

Clive Staples Lewis, author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, wrote in *Mere Christianity* that pride is an “anti-God” of the state, a position in which the ego and self are in direct opposition to God: “*Other vices including unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and so on, are mere ‘fleabites’ ... the devil became the devil by pride and pride is the cause of every other vice. Pride is the complete anti-God (and anti-others) state of mind.*”

Prometheus has been depicted many times in literature. Perhaps the most famous version of the myth is found in *Prometheus Bound*, traditionally attributed to Aeschylus from the 5th century BC. Early Christian writers saw Prometheus’ atonement as one of the archetypes of Christ’s torment, inspiring writers such as **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**, **Lord Byron**, **Thomas Kibble Hervey**, **André Gide**, who portrayed Prometheus as a masochistically enjoying sufferer, and **Mary Shelly**, whose best-known novel is titled *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*. In her novel, Victor’s attempt to become a great scientist turns out to be arrogant and self-righteous. In Slovenia, the motif of the tormented Prometheus was depicted by **France Prešeren** in his poem *To a Poet*.

In modern usage, hubris refers to excessive pride combined with arrogance. It is also often associated with a lack of humility. Human vanity can also be associated with ignorance. The accusation of being haughty often implies that suffering or punishment will follow, much like vanity and the enemy are often mixed in Greek mythology. The proverb “Pride goeth before a fall, a haughty spirit before a fall.” (*Book of Proverbs*, 16:18) sums up today’s use of hubris. Hubris is also referred to as “pride that blinds” because it often causes the one displaying hubris to act in ways that defy common sense. In other words, in today’s definition, it could be understood as “pride just before a fall.” It is generally considered an individual trait rather than one of the group, although the group to which the offender belongs may cause collateral consequences with the wrongful act. Hubris often indicates a loss of a sense of reality, an overconfidence in one’s abilities, and a glorification of one’s accomplishments. Hubris is associated with excessive pride, arrogance, and self-importance, which can often lead to disastrous retaliation or the creation of enemies.

The seven cardinal sins are contrasted with seven Christian virtues, which combine three theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) and four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude). But perhaps we can address them at the next KIBLIX International Festival of Arts, Science and Technology in 2024.

– Peter Tomaž Dobrila

The exhibition at KIBLA PORTAL presents: **Valeria Abendroth, AES+F, Aphra Tesla Operating System Incorporated Stefan Doepner, Uršula Berlot, Vuk Ćosić, Trbovlje, the New Media Setting, Betina Habjanič, Egon March Institute; Urška Kristina Škerl, Domen Kosmač and Marko Košnik, Jusuf Hadžifejzović, Marko Jakše, Maša Jazbec, Adela Jušić, Vladimir Kopicl, Laibach, Slava & Mihail Mizin, Toni Soprano MENEGLJTE, P L A T E A U R E S I D U E, Monika Pocrnjić, Rok Predin, Vlado Repnik + Cirkulacija 2, Jiří Surůvka, Andrej Štular, Zoran Todorović, Tanja Vujinović, Valerie Wolf Gang and a selection of Metamedia Association from Pula, Croatia - Tin Dožić, Marko Gutić Mižimakov, Mario Mu, Ivana Tkalčić. The production of KIBLA2LAB will also be on display.**

The festival will offer a thematic discussion, AV performances, concerts, workshops and guided tours until the end of December.

In addition, KiBela, space for art, presents the exhibition *Grain of Gold* by Meta Grgurevič and artKIT presents the exhibition *When Structure is Replaced by Fragmented Moments* by Neža Knez.

KIBLIX 2023

Hypocrisy and Pride

26 October–29 December 2023

KIBLA PORTAL, Valvasorjeva 40, 2nd floor, Maribor

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 3 to 5 p.m., out of hours appointments for groups (kibla@kibla.org)

KIBLIX 2023

Hypocrisy and Pride

26 October–29 December 2023

KIBLA PORTAL

Superbia (pride, arrogance, hubris)

The 21st *International Festival of Arts, Technology and Science* KIBLIX is themed *Hypocrisy and Pride*, after *Love and Peace* last year. This year’s edition refers to the currently prevailing social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, technological and other relations in the communities that we call states, unions, organizations ... and which, of course, exist also in art. Perhaps most strikingly, when various historical figures and mythical images – of which literary history and art history are so full, they can be found even in music – see themselves in a mirror. Hypocrisy is a part of us, a widespread trait that can develop into a character trait. One of its causes is self-interest. Pride is equally universal; in some people it lies dormant, in some it hardens, while in others it blossoms and becomes *spiritus agens*. The spirit of progress. An agent. It has many synonyms: arrogance, haughtiness, conceit, insolence, presumption, which have certain semantic differences, and the Greek *hubris* (ὕβρις), which contains additional shades of meaning such as impudence and indignation. Hypocrisy, which has the same root in many Slavic languages, also means duplicity and pretense.

The Christian seven deadly sins, the correct theological term being the seven cardinal sins, are an ancient classification of seven behaviors or thoughts that are considered deadly sins. They were first enumerated by the monk Evagrius Ponticus around 300 AD. To be precise, he drew up a list of eight “terrible temptations of the human soul,” which were later reduced to seven by Pope Gregory the Great in 590 and designated as mortal sins. In the 14th century, they were further elaborated by Dante Alighieri in his *Divine Comedy* – *Superbia*: pride; *Avaritia*: greed; *Luxuria*: lust (wantonness, unbridled desire); *Ira*: anger; *Gula*: gluttony; *Invidia*: envy; *Acedia*: sloth.

At the beginning of the 14th century, the idea of the “seven deadly sins” was spread through art as a source of inspiration, so that the idea became rooted in the Catholic consciousness. Around the same time, the mnemonic acronym SALIGIA was coined, based on the first letters of the seven sins in Latin. The seven deadly sins are the source of all other vices and weaknesses.

In 1589, Peter Binsfeld assigned a demon to each of the deadly sins that tempted people. In Binsfeld’s classification, they are listed as follows: Lucifer: pride (*superbia*); Mammon: greed (*avaritia*); Asmodeus: lust (*luxuria*); Leviathan: envy (*invidia*); Belzeebub: gluttony (*gula ali gullia*); Satan/Amon: wrath (*ira*); Belphegor: sloth (*acedia*).

The first mortal sin or cardinal sin, the most serious of all sins, is pride, also called vainglory – *superbia* is associated with Lucifer (from Latin *lux* – light, *ferre* – to bear, *bringer of light*). In Christian tradition, it stands for the fallen archangel, usually associated with Satan, the embodiment of evil and an adversary of God. According to legend, Lucifer was a high-ranking archangel in heaven before his arrogance led him to rebel against God. When the rebellion failed, God banished him and a third of his followers from heaven and cast him to earth, where he lives today. Pride, its synonym and an even more powerful pre- and para-Christian concept that appears as an archetype in Greek tragedy, is *hubris*, and examples of pride abound in literature. The hero, the heroine, suffers from his hubris, exaggerated self-confidence. This is tragically human, but not a bad thing – for without hubris there is no hero, except perhaps the cunning **Odysseus**.

Prometheus (Προμηθεύς – the forethinker) is one of the Titans, a son of the Titan Iapetus and Clymene or Asia, one of the Oceanids. He is credited with the creation of mankind. He created humans from clay, while Athens breathed life into them. But the people did not worship the gods. To punish them, Zeus took away their light and heat. So Prometheus stole the fire from Olympus and brought it back to the people in a hollow stalk of fennel, saying, “fire is a good servant, but a bad master.” This gravely angered Zeus, so he sent them sickness and toil to torment them forever. Zeus condemned Prometheus to eternal torment and chained him to a mountain in Caucasus for 30,000 years, where an eagle feasted on his liver every day, but it grew back at night, for all eternity. He was freed a few centuries later by Hercules, who climbed the mountain, killed the eagle and broke the chains that bound Prometheus to the rock. As a sign of submission to Zeus, Prometheus had to wear a link of the chain with a bit of the Causasian rock.

Icarus and his father Daedalus escaped from captivity (the labyrinth) in Crete with wings made of wax and feathers. The father decided to construct the wings for himself and his young son Icarus. He sewed the feathers together and arranged them from the shortest to the longest. He attached the larger feathers with string and the smaller ones with wax, creating a large surface that resembled the wings of a bird. Icarus flew higher and higher to reach the sky and touch it, but he flew too close to the Sun, so the wax in his wings began to melt. His wings dissolved and Icarus plummeted into the sea and drowned.

These are two of many “fallen angels”, among others in Greek mythology are **Phaethon**, **Salmoneus**, **Niobe**, **Cassiopeia**, **Tantalus** and **Tereus**.

Phaethon was the son of Apollo and the Oceanid Clymene, while according to other genealogies he was the son of Heliad Merope and Helios’ son Clymenos, or even Helios’ own son. The most famous version of the myth about Phaethon is found in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, in which Phaethon seeks confirmation that Helios is really his father and asks him to let him drive the sun chariot. But Phaethon does not know how to hold the reins and loses control of the horses. To prevent the destruction of the earth, Zeus intervenes and strikes with one of his thunderbolts, killing him instantly. The figure of Phaethon was the inspiration for the name of the hypothetical planet between Mars and Jupiter, which for unexplained reasons dissolved into an asteroid belt (according to current theory, there never was a planet there).

Salmoneus was the son of King Aeolus and Enarete. Originally from Tesalia, he moved to Eleia, where he became king and founded the city of Salmone in Pisatis. He ordered his subjects to worship him under the name of Zeus. He built a bridge of brass over which he drove his chariot at full speed to imitate thunder. The effect was enhanced by dried skins and cauldrons trailing behind him, while torches were thrown into the air to represent lightning. For this sin of hubris, Zeus finally struck him down with his thunderbolt and destroyed the city. In Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Aeneas is said to have observed Salmoneus being subjected to eternal torment in Tartarus.

Niobe, daughter of Tantalus and wife of the Theban king Amphionus, mother of seven daughters and seven sons, was incredibly beautiful but also quick to anger. Just like her father, she was punished for declaring herself equal and even superior to the gods. When Leto’s children, Apollo and Diana (Artemis in Greek), were born, the Theban women wanted to worship the goddess, but Niobe stopped them, saying that she should be the one they worshiped because she had 14 children. Leto appealed to her children to punish Niobe for her arrogance. Phoebos (Apollo) and Phoebe (Diana) unleash a barrage of arrows on Niobe’s sons who are training in a field. Their distraught father takes his own life. Niobe is devastated over the terrible loss. Then she remembers that she still has seven daughters. She brags again to the goddess Leto, which leads to the arrows soon coming down on her daughters as well. Niobe begs Apollo and Diana to spare her youngest daughter, but they ignore her pleas. Full of grief, Niobe turns into a stone.

Cassiopeia, the mother of Andromeda and wife of Cepheus. Her Greek name means “she whose words excel.” She was beautiful, but also arrogant and vain. She boasted that she and her daughter Andromeda were more beautiful than the Nereids, the beautiful nymph daughters of the sea god Nereus. Angered by this claim, Poseidon ordered the destruction of Ethiopia. To avert the terrible fate, Cassiopeia and Cepheus consult a wise Amonian oracle who tells them that the only way to avert disaster is to sacrifice their daughter Andromeda. Andromeda is then tied to a rock. Having just slain the head of Medusa, Perseus secures the parents’ promise to marry her if he can save her. He then kills the monster and marries Andromeda. After their deaths, Cepheus, Perseus, Andromeda and Cassiopeia were placed in the sky.

Poseidon made sure that she did not escape her punishment and forced her to orbit around the northern celestial pole, facing downward half the time (circumpolar constellation).

Tantalus was the son of Zeus and one of the few mortals who were allowed to sit at the same table with the gods on Olympus. He was their favorite and protégé. He imagined himself equal to the gods because he shared with them the nectar that only they drank and ate ambrosia that only they ate. One day a boy brought him a statuette he had stolen from the temple of Zeus in Crete. Tantalus hid it from the gods and denied knowing anything about its whereabouts. He thought that the gods did not know about his secret. But he was wrong – they knew, but hoped that he would realize his mistake after he got tired of the statue and would return it to the temple. The fact that the gods said nothing about all this strengthened his conviction that he was the equal of the gods. He decided to test their omniscience one more time. He killed his own son Pelops and served his flesh at a banquet for the gods. Everyone except the distraught Demeter, who ate a piece of the meat, was furious and demanded that Zeus punish the sinful king. Realizing that the gods knew all along, Tantalus asked for forgiveness, but to no avail. Pelops was brought back to life and the missing part of the boy’s shoulder that Demeter had eaten was replaced with a part made of ivory. From now on all his descendants had white spots on one shoulder. Zeus threw Tantalus into Tartarus for eternal punishment. He was tied in the middle of a river and whenever he tried to drink from it, the water receded. It was always just a few inches from his mouth, always out of his reach. This torment is the origin of the English word *tantalize* – to be tormented by a desire that cannot be satisfied.

Tereus was a Thracian king, the son of Ares and the Naiad Bistonis, the husband of the Athenian princess Procne, and the father of Itys. When Tereus desired his wife’s sister, Philomela, he came to Athens to his father-in-law Pandion to ask him for his other daughter, since Procne had died. Pandion granted him the favor and sent Philomela and guards with her. But Tereus threw the guards into the sea, and when he found Philomela on a mountain, he forced himself to her. Then he cut out her tongue and held her captive so that she could not tell anyone about it. After returning to Thrace, Tereus gave Philomela to King Lynceus and told his wife that her sister had died. Philomela wove letters into a tapestry depicting Tereus’ crimes and secretly sent it to Procne. Lynceus’ wife Lathusa, who was a friend of Procne, immediately sent the concubine (Philomela) to her. When Procne recognized her sister and learned of Tereus’ sacrilegious act, the two plotted to take revenge on the king. Meanwhile, it was miraculously revealed to Tereus that his son Itys would die at the hands of a relative. Hearing this, he thought that his brother Dryas was plotting his son’s death and killed the innocent man. Procne, however, killed Tereus’ son Itys, served his flesh in a meal at his father’s table in revenge, and fled with her sister. When Tereus learned of the crime she had committed, he pursued the sisters and tried to kill them, but all three were turned into birds by the Olympian gods out of pity: Tereus became a hoopoe or hawk; Procne became a swallow whose song was of grief for the loss of her child; Philomela became a nightingale. By the way, the female nightingale has no song.

In ancient Greece, *hubris* was also associated with “outrage”, actions that violated the natural order or that shamed or humiliated the victim, sometimes for the pleasure or gratification of the perpetrator. In some contexts it had a sexual connotation. Shame was often applied to the perpetrator as well. The Greek word for sin, *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία), originally meant “to miss the mark”, “to err”, which is why Hesiod and Aeschylus used the word hubris to describe transgressions against the gods. A common form of hubris was when a mortal claimed to be better than a god in a particular skill or quality. Such claims rarely went unpunished, and so Arachne, a talented young weaver, was turned into a spider when she claimed that her abilities surpassed those of the goddess Athena.

Such behavior was not limited to myth; some historical figures were punished for committing hubris through their arrogance. One such figure was King Xerxes, who in Aeschylus’ *The Persians* supposedly threw shackles on the Hellespont (today’s Dardanelles) to punish the sea for daring to destroy his fleet. What all these examples have in common is the transgression of boundaries, because the Greeks believed that the Fates (*Moīrai*) had assigned to each being a certain area of freedom, an area that even the gods could not transgress. Works in recent literary history that deal with hubris include: **Miguel de Cervantes’** *Don Quixote*, many of **Shakespeare’s** plays, **Goethe’s** *Faust*, **John Milton’s** *Paradise Lost*, in which Lucifer tries to seduce the angels into worshiping him. But God and the innocent angels banish him to Hell, where he declares: “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.” **Christopher Marlowe’s** *Doctor Faustus* is about a scholar whose arrogance and pride force him to make a pact with the devil, and who maintains his excessive pride until his death and damnation, although he could easily have repented if he had wanted to.