

Poetic Science
Poetic lecture performance
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(using texts by András Cséfalvay)

Translated by Lucia Faltin

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A list of characters

ANDRÁS

VOICE

ANDRÁŠ Before it all begins ... Let me confess something. In the coming minutes you will witness trickery, deceit and twisting reality. In the play you are about to see, I shall be the only one to perform. Yet as four people, characters. So that you trust me that they actually exist, I have reached for a few proven methods. The lives of these people are reviewed across a few lines in a way that they are credible and incredibly specific. I shall keep transforming myself in a way that you won't be able to tell similarities between them. I shall act and pretend.

I beg you not to criticise me for that. After all, isn't it part of any standard stage performance? C'mon! For the question that matters is: Why have I decided to deceive you, right? Hard to tell whether this is the question asked by every theatre-maker who partakes in the great deceit such as stage play. Yet, if anyone explores it within, they can come to terms with the fact that it is deceit for the right aims. Deceit that can be ethically justified in terms of the right aims. Certainly, it is hard to tell what the word "right" means in terms of "right aims".

The purpose of this play is to play a scientist. I always wanted to be a scientist. And I have become a poet. So, don't be upset with me. Do play along. I shall try to justify my point.

VOICE So far, our planet experienced five extinctions that were caused by such momentous changes that many species simply failed to adapt and, consequently, became extinct. We are in a middle of sixth such phase. It is as deep and far-reaching as the one that brought extinction to the dinosaurs. It is virtually incomprehensible that, whilst we carry on with our lives, the rest of the planet is dying in the extent that was brought about by the colossal collision with an asteroid. The world which we live in, is framed, controlled, (re)produced and conceptualised through science. Science as the means of knowing, delineates the overarching episteme. Technological innovation remains to be a matter of work and leisure experience. Yet, at the same time, society is a reflected and recreated sci-fi: as a contributor to the nostalgic economy, as dominant visually-commercial aesthetics, as mimetic index of contemporary utopian and dystopic trends. This is the time of extreme uncertainty. We face a number of catastrophes – political, socio-economic and, most urgently, ecological.

It may be poetry, after all, that offers a way of thinking and writing beyond the limits of what is already known to us. Though it often falls into the category of hobbies, it bears a potential of true alterity: corrective articulation, distortion, experiments. Let's explore the network between poetry, science and science-fiction. Our techno-modern reality is shaped by scientific decision-making and innovation. Meanwhile, however, it is based on an uneven division of knowledge and technologies. In terms of its tendency to re-formulate the world that already resembles futuristic dystopia, science-fiction faces the risk of critical impotence. Let's not allow the insufficiently corrosive poetry slip into futility.

Science and scientists speak to us through charts, tables, and figures that are the fruit of research. At the time of crisis of trust in science, it is the climate change that is at the forefront of sceptics. They abuse the media, their arguments and rhetorical skills in order to nurture distrust in scientific facts. Today, instead of listening to statistical data and looking at the charts, let's try to acquire wisdom from poetry. The intention is to achieve an open process. Speculative poetics as a way of thinking, method and creative strategy applied to reading. We will have an opportunity to listen to the works by three scientific poets. The first to feature is Enoch Silver with his text *Virtuous Reality*. Enoch is professor emeritus in paleoecology at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland. He is one of the foremost specialists on dendrochronology – establishing dates with the aid of trees. In the 1980s, he was the leader in identifying annual chronology of growth of tree rings as far as 7,400 years back.

Virtuous Reality

ENOCH When I say that trees have talked, it won't be quite as it may sound. Trees don't talk. Yet, at the end of day, sometimes even the best story has to win. Hence, trees did talk. There is a mention of estrangement. Some even mentioned dried out branches, and roots that were rotting in their own juices because of excess liquid.

I shall try to speak of the fallibility and aspects of ideal worlds that have remained veiled in silence.

Touch is impossible, the trees used to tell themselves. Things can't go on like this. No community can be created like this. That has been evidenced by the amount of dry and fallen needles around. The great sauropod that just laid by, existentially sensed the inefficiency of such community-generating technologies. It felt tremendous hunger. While the trees rustled their leaves and kept exchanging juices, thus speaking to each other, the large sauropod kept sighing unhappily. It felt sick, knowing that something in the world wasn't quite the way it could be. Yet it didn't know exactly what to do. As a matter of fact, it even didn't know it didn't know.

It was drought; and the trees and even the large saurians were dying out.

Biotechnological development led the trees to the opinion that the only way to escape certain extinction was to reach out to the newly generated entities for help. Indeed, they had erred before. Excessive population (tree density), or even the size of some cycad species appear to be excessive techno-optimism. Yet, just like when erring, in an attempt for remedy one has to

start with oneself – whispered the trees to each other. Life, as they observed, is extremely ineffective and inflexible! The sauropod is a slow learner. Essentially, it is just a giant engine, laughed the leaves. Meanwhile, the sauropod continued thinking of the unthinkable: I've got to do something about it. Or whatever giant engines think. And it kept on laying in the sun. For the newly emerging techno-entity that was to be the answer to contemporary engines. There were a number of visions. Initially, they seemed contradictory. Ultimately, most proved incompatible. It was first said (the trees) – technologies are to serve the extension of our body. We must keep perfecting ourselves; we have to find the way to slow down the extinction, to improve communication. There was talk about changing the shape and size of leaves, about sprouts and protein instruments. As we shall see later, all those proved successful proposals. Others (other trees) envisaged farming on trees that were materially dependent, yet in terms of locomotion and consciousness they were independent slaves. Whilst some underestimated, smilingly, the utility of further moving robots, there were also voices that warned against the intellectual potential of such techno-entities. They believed it possible for their mental capacities exceeding ours; hence, us becoming redundant to them at some point. That was the warning voice: techno-entities might turn against their own creator. Those fears, as time will show, were also justified; though, in a way, they were exaggerated. As it often happens, self-assessment on the part of new entities, the way they feel, and the influence of their own requirements were omitted in the calculations. Those factors are bound to repeatedly come back in revenge, and to remind of themselves.

Sprouts and first generation.

Increased efficiency of one's own survival, more controlled reproduction, lower number of sprouts, and transformation of conifers into deciduous trees proved to be a revolution from which too little time has, as yet, passed for us to be able to state with certainty that it meant positive change. Yet, in any case, it led to the invention of shadow and/or a stash in branches. The use of new protein algorithms gave rise to the population of new world. Compared to the saurians that were sunbathing, squirrels emerged as a new instrumental entity in the spaces of void (shadow, cavities).

(We shall use the term as an acronym for further common predecessor of humans, i.e. placental ancestor.)

From the outset, small mammals kept meeting the expectations. Communication between the trees improved. Forest developed into a society in a much narrower sense. All in

all, the new flexibility (warm blood, new methods of locomotion) made it also possible for the trees and later even the small mammals, when the dinosaurs had been extinct, to survive the cataclysms.

Still, some trees kept underrating squirrels. Actually, they considered them to be slaves, tiny labourers only able to survive as long as they kept helping the trees to survive. Nonetheless, an alternative ideology emerged among the trees, a new naiveté. It looked at the world through the prism of new instruments. It is not entirely clear whether the newly discovered phenomena might have emerged along with the new instruments. How does a tree think through its squirrels? Let me repeat, to be clear: How does a tree think through its squirrels?

Bite the hand that feeds you (something from the other side).

We presume that the domain of a squirrel mind – as an extension of trees, shadow and stash – is largely created by a tree itself. Tree has an overview of everything that a squirrel thinks. There is a presumption that squirrel is the first generation of an ideal world of purity, and an attempt on the part of the trees to achieve innocence. It is a new world in which a tree sees through the microscope everything – or at least everything of which it knows. And that everything is perfect, just as the tree has envisaged it to be. Trees – the architects of a new virtue. Thinking of trees through squirrels – a new reality.

Second generation and interactive slavery.

Now, it might be appropriate to discuss the transformation of small mammals through man-apes to the emergence of a new generation of relatively autonomously acting tree biotechnology: homo. Yet, I consider this part of the story to be pointlessly technical. I'd rather skip straight to the question everyone should ask themselves.

Are we, humans, the artificial intelligence that is to destroy the world? At least the trees think so. The ingeniously masterminded development of a perfect tool, the purity of which would lead the trees to balance and immortality.

The development of uber 1 went from squirrels through some 10 millions of generations, all the way to humans. They were the first to reach the level of mind that enabled them to create their own slaves. While the mankind is devising silicate technologies to achieve immortality, and is creating virtuous domains, the trees are overheating their heads (branches) by contemplating what went wrong in their splendid design that prospered relatively long enough.

Trees are only able to comprehend squirrel language to the point that is allowed by their tree-mind. Even though they were their own biotechnology, they couldn't have known it in its entirety. If we presume continuity of mind, meaning that – at one point in evolution – mind didn't switch on just like that, but it evolves in parallel through all that is with mere qualitative differences, then I think this:

1. It is excessively optimistic to claim that the new world of magnetic-silicate spaces is (will be) virtuous and innocent. Those spaces will have to be filled with doubt, grief and self-doubt on the part of the given matter. I am afraid that, instead of super-intellect, we will merely come across super-grief.
2. Any arguments that they might cause apocalypse are excessively pessimistic. Grief and self-doubt on the part of the magnetic-silicate entities are mightier than their potential to destroy the mankind or the world. Though we are likely to suffer a lot of pain, just as the trees feel pain because of us.

And the mankind told itself: let's create virtu-e-al reality, and let's go live there.

Dragging your shit all along (something from either side).

Elves leaving

VOICE Carl Bailie lectures in mediaeval literature at St. John's College, Oxford. His research spans from early English all the way to early Renaissance.

Bailie's research focuses on ancient Icelandic literature, mediaeval literature written by women, European Arthurian literature, and on the study of mediaeval emotionality. He published old English and old Icelandic collections of wisdom poetry, edited the volume *Women and Writing in Mediaeval Europe: A Sourcebook*, and two collections of essays on the ancient Norwegian volume *Poetic Edda*. His revised and expanded translation of *Poetic Edda* has become a benchmark today. We shall now have the opportunity to hear his poem *Elves Leaving*.

Electric impulses
transmit repulsive
information taking a route
in a large system of roots

yes, we do not understand
why the forest is dying.
The elves are leaving the forest.
The elves are leaving the woods.
Have we forgotten something?
What did we do wrong?
We did everything right
except for: quality.
Except for: quantity.
Except for: intensity.
The purpose was alright.
It is the equilibrium that we fucked up.
The elves are leaving the forest.
The elves are leaving the woods.
Not because: our common home is now inhabitable.
Not because: they have lost hope.
But precisely because they admitted:
the inevitable end, the utmost goal of culture
(yes even of elven culture)
is domination.
The elves are leaving the forest.
The elves are leaving the woods.

The elves are leaving in self-defeat.

We at the current moment
at our present culture, live our self-defeat
as a feature of what we are.
The elves are leaving the forest.
The elves are leaving the woods.

The roots tell something of a king.
How do I change without force?
That is the ecological question!

I want to know you, so you don't have power over me.

But I don't want to know you so much that I could overpower you.

That is the ecological question.

The elves are leaving the forest.

The elves are leaving the woods.

Useful flat Earth

VOICE Michael Blasé is Belgian astrophysicist at the University of Liège. He specialises in massive stars and their interaction with their surroundings. In 2018, Blasé worked on a controversial dissertation written by a student at the University of Sfax. It defended the thesis of Flat Earth along with a geocentric model of solar system and Young Earth. The dissertation, that failed to receive the approval by the Environmental Studies Committee, was published by Professor Paul Dickson, the founder of the Astronomical Society of Tunisia on his Facebook profile in 2017.

MICHAEL Let me first clarify the purpose of this brief sketch. I was invited to write about the truth, perhaps in light of my visual artistic and theoretical interest in the relationship between science and truth. It was already in my dissertation that I focused on the difficult relationship between reality and fiction. I diagnosed the imbalance between the emergence from accentuation of a certain type of narrative (fiction) to the detriment of the others.

The use of deductive narrative tools helps to generate useful and relatively whole image of the world. Yet, there is an assumption – one can indeed speak of major doubts – that scientific narrative has its limits and is unable to speak of everything. The result of the scientific narrative about the world hardly ever lends mendacity. Nonetheless, if we use internal logic of thus pictured world as our vantage point, something becomes extinct; inexpressible entities remain inarticulate. In order for these shapes to emerge from the new figurations, we have to add weight also to other types of narrative. One may call it religious expression, sometimes esoterica. Somewhat sardonically – though merely in descriptive terms – it may also be called irrationality. Those words sound dangerous. Yet, I would prefer to appeal to caution in general. I would look at when we err in how we call our conduct. It wouldn't be right to end up producing categorical errors.

I understand why, when ignorance seems to be a virtue, at the time when – through digital reproduction – we face new types of uncertainty, some may find it appropriate to cling to fixed and clear formulae. I do understand, for we need something that is certain. May reality be that what we know intimately. Or, even better: something that we are able to count and forecast thoroughly. It is particularly during those instants that we ought to be vigilant. On the one hand, I think it important to realise the means by which different types of knowledge (facts) function. That is their operability; hence, particularly what are the premises they automatically anticipate. Alternative facts may exist, provided they are part of a system that is based on different pillars. Not everything is commensurate. I just wanted to mention this briefly. After all, this issue has long been dwelled upon by philosophy of science. Yet, there is also the second point that is interesting and draws attention. At the time when stupidity and disinformation grow in malign extent, does it make sense to advocate some kind of relativity of truth? Isn't it counterproductive? Doesn't it give power to the disinformers themselves? The way I see it, vast proportion of consumers is left at the mercy of manipulators precisely because scientific interpretation of reality is misappropriated. Research and mass higher learning are often reduced to rationalist narrative. I am not merely interested in what we know about the shape of the Earth, but, first and foremost, about how they ended up on the other side. If I examine the arguments based on how useful they are to operate with (may it be such terms as electron, prayer or discworld), my thinking may seem utilitarian, favouring a functional effect over higher truth. Nevertheless, as soon as one thinks through the seriousness and actual functionality of some non-rational narrative, I think that it isn't difficult to justify the argument that this is indeed how things are. And those, too, are apparently functional images of the world. What, then, are these useful non-rational narratives I have been talking about all along?

No, I am not unbiased. First of all, I speak on behalf of art.

Is the Earth flat then? Is it sheer nonsense? Who says so? And how come? Why?

Can one argue that, under certain circumstances, it is useful to think so?

1. Relativity of shape

In a sense, it is such a simple question that I am surprised no one talks about the answer:

After all, shape is no absolute quantity. Shape can only exist in relation to a system of coordinates or a value system. In relation to set rules, it may come across as something giant and obtuse, while the same thing – under similar circumstances – yet in a different system of

coordinates, may seem tiny and sharp. Shape is merely a coincidence: in a given moment one and inseparable reality is sliced according to the same rules. The systems of coordinates are inevitable. The Euclidian space has become somewhat of a benchmark in terms of our ordinary common sense. Hence, they can be taken for granted. They are indeed to be taken somewhat for granted. Yet that is, apparently, also related to human scale. To a galactic or atomic being, the Euclidian space would obviously be far less useful.

With the use of coordinates, we find differences; shapes emerge.

Still, when we ask about the exact value of pressure in the instant Caesar was murdered, we have to realise that the units we use to measure some quality, are conventional. And our conventions shouldn't be reflected into reality. The fact that we decided to measure pressure in certain units is a contingent condition; it doesn't make sense to ontologise. We can thus argue that there is something like pressure that is physically real and becomes apparent, for instance in the changing boiling point in water (similarly to thousands of other phenomena). Pressure creates a continuum in which, if intending to measure it, we have to conventionally identify a point to which we attach a zero value. Plus, we must choose a unit. Those two points are conventional. They are artefacts. Their choice doesn't alter the objective value of pressure we are measuring. The differentiation between the real and conventional aspects of a measurement is central for instrumental realism, a reality of a continuum, in which neither objects, phenomena nor quantities are singled out. Only man living in certain culture somehow slices the continuum by means that reflects his needs.

Image 1 is projected – Grids.

Picture, for instance, pixelation – a grid. Setting median value to luminosity gives us images where different shapes appear in different grids. The methods of slicing, the method of creating a grid, the value systems that we project into it can also be assessed according to the fineness (resolution), but also according to the usefulness of the recognised shapes (dispersed maps). Reality can be sliced by moving, looking into, and by thinking in it.

If we place our Earth into a three-dimensional system and retain the presumption that our observation (vision) isn't too distorted, it will prove most useful if we admit while thus slicing, that the surface of the Earth is curved, quite round. By retaining such methods of slicing, we manage to keep creating vast numbers of effective predictive tools. According to the equations thus defined, we can land – with high accuracy – on the moving Moon, as well

as at on the tiny celestial body Churyumov–Gerasimenko. It is only a matter of time that the mankind manages to populate nearby universe by small and large engines at our service.

Yet, if shape, as we have said, is a correlative quantity, that is, it only exists in relation to something, then we should be able to land on the Moon and on comets without any other, arbitrarily chosen shape of the Earth, bodies and system in general. Is something stopping us? First of all, if we insist that the Earth is flat (this is our new slicing, our new axiom), we must rethink our many years of instrumental practice of measuring lengths, weights, and what is straight. The vision will probably have to be curved.

Image 2 is projected – Flat Earth with an infinite circle surrounding the world.

Image 3 is projected – Sailboat goes straight, the vision curved upwards, the shapes of celestial bodies are like croissants.

Physics will have to be rewritten extensively.

While we are on the flat Earth, can something useful come out of us building upon the axiom that the Earth is hollow?

Image 4 is projected – Hyperbolic Earth may be possible with a decelerating constant of the speed of light.

I wanted to point out that, when it comes to the relativity of shape and that of choice of the method of slicing the world, some simple methods prove useful to us. Contrary to those, there are megastructures that make our pointlessly life complicated. For us to define the formulae for landing on the Moon, drawing from the assumption that the Earth is flat, we would have to change the interpretation of the hitherto observations to the extent that we would be likely to count to death by exhaustion. Even if I were the world's ultimate relativist, I can therefore easily admit that flat Earth is merely legitimate as a claim; and that being utterly useless. It is difficult to navigate tankers. And one can only dream of the GPS satellite system or landing the Rosetta module.

Still, we should be vigilant. Particularly when what is at stake, may be a pun. By attaching substantial weight (even the flag!) to the argument of landing on the Moon, I actually accept the operationality of notion as interpreted by techno-sciences (usefully in terms of serving their own purpose).

There is often a talk about protecting the gates of truth, and about the fact that the rust on those gates is the consequence of the rain of relativism and of the pressure of affirmative facts. At the borders we aren't vigilant enough! The fences are concealed by overgrown greenery, and difficult to be seen from distance. The economics-mathematical departments at research universities keep encouraging us: don't be lazy, we have work to do at the borders. No matter how pressing, it is nothing innocent, considering that their research is fuelled by lithium mined in African soil. The perpetual looking into the future requires energy which, in turn, is acquired from soil.

In silence we keep asking the others, our neighbours or bystanders, whether we need to go to the Moon. It is wonderful, the fascination is justified. Yet we don't always have to trust the scientists in that they indeed do what they say they do.

On the Mauna Kea mountain on Hawaii, there is one of the biggest optical telescopes on Earth today. During its construction, the astronomical company ran into conflict with the indigenous population that claimed the site was their sacred site not to be disturbed. The conflict was only resolved when the astronomers started claiming that their research, i.e. looking up, is their own form of spirituality and relating to heaven. The scientists left happy, perhaps even smiling at the thought of the indigenous residents falling for their subtle deceit. Yet even the indigenous residents were leaving with smile on their lips: whilst they knew that the scientists might not have been entirely honest in what they were saying, ultimately though – even if unaware – they do practice spirituality.

2. Creating maps

Techno-sciences are useful, for they offer useful shortcuts wherever we may stray easily.

They can slice the world in a way that the emergent shapes focus on some useful things, whilst others remain in the background and keep buzzing. There is a tendency to operate by simplification. Then a highly effective narrative is offered, an explanation of how things are. Rather useful maps are being created. Their explanatory potential is enormous. Sometimes a shape with multiple meanings emerges from the background. The transparency of those maps and of how well they fit, sometimes helps to forget about the very material of which the given map has been made, or even about the fact that it is a map. Very little is known about why a map was created. It isn't always clear why a particular method was applied. What is also unclear is what to do with the drawn world and whether the site marked with an "x" designates

a treasure. Map – what is apparent to the eye – may be transparent. Yet the context and intentionality are covered first by thin fog that becomes, in time quite dense and mysterious.

The fog sometimes makes it unclear whether the map is pinned to the sky, or whether someone is holding it and has some clear purpose.

Evidence – in a sense of instant vision, an insight – emerges in Greece at a forum by abstracting (idealising) phenomena, thus lending a clever pun where the abstract ideal notions create a convincing relationship. Evidence serves to gain preponderance in situations of exchange of views. To take someone through the steps that weren't in conflict with the arguments, all the way to the instant of clarity, was a narrative invention with immense potential. Not even Homer could compete with such efficiency. "The quick Achilles is slowly approaching a tent." There we go. It is through anecdotic testimony that Greek epics speak of reality, about how things are and were. Sometimes the claims contradict each other. Yet the aim is not to deduce and say something definite about some concrete Achilles. The epic retells. Do we learn anything about the world by such method? Indeed, something within us moves, but can it compete with deduction that is infallible in every step in its chain?

17th-century experimental science goes as far as claiming that the abstractions it uses, triangles, circles and the language of mathematics, suffice to comprehend the world. The successful output of experimental science is to show us that the complex world is ultimately divided to the point that it yields simple rules. Experiment, the essence of new science, lays in creating an ideal situation where the aspect of the world that is the target of our curiosity can be examined in isolation. In the world thus isolated one can take measurements. The acquired correlations, formulae are able to tell us with sufficient precision how the world is doing. As Galileo put it: "Measure all that can be measured, and make measurable that which is immeasurable."

It is difficult to argue about the utility and success rate of this method. In the struggle of the eye of a scientist that is impartial, innocent and unbiased about Church dogmas and institutions, ultimately led to the victory of the Enlightenment. It is indeed possible to advocate objectivity! If we think of the relationships that are internally consistent and of those that enable us to speak of the world, then we can measure the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere, to forecast global population growth and calculate the time when Antarctica melts. And we can rely on all that. This is the objectivity that is consistent within. We don't see the whole, the entire sequence or the very method of use. Still, the examined sequences of facts aren't mutually contradictory. Nonetheless, if I hand the map to the pirates, what kind of man am I? To what will my map

lead an adventurer who starts following my signs and living according to the instructions? Will he start taking it seriously? What kind of man does my map create?

3. Fences

Cardinal Bellarmino replies to Signor Galileo arguing that facts and reality are definitely related to value judgements. The Cardinal says that the truth is relative, which is no reason for concern. It merely means that something makes sense in terms of measuring, of a (sacred) text, of point zero. What kind of man my consistent sequences of facts turn me into? Naturally, we don't need to look far for an answer: "No!" Replies a positivist. Facts don't need value judgements. What kind of question it is anyway? My impartial eye describes reality as is.

Where do you take this transparency and certainty from? Isn't your transparency the very cover for opacity? Feyerabend asks (5), whether Galileo wouldn't find it as hard today in advocating his pioneering theses as he did during the Inquisition. Trust in contemporary institutionalised science is supported by immense efficiency in some disciplines. Yet all it takes is to test one's new drug on a group of ten volunteers, and the adventurous alternative researcher ends up facing the police.

Fences are being build, some are made from highly resistant material. The cost of entering the world where I can verify and test the existence of some exotic elementary particles is enormous. While anyone in Galilee was able to see the miracles of Jesus, today an ordinary person wishing to see neutrino – i.e. the massive volume of energy and finance – has to master the hurdle of ten years of university studies and a number of doors with access code.

Vast majority of conspiracy theories are anchored in the fact that a government (of reptilians, aliens or simply Americans) doesn't say the whole truth. On the contrary, they conceal important information to the detriment of the majority. Certainly, these theories can be dismissed easily, for they merely tend to be methodologically incorrectly deduced scientific deductions. Take, for instance, the story of creation. What is perfectly legitimate and viable version of the creation of the world for a Protestant family, is seen by school system and science as a fairy-tale that doesn't merit any special place. We can then hardly expect some people to take climatic scientists seriously. To me, the question is about how to deal with the sense of non-involvement. For the entitlement to a useful method of narrative about the world cannot be misappropriated. Is it so surprising that such a large number of people feel excluded? That

they feel they don't participate in what is known? They remained on the other side of the fence. And those inside say that they climb the mountain to the telescope, saying: Behold, we are transparent! Just repeat our steps and you, too, can be here. Yet their words and deeds don't match. They go to the mountain to pray!

Image 5 is projected – Mauna Kea.

They are looking up through the telescope. Somewhere out there, in the infinity, the direct lines of progress and prosperity rising in parallel meet. Carl Sagan argues that our tiny planet is a blue spot in the vast universe. A few planetary errors in comparison with the infinite space for redemption. The planet is a springboard, the universe is a field of opportunities for ever new beginnings, and the birthplace of new worlds and human colonies.

Or, imagine an alternative fact. (6). Say, the Earth is flat. For instance, beneath me infinite depths stretch, above me infinite sky spreads. Around me – a horizontal community. At sunset, I meet friends and the Earth isn't pointlessly turning to the sun. Is it possible that slicing with the aid of the flat Earth enables emergence of such shapes which I forgot about when looking through the telescope into the infinity from the fenced-up mountain? I suddenly feel soil beneath my foot, tons of soil. I realise the mystery of the depths: the depths aren't merely the source of raw material to exploit, but they are equally part of the domains of my responsibility.

I can thus approach that who denies the fact that the Earth is round, a conspirator, grab him by the shoulder and say, as the sun rises: "Sorry, I forgot about you." Can I?

Or, when the fences of truth corrode, perhaps we don't have to immediately mobilise border-guards. Maybe we should look across the fence and ask why some have stayed over there. To paraphrase Bellarmino: not to be interested in the truth. Isn't it, after all, just a tyrannical word? We better look instead at what kind of man my truth makes of me in terms of values.

VOICE Thank you, Michael Blasé for your exhaustive and comprehensive paper. Our thanks also go to Carl Bailie and Enoch Silver for their input into the examination of the intersection of the two initially incompatible areas, poetry and science. For the very Greek word *poiesis* means activity by which man brings something that didn't exist before.

Andráš? Andráš, is it OK? I'll get going.

ANDRÁŠ Oh, what are you doing? You spoiled it all.

VOICE Sorry, I can't go on. It's too much, all at once. Yet, everything is great. I just have to go now.

ANDRÁŠ Sure, off you go. (*Pause.*) Next time I might record that as well.

The End