learning the principles requires the knowledge of elementarium. Thales, therefore, being a young philosopher, should have started his philosophical education by learning of things that surround him, the physis, to be able to reach what is above it, the metaphysis.

[3] Thales symbolises a man brash and eager, certain of his abilities, who claims that he can freely reach towards any secret. The attempt to know the sky is the attempt to learn celestial secrets. The sky, in turn, is home to the gods, therefore learning celestial secrets is nothing more than learning secrets of the gods. However, they guard their secrets closely and punish greatly those, who are too eager to know them. Thales turned his vain curiosity towards the sky and paid for that by falling into the pit. The old lady here is a messenger, sent by the gods to issue a warning, and let him know that everyone who attempts to learn secrets of the gods will be punished and sent to hell.

[4] Thales, a man in awe of scientific discoveries and obsessed with the idea of knowing all and becoming all-powerful, wants more and more. He believes he has the right to be able to achieve everything he wants. The attempt to know the sky is the attempt to cross the earthly horizon, to bypass the human condition, to be more than just a man, someone even greater than Icarus, who wanted to be nothing more but a bird. Thales dreams about the stars, which can only be seen by the gods, so in reality, he dreams of becoming a god. He is not a god, however, and every time he tries to "play god," he faces defeat and falls.

[5] Thales is an example of a man cheated by fate. He reaches for the stars as did Adam, who let Eve seduce him and took the apple. He did something he should not. And so, Thales let the old woman, representing philosophy, lead him astray. She pushed him to the verge of pride and arrogance, where he fell into the pit. Philosophy and science are the new incarnations of the devil, who again test the man's ambitions. Knowledge can help, but it can also lead astray.

[6] It is impossible to include here all of the interpretations and it is equally difficult to select the most interesting ones. However, I would like to mention one more interpretation, which is not only an interesting proposition in itself but also reveals an important aspect of the students' works – the form. The participants, while trying to interpret the anecdote, used blocks to present the figure of Thales and the old lady, the pit, the stars etc. But one girl surprised everyone with her work – the participants could not find any of the elements mentioned. It appeared that the work was reflecting the inside of Thales' mind. The girl explained that the anecdote about Thales is an illustration of a thinker who is lost in his own thoughts. Thales falling into a pit is an example of a man plunging or even locked away in the darkroom of his mind, where he dreams impossible dreams, symbolised in the anecdote by stars. The old lady is the voice of the thinker's conscience, calling him to abandon those ideals and exit the dark pit, towards the light, to find joy in simple, everyday things. The most important thing in life is not to dream about life, but to live one's life.

Taking into consideration the descriptions above, one can observe that young people read the anecdote of Thales in two ways: first – as a methodological message on dealing with philosophy and science (to move from what is easy towards that, which is more complex), and second – as an ethical message, showing the moral boundaries for human learning (lust for knowledge cannot justify all actions). It would therefore seem that young people find rich deposits of substance and precious sources of creative inspirations in places, where many scientists found nothing of interest.

### 1.3 Theory of ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΩΣ workshops and philosophical tradition

The concept of the workshops, especially the idea of using plastic tools (that, which is material) to analyse ancient texts (that, which is intellectual, spiritual, immaterial) may seem as foreign and as far from the spirit of antique philosophy, as is Capricornus from the planet Earth. Such perception, however, is wrong, as the core idea behind the classes, the mechanism itself, is in reality very antique and carries much of Plato's teachings.

One should take into consideration the fact that Plato in his dialogues, when describing key notions, uses imagery - speaks "through images" (Greek δι' εικόνοσ, read *di' eikonos*).<sup>10</sup> In literature, Plato's methods are referred to as allegories, metaphors, parables, even myths. For example, we used to talk about the "allegory of the cave", while Plato himself "allegory of the cave" calls the "image" (Greek ἡ εἰκών, read *he eikon*).<sup>11</sup> However, for some time now attention is given to the similarities between Plato's descriptions and Greek vase paintings. Sometimes it is difficult not to see technical similarities, present in the descriptions of the scenes in dialogues, with images on the vases. In both cases, characters are richly drawn, whereas the scenery is minimal. Terms used by Plato are testament to this notion, e.g. the phrase apeikason (ἀπείκασον – *Republic*, 514 A; ἀπεικάσαι – *Republic*, 429 D; εἰκάζειν – *Republic*, 377 E)<sup>12</sup>, which can be understood as present as an image, picture yourself, see the image. What lies at

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10) Plato, *The Republic*, 487 C, [in:] *Platonis Opera*, Volumen 4: Tetralogiae VIII, ed. John Burnet, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1903.

11) Pau Gilabert Barberà, *The "image" of the cave and the constant temptation to correct Plato: Benjamin Jowett as an example*, Estudios Clásicos. Traducir a los clásicos. Anejo 1/2010, pp. 105-115.

12) Plato, *The Republic*, [in:] *Platonis Opera*, Volumen 4: Tetralogiae VIII, ed. John Burnet, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1903.

the core of Plato's intuition, is the certainty that to understand anything, man must first see – and seeing is understanding.

But that is not all, and to truly understand this notion, one must take a closer look at the philosophical premise of the project.

#### **1.4 Creating through reading – creatio ex legendo**

The word “creativity” since the 1990s took on in Poland (and indeed the rest of the world) a particular meaning. It expelled from common linguistic practice the notions of “creative”, “able”, “talented”, “resourceful”, “inventive” and other similar descriptions. The word “creativity” became a synonym for one of the most sought-after qualities in candidates looking for a job. It is one of the most commonly used phrases to advertise various companies and social endeavours. It became so strong, even magical, that it can open all doors and resolve all matters. A creative person, is perceived as someone who excels in all disciplines.

The term “creative” itself comes from the Latin verb *creare*, broadly understood as “to create” (hence *creatio* – creating, creator – he who creates, *creatus* - creative). The Romans used it long before Christ was born to describe more common actions. It was however the Christian tradition, which connected the term “*creatio*” with God – hence “*creatio ex nihilo*” meaning “to create something out of nothing”. Indeed, in the eyes of the Christians only God had the power to create the world out of nothing. Man can only create out of something else.

It is however not so that when we put tools and materials in front of man, he will be able to create, say, a beautiful evening dress. A few will succeed – the majority will not be able to perform the task. Those who create beautiful dresses are referred to as fashion designers. However, among them many are mediocre and only a handful has a real influence on global trends and set standards for what to wear. This influential group, in contrast to designers, is referred to as fashion creators (though it is not a rule that is strictly followed by all).

Fashion creators are socially celebrated people. Many worship them, as ancient Greeks worshipped their gods. Why is it so? To put it simply, one can say that the fashion creators distribute beauty, giving us the illusion of agelessness, everlasting youth – or even immortality.

However, there is a group of people who have great ideas and suggestions, and yet they do nothing to make their projects a reality. Drawings are often put into drawers, only to be discovered after the artist's passing, or are forever lost and never see the light of day. And so, it seems the idea is not everything - one also needs the strength to carry it out.

## **1.5 A play and a toy – Socrates' premise**

Socrates is accredited as the creator of the notion of the so-called ethical intellectualism of Socrates.<sup>13</sup> In his opinion, man is inherently good, chooses to do good and acts in a good way. If, however, he does a bad deed, it is only because of lack of in-

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13) About ethical intellectualism of Socrates see: William Keith Chambers Guthrie, *Socrates*, (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge – London – New York – Melbourne 1971, pp. 130-139; Giovanni Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica. I. Dalle origini a Socrate*, (VITA E PENSIERO Pubblicazioni della Università Cattolica) Milano 1987 (Quinta edizione), pp. 314-321.

formation, for if he knew, what is good, he would not choose that which is evil.<sup>14</sup> This point of view met with critique, still by Socrates' contemporaries. Ovid formulated his well-known saying – *video meliora proboque deteriora sequor* (*I see better things, and approve, but I follow worse*).<sup>15</sup> Today, Socrates' standpoint seems equally naive and contrary to everyday experiences. But is this correct?

Every mother points out to their child, not to play with fire, unfortunately, children act differently. Why is it that they put their hands into the fire when they know not to do that because it's bad for them? The difficulty, I think, lies in understanding the term "to know." Ovid was convinced children know that putting their hands into a fire is bad because they indeed heard about it from their parents, but they do not know it in the sense postulated by Socrates. According to him, to know means not only to hear something is bad but also to experience it. In other words, knowledge is born as a result of merging of the intellectual, common information and emotional, personal experience. Knowledge is a state, in which the emotional explains that which is intellectual and only then can one speak of having knowledge. Thus, it is only when a child burns himself or herself that he or she understands fully the evils spoken of by his or her mother, and only then will he or she have knowledge.

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14) Plato, *Protagoras*, 358 C–D and *Menon*, 77 C–78 B [in:] *Platonis Opera*, Volumen 3: *Tetralogiae V–VII*, ed. John Burnet, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1903; Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, III 9, 5 [in:] Xenophon, *Memorabilia. Oeconomicus. Symposium. Apologia*, translated by E. C. Marchant and O. J. Todd, (Loeb Classical Library No. 168, Harvard University Press) Cambridge, Massachusetts, London 1997, pp. 224–225; Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, VII 1145 B, Translated by David Ross Revised with an Introduction and Notes by Lesley Brown, (Oxford University Press) Oxford New York 2009, p. 119; Aristotle, *Magna Moralia*, I 1182 A, [in:] Aristotle, *Works: Magna Moralia, Ethica Eudemia, De virtutibus et vitis*, Translated into English under the editorship of William David Ross and John Alexander Smith, (Clarendon Press) Oxford 1915.

15) Ovid, *The Mmetamorphoses*, VII 20–21, A complete new version by Horace Gregory, (The Viking Press) New York 1958, pp. 173–174: "I see the Wiser, Yet I take the wrong".

However, we can hardly expect children to put their hands into the fire every time they have to learn something. That is why I asked myself, is it possible to reverse this process and try to teach them using positive emotions.

Positive emotions are easily awakened in man, especially in children, through play. The idea of using games in the didactic process of learning has been known for a long time now and is practised in many schools. But, in my opinion, playing in school is not fun enough (i.e., not believable in the eyes of a child), because the games are in fact simulated – no child plays at school the way it plays at home. It is therefore important to recreate, in schools, the playful environment the children have at home, and – at the same time – to use the emotions accompanying this process in teaching them. Only natural, spontaneous and fun games and situations can awaken natural reflection. Thus, the need for a toy, which would be associated by children with their own games they play at home. And on the other hand, the toy has to meet certain criteria in order to be used as a didactic tool. It has to be easy to use, be able to take different forms, and to be applied as an element of a stable construction; it has to have a clear association with fun, high aesthetic quality; it has to offer the ability to be reused and meet with the same amount of interest among boys and girls. One solution was found – various kinds of blocks and plastic materials (wooden, metal, plastic, as well as plasticine, paints, crayons and paper) turned out to be the right kind of toy.

## 1.6 Astonishment and awe – the first Aristotelian premise

As Aristotle claims in *Metaphysics* “It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophise” (διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν).<sup>16</sup> Although Plato was the author of this idea (μάλα γὰρ φιλοσόφου τοῦτο τὸ πάθος, τὸ θαυμάζειν)<sup>17</sup>, it is undoubtedly Aristotle who became famous for it. From the viewpoint of the workshops, this idea has a very important practical application. The Greek term “*thaumadzein*” (θαυμάζειν) contains two meanings – it can denote, on the one hand, surprise, meaning astonishment and disappointment, and surprise meaning awe and admiration on the other. Therefore, we have two states – disappointment and enthusiasm. Moving from one state to the other in a natural way provokes questions and, in this sense, encourages one to philosophise.

When starting to interpret the text, the student is convinced his or her idea is sound. Often it seems his or her way of understanding is obvious and without flaw. However, by looking at other works and listening to other students, he or she experiences astonishment/surprise when it turns out that there are more ways of interpreting the text. Often, he or she becomes disappointed, when he or she has to admit that his or her colleague’s idea is more interesting – although the workshops are not about intellectual competition.

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16) Aristotle, *The Metaphysics*, Books I-IX, 982 B – 983 A, with an English translation by Hugh Tredennick, M.A. (London: William Heinemann LTD, New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons) 1933.

17) Plato, *Theaetetus*, 155 D, [in:] *Platonis Opera*, Volumen 1: Tetralogiae I-II, ed. John Burnet, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1903.

The student is quickly rehabilitated however, when he or she discovers that the source of joy and self-worth is found not in the fact that his or her work is the best, but in the realisation that he or she can understand and talk about any work presented. It is then that analysing, achieving deeper understanding of the text and formulating new ideas, becomes the source of admiration for thinking.

In the background of surprise and awe a question appears in the student's mind – “why” (διότι). Why does each and every one of us think and understand differently?

### **1.7 Empiricism – the second Aristotelian premise**

When we say “I think”, usually we picture the thinking process as speaking silently inside one's head. Thinking is thus commonly associated with the brain and the spoken word. It is, of course, a true notion, but it is not complete – thinking is a process, which takes place also without words. To understand this, one must consider the fact that memory is essential for thinking. We remember what we were told by someone and now we can think on it. But it is not the only kind of memory. An example of the other kinds of memory is muscle memory. It often happens we cannot recall a phone number, and we are unable to repeat it in our minds. Then, to remind ourselves, we stop thinking with words and just automatically move our hand through the keyboard, and it quickly turns out we start to remember. Thinking without words is based on the same principle, as remembering without words. To illustrate the point, some painters claim that they do not always know, what they want to paint when they start to work. They come up with the picture while painting.

On more than one occasion during the classes, I wondered, if students who present their interpretations, would be able to formulate them without structures made of blocks. Is it not possible to immediately skip to the presentation of one's own interpretation? Then I listen closely to students admitting that when they started their work, they had no clear idea, how to understand it yet. As they explain it, the idea appeared in their heads while physically creating their work, when they started to use their hands.

Thinking using physical materials is a two-way relationship. On the one hand, a man gives the matter a new shape, on the other – the matter itself influences a man. This way a kind of dialogue takes place between man and matter, which culminates in an understanding of the text and presenting the material interpretation of an immaterial idea behind the text.

### **1.8 Metaphorism – the first Plato's premise**

A scientific discussion, and indeed any discussion, can only be settled in an objective environment. That, which is subjective, cannot be the subject of the discussion until it becomes objective. To get to know the core of this notion, one should take a look at the etymology of those words. *Subiectum*, i.e., that which is suggested, comes from the Latin word *subicere* and means *that, which is tossed under something; that, which is under something*, meaning something is thrown at the feet of a person, who steps on it so that nobody can see it, and no one but this person knows of its existence. *Obiectum* comes from the word *obicere* (to reject) and means that, which is thrown back, e.g., a person

picks up the object at his feet and throws it in front of other people to see. So long as the aforementioned object is “under” me (*subiectum*), it cannot be the subject of the discussion, since nobody can see it or even know of its existence. It is only when the object (*obiectum*) is thrown at other people to see, that everyone can describe it and acknowledge its existence.

Discussions during the workshops are initiated on a similar basis. The student, after reading the text, has his or her own vision of its interpretation. However, so long as he or she keeps his or her understanding, the image inside his or her head, the other students cannot discuss it, cannot see it. Creative effort is thus directed towards the student showing, what he or she thinks, what is inside his or her head – in other words, to bring outside that, which is inside, so that others can see it. And so, *transference* or *metaphor* must take place. In Ancient Greek, the word *metaphor* (ἡ μεταφορά) is constructed from the prefix *through* and the verb *carry*, hence *carry through* or *transfer*. It is thus about transferring thoughts into matter, from the invisible to the visible.

### **1.9 Epilogue – the second Plato’s premise**

After the participants analysed all the works, they recount briefly their interpretations one more time. Unlike typical school classes, the goal of the summary is not to point out the only correct way to understand the anecdote. It is more important to awake curiosity and provoke students to think on their own about the problem outside the school. This was inspired by Plato’s principles of forming the so-called Socratic dialogues. Two characters

discuss the meaning of a term, quoting different interpretations. However, in the end, they do not agree on how the term is to be understood. This situation, after a long and difficult reading, makes the reader (or listener, as contemporaries would often read texts aloud) feel unsatisfied, even slightly irritated, because the effort did not conclude with finding out the answer. Similarly, when we watch a detective film and, in the end, do not learn who the killer was, it makes us angry and tired, but at the same time encourages us to think and wonder, who he was, long after the film ended.

Contemporary scholars of ancient philosophy believe that this was Plato's way of awaking interest and encouraging readers to find their own answer. And indeed, this is the goal of collecting the interpretations without saying, which one should be regarded as the correct one.

Books are mute to man until he experiences the stories enclosed in them. Thus, philosophy cannot be taught – it can be experienced and understood and used to understand and shape one's life. The mission of philosophy in schools is to encourage students to go on a journey, rather than to point out the way they should take. We must all choose our own path. For philosophy to be helpful in this process, its form has to respond to the natural way children philosophise – their curiosity.



## 2. Hercules at the crossroads

The idea of the crossroads and the choices made by Heracles, Jesus Christ and Lord Vader is an echo of the philosophical dispute about the nature of man: whether he is a creature inherently good or evil. In this context it is also important to ask, to what extent can a man influence his life, and can he be held accountable for it; can he face consequences of his actions or influence his fate. This dispute, just like so many others in the realm of philosophy, has never been resolved in a definite manner, although there have been many suggestions as to how to understand the notions. To capture the essence of this argument and its dynamics, one should call upon the discussion between Sigmund Freud and Erich Fromm on the nature of man.

Sigmund Freud was an advocate of the duality of human nature, which in his view is influenced on the one hand by the instinct of life, called *Eros*, carrying the man towards Good (understood as the strengthening of life), and on the other - the instinct of death, called *Thanatos*, which pushes him towards Evil (understood as the destruction of life). Freud put forward that man is equally good and evil, and only through the inborn power of the instincts it transpires, which side of the nature of man wins and what shape will ultimately his personality take. Freud's view should be regarded as deterministic because it encloses man in clutches of the two instincts. Everything the man is capable of doing is defined by the balance between good and evil, as the two spheres are inseparably connected and as such create the true nature of man, who will never achieve wholeness and be good throughout.<sup>18</sup>

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18) Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Authorized translation from the second German edition by C. J. M. Hubback, (International Psycho-Analytical) London-Vienna 1922.

A few years later, Freud's views were challenged by Erich Fromm, who claimed something opposite: that the man is inherently good and has no element of evil inside (i.e., the Freudian instinct of death). He stressed the fact that man is homogenous and good throughout. If he is evil as an adult, it is because he became evil. He becomes evil not through inborn instincts, but as a result of his own choices, which he makes already at the earliest stages of life<sup>19</sup>.

In reality, Fromm's idea wasn't new - it can be traced back as far as 2500 years. It was then that among Pythagoras and his disciples a new concept was born - the philosophical question "how should one live" (from Greek πῶς βιωτέον)<sup>20</sup> to achieve happiness. The answer arrived at by philosophers is expressed in the myth of Heracles at the crossroads, which was to help man in choosing his own way of life and achieving happiness, or - in modern terms - success.

The myth of Heracles and the vision of the Pythagoreans as its basis, though far away from modern times, is still close today in cultural terms, its significance ever-present, its presence felt in many aspects of human life. Let us take a closer look.

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19) Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, (Holt, Rinehart And Winston) New York-Chicago-San Francisco 1974.

20) Plato, *Gorgias*, 492 D, [in:] *Platonis Opera*, Volumen 3: Tetralogiae V-VII, ed. John Burnet, (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1903.

## 2.1 Heracles

Let us start by citing the source text that first introduces us to the myth of Heracles at the Crossroads. This myth was known in antiquity primarily through Xenophon (430-355 BC), who was a contemporary of Socrates and Plato. Xenophon in turn citing the myth in his *Memoirs of Socrates* refers to Prodikos of Keos (ca. 470-399 BC), who was probably a Pythagorean. Here is the content of the myth itself:

[21] καὶ Πρόδικος δὲ ὁ σοφὸς ἐν τῷ συγγράμματι τῷ περὶ Ἡρακλέους, ὅπερ δὴ καὶ πλείστοις ἐπιδείκνυται, ὡσαύτως περὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀποφαίνεται, ὧδέ πως λέγων, ὅσα ἐγὼ μέμνημαι. φησὶ γὰρ Ἡρακλέα, ἐπεὶ ἐκ παιδῶν εἰς ἦβην ὠρμάτο, ἐν ἧ ὁί νεοὶ ἤδη αὐτοκράτορες γιγνόμενοι δηλοῦσιν εἴτε τὴν δι' ἀρετῆς ὁδὸν τρέψονται ἐπὶ τὸν βίον εἴτε τὴν διὰ κακίας, ἐξελθόντα εἰς ἡσυχίαν καθῆσθαι ἀποροῦντα ποτέραν τῶν ὁδῶν τράπηται:

[22] καὶ φανῆναι αὐτῷ δύο γυναικας προσιέναι μεγάλας, τὴν μὲν ἑτέραν εὐπρεπῆ τε ἰδεῖν καὶ ἐλευθέριον φύσει, κεκοσμημένην τὸ μὲν σῶμα καθαρότητι, τὰ δὲ ὄμματα αἰδοῖ, τὸ δὲ σχῆμα σωφροσύνη, ἐσθῆτι δὲ λευκῇ, τὴν δ' ἑτέραν τεθραμμένην μὲν εἰς πολυσαρκίαν τε καὶ ἀπαλότητα, κεκαλλωπισμένην δὲ τὸ μὲν χρῶμα ὥστε λευκοτέραν τε καὶ ἐρυθροτέραν τοῦ ὄντος δοκεῖν φαίνεσθαι, τὸ δὲ σχῆμα ὥστε δοκεῖν ὀρθοτέραν τῆς φύσεως εἶναι, τὰ δὲ ὄμματα ἔχειν ἀναπεπταμένα, ἐσθῆτα δὲ ἐξ ἧς ἂν μάλιστα ὦρα διαλάμποι: κατασκοπεῖσθαι δὲ θαμὰ ἑαυτήν, ἐπισκοπεῖν δὲ καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος αὐτὴν θεᾶται, πολλακίς δὲ καὶ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς σκιὰν ἀποβλέπειν.

[23] ὡς δ' ἐγένοντο πλησιαίτερον τοῦ Ἡρακλέους, τὴν μὲν πρόσθεν ῥηθεῖσαν ἰέναι τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον, τὴν δ' ἑτέραν φθάσαι βουλομένην προσδραμεῖν τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ καὶ εἰπεῖν: ὀρῶ σε, ὦ Ἡράκλεις, ἀποροῦντα ποῖαν ὁδὸν ἐπὶ τὸν βίον τράπη. ἐὰν οὖν ἐμὲ φίλην ποιησάμενος, ἐπὶ τὴν ἡδίστην τε καὶ ῥάστην ὁδὸν ἄξω σε, καὶ τῶν μὲν τερπνῶν οὐδενὸς ἄγευστος ἔσει, τῶν δὲ χαλεπῶν ἄπειρος διαβιώσῃ.

[24] πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ οὐ πολέμων οὐδὲ πραγμάτων φροντιεῖς, ἀλλὰ σκοπούμενος ἴδιέση τί ἂν κεχαρισμένον ἢ σιτίον ἢ ποτὸν εὔροις, ἢ τί ἂν ἰδῶν ἢ ἀκούσας τερφθείης ἢ τίνων ὀσφραϊνόμενος ἢ ἀπτόμενος, τίσι δὲ παιδικοῖς ὀμιλῶν μάλιστ' ἂν εὐφρανθείης, καὶ πῶς ἂν μαλακώτατα καθεύδοις, καὶ

[21] „Aye, and Prodicus the wise expresses himself to the like effect concerning Virtue in the essay ‚On Heracles‘ that he recites to throngs of listeners. This, so far as I remember, is how he puts it:

„When Heracles was passing from boyhood to youth's estate, wherein the young, now becoming their own masters, show whether they will approach life by the path of virtue or the path of vice, he went out into a quiet place, and sat pondering

[22] which road to take. And there appeared two women of great stature making towards him. The one was fair to see and of high bearing; and her limbs were adorned with purity, her eyes with modesty ; sober was her figure, and her robe was white. The other was plump and soft, with high feeding. Her face was made up to heighten its natural white and pink, her figure to exaggerate her height. Openeyed was she; and dressed so as to disclose all her charms. Now she eyed herself; anon looked whether any noticed her; and often stole a glance at her own shadow.

[23] „When they drew nigh to Heracles, the first pursued the even tenor of her way: but the other, all eager to outdo her, ran to meet him, crying:

„Heracles, I see that you are in doubt which path to take towards life. Make me your friend ; follow me, and I will lead you along the pleasantest and easiest road. You shall taste all the sweets of life ; and hardship you shall never know.

[24] First, of wars and worries you shall not think, but shall ever be considering what choice food or drink you can find, what sight or sound will delight you, what touch or perfume ; what tender love can give you most joy, what bed the softest slumbers ; and how to come by/ all these pleasures with least trouble.

[25] And should there arise misgiving that lack of means may stint your enjoyments, never fear that I may lead

πῶς ἂν ἀπονώτατα τούτων πάντων τυγχάνοις.

[25] ἐὰν δέ ποτε γένηται τις ὑποψία σπάνεως ἀφ' ὧν ἔσται ταῦτα, οὐ φόβος μὴ σε ἀγάγω ἐπὶ τὸ πονοῦντα καὶ τάλαιπωροῦντα τῷ σώματι καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ ταῦτα πορίζεσθαι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἂν οἱ ἄλλοι ἐργάζωνται, τούτοις σὺ χρήση, οὐδενὸς ἀπεχόμενος ὅθεν ἂν δυνατὸν ἦ τι κερδᾶναι. πανταχόθεν γὰρ ὠφελείσθαι τοῖς ἐμοὶ συνοῦσιν ἐξουσίαν ἐγὼ παρέχω.

[26] καὶ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς ἀκούσας ταῦτα, ὦ γύναι, ἔφη, ὄνομα δέ σοι τί ἐστίν; ἡ δέ, οἱ μὲν ἐμοὶ φίλοι, ἔφη, καλοῦσί με Εὐδαιμονίαν, οἱ δὲ μισοῦντές με ὑποκοριζόμενοι ὀνομάζουσι Κακίαν.

[27] καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἑτέρα γυνὴ προσελθοῦσα εἶπε: καὶ ἐγὼ ἤκω πρὸς σέ, ὦ Ἡράκλεις, εἰδυῖα τοὺς γεννήσαντάς σε καὶ τὴν φύσιν τὴν σὴν ἐν τῇ παιδείᾳ καταμαθοῦσα, ἐξ ὧν ἐλπίζω, εἰ τὴν πρὸς ἐμὲ ὁδὸν τράποιο, σφόδρ' ἂν σε τῶν καλῶν καὶ σεμνῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐργάτην γενέσθαι καὶ ἐμὲ ἔτι πολὺ ἐντιμότεραν καὶ ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖς διαπρεπεστέραν φανῆναι. οὐκ ἐξαπατήσω δέ σε προοιμίους ἡδονῆς, ἀλλ' ἦπερ οἱ θεοὶ διέθεσαν τὰ ὄντα διηγῆσομαι μετ' ἀληθείας.

[28] τῶν γὰρ ὄντων ἀγαθῶν καὶ καλῶν οὐδὲν ἄνευ πόνου καὶ ἐπιμελείας θεοὶ διδόασιν ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλ' εἴτε τοὺς θεοὺς ἴλεως εἶναι σοὶ βούλει, θεραπευτέον τοὺς θεοὺς, εἴτε ὑπὸ φίλων ἐθέλεις ἀγαπᾶσθαι, τοὺς φίλους εὐεργετητέον, εἴτε ὑπὸ τίνος πόλεως ἐπιθυμεῖς τιμᾶσθαι, τὴν πόλιν ὠφελήτεον, εἴτε ὑπὸ τῆς Ἑλλάδος πάσης ἀξιοῖς ἐπ' ἀρετῇ θαυμάζεσθαι, τὴν Ἑλλάδα πειρατέον εὖ ποιεῖν, εἴτε γῆν βούλει σοὶ καρποὺς ἀφθόνους φέρειν, τὴν γῆν θεραπευτέον, εἴτε ἀπὸ βοσκημάτων οἶε δεῖν πλουτίζεσθαι, τῶν βοσκημάτων ἐπιμελητέον, εἴτε διὰ πολέμου ὀρμᾶς αὔξεσθαι καὶ βούλει δύνασθαι τοὺς τε φίλους ἐλευθεροῦν καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς χειροῦσθαι, τὰς πολεμικὰς τέχνας αὐτάς τε παρὰ τῶν ἐπισταμένων μαθητέον καὶ ὅπως αὐταῖς δεῖ χρῆσθαι ἀσκητέον: εἰ δὲ καὶ τῷ σώματι βούλει δυνατὸς εἶναι, τῇ γνώμῃ ὑπηρετεῖν ἐθιστέον τὸ σῶμα καὶ γυμναστέον σὺν πόνοις καὶ ἰδρωτί.

[29] καὶ ἡ Κακία ὑπολαβοῦσα εἶπεν, ὡς φησι Πρόδικος: ἐννοεῖς, ὦ Ἡράκλεις, ὡς χαλεπὴν καὶ μακρὰν ὁδὸν ἐπὶ τὰς εὐφροσύνας ἡ γυνὴ σοὶ αὕτη διηγῆται; ἐγὼ δὲ ῥάδιαν καὶ βραχεῖαν ὁδὸν ἐπὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν ἄξω σε.

[30] καὶ ἡ Ἀρετὴ εἶπεν: ὦ τλήμων, τί δὲ σὺ ἀγαθὸν ἔχεις; ἢ τί ἡδὺ οἶσθα μηδὲν τούτων ἔνεκα πράττειν ἐθέλουσα; ἦτις οὐδὲ τὴν τῶν ἡδέων ἐπιθυμίαν ἀναμένεις, ἀλλὰ πρὶν ἐπιθυμῆσαι πάντων ἐμπίμπλασαι, πρὶν μὲν πεινῆν ἐσθίουσα, πρὶν δὲ διψῆν πίνουσα, ἵνα μὲν ἡδέως φάγης, ὀσποιοὺς μηχανωμένη, ἵνα δὲ ἡδέως πίης, οἶνους τε πολυτελεῖς παρασκευάζῃ καὶ τοῦ θέρους χιόνα περιθέουσα ζητεῖς, ἵνα δὲ καθυπνώσης ἡδέως, οὐ μόνον τὰς στρωμνὰς μαλακάς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς κλίνας

you into winning them by toil and anguish of body and soul. Nay; you shall have the fruits of others' toil, and refrain from nothing that can bring you gain. For to my companions I give authority to pluck advantage where they will.'

[26] „Now when Heracles heard this, he asked, ‚Lady, pray what is your name?‘

„My friends call me Happiness,‘ she said, ‚but among those that hate me I am nicknamed Vice.‘

[27] „Meantime the other had drawn near, and she said: ‚I, too, am come to you, Heracles: I know your parents and I have taken note of your character during the time of your education. Therefore I hope that, if you take the road that leads to me, you will turn out a right good doer of high and noble deeds, and I shall be yet more highly honoured and more illustrious for the blessings I bestow. But I will not deceive you by a pleasant prelude: I will rather tell you truly the things that are, as the gods have ordained them.

[28] For of all things good and fair, the gods give nothing to man without toil and effort. If you want the favour of the gods, you must worship the gods: if you desire the love of friends, you must do good to your friends: if you covet honour from a city, you must aid that city: if you are fain to win the admiration of all Hellas for virtue, you must strive to do good to Hellas: if you want land to yield you fruits in abundance, you must cultivate that land: if you are resolved to get wealth from flocks, you must care for those flocks: if you essay to grow great through war and want power to liberate your friends and subdue your foes, you must learn the arts of war from those who know them and must practise their right use: and if you want your body to be strong, you must accustom your body to be the servant of your mind, and train it with toil and sweat.‘

[29] „And Vice, as Prodicus tells, answered and said: ‚Heracles, mark you how hard and long is that road to joy, of which this woman tells? but I will lead you by a short and easy road to happiness.‘

[30] „And Virtue said: ‚What good thing is thine, poor wretch, or what pleasant thing dost thou know, if thou wilt do nought to win them? Thou dost not even tarry for the desire of pleasant things, but fillest thyself with all things before thou desirest them, eating before thou art hungry, drinking before thou art thirsty, getting thee cooks, to give zest to eating, buying thee costly wines and running to and fro in search of snow in summer, to give zest to drinking; to soothe thy slumbers it is not enough for thee to buy soft coverlets, but thou must have frames for thy beds. For not toil, but the tedium of having nothing to do, makes thee long for sleep. Thou

καὶ τὰ ὑπόβαθρα ταῖς κλίναις παρασκευάζῃ: οὐ γὰρ διὰ τὸ πονεῖν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ μηδὲν ἔχειν ὅ τι ποιῆς ὕπνου ἐπιθυμεῖς: τὰ δ' ἀφροδίσια πρὸ τοῦ δεῖσθαι ἀναγκάζεις, πάντα μηχανωμένα καὶ γυναιξὶ τοῖς ἀνδράσι χρωμένα: οὕτω γὰρ παιδεύεις τοὺς σεαυτῆς φίλους, τῆς μὲν νυκτὸς ὑβρίζουσα, τῆς δ' ἡμέρας τὸ χρησιμώτατον κατακοιμίζουσα.

[31] ἀθάνατος δὲ οὐσα ἐκ θεῶν μὲν ἀπέρριψαι, ὑπὸ δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἀγαθῶν ἀτιμάζῃ: τοῦ δὲ πάντων ἡδίστου ἀκουσματος, ἐπαίνου σεαυτῆς, ἀνήκοος εἶ, καὶ τοῦ πάντων ἡδίστου θεάματος ἀθέατος: οὐδὲν γὰρ πώποτε σεαυτῆς ἔργον καλὸν τεθέασαι. τίς δ' ἂν σοὶ λεγούσῃ τι πιστεύσει; τίς δ' ἂν δεομένη τινὸς ἐπαρκέσειεν; ἢ τίς ἂν εὖ φρονῶν τοῦ σοῦ θιάσου τολμήσειεν εἶναι; οἱ νέοι μὲν ὄντες τοῖς σώμασιν ἀδύνατοί εἰσι, πρεσβύτεροι δὲ γενόμενοι ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἀνόητοι, ἀπόνως μὲν λιπαροὶ διὰ νεότητος τρεφόμενοι, ἐπιπόνως δὲ αὐχμηροὶ διὰ γήρωσ περῶντες, τοῖς μὲν πεπραγμένοις αἰσχυρόμενοι, τοῖς δὲ πραττομένοις βαρυνόμενοι, τὰ μὲν ἡδέα ἐν τῇ νεότητι διαδραμόντες, τὰ δὲ χαλεπὰ εἰς τὸ γῆρας ἀποθέμενοι.

[32] ἐγὼ δὲ σύνειμι μὲν θεοῖς, σύνειμι δὲ ἀνθρώποις τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς: ἔργον δὲ καλὸν οὔτε θεῖον οὔτ' ἀνθρώπειον χωρὶς ἐμοῦ γίγνεται. τιμῶμαι δὲ μάλιστα πάντων καὶ παρὰ θεοῖς καὶ παρὰ ἀνθρώποις οἷς προσήκω, ἀγαπητὴ μὲν συνεργὸς τεχνίταις, πιστὴ δὲ φύλαξ οἴκων δεσπότης, εὐμενὴς δὲ παραστάτις οἰκέταις, ἀγαθὴ δὲ συλλήπτρια τῶν ἐν εἰρήνῃ πόνων, βεβαία δὲ τῶν ἐν πολέμῳ σύμμαχος ἔργων, ἀρίστη δὲ φιλίας κοινωνός.

[33] ἔστι δὲ τοῖς μὲν ἐμοῖς φίλοις ἡδεῖα μὲν καὶ ἀπράγμων σίτων καὶ ποτῶν ἀπόλαυσις: ἀνέχονται γὰρ ἕως ἂν ἐπιθυμήσωσιν αὐτῶν: ὕπνος δ' αὐτοῖς πάρεστιν ἡδίων ἢ τοῖς ἀμόχθοις, καὶ οὔτε ἀπολείποντες αὐτὸν ἄχθονται οὔτε διὰ τοῦτον μεθιάσι τὰ δέοντα πράττειν. καὶ οἱ μὲν νέοι τοῖς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἐπαίνοις χαίρουσιν, οἱ δὲ γεραῖτεροι ταῖς τῶν νέων τιμαῖς ἀγάλλονται: καὶ ἡδέως μὲν τῶν παλαιῶν πράξεων μέμνηται, εὖ δὲ τὰς παρούσας ἡδοναὶς πράττοντες, δι' ἐμὲ φίλοι μὲν θεοῖς ὄντες, ἀγαπητοὶ δὲ φίλοις, τίμιοι δὲ πατρίσιν: ὅταν δ' ἔλθῃ τὸ πεπρωμένον τέλος, οὐ μετὰ λήθης ἄτιμοι κείνται, ἀλλὰ μετὰ μνήμης τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον ὑμνούμενοι θάλλουσι. τοιαῦτά σοι, ὦ παῖ τοκέων ἀγαθῶν Ἡράκλεις, ἔξεστι διαπονησαμένῳ τὴν μακαριστοτάτην εὐδαιμονίαν κεκτήσθαι.

Xenophon. *Xenophontis opera omnia*, vol. 2, (Clarendon Press) Oxford 1921, 2nd edn. (repr. 1971).

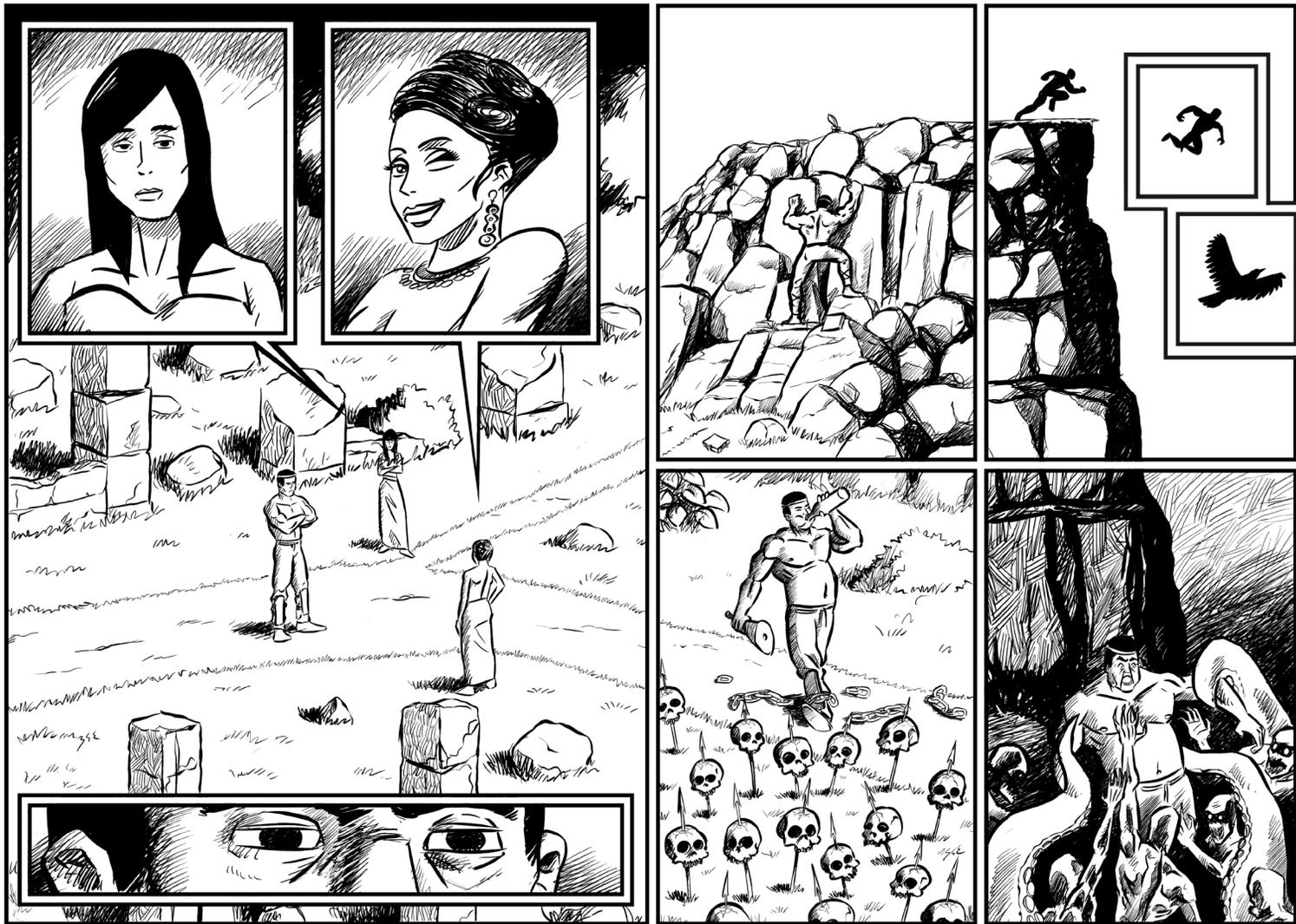
dost rouse lust by many a trick, when there is no need, using men as women: thus thou trainest thy friends, waxing wanton by night, consuming in sleep the best hours of day.

[31] Immortal art thou, yet the outcast of the gods, the scorn of good men. Praise, sweetest of all things to hear, thou nearest not: the sweetest of all sights thou beholdest not, for never yet hast thou beheld a good work wrought by thyself. Who will believe what thou dost say? who will grant what thou dost ask? Or what sane man will dare join thy throng? While thy votaries are young their bodies are weak, when they wax old, their souls are without sense; idle and sleek they thrive in youth, withered and weary they journey through old age, and their past deeds bring them shame, their present deeds distress. Pleasure they ran through in their youth: hardship they laid up for their old age.

[32] But I company with gods and good men, and no fair deed of god or man is done without my aid. I am first in honour among the gods and among men that are akin to me: to craftsmen a beloved fellow-worker, to masters a faithful guardian of the house, to servants a kindly protector: good helpmate in the toils of peace, staunch ally in the deeds of war, best partner in friendship. To

[33] my friends meat and drink bring sweet and simple enjoyment: for they wait till they crave them. And a sweeter sleep falls on them than on idle folk: they are not vexed at awaking from it, nor for its sake do they neglect to do their duties. The young rejoice to win the praise of the old; the elders are glad to be honoured by the young; with joy they recall their deeds past, and their present well-doing is joy to them, for through me they are dear to the gods, lovely to friends, precious to their native land. And when comes the appointed end, they lie not forgotten and dishonoured, but live on, sung and remembered for all time. O Heracles, thou son of goodly parents, if thou wilt labour earnestly on this wise, thou mayest have for thine own the most blessed happiness.'

Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, [in:] Xenophon, *Memorabilia Oeconomicus*, Translated by E. C. Marchant, Symposium Apology, Translated by O. J. Todd, (Harvard University Press) Cambridge – London 1997, p. 95-103.



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The myth of Hercules at the crossroads<sup>21</sup> speaks of young Hercules' dilemma as he stands at the crossroads and needs to decide, which path to follow through the rest of his adult life. On one of the roads there appears a beautiful girl named Kakia (Κακία is Greek for "Evil"). She entices Hercules to follow her path, promising an easy life with no struggles and full of pleasure – it is what, in her opinion, constitutes happiness. On the other

21) See also: Erwin Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst*, (Teubner Verlag - Studien der Bibliothek Warburg 18), Leipzig - Berlin 1930.

road there appears a modest, less beautiful woman named Arete (Ἀρετή is Greek for “The Most Perfect”; to be precise her name is created based on the Greek verb *aristeuo* - ἀριστεύω - literally meaning to be the best, also in moral terms). She pursues Heracles to choose the path that is not easy, but full of effort and work. Ultimately however it will bring him true happiness.

Heracles, as a young man would, makes the obvious choice - he turns to the beautiful Kakia. It is at this moment that the women exchange opinions, and it turns out that Kakia’s promises are misleading. Arete speaks to Kakia:

While thy votaries are young their bodies are weak, when they wax old, their souls are without sense; idle and sleek they thrive in youth, withered and weary they journey through old age, and their past deeds bring them shame, their present deeds distress.<sup>22</sup>

Those who follow Arete experience the opposite fate, are happy to recall their past deeds and carry out ongoing work with real satisfaction and “*have for thine own the most blessed happiness*”.<sup>23</sup>

Other authors also repeat a similar version of the myth of Heracles at a crossroads, for example, Cicero:

Nam quod Herculem Prodicus dicit, ut est apud Xenophontem, cum primum pubesceret, quod tempus a natura ad deligendum, quam quisque viam vivendi sit ingressurus, datum est, exisse in solitudinem atque ibi sedentem diu secum multumque dubitasse, cum duas cerneret vias, unam Voluptatis, alteram Virtutis, utram ingredi melius esset, hoc Herculem lovis satu edito“ potuit fortasse contingere, nobis non item, qui imitamur, quos cuique visum est, atque ad eorum studia institutaque impelhamur; plerumque autem parentium

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22) Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, II 31–32, Translated E. C. Machant (Harvard University Press) Cambridge, Mass 1918, p. 101.

23) Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, II 33, Translated E. C. Machant, (Harvard University Press) Cambridge, Mass 1918, p. 103.

praeceptis imbuti ad eorum consuetudinem moremque deducimur; ahi multitudinis iudicio feruntur, quaeque maiori parti pulcherrima videntur, ea maxime exoptant; non nulli tamen sive felicitate quadam sive bonitate naturae sine parentum disciplina rectam vitae secuti sunt viam.

For we cannot all have the experience of Hercules as we find it in the words of Prodicus in Xenophon: „When Hercules was just coming into youth's estate (the time which Nature has appointed unto every man for choosing the path of life on which he would enter), he went out into a desert place. And as he saw two paths, the path of Pleasure and the path of Virtue, he sat down and debated long and earnestly which one it were better for him to take.” This might, perhaps, happen to a Hercules, scion of the seed of Jove“; but it cannot well happen to us; for we copy, each the model he fancies, and we are constrained to adopt their pursuits and vocations. But usually, we are so imbued with the teachings of our parents, that we fall irresistibly into their manners and customs. Others drift with the current of popular opinion and make especial choice of those callings which the majority find most attractive. Some, however, as the result either of some happy fortune or of natural ability, enter upon the right path of life without parental guidance.<sup>24</sup>

In ancient times the myth was symbolically written as the letter Y, the Greek letter ypsilon, which has two arms - one wide, one narrow. It was believed that man, just as Heracles, chooses his own way of life<sup>25</sup>. On the one hand, there is the quick and easy way that is not difficult, but which ultimately leads to unhappiness. It is this path that is symbolised by the wide arm of the letter ypsilon. On the other hand the man sees the second, more difficult and slower way, which demands more patience and effort, but ultimately leads to happiness. It is this path that is symbolised by the narrow arm of the letter ypsilon.

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24) Cicero, *On Duties (De Officiis)*, I 118–119, with an English translation by Walter Miller, (Loeb Classical Library No. 30), London (William Heinemann Ltd) and New York (G. R Putnam's Sons) 1928, p. 120-121.

25) Persius, *Satire*, III, Vers 56f, [in:] Juvenal and Persius, with an english translation by G. G. Ramsay, (The Loeb Classical Library) London 1928, pp. 348-350.

The hero's struggle was to convince mortals that everyone can achieve happiness and will owe it not to chance or gods but to their own work and effort. And true happiness begins already at the moment of making the right choice, here and now, in this world.

It is worth noticing that the concept of the myth of Heracles at the crossroads was adopted into the philosophy of Plato. It can be found in the image of the cave, painted in Plato's *Republic*<sup>26</sup>. The prisoners sitting on the bottom of the cave and refusing to climb out are those, who chose the way of Kakia - an easy way, demanding no effort. Those, however, who make the climb to get out of the cave towards the sun are the ones, who chose the way of Arete.

## 2.2 Jesus Christ

Echoes of the myth of Heracles at the crossroads can be found in the teachings of Christ. However, Christ nowhere refers to the philosophy of Pythagoras, nor does he mention the figure of Heracles anywhere, the parallels were also evident in the eyes of Christian thinkers like Basil the Great. Basil the Great's nuances to his brethren that they should not reject all pagan literature simply because it is pagan but should use it if it supports the truths of the faith and the teachings of Christ. Basil the Great believes that such support for the faith is given by the myth of Heracles at the crossroads and says:

Somewhere too in his writings Prodicus, the Sophist of Chios, has made similar reflexions on vice and virtue, to whom attention may

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26) *The Republic of Plato*, 514 A – 517 C, ed. James Adam, (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge 1902.

well be paid, for he is a man by no means to be despised. So far as I recollect his sentiments, they are something to this effect. I do not remember the exact words, but the sense, in plain prose, was as follows: Once upon a time, when Hercules was quite young, and of just about the same age as yourselves, he was debating within himself which of the two ways he should choose, the one leading through toil to virtue, the other which is the easiest of all. There approached him two women. They were Virtue and Vice, and though they said not a word they straightway shewed by their appearance what was the difference between them. One was tricked out to present a fair appearance with every beautifying art. Pleasure and delights were shed around her and she led close after her innumerable enjoyments like a swarm of bees. She showed them to Hercules, and, promising him yet more and more, endeavoured to attract him to her side. The other, all emaciated and squalid, looked earnestly at the lad, and spoke in quite another tone. She promised him no ease, no pleasure, but toils, labours, and perils without number, in every land and sea. She told him that the reward of all this would be that he should become a god (so the narrator tells it). This latter Hercules followed even to the death. Perhaps all those who have written anything about wisdom, less or more, each according to his ability, have praised Virtue in their writings. These must be obeyed, and the effort made to show forth their teaching in the conduct of life. For he alone is wise who confirms in act the philosophy which in the rest goes no farther than words. They do but flit like shadows.<sup>27</sup>

The story of the life of Jesus presented in the scriptures can also be treated as a tale of the awareness of choice, which Christ makes and defends. The essence of the choice is represented in the scene of Christ's temptation by the Devil. Christ was without food for forty days on the desert when the devil appeared and tempted him, the hungry man, saying: "*If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread*". Jesus however does not give in to temptation and answers: "*It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*".<sup>28</sup>

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27) St. Basil the Great, *Homiletical*, Homily XXII, [in:] St. Basil the Great, *Letters and Select Works*, ed. Philip Schaff, (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Series II: Vol. 8:), 2009, p. 116–117.

28) Bible, *Matthew*, IV 1-4, [in:] *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Text Edition 2016 ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com)).

Hunger here refers to all kinds of bodily hunger, all bodily needs, everything that passes, just as hunger does. Christ however stands by his words, which are symbolised by the Greek term *logos* (λόγος), by what inherently belongs to the world of thought and spirit, what is contrary to body and matter.

Jesus expresses this later. It is clearly visible during the sermon on the mount, where he specifically takes over the traditions of the myth of Heracles, quoting the so-called tale of the wide and narrow gate:

Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, Christ will teach that to cross life one may choose the narrow gate, which is the difficult way (the way of Arete), or the wide gate, which is the easy path (the way of Kakia). He encouraged people to take the first path, because it is this way that will lead to true life.

The same message is found in the scene of capturing Christ, when one of his students - wanting to protect the master - drew his sword and cut off a soldier's ear. And so, Christ said: "*Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword*".<sup>30</sup> In other words you can give in to fear and emotions, and react in the quickest, simplest way - aggression, i.e. follow Kakia's way. But you can also control yourself, your

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29) Bible, *Matthew*, VII 13-14, [in:] *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Text Edition 2016 (<https://www.biblestudytools.com>).

30) Bible, *Matthew*, XXVI 52, [in:] *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Text Edition 2016 (<https://www.biblestudytools.com>).



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emotions and fear, which is undoubtedly more difficult and requires effort – i.e., follow the path of Arete. Christ’s promise of happiness, in contrast to Heracles, referred to not the life here and now, but to the afterlife which awaits us behind the narrow gate – the final *there and after*.

### **2.3 Lord Vader**

The character of Lord Vader from the movie Star Wars is in reality an embodiment of the story of the family of Skywalker - the father, Anakin, and his son, Luke. Fate presents both with a choice between the light side and dark side of the Force - a power that rules over the galaxy and its inhabitants. Both heroes make a decisive choice, and both choose differently.

The first character to be offered the choice is Anakin, who out of fear for the life of his beloved wife and unborn child (twins as it turns out) gives in to fear and emotions, and decides to quickly and radically push away the danger. He chooses the path of the sword and aggression (Kakia's way). It is fear however that leads him to the dark side of the Force and, as a consequence, instead of bringing rescue, in rage and anger he kills the ones close to him, betrays his friends, destroys that which he cared for and wanted to protect, and ultimately loses himself. Instead of becoming a saviour, he becomes the lord of destruction, Lord Vader (from Latin *vadere* – *to walk forward with evil intentions*).

Twenty years later, the son of Anakin, Luke Skywalker, brash and eager as his father, finds himself in the same predicament. Luke's first trial takes place in a cave. It is there that during his training Luke stops and turns to his master, Yoda, saying he senses peril awaiting inside. Yoda encourages Luke to enter the cave, noting only that he will not need weapons (“*Your weapons. You will not need them.*”). The student however arms himself and descends down the cave, following a dark corridor. Suddenly, in the darkness, there appears the figure of Vader, whom Luke does not know yet at this point. The dark entity moves towards Luke but makes no gestures and speaks nothing. Luke gives in to fear, just like one of Christ's students, and reaches for his sword. A fight ensues. Luke cuts off Vader's head with his light sabre. The head, still enclosed in the helmet, falls down on the ground, only to explode a moment later, revealing the face of the adversary. It is then that Luke sees his own face.<sup>31</sup>

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31) *Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back*, Directed by Irvin Kershner, story by George Lucas, USA 1980.







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This scene is an obvious paraphrase of Christ's words about the sword (what is interesting, similar paraphrases can be found in other movies, e.g. Iron Man, part 1, where the main hero, Tony Stark, is a weapons' manufacturer; in the first scene of the movie a military convoy transporting him falls under a terrorist attack; a rocket hits the ground just next to Stark, who looks at it just before it explodes, he sees his own name).

The final test takes place when Luke is taken to the Death Star to face Vader. Luke's friends and his sister, Leia, found themselves in great danger. Young Skywalker knows that his father, now Lord Vader, the source of all evil in the galaxy, is responsible for that. The easiest and most effective way would be to kill Vader. Despite that, Luke does not give in to bad emotions, which took hold of his father. He challenges him and defeats him as a warrior, yet he does not kill him. He thus picked the more difficult way of Arete.<sup>32</sup>

Lord Vader, who was used to killing, at first did not understand his son's choice. He perceives it as a weakness, saying "*You are unwise to lower your defences*". After a moment, however, he realises that his son offers him something more than his life – he gives him a chance to fix the wrongs he, Vader, did and to return to the light side of the Force.

The most important message of this story is focusing on the fact that even in the evillest of men (just like Vader), under the mask of cruelty, there can still be an inkling of good. If you reach out to such a person not with a sword, but with your hand, he can

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32) *Star Wars: Episode VI – Return of the Jedi*, Directed by Richard Marquand, story by George Lucas, USA 1983.

be turned towards good, to the light side of the Force. Although in the everyday life this seems unbelievable, it is often the case that the one who hurts others needs help at least as much as the one, who got hurt. Thus, Luke chose the light side of the Force. Ultimately, he saves his friends, achieves perfection and even manages to save his father. His choice proves that *anytime and anywhere* one can turn back and, despite earlier errors, achieve happiness.

## **2.4 The Choice of the Modern Man**

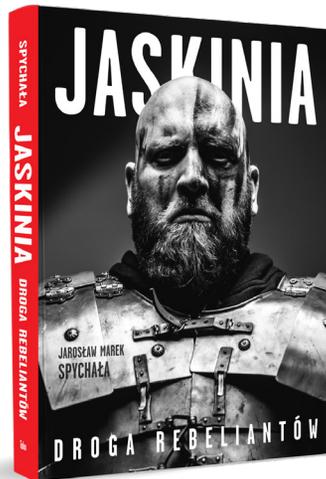
Modest Arete, the narrow arm of the letter ypsilon, the narrow gate and the light side of the Force are in reality different names for the same, difficult path of work, effort and struggle, which leads to happiness. Just as Kakia, the wide arm of the letter ypsilon, the gate wide open and the dark side of the Force are names for the easy choice, which inevitably leads to defeat. There are many modern paraphrases of this message, the banalest of which are sayings such as “*you’ve made your bed, now lie in it*”.

In other words, the situation in which Heracles, Jesus Christ and Lord Vader find themselves is universal and each hero chooses similarly, although with different motives. Men choose their moral identity through their actions. They are not born evil or good, but they become one or the other. The difference between these stories is the way the heroes encourage them to do the right choice. Heracles advises, Christ warns and Vader (and through him Lucas) - inspires.

It is beyond doubt that through ethical persuasion Lord Vader “wins” in cultural terms. Why is that so? Is fiction stronger than reality? It may be because Lord Vader absolved those, who through their choices in life fell, and now, thanks to him, can rise again - *always and anywhere*. The myth of Vader does not scare nor punish but inspires and gives a chance. And even if Vader is just a fictional character, he touches upon something true, something human, a part of us: dreams allowing us to reach the stars and become “Skywalker”.

It is in accord with this message that philosophical texts are selected for the classes using the ΛΕΓΩ-ΛΟΓΟΣ method. They show their true meaning through the experience of this ethical message.

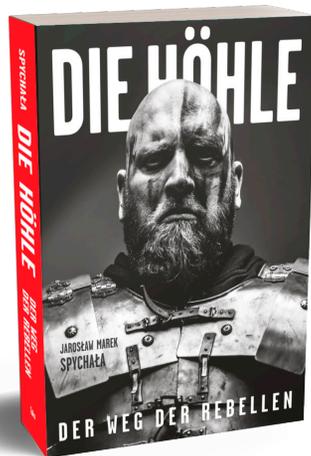




Jarosław Marek Spychała  
*Jaskinia. Droga Rebeliantów.*

Language: Polish

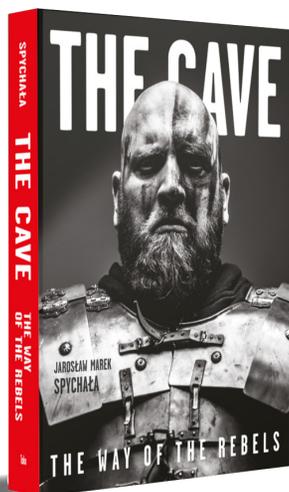
Toruń (Poland) 2019



Jarosław Marek Spychała  
*Die Höhle. Der Weg der Rebellen.*

Language: German

Toruń (Poland) and Konstanz (Germany)  
2021



Jarosław Marek Spychała  
*The Cave. The Way of the Rebels.*

Language: English

premiere 2022

