

TIT_{for} TAT

Manuel Saiz

One True Art Books

TIT_{for}TAT

One True Art Books

English edition: William Truini

Proofreading: Ana Bescós

Design: Double-D/Sign

Printed by:

Manuel Saiz 2014

www.manuelsaiz.com

Content

Tit for Tat	7
Final Nota Bene	149
Notes	155

Tit for tat is an English saying meaning ‘equivalent retaliation.’ It is also a highly effective strategy in game theory for the prisoner’s dilemma, usually the simplest and the most successful. An agent using this strategy will first cooperate, then subsequently replicate an opponent’s previous action. If the opponent previously was cooperative, the agent is cooperative. If not, the agent is not. The success of the tit-for-tat (TFT) strategy, which is largely cooperative despite the fact that its name emphasizes an adversarial nature, took many by surprise.

An eye for an eye is the principle whereby a person who has injured another person is penalized to a similar degree, or, according to other interpretations, the victim receives the value of the injury in compensation. The Gospel according to St. Matthew presents Jesus opposition to this principle: “You have heard that it was said, ‘an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also” (Matthew 5, 38).

Jean Baudrillard in *The Transparency of Evil* suggests an alternative account of the extermination of the South American Indians: they had to be exterminated not because they were not Christians but because they were more Christian than the Christians themselves. Their cruelty and their human sacrifices were intolerable to the Spaniards not because they excited pity or moral indignation but because this cruelty bore witness to the authority of their gods and the strength of their beliefs. This force of conviction amongst the Indians made the Spaniards ashamed at how little religion they themselves had. It made a mockery of a Western culture which, behind its flimsy facade of faith, had no gods except gold and commerce.

Aristodemus was a Spartan sent to the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC. The day of the battle he was stricken with an ophthalmic disease and excused from combat. He was the only Spartan who returned home alive. After that, Aristodemus was subjected to humiliation and disgrace at the hands of his compatriots: he was called *Aristodemus the Coward*. At the Battle of Plattea, in 479 BC, Aristodemus fought with such fury that the Spartans regarded him as having redeemed himself. They would not award him any special honours for his valour though, because he had fought too impulsively, with suicidal recklessness; the Spartans regarded as more valorous those who fought while still wishing to live.

In *Five Fingers*, a 1952 film directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Ulysses Diello, played by James Mason, is the valet of the British ambassador in Ankara during World War II. In that position he has access to classified documents that he photographs and tries to sell to the German Nazi Government. At one point in the film he visits the German Embassy and makes his offer. When he is about to leave he says to Moyzisch, the German official who has received him: "... and please don't have me followed. You Germans have no talent for it. You keep wanting to get ahead of the people you follow".

In a footrace with a tortoise Achilles allows the tortoise a head start of 100 metres. If each racer starts running at some constant speed, then after some finite time, Achilles will have run 100 metres, bringing him to the tortoise's starting point. During this time, the tortoise has run a much shorter distance, say, 10 metres. It will then take Achilles some further time to run that distance, by which time the tortoise will have advanced farther; and then more time still to reach this third point, while the tortoise moves ahead. Thus, whenever Achilles reaches somewhere the tortoise has been, he still has farther to go. Therefore, because there are an infinite number of points Achilles must reach where the tortoise has already been, he can never overtake the tortoise.

The Bottle Imp is an 1891 short story by Robert Louis Stevenson. In it, the protagonist buys a bottle with an imp inside that grants wishes. However, the bottle is cursed; if the holder dies bearing it, their soul is forfeit to hell. The bottle can be sold, but only at a loss, i. e. for less than its owner originally paid, or else it will simply return to him. It also returns if is thrown or given away. All of these commands must be transmitted from each seller to each purchaser. At the beginning of the story the bottle is sold for 50 dollars. The price is progressively lowered until at the end it is sold for one cent to a mariner, who then goes to hell.

Philip IV of Spain ascended the throne in 1621 and reigned in Spain until his death. On one occasion, some gentlemen of his court were praising his greatness to the extent that they suggested calling him *Philip the Great*. Francisco de Quevedo, a Spanish nobleman, politician and writer, did not agree with this epithet, or for the king to be remembered in such a way. He intervened in the conversation by saying that Philip IV was indeed a great king, but in the same way that wells are. A well is greater the more soil is removed from it. During Philip IV's reign, Spain lost dominion of many lands, especially in America.

A classic racist Spanish joke tells the story of a Gypsy who owns a donkey. As he is poor and feeding the donkey consumes a big part of his resources, he considers the possibility of training the donkey not to eat, an ability that would render it financially worthwhile. In order to do so, he progressively starts reducing the amount of hay given to the animal. For a while the system seems to be working. The Gypsy, however, ends up very frustrated, because just as he is on the verge of succeeding, the donkey dies.

The paradox of the unexpected hanging: A prisoner is told that he will be hanged on some day between Monday and Friday, but that he will not know beforehand on which day. He cannot be hanged on Friday, because if he were still alive on Thursday, he would know that the hanging will occur on Friday, but he has been told he will not know the day of his hanging in advance. He cannot be hanged Thursday for the same reason, and the same argument shows that he cannot be hanged on any other day. Nevertheless, the executioner unexpectedly arrives on some day other than Friday, surprising the prisoner. A humorous version of the paradox explains that a high percentage of accidents on staircases take place on the lowest last step, so engineers have decided to remove the last step to make safer staircases.

Peter Adamson speaks in *Philosophy Bites* about Plotinus' views on evil: "Everything evil in the world is a lack of something. Not a positive force in the world but an inevitable absence of good". To explain this idea, Adamson uses the following metaphor: "In a block of Swiss cheese there are holes. You have to have the holes: it comes with the metaphysics of Swiss cheese. And the holes are like evil, areas where you don't have cheese, but you could have cheese, so there is some potential cheese there which has not been actualised. And in the limit case, just as you cannot have pure evil, you cannot have a piece of Swiss cheese that consists entirely of holes. This is not cheese. It is just air".

Alfred Hitchcock offered an explanation of what a MacGuffin is: It might be a Scottish name, taken from a story about two men on a train. One man says: “What’s that package up there in the baggage rack?”. And the other answers: “Oh, that’s a MacGuffin”. The first one asks: “What’s a MacGuffin?”. “Well”, the other man says, “it’s an apparatus for trapping lions in the Scottish Highlands”. The first man says: “But there are no lions in the Scottish Highlands”. And the other one answers: “Well, then, that’s no MacGuffin!”. So you see that a MacGuffin is actually nothing at all.

False pregnancy or *phantom pregnancy* is the appearance of signs and symptoms associated with pregnancy when the organism is not actually pregnant. Clinically, false pregnancy is most common in veterinary medicine (particularly in dogs and mice). False pregnancy in humans is less common, and may sometimes be purely psychological. It is generally estimated that false pregnancy is caused by changes in the endocrine system of the body, leading to the secretion of hormones which translate into physical changes similar to those during pregnancy. Some men experience the same symptoms as a woman would experience while pregnant when their partner is pregnant.

During the Cold War it was possible for western nationals to travel to West Berlin through East Germany by car via specific East German highways, *transit routes* (*Transitstrecke*). At East German border checks a valid passport had to be shown to border guards, who would then issue a transit visa for a fee of 5 Western Deutsche Mark. East German authorities were concerned about the possibility of East German nationals, especially children, using the passing cars to defect. At the checks, westerners travelling had to state clearly to the guard the number of people travelling with them, including children. Even if it was evident that no children were in the vehicle some drivers took special pleasure in adding “und keine Kinder” (‘and no children’) after the number, as a matter of provocation.

In countries like the United States, Australia and New Zealand a restricted traffic lane is reserved at peak travel times for the exclusive use of vehicles with a driver and one or more passengers. The policy is called *high-occupancy vehicle lane* (*HOV lane*). The normal minimum occupancy level is two or three occupants. Drivers are willing to go to any extreme to secure a speedier trip in the HOV lanes. A parody of this attitude is portrayed on the show *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, where Larry David famously picks up a prostitute to sit in the passenger seat so that he can get to a Dodgers game more quickly in the speedier lane.

For Roland Barthes “the ship may well be a symbol for departure; it is, at a deeper level, the emblem of closure”. “A ship is a habitat before being a means of transport”. In his book *Mythologies* he writes that the *Nautilus*, the submarine of Verne’s *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, is the most desirable of all caves as it is possible to watch, through a large window-pane, the outside vagueness of the waters, and thus define, in a single act, the inside by means of its opposite. Verne had, Barthes says, an obsession for plenitude: he never stopped putting a final touch to the world and furnishing it, making it full with an egg-like fullness.

The Annals of Lü Buwei, a Chinese book from 239 BC, tells the story of Duke Yi, who was killed in a revolt by the Di Army. His enemies ate all his flesh, leaving only his liver. Hong Yan, one of the duke's men, found the duke's remains when he returned home from a mission. He cried out to heaven and wept. His tears did not cease until all his grief was spent. Then he exclaimed: "My lord, allow me to serve as your cloak". He cut open his belly, placed the duke's liver inside, and fell down dead.

In pectore (Latin for ‘in the breast/heart’) is a term used in the Catholic Church to refer to appointments to the College of Cardinals by the pope in which the names of the appointees are not publicly revealed (reserved by the pope *in his bosom*). This right of the pope is usually exercised in circumstances where he wants to make a statement for later historians about the honour due a particular cleric, while not wanting to endanger that same cleric in his present circumstances of persecution. Areas where it is believed that unnamed *in pectore* cardinals were appointed are the People’s Republic of China and, before the fall of the Soviet Union and collapse of the Iron Curtain, in Central and Eastern Europe.

During the Trojan War the Greeks used a subterfuge to enter the city of Troy and win the conflict that has come to be known in history by the name of *Trojan Horse*. After a fruitless ten-year siege, the Greeks constructed a huge wooden horse, and hid a select force of men inside. The Greeks pretended to sail away, and the Trojans pulled the horse into their city as a victory trophy. That night the Greek force crept out of the horse and opened the gates for the rest of the Greek army, which had sailed back under cover of night. The Greeks entered and destroyed the city of Troy, decisively ending the war.

In 1946, Hermann Göring was sentenced by the Nuremberg Trials to death by hanging. He made an appeal asking to be shot as a soldier instead of hanged as a common criminal, but the court refused. Defying the sentence imposed by his captors, he committed suicide with a potassium cyanide capsule the night before he was to be hanged. In 2005, former US Army Private Herbert Lee Stivers, who served in the honour guard for the Nuremberg Trials, claimed he gave Göring *medicine* hidden inside a fountain pen a German woman had asked him to smuggle into the prison.

George Sterling was an American poet and playwright. He became a significant figure in Bohemian literary circles in northern California in the first quarter of the 20th century, and in the development of the artists' colony at Carmel-by-the-Sea. He was mentored by a much older Ambrose Bierce, and became close friends with Jack London. Sterling carried a vial of potassium cyanide for many years. When asked about it he said: "A prison becomes a home if you have the key". Sterling used it in November 1926, when he was 56; his corpse was discovered at his residence at the San Francisco Bohemian Club.

Culture and Value is a selection from the personal notes of Ludwig Wittgenstein made by Georg Henrik von Wright. It was first published in German as *Vermischte Bemerkungen* (1977). The remarks are arranged in chronological order with an indication of their year of origin. Nearly half of them stem from the period after the completion (in 1945) of *Part One* of *Philosophical Investigations*. In an entry of 1942 he wrote: “A man will be *imprisoned* in a room with a door that’s unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to *pull* rather than to push it”.

In martial arts, the terms *hard technique* and *soft technique* denote how forcefully a defender counters the force of an attack in armed and unarmed combat. The goal of *jujutsu* ('art of softness', 'way of yielding') and *judo* ('gentle way') is to deflect the attacker's force to his or her disadvantage, with the defender exerting minimal force. With a soft technique such as these, the defender uses the attacker's force and momentum against him or her, by leading the attack(er) in a direction to where the defender will be advantageously positioned and the attacker off balance. A seamless movement is the key to a soft technique.

In the history of the Catholic Church there has been permanent controversy over whether missionaries should propagate faith in Asia by imposing European customs on the natives or if they should instead adopt the local customs and adapt liturgy to the language and beliefs of those being evangelised. This second approach was always maintained by the Jesuits, who, by following Matteo Ricci's (1552-1610) policy of accommodation in China, even started to wear the gowns of Buddhist monks, before adopting the more prestigious silk gown of Chinese literati. The Spanish Franciscans, however, were more inclined in China to use the *tabula rasa* principle they had used in other places, and eventually persuaded Pope Clement XI that the Jesuits were making dangerous accommodations to Chinese sensibilities.

At the start of the 18th century, the feudal lord Asano Naganori was compelled to commit *seppuku* for assaulting a court official named Kira Yoshinaka. Ōishi Yoshio, Asano's head chamberlain, then began a careful plot to kill Lord Kira, but to throw off suspicion he spent time (and money) in the Geisha houses of Kyoto. This type of ruse is referred to as *hiru andon*, a term frequently applied to Ōishi, meaning 'a paper lantern lit in daylight', referring to something which serves no useful purpose but which, at the same time, cannot be seen, whose presence is not conspicuous and whose value is therefore difficult to assess. He carried out his role well and secretly coordinated the movements of the remaining forty-seven loyal Asano samurai, who successfully made their attack two years later.

Paul Virilio, in his 1980 book *The Aesthetics of Disappearance*, writes: “During the war of 1914 the authorities agree on the evident advantage in renouncing bright colours in the manufacture of uniforms and in adopting a habit of neutral shade to diminish the visibility of troops in the field. At war now there are only extras, masses of extras assembled to make a great number; after the colour madder (red), too brilliant, they picked sky-blue, field-gray, gray-green and finally English army khaki, this colour which is really much more than a colour..., the major concern being less with identification than disintegration, since the word comes from the Hindustani *khaki*, meaning ‘colour of dust’”.

Georg Büchner fell ill on 2 February 1837, and ran a temperature. It took the doctors almost two weeks to diagnose typhoid. According to a friend who looked after him on his deathbed, Büchner had revolutionary visions and, from time to time, said with solemn voice: “We do not suffer too much pain, we suffer too little; for through pain we join God. We are death, dust, ashes. How can we complain?”. He died on 19 February 1837, aged twenty three years and four months. These events are told in *The Book of Friends* by Hugo von Hofmannsthal.

(Leon stops Deckard in the street and pulls him into a deserted alley). DECKARD: Leon. LEON: How old am I? DECKARD: *(Punches Leon)*. I don't know. LEON: *(Throws Deckard against wall)*. My birthday is April 10, 2017. How long do I live? DECKARD: Four years. *(Leon throws Deckard against another wall)*. LEON: More than you. *(Leon swings and misses Deckard, but punches a hole in a steam generator)*. LEON: Painful to live in fear, isn't it? *(Leon tosses Deckard down on his back)*. LEON: Nothing is worse than having an itch you can never scratch. *(Leon picks Deckard up by the tie, and slaps him across the face)*. LEON: Wake up! Time to die. *(Leon gets ready to gouge out Deckard's eyes... but, Rachael pops some lead into his cranium)*.

Kanshi is a specialized form of *seppuku* (*harakiri*) in which a retainer would commit suicide in protest of a lord's decision. The retainer would make one deep, horizontal cut into his stomach, then quickly bandage the wound. After this, the person would then appear before his lord, give a speech in which he announced his protest of the lord's action, then reveal his mortal wound. The action gives special value to the protest, as if being made by somebody *already dead*. A fictional variation was the act of *kagebara* ('shadow stomach') in Japanese theatre: the protagonist, at the end of the play, would announce to the audience that he had committed an act similar to *kanshi*, a predetermined slash to the stomach followed by a tight field dressing, and then perish, bringing about a dramatic end.

Bertrand Russell was announced dead by the Japanese press in 1920 when he was suffering from pneumonia. Some sources say the reports were a deliberate form of revenge by Japanese journalists whom Russell had refused to meet due to his illness. His supposed death may also have been reported in *The Times*. It is also sometimes said that, by way of apology, *The Times* allowed Russell to pre-write his own obituary for publication on his actual death. It is a common practice of newspapers to have obituaries of famous people still alive prepared for the time they will cease to be so. Russell died in 1970.

It is often heard that Buddhists do not eat the meat of dead animals, which is, at the least, a vague statement. An imprecise or mistaken reading of religious precepts like this one can bring unexpected consequences. First, not all branches of Buddhism are vegetarian. But secondly, those whose precepts prevent them eating the meat of animals do not accept eating meat at all. The word *dead* in the sentence would allow farms of living animals whose amputated limbs could be sold to Buddhists. They would be able to eat the meat as long as the animal that the limb comes from is still alive, something that perhaps could now be checked before meals on an on-line database.

In one of the episodes of *The Flowers of St. Francis*, a 1950 film directed by Roberto Rossellini and co-written by Federico Fellini, Brother Ginepro, one of St. Francis' companions and an early Franciscan, attends to a sick brother who asks him for a pig's foot to eat. Ginepro takes a knife and goes to the forest where many swine are feeding. He selects one, cuts off the foot, cooks it and serves it to the brother. When the swineherd comes and calls the friars robbers, St. Francis asks Ginepro why he did it. He replies that he believes that he and the swine have done a good deed and that he is certain the swine was happy to have served God.

The Amazons are a nation of all-female warriors in Greek mythology and Classical antiquity. Herodotus placed them in a region bordering Scythia in Sarmatia (modern territory of Ukraine). Amazonian raiders were often depicted in battle with Greek warriors in classical art. In order to increase their ability to use weapons they amputated their right breast. Hippocrates describes the process as follows: "... while they are yet babies their mothers make red-hot a bronze instrument constructed for this very purpose and apply it to the right breast and cauterise it, so that its growth is arrested, and all its strength and bulk are diverted to the right shoulder and right arm".

A commonly repeated legend claims that the two-fingered salute or V sign derives from a gesture made by longbowmen fighting in the English and Welsh army at the Battle of Agincourt (1415) during the Hundred Years' War. According to the story, the French were in the habit of cutting off the arrow-shooting fingers of captured English and Welsh longbowmen, and the gesture was a sign of defiance on the part of the bowmen, showing the enemy that they still had their fingers. This origin is unlikely, since no evidence exists of French forces (or any other continental European power) cutting off the fingers of captive bowmen. The standard procedure at the time was summary execution.

By July 1941, the emblematic use of the letter V had spread through occupied Europe. On July 19, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill referred approvingly to the V for Victory campaign in a speech, from which point he started using the V hand sign. Early on he sometimes gestured palm in (sometimes with a cigar between the fingers). Later in the war he used palm out, which avoids shameful misunderstandings about its meaning. Other allied leaders used the sign as well; starting in 1942, Charles de Gaulle used the V sign in every speech until 1969.

Air quotes, also called *finger quotes* or *ersatz quotes*, are virtual quotation marks formed in the air with one's fingers when speaking. This is typically done with hands held shoulder-width apart and at the eye level of the speaker, with the index and middle fingers on each hand flexing at the beginning and end of the phrase being quoted. The air-quoted phrase is, in the most common usage, very short, at most a few words. While the term *air quotes* did not appear until 1989, use of similar gestures has been recorded as early as 1927. A single-handed quote is a simplified variation.

A kōan is a story, dialogue, question, or statement which is used in Zen practice to provoke *the great doubt*, and test a student's progress in Zen practice. There is a famous koan which asks: "You can hear the sound of two hands when they clap together. Now, what is the sound of one hand clapping?". The student of Zen is supposed to meditate on this riddle until some degree of insight or enlightenment occurs. According to Victor Hori, a Stanford professor of Japanese Religion, a central theme of many koans is the "identity of opposites". This one can be read as asking: you know what duality is; now, what is non-duality?

Harry S. Truman was president of the United States from April 12, 1945 to 1953. He was in office at the end of World War II and during the hardest years of the post-war period, the uneasy transition from war to a peacetime economy. There were several economic threats, such as the immediate decrease of Government expenditures on the military maintained during the war effort. Besides, the effect of demobilisation on the economy was unknown, and there were fears that the country would again enter into a depression. He is quoted as having said: “Give me a one-handed economist! All my economists say: ‘On the one hand..., on the other’”.

In 1882 Oscar Wilde made a tour of the United States giving lectures in many places. After he came back to England he wrote *Impressions of America*, a short book that gave an account of the trip. It is a collection of anecdotes and descriptions of the places and people he met. He states that he found no knowledge of art in the west beyond the Rocky Mountains: “There was a patron of the arts who imported a plaster-cast *Venus de Milo* from Paris and, having been delivered minus the arms, he sued the railroad company for damages. And, what is more surprising still, he gained his case and the damages”.

A *phantom limb* is the sensation that an amputated or missing limb is still attached to the body and is moving appropriately with other body parts. Approximately 60 to 80% of individuals with an amputation experience phantom sensations in their amputated limb, and the majority of the sensations are painful. Phantom sensations may also occur after the removal of body parts other than the limbs, e. g. after amputation of a breast, extraction of a tooth or removal of an eye. The missing limb often feels shorter and may feel as if it is in a distorted and painful position. The frequency and intensity of attacks usually declines with time.

In the short story *The Things They Left Behind* by Stephen King, Scott Stanley narrates how he was an employee of Light and Bell Insurance, on the 110th floor of the World Trade Center, at the time of 9/11. By chance, that very day he skipped work so he did not perish with the rest of his colleagues at the company. One year later, not only is Scott unable to get rid of his survivor's guilt but things belonging to his late colleagues start to appear in his apartment, sunglasses, a baseball bat, etc. He can even hear their voices as if they were there with him. Although their presence haunts him, he manages to get rid of it by giving the objects to relatives of the deceased.

Lal Bihari, an Indian farmer and activist from Amilo, in Uttar Pradesh, was officially dead between 1975 and 1994. When he tried to apply for a bank loan in 1975, he visited the revenue office at district headquarters to get a proof of identity and he found out that he was dead: his uncle had bribed a Government bureaucrat to register him as deceased, so that he would get ownership of Bihari's ancestral land. Bihari fought with Indian bureaucracy for nineteen years to prove that he was alive. Meanwhile, he added *Mritak* ('deceased') to his name (then Lal Bihari Mritak), and founded Mritak Sangh, the Uttar Pradesh Association of Dead People, to highlight other cases like his.

In some Australian Aboriginal culture the dead are not referred to by their name directly as a mark of respect. The avoidance period may last anywhere from 12 months to several years, depending on how important or famous the person was. The person can still be referred to in a roundabout way, such as “that old lady”, or by generic skin type, but not by first name. This tradition has been extended to film and audio recordings. Many Australian television programs include a title card warning Aboriginals to “use caution viewing this film, as it may contain images or voices of dead persons”.

Greek historian Arrian reports that, in his conquest of India, Alexander the Great and his army arrived at the Taurus Mountains, which extends in length throughout all Asia. They have their beginning at Mycale, a hill opposite the island of Samos. In the country of Bactria they join to Mount Paropamisus, which the Macedonians, who accompanied Alexander, called *Caucasus*. In fact, *Caucasus* is a mountain of Scythia, which was about thirty thousand stadia (or 5,600 kilometres) distant from there; their reason for naming it as such was to enhance their general's glory, so they might boast that Alexander had passed over Mount *Caucasus* in one continuous march of victory.

In the 1996 film *Fargo*, by Joel and Ethan Cohen, Marge Gunderson is a pregnant police officer in charge of solving the murder of a colleague, shot in a road vehicle check. After examining the murder scene she discusses with Lou, her patrol partner, the clues they have. The last number plate noted by the victim bore the letters DLR, which Marge cleverly attributes to *dealer*, the special license plate used by dealers that allows customers to legally test-drive unregistered cars on public streets and highways. She then tells Lou a joke: “Say, Lou, didya hear the one about the guy who couldn’t afford personalized plates, so he went and changed his name to J3L2404?”

Berlin is surrounded by lakes that, during the summer season, are a place of leisure for a large part of the city's population. Although there are many lakes, visiting them on weekends is so popular that on Sundays they get quite crowded. Visitors who have no special attachment to any particular lake try to guess which one will be quieter on any given Sunday. In 2013 the best choice for some people for a couple of Sundays was a lake in which a boy had drowned on a previous weekend. The body hadn't been found yet, and many people were disgusted by the possibility of bumping into the body while swimming.

Japan is well known for the small size of its houses and flats. The price per square meter, or by tatami, as it is measured in the country, is so high that it is common to live in reduced spaces. Japan is also known for having one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Most people do not want to live in a house in which somebody has killed him or herself. Therefore, when somebody commits suicide in a rented flat it often happens that the landlord sues the family of the deceased for the loss of rent. Due to the lack of demand, these flats are usually rented cheaper by people who can bear living in such a place.

Julian Savulescu, Australian philosopher and bioethicist, talks in a *Philosophy Bites* podcast about the *yuck factor*, a feeling of horror, revulsion or disgust generated by an aspect of an idea, action, situation, etc. He analyses the reasons and logic behind morality being based on emotional reactions of disgust. Although adverse reactions often appear instinctively as a form of defence mechanisms, they are also a source for biases. Savulescu mentions the example of refusing to eat perfectly safe sausages due to the memory of a previous intoxication. Also that of incest, a traditional way to prevent malformations in babies, which is now obsolete given the existence of technical means to determine beforehand genetic incompatibilities.

In the 1966 film *Gran Prix*, Yves Montand, who plays the role of Jean-Pierre Sarti, a many times champion of car racing, says to a journalist after an accident on the track: “Before you leave I want to tell you something. Not about the others, but about myself. I used to go to pieces. I’d see an accident like that and be so weak inside that I wanted to quit – stop the car and walk away. I could hardly make myself go past it. But I’m older now. When I see something really horrible, I put my foot down. Hard! Because I know that everyone else is lifting his.

Guy Debord's *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* opens with this quote from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*: "However critical the situation and circumstances in which you find yourself, do not despair; it is on the occasions in which everything is to be feared that it is necessary to fear nothing; it is when one is surrounded by all the dangers that it is not necessary to dread any; it is when one is without resources that it is necessary to count on all of them; it is when one is surprised that it is necessary to surprise the enemy himself".

Arrian writes about the following episode of the crossing of Alexander the Great and his army through the deserts of Gadrosi (Balochistan). While the army suffered dreadful inconveniences of heat and lack of water, the king, though ready to faint with thirst, marched on foot, always at the head of his troops. Soldiers dispatched to search for water found a small quantity, in the muddy channel of a brook. They drew it up and presented it to the king in a shield, as a choice gift. He received it and, returning due thanks to those who brought it, poured it immediately upon the ground, in presence of the army. This action encouraged the soldiers, as much as if every man had drank a share of that water.

Shortly after one is struck by the mystical majestic impression produced by the contemplation of Niagara Falls, a no less unusual occurrence is experienced: the sudden appreciation of the enormous amount of energy that passes each second from a potential to a kinetic state in the falling of the water, and that goes down the river into Lake Ontario. The result of this insight in many visitors resulted in the construction in the 1960's of several power plants, both on the Canadian and the American side, to which between 50% and 75% of the water volume is diverted from the falls, in order to produce electricity. The proportion diverted at each moment has been agreed between authorities of both countries, using as criteria the hotel occupancy in the area and the best times to contemplate the falls, in such a way that the falls are bigger when more tourists are looking at them.

The tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse was fond of having literary men about him, such as the historian Philistus, the poet Philoxenus, and the philosopher Plato, but treated them in a most arbitrary manner. Once he had Philoxenus arrested and sent to the quarries for voicing a bad opinion about his poetry. A few days later, he released Philoxenus because of his friends' requests, and brought the poet before him for another poetry reading. Dionysius read his own work and the audience applauded. When he asked Philoxenus how he liked it, the poet replied only: "Take me back to the quarries".

American boxer Rubin *Hurricane* Carter spent 20 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. His struggle to regain freedom is told in his autobiography, *The Sixteenth Round*, brought to cinema by Norman Jewison in 1999. Denzel Washington, who plays Carter in the film, says in one scene while in prison: “It came to me as kind of a revelation that my own freedom lay in not wanting or needing anything of which they could deprive me. If punishment consisted of being locked in your cell, then by simply choosing to never leave my cell, I deprived them of that weapon. I would not work in their shops. I would not eat their food”.

In the 2002 British film *24 Hour Party People*, Tony Wilson, the *owner* of Factory Records, replies to the offer by a powerful London record label to buy the company: “We’re terribly flattered that you think we’re worth such a princely sum. However, what I have to explain to you is that you’re labouring under the misapprehension that we actually have any kind of a contract at all with our bands and I’m afraid we don’t. Because that’s the sum total of the paperwork to do with Factory Records’ deal with their various bands: ‘The artists own all their own work. The label owns nothing.’ [...] my epitaph will be that I never, literally nor metaphorically sold out. I protected myself from ever having to have the dilemma of having to sell out by having nothing to sell out”.

Donna Dickenson, author of the book *Body Shopping: The Economy Fuelled by Flesh and Blood*, explains the implications of the 1990 Moore's court case. John Moore underwent treatment for hairy cell leukaemia at the UCLA Medical Center under the supervision of Dr. David W. Golde. Moore's cancer was later developed into a cell line that was commercialised. Moore received no part of the profits from this and sued UCLA. The California Supreme Court ruled that Moore had no right to any share of the profits realised from the commercialisation of anything developed from his discarded body parts. Traditionally removed body parts were legally considered *res nullius* (lit., 'nobody's property'). Moore's tissues became the property of the medical centre due to the Lockian principle that non-claimed land becomes property when mixed with labour.

In 13 May 2012 Mao Sugiyama, a Japanese artist, cooked his own genitals and served them to five paying diners in Tokyo, in a bizarre act to raise awareness about sexual minorities. He had his penis and testicles surgically removed in March and kept them frozen for two months. Diners paid 20,000 yen for the plate with a portion of genitals, garnished with mushrooms and parsley. Police in Tokyo said they knew of the episode, but added that it had not broken the law, as cannibalism was not illegal in Japan. “I receive questions from some women and men asking: ‘Will there be a next time? Please host it again’”, Sugiyama tweeted on 16 May.

Koro is a psychological disorder characterised by delusions of penis shrinkage and retraction into the body, accompanied by panic and fear of dying. This delusion is rooted in Chinese metaphysics and cultural practises. The disorder is associated with the belief that unhealthy or abnormal sexual acts (such as sex with prostitutes or masturbation) disturb the yin/yang equilibrium which allegedly exists when a husband has sex with his wife, i. e., during *normal intercourse*. This disturbance of metaphysical harmony (loss of yang) manifests itself in penis shrinkage. *Koro* is also thought to be transmitted through food.

In mythology, Tantalus became one of the inhabitants of Tartarus, the deepest portion of the underworld, reserved for the punishment of evildoers. Tantalus was sent there because his cannibalism and his slaying of his own son horrified the Greeks of classical times. Tantalus's punishment for his acts, his name now a proverbial term for temptation without satisfaction, was to stand in a pool of water beneath a fruit tree with low branches. Whenever he reached for the fruit, the branches raised his intended meal beyond his grasp. Whenever he bent down to get a drink, the water receded before he could reach any. This fate cursed him with eternal deprivation of nourishment.

The Buridan's ass paradox refers to a hypothetical situation wherein an ass that is equally hungry and thirsty is placed precisely midway between a stack of hay and a pail of water. Since the paradox assumes the ass will always go to whichever is closer, it will die of both hunger and thirst since it cannot make any rational decision to choose one over the other. The paradox is named after the 14th century French philosopher Jean Buridan, whose philosophy of moral determinism it satirises.

The 1992 American film *Reservoir Dogs* ends with a stereotypical example of a Mexican standoff, which is a type of confrontation between three opponents armed with guns. The tactics for such a confrontation are substantially different from those for a duel, where the first to shoot has the advantage. In a confrontation among three mutually hostile participants, the first to shoot is at a tactical disadvantage. If opponent A (Mr. White / Larry Dimmick, played by Harvey Keitel) shoots opponent B (Joe Cabot, played by Lawrence Tierney), then, while so occupied, opponent C (Nice Guy Eddie Cabot, played by Chris Penn) can shoot A, thus winning the conflict. Since it is the second opponent to shoot who has the advantage, no one wants to go first.

The end of Stanley Kubrick's film *Dr. Strangelove* presents the theory of deterrence, which consists of the threat of using strong weapons against the enemy to prevent the enemy's use of those same weapons. The Russian ambassador explains that the Soviet Union has created a doomsday device consisting of fifty buried bombs with cobalt thorium G set to detonate should any nuclear attack strike their country. This doomsday device is deterrence based on the military strategy of mutually assured destruction. Faced with the scepticism of the president's scientific adviser, Dr. Strangelove, who states that the strategy needs to be made public to work, as the deterrence won't work if the device is kept secret, the Russian ambassador admits that they had plans to reveal its existence the following week at a Soviet party conference.

Crab mentality, sometimes referred to as *crabs in the bucket*, is a phrase popular among Filipinos. It describes a way of thinking best described by the phrase “If I can’t have it, neither can you”. The metaphor refers to a pot of crabs: individually, the crabs could easily escape from the pot, but instead, they grab at each other in a useless *king of the hill* competition which prevents any from escaping and ensures their collective demise. The analogy in human behaviour is that members of a group will attempt to *pull down* (negate or diminish the importance of) any member who achieves success beyond the others, out of envy, conspiracy or competitive feelings.

Finite and Infinite Games is a philosophy book by religious scholar James P. Carse in which he demonstrates a way of looking at actions in life as being a part of at least two types of what he describes as *games*: finite and infinite. A finite game is played with the goal of winning (thus ending the game). An infinite game, life for example, is played instead with the aim of continuing play and sometimes with a purpose of bringing more players into the game. Beginning to participate in an infinite game may be involuntary, in that it doesn't require conscious thought. Continuing participation in the current round of game-play is voluntary.

Russian Roulette is a 1937 short story by Georges Surdez. Sergeant Hugo Feldheim, serving in the Foreign Legion in Algeria, describes the conditions in which the suicide of his superior Sergeant Burkotvski, a gambling addict of Russian origin, took place. He claims Burkotvski had explained to him the meaning of the term *Russian roulette*: “With the Russian army in Romania, around 1917, some officer would suddenly pull out his revolver, put a single bullet in the cylinder, spin the cylinder, snap it back in place, put it to his head and pull the trigger. There were five chances to one that the hammer would set off a live cartridge and blow his brains all over the place”.

On January 10 of 49 BC, Julius Caesar led a single legion, Legio XIII Gemina, south over the river Rubicon from Cisalpine Gaul to Italy to make his way to Rome. In doing so, he (deliberately) broke the law on imperium, which did not allow troops to enter the Roman province, and made armed conflict inevitable. Caesar uttered here the famous phrase “Alea iacta est” (‘The die has been cast’) when he had crossed. The expression *crossing the Rubicon* has survived to refer to any individual or group committing itself irrevocably to a risky or revolutionary course of action, similar to the modern phrase *passing the point of no return*.

In the year 1519, Hernán Cortés and some six hundred Spaniards arrived on the coast of a mysterious, new land in faraway America. They soon learnt that it was an outpost of a powerful, warlike empire on a great inland plateau. Afraid of the confrontation, some of his men conspired to seize a ship and escape. Cortés squashed their plans and two of them were hanged, two were lashed, and one had his foot mutilated. To make sure such a mutiny did not happen again, he decided to scuttle his ships, on the pretext that they were no longer seaworthy. During the following two years he completed the conquest of the Aztec empire. There is a popular misconception that the ships were burned rather than sunk, but parts of the ships were actually used for different purposes later during the conquest.

The sentence “You can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs”, from French “On ne fait pas d’omelette sans casser des œufs”, has been sometimes attributed to Stalin, who may well have made this remark to justify his tyrannical policies. The epigram, however, seems to have been used first and with its complete meaning, during the French Revolution by Maximilien Robespierre, mastermind of the Reign of Terror. He wrote in February 1794 in *On the Principles of Political Morality*: “If virtue be the spring of a popular government in times of peace, the spring of that government during a revolution is virtue combined with terror: virtue, without which terror is destructive; terror, without which virtue is impotent”.

There is a common proverb that says “too many cooks spoil the broth”. While one cook working alone can make a decent soup, having a number of cooks arguing over the recipe, the different ingredients, how long it should be simmered, and so on, can end up being a recipe for something inedible. The expression can be traced to the 1575 book *Life of Carew*, by J. Hooker, originally as “The more cooks the worse potage”. Napoleon seems to have said something of similar meaning: “One bad general is better than two good ones”. Abraham Lincoln quoted this on one occasion, adding that “an army is better directed by a single mind, though inferior, than by two superior ones at variance and cross purposes with each other”.

After discovering that he has married his own mother, Oedipus cursed his sons Polynices and Eteocles, wishing for them to endlessly struggle over the Kingdom of Thebes or, according to other versions, to kill each other. Instead, the brothers decided to share the throne, agreeing to reign in alternation for one year each. The person not reigning should leave Thebes to thus avoid their father's curse. A year of Eteocles reigning passed and Polynices called upon Eteocles to comply with the agreement, but Eteocles refused to vacate the throne. There are different versions about why he did this. In one of them, Eteocles gave Polynices some treasure in exchange for his not reclaiming the throne, but Polynices did anyhow.

In a small inland village on Majorca there is a very popular restaurant which serves traditional vegetable and meat dishes. It is also a cafe, where one can have the typical Majorcan pastry, the *ensaimada*, for breakfast. The business belongs to three sisters who many years ago got into an argument and decided not to do business together anymore. Two sisters went one way and the third another. Because the restaurant was an inheritance and they could not agree on how to sell it, they decided to alternate their ownership of it. Every two weeks the owner changes and so does the menu, the crockery and cutlery, the ornamental plants, and even the table clock.

On 3 September 1967, traffic in Sweden switched from driving on the left-hand side of the road to the right. After a long and laborious planning, at 4:50 on *Dagen H* ('H-Day'), as it was called, all vehicles came to a complete stop, then carefully change to the right-hand side of the road and waited until they were allowed to proceed at 5:00. The change was needed as all of Sweden's immediate neighbours drove on the right. The operation required the change of traffic posts and lights, of lines painted on the roads, of public city buses, of the location of bus stops, of tram and bus routes and of headlights of all public and private vehicles.

Lepe is a town in the province of Huelva, in the south of Spain, that during the 1990s was the butt of many jokes. One of them tells of an official trip of the mayor of Lepe to London. After a few days visiting he comes back to Lepe and shares with the inhabitants his impressions of the city. Mostly he was fascinated by the low number of car accidents and the fluidity of the traffic, which he attributes to the fact that people drive on the left-hand side of the road. He decides to implement the same system in Lepe as in the UK: this year all the cars will drive on the left-hand side and, if everything works well, next year lorries will too. This might be a version of a British joke from the time just before Sweden changed over to driving on the right-hand side.

The Doppler effect, named after the Austrian physicist Christian Doppler in 1842 in Prague, is the change in frequency of a wave (or other periodic event) for an observer moving relative to its source. It is commonly heard when a vehicle sounding a siren or horn approaches, passes and recedes from an observer. Compared to the emitted frequency, the received frequency is higher during the approach, identical at the instant of passing by, and lower during the recession. The engine of vehicles coming toward the observer sounds on a higher pitch than those going away.

Due to the great numbers of Spaniards from the region of Galicia who went to South America, in some countries of the continent all Spaniards are called *Gallegos*, and by such a name they are the butt of a series of jokes in which the main character has an idiotic understanding of daily life. As it stands, true Gallegos are also known for their idiosyncrasies among Spaniards. It is said that they have the tendency to reply to everything with a new question, saying very little about themselves. Furthering this fame of being difficult to assess, it is said that, if one meets a Gallego on a staircase, one will never be sure if he is going up or down the stairs.

As a punishment for his trickery, the Greek king Sisyphus was made to roll a huge boulder up a steep hill. Before he could reach the top, however, the massive stone would always roll back down, forcing him to begin again. The maddening nature of the punishment was reserved for Sisyphus due to his overoptimistic belief that his cleverness surpassed that of Zeus himself. Zeus accordingly displayed his own cleverness by consigning Sisyphus to an eternity of useless efforts and unending frustration. Thus it came to pass that pointless or interminable activities are sometimes described as *Sisyphean*.

In logic and critical thinking, a *slippery slope* is a logical device, but it is usually known under its fallacious form, in which a person asserts that some event must inevitably follow from another without any rational argument or demonstrable mechanism for the inevitability of the event in question. For example, the gateway drug theory, sustained by this device, states that the use of less noxious drugs can lead to a future risk of using more dangerous hard drugs or crime. It is often attributed to the earlier use of one of several licit substances, including tobacco or alcohol, as well as cannabis. The reverse gateway theory posits that earlier regular cannabis use predicts later tobacco initiation and/or nicotine dependence in those who did not use tobacco before.

English writer Thomas De Quincey offers in his essay *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*, first published in 1827 in *Blackwood's Magazine* in Edinburgh, the following moral: “For, if once a man indulges himself in murder, very soon he comes to think little of robbing, and from robbing he comes next to drinking and Sabbath-breaking, and from that to incivility and procrastination. Once begun upon this downward path, you never know where you are to stop. Many a man dated his ruin from some murder or other that perhaps he thought little of at the time”.

The Threepenny Opera is a play with musical elements by German dramatist Bertolt Brecht and composer Kurt Weill and it offers a socialist critique of the capitalist world. When the main character, the petty thief Macheath, prepares to die, he laments his fate and poses some revolutionary questions: “We lower middle-class artisans who toil with our humble jemmies on small shopkeepers’ cash registers are being swallowed up by big corporations backed by the banks. What’s picking a lock compared to buying shares? What’s breaking into a bank compared to founding one? What’s murdering a man compared to employing one?”

In 1906, Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto created a mathematical formula to describe the unequal distribution of wealth in his country, observing that 20% of the people owned 80% of the wealth. After Pareto made his observation and created his formula, many others observed similar phenomena in their own areas of expertise. The 80/20 rule means that in anything a few (20%) are vital and many (80%) are trivial. For example, project managers know that 20% of the work (the first 10% and the last 10%) consumes 80% of your time and resources. The 80/20 rule may be applied to almost anything, from the science of management to the physical world.

In 1745, David Hume accepted an invitation from General St. Clair to serve him as secretary. He wore the uniform of an officer and accompanied the general as an *aide-de-camp* on diplomatic missions in Austria and Northern Italy. In 1746, he embarked with the general on an expedition against Canada ordered by the Duke of Newcastle, secretary of state. The duke, after much vacillation, decided to divert the expedition to what proved to be an abortive attack on the coast of Brittany. The Duke of Newcastle was described by his contemporaries as a man who lost half an hour every morning and spent the day in search of it.

On 3 April 2014, the National Institute of Standards and Technology of the US Government unveiled the NIST-F2, the most precise timekeeper yet developed. The ultraprecise atomic clock is so exact it is capable of maintaining perfect time for 300 million years, neither gaining nor losing one second during that time. However, according to an idea Ernst Jünger describes in *Die Schere*, one of his late books when he was 90 years old, this clock would be further from absolute accuracy than a sundial of antiquity. And, according to the popular saying, if one day it stops, it will give the right time twice at day for all eternity.

Walter Benjamin, in *The concept of History*, discusses the relationship between revolution and time. He records an incident that took place during the July Revolution, the French Revolution of 1830, which did justice to the awareness revolutionaries have of the conservative character of time: “During the evening of the first skirmishes, it turned out that the clock towers were shot at independently and simultaneously in several places in Paris. An eyewitness who may have owed his inspiration to the rhyme wrote at that moment: ‘Who would’ve thought! As though, / angered by time’s way, / the new Joshuas / beneath each tower, they say / fired at the dials / to stop the day’”.

Work-to-rule, known also as *Italian strike*, is an industrial action in which employees do no more than the minimum required by the rules of their contract, and precisely follow safety or other regulations in order to cause a slowdown, rather than to serve their purposes. Such an action is considered less disruptive than a strike, and just obeying the rules is less susceptible to disciplinary action. The term *rule-book slowdown* conveys a slightly different meaning than *work-to-rule*: the former involves applying to the letter rules that are normally set aside or interpreted less literally to increase efficiency; the latter, refraining from activities which are customary but not required by rule or job description.

Wikipedia reports that *huelga a la japonesa* (Spanish for 'Japanese-style strike') is a Spanish urban legend. The story goes that it is a phenomenon that emerged in Japan as a form of union pressure in which workers devote more effort and dedication to their tasks than normal, causing an overproduction that the owners of the industry cannot distribute on the market, thus resulting in serious economic disruption. The legend is based on the great work culture that exists in Japan, which, together with the relative remoteness of the country and its just-in-time production style, make it seem to be a credible story.

One of the propaganda techniques used by Joseph Goebbels is called *availability cascade*. It is a self-reinforcing process in which a collective belief gains more and more plausibility through its increasing repetition in public discourse (if you repeat something enough, it will become true). He said: “If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie”.

Two Japanese people enter a restaurant in Spain. They take a seat and then the waiter comes. The waiter asks what they would like to order. One of them replies, with difficulty, in English: “Three beers, please”. The waiter asks: “Two?”. The Japanese repeats: “Three beers, please”. The waiter goes to the bar and comes back with two beers. Then a third Japanese, who was presumably parking the car, enters the restaurant and joins the other two. This is an example of *confirmation bias* or *availability error*, the tendency of people to favour information that confirms their beliefs or hypotheses. People display this bias when they gather or remember information selectively, or when they interpret it in a biased way.

Juana Gallo, born Ángela Ramos, was a popular and legendary character in Mexico during the revolutionary period of 1910 to 1919. She became known in 1915 when she led a group of people enraged by the closing of the churches ordered by General Benjamin Hill. She daily visited the military barracks of the Zacatecas area selling boiled eggs, tacos, cheese, and other traditional foods. It is said that, as she was entering the canteens, she used to shout: “No sé qué tienen mis ojos, que puros cabrones veo” (‘I don’t know what’s wrong with my eyes: I only see bastards’).

American business magnate Charles Thomas Munger, in a classical talk called *The Psychology of Human Misjudgement*, refers to the “man-with-a-hammer-syndrome”, that states that, if the only tool one has is a hammer, one tends to treat everything as if it were a nail. The first recorded statement of the concept was by Abraham Kaplan, in 1964, who called it *the law of the instrument*: “Give a small boy a hammer, and he will find that everything he encounters needs pounding”. A slightly different meaning can be found in the line of the Ruben Blades’ song *Pedro Navaja*: “Si naciste para martillo, del cielo te caen los clavos” (‘If you were born to be a hammer, nails fall to you from the sky’).

Hammering Man is a series of monumental kinetic sculptures in steel designed by American artist Jonathan Borofsky which portray the silhouette of a man with a motorised arm holding a hammer, in such a way that it hammers endlessly in the air. Different versions have been installed in cities around the world, such as Frankfurt, Basel, New York, Seattle, Seoul, etc. The most prominent *Hammering Man* is 21 metres tall and was commissioned in 1990 for the new *Messturm* (exhibition tower), a building at the Frankfurt Trade Fair. The artist statement affirms that the sculpture celebrates the worker.

The sculpture *Pietà* by Michelangelo has suffered several destructive incidents since it was finished in 1499. The most substantial damage occurred on May 21, 1972 (Pentecost Sunday), when a mentally disturbed geologist named Laszlo Toth walked into the chapel and attacked the sculpture with a geologist's hammer while shouting: "I am Jesus Christ!". Onlookers took many of the pieces of marble that flew off. Later, some pieces were returned, but many were not, including Mary's nose, which had to be reconstructed from a block cut out of her back. After the attack, the work was painstakingly restored and returned to its place in St. Peter's. Now it is protected by a bullet-proof acrylic glass panel.

“Delenda est Carthago” (‘Carthage must be destroyed’) is a Latin oratorical phrase which was in popular use in the Roman Republic in the 2nd century BC, during the latter years of the Punic Wars against Carthage, by the party urging a foreign policy which sought to eliminate any further threat to the Roman Republic from its ancient rival Carthage, which had been defeated twice before and had a tendency after each defeat to rapidly rebuild its strength and engage in further warfare. The phrase was most famously uttered frequently and persistently almost to the point of absurdity by the Roman senator Cato the Elder. He invariably finished his speeches with the formula “And, furthermore, I consider that Carthage must be destroyed”.

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union in 1941 Stalin ordered both soldiers and civilians to initiate a scorched earth policy to deny the invaders basic supplies as they moved eastward. The process was repeated later in the war by the retreating German forces, which burned or destroyed farms, buildings, weapons and food to deprive Soviet forces of their use. In 1945, at the close of World War II, when Adolf Hitler issued the same order within German territory, in what has been called the *Nero Decree*, Albert Speer, his minister of Armament, actively resisted the order.

A Woman in Berlin is a personal account of the Battle of Berlin, from 20 April to 22 June 1945. It tells the story from the point of view of a German civilian woman during the last days of the Nazi regimen and the entrance of the Soviet troops. At the beginning of the book there is a note about the policy of scorched earth the German troops are using in their retreat: Herr Pauli, one of the author's neighbours, has heard about an exception to the order issued to retreating German soldiers to leave all liquor stores intact for the advancing enemy, as experience has shown that alcohol impairs the enemy's ability to fight and slows their advance.

In the first volume of *Capital*, Karl Marx tells the story of Mary Ann Walkley, 20 years of age, who died of over-work while employed in a highly-respectable dressmaking establishment of London. This girl worked, on an average, 16½ hours a day, and during the busy season often 30 hours without a break, whilst her failing labour-power was revived by occasional supplies of sherry, port, or coffee. When she died, Mary Anne Walkley had worked without intermission for 26½ hours, with sixty other girls, thirty in one room, which had only one third of the cubic feet of air they required.

Ruth Benedict's 1946 book *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* explains the meaning of the concept *strike* in Japan by commenting on an article in the magazine *Time* of 18 February 1946: "Throughout Japan strikes do not slow up production. The favourite form is for the workers 'to occupy the plant, continue work and management lose face by increasing production. Strikers at Mitsui-owned coal mine barred all management personnel from the pits and stepped daily output from 250 tons to 620. Workers at Ashio copper mines operated during a *strike*, increased production, and doubled their own wages".

In one of the stories of *The Flowers of St. Francis*, Brother Ginepro, frustrated by not being able to join the brothers when they go to preach due to his task of preparing the meals, decides to improve efficiency by cooking all of the food that the Franciscans have accumulated at once into a broth. The broth will last for two weeks, thinks Ginepro, thus granting him the freedom to preach instead of cooking supper for the brothers. When the brothers return from praying, he discovers with disappointment his naiveté, as the food, instead, has spoilt. Francis then grants Ginepro permission to preach, on the condition that he begin each sermon with these words: “I talk and talk, yet I accomplish little”.

François Caradec in his 1997 biography of Raymond Roussel explains the peculiar eating habits of the aristocratic writer: “His mother definitively set the order of his meals and Raymond Roussel had to comply without changing anything. However, because he often got up late after having worked all night, and wanted to be free in the evening to go to the show, the preordained number of meals was no longer suitable. So he adopted a solution that combined tradition and respect with his need for freedom: he had four meals in one service that successively included breakfast, lunch, five o’clock tea and dinner... If one believes André Guillot, the cook, the *meal* invariably took place from 12:30 to 17:30”.

“Can God cook a meal so big that he himself would not be able to eat it?” is a traditional formulation of the so-called *omnipotence paradox*. This question is similar to “Could God make a burrito so hot that he himself cannot eat it?” that was posed by Homer on an episode of *The Simpsons*. The point of the question is to prove God isn’t almighty: If he can make it, but cannot eat it, then he isn’t all-powerful. If he cannot make it, that he also isn’t all-powerful. This is a question that leads to a syllogistic error. You cannot compare an infinite being (God) to a finite thing (a hot burrito or heat).

Max Liebermann was an artist founder of the group Berlin Secession. He was also president of the Prussian Academy of Arts. He resigned in 1933, when all areas of German life were under the control of the Nazi regime and the Academy decided to no longer exhibit works by Jewish artists. While watching the Nazis celebrate their victory by marching through the Brandenburg Gate, Liebermann was reported to have commented: “Ich kann gar nicht so viel fressen wie ich kotzen möchte” (‘I cannot eat as much as I would like to vomit’). He died a little later, in 1935.

Marguerite Porete, a French mystic, was burnt at the stake for heresy in Paris in 1310 after a lengthy trial, as she refused to remove her book *The Mirror of Simple Souls* from circulation or to recant her views. Written originally in Old French at a time when Latin was the prescribed language for religious literature, it explores in poetry and prose the seven stages of *annihilation* the soul goes through on its path to oneness with God through love. Chapter 23 of the book is a conversation between Love and Reason, in which Love says that the Soul is inebriated by divine love. She is inebriated “not only from what she has drunk, but very intoxicated and more than intoxicated from what she never drinks nor will ever drink”.

In the 1939 film *Ninotchka*, Leon, a decadent capitalist, tries to elicit a laugh from a stern Russian commissioner, played by Greta Garbo, who is visiting Paris. He tells her a series of jokes and becomes progressively more upset due to his lack of success. Finally, almost shouting at her, he tells her one he says made him laugh himself sick when he first heard it. A man comes into a restaurant. He sits down at the table and says: “Waiter, bring me a cup of coffee *without* cream”. Five minutes later the waiter comes back and says: “I’m sorry, sir. We have no cream. Would it be all right without milk?”. The joke is later quoted by Werner Herzog in his book *Conquest of the Useless*, a diary-like account of the difficulties of making his 1982 film *Fitzcarraldo*.

In the first part (finished in 1767, published in 1782) of Jean Jacques Rousseau's putative autobiographical work *Les confessions*, he writes about a great princess who, when she was told that peasants of her country had no bread, said: "S'ils n'ont pas de pain, qu'ils mangent de la brioche!" ('If they have no bread, let them eat cake!') The phrase has been attributed to Marie Antoinette, queen of France from 1770 to 1792, but there is no evidence she ever said it. It may have been a rumour started by angry French peasants as a form of libel. Marie Antoinette was executed by guillotine in October 1793.

Panait Istrati, a Romanian writer once well known to European readers for his tales and short novels of vagabondage and adventure, fell out of favour with his Marxist comrades after he published *Russia Unveiled*, an early denunciation of the Bolshevik regime. At one point during his sixteen-month stay in the Soviet Union in the late nineteen-twenties, that would lead to Istrati's denunciation and his ultimate isolation, a Soviet official responded to one of Istrati's observations with the old saying "You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs". "I see the broken eggs", legend has Istrati responding, "but where's this omelette of yours?"

One classical *rakugo* story, a type of popular theatre in Japan, is called *The Stingy Grilled Eel Shop Owner*. A man who likes eel takes up the habit of standing in front of a shop to enjoy the delicious smell of eels being grilled with *teriyaki* sauce. He doesn't have enough money to buy a piece, so he comes every day to the front of the shop with his bowl of plain rice and eats it while sniffing. When the annoyed owner asks him to pay for using the smell of his eels, he just clinks two coins and says: "I only smelled your eel, so you can only hear my money".

From Hand to Mouth is a sculpture made in 1967 by American artist Bruce Nauman. It is a cast in plaster and pea green waxed cloth of a region of his body that included his hand, arm, part of his neck and chin, and his mouth. Besides being a description of the actual object, the title of the work is both a play on words (expressing his modest income at the time), as well as an illustration of the Nauman philosophy – that what is not there is as important as what is. The expression, *live from hand to mouth* means to have just enough money to live on and nothing to spare beyond basic necessities.

Cato used the phrase “*Bellum se ipsum alet*” (“The war will feed itself”) in 195 BC during the conquest of Hispania, but it became associated with the Thirty Years’ War. It describes the military strategy of feeding and funding armies primarily with the potentials of occupied territories. During the invasion of the Soviet Union by the German army in World War II, the conquered territories did not provide as many resources as the Nazis had expected, due to previous shortfalls of the Soviet planned economy and the devastations during the conquest. Thus, *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Göring, to supply the army, implemented strict restrictions on the local population. Aware of the consequences of these measures, in September 1941 Göring foretold “the largest starvation since the Thirty Years’ War” in the occupied areas.

An obsolete usage of the word *placebo* referred to someone who came to a funeral claiming (often falsely) a connection with the deceased to try to get a share of any food and/or drink being handed out. This usage originated from the phrase “Placebo Domino in regione vivorum” in the Roman Catholic Church’s Office of the Dead ritual. In France, it was the custom for the mourning family to distribute *largesse* to the congregation immediately following the Office of the Dead. As a consequence, distant relatives and other unrelated parasites would attend the ceremony simulating great anguish and grief in the hope of, at least, being given food and drink.

In the Battle of Asculum, in Apulia, 279 BC, the Greek king Pyrrhus of Epirus defeated the Roman legions. The two armies were likely close to the same size at 40,000 men each. The battle lasted for two days. Traditionally, it is believed that Roman casualties totalled nearly 8,000, while Pyrrhus lost some 3,000, including many of his officers. Pyrrhus later famously commented on his victory stating: “One more such victory, and we are lost”. The victory was so costly that it was barely better than defeat. It is from reports of this semi-legendary event that the term *Pyrrhic victory* originates.

“In January of 1982, an Air Florida plane crashed into the Potomac River. In the ensuing crisis, a man in the water passed the life-line on to the others four times. When the rescue helicopter came back a fifth time, he had gone under never to be seen again. He was as anonymous as he was selfless”. This is an example of *supererogation* offered by M. W. Jackson in his article “Above and beyond the call of duty”. *Supererogation* (Late Lat. *supererogatio*, ‘payment beyond what is due or asked’) indicates an act that is more than what is morally required to be done, performed where another course of action, involving less, would still be an acceptable action. Supererogation may be considered as performing above and beyond a normative course of duty to further benefits and functionality.

The second Count of Olivares was ambassador of Spain in Rome from 1582 to 1591, and during that time three different popes passed through the Vatican, Gregory XIII, Sixtus V and Gregory XIV. The count had the habit of calling his servants with a little bell. As this was reserved in Rome only for cardinals, he was advised by Sixtus V to refrain from doing so, a request that was further backed by the French ambassador. Several times the count tried, unsuccessfully, to convince the pope of his right to use the bell. The count then decided to start calling his servants by cannon shots that were heard by all of Rome, until the pope finally decided to allow him the use of the bell.

“Y hablando de cañonazos...” (‘And since we are talking about cannon shots...’) is a traditional Spanish saying that people use to imply that the next thing they are going to say is unrelated to the previous one, but they are keen to say it. The saying was originated by a man who fought in a war and was always eager to tell the stories of the campaigns in which he had participated, regardless of the conversation taking place or the interest people present may have in them. Any time there was a short silence in the conversation he pretended to have heard a cannon shot: “Didn’t you just hear a cannon shot? And since we are talking about cannon shots, I heard a lot of those in...”.

In public relations and management there is a technique for communicating criticism commonly referred to as *feedback sandwich*. What this means is giving praise (“You’ve done a great job with the project plan”), then counsel (“You have upset several people in the team who feel that you are not listening to them”) and then more praise (“That email with the progress report was well written”). The idea is that, by cushioning the blow, the counsel is more likely to be well received and acted upon. Sandwich feedback is often ineffective though: praise might be substantial and obscure the criticism, praise might be trivial or just-for-the-sake-of-it and serve no function, or employees might get tuned in to the praise-criticism-praise pattern.

“If you give me six lines written by the hand of the most honest of men, I will find something in them which will hang him” is a quote featured in *The Cyclopaedia of Practical Quotations* (1896) by Jehiel Keeler Hoyt, as said by Cardinal Richelieu, although Édouard Fournier disputes this attribution. The sentence has been used by detractors of the *nothing to hide* argument (exemplified by the motto “If you’ve got nothing to hide, you’ve got nothing to fear”), which states that government data mining and surveillance programs do not threaten privacy unless they uncover illegal activities, and that, if they do uncover illegal activities, the person committing these activities does not have the right to keep them private.

George Orwell, as he relates in *Homage to Catalonia*, was in hiding for a few weeks in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War. While the fighting against the fascists was taking place far away at the front, other battles were being waged within the republican territory itself. Orwell had been serving in the militia of the POUM, a workers political organisation that was later persecuted for its rivalry with communists and right-wing socialists. Everyone who was proved to have had a connection with the POUM was put in prison indefinitely. Orwell says he, however, did not feel in danger: “The whole thing seemed too absurd. I had the ineradicable English belief that ‘they’ cannot arrest you unless you have broken the law. It is a most dangerous belief to have during a political pogrom”.

Otto Jahn relates in his *Life of Mozart* a late chapter of the rivalry between Antonio Salieri and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. He explains how the Italian was shamefully accused of having administered poison to Mozart on his deathbed and how many came into exonerate Salieri and protest against such calumny: “The grounds on which the rumour was discredited by Kapellmeister Schwanenberg of Braunschweig, a friend of Salieri, are peculiar. When his pupil read to him from a newspaper the report of Mozart’s having been the victim of the Italian’s envy, he answered: “Pazzi! Non ha fatto niente per meritar un tal onore” (‘Madmen! He did nothing to merit such an honour’).”

“There is nothing proper about what you are doing, soldier, but do try to kill me properly” are said to have been Cicero’s last words. He bowed to his captors, leaning his head out of the litter in a gladiatorial gesture to ease the task. By baring his neck and throat to the soldiers, he was indicating that he wouldn’t resist. According to Plutarch, Herennius first slew him, then cut off his head. On Antony’s instructions his hands were cut off as well; these were nailed along with his head in the Forum Romanum according to the tradition of Marius and Sulla, both of whom had displayed the heads of their enemies in the Forum.

Chuang-Tze, a 4th century BC philosopher follower of Lao-Tze, wrote *The Dexterous Butcher*, a short story about cook Ting, who said: “A good cook need sharpen his blade but once a year. He cuts cleanly. An awkward cook sharpens his knife every month. He chops. I’ve used this knife for nineteen years, carving thousands of oxen. Still the blade is as sharp as the first time it was lifted from the whetstone. At the joints there are spaces, and the blade has no thickness. Entering with no thickness where there is space, the blade may move freely where it will: there’s plenty of room to move”. Ting explains further how he moves his blade with increasing subtlety until the meat falls apart.

Dexter Morgan is a fictional character in the *Dexter* TV series. The overall plot in the series is very complex due to its self-referentiality: he is a serial killer who kills serial killers. In each episode he catches a criminal who has escaped from justice, places him on an improvised operation table and cuts him into pieces with a variety of shiny knives. Dexter is also a member of the scientific unit of the Miami Metro Police, a blood splat analyst, and beloved by his colleagues. In his job, he skilfully interprets the traces other murderers leave, so he improves the way he removes his own traces. He mistrusts his own impulses, and analyses and corrects them accordingly.

King Philip II of Spain ruled for 44 years and his name defined an epoch. By the end of his reign, Spain was at the height of its empire, with territories across Europe and the Americas. The Philippines, a whole Asian archipelago visited by Spanish galleons, took his name. Philip's court became notorious for the bitterness of its factional infighting, in which the king himself consented murder, as in the case of Juan de Escobedo, the secretary of Don John of Austria. Philip's official court historian wrote of him that "his smile and his dagger were very close".

Apollonius of Rhodes is best known as the author of the *Argonautica*, an epic poem about Jason and the Argonauts and their quest for the Golden Fleece. He includes Orpheus as one of the members of the expedition, although this is disputed by other authors. He writes: “Some wonder, though, why Orpheus, who was weak, sailed with the heroes: because Cheiron, being a soothsayer, prophesied that they would be able to get past the Sirens with Orpheus sailing with them”. The irresistible charm of the Sirens’ song lured mariners to their destruction on the rocks surrounding their island. But Orpheus heard their song and immediately realised the peril they were in. He took out his lyre and sang a song so clear and ringing that it drowned the sound of those lovely fatal voices.

In the final scene of Harun Farocki's film *Inextinguishable Fire*, a worker gives an explanation of the Marxist critique of the division of labour that is as perverse as it is humorous. He confesses to the camera that has surprised him in the act of recovering a small object he had hidden in the factory toilet: "I work in a vacuum cleaner plant. My wife could use a vacuum cleaner at home, so, on the sly, I've been removing vacuum cleaner pieces one at a time. The problem is that, when I finish putting all the pieces together at home, what I always end up with is a sub-machine gun".

According to Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*, the ship Theseus used to return to Athens from his mission of slaying the Minotaur was kept in the Athenian harbour as a memorial for several centuries. To preserve the ship, any wood that wore out or rotted was replaced. Plutarch asked in the book whether a ship which was restored by replacing each and every one of its wooden parts remained the same ship. This thought experiment is a model for philosophers: some say it remained the same, while others say it did not remain the same. Centuries later, the philosopher Thomas Hobbes introduced a further puzzle, wondering what would happen if the original planks were gathered up after they were replaced and used to build a second ship. Which ship, if either, would be the original ship of Theseus?

In Odaiba, an area of reclaimed land in the bay of Tokyo, there is a popular themed shopping mall in which shops and passageways seem to be a duplicate of Italian streets. There are *piazzas*, *chiesas*, and even some entertainers who dress like Italian musicians. The management of the shopping mall, always aiming to surprise and for lack of a better way to further the simulation, is considering the possibility of hiring some actors to randomly pick out some visitors to be mugged, as might happen, to a minor extent, on any Italian street. A small fake police station with fake *carabinieri* would be installed, where stolen wallets and purses would be returned after the shopping. If the idea proves popular, the staff would then consider trying *violent robbery* and keeping the stolen goods, in order to enhance the experience.

For centuries, the Roman Coliseum was used for gladiatorial contests and public spectacles such as mock sea battles, animal hunts, and dramas based on classical mythology. Small theatre pieces were also presented there, in which the main roles were played by criminals. At the end of the play, the main character's fate (fictionally) was to die, although the real-life actor was executed as part of the play. For example, if a re-enactment was made of the death of Laureolus, a famous bandit punished by the Romans, another bandit would play the role in the scenes of the capture and trial, to finally be nailed to a cross and left in the company of a Scottish bear. Other plays in the repertory were, for example, the story of Attis (who castrated himself) or Hercules (who was burned alive).

Lieutenant Colonel Rudolf Höss, who was in charge of managing the Auschwitz death camp, is one of the characters in *Sophie's Choice*, a 1982 film that was a milestone in shaping the image of the holocaust in the media. The role is played by German actor Günther Maria Halmer. While watching the film one is struck by the impression that he fits the role well, that he was well cast. But, does one know what Höss looked like in reality, or is it just that Halmer looks ruthless, the evil person one has imagined Höss must have been? One then might discover, sooner or later, that one has seen the actor in *War and Remembrance*, a long TV series in which he plays the same role, one of the main characters, some years before.

Body double is a general term in filmmaking for a person who substitutes in a scene for another actor such that the person's face is not shown. The 1984 film *Body Double*, directed by Brian De Palma, featured a plot that hinged on the discovery that one character had in fact served as a body double for a woman with whom she bears some resemblance. The main character is lured into thinking that the woman he has been seeing performing erotic scenes for him while he was peeping through a telescope is the same who will be murdered later. This is made with the purpose of subtly forcing him to witness the crime and thus give erroneous testimony. A body double actor might perform actions involving nudity or special skills in which face recognition is not required.

The *Essays* of Michel de Montaigne are contained in three books and one hundred seven chapters of variable length, written, published and revised over the period from approximately 1570 to 1592. In chapter xxxv of the first volume, called "On the custom of wearing clothes", Montaigne writes: "Someone asked a beggar, whom he saw in his shirt in the depth of winter, as brisk and frolic as he who goes muffled up to the ears in furs, how he was able to endure to go so. "Why, sir", he answered, "you go with your face bare: I am all face".

The faces of four United States presidents, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln, are carved in the granite side of Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota. The carving started in 1927 and ended in 1941. The faces are sixty feet (eighteen metres) high, the same size as a six-story building. On learning that weather erodes granite one inch (twenty five millimetres) every 100,000 years, sculptor Gutzon Borglum added an extra three inches to each president's features on the sculpture. "Three inches would require 300,000 years to bring the work down to the point that I would like to finish it", he said. "In other words, the work will not be done for another 300,000 years, as it should be".

In a scene from Orson Welles' 1941 film *Citizen Kane*, the main character is discussing with Thatcher, his adviser, the financial viability of his newspaper. THATCHER: I happened to see your consolidated statement yesterday, Charles. Could I not suggest to you that it is unwise for you to continue this philanthropic enterprise – (*sneeringly*) this *Inquirer* – that is costing you one million dollars a year? KANE: You're right. We did lose a million dollars last year. (*Thatcher thinks maybe the point has registered*). KANE: We expect to lose a million next year, too. You know, Mr. Thatcher – (*starts tapping quietly*) at the rate of a million a year – we'll have to close this place in sixty years.

Jean Baudrillard, French philosopher, published in 1994 his book *The Illusion of the End*. In one of the book's last chapters, called "How can you jump over your shadow when you no longer have one?", he tells an illustrative joke when discussing society's desire to reach limits, definitive immortality, the mania for identity, for saturation, completion, repletion and perfection. It involves the story of a man walking in the rain with his umbrella under his arm. When asked why he doesn't open it, he replies: "I don't like to feel I've called on all my resources". Baudrillard died in Paris in 2007.

Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681) is regarded as one of Spain's foremost dramatists and one of the finest playwrights of world literature. He is mostly known for the play in verse *La vida es sueño* (*Life is a Dream*), in which one of the characters says: "There was a wise man once, so poor / and suffering he barely stayed alive / eating some herbs picked from the roadside ditch. / One day he asked his heart: / Is anyone as poor and sad as I? / He turned his head just then and saw / another sage, on ragged knees, / gleaning the brown-edged leaves he'd thrown away".

David Hilbert's paradox of the Grand Hotel is meant to illustrate certain counterintuitive properties of infinite sets. Consider a hypothetical hotel with a countably infinite number of rooms, all of which are occupied. One might be tempted to think that the hotel would not be able to accommodate any newly arriving guests. But suppose a new guest arrives and wishes to be accommodated in the hotel. Because the hotel has infinitely many rooms, we can move the guest occupying room 1 to room 2, the guest occupying room 2 to room 3 and so on. Every room left empty is occupied by a guest from the room next to it, and so we can fit the newcomer into room 1. By repeating this procedure, it is possible to make room for any finite number of new guests.

The Ring of Clarisse is an essay by Claudio Magris in which he analyses the crisis of the arts and thought, which in his account are not able to give unity to the contemporary disperse experience. In the book he refers to a comment by Ernst Bloch concerning the empty seat, the theatre box, which was reserved for all performances, in all theatres and in all cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire ready for the eventuality of the emperor arriving at the last moment to honour the performance with his presence. For Bloch, Magris writes, this seat never occupied is the perfect fulcrum of the Empire.

During Adolf Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem, in 1962, one of the witnesses on the stand recalled how, despite the terrible conditions in the detention camps and the tragic nature of the decision, suicide by the internees was badly viewed by fellow prisoners. This was not because of the generally accepted views against suicide found in our institutionalised world, but rather had a precise practical motive: those who wanted to kill themselves were asked to give way to their wish only once they had reached the final destination on the trains. Otherwise the space left by them would be immediately replaced by others on the transports.

On 30 November, 1810, Heinrich von Kleist wrote the following anecdote: “In very wet weather a Capuchin monk was accompanying a Swabian to the gallows. The condemned man, as they went along, several times complained aloud to God at being obliged to walk such a bitter way in such unkind weather. The Capuchin, wishing to give him some Christian comfort, said: ‘Louse, count yourself lucky. You only have to go, but I, in this foul weather, have to come back again, the same way’. Anyone who has ever felt how desolating, even in fine weather, the way back from the place of execution is, will admit the monk had a point”.

Abraham was commanded by God to offer his son Isaac up as a sacrifice. The patriarch travelled three days until he came to the mount that God told him of. Isaac carried the wood upon which he himself would be immolated. Along the way, Isaac asked his father where the animal for the burnt offering was, to which Abraham replied: "God himself will provide a lamb for a burnt offering". Just as Abraham was about to kill his son, already bound to an altar, he was interrupted by the angel of God, and he saw behind him a ram "caught in a thicket by his horns", which he sacrificed instead of his son. Then Abraham returned with his son to where his servants were, and they set off together for Beersheba.

Yakov Dzhugashvili, Stalin's son, served as an artillery officer in the Red Army and was captured on 16 July 1941 at the Battle of Smolensk, in the early stages of the German invasion of the USSR. The Germans later offered to exchange him for Friedrich Paulus, the German field marshal captured by the Soviets after the Battle of Stalingrad, but Stalin turned the offer down, allegedly saying: "I will not trade a marshal for a lieutenant". According to some sources, another proposition was also made, in which Hitler offered to exchange Yakov for his nephew Leo Raubal; this proposition was not accepted either. Yakov died in 1943 at Sachsenhausen, a concentration camp near Berlin.

Quid pro quo means an exchange of goods or services where one transfer is contingent upon the other. It is also a legal concept in the area of trade or exchange of goods or services. A contract is said to be binding if it is *quid pro quo*, that is, if it involves an exchange of goods or services for something of comparable value, usually money. It is often used to describe corrupt practises, where favours (notably political or sexual favours) are illicitly given in exchange for cash. In the 1991 thriller movie *The Silence of the Lambs*, starring Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins (as agent Clarice Starling and Dr. Hannibal Lecter, respectively), the doctor uses the term when he requests personal information from the agent in return for his knowledge of the psychology of serial killers.

Tit for tat is an English saying meaning ‘equivalent retaliation.’ It is also a highly effective strategy in game theory for the prisoner’s dilemma, usually the simplest and the most successful. An agent using this strategy will first cooperate, then subsequently replicate an opponent’s previous action. If the opponent previously was cooperative, the agent is cooperative. If not, the agent is not. The success of the tit-for-tat (TFT) strategy, which is largely cooperative despite the fact that its name emphasizes an adversarial nature, took many by surprise.

Final Nota Bene

I believe there is a reason to put this collection of texts together, although it is not clear even to me what that reason is. Rather than writing this note it might perhaps have been better to leave the book to its own devices, and to the readers, if any, to decide what kind of blend it is, to determine the character of the connections between stories which at first appear so unrelated. Categorising the collection, though, has been inspiring to me during the process of gathering and combining these paragraphs, and it may also be of use during the reading.

I suggest the reader looking at them simultaneously, or alternately, in different lighting conditions, according to the specific paragraph, to the personality of the reader, to the mood of the day, or just randomly. I shall here provide examples of the genres into which the book can fit. Some of these are such tight confinements that it can only be squeezed into them by applying brute force. But a reading can be as suggestive as the collision of the text with the genre's normalisation is violent. Thus, the only genre that might render no relevant result in this case is the one this

book deserves by default, the all embracing one of the *artist book*, the category for books that cannot be categorised.

And so, if one sovereignly decides that this book is a novel, some characters might appear repeatedly throughout the paragraphs, if only with a different name each time. If instead it is seen as a collection of poems, what might emerge from the reading is a chain of metaphors and depictions of image-experiences which are otherwise difficult to name.

The contemporaneity of the text might be enhanced when considering it a session of Internet browsing, an instance of that modern experience of click-jumping from one isolated context to another, which usually leaves the performer's impressions utterly *out of context*. In this sense the book works as an *abstractator*, a device intended to space-out the reader. If one manages to encompass the abstraction of one jump, the next one will lead the reader further into confusion. This particular browsing session might seem staged though, like a constant flow of happy coincidences, of *I'm Feeling Lucky* clicks, and of links that, no matter how straight or twisted, are always meaningful, if only by hypnotic suggestion.

This capability for abstraction comes from the fact that the most interesting stories in the book are happening in the empty space between the texts, synchronised with the movement of turning the pages, and due to the *understanding lag* entailed by reading a paragraph still under the impression of the previous one, which only then becomes fully comprehended. For that reason, I have seen the collection of paragraphs in some occasions as an installation, the importance of which is located in the relationships between the objects, and not in the objects themselves.

The attempt to force a sequential reading of an installation has engaged me in an unfair combat with polysemy: every time I have tried to tame the meaning of one paragraph into the next, to fix and reduce its connotations, it has instead spread as if I were beating embers. Many other paragraphs seemed instantly to be suitable to follow. In this struggle I have been re-enacting repeatedly the surprise of the early pioneers of film montage, experiencing once and again the Kuleshov effect, whereby shots acquire their meaning only in relation to other shots. The most unexpected implications have come up with the combination of unlikely combinable cards. The decisions I have made create a clumsy, although inexorable, thread of events which resembles a textual version of Fischli and Weiss' *Der Lauf der Dinge*, the orchestration of an organic, metastatic, domino effect.

Although aware of all these possibilities, which I have applied systematically before telling anyone to do so, most of the time I have worked with the conviction of compiling a manual of sculpture, because the first selection criteria for the paragraphs as independent entities has been their sculpturing quality: they refer mostly to ordering, to volumes, switches, exchanges, metamorphosis and alternations. Each paragraph means to be more like a bolt of lightning than a stream contributing to a flow. The title of the book, taken from the theory of games, suggests each of these paragraphs is a stroke, a move, or a phrase, that has to be reciprocated. Reciprocation might be, as in the theory of games, cooperative or hostile.

I started collecting these stories because I find them fascinating. As much as I am fascinated by them, however, I am also fed up with fascinating stories, because of the claim they make of possessing a cornerstone value. It is too common to see artists and writers diving

in search of that fascinating story whose discovery would make their day and, by extension, their artwork, their essay, their book... Too many times I feel confronted by works whose only meaning is “Look at this fascinating story”. Even worse. Often I am convinced that a fascinating story I have found will make a good cornerstone for one of my works. I think the best way to prevent this eventuality is to shoot all my cartridges at once in this publication.

This list doubles as source references and acknowledgement. In both senses Wikipedia.org receives most of it. I did not discover many stories through Wikipedia, but most of the ones I knew I wrote after looking at the related entry on the site. A few years ago it was not easy to be as accurate with data as it is now but, on the other hand, it was not so mandatory either. In the case of this book, which is mainly a collection of memories, I am as thankful to Wikipedia as I am cursed by it.

7. I first heard an explanation of this term in a 2011 documentary by Adam Curtis called *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*, but then I came across it in an earlier film, *Nice Guys Finish First*, a 1986 BBC documentary by Richard Dawkins.

8. I attended a religious school. Words are taken from the Bible.

10. The story of Aristodemus is told in *A History of Western Philosophy*, by Bertrand Russell.

12. Variation from Wikipedia.

13. Although it is not especially suitable for children, I read this short story in Spanish when I was a kid.

14. Taken from a book of anecdotes which came with a Sunday edition of a Spanish newspaper in the 80's.

15. I read about it in a thread of reddit.com.

16. philosophybites.com is run by Nigel Warburton and David Edmonds.

18. This definition appears in the interviews with Alfred Hitchcock conducted by François Truffaut in 1967.
19. Most of the information is from Wikipedia.
20. I witnessed the driver of the car I was travelling in say this as we crossed the Berlin border in 1987.
21. Most data and wording are from Wikipedia and HBO.
22. Sentences extracted from the book, translation by Annette Lavers.
23. Taken from *Seppuku: A History of Samurai Suicide*, by Andrew Rankin.
24. I attended a religious school. Words are taken mainly from Wikipedia.
26. Learnt on the BBC documentary series *Nuremberg: Nazis on Trial*, and later in *Nuremberg- Tyranny on Trial* (The History Channel).
27. It appears in the documentary *The Gospel According to Philip K. Dick*, which Erik pointed out to me.
28. Taken from the translation by Peter Winch.
29. I heard about it in a samurai movie.
30. I first read about the Jesuits policy in *Cultural Hybridity*, by Peter Burke.
31. Taken from *Seppuku: A History of Samurai Suicide*, by Andrew Rankin.
32. Translated by Philip Beitchman.
34. This is a scene from *Blade Runner*, written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples after a Philip K. Dick novel.

35. Taken from *Seppuku: A History of Samurai Suicide*, by Andrew Rankin.
36. I found out about this when I was researching *premature obituaries* for my project *If Alive* (ifalive.com). The details are from Wikipedia.
37. When visiting Taipei, Marko took me to the best Buddhist restaurant in town, where rich monks have their treats and where all kind of fish and meat dishes are replicated using only vegetable products. We came up with this idea while having lunch there.
39. I first read about this in 1994 in *Historia de la técnica*, by Nicolás García Tapia.
40. Popular but final research in Wikipedia.
41. General culture.
42. Popular but some data from Wikipedia.
43. I read about this koan first in relation to John Cage, who learnt it from D. T. Suzuki.
46. Wikipedia.
47. Heard this story in the audiobook compilation *Terror's Echo: Novellas from Transgressions*, narrated by John Bedford Lloyd.
48. I read in an online news site that filmmaker Satish Kaushik was planning to make a movie about Bihari's life and *death*.
49. I heard about it in the process of research for my project *If Alive* (ifalive.com).
50. I heard Audible's *Alexander, the Great*, narrated by Charlton Griffin.
52. Ingrid went to one of these stigmatised lakes a couple of times and told me.

53. Well known in Japan.

54. philosophybites.com is run by Nigel Warburton and David Edmonds.

55. I watched the movie after Javier Utray narrated the scene at the Moriarty Gallery in Madrid in 1991.

58. In 1995 I was granted a one month art residency at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University. From the cabin where I was staying I could hear the sound of the water falling.

59. I read it in Plutarch talking about Alexander.

60. The beginning of my knowledge of this story was Bob Dylan's song *Hurricane*, from the 1976 album *Desire*.

61. I watched it in London on Sakiko's recommendation.

62. There is a very good interview at philosophybites.com, by Nigel Warburton and David Edmonds, where I first learnt about the book.

63. Appeared in japantoday.com on May 26, 2012.

64. Appears in *Abnormal Psychology: A Clinical Approach to Psychological Deviants*, by James D. Page (1947).

65. Wording from Wikipedia.

68. Kubrick's films were shown in my hometown in matinée programmes when I was a teenager.

69. Commonly used in management literature and in theory of games.

70. Geert Hofstede talks about it in *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, when explaining the specificity of Japanese business practices.

72. I was born on the 10th of January. I use it for my research for *If Alive* (ifalive.com).

75. It was quoted by Ulrike Boesser, a member of the Town Council of Munich and specialist in urban planning, in an interview she gave for my project *Train Time Zeit Zug*.

77. Toni brought me to the restaurant and told me the story.

78. A nice Swedish guy told me this one evening in Gothenburg when I was visiting the city for a show in 1996.

81. I heard it first from Miguel, a Gallego, in the beginning of the 80's in Madrid.

83. Most of it is from Wikipedia.

86. From a book on management, probably *Management for Dummies*.

87. It is noted in a letter Hume wrote to his brother John in 1746 and published in *The Letters of David Hume*, edited by J. Y. T. Greig.

88. Part of it taken from huffingtonpost.com, April 4th 2014.

90. It is often used in Spanish as *huelga de celo*, but wording from Wikipedia.

92. First heard in *The Goebbels Experiment*, a 2005 film based on Goebbels diaries, narrated by Kenneth Branagh.

93. I witnessed this scene in a bar in Majorca.

94. My father used to say this as a joke. I found bits and pieces in various Mexican websites.

95. The talk is on youtube.com. It was featured in a boingboing.net post. *Pedro Navaja* was very popular when I was teenager.

97. I remember watching it in the news on TV at the time, but I found it again when interviewing Dario Gamboni for my project *Train Time Zeit Zug*.

98 I read this sentence when I was a kid in *Asterix and the Laurel Wreath*.

100. I read it when I first settled down in Berlin, by recommendation of Connie.

104 Taken from *Raymond Roussel*, by François Caradec. I read it first in the prologue of the Spanish edition of *Impressions of Africa*, in a Siruela edition.

105. Adrian Moore explains this paradox in a podcast of *Philosophy Bites*, philosophybites.com, run by Nigel Warburton and David Edmonds.

106. From Wikipedia.

107. Menchu recommended the book and told me about this chapter.

109. From Wikipedia.

110. I read it first in *Zizek's Jokes*, MIT Press, 2014.

111. Yohsuke told me this story while we were hungry, in a queue for eating dumplings, at the entrance of a restaurant in Omotesandō.

112. Taken from the website of the Hirschhorn museum, to which collection this work belongs.

114. Gleaned while reading about *Office of the Dead* by the composer Jan Dismas Zelenka. Most of the information is from Wikipedia.

116. I heard about *supererogation* first from *The Pig That Wants to Be Eaten, and Ninety-Nine Other Thought Experiments*, by Julian Baggini.

117. My brother told me this once and then I looked for it while I was living in Rome, on the Gianicolo, a hill where a gun is fired each day at noon.

118. Taken from *El porqué de los dichos*, by José María Iribarren.

119. Taken from the book *The Mind Gym: Wake Up Your Mind*

120. Taken from wikiquote.org and Wikipedia.

121. I listened to the audiobook, beautifully narrated by Patrick Tull.

122. Taken from a book of anecdotes which came with a Sunday edition of a Spanish newspaper in the 80's, and then from Google Books.

123. I became interested in the life of Cicero after listening to *A History of Western Philosophy*, by Bertrand Russell. The text is from Wikipedia.

124. It is used by Baudrillard as an illustration in his *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (1976).

125. Produced by Showtime Networks.

126. Taken from *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (britannica.com).

129 I read it first in *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*, who I think mistakenly refers to this ship as the Argo, the one Jason and the Argonauts used for seeking the Golden Fleece.

130. Pure fiction based on a visit to a shopping mall in Odaiba called *Venus Fort*.

131. Taken from the book *The Way of the Gladiator*, by Daniel P.

Mannix. I came across these uses of the Coliseum while realising my project *The Colossal Blog* in Rome, which involved deep research on the building.

132. It happened to me.

134. I read this quote years ago in a text about Ingmar Bergman's *Ansiktet* (*The Face*). It is also quoted in *Notes of the Cinematographer*, by Robert Bresson.

135. Taken from Futility Closet (futilitycloset.com).

139. Adrian Moore explains this paradox in a podcast of *Philosophy Bites*, philosophybites.com, run by Nigel Warburton and David Edmonds.

141. The footage of this testimony appears in Eyal Sivan's *The Specialist*, a documentary film about Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem.

142. I first heard this as a joke referring to the last executions of Francisco Franco's regime in 1975, but found it recently in David Constantine's *Selected Writings* of Von Kleist.

143. I attended a religious school.

144. I read about this in *Women of the Third Reich*, by Anna Maria Sigmund, which I learnt of from Chus.

145. Thanks to *The Silence of the Lambs* I learnt about this term, about Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* and about Glenn Gould's version of the *Goldberg Variations*.

146. I first heard an explanation of this term in a 2011 documentary by Adam Curtis called *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*, but then I came across it in an earlier film, *Nice Guys Finish First*, a 1986 BBC documentary by Richard Dawkins.

Manuel Saiz is an artist. He has published books as *Catalogue of Machinery*, *101 Excuses: How Art Legitimizes Itself*, *Art Lovers 101 Key Ideas*, *A Colossal Blog* and *Train Time - Zeit Zug*. His works on video and photography and his installations and sculptures have been seen on galleries and festivals in Tokyo, London, Berlin and Madrid. Saiz has curated several art projects as *25hrs*, *VideoDictionary* and *Art Summer University* at Tate Modern in London and *One True Art* at MNCARS in Madrid. He lives in Berlin. www.manuelsaiz.com