

WEEK 14, 2019 • 1

THE EPOCH TIMES

ARTS &

TRADITION

ALL PHOTOS BY FOREEDGEFROST



*The Disappearing Art of Vanishing
Fore-Edge Painting... 4*

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THE EPOCH TIMES
TRUTH AND TRADITION

THE EPOCH TIMES



(Top) Anne (Isabelle Huppert) and her husband, Peter (Chris Noth), have grown apart over the years. (Above) Anne and her beloved son (Justice Smith). (Right) Anne and her son's girlfriend (Odessa Young).



THEATER REVIEW

WHEN THE MIND FAILS

JUDD HOLLANDER

NEW YORK—The turmoil of a confused, failing mind is examined in French playwright Florian Zeller’s “The Mother.” Translated by Christopher Hampton and having its U.S. premiere at the Atlantic Theater Company, the work is an attempt to view one woman’s disintegrating psyche from the inside.

Anne (Isabelle Huppert) is a middle-aged woman in an unhappy marriage. Once completely devoted to her two children, she has precious little to do now that they have grown up and moved away. She prefers to stay inside and brood about what she has lost rather than trying to get on with her life.

It doesn’t help that she and her husband, Peter (Chris Noth), have grown apart over the years, though exactly which of them is to blame for this is impossible to say.

On this day, Peter is preparing to leave for a four-day work-related seminar. Anne, however, is convinced that Peter is planning to dump her for a much younger woman. This accusation he vehemently denies.

Anne equates Peter’s pending departure with the fact that both her children have left her. She’s especially hurt by the departure of their son Michael (Justice Smith), and the fact that he’s now living with his girlfriend (Odessa Young). Anne is so jealous of this new woman in her son’s life that she refuses to say her name aloud correctly.

It’s not long before it becomes obvious that something is amiss. Anne’s actions and comments change from ones that initially seem funny, snide, or deliberately obtuse (such as her continually asking Peter how his day has been), to something bitter, mean-spirited, and at times, overtly sexual.

This effect is accomplished by the replay of certain scenes and dialogue, with the different characters altering their delivery accordingly. Anne changes the most during these moments, with a clear indication that she is suffering from some form of mental disorder.

“The Mother,” the second in a trilogy of plays by Zeller about family, offers some tantalizing possibilities, with an early sequence being especially funny. Noth and Huppert have excellent back-and-forth banter here, even though it soon becomes obvious that what we are seeing is anything but comedic.

While running through the entire work is the importance of Anne’s dignity—even as she quickly becomes unlikable for her actions—we soon realize that we are seeing pretty much the entire play through the prism of her mind. She reacts to situations as she perceives them, not necessarily as they actually are.

This premise is a major misstep by the show’s creative team. We are left to determine what, if anything, presented has some basis in fact. Without a clear fixed point to serve as a reference or anchor, it’s impossible to figure out who to believe on any

subject. As such, any opportunity to connect to the characters is lost. We are reduced to passive observers, with little chance to become emotionally invested in what those on stage are experiencing.

It doesn’t help that there is little character development in the play. The intention of the playwright may have been to keep the audience guessing as to what is real and what is not, but it would have been far better if some sort of backstory were included for these people. Everything that is offered is colored by Anne’s own personal filters, no matter how damaged they might be.

Huppert is excellent as a woman whose life is falling apart. Her descent was perhaps, at one point, of her own making, but she has long since lost any control over it.

Noth, basically relegated to a reactive character, comes off wonderfully in the early portion of the play as a befuddled husband, with a perfect, slow burn, as he tries to make sense of his wife’s actions.

Smith is fine as the son, although some insight as to the exact nature of Anne’s relationship with her son would have made the play much more effective. We can assume it included overprotection on her part to the point of obsession.

Young, the only actor who plays multiple roles in the show (such as the husband’s girlfriend, a nurse), is quite good. Her turn as Michael’s girlfriend is particularly striking. She’s initially a loving and caring person who turns into someone quite callous and cruel, all depending on how Anne happens to see her at any specific moment.

Trip Cullman’s direction is fine as far as it goes, but it can’t overcome the weaknesses in the script. Mark Wendland’s set is nicely antiseptic, and Ben Stanton’s harsh lighting works quite well. Yet their efforts only serve to further defuse the story rather than allow it to coalesce into anything more substantial.

It’s interesting to note that the play script subtiles the show as “a black farce.” This distinction, though, is not mentioned in the actual theater program or the press materials.

While “The Mother” touches on a subject the playwright obviously cares deeply about, the work refuses to let the audience get any closer than arm’s length and reduces a potentially powerful message to little more than an afterthought.

Judd Hollander is a reviewer for Stagebuzz.com and a member of the Drama Desk and the Outer Critics Circle.

‘The Mother’

Linda Gross Theater
336 W. 20th St.
New York

Closes
April 13

Running Time
1 hour, 30 minutes
(no intermission)

Tickets
866-811-4111 or
AtlanticTheater.org

ESSENCE OF CHINA



Qingming Festival: Tomb-Sweeping Day in Honor of Ancestors

‘Be pure and bright,’ the loyal official advised the king

DUOYU ZHONG & TANYA HARRISON

Many Chinese will be visiting the tombs of their ancestors on April 5 to pay their respects, as the Qingming Festival, also called Pure Bright Day or Tomb-Sweeping Day, falls on that day this year.

Qingming is an important traditional Chinese festival celebrated on the 15th day after the spring equinox. It’s not only a day for honoring one’s ancestors but also a time to celebrate spring.

The origin of the Qingming Festival can be traced back to a legend recorded in “Zuo Zhuan,” one of the earliest Chinese works of narrative history, which covers most of the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476 B.C.).

A Solemn, Stirring Story

As the legend goes, Chong Er (697–628 B.C.), once the crown prince of the state of Jin, was driven out of the state by Liji, who was then his father’s favorite concubine. During his 19-year exile, Chong Er lived in extreme poverty, with only a few faithful men to serve him. One of them was Jie Zitui.

One day, close to death from starvation, Chong Er lost consciousness. To save his life, Jie cut a piece of flesh from his own thigh and prepared a bowl of soup for his master.

Chong Er was deeply moved and promised to repay Jie in the future. Jie insisted he wanted no reward; his only wish was for Chong Er to become a king who had a pure and bright heart while governing the state of Jin, keeping it peaceful and orderly.

After Chong Er ascended the throne, he summoned the people who had stayed loyal to him and generously rewarded them. As the new king, he even rewarded the people

who had betrayed him but now supported him. However, he forgot Jie.

When Chong Er finally remembered Jie and his sacrifice, he was filled with regret. He sent a messenger to find Jie and invite him to the palace. But Jie had already moved with his mother deep into the forests of Mount Jin (in the northeast of China). The king personally went to the mountain to look for Jie but failed to find him.

When a minister suggested that they set fires on three sides of the mountain to force Jie to come out, Chong Er agreed. The fires raged for three days, but there was still no trace of Jie and his mother.

Jie was later found dead, leaning against a large willow tree. In a hole on the side of the half-burned tree, there was a note written with blood on a piece of cloth. It read:

Cutting off my own flesh to respectfully present to my monarch, offering loyalty with all of my heart.

Only wishing Your Majesty will always be pure and bright.

Dead under a willow tree and seen no more, Better than accompanying my monarch as a remonstrating minister.

Your Majesty, if you have me in your heart, Frequently reflect on your shortcomings

SL CHEN/SHUTTERSTOCK



THITI TAN/SHUTTERSTOCK

▲ Celebrating the Qingming Festival at Longshan Temple in Taipei City, Taiwan, on April 4, 2018.

when you think of me. Your minister in the underworld died with a clear conscience. Be diligent in governing the country so that purity and brightness will be renewed.

Tears rolled down Chong Er’s cheeks. He was so sad that he cried aloud. He tucked Jie’s note in a sleeve pocket and vowed to be a pure and bright king for his people.

King With a Righteous Heart

Jie was buried under the willow tree, and in his memory, Chong Er ordered that no fire or smoke be allowed on that day. That day was called Hanshi Day (Cold Food Day) because without fire, the people had to eat cold meals.

◀ The burning of offerings during the Qingming Festival.

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THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH and TRADITION

A NEWSPAPER GEORGE WASHINGTON WOULD READ

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Split-double fore-edge paintings on an 1863 edition of "The Works of William Shakespeare."



Martin Frost's fore-edge painting of London's river Thames flows along the edges of a circa-1880 edition of "The Book of the Thames."

CRAFTSMANSHIP

The Disappearing Art of Vanishing Fore-Edge Painting

An interview with fore-edge painter Martin Frost

LORRAINE FERRIER

"Wow! I didn't see that coming." For over 40 years, these have been the words that fore-edge painter Martin Frost has heard the most when people have seen his work for the first time, and it's a delight he never tires of hearing. Frost continues the critically endangered UK heritage craft of fore-edge painting, in particular vanishing fore-edge painting, a craft whereby images are painted on the fanned page edges of a book and are therefore hidden under the gilded tips of a page, or less commonly, under the marbled tips of a page. In the 2019 New Year Honors list, Frost was honored for his services in preserving the disappearing art of fore-edge painting and awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire, a national honor. Below, Frost shares his thoughts about the dying tradition of fore-edge painting and reveals how the hidden images can be seen.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Please tell us about your work. **MARTIN FROST:** Vanishing fore-edge painting is a form of book art for book decoration unlike any

“**Vanishing fore-edge painting is a form of book art for book decoration unlike any other.**”

Martin Frost, artist

work; it's fun, basically. For example, I do a lot of copies of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," basically on Bibles and prayer books, but each one is slightly different. That's the joy of hand-created work. You can put a bit of yourself into it, and you don't get that when you're producing work for the print trade—where you produce an image and then it's just repeated by the thousand. There's a lot less zest, as such, with that.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How did you come to be a fore-edge painter?

MR. FROST: Well, I've always been a painter and artist. My father was a professional painter. He was a member of The Pastel Society, so as I grew up, there was always painting going on, there was always drawing going on, and so there was no fear of art. It's what we did. I didn't really want to do painting; I wanted to do something a bit different, so actually my training was in theater. I produced set designs, stage designs, costumes, props, and backdrops. It was when I was working at Glyndebourne, the local opera house, that I met up with Don Noble, a colleague who was also doing stage work. Noble had been doing fore-edge painting for

decades, and he showed me what he did. And I thought, "I could do that; that's pretty straightforward. I'll have a go at that." And I did. I tried my hand, and offered them to one of the local bookshops, and they said, "That's not bad; we'll buy that."

Admittedly, it took me a few years to actually move away from my work in the theater, and I then moved into newspaper design, typography, and print, but all the time, I was still painting on the edges of books.

Back in the 1980s, there was a revival of fore-edge painting, so there was enough work for me to actually call myself a full-time professional fore-edge painter, and it's been like that ever since.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Can you give us an overview of the history of fore-edge painting?

MR. FROST: The earliest examples of fore-edge painting that we know of—now, that doesn't mean that they are the earliest, but the ones that we have evidence of—go back to about 1650 in London. They tended to be of armorial crests, coats of arms, lettering, and emblems. They weren't picturesque, but they did vanish under the edge gilding.

About a hundred years later, in the late 18th century, Edwards of Halifax, in Yorkshire, resurrected it. The Edwards family really commercialized vanishing fore-edge painting, and they did

some very nice work and some very nice bindings as well. They were primarily a bookbindery, but they were always interested in trying other things as well. They were quite the trailblazers, and their work is very collectible now. They produced picturesque vanishing paintings on the edges of books; they were views of houses, seascapes, and townscapes—the sort of paintings that were being hung on walls at the time.

The story of fore-edge painting is the story of a sort of wave formation: It comes in, it's popular, then it sort of drifts away, and then it is rediscovered a generation or so later. That's what happened in my time, really. Back in the 1980s, it was riding high. It was very popular.

It's not as popular now. We don't sell as many; we don't produce as many because it's a fashion thing, really. I started fore-edge painting around 1970 and have produced around 3,500 so far.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Can you tell us about the actual process of the fore-edge painting?

MR. FROST: The technique I use is to fan out the book, and then I put it into a press, and a clamp holds the book into position for me to do the painting.

The books don't always fan easily; sometimes if the paper is very stiff, they don't fan very well. If the paper is too thin, they over-fan, so there are optimum types of books to work on.

The painting is a little strange, actually. I use English watercolors because I'm a bit of a traditionalist. However, painting with English watercolors is usually a very wet process. First you put water down on the paper, then you add color afterward, and you get a lovely blur and blend. But you don't do that with fore-edge painting because if you add a lot of water onto the fan edge of the book, the pages will ripple and you end up with a very wobbly-looking book.

So it's a dry brush technique that I use, which is very unusual for English watercolors, but I find it's the technique that works for me.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Do you only paint on antique books?

MR. FROST: No one had thought about combining modern binding with fore-edge painting until I really got involved. I could see that the market was changing. The market for the old books was beginning to wither, and I thought the technique of vanishing fore-edge painting could be applied to modern books just as easily as old books, so long as you could involve the binder, who needs to remake the book and apply gold on the edges because modern books do not have gilded edges. It then became a necessity to find out how to bind and gild modern books in order to hide the painting. So fore-edge painting onto modern books is a lot more work than going out and buying an old leather book with the gold edges already on it and painting that.



My preference is to always create a new binding rather than use the old production binding. I like working in leather and gold, using the old artisan techniques, the old crafts of bookbinding, so I'm working within a tradition.

You can produce some very interesting modern work. I tend not to do that; I'm a bit of a traditionalist here. Some of the techniques that I use for putting a book back together again are the same methods bookbinders have used for the last 400 years.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Where did you learn the skills of bookbinding and gilding?

MR. FROST: You learn it on the job; there are no apprentices these days. The old bookbinding guilds have just about vanished, so I've had to learn the skills myself. But I've got a lot of friends who are bookbinders, who have been doing it for a long time, so I pick their brains mercilessly. The handcraft bookbinders, they're all basically like me: They're all people who love what they are doing and are invariably happy to pass on the information to others who show an interest.

I'm a one-stop craftsman now. I can take it from the printed pages straight up to the finished job, and I am on my own like that. I am the only one doing fore-edge painting, book gilding, gilding the pages, and binding as well.

This is handcraft work, which is a skill, and I've been doing it for over 40 years now, and it's taken me that time to get up to where I am now. It's not something that you just look at on YouTube and say, "Oh yeah, that's how you do that." It's something that you have to plod away at, and we've got to the stage now where people are appreciating that. In fact, I like to think that craft in the arts is enjoying a bit of a revival. People are saying, "Yes, we can get our iPhones. They're produced by the hundreds of thousands. They're amazing things, but they're not really human."

Now a book, a book by its very nature is a very tactile thing. It's a very enjoyable thing. You can pick it up, you can put it down, you can rifle through it, you can feel it, and you can even smell it if it's a leather-bound book. It's quite distinctive, and then if you can find a special secret surprise on it that has been handcrafted just for that book, it becomes something really special. And that, to my mind, is what craft is all about. These are one-offs. What you'll get with a fore-edge painting is something absolutely unique in your hands, and there will never be another one quite like it.

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.



Martin Frost's painting of Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper" is a popular choice for the edges of Bibles and prayer books.

other. I decorate books in a way that is invisible unless you know how to open the book properly to show the image. It's sort of very English; we English, we're great ones for doing things a bit strange. We like the odd, we like the quirky, we like the unusual, and vanishing fore-edge painting is certainly that. I'm a painter; I don't call myself an artist because an artist will create new images. I do a lot of images that I've acquired from elsewhere, so there's a fair amount of copywork going on. But I'm a painter, and I paint images, and I'm happiest when I've got a paintbrush in my hand. It's not



(Above) Vanishing fore-edge paintings are on all the edges of this family Bible; the images are revealed when the book is twisted, as in this photo.

(Above Left) Two chariots race each other in a scene from ancient Rome on the edge of "Cassell's Illustrated Universal History," 1887 edition.

LITERATURE

Great Books I Wouldn't Want to Be In

(And Some I Would!)

SUSANNAH PEARCE

If there's something book lovers like almost as much as reading books, it's talking about books. About the plot details. About the characters. About the meaning. We feel for and with the characters. We immerse ourselves in the details. We virtually put ourselves into the stories. Just for fun. I thought I would imagine what it would be like to be a character in the works of a selection by well-known authors. I imagined myself being an inhabitant in the world and story the author created, not always the protagonist, and not necessarily as myself. It turns out, I would not like to be in many of them as much as I enjoyed reading them.

What follows is my rating of each. The authors are listed chronologically by the dates of their birth.

Continued on Page 12

"Reading Woman" (portrait of artist's wife), after 1866, by Ivan Kramskoy.



PUBLIC DOMAIN



PUBLIC DOMAIN

Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936, English)

♦ I have the courage for this.

I'd have to be raised by wolves to not want to be in his books. Oh, wait. I'd probably enjoy it even more if I were raised by wolves, like Mowgli in "The Jungle Book"! Excitement, rites of passage, and becoming a grown-up are the advantages Kipling's characters enjoy in his jungle and sea adventures.

▲ Kipling offered loads of adventures. Poster for "The Jungle Book," circa 1900. The New York Public Library, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, American Book Posters.

Geoffrey Chaucer (circa 1343–1400, English)

♦ Count me in!

Basically, in "The Canterbury Tales," I get to go on a long pilgrimage on foot, to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, with a passel of mix-and-match mates, telling and listening to entertaining tales along the way. Accommodation in inns is assured, and the whole thing is entirely voluntary. What's not to like?

William Shakespeare (1564–1616, English)

♦ To be, or not to be in his works?

I'll go with his comedies, but pass on his tragedies. Who would wholly opt out of the chance to speak the brilliant dialogue penned by The Bard, maneuvering in and out of hilarious plans within plans? The beauty of it is, anyone with a penchant for the stage can be in them! Shakespeare wrote plays!

Jane Austen (1775–1817, English)

♦ My good opinion of the prospect has been easily gained.

On the liability side, I would almost certainly be a poor young woman with little prospect of a good marriage. But on the asset side, by Austen's reckoning, "poor" means that I can afford only one servant. Balls and walks in the English countryside are guaranteed. Best of all, my witty personality will result in my becoming the wife of a man in possession of a good fortune (and handsome, in the bargain).

Charles Dickens (1812–1870, English)

♦ Low expectations for this one.

What I don't understand is where the expression "A Dickens Christmas" came from. Haven't those who use the phrase read any of his masterful books? A true Dickens Christmas is sure to be populated with selfish, gruesome, underhanded, and unlikeable figures if it were anything like his books. I would definitely not like to enter a world like that.

Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë (1816–1855, 1818–1848, 1820–1849, English)

♦ I would always rather be happy than be in their books.

These gals can write! But they can write me out of their novels. Gothic romance and melodrama is not for everyone. The damp English weather may not have been conducive to good health and cheerfulness for these young ladies, but it did wonders for their creative imagination. As a potential character in their books, I opt for less of the moors.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Leo Tolstoy (1821–1881, 1828–1910, Russian)

♦ Nyet.

For space considerations, I'm lumping together these two Russian literary geniuses. Remembering the names and nicknames of hundreds of people and the faces they go with is not my forte. And I like to be happy. While I might learn great moral lessons, if I had to be in one of their books, I just might throw myself in front of a train.

Jules Verne (1828–1905, French)

♦ I'm sure to go far in his books.

Adventure on the cutting edge of future Steampunk technology with plenty of financial resources—and a servant—actually appeals to me. It would be like a science field trip to plunge the depths in Captain Nemo's Nautilus, or explore the depths of the Earth. Or a speed vacation, circumnavigating the globe in 80 days. I'd go a long way for inclusion in Verne's novels. Perhaps even 20,000 leagues.

Mark Twain (1835–1910, American)

♦ Any friend of Twain's is a friend of mine.

Not unlike the celebrated frog of Calaveras County, I'd jump at the chance to be in any of Mark Twain's books. (Though, I'd better be sure no one filled me with a handful of shot first.) Fun, adventure, and more than a

handful of sharp American wit fill his pages.

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900, English)

♦ I would earnestly enjoy being in some of his works.

Delightfully convoluted first-world problems, those lovely late Victorian fashions, and happy endings! Sounds like an ideal marriage to me! But please, I'd rather not be in "The Picture of Dorian Gray."

Kenneth Graham (1859–1932, English)

♦ Believe me, there would be nothing half so much worth doing as messing about in this book!

Although "Wind in the Willows" is a talking-animal book, it ought to be in every well-read adult's library. Friendship is the main thing here. There is plenty of lolling about in boats, picnicking, and visiting neighbors. The main turmoil comes from Mr. Toad's wild streak, which necessitates continual rescue by his faithful friends. Graham's idyllic English countryside is one I would inhabit with enthusiasm!

Jack London (1876–1916, American)

♦ I don't hear the call of his books.

I admit, the foremost reason I do not wish to be in London's books stems from my aversion to being cold. I could not bear to be cast in a scene in which the temperature is 50 degrees below zero. And you just can't trust this author to let your hands work well enough to strike a match to start a fire. I'm not going there.

P.G. Wodehouse (1881–1975, English)

♦ What ho! I'll go!

I would generally get to hobnob with the upper classes of the unrealistically idyllic 1930s England. His characters are endearing, and the hilarious predicaments he creates are thoroughly G-Rated. Yet, his stories are peppered with references enjoyed by the well-read and highly educated. I would let Wodehouse write me into anything!

Homer (circa 750–650 B.C., Greek)

♦ Just kill me first.

There are many unpleasant ways to die in "The Iliad" or "The Odyssey." I would consider myself lucky if I were killed off in the Trojan War in "The Iliad" rather than head home victorious, say no to drugs, resist the temptation of the siren song, avoid becoming a Cyclops snack, skirt a whirlpool while at the same time not being swallowed by the six-headed Scylla, to ultimately be drowned in a sea storm as punishment for eating a steak. Call me weak.

♦ Odysseus and the sirens, 2nd century A.D., mosaic at the Bardo Museum in Tunis, Tunisia.



PUBLIC DOMAIN

After the Trojan War, it took Odysseus 10 years to get home. Each of the adventures on his journey required that he master an aspect of his own character. A detail from "Odysseus und Polyphemus," 1896, Arnold Böcklin.

ODYSSEUS AND THE ENNEAGRAM

Finding the True Self Odysseus's Journey Part 1

An ancient personality tool, the enneagram

JAMES SALE

In this multipart series, "Finding the True Self," we will discuss nine types of personalities and their flaws, and show how Odysseus, through his adventures, overcame them to find his way back home.

The "Odyssey" is the most famous homecoming story in Western literature and mythology. It is justly famous because it is a work that one can truly say is divinely inspired: In its opening few lines, Homer invokes the Muse, whom he calls the "daughter of Zeus," the king of the gods, as the inspiration for the poem.

There is so much in the "Odyssey" to provoke the imagination and to touch the heart. For example, this isn't just a story about a man finding his way home to his wife and son, but the journey of mankind in search of our own souls. In other words, this is not just some physical adventure, but a deeply psychic, symbolic, and spiritual one too.

Indeed, it is quite early on in the tale when Polyphemus, the Cyclops, calls on his father,

the Sea God, Poseidon, to avenge his blindness, and Poseidon hears his son. Thus, it is that the very depths of the sea, symbolizing our raging emotions and deep subconscious, are pitted against Odysseus. He must contend with them if he is ever to get home and become himself; for home is where we are ourselves. Only at home can we relax.

What Is the Enneagram?

What is surprising, perhaps, is the discovery that the "Odyssey" is not just a story but also a heuristic, personality tool! The Enneagram (from the Greek, meaning nine points) is, among other things, a personality-typing device or symbol. It came to recent prominence in California in the 1950s. There is some dispute among experts as to the exact origins of the Enneagram, but according to Judith Searle in her book "The Literary Enneagram," the Enneagram was known as early as 2500 B.C. in Babylon or the Middle East, and that its symbol was familiar to the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras (circa 582–507 B.C.).

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Literature allows us to gain a breadth of experience that our own circumstances would not permit.



PUBLIC DOMAIN

ODYSSEUS AND THE ENNEAGRAM

Finding the True Self

Odysseus's Journey *Part 1*

Continued from Page 7

So this easily means that Homer could have been familiar with the Enneagram and incorporated it into his masterwork.

To take a more contemporary tool, the Myers-Briggs might be considered a rival of the Enneagram. But the Enneagram seems sourced with wisdom from a much deeper level in the human psyche. And once it surfaced in California, there was an explosion of books and literature on the topic, and Enneagram studies became mainstream and popular around the world.

What, then, is the Enneagram? At the risk of oversimplifying, the Enneagram is a personality tool that classifies all people into one of nine types. Although there are only nine, there is massive complexity within and across the types.

Before considering how this works in the "Odyssey," let's consider what these types are that each one of us corresponds to.

The Nine Types of People

Each of us is one number that has a specific self-image and positive motivation, and each has one "deadly" sin that tends to be his or her Achilles' heel, and which must be overcome to reach one's full potential.

It is important to understand that one can only be one number, and this doesn't change over one's lifetime. However, that said, the numbers are fluid as the Enneagram symbol suggests. Adjacent numbers (called "wings") may impact one's primary number, and there are other ways in which numbers interact with each other.

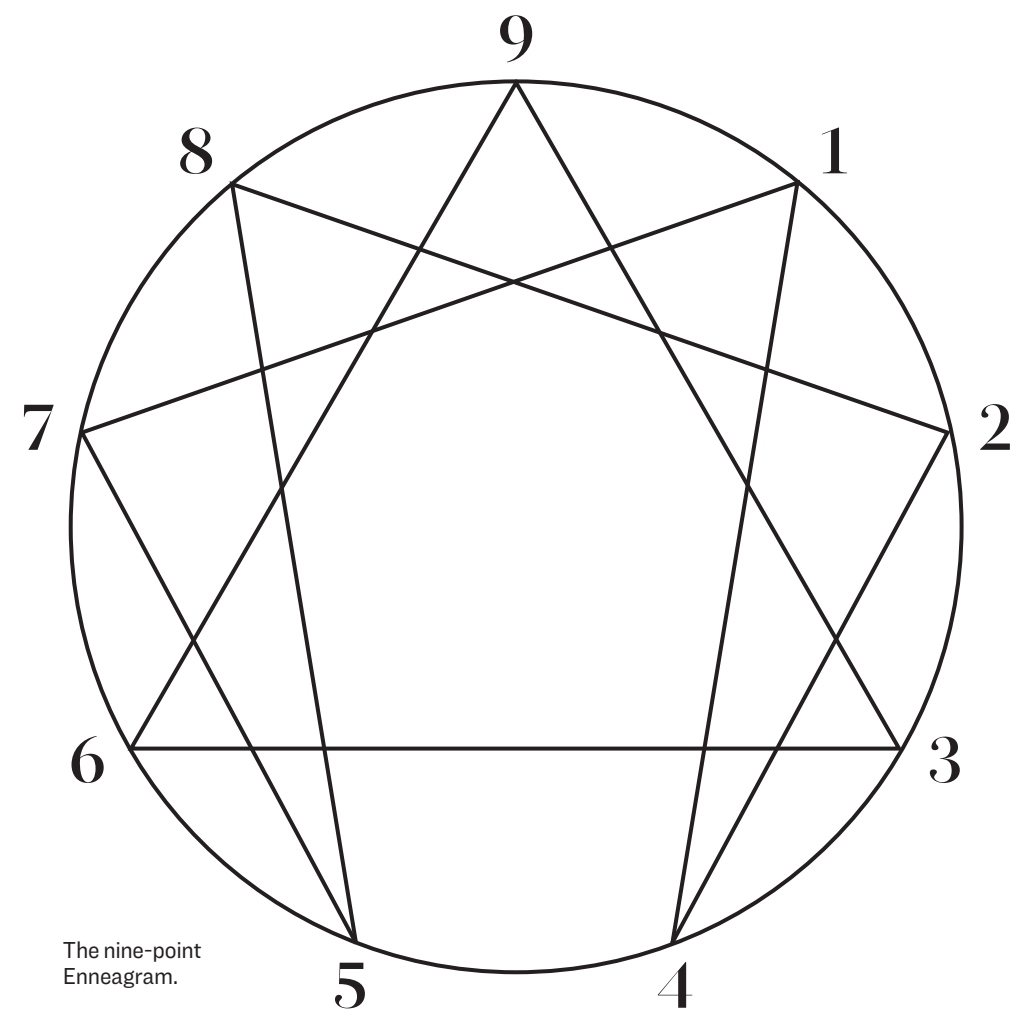
If we go around in order from One to Nine and describe each's essential characteristics, it may be possible to identify what one's Enneagram number is. Usually, most people identify with two or three numbers, and then it's a question of getting feedback to narrow the options down. I like the oral tradition of ascertaining where one is by careful sifting of the qualities of each number.

Starting Clockwise, With Ones

Number Ones believe "I am right" and have a basic desire to do good and so tend to be idealistic. Their deadly sin, often repressed, is anger. Because Ones are perfectionists, and so reformers, their anger is repressed for they know that if they were perfect, they wouldn't experience it!

At their best, Ones are good people wanting to improve the world. Of course, at their worst, they are self-righteous, arrogant, and highly judgmental of others.

The Enneagram is a personality tool that classifies all people into one of nine types.



The nine-point Enneagram.

The number Twos' self-image is "I help," and their basic desire is to feel love and to be a loving person, but their deadly sin, again often hidden even from themselves, is pride. This is surprising but arises because in their desire to help others, they often develop a sense of superiority over those they help. But for my help, what a mess so-and-so would be in.

Furthermore, while wishing to help others, they can deny that they need help themselves. This can, perversely, create exactly the opposite effect of the love that Twos intend.

At their best, Twos are generous helpers, loving, and openhearted friends; at their worst, they are flatterers, martyrs, and manipulators.

Number Threes' self-image is "I am successful," and their basic desire is to be valuable, or an effective person, but their deadly sin is deceit, and often they fool themselves about their true motives. This is because image is vitally important to Threes. So as they sculpt their own images to appear successful, they can easily end up believing their own hype!

Some writers on the Enneagram think that whole countries can be characterized by a dominant number. Threes' quest for success is often considered typically American.

At their best, they are motivating, goal-orientated achievers; at their worst, they are workaholics, and as Michael Goldberg says in his wonderful book "The 9 Ways of Working," "soulless hustlers."

Who Wants to Be Different?

Fours see themselves as "I am different," and their desire is to be unique or original people. Their deadly sin is envy because they can't help but look on others and compare themselves, and feel they come up short. Hence, they focus on authenticity and originality as a way of compensating for comparative deficiencies. Fours are often considered artistic types.

At their best, Fours are sensitive, aesthetic, and profound; at their worst, they tend to be depressive, self-absorbed, and spiteful.

Fives' self-image is "I see through," and their basic desire is to master, as in becoming a wise person. But their deadly sin is avarice: There is never enough knowledge, so they tend to hoard it. They have a fear of not knowing enough. If the Americans are generally expansive Threes, the Brits are sometimes considered introverted Fives. At their best, Fives are perceptive, objective, and wise; at their worst, they are cold, pedantic, and distant loners.

The Sixes' self-image is "I do my duty," and my basic desire is to be supportive and supported, and to be perceived as a loyal person. If Fives tend to be loners, then Sixes tend to be social and team workers. Their deadly sin is fear, especially of not being supported, or of being betrayed, which can create massive anxiety for them.

At their best, Sixes are committed, loyal, self-sacrificing team players; at their worst, they are suspicious, paranoid, and centers of deep negativity.

Sevens see themselves as "I am happy," to be satisfied is their desire, and to be a joyful, optimistic person. But their deadly sin is gluttony, or excess. They seemingly cannot get enough positive experiences and are always propelling themselves forward to find the next one. Because of their quest for excess, important things often never get completed, as they move to the next thing.

At their best, Sevens are innovative, inspirational, and big-picture people; at their worst, they are irresponsible, shallow, and underachievers.

Here's the Boss, at Eight

Eights perceive themselves as "I am strong," and their basic motivation is to protect themselves and to be a powerful person. Their deadly sin is lust, not just in a sexual sense but also as in a desire or lust for power. They want to know who's in control, and they want it to be them! Being weak is what they must avoid.

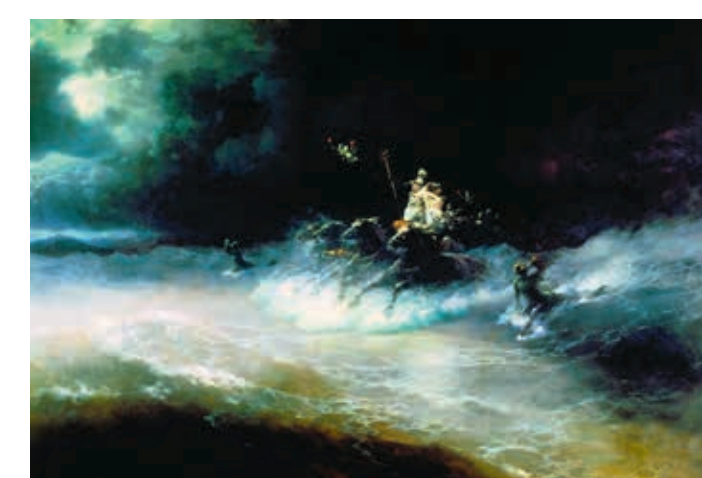
At their best, Eights are high-energy, take-charge, and responsible individuals; at their worst, they are confrontational, reckless, and



3



4



5

3. Narcissus shares some traits with number Four types, sometimes considered the artist type. "Narcissus Changed Into a Flower," 1771, by Nicolas-Bernard Lépicier.

4. Achilles, likely an Eight and certainly a man of strength, could be vindictive, as he was to the Trojan Hector, whose dead body he dragged behind his chariot. "The Triumph of Achilles," 1892, by Franz Matsch. A fresco on the upper level of the main hall of the Achilleion at Corfu, Greece.

5. Odysseus must confront Poseidon, who represents the very depths of Odysseus's soul. "Travel of Poseidon by Sea," 1894, by Ivan Aviazovsky.


vindictive. Finally, Nines see themselves as "I am content." They wish to experience wholeness and be a peaceful person, but their deadly sin is sloth, or what the ancients called acedia—the inability to take effective action. Part of this inactivity is due to their ability to see both sides of a position, and so to fail to choose either.

At their best, Nines are empathetic, reliable, and harmonious; at their worst, they are apathetic, listless, and stubborn.

Having read an overview, you might consider what number you think most represents your personality. And while you are thinking about it, our Part 2 of this series will begin to explore how these are revealed in Homer's "Odyssey."

James Sale is an English businessman and the creator of *Motivational Maps*, which operates in 14 countries. He has authored over 40 books from major international publishers, including Macmillan, Pearson, and Routledge, on management, education, and poetry. As a poet, he won first prize in the Society of Classical Poets' 2017 competition.





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Great Books I Wouldn't Want to Be In

(And Some I Would!)

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I'll skip the journey with the hobbit. Dust jacket for "The Hobbit," April 1937, by J.R.R. Tolkien. Bodleian Libraries.

J.R.R. Tolkien (1892–1973, English)

They can go without me.

I once went on a 22-mile hike over two days. That was enough for this not overly outdoorsy girl. These people (and hobbits, and dwarfs, and elves, and whatever else) were on their arduous, dangerous, Middle-earth saving journey for over six months—one way!



C.S. Lewis (1898–1963, English)

Did someone say wardrobe?

I'm not up for inclusion in his space trilogy, but I'd be willing to go to Narnia. Finding a secret passage to a mysterious, magical world filled with potential danger wouldn't be so bad, under the providential protection of a good, albeit not tame, lion. Who wouldn't want to encounter centaurs, winged horses, and all manner of mythical characters?

George Orwell (1903–1950, English)

I vote No.

Orwell is mostly known for dystopian political commentary. Dystopia is not my ideal place to hang my hat. Mostly, his books make you glad you don't live there, and that's the point. Despite my

reluctance to be in them, I do want to put in a good word for one of his more humorous and delightful novels, "Keep the Aspidochelone Flying." I still don't want to be in it, but I assure you, it has an uplifting, buoyant ending.

Evelyn Waugh (1903–1966, English)

A vile idea.

Waugh may be a great writer, but even in his masterful novel "Brideshead Revisited," one finds no character truly lovable. I get the feeling that even Waugh didn't like them. Who knows what he might do with me in one of his books!

Flannery O'Connor (1925–1964, American)

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

Weird. Southern Gothic. Grotesque. Be sure to read them all!

The 1812 Battle of Borodino is vividly depicted in Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace." "The Battle of Borodino," 1822, by Louis-François, Baron Lejeune, 1822. Versailles, Château et Trianon.

Why Live It If You Can Read About It?

It is interesting that at least half the great books I considered were stories I would not want to enter, but loved reading.

Literature allows us to gain a breadth of experience that our own circumstances would not permit and at very little expense to us. A good writer can show us the world. He or she can take us into battle, demand rigorous moral discrimination, and allow us to grapple with evil, unharmed. We then step back into our mundane lives better people than we were before.

For this, I am truly grateful to the gifted authors of the past.

Susannah Pearce has a master's degree in theology and writes from her home in South Carolina.

ESSENCE OF CHINA



(Left) Three generations of a Chinese family pay respects to their ancestors during the Qingming Festival, also known as the Tomb-Sweeping Festival. (Right) Kite flying is a popular activity during the traditional Chinese Qingming Festival, which falls on Friday, April 5, this year. An old Qingming custom involves writing down one's misfortunes on a kite, often shaped like a hawk, and cutting the string while the kite is flying high, which symbolizes letting troubles and illnesses be gone with the wind.

Qingming Festival: Tomb-Sweeping Day in Honor of Ancestors

'Be pure and bright,' the loyal official advised the king

Continued from Page 3

On the first anniversary of Jie's death, the king, with officials in attendance, visited Jie's tomb. To their surprise, they discovered that the large willow tree was alive and full of new branches with green leaves. It was as if Jie was greeting them and encouraging the king to remain pure and bright.

Seeing this, Chong Er felt happy and comforted. He remembered the word "qingming" from Jie's note and named the day Qingming Day (Pure Bright Day).

It was later recorded that Chong Er was indeed a pure and righteous king, and the people of Jin lived in peace and harmony under his reign.

From that time on, Qingming Day became an important occasion for Chinese people to

remember the sacrifices of their ancestors. Later, it became a festival, while Hanshi Day, which was originally on the eve of Qingming Day, was incorporated into the Qingming Festival.

Qingming Customs

Today, sweeping tombs and graves has remained the most important tradition of the Qingming Festival. People clear away debris and weeds and place offerings to honor their departed relatives. The offerings are usually rice wine, fruit, steamed buns, or the deceased's favorite foods.

Traditionally, as part of the ceremony, people burn incense and paper articles resembling special items like money or other treasures in hopes that the deceased would not lack any comforts in the afterlife. Today,

Celebrating spring has become an important part of the festival.

flowers are often used instead. Prayers are respectfully expressed as well.

In some regions, people place willow branches on their gates and front doors. It's believed that, if one is kind and upright, the branches drive away evil spirits and invite heavenly blessings of longevity.

Celebrating spring has become an important part of the festival. Many people enjoy hikes and family outings on this occasion. Families often combine their outings with a visit to the tombs or graves of their ancestors.

Kite flying is also popular, all day and into the night. At night, people tie small, colorful lanterns to the kites so that they look like twinkling stars in the sky. Cutting the string and setting the kite free is believed to bring healing and good luck.