



EPISTEMOLOGICAL HEMERALOPIA

In response to a friend.

by Pierre Beaudry, July 27, 2015



INTRODUCTION

There is, in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, a stunning medical condition which is common to a lot of intelligent people on the planet, and which I would call night-blindness, or *epistemological hemeralopia*. This disease of the mind is not congenital like the physical condition is, and can be treated and cured simply by adjusting the projection of light inside of Plato's Cave.

Hemeralopia is a condition under which the patient, who is capable of seeing very clearly during the day, is incapable of seeing at night. *Epistemological hemeralopia* reappears periodically and becomes invasive whenever the world has to go through an axiomatic crisis as was the case with the Renaissance of Nicholas of Cusa, and as it is also the case with the Renaissance of Lyndon LaRouche, today. What happens in such a situation is that a certain percentage of the intelligent people of the planet see very clearly when everything goes well, but, when things go bad, they become completely blind as the darkness of the tempest falls upon them.

It is only when they begin to see how the light signals are being transmitted in the middle of the storm and throughout Plato's Cave that they are able to see properly in the dark. Therefore, from a clinical standpoint, it is essential to remember how Confucius identified the measure of the situation in his own time, when he said:

"I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not walked in:-The knowing go beyond it and the stupid do not come up to it. I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not understood: - The men of talents and virtue go beyond it, and the worthless do not

come up to it.” (Confucius, [THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN](#), translated by James Legge.)

1. THE SELF-DESTRUCTION OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY

“You know, I'm just going to put something on the table which I've been thinking about for about 20 years, which is this question of -- I've written about it to myself, but the point is this discovery of principle: In Shakespeare's *Lear*, he leaves an opening, a critical opening, when Lear comes off the heath, after the storm; he goes into a hovel and he sees Edgar dressed as the Bedlam, Tom O'Bedlam. And he gets a moment of total lucidity, and says: ‘You know, I should have been a better king.’

“I didn't know this was going on. Then his last three plays are a total new genre which he creates on the basis of that discovery, which is that kings are subject to much higher principles. And in each of the plays, the king completely screwed up, completely going to destroy the next generation because of tradition. And the ending of the *Winter's Tale*, particularly, and *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, are a completely new genre. And what you're saying just provoked that in me; it reminded me of that.”

Gerry Rose, *NEC meeting*, Tuesday 21 July, 2015.

What is happening to the British Monarchy? In the wake of the revelations published in the July 18, 2015 issue of *The Sun*, there began the end of the British Monarchy. You, my intelligent reader, might have examined this piece of news with shocking surprise and might have had the immediate reflex: “This poor queen was only six years of age at the time; she didn't know what she was doing. Attributing any significance whatsoever to these childish gestures is not only unjust, but also dishonest.” Indeed, if the Queen were not who she is and if the matter were simply an inside joke within the family playing on the lawn in Balmoral, I would say, you are right. But, that is not the case. When you deal with historical truth, it is precisely such “shocking news revelations” which make history.

Then, *The London Guardian* picked up the news and ran this devastating headline on the day after: “*Royals Told: Open Archives on Family Ties to Nazi Regime.*” One day after, the cat was out of the bag and the story had a life of its own. Every newspaper in Great Britain had to say something about it. Now, you can no longer stop the truth from coming out. What could nowhere be seen was everywhere visible.

Now, this is where the intelligent people tend to go blind, because everything they believe in begins to be shattered and the axioms that made them see clearly during the day have been destroyed. Some people will say: “How could I have been such an idiot?” But, others will remark: “Nobody knew that Hitler was going to be such a monster, before the war, and especially not in 1933.” And that is how the intelligent people of the world go blind.



The important thing to pay attention to, here, is not the truth of the matter but the intention. The question to ask is not whether the Queen is a Nazi or not. The relevant question is the question of timing and the intention behind the timing. *Are the revelations of The Sun relevant for history? Why did The Sun come out with that story at this time? What was the intention behind that action?*

We may never know the precise reason why this decision of *The Sun* was taken, but the nature of what that action means by its intention should be obvious to everyone. This is the signal that a big faction fight has begun over the Monarchy in Great Britain, which reflects the beginning of the end of that institution.

Figure 1 Cover story of the Sun, July 18, 2015. See EIR, July 24, 2015: “[Depose the Nazi Queen.](#)”

When the British Nazi King, Edward VIII, abdicated on December 12, 1936, Hitler changed his plans about first attacking Russia. He realized he could not do it without the support of the British Empire. It was the abdication of Edward VIII which decided Hitler to attack France and Britain instead. And, when Hitler heard the news of Edward’s abdication, he said to Albert Speer: “I am certain through him permanent friendly relations could have been achieved. If he

had stayed, everything would have been different. His abdication was a severe loss for us." (Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, New York: Macmillan, 1970, p. 118)

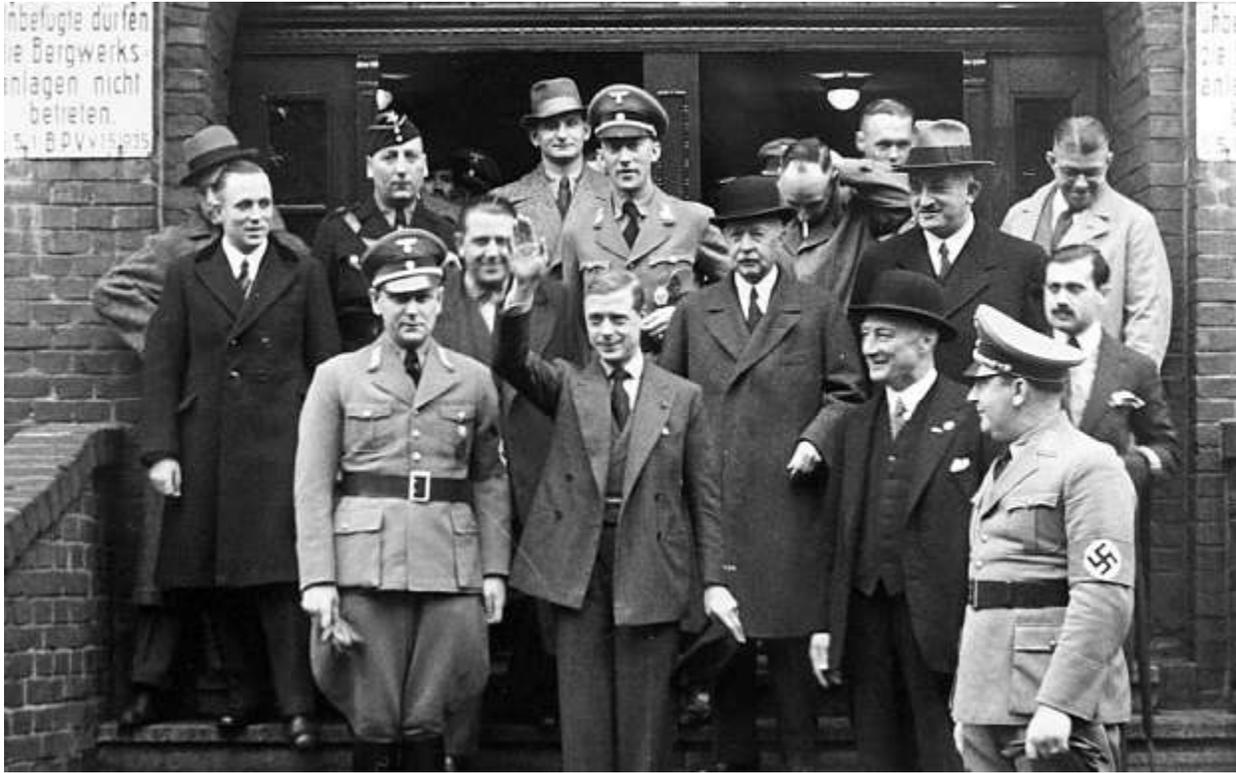


Figure 2 The Duke of Windsor visiting a mine in the Lower Rhine area in 1937. ([Morgan Evans Antique Auctions/Wales Daily Post](#))

Edward VIII was King of the United Kingdom for only one year (January 1936-December 1936) before he abdicated and, then, became known as the Duke of Windsor. Although the history books show that Edward abdicated because of his marriage with Wallis Simpson, the true reason was his Nazi affiliation. In fact, Edward was not a true Windsor; he was a Saxe-Coburg and Gotha Habsburg and spoke German before he even babbled English. Recently declassified documents reveal that both the Duke and the Duchess were spying for the benefit of Hitler prior and during WWII, and that the Duke advised Hitler to bomb London in order to induce panic in the population, force the Churchill government out, and replace King George VI by restoring his highness on the Throne of Great Britain as an official Nazi King. (See Philip Ziegler, *King Edward VIII: The Official biography*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1991.)



Figure 3 Duke and Duchess of Windsor meeting with Hitler in Munich in October 1937, less than two years before WWII began.

2. SHAKESPEARE’S KING LEAR AND THE CURE FOR EPISTEMOLOGICAL BLINDNESS.

About twenty years ago, Gerry Rose wrote a very insightful ten-page report entitled *Beyond Tragedy: The Late Shakespeare*, in which he identified the implications of what the last plays represent for the “redemption of kings by higher lawfulness.” This is what I have termed the mental condition of *epistemological hemeralopia*. Here is how Gerry stated the matter:

“It is well known to everyone who has studied great geniuses that they all have what is known as a “late phase,” if they happen to live long enough. In this phase of their creative life they have total mastery of their creative method and can call it up at will. Yet

more importantly they can make intelligible the actual method they have used and the issue they are focused on is in fact creativity per se.” (Gerry Rose, *Beyond Tragedy: The Late Shakespeare*.)

The point that Gerry was making is that a great genius is capable of seizing a very fleeting moment, an apparently insignificant moment that other intelligent people are incapable of seeing as crucial, because their visions have been darkened by stormy tendencies. Why is it that after a long period of lucidity during normal times we suddenly become blind in the middle of the storms of life? Is it because we have been conditioned so much with the practicalities of life that we can no longer recognize the signs of the creative process? Take the case of Shakespeare for example, why is it that we fail to understand the performative artistic function of his play within the play, such as the mousetrap play in *Hamlet* or the function of light in Leonardo da Vinci’s *The Virgin of the Rocks*?

What we fail to understand is the replication within the play itself of the creative process. It is not only a reflection of it; it is also the action of change within it that is forced upon us. Under such conditions, the artist imposes a new notion of time, which goes into an inversion; a time function by means of which the unity of theatrical space-time breaks down, axiomatically, and causes a creative change by the inversion of the mind of the spectator. In other words, suddenly, normal chronological time no longer functions and a sort of blind spot moment takes over. The time of the play is no longer linear and practical; it provokes an interruption of all of our habits. It is as if, suddenly, time corresponded only to the duration it takes to be affected and changed by it, as if the subject of the play had become the production of that change, itself. As Gerry put it about Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*:

“In a very provocative essay by Northrop Frye, he makes a very convincing case that the character of Prospero is Shakespeare, and that the play is about the very process of how an artist creates a play. In calling-up the Aerial spirits to Prospero’s aid, it is very reminiscent of Shelley’s defense of Poetry in which the artist is calling on the power that illuminates the universe and elements to redeem mankind.” (Gerry Rose, *Beyond Tragedy: The Late Shakespeare*.)

This is not simply a device, some cheap trick. This is a unique moment of passion in which the author invites the spectator to participate in his own creative process. For example, the character Prospero puts on a masque, not for the benefit of Ferdinand and Miranda, but for the intention of the spectator who is made to pay attention more to the way in which he puts it on, rather than paying attention to what the masque says. It’s the “how,” not the “what” that Shakespeare is inviting you to participate into. And the “how,” he dedicates only to those who came to watch the play. As Prospero said to Ariel:

“Go make thyself a nymph o’ th’ sea:
Be subject to no sight but mine, invisible

To every eyeball else.” (Tempest I, ii., 301-303)

Northrop Frye captured well that unique moment of the creative process when he made the following insightful remark:

“Why such an elaborate get-up if nobody’s to see him except Prospero? We’re forgetting ourselves in the audience, watching both Shakespeare’s play and Prospero working out the action of the play. It’s not uncommon for a play to depict one play in rehearsal and then have another story move across it, as in Pirandello’s *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Devices of the same general type were used in Shakespeare’s day too: take a look at Beaumont and Fletcher’s Knight of the Burning Pestle sometime. But, for one play to be consistently both process and product is surely very unusual. What would have given Shakespeare the idea for such a play?” (Northrop Frye, [*Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*](#), Fitzhenry & Whiteside, Yale University Press, 1986, p. 173)

Whatever may be the action or the circumstance, the intention behind such a performative action is to turn the spectator into a creative individual. That is why any performative action is a provocative creative action that changes people by time reversal. And, that’s where the blindness is located. It is a true blindness, when understood through the theatrical setting of Plato’s Cave. However, it is very unfortunate that modern authors such as James Joyce, or Pirandello, used that process as a mere device to show the paralysis of the mind and the failure of the creative process.

On the contrary, that’s the idea by means of which, even in the middle of a storm, the genius playwright is able to show how an apparently insignificant interference, such as Elizabeth’s Nazi salute, can cause an impact which can change world history. As Gerry showed, the quality that is required is to be able to do the impossible from the vantage point of goodness; because goodness is what drives genius to be constantly concerned with investigating what causes the degradation of mankind.

As Gerry noted about the study of Northrop Frye, the character of Prospero is Shakespeare himself, and the play, *The Tempest*, is about the creative process itself. This is absolutely true, because if you locate the thinking process of the King as the creative process of Shakespeare, you will understand why the most lucid parts of King Lear dialogues are found in the middle of the tempest and its immediate aftermath.

The concept of a genius stricken with sorrow and rage is a powerful idea for what happens to the mind when, after having understood so clearly the truth of history and after having lived a full life of creative insights to make it happen; such a king (or queen) becomes resentful of what others cannot replicate after he’s gone. However, when such a mind turns to blindness, when the darkness of an axiomatic crisis falls upon him, then, one must summon all of one’s wits to discover the principle of darkness which has taken hold of his genius.

The irony is that it is at the height of his madness that Lear appears to be the most reasonable to the spectator, but not to himself. It is in the middle of Lear's darkness that the spectator begins to see why this is happening to him. Because it is when he begins to realize how the storm is like his own mind. For example, in the middle of the storm, Lear attempts to tear himself away from his blinding moment:

*“Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! Spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters.
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, called you children.
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
your horrible pleasure. Here I stand your slave,
a poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.
But yet I call you servile ministers,
that will with two pernicious daughters join
your high-engendered battles ‘gainst a head
so old and white as this. Oho! ‘Tis foul.”*

(King Lear, 3.2.14-24)



Figure 4 “Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! Rage blow!” (King Lear, 3.2.1) Benjamin West, 1788.

For an old man to be consumed by the fear of dying without having distributed properly his inheritance, is it simply ill-conceived vanity? In his lack of self-consciousness, Lear will merely become a choleric old man who seeks to be flattered by his surroundings and loved by his daughters, unless something else grips his mind; something like the [in]tention of music. As Lyn put it:

“Music is not music per se; music is a state of the human mind which finds its expression in new forms, insight into new forms, higher forms of insight into the nature of the human species, and in the progress of the human species. You cannot mechanically produce decent music; you have to have an inspiration. You have to envelop it internally, and let it envelop you. And when it envelops you, then you begin to understand yourself.

“That’s what you mean by the great performers. They were not rehearsing notes; they were creating an order in which the music flows, which is not the sound—it’s the tension. The tension, not the sound. And anyone who performs competently in music, knows that. It’s the tension which makes it. That’s what Furtwängler did with the 9th Symphony of Schubert—the tension.” (Lyndon LaRouche, [**MUSIC IS NOT NOTES, IT’S THE \[IN\]TENSION**](#), EIR, July 24, 2015, p. 24.)

That’s what Lyn calls the placement of the voice or of the mind between the notes. When you focus on the intervals between the notes instead of the notes in themselves, what you get is an unresolved tension, a dissonance, in which you are looking for what the next note will be that will resolve it. It is the attention to the indeterminacy of those intervals which lead you to place the next note in the right place at the right time. And, the point is that, depending on what set of intervals you are using, you reach a point where no other note will do, as the next note, and you must be able to locate the right set of intervals in a series in order to achieve what note you want to change into and determine the effect you want to achieve by doing that. And, Lyn added this wonderful performative insight:

“You have to uplift people, inspire them, which is the function of Classical music. But the sound is not the thing; it’s the tension, not the sound. People can try to practice the thing in terms of the sound, and it doesn’t work. It’s the tension between the spaces of the sounds; between the notes. It’s a common expression: “Music lies between the notes.” Now, what does it lie there for? It lies in the area of tension between the notes, and the role of the tension is what determines the quality of the music. It’s the inspiration of a state of mind which is not based on sound, but is based on the tension which may be associated with sound.

“It is that tension which makes the difference between an animal, a papier-mâché project, and a human being. It is the tension that lies between the cracks of the notes. And it is that tension, if you listen very carefully—a musician can do this, who’s experienced. Look between the notes in Furtwängler’s work, especially the opening of the first part [of Schubert’s 9th Symphony], and look at how he paces the stress in the passage of the

notes, between the passage of the notes. That's where the location of creative musical insight comes into obvious reality. The achievement of most of the greatest musicians, composers, is to rely on that principle." (Lyndon LaRouche, [**MUSIC IS NOT NOTES, IT'S THE \[IN\]TENSION**](#), EIR, July 24, 2015, p. 25)

Such is the condition under which axiomatic transformations of history also take place, through a higher law which has the power to depose Kings. It is never a matter of interpreting history; it is a matter of changing history in the middle of a storm by causing an [in]tention for the future to be placed at the right place and timed at the right time, as Lyn demonstrated performatively.

The key is located in the tension of that discovery of a stormy series of in-betweennesses, where a ray of light may correct the *epistemological hemeralopia* of your mind. What's important is the change that takes place between the unresolved [in]tention and the resolution of the placement of the voice into something new that comes from the future. When you achieve that, then, you know how the actions to be taken immediately have to be taken. And, the British getting rid of their Nazi Monarchy might just do it in the same way this coming week.

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