Lost In Matter
(Bible For The Sane)

Introduction

This book is not written for the present! Publishing it is merely a way of keeping it for the future. This fact itself that in our new civilization, the best way to safely preserve something, is not to hide it somewhere, rather spread it out into the big garbage bin of common stupidities, is a deep contradiction. And this book is about the deep contradictions.

Contradictions are the roots of questions and questions are the roots of understandings. The biggest contradiction of civilization is that it tries to hide the contradictions. But civilization itself is the result of understandings. So civilization is fundamentally suicidal. To recognize some consequences of this, and emphasize only those as the obvious problems with civilization is not understanding at all. Pointing at the population explosion, environment depletion increasing inequalities, military expenditures, globalization, all merely help the main tendency of hiding the contradiction. The skeptical individual rejects the leftist social messages by simply realizing that there is no way to fight the main tendency. This sympathizer, but bitter critic of the naïve leftist is potentially ripe for real understanding, but through its actions is also committed to fail.

A perfect example of such bitter critic was my grandfather. A poor jewish tailor from Transylvania who moved to Budapest and survived the second world war. When the Russians freed Hungary. the surviving jews became a big bulk of the new communists including my parents. Even my grandmother was filled with the new enthusiasm of building a better future. She didn't become a party member, but gave lectures for housewives. My grandfather shouted out at a meeting, "You are all fools! There were always number ones and number twos, and there always will be!" After the 1956 revolution when the lies behind the party trials came out to the open, my parents lost their faith but still remained in the party.

At Christmas 1955, in the kindergarten for the inner ministry situated in a beautiful villa in Lendvay street, we all got our first oranges. Some gypsy kids were glued to the fence and asked us what the "golden apples" are. I handed them mine, but my kindergarten teacher auntie Tchisy stopped me. I was puzzled and explained that good communists must share with the poor. In the afternoon she talked to my father. They were laughing, picked me up and kissed me. I was everybody's favorite. They called me the champion of truth. I was watching the world watch me.

The naïve seek for truth soon turned against me in school. My first grade teacher auntie Etelka was sticky taping the mouth of those kids who kept talking. I never got taped but once was put in the corner in front of a big table of the Hungarian alphabet. I was bored and looking at the alphabet, I realized that it is illogical, because the accent is also used to make different sounds like a, á, but also to express the length at other sounds like o, ó. So, I "fixed up" the table by changing and adding new letters. When Miss Etelka saw how I ruined the table, she was furious, she took me to the principal, the feared Laszlo Bellai. Usually he beat the kids with a floor panel, but I was still too small and got only a note in my message book. I was crying after school and afraid to go home. Miss Etelka took me to her home just around the corner where she wrote a poem for me to present it with the note and express my apology. My father laughed so much after hearing the poem that he didn't even punish me.

In third and fourth grade I got a teacher who was the first big influence on my personality. His name was Gyuriáts, but he was called "stick arm", because he used a chair leg to beat the kids which he hid under his sleeve. He usually sent the kid to the toilet and followed him later with the stick. I was never a recipient of this illegal

punishment. By the way, the parents always gave permission to use the stick. I particularly remember this one kid called Gadányi, whose father was the head of a paper factory and asked Gyuriáts to punish his son after he found the kid smoking at home. This punishment was in the classroom and we all laughed especially when the teacher wrote up on the blackboard, “The score from now on: 3 hits for cigarettes, 4 for cigar, 5 for pipes.” This same teacher took the kids for excursions every weekend, tutor them in his home at Retek street. I was good at grammar and so I tutored the others. His was the first home where I saw a big cross on the wall and when I asked about it, he and his beautiful wife talked about Jesus. They were baking waffles to supplement their income. The smell of the different flavors are still with me. Gyuriáts got a gall bladder stone removed and showed us the big yellow pebble.

Unfortunately, at grade five and six, I got an idiot math teacher who convinced me that I’m stupid for math. Once, she asked me what’s the name of the line connecting two points of a circle, and when I didn’t know it, she hit my head with those musical hammers that whistle and sang to it, “Chord, chord, chord.”. I spent the afternoons at a childcare in the home of an ex-teacher, from our school. She was called I-Mama (E-Mama), because her name was Irene. She was supposed to come from some royal line and was married to a bitter but very smart engineer Zoltán Magyari. They had a son called also Zoltán, who was accidentally a classmate of my older brother in high school, and a daughter called Eva. My idiotic math teacher, Mrs Laszlo was tutoring the kids at I-Mama’s place, because they were friends from the time I-Mama was teaching. The elementary math text books of Hungary were written by my principal Bellai. One day, I was showing the homeworks I did to Mr Magyari who often helped out. When he looked at my math book, he said, “What kind of idiot wrote this book?”, and I told it was my principal. Mr Magyari explained me that learning the framed rules will not help and I should rather remember examples with numbers.

Even in summer holidays I spent weeks at I-Mama’s resort at the Danube. The boys had to shower naked every night in the backyard in front of the others. Once I hid in a tree with a boy and watched the girls shower. These “dark ages” before my first “rebirth” are actually more vivid in my memory than all the things later. My first secret infatuation was with a girl called Ana Vadas in grade three. My classmates found out somehow about this and teased me because my name rhymed with hers. I-Mama’s daughter Eva was the second infatuation who I watched shower from the tree.

I was a pretty average student, so I was happy when the school announced that it will provide continuing four years education for the students. This was a tendency because there were not enough high schools and these so called twelve grade schools were the only solution for the boom generation. But in our case the ministry didn’t allow the transition, so all students had to find a high school in a few weeks. Coincidentally, nearby an old girl high school got only the permission from the ministry in the last moment to open a mixed special math class. My mother convinced me to apply. I was accepted not because of my results or knowledge at the interview, but because they hadn’t enough applicants.

So I accidentally slipped into a special math class and this was the single determining factor of my whole life. After the mentioned Gyuriáts, here I met the second teacher in my life, Laszlo Banhegyi, who I regard as the biggest help in finding my true personality. The first three months of high school was a continuous explosion and this was my first rebirth I mentioned above. I won the competition of the mathematical journal by the end of the year. This all could only happen because of who Banhegyi was. He understood perfectly what mathematics is all about and avoided all pretence of superiority. Some of us soon surpassed his knowledge and he was happy about this. After I realized that I can learn anything in mathematics, I thought that I can understand the world too. The all girl school with the less than fifteen of us boys in the math class was a very weird experience. In the first day, an older class greeted us. One of the girls was a later famous singer Zsuzsa Konc. Next

to her, stood a sad and extremely beautiful girl with whom I fell in love at once. I followed her secretly in the first weeks and found out that she had an affair with an old German teacher. This was the last dark memory from the time before my rebirth in mathematics.

The high school had an excellent spirit and very high level in all subjects. I was admitted to university without an entry exam due to the national competitions that I won. I hated university as much as I loved high school. I took up philosophy as second subject and there the stupidity was even worse. After the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the mood at the philosophy department became even worse. Half of the teachers were in Yugoslavia at a conference and signed a protest against the occupation, so when they returned, were all fired. Thus, all the second grade lecturers got instant promotions.

One night my old high school friend came over, we were sitting for a whole night and contemplated how bad things are. He was sure that the Russians will eventually occupy Yugoslavia too and said that we should escape through there while it's still possible. The decision was made and through incredible adventures in trains with goats and through villages at the border we arrived in Italy. I spent half a year in Rome and arrived in the US at Christmas of '69. The three years I spent in the States could fill a book, but the most important event was the night I dropped my first acid and experienced my second rebirth. Since then I merely followed and walked in the same direction.

Marriages, children, living on a farm, leaving Hungary again, and now living in Sydney are all unimportant details. The important thing is to take my hand and follow the arguments that will show why and how we humans failed. A very pessimistic world view is what I offer. If you are happy, you should close this book right now. If you are unhappy then this book will make you even more so, but will also give you a bitter sweet resolution.

Chapter 1 – The purpose of life is death.

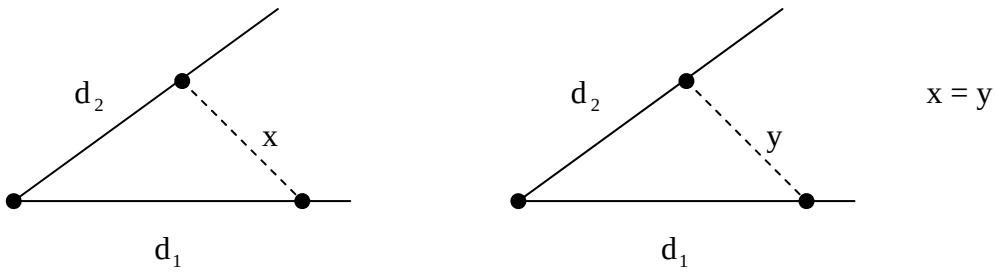
We might think that the sharpest distinction between people is whether they believe in their own existence after death or not. After all, those who don't, must regard their whole life as the purpose itself, and thus should act more selfishly than those who only live to prepare for something beyond. This of course is false! In fact, those who deny the afterlife usually carry a more concerned life than those who "believe". The root of this contradiction is the seemingly wider problem with belief as such. To claim a belief in anything, is empty opinion about ourselves. Only our actions can verify a belief. In other words, the beliefs are regulating our actions while our opinions or stated beliefs are merely behaviors, reactions to questions. But this particular question is still specific in the sense that it polarizes this wider problem and makes the falseness of our beliefs black and white. A non believer would even state it simpler and say that those who claim to believe in after life, actually lie not only to the world, but to themselves too. So, are we creatures populating this planet in a continuous mass hysteria, are we common liars, or is there a deeper meaning to the false beliefs. To slice this knot, we have to ask two new questions. The first is whether there is anything beyond life, but now not with the sense of beyond as after that is in time, but rather as beneath, that is in space. The second is whether there is anything beyond matter at all. With these two questions, we not only brought space, time and matter into the picture, but also placed life in a new overemphasized role. The earlier arguments about false beliefs, now again apply with even more drastic consequences. Now its not only falsely claimed beliefs about ourselves, but falsely verbalized statements, that can cause confusion. The question of what's beyond matter for example leads to the oldest splitting of philosophies into idealism and materialism. Hegel, the greatest classical philosopher answered this problem correctly, by saying that there is no materialist philosophy at all, because every

thought itself is an act of idealism. So by his view the table turned and not the believers are in false self delusion, but the non believers. But that couldn't make the false believers correct, rather split the whole in three, namely the false materialist, the false idealist and the true idealists. More worrying would be then that while the false idealists are people acting without real beliefs but claiming such, the materialists are merely falsely claiming a view but still could act in both ways. So then actually there should be two kinds of materialists too. As stupid as all this sounds, it still has some meaning. The communist materialists were obviously the "good" materialists, who believe by their actions in things beyond matter, but were afraid to go all the way to idealism. The real irony is not that Marx was a student of Hegel, rather that this lead to a survival of Hegel in the communist materialism. Today, a linguistic oversimplification claims the whole problem meaningless and says, "Come on people, it's all bullshit! If you say there is something beyond matter, then I can say that that is matter too! We are back to the, I say tomato, you say tomato. It's all pointless.".

To take out the edge of the materialism-idealism sword this way, is the worst result of the general tendency I claimed above about hiding the problems. It's not accidental that I say a linguist would do this de-philosophizing, because it is in the formal way of looking at statements where the old differences collapse. This new "philosophy" is actually called Formalism. In effect it is the new age stupidity that spreads right now and tries to kill the problematic approach. What I said above, that this de-problematizing tendency is inherently part of civilization, so then Formalism is actually ancient. This realization is vital! Even mathematical Formalism is ancient!

For a while I believed in sharp changes towards Formalism, especially Gauss seemed like a main culprit, but then I compared him with Euler and then him with Descartes, further and further back and finally I realized that already Euclid was a full blown Formalist. This will be a very useful detour:

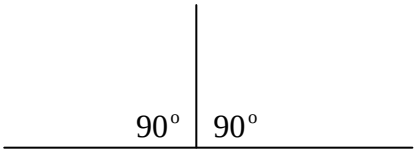
The two basic concepts of geometry is the point and the distance. The distance of course, is meant on a straight line, so hidden straightness is a third basic concept too. In fact, the longer and longer distances continuing each other actually form an infinite half line, or if we go in both directions a full infinite line. What makes a line straight is hard to tell but the distances help in reverse too, because they can be added into new distances and they become the shortest if they are on one single line. So the old saying that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, is perfectly describing the situation but in a sense, it also hides the problem between distance and straightness. It's like the egg and the chicken problem. Which should be first, distance or straightness? They can only be regarded together. In space, the lines can go in all directions completely avoiding each other. In a plane however, two lines usually cross in a single point except if the two lines are parallel. This special parallel situation can be seen by three ways: First, of course is the special situation itself that the two lines never cross in either direction. A second more measurable way would be to see that the distance between the lines remain the same. Finally, a third way is to cross the two lines with a third one and see that the angles they depart from this crossing line, are the same. This last approach is the most involved because we would have to make precise sense of the angles being the same. This however is fairly easy through distances. Indeed, two angles are the same if the same distances measured onto their arms will give points being also the same distanced.



In short, parallelity in a plane means three things:

1.) Non Crossing
2.) Fixed Distance
3.) Equidirectionality

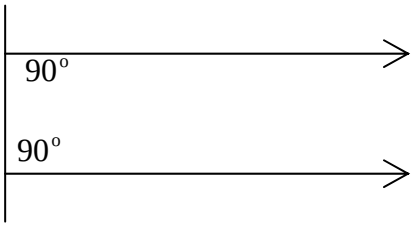
Any of these three is enough, so in other words these three always go together!
This is the fundamental law of parellelity. Mathematics tries to derive its laws from simple assumptions, called axioms. So the problem for Euclid was what he should accept as axiom from which the identity of the three versions of parallelity follows.
First he realized that even though the equidirectionality is the most complicated form, it is enough to use it for one fix angle. The simplest special angle is of course the right angle, where the two sides form equal angles:



This is a mere agreement to measure these equal angles as 90^o, which makes of course a full circle 360^o.
Euclid realized that for proving the identity of the three forms, is sufficient to claim that equidirectionality with right angle implies non crossing. That is:

Euclid's axiom of parallelity:

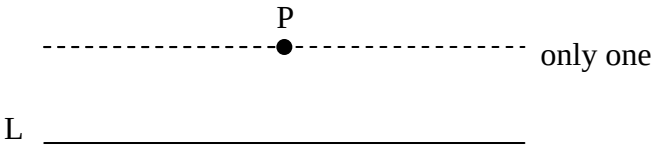
If two half lines leave in right angles to a line, then even if they leave on the same side they will never meet:



Today, we usually use an opposite direction and proceed not from the most involved equidirectionality, but rather from the simplest non crossing.
Then, what we have to claim is:

Fairplay's axiom of parallelity:

For a fix line L, and a point P outside, there is and there is exactly only one line through P that will not cross L:



It's a matter of taste, what axioms we choose, the main thing is to use them and only them to derive everything else. This dilemma of choices is usually not emphasized because after a few steps, all basic and obvious truths are derived and the more complicated theorems are never derived back to axioms, only to earlier theorems. Most importantly though, the more complicated derivations are only possible in one or sometimes in few well known ways. Thus, we don't get any sense of arbitrariness, quite oppositely, all facts seem to align in a strict order. In fact, a false obsession with derivations penetrated the presentation of mathematics, completely disregarding the purpose of presenting the facts in an understandable way.

The common but hidden Formalist belief is that learning the “hows” of derivations will automatically enlighten the student about the “whys”. This of course is a complete lie. 99 percent of students have no idea of what’s going on, and learn the derivations mechanically. But the truth is much worse. The lower level education imitates the full axiomatism of foundations, and presents the facts in a Formalist, but not even correct over simplified manner.

So as we see, mathematics is not only the purest form of all knowledge, it is the purest form of all stupidity. Since mathematics is still the center, it is fair to use the name Formalism for the general tendency of denying problems. The patronizing stupid oversimplification and stereotypes of the media, the bureaucracy of social processes, the alienation of people in economic constraints are all part of Formalism. Thus, we get a new and proper name for the evil suicidal nature of civilization, but that still doesn’t enlighten us about the problems we left above unresolved:
Is there anything beyond matter? Is there anything beyond life?
To avoid the first is to avoid the second. To regard matter as a mere empty term for anything that we know is faulty because it forces us into the “what” and ignores the “how”. In mathematics, it’s quite the opposite. Formalism is only concerned with the “how” and ignores the “why”. In physics, its mirrored into a completely new “how”. Not how the laws are relating to each other, but how matter obeys the laws. So actually it becomes “what”, namely what laws are true. Thus, the real question is whether some “how” is lost in physics. And so, the real claim of idealism is that matter itself obeys non mathematical or which is the same, non physical laws. But these only become meaningful for us through life and that’s why the “whats” beyond life is a separate question superceding the one about matter.

A cross reduction by asking whether life is merely matter or not doesn’t help either. Life in general, plant life, animal life, human life, physiology, psychology, sociology are already reduced to matter. But life as actuality, our own life is not matter, because it’s controllable directly! We are the ones who understand mathematics, we are the ones to create art, we are the ones who care about the truth, about the lies, point the fingers, revolt, fall back, fall in love, murder, get killed, get jealous and most importantly die! Life is falsely replaceable by matter, death is not. Matter doesn’t have to die, we do.