

STRESS, WORLD CULTURES & PEACE



Stress Books

J.K. Burns

***Stress, World Cultures
and Peace***

By

J. K. Burns Ph.D(Glas.),
B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B.,B.A.O. (NUI). M.I. Biol.

Publication Data

C 1994 By J. K.Burns.

Printed by Alfa Print, Athlone,
Co. Westmeath, Ireland.
Tel 0902.94198 Fax 0902.94642

Published 1994, by Stress Books,
121 Kingshill, Salthill, Galway, Ireland.
Tel 091.28838

Cataloguing in Publication Data

Burns, J.K. Stress, Causes, Treatment
and Research

ISBN 1 898874 04 X 1994.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced by any means, nor transmitted, nor translated, without prior permission of the copyright owners.

Stress Books

Prof. J. K. Burns has researched stress for a quarter of a century. He has been Professor of Physiology at University College Galway, Ireland and King Abdullaziz Medical College, Saudi Arabia ; also lecturer at Glasgow University and the University of St. Andrews ; Senior Consultant with the World Health Organisation in South East Asia ; Fellow of The Council of Europe. Professor Burns has held exhibitions of Chinese Prints, Japanese Prints, Stress and Culture, in Ireland and of International Cultural Unity in Cairo. He lectured to audiences of International Societies and University Faculties in twenty countries worldwide.

By the Author.

Stress Books Publications include :

Birth Defects and Their Causes (1994)

Islam, Christianity, Life Science and Unity (1994)

Stress and Human Nature (1994)

Medical Research on Stress in Pregnancy and Labour (1994)

Life Science and Religions (1994)

With Philosophical Library

Stress, World Cultures and Peace(1994)

Stress, Causes, Treatment and Research (1994)

Contents

1.	Greek Culture and Intellectuality	3
2.	Middle East Culture and Mentality	15
3.	Russian Culture and Communalilty	28
4.	Indian Culture and Universality	42
5.	Chinese Culture and Personality	68
6.	African Culture and Originality	86
7.	Japanese Culture and Humanity	109
8.	American Indian Culture and Unity	120
9.	Stress, Cultures and Peace	132
10.	Stress, Poetry and Internationality	151

Illustrations

1.	Apollo, Light	6
2.	Zeus, Representing Love	10
3.	Kahlil Gibran of Lebanon	19
4.	Alexander Solzenitsyn	32
5.	Shiva : The Cosmic Dance	46
6.	The Taj Mahal	52
7.	Chinese Landscape	73
8.	Chengde Temple	79
9.	Queen Nerfertiti	90
10.	Tut Ankh Amun	94
11.	Royal Egyptian Funereal Couch	99
12.	Head of an Ox, Egypt	104
13.	Kabuki Drama, Japan	113
14.	Himeji Castle, Japan	118
15.	Lance and Peace Pipe	124
16.	Kung Fu Tzu - Confucius	137
17.	The Buddha	142

Stress, World Cultures and Peace

Stress, or suffering is the main problem, worldwide, medically and socially. It is important that we become informed about stress, so that we can understand the causes, biology, medical, cultural and religious aspects. The present study of stress and of some of the worlds oldest cultures aims at identifying the relation between stress and cultures. In general, cultures tend to prevent stress and suffering : on occasion some cultures enhance suffering. The relation is generally clear, to those who study cultures. It is not so clear to those who know only their own culture or religion - and who think theirs is right and all others are wrong. It is essential that this viewpoint be changed, in the quest for world harmony and peace.

Cultures are almost universal in counteracting stress and suffering, and in evincing desire for love and harmony, knowledge and truth, understanding and empathy. The purpose of humankind is to preserve the earth and ourselves. Human genocide is an admission of failure - of maladaptation, separateness of body and 'soul', division and conflict. Genocide is evil, evidencing individuality, pride, psychological territoriality, self-righteousness, self-consciousness, greed, aggression and destructiveness. The idea of One God - which is 'our God and no one elses', is part of the pattern of human pride and vanity. The concept

of a universal spirit is a prerequisite for peace and harmony, requiring us to look outwards to the rest of the universe, and to know that love and truth are necessary for the saving of humankind. Speech and communication, literature, history, life sciences, human geography, traditions, music and dance, art and crafts, education and medicine convene at the nub of civilization and radiate the opportunity to make living more pleasant, caring and considerate, healthy and civilized.

Partial education and finity of consciousness and feeling imply ignorance and self-righteousness. The way to survival and unity is broad education, knowledge, understanding and love. 'Good' must be infinite, in truth and love, knowing other points of view, other cultures, other religions.

The present purpose is to lead people to the consideration of the relation between stress, suffering and international cultures. Our cultures reflect our mentality, love or hate. Some cultures are based on love, others on hate and aggression. The main proposal is that we can gain from consideration of other cultures. The question is, how do we persuade people to love, especially if their tradition or upbringing preaches disunity, conflict, aggression and hate? The answer is international education.

Kieran Burns

1. Greek Culture and Intellectuality

Light and Universality : Apollo

Light is essential for knowledge, with which it is equated, and for love which is its spiritual origin. The beauty of the Grecian seascape, the brilliance of the water's reflection, the clarity of visual images - islands, shore and sea, the sparkling of the waves, and of the stars at night, these demanded attention daily from a people who were engendering intelligence and destined to look outward and upward. Light is almost indescribable, in its importance as originator of images, vision, perception, association ; in the variety and beauty of its colours and tones ; in its intimate relation to form, its relevance to learning and memory. The Greeks likened light from the Sun to the spirit of God, emanating from God. It is appropriate that our perception and experience of Greece, particularly its islands, is of brilliantly lit land and shores, golden sands and white rolling waves, and blue skies of cloudless purity. In the West we appreciate the centrality in intellectual development of Greek thought, philosophy and theology and its early artistic contributions to sculpture and architecture, drama, philosophy, politics and many aspects of cultures, including the athletic competitiveness that led to the Olympic games. In Tinos Apollonian light sparked

from a glistening tear in the eye of Our Lady (Miriam), shed in sorrow and compassion, for human manmade suffering.

Love and Creation : Aphrodite

Love inspired creation, and a caring attitude towards the universe and life. Love inspires motivation and action and it is the ideal feeling in humankind, since it determines care and respect, empathy and survival. Creative infinite intelligence and love endowed humankind with protective design, as well as the 'highest' known form of intelligence and love in finite beings. Design required order, knowledge, planning and intervention. Those who consider that chance designs complex biological systems, including the human brain, are too proud to admit that a Designer, in an abstract form, exists or are lacking in knowledge of biological systems, and a Grecian way of thought.

According to the Greeks there was chaos, in the beginning, whereas love, as an intelligent force, creatively evolved order in the Cosmos. Many myths surround creation of the earth, plants, animals, and humankind. Aphrodite was the name given by the Greeks to the love that formed motion, order and life. Whereas modern concepts of Deity involve universal knowledge, including psychobiology and

biochemistry in creative formation of animal and human life, initial Greek ideas involve the four elements, earth, air, heat, water.

The epitomy of western civilization, conceiving of love as older than time, and intellectuality as the basis of civilization, the Greeks envisaged God as having human characters, but later accepted that a human has divine nature, comprising a blend of humanity and perfection. Formulating a tradition of poetry and drama, sculpture and architecture, philosophy and politics, Greeks were known for their interest in learning and teaching, academic development, rational theology of love and logic. Initially, Gods were powers of nature, evidenced by natural events or outbursts, personification of feeling, humanity or behaviour. The Greeks were in awe of the miracles of nature - and its human offspring ; they excelled in perception, observation, learning, understanding, appreciation, gratitude and love. Their cultural developed by intellectual endeavour, and their acceptance and understanding of Christian concepts was a natural sequel to their academic achievement. We should not denigrate Greek reasoning and religion for its multiplicity of concepts of God. Rather was God perceived as a universal spirit, branching out in emanations of achievement, blossoming in a culture of beauty and its appreciation. There was not, in belief a materialist enumeration of Gods;



Stress and Cultures

1. Apollo represents light and universality, knowledge, intellectuality and thus the Infinite. Greece is light portrayed in land and seascapes, the sun in its orbit, the moon and stars at night. All cultures respect light. The junction of light and darkness is illumined by the appropriately named Morning Star.

rather were all activities of nature credited to God, in a universality of pantheistic rather than unitary numerical visualization.

Bearing in mind this unitary concept of deity, the following ideas of greatness, intellectual, emotional or academic can be understood as being divine, or human or both : the latter, perhaps, on the premise that one is infinite, the other 'fallen' and finite. The following are 'Greats' of Grecian Culture. Some are 'God', some saints, others human. "All characters take a tincture of our own" and personification or characterization in theology is well known to characterize human theology.

Life and Desire: Zeus

Human life, the epitomy of finite intelligence and love, is ascribed to Zeus, or God, who breathed into humankind his spirit, which linked intelligence and love to finiteness, the human material dimension. Greek tradition included the birthplace of Zeus, his infancy in a cave, and his 'fatherhood' of instinctual behaviour (Minotaur) and rational materialism (Ariadne). Typically Greek, this mythical and metaphorical description of early human development is scientific to this day, when we describe the human brain as evincing emotion and reason. There is no real need for new concepts here. Science and myth are

Representations in Greek Culture

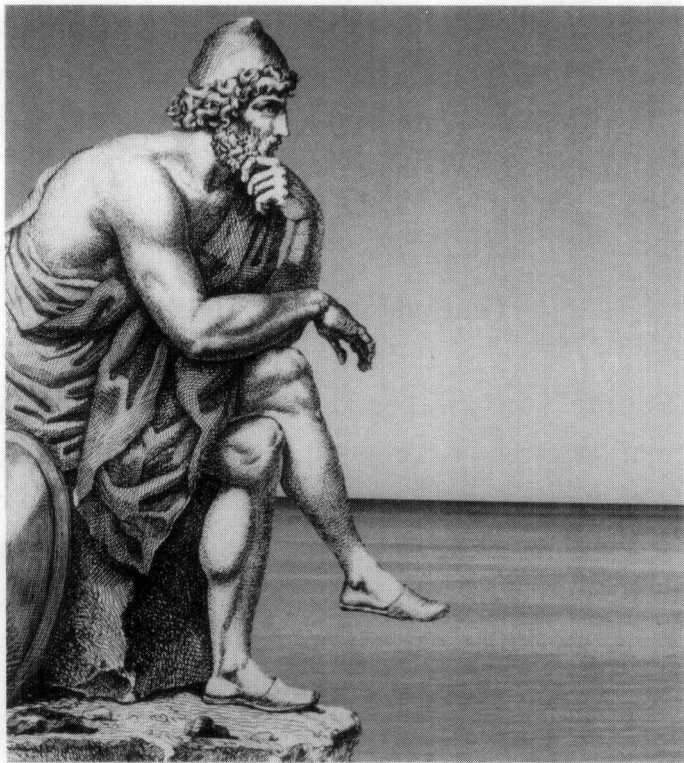
Light and Universality	: Apollo
Love and Creation	: Aphrodite
Life and Desire	: Zeus
Time and The Sun	: Helios
Poetry and Islands	: Homer
Imperialism and Unity	: Alexander
Intelligence and Genius	: Aristotle
Emotion and Jealousy	: Heracles
Philosophy and Logic	: Plato
Culture and Travel	: Odysseus
Seasons and Fertility	: Hera
Ethics and Spirituality	: Pericles
Drama and Tragedy	: Aeschylus
Trial and Justice	: Athena
Theology and Religion	: Aigina

These aspects and personalities of Greek culture give some indication of the variety of its features.

one, i.e. united in truth and perspicacity. Similarly for stress, suffering and life science, the need for saving - or extending towards perfection and infinity and the verified unity of religions with life science.

Time and the Sun : Helios

Helios, the sun awakened, and dawned beauty and imagination in the human mind. Helios persuaded mists to rise from the sea and from inland waters, to mould clouds and descending raindrops. The sun coaxed seedlings to germinate into plants, and animals to cycle their behaviour in accordance with his every movement, to waken when he wakens, sleep when he sleeps, thirst when he thirsts, at the zenith of his journey. It is understandable that some people considered the sun as God. Modern science ascribes endless 'miracles' to multitudinous patterns of radiation, using different names for the basic structures and functions involved. In modern parlance God is a biochemist, 'putting it all together' with substrates, enzymes and cell membranes.



2. Zeus is intelligence and love.

God is infinite in both of these mental attributes, humans finite, individual (unlike God), separatist, self-conscious, self-righteous, proud, divisive and therefore conflicting.

Poetry and the Islands : Homer

Homer is the best known of Greek poets, for two epic poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey. These relate behaviour and affairs of 'Gods' and men, the former being mythical characters, who resembled humans as much as mankind strove to be like Gods. The interesting features however are not the travel, places, people, deeds but attitudes and mentality. There is apparent every sphere of psychological development - knowledge and understanding, empathy and antipathy, harmony and aggression, depiction of beauty and ugliness, peace and war, love and hatred, jealousy and revenge, fear and courage, faltering mentality and determination. Above all there is the openness of mind which many have failed to learn from history and which affects and reflects cultural development. It is expressed in the Greek word ephetha - open. Its modern counterpart, the truth and universality of science, is Kalki, all truth, including and confirming religious fundamentals.

Odysseus travelled, in these epics of Homer - far and wide among the Aegean and other Greek Islands and met with many and varied adventures. The idea of travel, and the motivation, is probably part of insular influence, since islanders have the means for sea-going, the motivation and the expertise. Lacking in most people - though not in Odysseus - is the motive to travel for the sake of the