

China – From Real Tao to Mao, and Then to Multipolar Fake Tao

[China – From Real Tao to Mao, and Then to Multipolar Fake Tao](#)

by [Mees Baaijen](#), *Winter Oak*

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Abstract

This article, the second in a [series](#), provides an overview of the manipulations that led to the incorporation of the former Chinese Empire into the global power structure designed by the Global Mafia (or Glafia, i.e. the Predators), the criminal owners of most of the planet's wealth, governments, corporations and institutions. Many details and references not mentioned here can be found in my book [The Predators versus The People](#).

Introduction

Chinese civilization goes back thousands of years and is one of the oldest in the world. It has seen many changes and wars, and some of these wars were certainly not defensive. The same goes for the Great Wall, which in part protected the Empire's newly annexed territories.

Until the early 1800's, Asia and especially China, was the dominant player in the world economy and technology ([James Petras](#); [Joseph Needham](#)). The ships used in Admiral Zheng's "charm offensive" in the 15th century to visit India, Arabia, Egypt and Africa were up to 4 times bigger than the European ones. Yet China never colonized the world, probably for philosophical reasons (Confucianism, Taoism) and also because

the rest of world had little of interest to offer to China (G. Arrighi).

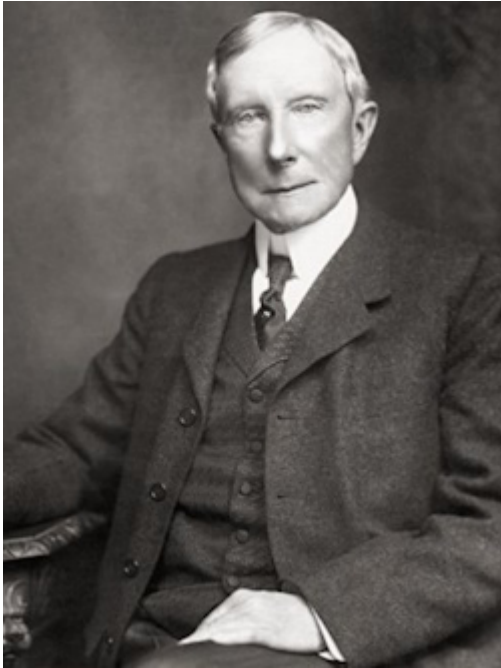
In the early 19th century, the hidden driving force behind world history in the last 500 years – Glafia – placed China on its list of Eurasian empires to be “normalized”, to provide a “level playfield” for their plan to dominate the whole world. Activities were started to weaken all great Eurasian empires, in the case of China mainly the opium wars and the making of a subordinate (or comprador) elite.



However, for the final conquest of the still highly sovereign empires of Eurasia, a very strong force had to be established: an alliance between Glafia’s already fading but still very powerful British Empire, and its rising American Empire, helped by its European proxy states. That coalition, in which many Zionist proxies also participated, would instigate and execute the World Wars, the communist revolutions in Russia, China and elsewhere, and financial crises.

Indeed, in 1897 Britain and the USA made a secret agreement to carry out the gigantic project to subdue and colonize the whole of Eurasia, China included. This project, which included the setting up of bogeymen Hitler and Mussolini, is here called *The Great 20th Century Slaughter of Eurasia*. It affected humanity more destructively and on a larger scale than had ever happened in history.

Rockefeller in China



In 1863, John D. Rockefeller (just 24 years old) sold his first (lamp) kerosene in China and made his first “disinterested” gift to China missions. In the usual Rockefeller style, he quickly established a monopoly. At the time, China had been made “the sick man of Asia”, due to the devastating opium wars launched at it by the British Empire. In cahoots with the USA, it forced China to accept opium produced in British India (and not bullion) as payment for its exports of luxuries to the West.

The Rockefellers and their influence would never leave China. Across the 20th century, their “philanthropic” investment in China’s science, medicine, and higher education officially surpassed one billion dollars. Mary [Brown Bullock](#) writes:

“Over the course of the 20th century, several hundred Chinese institutions and many thousands of Chinese scholars and practitioners received Rockefeller philanthropic support. Rockefeller philanthropy’s sustained emphasis on science and medicine transformed and secularized the American cultural role in Republican China. It legitimized an American scientific influence and a tradition of intellectual and professional relationships that

transcended Mao's China and continues to distinguish the bilateral relationship.

"Rockefeller philanthropic institutions have long served as a bellwether for the American non-governmental presence in China. Their formative influence on China's science and medicine defined the post-missionary era in the first half of the [20th] century. Their re-entry into China after Nixon's [1972] opening was carefully orchestrated by China's leaders."

Glafia, together with the Rockefellers and other minions, led China's trajectory from sovereign Empire to global hegemon in three revolutionary steps, which are discussed below.

The first Glafia-led revolution in China: Sun Yat-sen

Japan had been corrupted since the 1860's by Glafia's British, and later also American, hegemon (for example through Jacob Schiff's \$200M loan to Japan), to serve as a future battering ram against China and Russia, which started with the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese war. Japan also served as the base for Sun Yat-sen's overthrow of China's Qing dynasty in 1912, financed by Wall Street & The City. According to A. Sutton:

"The best-documented example of Wall Street intervention in revolution is the operation of a New York syndicate in the Chinese revolution of 1912, which was led by Sun Yat-sen. Although the final gains of the syndicate remain unclear, the intention and role of the New York financing group are fully documented down to amounts of money, information on affiliated Chinese secret societies, and shipping lists of armaments to be purchased."

Sun, a Christian who had studied in the USA, wanted to develop China in the same way. But as in the case of Russia, Glafia's bankers did not, at least not at that time: their plan for the 20th century was to make the USA their new hegemon. China had to be suppressed, by placing it in the "communist fridge", under Mao Zedong, together with Russia (which had been in the communist fridge since the 1917 Revolution). Never forget that communism was also a Glafia project!



In 1925, Sun Yat-sen was poisoned, probably by the British, and died. Under Chiang Kai-shek and his successors, the Chinese Nationalists were sabotaged by the treasonous Americans, who officially supported them. That's why, since 1928, they had to govern mainland China from Taiwan. In 1949, the Chinese Communists took over control of the Chinese mainland, and the Nationalists were left with the small island of Taiwan.

Glafia's second revolution in China: communism

Already by 1919, Mao had been headhunted and earmarked by "Yale in China" school. It was a US intelligence front, in collaboration with members of the Skull and Bones Society at Yale University, which had been founded in the 1830's by the US Russell family, opium dealers in China. Under the cover of WW2, the USA betrayed China into Communism (see [James Perloff](#)), with a treasonous key role for Glafia pawn General George Marshall, *America's wartime commander and name giver to the later Marshall Plan*.

Mao received several Glafia advisors, all Jewish, to assist in the creation of a Glafia-desired totalitarian state. After David Rockefeller visited China in 1973 with his faithful

agent Henry Kissinger, he was very satisfied about “this” – or should we say “his” – experiment:

“Whatever the price of the Chinese Revolution ... [this] social experiment in China under Chairman Mao’s leadership is one of the most important and successful in human history”.

With “whatever the price”, Rockefeller coldly referred to the fact that in the 1950’s and 60’s, Chinese communists slaughtered tens of millions of Chinese non-communists, often people dedicated to Tao. Today’s pro “pacifist, harmonious and Taoist” China and pro “multipolar order” Westerners – like Pepe Escobar and Matthew Ehret – seem to have forgotten this horrible episode.



An important reason for the US hegemon to put China on the communist path was to keep it backward and isolated for several decades, the same “refrigerator” trick as applied earlier on in Russia. That eliminated China and Russia as

economic competitors, so the USA, the “great champion of liberty and free trade”, could have a typical, soaring Glafia career. It was also an experiment in the creation of the modern, Glafia-controlled totalitarian Chinese state – which it remains until today. Klaus Schwab and his pupil Justin Trudeau are big fans of present-day Communist China, and they show it on YouTube.

Glafia’s third Chinese revolution: global hegemon

When Glafia’s US hegemon started to prepare their “China hegemon” project in 1971 (a year of great change), that was because:

- Glafia has no loyalty to any nation, religion, race, or ethnicity, and presently they see Communist China (assisted by Russia) as the best global system for their domination project (see also the Yalta Conference during WW2, in which the Allies gave Central Europe and North Korea away to communism).
- China, with well over one billion clever and hardworking people, had by far the largest economic potential – just as it had shown before 1850.
- China was severely humiliated in the 19th century, which it will never forget, and was only going to participate in Glafia’s New World Order as its leader state (as confirmed in this [George Soros interview](#)).



In that very same year 1971, the People's Republic of China, led by the Chinese Communist Party under Mao, was recognized as "the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations"; with support of Glafia's US hegemon, of course. The representatives of the Republic of China in Taiwan were immediately removed from the UN organization. So again a seed for a future conflict was planted, a trick also used by splitting North and South Vietnam, North and South Korea, and the giveaway of Crimea by Khrushchev.

Forty years ago, Antony Sutton prophesied about the development of China by American corporations. As it turned out, he was right – again:

"[Bechtel Corporation](#) has established a new company, Bechtel China, Inc. to handle development, engineering and construction contracts for the Chinese government... It appears that Bechtel is now to play a similar role to that of Detroit-based Albert Kahn Inc., the firm that in 1928

undertook initial studies and planning for the First Five Year Plan in the Soviet Union. By about the year 2000, Communist China will be a “superpower” built by American technology and skill...

And who is to say that the Chinese Communists will not make their peace with Moscow after 2000 and join forces to eliminate the super-super-power, the United States?”

In recent years, it was easy to see how all Western actions against China and Russia – the Ukraine war included – had their unification and reinforcement as main goal. The Pentagon’s [2017 budget](#) was the first driven by Glafia-created bogeymen [China](#) and Russia. Yet another Glafia project to upset the global balance of powers is arriving at its harvest time! History shows that the Global Powers have no loyalty to any nation, religion or race, and Glafia-supported China is now simply their best totalitarian and hegemonic model.

This is how countries are used as *“pieces on a chessboard upon which is being played out a great game for the domination of the world”* (Lord George Curzon, 1859-1925, British politician, Vice Roy of India). Remember that there’s only one player behind the board!



The Great Shift: after 500 years, Glafia goes East

To quickly recap: according to Giovanni Arrighi ([1994](#)), the world capitalist system developed in four cycles, each led by a temporary hegemon, respectively Spain, Holland, England, and the United States. Each cycle was divided into three phases:

1. An accumulation phase, through trade (piling up of capital).
2. A phase of industrial expansion.
3. A period of financialization (investment, mostly foreign, of capital), dominated by bankers (the earlier merchants lending out their capital).

This last phase is “burning hot and then fading away”, or as Braudel called it, “a sign of autumn”. In it, not only the finance era runs its final course, but also the leader state itself. The gradual demise of one cycle would become the gradual birth of the next, on an ever grander and more global scale.

For Glafia’s present hegemon, the Arch-Fascist informal empire

of the United States of America – officially “the free and democratic USA” – the turning point to autumn can be dated to 1971. When we take the recent developments into account, including the war in Ukraine, there can be no doubt: China, and Russia too, will be the new horses pulling Glafia’s chariot.

This time the move is cleverly being sold by stating that we will go from a bad and disgraced uni-polar world to a good, harmonious and even Taoist multi-polar world. With ALL LANDS now brought under control, and the Global Digital Prison on its way to controlling ALL PEOPLE, that powerful Western-Zionist coalition is no longer needed and is being dismantled.

The “China hegemon” project



Like practically all meteoric careers since the start of the Glafia project around 1500, either of persons, corporations or countries, Communist China’s skyrocketing rise after 1971 was Glafia-made. Glafia’s proxy for this new state-building project was of course its 20th century hegemon, the United States of America. Special roles were given to Henry

Kissinger, Bill Clinton, and members of Yale's Skull and Bones Society, amongst others as US ambassadors to China.

The US hegemon started the "China hegemon" project overtly in 1971, when the visible part of the preparations took off, with Henry Kissinger's famous visit. No doubt that secret preparations had started long before (the book *The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* [OSS] provides evidence of such). To recap, the reasons for this project were:

1. Glafia's core of dynastic families sees Communism – which they themselves launched and helped to establish in Russia, and later in China and elsewhere – as the best control system for their global domination project. Under their guidance (see [here](#) for an example), China has become the global leader of the "Digital Prison" project. Many Western leaders criticize it, while omitting to mention that their own countries are covertly implementing the same system.
2. China, with far over one billion capable and industrious people, has by far the largest potential for economic capacity – as it had already showed for thousands of years.
3. China, which was severely humiliated in the 19th century, was only going to participate in Glafia's New World Order as its leader. George Soros openly admitted this in 2009 (see [George Soros interview](#)).
4. The rude, brutish, and ruthless USA, with its constant see-through lies, has on purpose lost its credibility in most parts of the world, while China has been doing its best to gain – and buy! – global popularity.

China wasn't the USA's first big-state-making project: it had also managed Russia's transformation into a communist empire, the Soviet Union. Then, after the Glafia-planned fake de-colonization, it made all the post-WW2 "newly independent" ex-

colonies their dependent proxies, via bought and paid for subordinate elites (also called vassals or puppet regimes). And in fact, there's no difference in how they "made" Israel, the European Union, NATO, Japan as their battering ram in Asia, the 19th century unification of Italy, and also of Germany, et cetera: as always, they bribed and corrupted the political and blueblood elites in those countries, including the mainstream media and academia.

Is China's new role a reason for HOPE?



Will an era of global peace, prosperity and freedom rise with the proposed multipolar order led by China and Russia?

The answer is: *Sorry, but NO*, for the five major reasons are given below.

First, the *Covid litmus test*: China, and Russia too, knew that cheap HCQ and Ivermectin work, as shown on a large scale in China, Uttar Pradesh, Japan. But even so they suppressed their people massively with such crazy measures as mRNA jabs (Russia, not China) and lockdowns.

Second, read General Chi's chilling speech ([The secret speech of General Chi Haotian](#)). Anthony Hall confirmed this is not a

forgery. It leaves you wondering what's really behind China's big smile.

Third, the *criminal Triads*, who had a role akin to Freemasons in the West, have since long been in cahoots with the *Hong Kong tycoons* and the *Chinese Communist Party*, together forming a "Glafia-subordinate gangster elite".

Fourth, a shocking 2014 article shows how nearly 22,000 members of China's [communist elite](#) hold *secretive offshore companies* in British and other tax havens, which makes them highly dependent on Glafia's banksters. Like all Glafia's proxies, they can never stray from the agenda, because just as Glafia made them, it can also break them. Yes, that's "autonomous" China!

An important fifth reason is the *money system litmus test*. Indeed, the whole multipolar effort will be futile if the present usurious money system, fully under control of Glafia's banksters, is maintained, as it is totally incompatible with peace, prosperity, sustainability, and freedom. As long as Glafia's bankers stay in charge of our money system, there will be no "autonomous" China, nor any other "self-reliant" countries or regions, or a "sustainable" world, or a "free" world.

Of course the new Chinese hegemon is sold to the public as a benovolent, and even Taoist country, "on the path to socialism with Chinese characteristics". Just as the criminal and genocidal American hegemon was always presented as "the great champion of democracy and free trade"!

Only if we can create *awareness in lots of people*, if we re-discover our strength as miraculous and spiritual human beings, and if we cooperate in an open-minded manner with others seeking the truth, can this gigantic problem be tackled.

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Evil Beyond Words

[Evil Beyond Words](#)

by [Paul Cudenec](#), [Winter Oak](#)

June 13, 2024



In a previous phase of my existence I used to pen regular film reviews for the local paper at which I worked.

I got into the habit of writing these as soon as possible after I had seen the film in question, so that I would still be in touch with the impression that it had made on me and remember the salient details.

So it's somewhat surprising for me to realise that I have taken several weeks to write about the film I am going to describe.

What has happened, I think, is that it made a very deep impression on me that I have needed time to fully process.

[Les Survivantes](#) ('the female survivors', literally, or perhaps better rendered as 'the women who survived') is a new French documentary from director Pierre Barnérias, known for his 2020 exposé of the Covid scam, [Hold-Up](#).

Given the vitriol and censorship aimed at that film, and given the even more controversial subject matter of *Les Survivantes*, I would have expected only to have been able to view it via some rebellious non-corporate website.

So it was a little surreal to find myself sitting down to watch it at a massive multiplex cinema in an out-of-town commercial zone in Nîmes.

The subject of the film is the abuse of children: not just sexual abuse, including violent rape, but also the torture of children, the dismembering and murdering of children and the forcing of children to watch and participate in the abuse, torture, dismembering and murdering of other children.



It has taken me a month to be able even to write that sentence, so it is hard to imagine how difficult it must have been for the survivors of such activity to talk in public about what they experienced.

Indeed, as one of them explained, part of the purpose of the activity – in particular the forced participation – was to traumatise and shame them into a lifelong silence that these

women have now broken.

An important aspect of the film is that these crimes were not carried out by random individuals but by a network – when they met up, some of the eight women realised they had been abused by the same individuals in different locations across France, Belgium and Switzerland.

As the survivors told their stories, the nature of this network became increasingly apparent – there was talk of powerful people, politicians, heads of state and billionaires.

A former employee of Crédit Suisse (which cropped up in my [recent article](#) on the Rothschilds' Chatham House operation) described how he had walked out of a party hosted by his banker boss when it started to involve a simulated satanic child sacrifice involving the banker's daughter.

Just in case there was any lingering doubt, the caption at the end of the film refers to the network being run by “global financial power”.

We have, of course, all heard about Jeffrey Epstein or Jimmy Savile, with dark rumours about activities even less acceptable than sex with underage girls and boys.

But I for one never wanted to think about this too much, didn't really want to emotionally embrace its reality, even though I accepted it intellectually.

Les Survivantes forced me to think about it, to *feel* it through the words of little girls who had suffered, survived and somehow found the courage, as women, to tell the world what had happened.

I know I was not the only person who walked out of the cinema desperately suppressing the desire to burst into angry tears.



In the subsequent weeks, the shock of what was described in the film has percolated into my thinking.

I thought I was being pretty hard-line in the language I use to describe the circles involved in all this, using labels like “criminocrats” or “mafia” and adjectives like “corrupt”, “odious” or “vile”.

However, I now realise I have been letting them off the hook. They’re worse than any of that.

It is already difficult to understand how anyone could deliberately cause the deaths of millions of people in wars, deliberately poison them with toxic drugs, deliberately destroy the natural world, polluting land, air and water, deliberately wreck communities and cultures, cynically enslave and exploit people across the world.

But how can we digest the fact that members of this same global financial power also enjoy raping, torturing, dismembering and murdering little children?

What words can we use to describe what they are? Even “Satanist”, which is presumably how they regard themselves, seems too weak.

I’ve always thought that mere human beings can no more be entirely evil than they can be entirely good.

Now I’m not so sure.



The three pieces of art illustrating this article are all by the film director David Lynch.

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The World Out of Kilter: Being Modern

[The World Out of Kilter: Being Modern](#)

by [Paul Cudenec](#), [Winter Oak](#)

April 26, 2024

To be modern is to accept that which you should refuse; to

adapt to evil rather than to resist it.

To be modern is to have been melted down and poured into somebody else's mould.

To be modern is to have forgotten how to remember.

To be modern is to be more detached from nature, more helpless, more dependent, more wasteful, more destructive, more short-sighted than your ancestors could ever have imagined, and yet to feel proud of yourself and your era.

To be modern is to prefer artifice to organicity, surface to depth, quantity to quality.

To be modern is to have absorbed so many meaningless facts that there is no more room in your head for meaningful knowledge.

To be modern is to turn your back on common sense and conform to the collective insanity.

To be modern is to be convinced that all change is necessarily good and to refuse to recognise the instinct that tells you otherwise.

To be modern is to be at home both everywhere and nowhere; to be somebody and nobody; to be still alive and yet already dead.

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The World Out of Kilter: Occupation and Zombification

[The World Out of Kilter: Occupation and Zombification](#)

by [Paul Cudenec](#), [Winter Oak](#)

April 22, 2024

The kind of society I long for is an organic one, in which people live in the way they see fit, guided by their own inclinations, the customs they have inherited and the circumstances of place.

As an anarchist, I am obviously opposed to all authority imposed from above, to any kind of formalised, entrenched power, but that does not mean that there could be no kind of moral “authority” or guidance in the world I want to see.

Traditional societies often look to village elders, wise women, and other respected individuals to help steer their decision-making.

The advice they give arises from within the community concerned and, in order to be followed, will have to correspond to a generally-shared sense that the proposed direction is the *right* one.

This is not the case with those who exercise power over us today. Due to the corruption of our society, authority is wielded in the interests of a group which neither identifies with the people as a whole nor is prepared to be guided by its wishes.

Instead, it seeks to impose its own agenda on the population

by any means necessary – by [propaganda](#) and persuasion, if possible, or otherwise by outright deceit, intimidation and physical violence.

Even worse is that this ruling gang, which is essentially nothing but an occupying force, shares neither the specific local moral codes of the various peoples it rules over, nor the general human sense of right and wrong that would once have been shared by its own ancestors.

This is because it is a rogue element, a criminal entity, intent only on increasing its own wealth and power, and has no use for ethics.

Indeed, it takes sadistic pleasure out of using, manipulating and inverting the majority population's values – their sense of justice, their fondness for their homeland or their love of nature – in order to advance its own venal programme.

Individuals in such a society are unable to follow their own moral compass, to act according to their own innate desires, to follow their dreams, pay respect to the archetypal template in their unconscious.

This is not just because they are physically constrained, by authority, from acting and living in ways that they feel are right, but also because they have been mentally conditioned not to listen to the voice within.

They are besieged, through all their waking hours, by messaging, by propaganda that tells them they have to live, think and behave in the ways set out by the ruling gang.

A natural society will produce all kinds of individuals who complement each other in the ways that they contribute to its well-being.

There are those who are drawn to caring for others, to teaching the young, to growing, to feeding, to building, to

physically defending the community, to resolving disputes and so on.

There are also the artists, poets, preachers and prophets, the antennae of the people, who are sensitive to the overall *feel* of the society and can sense when something is wrong.

Young people often start out with this gift – think of all the different generations rebelling, in their varying ways, against this modern world! – only to be ground down into compliance by the satanic mills of power.

But some carry on noticing and sounding the alert, with the aim of waking up the population as a whole to the danger they are facing.

It is therefore important for the ruling occupying force to isolate the small minority who remain connected to their own deep knowing and to the organic spirit of the community.

They do this by insulting, mocking, demonising, dismissing, intimidating, criminalising and imprisoning them – by presenting them, in their usual inverted manner, as a menace to the very society whose well-being they are trying to defend.

This is psychologically difficult for these social antennae, who risk being deeply wounded by a rejection that they feel comes as much from their own community as from the occupying force.

Banding together in self-defence, they can become inward-looking, cultish, and unable to properly communicate with others outside their ranks.

Or, as individuals, they can become bitter and angry with those who refuse to listen to them, dismissing most members of their community as ignorant fools who deserve no better.

In either case, they have completed the work of the ruling gang by cutting themselves off from the social organism to which they belong.

That organism therefore has no more brain, no more soul, but is a social zombie, staggering on towards its own destruction under the malevolent control of the life-sucking criminocracy.

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Deep Resistance: Nature, Freedom, and Joy

[Deep Resistance: Nature, Freedom, and Joy](#)

*The essay below is the final part of the **Deep Resistance** series by [W.D. James](#). It was first published on [Winter Oak](#). The rest of the series can be found at Winter Oak or at W.D. James' [Philosopher's Holler](#).*

Nature, Freedom, and Joy (Deep Resistance Part 5)

by [W.D. James](#), [Winter Oak](#), [Philosopher's Holler](#)

February 2, 2024

Fish in the sea, you know how I feel

*River running free, you know how I feel
Blossom on the tree, you know how I feel*

*It's a new dawn
It's a new day
It's a new life, for me
And I'm feeling good*

– Nina Simone, *Feeling Good*ⁱ

So far in this series of essays we have talked much of 'nature' and things like 'custom' that may get in its way. However, we have not yet really gotten down to brass tacks about what nature, *phusis*, is for the ancient Greeks. The great Stoic maxim was "Live according to nature". So, we should determine what that really means.

Phusis

According to Pierre Hadot, explaining the Stoic doctrine, "Living in conformity with reason thus means living in conformity with nature, which causes the evolution of the world *from within*" (my italics).ⁱⁱ For we moderns, 'nature' pretty much just means all the bits of matter out there plus the energy that moves them and possibly the laws of physics which govern that movement. For the Greeks, it meant all of that *plus* the innate striving of all things toward good order. They called this the *telos* of things; the aim and purpose of things. While we tend to see nature in terms of mechanism, they saw things as genuinely organic.

To illustrate this, we can take Aristotle's famous example of the acorn. For him, and the Greeks generally, it is not wrong to speak of the acorn having the purpose of becoming a mighty oak tree. This tendency is innate to the acorn as an acorn (is part of its acorn/oak nature). It is not going to become anything else: a cherry tree, a chicken, or an amoeba.

Further, it will seek to become a good, healthy, flourishing (*eudaimonia*) oak tree. It might not succeed: it might not get enough water or sunlight, it might get eaten by a squirrel, or might get ripped up as a sapling by a mischievous person. Nevertheless, it possesses the internal propensity to grow towards becoming a mighty oak.

Further yet, all things have this internal propensity toward good order. The first bits of matter formed themselves into galaxies and solar systems, every living thing strives towards its perfection, even inert matter behaves as proper to its nature. In fact, everything in nature strives towards the good. Nature is an engine of goodness. The acorn strives towards the oak tree, the thoroughbred horse delights in running swiftly, and the human being seeks to live in accordance with her nature as a rational and moral being. The Stoics did not hesitate to describe this universal quest for goodness as a providential order. As Gilbert Murray expressed it, "We now see what goodness is; it is living or acting according to *Phusis*, working with *Phusis* in her eternal effects towards perfection... It means living according to the spirit which makes the world grow and progress."ⁱⁱⁱ

Finally, as Nina Simone celebrates in the lyrics of the song quoted at the opening of this essay, freedom consists in just this fulfilling of natural tendencies towards the good. The fish swimming in the sea. The river coursing down a mountain ravine. The blossom on a tree (no doubt an oak). Goodness, freedom, and joy ultimately all coincide and inhere in nature.

Philosophic Practices

The practices, or spiritual exercises, we explore in this concluding look at Epictetus will demonstrate some of the practical implications of this view of nature. First, we'll delve into what it is to live according to nature and then look at the conception of virtue that goes with this.

Practice 3: Living according to nature

Conduct yourself in all matters, grand and public or small and domestic, in accordance with the laws of nature. Harmonizing your will with nature should be your utmost ideal. (9)

For good or ill, life and nature are governed by laws that we can't change... Freedom isn't the right or ability to do whatever you please. Freedom comes from understanding the limits of our own power and the natural limits set in place by divine providence. (21)

Each of us is part of a vast, intricate, and perfectly ordered human community... We properly locate ourselves within the cosmic scheme by recognizing our natural relations to one another and thereby identifying our duties. Our duties naturally emerge from such fundamental relations as our families, neighborhoods, workplaces, our state and nation. Make it a regular habit to consider your roles – parent, child, neighbor, citizen, leader – and the natural duties that arise from them. (42)

Your possessions should be proportionate to the needs of your body, just as the shoe should fit the foot. Without moral training, we can be induced to excess. In the case of shoes, for instance, many people are tempted to buy fancy, exotic shoes when all that is needed is comfortable, well-fitting, durable footwear. (67)

When we name things correctly, we comprehend them correctly, without adding information or judgments that aren't there. (73)

Stoicism is one of the primary sources for the Western 'Natural Law' tradition. Epictetus was able to build a whole theory of natural law out of meditating on a pair of shoes. Let's see what is involved here. We need shoes because we have feet. Our feet have a certain nature, a purpose to serve. They help us to stand upright and to propel ourselves forward.

That's what they are for. Hence, if we are to clothe them well by putting them into shoes, those shoes should augment, not hinder, the natural purpose of feet: they should work with nature. So, the shoes should fit well, be sturdy, support us in propelling ourselves forward. Those would be good shoes. Bad shoes would hinder this. Perhaps they have pointy toes that cramp our feet because we think that looks good or inordinately high heels to make us look taller, but which make us clumsy. Bad shoes. Perhaps they're cheaply made and will fall apart or damage the arch of our foot. Bad shoes.

Further, we will *choose* the shoes. This will also be in accordance with nature, or not. The shoes are to serve our bodies, our feet. It is not part of the natural aim of shoes to augment our social standing, make us look good to others, or demonstrate our wealth. If we make our choice in footwear to serve those purposes, say by having them be made of expensive materials that don't make them any better shoes or because of their brand recognition (the devil wears Prada), we have chosen in a way contrary to nature: *contra natura* as the medieval theologians would have said.

In this little illustration from a pair of shoes, Epictetus has shown us the pattern we can apply to all human artifacts and actions. What is it we are talking about? Nail that down, get it right. Call it what it is. This is what Confucius, in another tradition of natural law, called 'the rectification of names.' Ok, we are concerned with X. What is the place of X in the nature of things, what is its nature, its purpose and function? Given the nature of X, as a free being, act in accordance with nature by cooperating with X performing its function. Then, things will go well.

We can learn the same sort of lesson by reasoning from the very mundane and intimate outward. Each part of your anatomy has a purpose to serve in the overall flourishing of the organism of your body. Recognize that and support the healthy functioning of your parts. You as an individual also have a

role or roles to play in the overall functioning of the social organisms of which you are a part (your family, your neighborhood, your nation, the society of all humans—the Stoics coined the term ‘cosmopolitan’ to denote that). Do your part. Our species has a role to play in the overall operation of our ecosystems and planet.

All of this is what is meant by ‘live according to nature’.

Practice 4: Cultivating virtue

Every difficulty in life presents us with an opportunity to turn inward and to invoke our own submerged inner resources. The trials we endure can and should introduce us to our strengths. (17)ⁱ

The surest sign of the higher life is serenity. Moral progress results in freedom from inner turmoil. You can stop fretting about this and that. If you seek the higher life, refrain from such common patterns of thinking as these: “If I don’t work harder, I’ll never earn a decent living, no one will recognize me, I’ll be a nobody,” or “If I don’t criticize my employee, he’ll take advantage of my good will.” (19)

Attach yourself to what is spiritually superior. (29)

Clearly assess your strengths and weaknesses...Different people are made for different things... You can’t be flying off in countless directions, however appealing they are, and at the same time live an integrated, fruitful life. (40-41)

...find worthy models to emulate... We all carry the seeds of greatness within us, but we need an image as a point of focus in order that they may sprout. (60)

Decide to be extraordinary... (79)

Goodness exists independently of our conception of it. The good is out there and it always has been out there, even

before we began to exist. (91)

Virtue has gotten kind of a bad name in recent times. Mainly, that is because we have turned it into its opposite. We tend to think of a virtuous person as a person who doesn't do certain things. Don't smoke, don't drink, don't rock-n-roll. We conceptualize of virtue as restraint, as *not* doing. That is the opposite of the ancient Greek idea. Virtue, *arete*, means 'excellence'. It referred to a power, a capacity for doing. The virtuous person was the one with the power of character to achieve excellence.

Excellence by what measure? By the measure of nature, *phusis*, as developed above. To perform one's purpose, to achieve one's natural goals, to achieve the state of flourishing, requires power. The acorn must have a certain power to survive and grow into that oak. My beagle dog Ellie, if she is to fulfill her purpose of beagling (rabbit hunting), must possess certain powers and capacities of smell, speed, sight, strength, intelligence, endurance, etc... These are her virtues and she is a 'good' beagle to the extent she possesses these virtues. With humans, we move to the specifically moral sense of virtue: the powers of will and character to choose and act in accordance with our nature.

There are a great many potential moral virtues, but the Greeks distilled these down to four virtues on which all the others were held to rest. The later Christian moralists called them the 'cardinal virtues' to denote their fundamental status. These are wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice. We need to be able to see into the nature of things to know what they are, what their purpose is, and what would constitute their state of flourishing. We must be wise. There will be those who hinder us, who wish to block us from acting according to our wisdom. We must have courage to face up to them. In the particular circumstances in which we find ourselves, we must know how to apply the abstract wisdom we possess to the situation at hand. We must possess the virtue of moderation:

neither too much nor too little, neither too strong nor too weak, neither too strenuous nor too apathetic. Finally, we must give each thing and each person their due. What do they need from us? What do we owe them? We must act justly.

Epictetus encourages us to cling to our high ideals and find noble examples to model ourselves on. Do what comes naturally to us, seek the good. Life will test you with hardship. It is a providential world: each time you reach down inside yourself and find the moral resources to respond appropriately to a situation, that resource will grow stronger and equip you for even more challenges in the future. We become progressively stronger and more integrated with ourselves. We experience the tranquility of the Stoic sage.ⁱⁱ

Practices of Resistance

Living according to nature

- The modern world has defined itself *against* nature. The current 'woke' ideology of our global elites actively *denies* nature with its anti-gender and transhumanist goals.
- Capitalism denatures everything by commodifying it.
- Stick with nature, with reality.
- Call things what they are. Not what we are falsely told they are.
- Get good at recognizing the organic purposes in everything, including yourself and your life.
- Discipline yourself to will what nature wills.
- Seek the natural good.
- Nature is a resource for values, not just commodities.
- The Stoic seizes on these values to cultivate their soul.
- With an emboldened soul, they are prepared to take on the large, impersonal world of a complex society and start setting it to rights.

- Buy proper shoes (you have to start somewhere).

Cultivate virtue

- Natural, harmonizing, power usually operates from the inside out.
- Become wiser, braver, more balanced, and more just.
- Act for a wiser, braver, more balanced, and just world.
- Start with yourself. Then your family and friends. Then your community.
- Virtue does not depend on the results, but on the intentions. No one can keep you from becoming morally stronger.
- If you steel yourself against the many subtle arts of persuasion and control, you establish a center of freedom.
- Take opposition and setbacks in your stride; all things can work for the good of your character.

i Listen to the song here: [Feeling Good – YouTube](#)

ii Pierre Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, translated by Michael Chase, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002 (original French edition, 1995), p. 129.

iii Gilbert Murray, *The Stoic Philosophy*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1915, pp 38-39.

iv As with Diogenes, I have opted for a non-literal but more flavorful translation that seeks to capture Epictetus' meaning: Epictetus, *The Art of Living: The Classic Manual on Virtue, Happiness, and Effectiveness*, translated and interpreted by Sharon Lebell, HarperSanFrancisco, 1995. This contains the whole of the *Enchiridion* as well as a few supplemental passages from *The Discourses*.

v The 'sage' was the Stoic ideal. However, no Stoic

philosopher ever claimed to be a sage; it was always an ideal goal for them. Maybe, just maybe, there had been a few sages. Maybe Socrates was a sage. Maybe Cato, who had opposed the rise of Julius Caesar, was a sage.

W.D. James's essays on Egalitarian Anti-Modernism have now been brought together in a 118-page pdf booklet, which is available to download for free [here](#). Winter Oak's complete collection of free books can be found [here](#).

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