A Cognitive View of the Legend of “EL DORADO”

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Abstract

The legend of El Dorado echoes the classical 1st attention spared in autism, the quantum 2nd attention hurt in it, the classical-quantum blend (or 3rd attention) hurt in madness, and the vision that natural systems re-create finiteness (1st) through infinity (2nd) in nothingness (3rd).¹ Vision makes the “logos heuristics.” El Dorado, the logos heuristics, Leonardo da Vinci’s “Fight for the Standard,” Alfred Wegener’s 1915 drift of continents, and plate tectonics tell us that Sir Walter Raleigh never wrote Shakespeare’s plays (e.g., “The Merchant of Venice”). They also tell us that climatic avalanches can be barred by a Third Rome provisional assembly built at the very least by the USA, Ukraine, and Russia (Hitler’s nemeses). The Third-Rome should kindly follow a Cincinnatus as wily as St. George, St. Helga/Olga/Elena, St. Vladimir/Volodymyr, Riúrik of Novgorod, and his great-grandson Yaroslav the Wise.

Keywords: El Dorado, autism, folly, “Fight for the Standard,” climate changes, Shakespeare’s source, the Third Rome

1. Introduction

When Christopher Columbus arrived at the mouth of the Orinoco River on his third trip in 1498, he exclaimed: “We have reached the Garden of Eden.” The enormous amount of sweet water launched into the sea by the lower Orinoco told Columbus that he had discovered a huge continent and that high mountains lay somewhere West of the delta he had reached. About forty years later three groups of exactly 166 men each met on the high plain of Cundinamarca, north of Bogotá (the capital city of Colombia). Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada headed the main Spanish expedition from the Atlantic port of Santa Marta by the Magdalena River, Sebastián de Benalcázar came from Quito in Ecuador, and Nikolaus Federmann, from Coro in Venezuela. Federmann meant the gold that German bankers had loaned to Spain.

The three captains had heard about gold stored in the Muisca Confederation near the sources of the Arauca and Meta rivers, two tributaries to the Orinoco. They found that every ruler-to-be of the Southern Muiscas was covered with gold dust before boarding a raft (the 1st attention) that coiled (the 2nd attention) to the center of the circular Lake Guatavita. Having reached the nothingness of that lake, El Dorado (“The Golden One”) jumped (the 3rd attention) into the water, releasing his precious blanket. The three explorers found just salt on that high plain. They never suspected that the drift of continents on Earth’s oblate spheroid allowed their reunion on that niche of fixed spring, beauty, and just rulers.

Continental drift was first devised by Alfred Wegener, a German meteorologist, in 1915; and the plate tectonics that confirms Wegener’s hunch is still under discussion. We presume that high valleys and earthquakes are produced by the clash of continents (e.g., in the Himalayas) or subduction³ (e.g., Bogota’s Savannah) in seven or eight large raft-plates.⁴ Earth’s terrestrial raft-plates made 300 Mya a super-continent called “Pangaea.” Pangaea and the single ocean (“Panthalassa”) its continents “crossed” have been floating on fluid magma. The autistic rigidity of Earth’s plates and the quantum plasticity of the magma they float on obey convection currents in Earth’s liquid outer core, which circles its hotter and solid iron-nickel core. El Dorado’s offer of gold dust becomes a metaphor for prizing the combination of laws that enrich nature and 98% of our minds (setting off 1% of us with autism and the 1% with madness).

The Muiscas obtained their gold by trading mineral salt in South-America, a fact that arose the myth of a city of gold at

¹ Nothingness or “Zero” is a shut door at the end of the 2nd attention or an open door at the start of the 3rd attention.
² Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus was a retired and mythical short-term dictator in the early Roman Republic.
³ Within “subduction,” an oceanic plate goes under a ring of continental plates, recycling into flexible magma.
⁴ Ninety per cent of earthquakes and tsunamis occur in the “Ring of fire” around the Pacific Plate.
the junction of Venezuela, Brazil, and Guyana. That city, or *Manoa*, soon became *El Dorado*. The greed of Europeans is epitomized in the two searches by the English knight Sir Walter Raleigh for Lake Parime and the legendary city of *Manoa/El Dorado*, located between the Venezuelan Caroni River and the Brazilian Amazon River. That city, seemingly hidden among the “tepuis” (cut mountains) in the Roraima region—was imagined full of gold nuggets and diamonds.

Sir Walter searched first for the golden palaces of *El Dorado* under Elizabeth I, the virgin and smallpox-scared English queen that in 1587 had put him in charge of colonizing North America. The colonists, placed by the London-based Raleigh on the Virginia/North-Carolina’s Roanoke Island, vanished before he first crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 1595.

In 1617, Raleigh searched again for *El Dorado* after his release from the Tower of London, where he was kept under the charge of plotting against King James VI (son of “Bloody Mary,” or “Mary Stuart”). Since James VI was less soft than Elizabeth I, Raleigh’s second failure brought him the loss of his son Wat and his head. Beyond the damage left today by illegal gold mining in Roraima, no explorer ever found the origin of the gold dust of *El Dorado*, nor would anybody state a vision of why *El Dorado* personally dropped it by jumping into the cold water at the center of Lake Guatavita.

About Sir Walter Raleigh, the American poet Edgar Allan Poe wrote: “But he grew old/This knight so bold/And o’er his heart a shadow/Fell as he found/No spot of ground/That looked like *Eldorado*.” (Poe, 1859).

2. Hypotheses

*El Dorado* knew that having gold is not enough. Economic growth and “knowing” a lady without worrying for her pregnancy underlie the growth of global population, the overheating of Earth’s atmosphere, sea-level rise, and the 6th extinction underway. Because most leaders lack the vision of *El Dorado*, Mother Earth may not sustain in this century the flight of three billion poor sub-Saharan Africans to rich economies. We are too many and consume too much energy.

The “forests” crossed by the sweet water of the Amazon, Essequibo, Caroní, and Orinoco rivers, their “richness of free nonhuman species,” and the “social justice” sought by *El Dorado* are now choked. Losing the previous tipping points would rob our young. Yet a “Third Rome” could sow the progress promised by Gabriel to Mary (as a mother).

Gabriel’s angelic hailing of Mary, the insight of the Viking St. Helga/Olga/Elena, and Shakespeare’s “Merchant of Venice” imply that faith, hope-doubt, and charity make justice and kindness. We just need to link Robert Burns’ question in his pool of old Scottish songs, “Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?” with the answer, “we’ll tak’ a cup o’ kindness yet, for auld lang syne.” Let us recall that free kindness does not carry gifts.

3. Discussion

Shakespeare’s “Merchant of Venice” begins with the concession of a loan to the young gentleman Bassanio by the Jewish moneylender Shylock. Bassanio’s ship-owner friend, Antonio, warrants repayment in three months, under the menacing extraction of a pound of his flesh. Bassanio invests the loan in marrying Portia, an heiress at Belmont, near Venice, while his friend Gratian marries Nerissa, Portia’s lady-in-waiting. Each wife gives a ring to her husband.

Since Antonio’s ships are reported lost at sea at the end of the grace period, he is arrested by the Dux of Venice. Although in the trial Shylock is offered the double of his loan, he chooses his convened-upon pound of Antonio’s flesh. Disguised as a mustache-adorned Paduan lawyer and his helper, Portia and Nerissa gracefully, kindly, and elegantly get the freedom of Antonio, spoil Shylock of his gold, and receive from their husbands their two rings as fair payment.

The next morning, Bassanio and Gratian see in Belmont each of their rings with the respective wife. Upon hearing that Portia received her ring from the lawyer she spent the night with, and Nerissa from the helper she accompanied all along, they are shocked! Yet a letter from Padua helps Bassanio and Gratian realize (Vision) that Portia “threw off” her gold dust, while impersonating the Paduan lawyer; with Nerissa following with his helper.

That letter would fail if Bassanio and Gratian could not combine classical cerebral computing (the 1st attention) with quantum cerebellar computing (the 2nd attention) in meeting justice, grace, and kindness (the 3rd Attention) by hurling our 5000 cerebellar microcomplexes into the cerebellar vermis and brainstem. Vision and will allow them to escape folly—echoing the travel and actions of El Dorado, the floating of a few pieces of rigid crust around the Fire that blesses the central nothingness of Earth’s gravity, and the fact that nature pursues the void junction of life (1st attention) and freedom (2nd attention) in the justice, kindness, and happiness that surround the 3rd attention.

Portia’s and Nerissa’s infinite ability to live in separate people at once saves Antonio and sets the happiness bestowed by a just and kind use (the 3rd Attention) of the infinity and nothingness veiled in the 2nd attention. It also explains El Dorado’s vision and will to get rid of his gold dust (the 1st attention). On balance, devilish freedom (the 2nd attention) cannot foil humans’ search for (the 2nd attention) and finding of justice, kindness, and happiness (the 3rd Attention).

Raleigh equals El Dorado’s going trip, as well as Scrooge McDuck’s attachment to gold coins. Because he never lost the thirst for gold in his 1st attention, though, Raleigh did not match the Prophet Muhammad, the Mesoamerican demigod Quetzalcoatl (Cassella, 2018), Christ, Krishna, and the Yellow Emperor, who returned to a renovated
world. Raleigh captured El Dorado’s spiral-like path through infinity to reach the empty heart of Lake Guatavita but failed to get the meaning of his immersion there. Having missed the return to a new world, he could not have written Shakespeare’s plays. In them, the 1st attention tastes the power of the 2nd attention and the beauty of the 3rd Attention. While he learned pronouns in the 2nd attention that encloses the 1st attention, Raleigh never reached the 3rd attention.

Autistics invert pronouns (Kanner, 1943) because their cognition cannot fathom the 2nd attention. Unlike the coiled going of El Dorado and the doubts and pronouns courted by Raleigh, autistics cannot cross the infinite rays of a circle or the infinite circles in a sphere. Autistics are charmed by circular lids, but are blinded by the perfection of repetitive schemes, as in the repetitive perfection of gold. They cannot play the fake madness of Alice’s phantomatic Cheshire cat, a cognitive mode of infinity that the searching Raleigh did have. Unlike the suicidal Vincent van Gogh, that English knight never reached the illumination, kindness, and beauty veiled in central nothingness. And van Gogh shot himself after realizing that real schizophrenia hampered his return to beauty and a better reality.

Nature’s autistic side prevented El Dorado’s sinking through his rigid raft, as we do not sink through Earth’s plates. He stood on his raft under the autistic laws that: a) “One thing cannot exist in separate places simultaneously (or Einstein’s finite speed of light), and b) “Separate things cannot share the same space at the same time” (or Pauli Exclusion Principle). These same laws bid Bassanio and Grattan to pay fairly their disguised wives with their rings.

They escape anger and madness (after the “confession” of their wives) by combining (the 3rd Attention) the cerebral principles of the 1st attention with the cerebellar principles of the 2nd attention: a) “One thing may lie in separate places” (within quantum entanglement; e.g., a Paduan lawyer in a Venetian trial and Portia in Belmont), and b) “Separate things may share the same space” (in the quantum superposition by which a lawyer and a dame (Portia) can share the same space). Bread and wine (or meat and blood) suggest the same combination in the Last Supper. In the same way that the wily Portia produces just, kind, and brilliant solutions in Shakespeare’s “Merchant of Venice” in the 16th century, the Viking and Christian St. Helga/Olga/Elena controlled her Drevlians neighbors in the 9th century.

Perhaps Shakespeare’s implicit Vision of the meaning of El Dorado’s jump into the center of Lake Guatavita is related to beliefs held by the Vikings. In his tryzub-trident, Yaroslav the Wise (the alleged son of Anna [a princess of Byzantium, or the 2nd Rome] and St. Vladimir/Volodymyr) added a cross to the circle/sphere’s topping that his Norse ancestor Rurik had placed on the center of the trident represented on the money used in Novgorod and Kiev.

Yaroslav’s fairness shows that about 1000 years ago he appreciated the love, pardon, and justice of his repented father after marrying the Christian Anna and getting that the 3rd Attention implies a just use of the 2nd attention. Today Russians hate a Ukrainian tryzub addressed at killing quantum computing. If the devil in our 2nd attention were slain, freedom and St. George’s remake of finitude would vanish. Slyness graces us in the center of a circle/sphere (Rurik of Novgorod), a cross (St. Olga and Yaroslav the Wise), Lake Guatavita (El Dorado), the Earth (the Great Goddess), and the cosmos (Cassella, 2022a). Reducing vision to vision creates unneeded danger.

The anthropological temperature rise of Earth’s atmosphere would hit bad our young. Worse than that, a cooling avalanche could succeed the heating one. The cause could be the incipient free trading of the “Azolla” super-plant that introduced past ice ages by reducing the atmospheric content of carbon dioxide (CO2), while growing in a closed Arctic Ocean about 50 million years ago. St. Olga/Elena would know how to prevent irreversible migrations of the Azolla.

Leonardo da Vinci too knew that we cannot reach progress by just winning a fratricidal war. Thus, he welcomed the 1503 initiative by Pier Soderini, the Republican gonfaloniere/dictator of Florence, to adorn the East Wall of the Hall of the 500, at Florence’s Palazzo Vecchio, with a mural of the 1440’s Battle of Anghiari won by Florence over Milan.

Confrontation, war, and winning belong to the 1st attention. Thus, in the “Fight for the Standard” of the “Battle of Anghiari” Leonardo’s emphasized (the 2nd attention) the defeated “condottieri” (Niccolò Piccininno and his son Francesco) more than the winners. He depicted the 3rd attention in the perception of an injustice by the onlooker. Because he valued Leonardo’s rendering of our three attentions in the Fight for the Standard, about 4.5 centuries ago the painter-architect Giorgio Vasari did not destroy da Vinci’s mural in the Hall of the 500: He just hid it.

4. Conclusion

My “logos heuristics” (Cassella, 2018, 2022a) suggests that Vasari hid the center of a “Fight for the Standard” (I size at 4.2 [height] x 6.2 [length] m at Palazzo Vecchio) 7.035 m under the center of his Battle of Marciano. Although I had in 1996 the help of the finest professors of psycholinguistics in Harvard and Mass universities to examine the cognition of normal and autistic youngsters in neuropsychological texts, the false absurdity of my heuristics makes it seem false.

I never falsified my logos. I checked my Vision of cerebellar Long-Term Potentiation (“For many are called”) and Long-Term Depression (“But few are chosen”) (Matthew 22:14, KJV) with Masao Ito (Riken Institute, Tokyo).

Cerebellar LTP pairs El Dorado’s going; and LTD, his jump. The strange path from LTP to LTD implies a central direction within a mode of kindness linked to a distributed-hierarchy ideal of nature, the human brain, and society.
If I found a *Fight for the Standard* in line with the counsels of the *logos heuristics*, my view of *El Dorado* would agree with a Third Rome in control of latent mayhems. I posited (Cassella, 2022b) that the Third Rome be headed by a modern *Cincinnatus* (e.g., a woman as wily as *St. Olga/Elena*) and made up at the least by a keen USA, a sturdy Ukraine, and an atoned Russia. The Third Rome would exalt the absurd nothingness prized by *El Dorado*.

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About the author

Placing the words “Antonio Cassella” in the author’s space at Amazon will generate a list of his books, while the website researchautism.com allows the downloading of free films and articles about his logos heuristics.

Antonio Cassella was born in Ethiopia in 1940. He had his primary education in Italy; and high-school, in both Italy and Venezuela. In 1965 he obtained from LUZ-Maracaibo a BSc in Petroleum Engineering. For 17 years Antonio developed oil fields in the tidal bay of Maracaibo with Creole (a subsidiary of Esso/ExxonMobil), Lagoven, and PDVSA (Petróleos de Venezuela). In 1976, he worked with EPRCO (Exxon Production Research) in Houston; and with Strategic Planning of PDVSA between 1983 and 1993. From 1994 to 1997 he was a scientist at MIT-CEEPR (Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research), in Cambridge (MA). His research at MIT led to establishing two scenarios of the global growth of population, energy, and the economy; i.e., until 2060 (Cassella, 2008).

In June 1997, his exploration of the roots of autism and creative intelligence led to a master’s degree in Psychology, the Dean’s List, the Thomas Small Prize, and the Award for Outstanding ALM Thesis in the Area of Natural and Human Sciences from Harvard University. In 2001 Antonio Cassella received from Universidad Nacional Experimental Simón Rodríguez (UNESR) in Caracas a doctoral degree of Research and Teaching in Sciences of Education under a Summa Cum Laude trajectory.

Antonio’s writings in Italian, Spanish, and English (at Amazon) show that we can restore the atmosphere and the cycle of water. As shown in researchautism.com, Research Autism LLC has published 12 free documentaries (15 minutes each) about the logos heuristics. The new links are as follows:

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