

December 2018

L'Eco del Bunker

Ideas, culture, independence

It's up to you
New York
New York
New Yorkoooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

EDITORIAL

Successus (succedo). The act of penetrating. Cavern, cave, hole. Going towards.

“Not long after that, a wandering Indian man went to sell baskets at the house of a well-known lawyer in my neighborhood. “Would you like to buy some baskets?” he asked. “No, we do not need any,” they replied. “What!” the Indian man exclaimed as he went out of the gate, “do you want us to starve?” Seeing his industrious white neighbours so well off, - the lawyer only had to weave some arguments and wealth and standing magically followed, he said to himself “I will go into business; I will weave baskets; it is something I can do”. He thought that if he wove the baskets, he would do his part and then it would be the white man’s turn to buy them. He did not realise that it was necessary for him to make the purchase of the basket look worth or at least make the lawyer think that it was so. I also had woven a kind of basket of a delicate texture but I had not persuaded anyone to buy it. However, in my case, I thought that weaving them was profitable for me, and instead of studying how to make them profitable for other people, I rather studied how to avoid the necessity of selling them. The life that people praise and regard as successful is only one possible kind. Why should we take too advantage from only one kind at the expense of the others?”

Henry David Thoreau & The egomaniac writer



MANKIND’S MOST POWERFUL COPING MECHANISM

The contradiction between our mortality and the never-ending seconds, minutes and hours of our days are at the very center of our civilizational malaise. We have all the time in the world to understand that there is nothing to do. Success as a goal appears to be the only worthwhile occupation, since we can at least distract ourselves from our interior, collective void.

Success is the most powerful drug, once a man has tasted it, he can never let go of it. It syphons his energy, his time, his consciousness and his arrogance makes him forget his condition. Wise men have always insisted on keeping powerful men aware of this treachery. Alexander was kindly asked to get out of Diogenes’ sun, and he did. “Memento mori”, others whispered at the ears of Charles the Fifth, who later retired from the world in a monastery in Spain, suddenly overwhelmed by the vanity of his past endeavors.

As humans starting our journey in this world, it would be necessary to learn right now, how not to take ourselves too seriously. Humanity is heavy, as put it Céline in his imaged language, by all this seriousness, this cold rigor, this obstinacy in foolishness and mediocrity. Let us not further contribute to our species’ dark history.

There are actually two human histories. One forged by wars, politics, resources, money, steam machines and artificial intelligence. The other by adventure, organized chaos and unwillingness to be part of this collective mess known as ‘civilization’, a ballad of fallen angels. Let us not forget that civilization is an invention and like all inventions, it finds its justification as a step towards the eradication of pain and suffering.

Organized chaos or planned escape from boredom is the dilemma. While the first is hardly sustainable, the second is capitulation. The first is life. It is based on the subtle dialectics of pleasure and pain, joy and suffering. The second is linear, finite and bears the seeds of humanity’s end. When pain and suffering will be totally eradicated, progress will objectively end, and our history with it.

Our cosmic being knows and feels all this, but our earthly bodies and minds have built a multitude of stratagems to escape from this harsh reality.

(Inspired by the grey Lombardian winter)

Sami Norredine
sami.norredine@studbocconi.it



CAN THE SUCCESS OF POPULISM DEFEAT THE PRESS?

"I soon learnt, that, provided I neither spoke of the Wealth of Nations in my writings, nor of the Government, nor of Religion, [...] I was at liberty to write, freely, all, and whatever I pleased, under the inspection of some two or three Censors!"

Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

Italian and international politics are the unfortunate victims the pauperization of political dialogue, built upon slogans and stadium chants in the posts and tweets published on the plethora of social networks. Even more despicable than the death of the much more civil contradictory is the recent war with no holds barred undertaken by the Italian government against journalists, accused of perpetrating actions of daily sabotage against the government itself in the name of private interests, an accusation that clashes with the 'real' information.

The casus belli of this conflict was the recent acquittal (N.B. *"Because the fact does not constitute a crime"*) of the mayor of Rome, Virginia Raggi, accused of forgery in a public act. The reactions did not wait. This time, instead of the usual accusations between parties, the target was 'The Press' and the community of journalists who are part of it. They got grotesquely defined by some members of the 5 Star Movement, as well as by a Minister of the Republic, as *"Whores"*, *"Hack writers"*, *"Jackals"* and other very pleasant names, adding the threat of *"Creating a law on pure publishers"* that reeks of good old fascist MinCulPop.

They closely follow the die-hard fans that scream on social media armed with caps lock and sharp exclamation marks to attack the information system, which is accused of being the enemy of truth instead of its emissary.

And then criticism, answers, counter-accusations, in a bombastic climax that crashes miserably before the final curtain falls, ending in many words in the wind and nothing done. For the time being, that is.

A fundamental question, however, remains unanswered, lost in the fog of the cacophony of words.

"Where is Lady Truth in all this?"

Probably on both sides and nowhere at the same time; Truth is superficial and constantly changing, like the Woman in Rigoletto.

On the one hand, 'The Press' tries to narrate it but it is still the victim of the humanity of the voices that shape the narration, with nuances, interpretations and ideas.

On the other hand, politics always and forever, will inevitably take advantage of the servility of information, attempting to put it under a boot or make a puppet out of it.

This is where the wild card of populism comes in. Can the consensus generate a new way of informing, where only what people like is true and the rest is a plot or an enemy to fight? Often in today's political landscape we see statements, denials, fake news and new versions that are frantically overwritten, degenerating into a situation of chaos and anarchy of information.

To take advantage of this media blender, populists have often been the ones who, riding the wave of uncompromising consensus, have pushed the use of different medias to replace 'The Press', sneaking into the immense opening created by social media. This is how a blog becomes an infallible informational channel and a Facebook page is a source of new truth.

'The Press' has not only become an enemy, subjected to imaginary external powers and blinded by opposing ideals, but also a competitor to beat on the clicking field.

It is undeniably true that in a newspaper, a TV channel or in general, information has an editorial line and private owners who could potentially influence the ideas and political sympathies of its employees, but it is equally true that even though journalists may be

subject to various biases and directives, the Truth of the facts can be manipulated up to a certain point and the objective core of news cannot be undermined without fatally transforming a biased interpretation into a lie. There's also the fact that everyone holds personal responsibility of their actions and opinions, so if a journalist tells lies trying to perpetrate a scheme against a party or a politician, the Law exists to protect the victim, put right and prevent cases of bad information.

Another delicate topic touched by the government in these days is the proposal to create a commission to supervise the contents of scientific broadcasts, especially on public service channels.

The justification for this is to *"Inform the citizen at 370 degrees"* (quoting Barbara Lezzi – M5S, the Minister for Territorial Cohesion) giving all possible versions on a given topic, trying to guarantee the notorious pluralism of scientific theories.

Not only should 'The Press' be friendlier, but also scientific communication would need to be examined by the new faces of power - I shudder at the thought - among which there are also anti-vaccinists, 'chemtrailers' 'flat-earthers' and other refined thinkers of the perennial conspiracy theory.

Although populist parties try to be self-referential in the generation of alternative anti-establishment information, it is extremely serious and unconceivable that anyone could

put limits on the press and free information; the only desirable limit would be to hinder the propagation of fake and biased news that proliferate social media, created specifically to get thousands of easy clicks.

In conclusion, it is essential to remember that Western civilization has always been built upon freedom, on the diffusion of culture and access to information for everyone. The contrast between politics and The Press should generate new ideas and improve the existing ones, because if something goes wrong it is the duty of the Press to publish it and the job of politics is to solve it. On the contrary, today it has turned into a 'Dog and pony show' made up of many walk-ons who say their opinion without interruption, where it is enough to say anything and the opposite of everything, obtaining NOTHINGNESS.

Thomas Jefferson's words could not be more appropriate to describe how we should love and defend our freedom, treasuring it continuously in the reoccurring search for Lady Truth.

"Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, that cannot be limited without being lost."

Alessandro Cavagnera
ale.cavagnera@tiscali.it
Tradotto da Carly Cornell



ABRAHAM, ODYSSEUS, AENEAS

. THREE HEROES, THREE ARCHETYPES OF SUCCESS

The three main elements of a good narration, whether it is a historical novel, a short story or a myth that has its roots in the dawn of time, are the presence of the main protagonist, the description of a setting and the flow of time that modifies the attitude of the former and the characteristics of the latter.

The figure of the main character, depicted as a hero since primal novels, has changed a lot among generations, with the passing of centuries. Until the art for art's sake dogma, and even during the darkest times of last century, the hero's figure has maintained some symbolical, moral and ethical traits that supported the most diverse conceptions of power and about human beings. What we know about this figure is based on three different narrative traditions: Judeo-Christian, Latin and Greek.

The oldest one, and also the most modern and lasting, is undoubtedly the Judeo-Christian tradition, that has its maximum expression in the Bible. The figure of the hero emerging from the Ancient Testament finds his heroic dimension in the act of salvation towards the Chosen People. Biblical heroes are Abel, Abraham, Moses,

Solomon and King David: all these people share a great faith in the Ancient Testament God and the conviction that Israeli people's salvation could happen following the dogmas imposed by the divine command. So men's model is based on a religious concept of membership and loyalty. This vision is reprised by the Catholic tradition, that expands the heroes' pantheon with the figures of saints and their hagiographies. Moreover, a man's subordination to a religious doctrine determines its success, existing only in the divine world. So it is also masterfully expressed in Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, in which we can get a final message saying that earthly success is evanescent, passing, and the only thing that counts is the eternal salvation of your soul. Therefore overcoming the abyss, moving from the ethical existence, depicted from judge Wilhelm in Kierkegaard's *Enter-Eller*, to the religious existence embodied by Abraham, that abandoned all his moral duties to follow the divine command.

The hero's figure in the Greek literature can be nothing but the reflection of the inheritance of both of the masterpieces written by Homer. So Achilles and Odysseus are the reference figures: the former is

irascible, impulsive, impetuous, furious; the latter is reflective, sly, clever, cunning, fortunate. Achilles challenges gods, he does not recognize anyone's authority but his, while Odysseus tries to use every hostile situation happening to him to his advantage; he is the emblem of the modern man, adventurous and curious about the unknown. It is no coincidence that his figure permeates the Western literature: his adventures resonate in the ones in the early six books of Virgil's *Aeneid*, whilst his thirst for knowledge is recalled by Dante Alighieri's immortal verses (you were not made...); in the Romantic poets' imaginary Odysseus is the man that challenges the unknown and that can only search for knowledge (I cannot rest from travel: I will drink life to the lees); in Ugo Foscolo's work *Zakynthos* he is the lost and researched native land, as the rocky native Ithaca for the Greek hero. Joyce dedicates his masterpiece *Ulysses* to him, Pascoli recalls him in the figure of Alexander the Great, while Primo Levi associates the last hope of the man as such in the Nazi concentration camps to the figure of Odysseus that seeks *virtute e canoscenza* (worth and knowledge).

Just as the Roman imperial dimension is different from the more troubled experience of democracies in Peloponnese, so the figure of Aeneas, forefather of gens Iulia and Rome's founder, is different from the Greek heroes: not only the Trojan fugitive avoids challenging gods and fate, but he shows himself passive, almost subordinate, towards his own destiny and the divinities deciding it. Aeneas is pious, devoted to the gods deciding his fate (*erga deos*), to his ancestors (*erga parentes*) and to his community (*erga patriam*). So he is not only a hero, a founder of populations, a leader; he is above all the tangible symbol of the human, civil, military and religious virtues eulogized by the Romans, that allowed the Roman Empire to maintain its greatness, its system, its *pax* (peace) which is founded on the respect of human and divine laws. Aeneas's figure will then be reprised by the greatest Empires of the 20th century:

the *pietas* is recalled by Mussolini in the Fascist mottoes of *balillas* (young fascists); the cult of the State, traditions and Religion (or an ideology) inexorably affect Nazi and Communist narrative, raising model citizens (such as Aleksej Stachanov) to true heroes of the fatherland.

Therefore Western tradition is founded on three parallel and opposed movements: Abraham's subordination to the faith in God, Odysseus's curiosity and thirst for knowledge and Aeneas's *pietas* in the Roman Empire. The narrations that permeated the collective conscience of the European people in the last two millenniums are built on these bases. Then what can we understand about the nature and the success of a hero? Are the most successful people the ones who sacrifice what is truly dear to them, as Abraham on Mount Moriah, to follow a god's command, being it an ideal, a philosophy, a mere materialistic expedient? Is it really more important to overcome our own limits, to enter Polyphemus's cavern and come out intact, to declare ourselves winners? Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield? Does feeling accomplished satisfy our desire, or will we yell "*We arrived; it is the end*" at the world borders, cry like Pascoli's Alexandros, dreaming about our distant Epirus? Or is a man's destiny inseparably bonded to his environment and his traditions? God, Homeland, Family were taught to our grandparents as values during the fascist dictatorship; is it possible that an apparently noble vision could have brought us to the atrocities of World War II? Which was true glory? We already know who we will ask the hard decision to...

Pietro Mazzeri

p.mazzeri@gmail.com

Translated by Paolo J. Vitrano



THE IDEA OF SUCCESS IN 'THE GREAT GATSBY'

'The Great Gatsby' is without any doubt one of the most important novels in the American and probably also the worldwide literature.

Written in 1925 by Francis Scott Fitzgerald, it is one of the masterpieces of the 20th century literature and gives a deep insight in the world and the life of the so-called 'Roaring Twenties' in the United States. Furthermore, it is a tale that also shows us the idea of the American Dream that has brought so many to this new continent in search for a new chance.

Seen by many as Fitzgerald's masterpiece, 'The Great Gatsby' takes place in the towns of East Egg and West Egg on Long Island in the summer of 1922, when the narrator Nick Carraway, a young Yale graduate, moves to New York and rents a house on Long Island next to the mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby, who is famous due to his incredible parties. After that, he sees his cousin Daisy and her boyfriend Tom and is soon invited to one of Gatsby's legendary parties, where he meets the tycoon himself and the two start becoming friends. In the meantime, Nick discovers that Tom has an affair with a married woman called Myrtle and that Gatsby has been in love with Daisy since the time of the war, where all three major male characters had fought. The self-made millionaire reconnects with Daisy through Nick and starts having an affair with her: when Gatsby reveals Tom about his intimacy with Daisy and she is about to break up with her boyfriend, he angrily confronts Gatsby even if he is unfaithful himself and tells his girlfriend that the tycoon made his money illegally. Nick's cousin though decides to stay with Tom, breaking Gatsby's lifelong dream of taking her back. While they both drive home together, Daisy accidentally kills Myrtle, with the tycoon taking the blame for her. At the end of the novel, Myrtle's husband shoots Gatsby in a vendetta after Tom tells him it was Jay's car who killed his

wife, and Nick organizes his funeral, where nobody apart from Jay's father attends. The main motive of the novel is the idea of money and materialism: it shows the glorious era after the World War defined by the widespread economic wealth and the new innovations. The perversion linked with money can be seen in the plot as well as in all the main characters, whose aspirations and actions are mainly driven from material desires.

Nick is the narrator and the only one with an external, critical opinion about the lifestyle of excesses on Long Island. Through his eyes, the reader captures the absence of morality and the pure desire for richness of all the other characters.

Tom is part of a very wealthy family and is always prone to show everyone his opulent lifestyle and sees himself as better because of his money. Furthermore, he cheats on his girlfriend and is violent in his behaviour with Myrtle, who is seen as a toy used to pass his time.

His fiancé Daisy is another unfaithful character driven mainly by money: after having met Gatsby during the war, she gets in a relationship with Tom and when she meets Jay again they end up having an affair. However, when she has to choose between the two men, she does not choose Gatsby, towards whom she has feelings, but Tom due to the incredible wealth he can guarantee her.

Myrtle is the wife of a gas station owner and lives thus in modest conditions but when she meets Tom she sees him as a gateway to a lifestyle of luxury.

Last but not least, Gatsby is a man of humble origins who made his fortune alone, which is seen by many as autobiographic of Fitzgerald's life. What seems to be the success of the American Dream at the beginning gets darker and darker throughout the plot: we discover that he became rich

through crimes and that he did that mostly to re-conquer Daisy. His gigantic parties are nothing but a way to meet her again and show everyone his fortune, but instead of enjoying them he spends the time alone in his house. Furthermore, after his dream is destroyed, the reader finds a man who is rich but desperate, and, as the funeral shows, very lonely. The fact that he is killed because of a crime he covered up for love by the man that thought of him as Myrtle's lover (who is in reality Tom) adds another layer of tragedy to the character of the young man full of hopes who was willing to do everything to get rich and win back Daisy but end up shot in his own pool.

That same pool has a symbolic meaning, as the millionaire himself wanted to enjoy one of his first swims and thus enjoy his richness for the first time but ends up being killed in that exact place.

The characters and especially Gatsby are directly tied to the idea of success in the novel: while the society as a whole saw monetary wealth as a sign of success in one person's life, Fitzgerald shows his criticism to this view in his masterpiece.

Through the eyes of Nick Carraway, who is external to the opulent lifestyle of Long Island, we have a critical view about the habits and lives of the rich New Yorkers.

Tom and Daisy, who should be, according to society, 'winners' are in reality materialistic and without any values: they chase money and their relationship is violated by the cheating on both sides and in the end, it is only Daisy's desire for Tom's family wealth that prevents them from breaking up.

Myrtle (and also her husband) are the victims of the rich: however, while Myrtle actively chooses her faith dreaming of a glamorous life, her husband is mainly passive, apart from when he kills the 'wrong' lover of his wife. Gatsby, on the other hand, is the most important character to understand the idea of success in the novel and in Fitzgerald's opinion in general.

While on the surface we might see him as a lucky man who has a huge wealth, who is well known and who throws these gigantic parties, when the plot goes on we see that the truth is much sadder.

We discover that instead of the young, rich self-made millionaire he always wants to be seen as, he has in reality earned his money with alcohol bootlegging and other criminal activities. Furthermore, we get to know that his only purpose to get rich was to win back his old love Daisy and he comes very close to his goal with her almost leaving Tom but he is in the end not only left alone but also killed for a crime she committed. Also, all the legendary parties turn out to be only a way of meeting Daisy again and Gatsby does not enjoy them or his fortune at all: on the contrary, he spends his time alone while everybody else is having fun at his expense and the first time he uses his pool he gets killed. However, it is the scene of his funeral that gives the last confirmation about the failure of Gatsby's life: the ceremony is organized by Nick, whom he knows since very little time, and all the masses present at his parties are absent. Every person invited does not show up and even Gatsby's crime partner Wolfsheimer refuses to come. The only person present apart from Nick is Jay's father, who is the personification of the humble origins of the millionaire, whose name was once James Gatz, and who still attends even if his son has lost himself in the search for monetary wealth in Long Island.

All these aspects taken together suggest that the novel sees the opulence and excess with a very critical eye. Fitzgerald, contrary to the public in the 20s, does not see money as success, as the sad and lonely story of Gatsby shows us and as the only one that comes at the funeral is coming from the humble origins of the millionaire.

*Alessandro Derchi
alederchi@virgilio.it*

HIKIKOMORI

WHEN THE PRICE OF SUCCESS IS JUST TOO HIGH

100,000 people missing. 100,000 people completely vanished, disappeared into thin air. One day they're hanging out with their friends, commuting on the bus, listening to a new playlist and then nothing of them remains, if not too many unanswered questions.

It might sound like the perfect plot for the next best-selling novel, or the beginning of a thrilling tv series. But although it's hard to believe, it is exactly what is happening in Italy these days. Hundreds of boys and girls disappear every year in the silence of the media and without any intervention from the authorities. To your surprise, the reason is strikingly simple: these people haven't disappeared at all. Or rather, they have decided to do so. In fact an estimated 100,000 young people is willingly isolating themselves in their rooms, gradually withdrawing from society and giving up on any kind of social interaction, refusing any contact whatsoever with the rest of the world.

Broken out in Japan in the eighties, the phenomenon is known as hikikomori, which literary means 'pulling inward, being confined' and is used to address both the withdrawal from society and the people involved in this recent and still mostly unknown issue.

Despite the seriousness of the problem, not many have heard about it, except the few touched by it, personally or through a familiar or friend, with the result of leaving them completely alone to face the problem. Even from a medical point of view there is still much to know about hikikomori: origins and possible treatments are surrounded by uncertainty, so that trying to help those affected by the problem have even less chances of receiving adequate assistance. The psychiatrist Saitō, the first to point it out, defined the phenomenon as *"the*

state of avoiding social engagement (e.g., education, employment, and friendships) with generally persistent withdrawal into one's residence for at least six months as a result of various factors" (Saitō, 2008). In order to identify it, the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare have settled official criteria, include living almost confined at home, the refusal of social interaction, a minimum duration of six-months and no apparent pathology related to it. This last trait is the one that led the communication scholar and professor Flavio Rizzo to describe hikikomorias *"post-modern hermits"* and to highlight the role of Japanese culture in the development of this phenomenon.

Initially shared by many academics, this vision is now widely rejected, given the diffusion of hikikomori in many other countries, especially economically developed ones.

So what causes hikikomori? Looking for similarities through the witnesses and the stories reported from families and close friends, there can be found one common characteristic that unifies all of the cases: the pressure for success. Between school grades, family demands and workplace duties, it's hard to fulfil all of these expectations, not to mention the rising urge to build a perfect image on social media to obtain popularity and attention.

Having to face this huge pressure and the consequent fear of failure often becomes unbearable to very sensitive individuals, who then decide to just take a step back from the responsibilities that society imposes them. Hence the self-confinement in a small and familiar place, as their own rooms, where they're free to be themselves and the external world can't harm or judge them; it is a drastic way to escape society's logics, by refusing to be part of it.



According to the explanation given by many scholars, we could think about hikikomorias a form of escape, that paradoxically requires a physical imprisonment, from a system of rules which are just too strict and oppressive. In a world that does not allow individuals to express themselves, but just expects them to follow an established and socially accepted path, the reclusion becomes the only mean to express a personal dissent or discomfort toward those restrictions.

This alone should already be a good explanation of the historical origin of the problem: Japanese culture is broadly known for its high level of competitiveness and its positive concept of conformism, which not only tends to be rewarded and encouraged, but even considered as the only respectable way to become accomplished in life.

To this already austere environment, a few key factors must be added: the lack of a paternal figure (often because of the exhausting rhythm of shifts and the devotion to work ethics) and, on the other side, a dependency from the overprotective role of mothers, whose presence becomes so invasive that it does not allow the children to learn from their mistakes and only reinforces their fear of failure. In addition it shouldn't be forgotten the part played by the recent economic and social crisis, which left a whole new generation questioning the sense and purpose of their daily sacrifices, which had not been enough to grant them stability and certainty.

Hikikomori was first observed at the end of the eighties and nowadays it is believed that the malaise has propagated to reach thousands of people; although official estimate reports about half a million subjects involved, many associations assert that the real amount of cases could easily amount to double that number or even more. It is extremely hard to precisely gauge the total; partly it is due to the stigma

still surrounding mental and psychological health in Japan, but also because of the ignored cases of affected females, since the role of women is considered more marginal, so that a certain tendency to isolation is commonly expected and not perceived as worrying.

Other critical aspects to consider are the general increase in competitiveness at school and work in a globalised world, the attention given to both social and technical skills, the diffusion of more uncertain and stressful job patterns and the growing number of only-children, who have to bear by themselves all of their parents expectations. These are just some of the reasons of the hikikomori spread we are witnessing all over the world, with hundreds of new cases pointed out every year, plus an imprecise and worrying amount of others that doesn't get reported at all.

These numbers highlight a social problem that cannot be ignored anymore. While the authorities have trouble keeping up with the rising call for solutions, more and more associations, websites and online groups are emerging to try and help hikikomori people and their families. At the same time another reflection must be made: more than just searching for a solution to this already existing problem, modern society should do something about its causes, trying to prevent the development of such issues.

To what extent are we ready to submit ourselves to common logics and schemes, ignoring our nature and passions? What are we ready to give up just to fulfil social expectations?

Success surely requires abnegation and sacrifices. But is it even success if the price is to lose ourselves?

Sarah Baracchini Caputi
sarahbaracchini@gmail.com

THE CASE OF ELON MUSK

The Good

At the age of 47 years old, Elon Musk is an entrepreneur, an investor, and a billionaire with a net worth estimated at US\$ 22.3 billion (November 2018). He holds three different passports, one from South Africa where he was born, one from Canada where he studied (Queens) and one from the US where he also later studied (Penn) and has subsequently been working for most of his life.

Musk is often depicted as one of the most successful entrepreneurs of the century. He became famous by revolutionizing internet payments with PayPal which he then sold to eBay for US\$1.5bln. He then reinvested his share of the profits (~US\$165M) to found several groundbreaking companies, the most famous one being the electric automotive company Tesla. Musk is also the Founder of the rocket-ship builder SpaceX, who now has a contract with the NASA to send astronauts to the International Space Station. Elon also invested in his cousins' venture, the solar-energy company SolarCity, which he helped develop and was eventually acquired by Tesla in 2016. Furthermore, he is behind the Hyperloop project which could potentially revolutionize the way we travel. Moreover, he is involved/ personally launched a myriad of other start-ups ranging from OpenAI which aims to develop friendly Artificial Intelligence to benefit humanity to Neuralink a neurotech company developing implantable brain-computer interfaces which could potentially treat brain diseases and eventually even enhance humans.

The Bad

On paper, Musk seems to be a true citizen of the world—he has more money than anyone could ask for or need in his life, a successful business, and international acclaim for helping the fight against global warming by democratizing electric cars. Moreover, not only he is at the forefront of tech advances which enable him to launch people, satellites and even his carto space, but he is also about to create enhanced humans. Musk's incredible life even served as the basis for Robert Downey's portrayal of Tony Stark character in the Iron Man movie series.

But Elon Musk is actually far from being perfect. It starts with small things like his constant stuttering during his keynotes or the fact that Musk just seems to be weird. But it gets worse—he has divorced three times, with his weddings lasting an average of only 4.3 years. In an article with BBC, Musk's first wife recalls what Musk told her at their wedding: *"I am the alpha in this relationship"*. He was a controlling husband, she said, pushing her to dye her hair more and more blonde. *"I am your wife,"* she recalled saying, *"not your employee."* *"If you were my employee,"* he would reply, *"I would fire you."*

Musk has suffered loss in his life, with the sudden death of his first son at only 10 weeks old. He also reports having been bullied during most of his childhood. In its biography he even mentions that: *"It would certainly be accurate to say I did not have a good childhood."*

The Ugly

More worryingly, he does not seem to be actually happy at all. In an unrealistic interview with Rolling Stone magazine in 2017, he says *"I've been in severe emotional pain for the last few weeks,"* Musk elaborates. *"Severe. It took every ounce of will to be able to do the Model 3 event and not look like the most depressed guy around. For most of that day, I was morbid"* He later adds *"Is there anybody you think I should date? It's so hard for me to even meet people."* Later in the interview - whilst crying- he adds that he doesn't talk with his dad anymore and that: *"Almost every evil thing you could possibly think of, he has done. Um..."*

More recently, he confessed that he had been sleeping at the Tesla factory. Rumours - which were denied by Musk on Twitter - suggested that he has been having trust issues with his management and hence stepped in to handle every details himself. Furthermore, Musk has declared that since he founded SpaceX, 12 years ago, he only took two vacations. In an interview with the New York Times— during which he also cried - he shared that he had spent the 24 hours of his birthday at Tesla's offices and almost missed his brother's wedding. He then shares that *"There were times when I didn't leave the factory for three or four days — days when I didn't go outside... This has really come at the expense of seeing my kids. And seeing friends."*

Elon Musk, whilst being a successful and rich entrepreneur, clearly has trouble in his personal relationships with employees, partners and family members, repeatedly cries during interviews, has to use Ambien (a sleeping drug) to sleep, and admits that he is in severe emotional pain.

In brief, Musk is definitely successful in some of the most tangible aspects of his life: wealth, status, power. However, it seems that he isn't successful in most aspects of his personal life.

Benoit Daoglio

benoit.daoglio@studbocconi.it



“GOD HATES US ALL”

A man, alone and full of emotion, contemplates the gawping crowd that filled the Mediolanum Forum on 20th November 2018. His friends have already gone away but he still wants to live the moment. 37 years of concerts, over 15 million disks sold but, most importantly, they became the spiritual fathers of truly extreme metal music. That man who gets emotional in front of the Forum, which is sold out for the event, is Tom Araya, bassist and singer of Slayer, one of the most influential metal groups in history.

Slayer, founded in 1981 in Huntington Park, a suburb of Los Angeles, are unanimously known as one of the ‘Big Four’ of Thrash Metal, a key genre in the evolution of the metal created by Black Sabbath – in other words the pioneers of heavy metal, children of hard rock who mixed the work of the British bands Iron Maiden and Judas Priest with the hardcore punk music of their compatriots Minor Threat and Misfits. Metallica, Megadeth and Anthrax began to emerge at the same time as Slayer. Fast, aggressive, blasphemous, confrontational and often macabre, Slayer created an extremely original sound that always

distinguished them from the competition. To me they are too mean to be compared to the more melodic Metallica and the more technical Megadeth but they are not sick and sulphurous enough to be considered a truly extreme group. The fast guitar riffs and fades, which are sometimes integrated by Kerry King and some others by Jeff Hanneman, evil and essential; the hammering but precise drums of Dave Lombardo – sometimes substituted by an equally talented Paul Bostaph; the shrill, young, and cathartic voice at the same time of Araya, the texts full of denunciations against and disregard for society. Slayer created a truly unique sound which is highly recognisable and limited in the course of the years and which hides great techniques behind an apparent roughness.

Slayer managed to make their music evolve, passing from a personal one, rather an imitation of Judas Priest - their first album, ‘Show No Mercy’, resembled ‘The Sad Wings of Destiny’ - to an extremely personal style. In the next album, ‘Hell Awaits’, they laid down the foundations for their fundamental triumph: ‘Reign in

Blood’ - unanimously considered their masterpiece - their following ‘South of Heaven’, slower and more melodic, and Seasons in ‘The Abyss’, essential and incisive.

The emergence of grunge in the ‘90s which pushed many contemporary groups to experiment with different solutions made them their fortune, so much so that ‘Divine Intervention’ from 1994 had incredible success considering the fact that the most popular bands at the time were Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, and other rock bands. ‘Divine Intervention’ was in fact nominated Golden Album. The death of Jeff Hanneman, founding guitarist, was an important part of their career. Hanneman, who is the founder of the group together with Kerry King, was not only one of the brains of one of their biggest successes but he also represented the essence of the band. It is no coincidence that his replacement, Gary Holt, did not take part in the line up of their last album, ‘Repentless’. Even if the sound of Slayer has not changed over the years, the lyrics, instead, have continuously become more evil and more mature.

At their beginning Slayer proposed openly blasphemous lyrics, with openly satanic declarations, even with their choice of titles - ‘The Antichrist’, ‘Raining Blood’, ‘South of Heaven’. Their songs frequently dealt with historical events or controversial figures - for example, ‘Angel of Death’, the most famous song in ‘Reign in Blood’ was about Josef Mengele, a German Doctor who was famous for his eugenics studies in Auschwitz during World War II, or ‘SS-3’, which is inspired by the destruction of the Czechoslovak village of Lidice and is about Reinhard Heydrich, the pioneer of the Final Solution. With time the group assumed an anti-religious position - in ‘Cult’ they speak of a religion that divides, that hates, and in ‘Disciple’ they even talk about a God that hates all human beings - while in ‘World Painted Blood’ the group concentrates their attention on the hate of modern society.

It will be this combination of extreme, fresh and, at the same time, brutal and with no compromises music, delicate themes which are often dealt without any filter and which are extreme adherent to their own style and image, that guaranteed Slayer fame together with the acclaim from fans and critics.

The people enjoying the show at Assago is undoubtedly the most shining success reached by this group.

Ignazio Boccia

igno97.ib@gmail.com

Translated by Joseph Donat Bolton



NAPPILY EVER AFTER

!!!Disclaimer!!!

This review contains spoilers for the movie *Nappily Ever After*.

"If at First You Don't Succeed..."

... *Try, try, try again*" is the English motto, and for some, a life motto. 'Practice makes perfect' is yet another, all of them implying, 'failure is not an option.' It's a cultural mindset, driving people not only to achieve their goals, but also to control every aspect of their lives, down to the devilled details.

Nappily Ever After's Violet Jones is such a girl, raised by her mother to become the perfect woman. She thinks she is, being a valued employee at her advertising firm, wearing long straight hair, and having a boyfriend-soon-to-be-fiancé-with-a-family-soon-to-follow.

Which of these does she believe makes her successful? Considering she spends a fortune to get her hair redone after it's ruined by the rain on the day of her hopefully-engagement dinner and shaves it all off after her boyfriend doesn't propose... well, it probably isn't personal happiness.

Directed by a woman of color, Haifaa al-Mansour, the film not only traces the dynamic story of complex, flawed characters, but also highlights social issues prevalent not only in the United States where the film is set, but around the world—and puts to film things we know about and talk about but never seen on screen.

In Violet's meetings, there is only one other woman, but they support each other and do not try to undermine

the other. Instead, the other woman is outraged when the account Violet bids for is given to adult men who propose a frat-boy fantasy of a commercial. Another woman who works in the same building but is a complete stranger invites Violet to her group counselling sessions after she finds her crying in the bathroom.

After she breaks things off with her boyfriend, Violet embarks on a process of self-discovery—a requirement of any complex film. Her journey begins with a catharsis as she realizes being the perfect woman with perfect hair doesn't make her happy. What is perfection to her if all it brings her is a boyfriend who doesn't love her and the pain of straightening her hair every day?

So, she cuts it all off, actress Sanaa Lathan beautifully ugly sobbing through it, al-Mansour switching between Lathan's face and the floor where her hair is, capturing the wild rawness of the scene.

What happens after the one thing you pin your success on is gone the next morning?

Violet lives in denial at first, but soon she develops a confidence in herself that is not tied to how 'perfect' she looks, not tied to her successful career or to her doctor now-ex-boyfriend. She enters a relationship with Will, a hair-stylist and shop owner, and teaches his daughter Zoe how to see herself as beautiful in a world that teaches black women that they are not, learning herself on the way the lessons she teaches the girl she becomes a role model for.

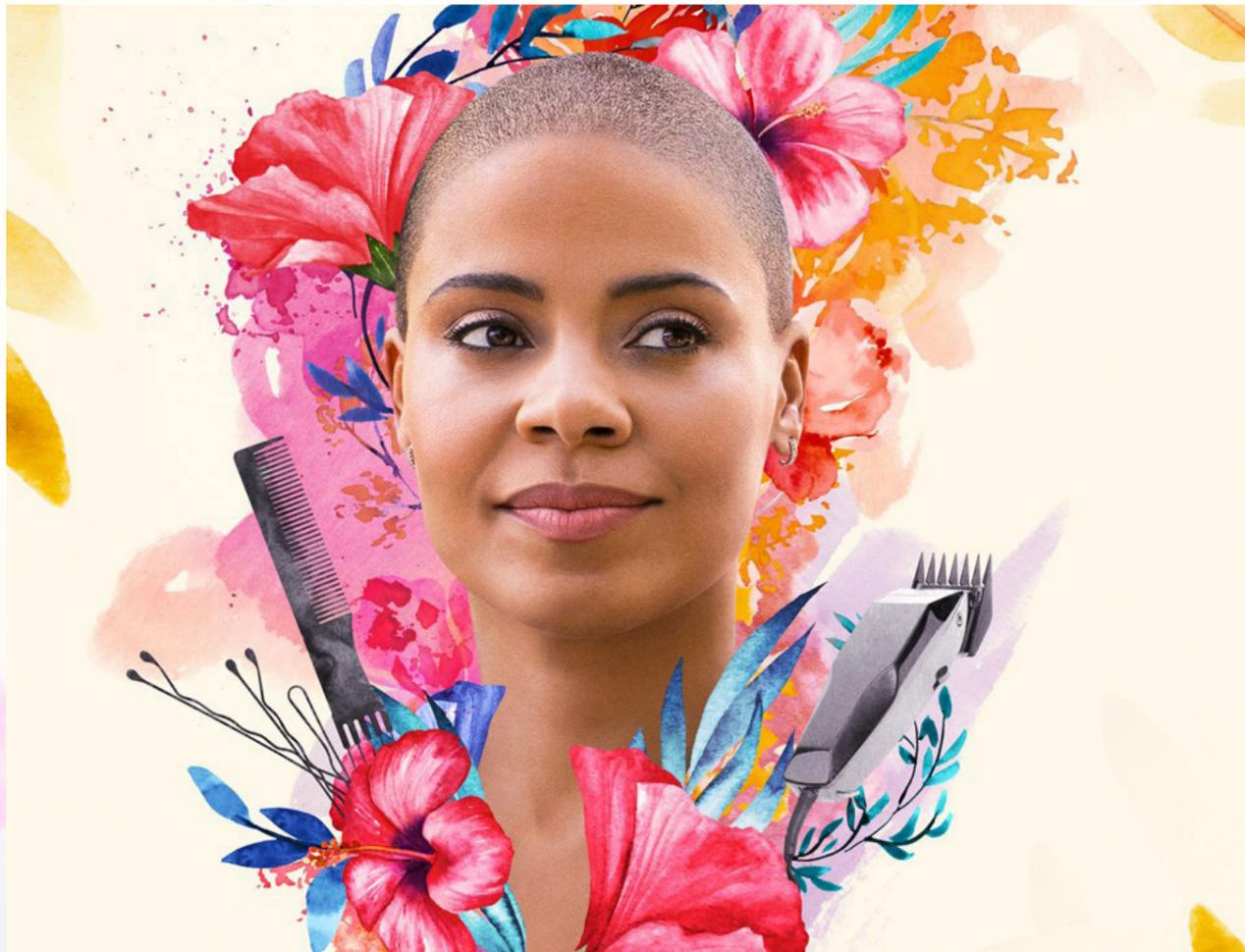
Perhaps the best thing about the film, however, is that it ends not with Violet and Will riding on white horses into the sunset, but with Violet quitting her job and becoming a freelancer, her success not based on how big of a firm

she is in or how white her hair looks or who she's dating, but on how she is satisfied with herself. Her relationship with Will is even left ambiguous, perhaps something al-Mansour does purposefully to underline Violet's own personal success and happiness.

If al-Mansour's goal was to make an excellent feminist film, she succeeded. She succeeded if her goal was to make an excellent film, if her goal was to make someone feel something, or if her goal was to help the romcom genre evolve into something more inclusive. If her goal was to make a film she is proud of, I hope she succeeded there.

Although the term 'refreshing' is perhaps applied to many Hollywood movies these days, *Nappily Ever After* certainly fits this particular bill. How many other romantic comedies are there that end with the heroine walking alone, happily?

Caterina Cattaneo
caterina@cattaneo.us



WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME

WHY WE PLACE THE BURDEN OF SUCCESS ON IMMIGRANTS

As of 2017, 20% of the world's migrant population has found a home in the United States of America. We call ourselves a country of immigrants, a veritable melting pot of languages, cultures, religions, stories, and ethnicities. We like to hold up stories to the light about successful immigrants and first-generation Americans—Albert Einstein, or Steve Jobs, or Sergei Brin— and exclaim how achievable, how attainable and real the American Dream can be for immigrant communities. They've made it, we think with pride. This is why immigrants are so important to America.

The impulse to share incredible immigrant narratives is natural—but it's important to think about the communities and individuals we devalue by focusing solely on these 'successful' immigrants. Immigrants are deserving of safety and compassion because of their fundamental human dignity, not because of their potential achievements for their new country. Immigrants don't have to be geniuses, or conform to our definition of success to be worthy of respect.

Most immigrants have faced incredible obstacles to reach their new homes—a success in and of itself. Yet, our society asks and expects more from immigrants because we need them to prove that they belong here, that they're worthy of being Americans. We place a greater burden of achieving success on immigrants, and the children of immigrants, to conform to the social and financial definition of "making it": financial stability, a secure family structure, and social conformity. We place immigrants at the bottom of an impossibly high pedestal—succeed, and you will be deserving of being here, we seem to say. And some immigrants, those with the right education or connections or background, are able to doggedly climb a stepladder towards the top. Others are left scrabbling at the slick sides or don't even attempt to scale the gargantuan feat before them, knowing they don't have the tools to make it to the top.

Immigrants have the right, not the duty, to meet our definition of success.

As the American daughter of two Indian immigrants to the U.S., I am very aware of how privileged my upbringing has been in comparison to those around me. My parents are, for all intents and purposes, successful immigrants. Both my parents have college educations and had stable middle-class upbringings in their respective hometowns in Maharashtra. My father has a job that provides us with enough for my mother to be a homemaker. My parents have never known war, or crippling poverty, or violence in their home countries. They both spoke English by the time they immigrated to the US, so the citizenship test was not impossibly difficult for them. This isn't to say they haven't struggled, or that they've never faced hardship—they have—but the experiences that they, and many other Asian-American families in the US have had is not comparable to the vast majority of immigrant stories.

The idea of 'model minorities'—a term that's used to describe certain racial or ethnic groups that seem to have higher rates of education, wealth, and social acclimatization—is one that's gradually spread across the United States in the past years. Asian Americans are usually heralded as model minorities— with higher rates of college education, high-paying jobs, and stable familiar structure, they've managed to have incredible success in their second home. It's inaccurate, however, to treat Asian Americans as a monolith—within that broad categorization, we see that Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean immigrants are on the whole more likely to be typically 'successful' than Cambodian Americans, Bhutanese Americans, or Bangladeshi Americans. Again, these broad characterizations are an injustice to the individual stories of Asian-Americans, but nevertheless, the idea that Asian Americans are more likely to be successful in their new countries remains.

Immigrants from other parts of the world aren't let off the hook, however—with the recent fear-mongering and hysteria

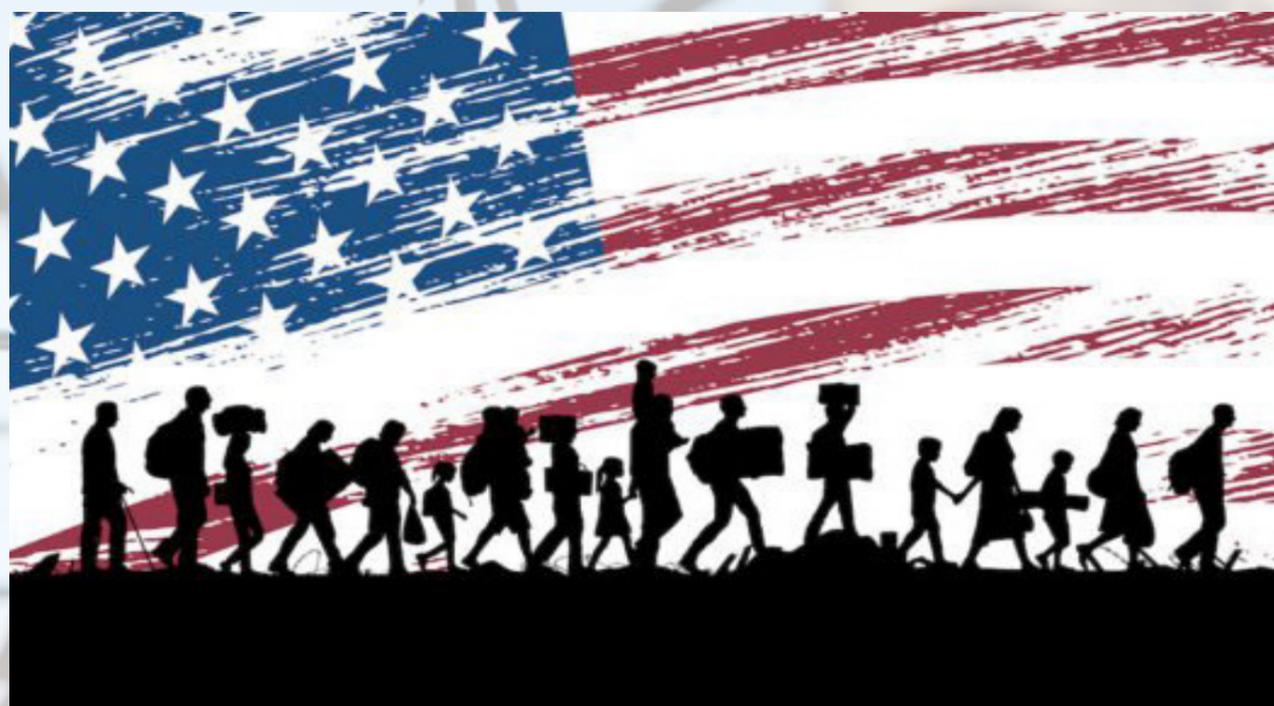
about the dangers that Latin American immigrants pose to the US from President Donald Trump, Latinx immigrants have to work even harder to separate themselves from the stereotypes their government is perpetuating about them. Be more. Work harder. Give them no reason to question your validity here. If immigrants cling to the definition of success America has handed to them, if they keep their heads down and their backs straight and follow the rules, perhaps finally, at last, they will belong. Success is a safety rail for immigrants—deviate, and you may at any moment slip over the precipice between American and 'other'.

Though the American Dream plays a particular role in demanding success from immigrants, this phenomenon is not specific to just the United States. Across the world, especially in light of the sweeping refugee crisis, more and more countries are finding themselves full of transplants from another land, trying to grow in a new place. And for them to grow, we must relax our expectations of success, and give them the freedom—for that is what they have traveled so far for—to be perfectly, imperfectly, themselves.

To know that success is something that is an aspiration, not an obligation. To believe, idealistically and beautifully, that the country they have rushed to embrace will someday embrace them back with no expectation of gain.

To be home.

Niharika Bhat
niharika.bhat@stud.bocconi.it



Follow us!

Search “Eco del Bunker” on

December 2018

Facebook



Linkedin



Do you wish to join us or help us improve our contents?
Contact us at ecodelbunker@gmail.com

PARTICIPATED TO THIS EDITION:

President:

Sabrina Shahnaz

Vice-President

Sofia Moramarco

Chief-Editor:

Giorgio Michalopoulos

Italian section:

Giorgio Michalopoulos

English section:

Elena Bocchi
Katharina Lamparski
Sabrina Shahnaz

French section:

Sami Norredine
Sophie Béquet

German section:

Nora Gasser

Spanish section:

Viena Espinoza

Authors:

Niharika Bhat
Ignazio Boccia
Sarah Baracchini Caputi
Caterina Cattaneo
Alessandro Cavagnera
Benoit Daoglio
Alessandro Derchi
Pietro Mazzeri
Sami Norredine

Translators:

Beatrice Balzano
Joseph Donat Bolton
Carly Cornell
Sofia Ivon Mason
Carlotta Pezzoli
Caterina Santagati
Laura Simoncelli
Paolo J. Vitrano

Graphics:

Alessandro Cavagnera

Web Editor:

Audrey Daley