The background of the page is a golden-yellow color with faint, stylized illustrations of ancient Egyptian figures and hieroglyphs. The figures are depicted in a traditional Egyptian style, with some holding staffs or objects. The hieroglyphs are arranged in vertical columns, typical of ancient Egyptian writing. The overall aesthetic is that of an ancient manuscript or a historical document.

Chapter 3
A Beer Story

How Do You Drink Beer?

I have expressed up to this point my opinions on such issues as what a good beer should be and how it should be made... Now, this chapter seems to be a proper place for me to talk about how to drink beer: the art, the way, the Tao, the rules, the right habits, the tactics, the strategies, the do's and don'ts of beer drinking... On a much deeper level, I want to expose readers to some of the proper procedural details of the initiation rituals I discussed frequently in the preceding chapters. In other words, the main goal of this chapter is for the modern readers to fulfill the requirement of forgotten ancient rituals so that our lives can be fuller and more mature. As beer is a drink that screams the messages of deep wisdoms, one can know all of these if one just listens quietly to what beer really says.

1. Humility and Brotherly Love

Beer is basically the drink of primeval tribes. Therefore, it is an informative exercise to investigate into the beer drinking practices of those few primeval tribes still remaining.

Even though primeval tribes began to drink beer tens of thousands years ago, they still drank 'good' beer. The beer was not mass commercialized yet. Not chemically filtered yet. Not toxically decolorized yet. The beer they drink still contained most of the phytogetic essence of the ingredient plants. If roses were used, there still remained some 'rosiness' in the color, in the smell, in the taste, and in the medicinal effects. And if garlic was used, there would still remain some 'garlicness'. Often, these phytogetic characters are more pronounced in this 'good' beer than in the original plants themselves. (Of course, we are talking about 'good' beer only.)¹

These tribes drank good beer in a state where the "beer," "the environment," and "myself" were no longer differentiable, where the "three had become one." Three becoming one? What does it mean, if anything? Our modern minds are so industrialized that only some hopeless New Agers can feign to understand such statements. Forgive me for a little digression here as we need some explanations. Serious explanations.

In the civilizations and cultures that dominated the earth before this Western industrial civilization, such concepts as self-awareness, 'ego,' or such an idea as "myself", were not as strong as they are today. In fact, "Western civilization," and "The Modern Age"² are defined as the way of thinking where "Me" is the center of the whole universe, the measure of everything, and the highest value of all. Nothing can be more important than "Me." "Me" should be taken care of first. What is in it for "Me"? Egocentricity. Pure Egocentricity. No gods were worshipped so faithfully and so blindly as the God of Modernity, which is nothing but "Me," in Modern society. Any God, including Jehova,³ would be ecstatic only if he

¹ I can think of an example of such good beer: Sphynx Beers produced in B.C. Canada!!!

² As defined by the Western Civilization.

³ The Jewish God who is famous for His jealousy. Do not come even close to Him unless

is worshipped only half as faithfully as modern men worship the God of "Me."

This egocentric world view is just fine as long as "Me" does not run into another "Me." The critical weakness of this religion of "Me" is that the God of "Me" can be worshipped neither collectively nor communally.

One could nobly declare that in modern times, the universal center moved from the Church (cum Traditions) to Humanity. But, that is empty talk, just semantic propaganda void of any real applicative value. From the beginning, the Church (tradition thereof and religions thereof) has been all about 'human' organizations and 'human' activities any way. The last time I checked, there were no 'dog' churches, yet.⁴ Departing organizations and activities which are already 100% human can not bring in more humanity. It would be more accurate to say that we are more focused on "Me" in exclusion of everybody else. Of course, when there is nobody else to exclude, this "Me" falls into deep despair. Worshipping of "Me" always requires that somebody else is ahead of whom this "Me" should be taken care of. When there is no such somebody else, or, where there is somebody else whose interests come ahead of this "Me," the whole religion of "Me" collapses immediately and violently. But, who cares? The most tragic aspect of the religion of "Me" is that, when it collapses, which is fatally inevitable; there is nobody around to mourn together. You have been the center of the universe. Therefore, you should arrange your own funeral, and you should pray for your own salvation. But, the biggest fact here is that such 'You's', who were formerly "Me", are DEAD.

Focusing on "Me" can be observed in many places. Let's first look at language. Having been heavily influenced by modern English/ and other modern Western languages, almost all sentences in Asian languages today begin with clearly defined "subjects." Perhaps for this reason, the number of sentences beginning with the word "I" has increased exponentially in all

you are prepared to worship him fully devotedly. I mean 100% devotedly.

⁴ No part of this whole book has ever encountered criticisms and objections than this part. So many readers vehemently discredited this statement by pointing to some churches they personally know. I do believe them to some extent.

literature of Asian languages. It was not so in the past. Reading literature from just a few decades ago, we can see that hardly any subjects are used in the conversations among Asian people. The sentences in past Asian cultures were almost void of 'subjects.' There are almost no instances where either "I" or "we" is used to begin sentences except when the king is commanding his subjects, or when a gangster is picking a fight with a passerby. For example, instead of saying "Did you like the food there?", they used to say, "Was the food OK?" Instead of saying "I do not like the food" they used to say "The food there is... well... Food there is..."

There was always room in which 'I' can be safely inaccurate. Such communications can be categorized as communal, as opposed to 'capitalistic' or 'market oriented.' A child returning from school used to only say, "Back." He did not say, "I, Smarty Pants, your son and legal heir, having returned from the elementary educational institute accredited by the national government, reporting the conclusion of the act of acquiring information for the advancement of internal qualities, at fifteen hundred hours and forty-three minutes have returned." In Japan, all you need at this time was "Dada Ima" – which simply means "now." All sentences, all communications were conducted this way because the self-centered concept of "I" and "Me" was not firmly established yet in all Asian cultures. "Me", "I" and "My" are basically Western concepts and even in the West, it is basically a 20th century syndrome. In Asia, we did not have them. To some extent, most of what we say in the modern world is nothing but "Worship Me, or...", and "Give yours to Me, or...." The assertion of the Self is invariably associated with implied violence. The other "Me" who is listening should make an instantaneous decision whether or not, and how to counter the threat of this implied violence.

This is precisely the diametric opposite of the thought patterns to which original 'beer' makers subscribed. The Buddhist "doctrine of selflessness" shares a connection with this 'beer' philosophy also. The "selflessness" of 'beer' doctrine, as well as the Buddhist doctrine, preaches is to the destruction of and the transcendence from the "I, as well as the attachment to something," and the "I, the one who must conquer and make that something mine, exclusively mine."

Once we attain such selflessness, the human attitude towards the surrounding environment is nothing but ‘reverence’ and ‘humility’: respectful awe of and harmony with Nature. It should be plainly reasonable to be humble in the face of Nature that has existed billions of years before human beings ever arrived. We can not understand this all, and we are not supposed to. We can not conquer this all, and we are not supposed to. This is the true meaning of the word, "humility." "Humility" without the respect and reverence toward the surrounding environment is just another defeatist interpersonal skill people employ to give a good impression of themselves. Most of the times, such a skill does not work. Even if it works, then, it is a deception.⁵

At this point, it is necessary to quote the speech of Chief Seattle in its entirety.⁶



Chief Seattle



Seattle

"We may be Brothers After All"

President in Washington sent us a letter that they want to buy our land.

How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us.

⁵ If you are ready to be deceptive, I can offer you a few more effective means to assert yourself than this fake humility. Even as a deceptive tactic, fake humility belongs somewhere between ‘very inferior’ and ‘hopelessly ineffective.’

⁶ The capital city of Washington State was named after this guy.

If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?

Every part of the Earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clear and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories of the red man. The white man's dead forget the country of their birth when they go walk among the stars. Our dead never forget this beautiful Earth, for it is the mother of the red man. We are part of the Earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters, the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and the man, all belong to the same family.

So, when the Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land, he asks much of us. The Great White Chief sends word he wishes to buy our land, he asks much of us. The Great White Chief sends word he will reserve us a place so that we can live comfortably to ourselves. He will be our father and we will be his children. So we will consider your offer to buy land. But it will not be easy. For this land is sacred to us.

This shining water that moves in streams and rivers is no just water but the blood of our ancestors.

If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred, and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events in the life of my people. The waters murmur is the voice of my father's father. The rivers of our brothers they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember to teach you children that the rivers are our brothers, and yours, and you must henceforth give the rivers the kindness that you would give my brother. We know that the white man

does not understand our ways. One portion of land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The Earth is not his brother, but his enemy and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his father's graves behind, and he does not care. He kidnaps the Earth from his children, and he does not care.

BIRTHRIGHT

His father's grave, and his children's birthright are forgotten. He treats his mother, the earth, and his brother, the same, as things to be bought, plundered, sold like sheep or bright beads. His appetite will devour the Earth and leave behind only a desert. I do not know. Our ways are different from your ways. The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the red man. But perhaps it is because the red man is a savage and does not understand.

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the unfurling of leaves in spring, or the rustle of an insect's wings. But perhaps it is because I am a savage and do not understand. The clatter only seems to insult the ears. And what is there to life if a man can not hear the lonely cry of a whippoorwill or the arguments of the frogs around a pond at night. I am a red man and do not understand. The Indian prefers the soft sound of the wind darting over the face of the pond, and the smell of the wind itself, cleansed by a midday rain, or scented with the pinon pine.

PRECIOUS

The air is precious to the red man, for all things share the same breath – the beast, the tree, the man, they all share the same breath. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench. But if we sell you our land, you must remember that the air is precious to us, that the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also receives his last sigh. And if we sell you our land, you must keep it apart and sacred, as a

place where even the white man can go to taste the wind that is sweetened by the meadow's flowers. So we will consider your offer to buy our land. If we decide to accept, I will make one condition – the white man must treat the beasts of this land as his brothers.

I am a savage and do not understand any other way. I have seen a thousand rotting buffaloes on the prairie, left by the white man who shot them from a passing train. I am a savage and do not understand how the smoking iron horse can be made more important than the buffalo that we kill only to stay alive.

What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of the spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man.

All things are connected.

RESPECT

You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandfathers. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the Earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the Earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the Earth befalls the sons of the Earth. If men spit upon the ground, they spit upon themselves. This we know – the Earth does not belong to man – man belongs to the Earth.

This we know.

All things are connected like the blood that unites one family.

All things are connected.

Whatever befalls the Earth – befalls the sons of the Earth. Man did not weave the web of life – he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. Even the white man, whose God walks and talks with him as friend to friend, can not be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all.

We shall see.

One thing we know, which the white man may one day discover – Our God is the same God. You may think now that you own Him as you wish to own our land, but you can not. He is the God of man, and His compassion is equal for the red man and the white. The Earth is precious to Him, and to harm the Earth is to heap contempt on its creator. The whites too shall pass, perhaps sooner than all the other tribes. But in your perishing you will shine brightly, fired by the strength of the God who brought you to this land and for some special purpose gave you dominion over this land and over the red man. That destiny is a mystery to us, for we do not understand when the buffalo are slaughtered, the wild horses tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires. Where is the thicket?

Gone.

Where is the Eagle?

Gone.

The end of living and the beginning of survival.

...

...

A truly magnificent composition!⁷

From this primeval point of view, an identity called "I," is not separate from Nature. An "I" that is distinctly separate from Nature, and an "I" that must always manipulate/conquest Nature...such an "I" is actually a

⁷ Truthfully, I harbor a firm conviction that someone from a much later generation than Chief Seattle forged this writing. There is only a very slim chance that a speech made a hundred years ago could express a modern environmentalist's point of view this accurately in such great detail. Furthermore, modern rhetoric is used. I don't understand why people are so keen about proving the falsehood of Bible in vain, while this kind of obvious fakes are blindly accepted. Anyways, the above writing is found in every anthology of the great American speeches. As a speech, it is considered second only to the Gettysburg Address of Abraham Lincoln.

hopelessly pathetic being. Such an "I" always thinks everything in terms of the ruling vs. the ruled, the winners vs. the losers, and the eater vs. the eaten. He sees the land only as a monetary pawn and possession to own. For him, there is no land, there are only real estates whose three L's are the most important essence of his small miserable universe. Yes, a very miserable small universe. The last piece of real estate he holds is nothing but a very small piece of real estate, a grave, which becomes a part of a toxic dump site sooner or later, or a golf course at best. Land sometimes should be just land, not real estate. If we look at Nature with only a little bit of more respect, humility, and love in our hearts, than Nature gives us a vast amount of wisdom in return.⁸ And this wisdom would not even be



Gas Chamber



Wishing you a Blessed Christmas

Silent Night

⁸ If both Christianity and Buddhism were to be summarized by one word, the concept of "grace" would be the most likely candidate. I have described this word in more detail in my other writing, "Blood and milk." To summarize Hinduism in one word, the most likely term would be "respect." Before pious Hindu's rise from bed in the morning, they will sing a long hymn called the 'veda,' "Dear Goddess of the Earth, I will now irreverently tread my foot upon you." They will do the same when picking a flower. For a truly pious Hindu, to hurt another human being is simply unthinkable. Yet it is these very people who produce nuclear weapons and perform the greatest number of suicide bombings... one way or the other, human hands turn everything good into the most horrific things. What anti-talent!!! The people who could not step on dirt respectfully enough are the ones who instigate holocausts.

But then, when Hitler started to murder Jews, the foreign policy of Europe remained lax. One of the rationales of these Appeasement policies was that no one could believe that the land of Beethoven and Goethe could produce such an atrocity...Foolishness, once grown beyond a certain limit, always turns into a brute tragedy. Whenever the Nazi's would put Jews into gas chambers, their speakers would play the Christmas carol, "Silent Night." Even today, whenever that Christmas carol is sung, Jews all over the world will grit their teeth, tremble, and mutter, "they're coming to kill us all again."

communicated through the intermediation of the languages that inevitably entails distortion, revision, filtration, and reduction; but is communicated directly to our subconscious in its original 'primitive' form. In other words, no words are needed for this wisdom to be taught.⁹

The ultimate and the deepest wisdom of all ages of all great teachers and of all places are always "Humility", and necessarily that, "We are Brothers after all." I can fill a few hundred pages quoting what Great Teachers such as Jesus and Buddha say about this. Humility and Brotherhood... Every other teaching pales in front of them. We are just feeble beings in the face of these harsh daily realities. Are we, then, not supposed to be humble? And aren't we, then, brothers after all in this tough game of difficulties and rare survival? Are we not at least co-sufferers of all this pain and tragedy?

That is why I particularly hate those Christians who always cry "Purge the enemies inside! Purge the heresy!" Doctrinal purity. Yes. It's a great thing. But, can't we just get along? These Christians constantly change the targets for which they feel that they should pray for God's special forgiveness. Sometimes, homosexuals are their main target. At other times, those women who undergo abortions become their main target. They are always calling for a holy crusade against some people and some issue. Personally, I do not agree with homosexuality and abortion. But, that does not stop me loving them as my brothers and sisters... I, at 47, am rapidly becoming bold, but, I wish that I keep being loved by other people even with my boldness. Sometimes, I just don't want to hate people on account of issues I do not know much.

The message of true Christians will always be concluded as "We are brothers." Discovering brotherhood was the mission of Jesus and the prophets, and the mission of pastors is to recover lost lambs; not to find new

Grace, humility.... why are these so hard to achieve? In that sense, I think that Phillip Yancey's *What is so Amazing about Grace?* (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1997) is a must for everybody. Yancey is this author's personal favorite, next only to C.S. Lewis.

⁹ This book was originally written in the language of my mother tongue, Korean. I declare that more than half of the original message was lost during the process of the translation into English. The readers from the English civilization lose a lot during the course of translation of works originally written in other languages. English is such an extremely commercial language.

subjects to purge.¹⁰ God is the one who purges in the end. Our own mission is to find our brothers in the meantime. No wonder the last message of Jesus was that "we are all one." The brotherhood grown by those "humble" people who use their respect for Nature as the common denominator among themselves...That is the Ultimate Teaching that I am describing.

The values and goals of brewing and drinking beer can all be summarized as humility and brotherhood. "I" am just a pitiful tiny creature who is nothing in the face of these multiple calamities unavoidable in life, and so are you. Thus, we are brothers, and God will bless us when we love each other...When we are brothers who die for each other, who can beat us? When we have already died for each other, how can our enemy kill us again? How can we be wrong when we say to each other that we are right? ...These are the messages and benefits of brewing and drinking beer. Covenant of Humility.

¹⁰ It is for this reason that I dislike those 'Fundamentalist' Christians who eagerly hunt out heretics within the church. In their eyes, everybody is a potential heretic and an agent of Satan. Heretics do exist of course, but "heresy hunters" tend to take immeasurable pleasure in slipping in the names of healthy churches and Christians into to the list of heretics. They are merely a pack of bloodthirsty wolves. They just love to judge other people. Why can't we offer a genuine invitation before being so judgmental against other people? Look into the eyes of those people who we are about to judge quietly. In their eyes, and through their eyes, God will tell you that we are all brothers. I just hate hating people for differences. We are all brothers, after all. When I gaze into the eyes of these people haters, I hear voices of carnivorous animals.

2. The Restoration of Biodiversity: Ears and Eyes

If we hold a respectful attitude towards plants, and maintain a stance of listening to the messages these plants send directly to our subconscious, they will tell us loudly which plants will cure which diseases. Actually, the great authors of ancient Eastern medicine like Shin Nong, Huh Joon, or Lee Si Jin did not produce their works by way of Randomized Double Blind Tests of each of the myriads of herbs they wrote about.¹¹ What these men had was a reverent attitude of listening to the trees and grasses around them, and it was to the people in such respectful postures that these plants whispered their secrets.

But, alas! They did not stop there, which they should have done. They did not stop at merely "listening" to Nature. They took these secrets and scandalously commercialized them by writing popular books. Thus, the arrogant also have access to those secrets that used to be available exclusively to the humble. There remain fewer reasons to be humble.



Humility



Old Herb Books

Heroes can be defined as 'humble human beings who are humble even when they do not have to be.' However, those of us who lead simple and ordinary lives as mine do not have the eyes to recognize these true heroes. As a

¹¹ Tens of thousands of herbs are covered in each of these books. One of this author's hobbies is to collect ancient herbal medicine books. I am planning to eventually turn these books into an electronic data base. Actually, the idea of Randomized Double Blind Tests began with Islamic civilizations. It is explained bit by bit later on in this book how the Islamic culture tended to over-crystallize the relationship between man and nature. To learn more about the Islam civilizations and clinical trials, I refer you to the Web site that carries my other research, www.eastwoodcos.com/Science.

result, even when these extraordinary heroes may approach us, they would be immediately ostracized from us. The only way for them to join us would be by attaining certain minimal material wealth. These heroes can exist in our modern society only as exiles or marginalized beings undistinguishable from the legitimately banished human garbage legally sorted into social piles of recyclable bins. Even though it is sad that we do not have eyes to recognize them, it is quite nice to know that they still exist, in spite.

It has long been an established fact of science that playing music to crops will result in a richer harvest, and talking to flowers will elongate a bud's life. Since these plants have "hearing ears," wouldn't they also have "speaking mouths"? Plants most certainly relay to us many kinds of information; we just do not have the "ears" to hear them. Or rather, we do have the "ears," but we have regressed from them. On top of that, we are basically made of "mouths." The "mouths" that eat and talk override the ears that hear. We are too busy endlessly shoving food into our stomachs, pissing out and throwing up these foods; Talking, arguing, lying, accusing others of lying, and, accusing others of falsely accusing me of lying... .When and how could we possibly hear these sounds? To "empty our hearts, become one with nature, and listen calmly" is an impossible feat for a modern person to achieve from the start.



Quietness and Listening

We are programmed to run only on the road we have chosen for ourselves to enlarge our claims in our own ways, all for "myself." It is not possible to "hear" when leading this kind of life, and the ones who do suggest trying to listen somehow appear hateful. It is so important to grab the mike to show off my wit, my cleverness, my humor, and my knowledge... to "listen" carefully is a very difficult concept to grasp. A pro-position such as, "Let us be quiet for a while" could be made occasionally, but it is the modern person's nature to wittily retort, "You first!" and feel a profound delight in his cleverness.

We have digressed from the question of how to drink beer towards the almost theological subjects of "emptying your hearts," and "denial of self"; but let us return.

First, we must decide what kind of beer we shall be drinking. It is during this moment that we need to "listen" with a "humble heart." The "heart must be quiet and empty" to "listen" to the "sounds of the body," and to find out with a pure spirit whether we want to drink a beer with orange taste in it, or perhaps garlic, cherry, pumpkin, honey, or sweet potato. Or, just straight pure hop taste. Creamy? Stout? There is no happier moment than when I am pondering over which kind of beer I truly want to drink. Sometimes, it becomes clear that I don't want to drink any. Then I just don't.



Quinine

Discovering what your body really wants is exactly the same as listening to what the trees and grasses are telling you to do. We need to be able to hear what this tree is telling us right now, and what that grass is trying to say right now. The Quinine will tell us, "You've caught malaria. Chew my roots," and the California Red Yew trees will mutter, "You have stomach cancer. Eat my bark." Or perhaps they might whisper to us what we should eat to avoid cancer in the first place.

This is only possible for the blessed and quiet people who have not only retained the sense of hearing God has given to them, but have lived for decades among the trees, grasses, and the insects as an integral part of Nature. We, however, begin our existence in urban concrete jungles, and live on food packaged in plastic bags, treating ourselves with chemical mixtures, and shoveling genetically manipulated foods from metallic containers. We have committed the wretched mistake of having irreparably damaged "bio-diversity." Now, we have to pay for it.

It is true, not only has the egocentricity of the modern person become too pronounced in our ways of thinking and talking, but our bodies have also become too "industrialized" to hear the sounds of Nature around us. Put more accurately, our surrounding environment has been reduced to

poisonous commodities and industrial wastes, while our bodies themselves have become sanitation tanks that harbor radioactive poisons and heavy metals. (A friend of mine who is a compulsive exaggerator told me this was the reason why corpses do not decompose anymore even after they are buried. Apparently, he went on to allege, parts of the corpses will even glow in the dark. Who could laugh at this?) Anyways, the capacity of the human body to realize what it needs and what it wants has become truly feeble.



Toxic Waste

If such a capacity is compro-mised, then it is only a matter of time until diseases set in; not the kinds that are quick and fatal, but the chronic ones that plague and degenerate their victims slowly over long periods of time.

We must recover this ability to listen to Nature and to find out what it is that our bodies need. Our bodies must be renaturalized so that we at least want to eat the foods that our bodies need.

If it is practically impossible to become a part of the trees and grass to lead a completely natural life, as it is for most of us, it is beneficial to begin a hobby of feeling and tasting the different types of available wood and herbs. In the past, most Korean nobles kept medicine chests in their houses, and herbs and tree branches would be hung all over the building. Also, the meals at Korean tables were hardly differentiable from medicinal herbal potions. I imagine how great it would be if modern families also owned wooden chests, with dozens or hundreds of drawers filled with infinite varieties of wood and herbs that they could happily touch and sample from time to time. (There was such a chest in my childhood home, but it did not contain any herbs, so I can not say for myself how exactly beneficial it is. I have, however, placed similar equipments in my office. Wooden chests these days were a little too expensive to acquire, so I used several large cheap plastic bottles. A funny but desperate compromise.)

It would also be nice to sample grasses in their natural locations

on a regular basis as well. There are a few "mushroom picking" clubs in Canada that not only collect mushrooms, but also hike through the Rockies for a few days collecting different varieties of trees and grasses, and teach the members what to eat and what to avoid (there are hardly any



Canadian Rockies

plants you must not eat, only, more accurately, plants you shouldn't eat in great amounts.) It is quite a useful program that isn't very expensive either. Hiking is one of my favorite pastimes, but I tend to make the mistake of packing city foods for my hiking lunch. If I had a little more patience and

perseverance, I would like to try procuring the food from the mountain. I myself am a city person down to the bone, and so I can appreciate how difficult it is to escape the urban mentality. I heard that it has become a fashionable hobby in Korea nowadays to go to "weekend farms." Straw-thatched huts are built on empty plots of land one or two hours away from the city, and the owner will lead a simple and sweaty life uncomplicated by television and uncontaminated by chemicals. No books are brought, and only rough tools are used. As long as the bites are not seriously harmful, I think it is actually quite healthy to be bitten by insects from time to time. I think that "weekend farming" is a good hobby for those who can afford the time and money involved. It would also be helpful to the farming community as these hobby farmers are willing to offer their labor free of charge.

In the same vein of thought, I believe that cooking is another very good hobby. It might be a little expensive, but while we touch, sniff, and taste high-quality vegetables, "biodiversity" would be greatly restored in our bodies and in our subconscious.

I myself have lived in North America for around twenty years, and I too will strangely feel a powerful urge once or twice a week to eat a MacDonald's hamburger or drink a can of Coke. The colossal monster that is industrial capitalism even has control over the tastes of individual human

beings. We are not free in what we want. In more dramatic terms, the modern human has become a trained and genetically manipulated animal like domesticated cattle. We don't want what we want. We want what they want us to want.

I recently watched a television program that investigated a chicken farm. Seventy percent of the chickens reared by this chicken farm -no, this chicken factory- were suffering from liver cancer. The chickens were dribbling blood and entrails everywhere. Many chicken farms will dig ditches to flush out the entrails spilled by these cancerous chickens. Of course, not all farms are as horrendous, but the suspicions that many chickens, and also



Chicken Farm

many farms, are that polluted can not be easily overthrown. Let us honestly consider it. Thinking about the foods we eat, the environment we work in, and the nature that we live; am I actually being oversensitive about these chicken farms?

There was once an employee in my office who had been imprisoned extensively for partaking in anti-government movements. If pigs or cows are placed in solitary confinement as he had been, they would die within several weeks. I remember how he complained to me that humans, however, are more durable in a voice that was half grievous and half admiring. If all

animals were fed the chemically treated foods that we ourselves we eat, they would all become cancerous like the aforementioned chickens pretty soon. Truthfully, I wondered more than once how miraculous it is that there are still people who have not contracted cancer.

To properly drink properly brewed beer, we must to a certain extent shed the "I" who has become a piece of industrial livestock that is fed chemical fodders; the "I" for whom "Me" is always the most crucial issue. Otherwise we would not recognize what kind of beer we want. A close friend does brew me Chinese medicinal herbs once in a while, and the reason I feel better after eating them is because my body recovers its ability to know what it wants after consuming these herbs. The herbs themselves do not solve any problems. They just help the body to solve its own problems. In short, they are helpful because the naturalness and the bio-diversity have been recovered in my body to a certain extent.

To drink beer properly, there needs to be regularly increasing opportunities for the skin, tongue, and eyes to come in contact with trees and grass in Nature. We must restore our naturalness this way so that we can hear at least a little bit of what the plants want to tell us through our subconscious. There is an herbal mix I use (let us simply call it M) that I made for my friends with this purpose in mind. I must say that this is an economic and wise method since "the recovery of naturalness" was the theme that drove the production of this herbal lump, M. It was not made specifically to invigorate, or to improve a specific body part, but as a pile of the basic herbs that the body needs to be in direct and frequent contact with. In Eastern medical terms, it is a "foundational" product. It is my opinion that this mix has the potential to become an important contribution to humanity someday.

Also, this 'M' is a mixture that can be adjusted here and there to create an infinite number of cure variations. Of course, it would be great if the mixture could be incorporated into all of the hundreds of thousand herbs known to medicine, but M does contain the herbs considered 'fundamentally essential' for a person's well being. I made the product after I heard about a medicinal herbal pillow¹² from China that supposedly cured all diseases, and proceeded to analyze and experiment with it. It turned out the mixture

I had made was compatible with the Chinese "Five Element" theory, the German "Complete Food" theory, and the American "Live Food" theory while clearly retaining all sorts of nourishment. I heard that the mix even contained a lot of the trendy stuffs such as anti-oxidants and beta-carotenes.¹³ Anyways, if somebody asked me what was the personal achievement that I was most proud of, I would definitely answer that it was the making of 'M,' while being frustrated at the same time with my inability to sufficiently explain why exactly I was so proud of it... I use quite a bit of M in addition to honey from various plants when I make my Sphynx Beer series.

3. The Art of Drinking

Now, the next problem is whether we want to drink it alone, or with somebody else; and if with somebody else, then with whom and how to drink with that person. In short, it is the matter of beer drinking etiquettes and manners.

Understandably, it is better to drink beer, the water of brotherhood, together with somebody rather than alone. This is because drinking beer has a propositional significance to it as discussed earlier in the book. If you can find a good companion, always drink beer with him together. Personally, I experienced from time to time that drinking beer alone brings about a certain degree of pessimism and self-pity.

It is very harmful to drink beer with any goal other than to enjoy yourself together with your companion, or with anybody else who retains a defective goal. Beer must absolutely never be drunk with those who derive queer pleasures from manipulating and subjugating other people, and you yourself must never harbor these intentions when drinking beer. It is also

¹² It is absolutely fascinating how Western culture also has such a herbal pillow. The main element in these pillows, however, is nothing but 'hop.' There has been an intimate connection between beer and the restoration of bio-diversity.

¹³ I share the formula to this product with anyone who may need it. There is no problem with my sharing of the formula since neither my company nor I have ever enjoyed any profits or suffered losses from this product.

troublesome to drink with anyone who likes to boast compulsively, even though a little bit of boasting is cute. Beer must not be drunk with a person in the spirit of wanting to control the fellow drinker or to show off to him. As I said before, this is because there are more appropriate liquors to serve that purpose. There are many people around us who like to manipulate other people. These symptoms arise from not having a smooth relationship with the father figure during childhood.

There are times when strong liquor is needed, for example, when trying to give and receive illegal bribes, or to bend another person's righteous opinions into evil ones. There also may be times when you want to deflate the arrogance of a junior person from work who subtly taunts you with a teasing sentence structure;¹⁴ or when you want to talk back to a pompous superior and need to be a little drunk to be brave enough to do so. It is during these times strong liquor must be drunk. Beer doesn't really work at those times. Also, these strong drinks should have a slightly "bitter" taste to them, and must be "downed" in one gulp.

Making (forcing) someone to consume this bitter liquid enables the giver to control the drinker. The relationship formed here is not the equal one between comrades, friends, and colleagues that beer brings about; but one where one drinker must obey another. A hierarchy is formed here. This is because drinking such strong liquor is almost the same as injecting the alcohol directly into the bloodstream. Compelling someone to swallow this bitter potion represents a demonstration of a party's superiority over another party. The threat of future punishment and promise of future obedience are being exchanged. To pour a strong and bitter drink would be equivalent to and symbolic of giving the death sentence in the Asian culture (fatal poisons were traditionally used for executing convicts.)

For seduction, the drinker must be given liquor that has a mild taste but is still strong in alcoholic content. The reason for this hardly needs

¹⁴ In Korean, and especially in the corporate world, it is unspeakably important to maintain and respect the hierarchy between seniors and juniors, or predecessors and followers. So adding a "yo" at the end of sentences, to make an otherwise casual sentence into a respectful one, is extremely crucial. If a junior would want to be especially insolent, he could delay the "yo" at the end; first by talking down to his superior and then adding the "yo" as an afterthought and a mocking loophole.

explaining: it is to give women an excuse to "let loose." Champagne and cocktails are hence most suitable for the female drinkers who need to return to the normalcy of being "chaste and virtuous" in a few hours after a short 'loose' period.

But beer can not be drunk this way. As discussed before, the purpose of drinking beer must be the cultivation of fellowship. This is because behind the drinking of beer, lies the World Tree that stems from the navel of the Gia, the earth goddess. From the Spring of Wisdom and Remembrance that lies below the Tree, the Water of Forgetfulness flows. Beer drinking is a symbolic act of acknowledging that the drinkers are brothers who passed through the initiation ritual at the same time.¹⁵ It is the time to form that unusual relationship that declares, "You and I are related by drinking this beer together."

It is not the superior strength of the enemy that is most disheartening during war, but the cowardly flight of one's own men who leave you to fight and be captured alone. Through the Initiation that beer drinking signifies, brothers pledge to each other that no such occasion will rise, and this oath is verified through this very ritual. It is a sworn union of blood between warriors that enables them to entrust their lives in each other's hands, and a person must partake in it to be treated as an adult of the tribe, to be allowed the rights to own property and marry. The community can not give these privileges to anybody who has not endured the ceremony—a non-adult, who is defined as 'not having passed the initiation rituals,' is not allowed to have any opinions, not to mention present them. People will just say, "Before you say anything, grow up!"

Drinking beer with a purpose other than this very ritualistic purpose can lead to unfortunate events. This is because beer is not just any kind of water, but a miraculous elixir. Unless there is a frank purpose of comradery involved, the consumption of beer can become a precarious situation. Bad things will happen.

People who have bad drinking habits must be avoided from the start.

¹⁵ This does not mean that the physical ages are identical numerically, but that they have endured the initiation ritual into the adulthood at the same time. In that sense, they have identical spiritual ages.

We Koreans are exceedingly tolerant of drunkards by excusing them as "lush dogs." But, personally, I insist that drunken misbehavior should never be tolerated. There are two horrendously bad habits that Koreans learned from



Bar Brawl

the Japanese while being under their colonial rule in the first half of the 20th century. One of them is drunken rowdiness, and the other is talking down to their wives. They are trashy habits that should have been inconceivable and impermissible in a country where strict Confucian manners are so deeply and widely entrenched for almost thousand

years. Although the country has been freed from the Japanese in 1945, the Korean military dictators, all of whom used to be low ranking Japanese officers, continued to dominate the country for almost thirty years. Consequently, the bad drinking habits and the tendency to talk casually to anybody have taken root in the Korean culture. It is a deplorable mess.

"Bad drinking habits" in Korea usually mean drinking and then picking a fist fight with people from another table, but I am referring more to the bad "talking" habits. You need to be careful with the way you speak when drinking beer. Once you start sipping, you actually have to be more careful and "cool." You need to be more polite, and more genuine. There must be ample mentioning of "you and I", "us," "comrades you love," and "humility before nature..."

Drinking beer reveals a person's true colors. There are people who have the habit of picking arguments when drinking. Invariably, they have serious marital problems. There are also those who become cheerful and vivacious, revealing a romantic side that can not usually be seen at other times. Normally he discusses only practical affairs but after a glass of beer or two he will make an irregular venture to talk about old romances, or maybe a nice poetic story he read in a book a long time ago; and politely

and naturally at that. He will act this way because his true nature has come out. In order for one to have such nice personality, one has to grow up petted by a loving father.

Of course, the etiquettes to follow in the office are different from the ones to follow while drinking beer. It is more difficult to be polite when drinking beer. This is because one must keep a good formality while pretending to relax. The subjects of conversation must be natural, and so should the responses. If you feed some alcohol to the wretches who routinely carry out filthy conversations about the "things of men and the things of women," they will grunt even more crudely about the human anatomy. These people should really be cut out from the list at the beginning. You can not tell somebody to go home once the drinking has started. Besides, they are usually the ones who cling to you till the third round.

The mature friends who can throw in nice, well timed jokes from time to time with a natural ease: these are the truly precious drinking partners. How could these treasures be precious only when drinking beer...it can only be a great blessing to have a drinking buddy like this. Anyways, I personally do not associate with anyone who becomes lecherous from drinking. It is not because I hold them in contempt, but more because I might become lewd myself if I am not careful. Lewdness after drinking...how many sins are being committed from there! Lechery and alcohol, it is not a good combination at all. "But don't all heroes love women and wine?" Perhaps... but among the people who spout sexual vulgarity, hardly any actually perform the act itself impressively. Manners, manners, manners - drinking becomes extremely trying if we forget manners. If one can not abstain from debauchery, then it is better to stay away from beer completely.

Jokes understandably need to arise from "situations." A good joke is bound to turn up when lighting the present situation from different points of views. These perspectives are not even that difficult to concoct, just think about a cute personality who is incredibly stupid and ill tempered, but can still be shrewd from time to time. Imagining what such a person would say in the present situation always leads to the unearthing of a good joke. If it doesn't, you can just remain silent. You can simply remain quiet in general if you can't think of anything funny. It is the fault of those clueless people

who forcefully blurt out unfunny jokes that the attainment of World Peace is constantly delayed.

Even worse, there are men who will even joke about their sexual relationships with their wives. It is truly disgusting... What would their wives say about this? And they'll even laugh at their own jokes. What are they laughing at? If their listeners start to nervously laugh out of shock, they will think the laughter is due to their own humor and continue... it is a painful situation. The more vulgar these people are, the more they can not stand it when other people make jokes of a better quality. At first they leap into the conversation once or twice to say something witty themselves, but the chances of success are nearly zero, and after a while they start to become mean...

It is not everyday that you can find a partner with whom you can have a pleasant drink of beer. So it is helpful to observe and secure good partners in advance.

Obviously there are times when lewd and muddy stories need to be told. They do have a rather positive effect at sites of heavy physical labor where the body is painfully worked. These stories of course, are most effective when accompanied by hard liquor. It is an established scientific fact that telling exceptionally lewd stories while sipping hard liquor raised the efficiency of workers of projects that required harsh physical labor. Such pastime also raised the workers' alertness and decreased the number of work related accidents.

On the same wave of thought, it is inadvisable to drink beer at home. This is because drinking at home strangely gives rise to a hierarchy between the host and the guest. So it is better to drink away from home. That is why we need the Axis Mundi.

I believe it is a good idea that couples and lovers abstain from drinking beer together. Lovers are meant to share wine. Lovers are lovers, not comrades. Sometimes lovers who are like "pals" seem attractive, but relationships such as these will never last very long.

The next question is: how much should you drink?

It varies from person to person, but I personally think that a litre of a beer like Sphynx beer should be enough. Also, it is better to not to

drink with those who do it excessively; they really do not know what they are doing. There are people who drink maliciously to settle a score with alcohol, and others who want to show off how much they can drink. I am always dumbfounded whenever I meet such people.

On top of that, there are also people who take pride in drinking in absurd manners – some will drink out of an ashtray, and others from an army boot.¹⁶ It is very rude to say this, but I see this people as mere pawns. They subject themselves to cheap acts of blind daring in hopes of being labeled as ‘eccentrics.’ There are not enough words of disdain for them. Instead of trying to socialize politely by putting the fellow drinkers at ease, and moving them through refined conversations with warm conclusions, they try to earn the comment, "that person is a character!" by conducting one or two acts of bizarre and repulsive behavior. What is even harder to tolerate is the pathetic manner in which they check from the corner of their eyes to see if anybody is surprised enough to offer such comments. All they want is to be called eccentric and can not even concentrate on effectively playing the oddball. Why would a genuine eccentric conduct his eccentricity while slyly heeding the glances of those around him? This wretch’s behavior is an example of the severe symptoms of the loser’s disease: a total lack of self-confidence. Typical among those whose families have genetic idiocy syndrome generation after generation.

As said before, properly brewed beer is very dark and heavy due to thixotropy, and it is not possible to drink a lot of the brew, as the stomach gets full easily. So it follows that problems like excessive drinking and addiction basically can not arise from drinking good beer. On the contrary, the commercial beer that is engineered to be drunk excessively is, in turn, drunk excessively just as the brewers intended. These are the brews that cause alcoholism and cause exorbitant drinking that generate further social problems. Native Americans originally never displayed any symptoms of alcoholism before they were exposed to industrialized liquors. As long as they drank those naturally brewed drinks, they did not have the alcoholism. Today, eight to nine out of ten Native American lives are ruined by addiction

¹⁶ These are typical heroic acts widely spread in the military circles through Japanese tradition.

to alcohol, and it is known that it was the chemically refined industrial liquors distributed by the whites that caused these addictions. This is one of the greatest sins of the white people to which these Native Americans paid back nicely by teaching them how to get syphilis and how to smoke tobacco. Tat for tit. Tit for tat. Anyway, everything that the aforementioned Chief Seattle feared has come true. The immediate result of the environment's destruction is the tribe's consumption of "strange liquor," and its complete ruin.

You can diagnose a society's state by learning what kind of alcohol it drinks. In retrospect, there would have been no way for alcoholism to find its way into any dark corner of a society led by a chief like Seattle. I personally believe that drug problems in Western societies originate from the general sense of insecurity and directionlessness among the youths.

Personally, I also think it is more effective to give a proper beer to an alcoholic, rather than cutting an alcoholic off from alcohol completely. Otherwise, the cravings for alcohol pile up until he suddenly explodes and shoves alcohol down his throat. It only becomes more difficult to treat the addiction once this happens. It is because alcoholism is a disease that results from the absence of bio-diversity. So if the addict drinks proper beer in which plants are still alive, his bio-diversity will be restored; and the brew would actually be a very effective type of cure.

Although proper beer can not be drunk excessively in the first place, there is actually no need to drink the brew in large amounts anyway. Imagine an elevator in a skyscraper. You don't have to press the button any harder to go to a higher floor than when you want go to a lower floor. All you need to do is softly tap the 'right' button. What our bodies really need is the "right" signal, and so the dosage is not that important. Homeotherapy is a medicinal art that was developed in Germany. The secret of this practice is to prescribe the minimum dosage of medicine to stimulate the body and then letting the stimulated body cure itself, rather than depending on large dosage to do the work. So the method is to simply wake the "body's natural curing power" that has been lying dormant. This is why I say from time to time that medical practices that use herbs are more about "talking" to the bodies, rather than "stuffing" them. This is especially the case when

introducing herbs to the body through a medium like beer. You can not drink a lot as it fills very soon. You do not have to drink a lot as a small quantity already works.

The two most powerful and rapid ways to "talk" to the body are probably to inhale the medicine by smoking it like a cigarette, or to drink it in beer. The active ingredients of herbs will stimulate the brain within a few seconds. The traditional mixtures that Eastern and Western medicine concoct need to go through digestion. It can take hours to become effective. Beer travels through the mouth and down the esophagus, but is already absorbed before the body begins to digest it in earnest. The chemical parts first stimulate the brain before they even reach the liver through the bloodstream. This is the very point of my emphasis. Right signals can be sent to the brain via drinking beer, and the actual concentration level of the active ingredients in the blood does not need to be chemically raised.

You can "talk" the problem out using taste and information, rather than "punching" in chemicals to raise their concentration in the blood. The brain can be used to send the correct information to the rest of the body. Talk first before you start punching. Furthermore, a large amount of herbs isn't needed to send a right message to the brain. This is precisely why even though beer is practically seen as just water from the chemical point of view, it can still powerfully stimulate the brain while barely calling on the liver. The brew can only be seen as an incredible type of "Delivery Vehicle." Using beer to deliver the herbal signal can get rid of the harmful side effects from massive chemical in-take as well as the burden on the heart and liver these herbs could have when consumed other wise. It is a point the field of Western medicine needs to seriously consider. This is not just Eastern mysticism.

On top of that, properly brewed beer plays a powerful role in strengthening the urination process of our body.¹⁷ It fortifies the very function that brings about healthy urination. During the process of healthy urination, the specific components that our bodies need are selected out from

¹⁷ In more scientific terms, the anti-diuretic hormone is suppressed. The beer lowers the hormone that blocks the urination process and relaxes the body as a result, letting the urine flow out of the body with ease. The anti-diuretic hormone is a hormone that makes the body tense, while beer is a substance that loosens the entire body. In a relaxed and loosened state, the regeneration of the body cells becomes more animated.

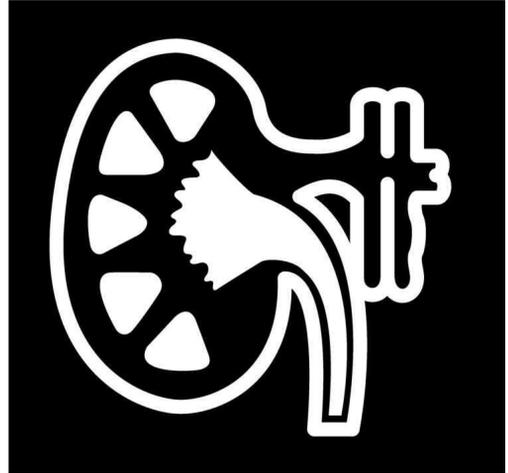
millions of substances and returned to the blood stream, while the harmful toxic elements are weeded and flushed out of the body. Our bodies contain such extraordinary selecting capabilities that screen bad from good, good from bad. If there is a problem with this capability, there is no way that the body can function properly. Since the essential elements are drained out, no strength remains; and since toxins run back through the blood, fatigue and other diseases will plague the body. The whole body is bound to suffer, and even the face will become puffy. Just picture what would happen if the drinking water and sewage system were reversed in a house, or if the dining room were confused with the bathroom... Besides beer, most of the herbs we consume as medicinal 'strengthening' tonics work at restoring the body's selecting capabilities and bringing about the excretion of "healthy urine."

The reason why serious diseases such as diabetes are particularly damaging is because it completely destroys screening and excretion capabilities.¹⁸ (The key to curing diabetes is actually the healthy strengthening of urination capability. This consensus among Eastern medicine shall be further discussed in another book of mine, *A Story of Diabetes*.) Properly brewed beer, however, can easily be seen as having explosively positive effects on the urination capabilities. A good brew will wash out the old weak unhealthy cells from inside the body, and so new healthy young cells are generated to take its place. This process happens in the organs strategically involved with the urination process, so I can leave it up to your imagination as to how beneficial it is for the body.

Even those with defective urination facilities can recover. I have seen many cases where patients with poor kidneys drank proper beer and ate squash; first in small, controlled amounts that increase gradually over time, to become fundamentally cured of their ailment. It is my personal conviction that strengthening of the urination capabilities is 'the' medical reason why beer can be called the cure of all diseases. Beer being hailed as the cure of all diseases can be substantiated by a lot more than just mythological imaginations.

¹⁸ Diabetes Mellitus means "sweet urine." The name of the disease already strongly suggests that the self-screening capabilities through urination went wrong.

I have always liked to drink my beer chilled. Most of the commercial beer we are familiar with in North America is usually meant to be drunk cold. Their makers have conducted many experiments to make the beer taste cold and fresh. They know that cold tasting beer sell more in North America. More beer will end up being drunk this way in North America. Europeans, however, like to drink lukewarm beer. So I tried my beer this way and surprisingly liked it



Kidney

lukewarm very much. You actually can not drink a rich brew chilled. If you try to swallow a dense beer chilled, it will get stuck in your throat. It was undrinkable when made too cold. There are even beers that are meant to be slightly heated before drinking. Most of the decently brewed beer that I know of is actually meant to be drunk this way.

However, operating in the commercial realities of North America, I had to develop a few versions of Sphynx Beer that taste better when chilled.

When I do drink my beer cold, I refrigerate it slowly for at least four days. If the beer is suddenly chilled, it strangely does not taste as savory. Also, I always keep a number of thick, glass mugs in the freezer. Personally, I pour beer into a mug only once. When I refill a mug, the foam's shape becomes ugly and so the taste also transforms dramatically (or so I say, at which my wife grumbles that I am just showing off. Anyways, the experts call this change in the foam's shape 'Head Killing.' I remember having read a few research studies into this topic.)¹⁹

It is the opinion of most beer masters that beer is more of a meal than a drink. You can recall here that earlier Kant was also of this opinion. I suppose someone who enjoys grand expressions can declare exaggeratedly,

¹⁹ Yes, I agree that our universities are over-budgeted.

"the course of man's history is nothing but the history of the debate between those who believe beer is a food and those who believe that it is a beverage." I believe that readers still remember my comments regarding Ambrosia and Nectar: God's meal and God's drink.

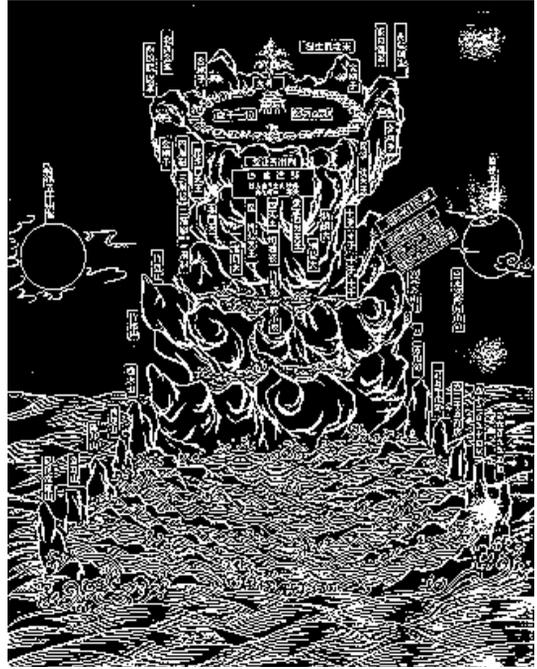
Anyways, whether it is a food or drink, beer needs to be accompanied by snacks every time it is consumed. Instead of deciding which beer to drink and then choosing the snack, it is better to choose the beer and the matching snack simultaneously. As mentioned before, it is helpful to train the subconscious so that the body automatically wants to consume well-made beer and snacks; in other words, empty the heart and enable the body to hear the sounds of Nature for itself. The issue of which snack to eat with which beer is practically another large area where many profound studies are done. Personally, I think that soy bean products in general are a good compliment to bear, especially black beans.²⁰ Peanuts do not seem quite appropriate, but fermented foods with sour tastes are more suitable. My personal favorite is Ascidiacea (a kind of dark green seaweed) in particular. If I live long, I guess that my habit of taking this regularly must have contributed to it.

I believe, however, that cheese, on average, is the best snack to accompany beer. If beer were a spiritual drink, then cheese would be a spiritual food. Buddhist mythology impressively opens by describing how, "Cheese will emerge when the oceans of the universe are stirred with Mount Sumeru." If honey in a lion's mouth symbolizes the word of God in Jewish Mythology, then cheese symbolizes the benevolent wisdom of the earth goddess in Indian Mythology. If honey represents blood, cheese represents milk. The Promised Land is a place that flows with both milk and honey, not just honey by itself. Honey signifies beer, and milk signifies cheese.

Cheese is obviously a becoming snack for beer. I personally prefer

²⁰ I don't know when their products will be commercially made and become available to us, but there is a farm named P-Land in Shenyang, China. It is a farm that grows improved breeds of wild beans, and uses them to manufacture a variety of products. The healthy effects that these beans will yield are worth anticipating and observing. They somehow succeeded in finding the site where soybeans originated. I expect that soybeans grown at their origin are have more powerful benefits than those grown in foreign places. A recent study about apples grown at their origins confirms this conjecture of mine.

young cheese to old, and believe that it is the secret that connects beer to grape wine. It is only my own inclination, but I don't think eating fruits and vegetables while drinking beer is a good idea. You need to drink at least a glass of a dry red wine to prevent the tongue from becoming numb due to the taste of beer, but cheese can also play out this function. Hence cheese and black beans are fitting condiments to beer; and it has been proven by modern medicine that consuming these foods this way is very beneficial to the body, and is especially helpful in the prevention and treatment of cancer.



Mount Sumeru

(Modern medicine is such a frustrating field to observe. Hundreds of billions of dollars are spent to "discover" the answers that are already available in ancient legends and myths, and then they go on to behave in a domineering and authoritative manner as if they have unearthed a new fact.)

4. Beautiful Experiences

I have probably drunk beer around a thousand times during the course of my life. Which of these times produced the most memorable experience? I find myself pondering over these kinds of questions from time to time.

The answer took place seven years ago in Japan. It was a cold winter's day and I had just finished a fierce match at a famous martial arts hall in Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan.

I had learned kendo, Japanese stick fighting, for about thirty years, and had been privately tutored under the most famous kendo masters in Japan. One of them was a Mr. Yamamoto, and from where I see it, the man

is a born genius of kendo. His own instructor was Mr. Maruta, a human cultural asset in Japan. To describe how brilliant his genius was, let us just say that Mr. Maruta, the master of masters, intentionally slit a ligament in Mr. Yamamoto's wrist to prevent him from becoming an arrogant kendo prodigy.



Kyoto



Kendo

Every evening in Kyoto at eight, experts from the Kansai region will gather at Butokukai, this famous martial arts hall, to hold freestyle matches. It is simply brilliant—to the point of being a state of art. There you understand why it is called a martial art, not a martial skill. Here, Mr. Yamamoto displayed skills that proved that he truly was an eagle among chickens. Yet, he liked my kendo. He liked the fact that I practice a pure and blunt kind of kendo. (He did, however, teasingly demand what an amateur like me was doing by wearing such expensive equipment.)²¹

The winter that year was especially frosty, and the 200 year-old kendo hall naturally did not have a heating system. It was so cold that when I worked especially harder to fight the cold, steam would cover my mask, and I could hardly practice properly. Surprisingly, the soles of my feet would start burning from running around on such a cold floor. Anyway,

²¹ My kendo really is terrible, but my armor was made by a famous human cultural asset in Japan. When I walk into the kendo hall wearing it, everyone becomes intimidated. Of course, this is only until I actually start to fight. The law of inverse proportions always applies to the price of the equipment and the actual skill; it is the same rule that dictates no one who uses expensive pencils ever gets good grades. I actually received the armor, along with two swords of also a high quality, in place of a fee when I succeeded in an extremely difficult M&A case in Japan.

when I had changed back into my clothes after playing for a mere forty-five minutes, it was already past nine o'clock in the evening. After I bathed in a small bathhouse only fifty meters away, I went to a very old geisha house that was only one hundred meters away. Mr. Yamamoto was not a teacher who would have accepted any lesson fees, and so instead I brought him to this slightly expensive and luxurious place to buy him a drink. I remember passing a small Japanese garden, loudly shouting "Nama Biru Gudasai (Bring Me Draft Beers)!" and proceeding to drink a great deal of beer. My teacher, of course, drank a refined rice wine, which is what one is supposed to drink in geisha houses.

The geisha who served the drinks just smiled amusingly. I think they thought it was odd that I would come to an expensive geisha house only to drink beer... How could these sisters, these foreign priestesses of foreign religions understand how I felt about drinking

beer? I never met Mr. Yamamoto again, but I heard a few years later that a cancer had developed in the muscles of a hand and he could no longer practice kendo. Kendo is not something you can do forever. Nevertheless, it is heartbreaking to see such a genius of the sword helplessly succumb to our ultimate enemy that is time.

Another memory is from the time when I was living in Edmonton, Canada. I was trapped in the house as the temperature outside had fallen past forty degrees below zero. The snow continued to fall outside, and I was suddenly inspired to write a poem with an ancient Chinese style. I wrote one that began, "The winter continues to ice as the white snow fly about as blossoms do" and gave it to my wife. She became so excited that she brought out some beer. My wife hardly ever drinks and I remember



Kendo Bougu

becoming happy like a child while watching her cheeks become rosy after just one sip of beer. I don't remember how the rest of the poem went, but I remember the last line went, "I have only remorse for the small life of my chosen wife." It was a poem I improvised on the spur of the moment, and so I do not remember it well. My wife tells me she has hid it somewhere, and will flaunt it if I ever cheat on her someday. It seems as if this light-headed fool has made a promise he can not even keep.

