

Apithology: An Emergent Continuum

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ABSTRACT – Apithology is the field of study concerned with identifying and enhancing the essential dynamics enabling the healthy development of emergent systems. It is also the practice of identifying and enacting the functional changes needed to allow emergent health in those generative systems. In this paper the foundational premise of the discipline of apithology is explained, together with reasons why the depth of practice in this field is predicted to increase. Apithology provides a means to access a continuum of development across two horizons of meaning. To illustrate this frame of reference the term ‘*apithology*’ is contrasted with its conceptual antonym, being ‘*pathology*’. Elucidation is provided as to why a balanced focus on both the pathological and apithological may be desirable and how this might assist in our endeavors towards the health and wellbeing of humanity as a whole.

INTRODUCTION

Our investigations into the many disciplines within the historical fields of pathology have yielded significant benefits for the survival of so many people. In diverse parts of the world human life expectancy ranges over the last century have increased, mortality rates have decreased and the quality of human lives has become greatly enriched generationally. This paper predicts that when we, as a species, shift to a more inclusive and humanitarian ethic, looking to the existence values for all, rather than only the subsistence values for some, our predominant emphasis of inquiry will also shift, from an avoidance of suffering and death of the many to the generative growth and wellbeing of the all. That shift is a shift from pathology to apithology.

Strangely, we have to date had no commonly held antonym for the term ‘*pathology*’. This paper proposes such a term and the basis for its conception. The intention in doing so is to open up the philosophy of our inquiry into the generative health and wellbeing of

humanity, by recontextualizing the traditional conception of a humanitarian ethic, in its entirety.

DEFINITIONAL ETYMOLOGY

Apithology is a word created to describe a timeless concept in a modern context. It is not known whether the word apithology may have existed previously and had an ancient meaning, as it appears to be an entirely new word formed to describe a novel conception. The term originally emerged from the development of a concept that in essence is the counterpart to its opposite, being *pathology*. The origin of the word derives from the etymology of its basic elements. By contrasting the two terms we can understand the counterpart nature of their relationship (as two horizons in one system of meaning). Looking to those roots:

Pathos~ (the root in *patho-biology*) - comes from the ancient Greek.

In this context *pathos* has the meaning related to ‘suffering’ or ‘disease’. *Bios* – is the ancient Greek word meaning, in this context, ‘life’. Pathology can be understood literally, based on its etymology, to mean studies of the ‘*suffering of life*’ – being any adverse abnormality in a natural biological state.

Apic~ (the root of *apithology*) – derives from the Latin.

Its use here is in its modern English meaning; ‘*of, at or forming an apex*’ (as in apical). The suffix end-form is the same as in *bi-ology*. Apithology can be understood literally, based on its etymology, to mean studies of the ‘*apex of life*’ – being any beneficial generations in a natural biological state.

The antonym of *apithological* is *pathological*. In a similar way, the antonym of apithology is pathology.

An antonym is a word of opposite meaning, a counter-term, used as a correlative of its synonym. Technically, a noun, being a descriptive label for something, does