



# laetus in praesens

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## Challenges of Renaissance

### suggestive pattern of concerns in the light of the birth metaphor

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#### Commentary

Given the historical inspiration offered by the Renaissance, and the current possibility of the birth of a new socio-cultural mindset through which to respond to the challenges of society, the following explores some parallels between the context of physical birth and the context of any such Renaissance. The assumption (outlined [elsewhere](#)) is that the metaphorical implications of Renaissance need to be explored in the light of their context rather than treated in isolation. This has the advantage of pointing to challenges and possibilities which may otherwise be ignored. Renaissance -- like childbirth -- involves a complex of processes and stages which the following exercise endeavours to highlight..

An optimistic focus -- on the "positive" aspects of birth alone -- will tend to seek to be sustained by "motherhood statements" and therefore to give rise to "motherhood" initiatives. Some understandings of sustainable development has been perceived in this light. Motherhood, as a concept, naturally holds a special place in the culture and the lexicon. But "motherhood statements" are recognized as "feel good" platitudes about worthy concepts. "Motherhood and apple pie" is used in politics to denote ideas that are wholesome and good. Whilst such statements and the policies that derive from them, indeed have a key role to play, they may not adequately address the needs for which Renaissance is an inspiration. The renewal implied by "birth" requires more than "motherhood" -- as is liable to be the case with Renaissance.

Comparison between birth of a child and socio-cultural renaissance	
Birth of child	Socio-cultural renaissance
Sense of lineage (succession, dynastic continuity, "carrying on the family name", procreative desire for a child)	Renewal and reinvigoration of socio-cultural and civilizational values, replication and development of traditional strengths, continuity of memetic evolution
Identification and choice of appropriate partner (looks, graces, strength, race, class, breeding, wealth, health, religion, heterosexual / homosexual / transsexual, monogamy / polygamy / polyandry, etc)	Identification and selection of appropriate range of partners to provide and ensure a valuable memetic mix and correction for any conceptual in-breeding
Tentative negotiation with chosen partner (dating, match-making, parental approval, interaction with relatives, "date rape", etc)	Tentative negotiation with potential working partner(s) and stakeholder(s) (match-making "finders fee")
Emergent attraction and affective bonding ("falling in love")	Development of empathetic bonds and working relationships with attractive partners
Courtship ritual (intimacy, charm, presentation / display / show, "good catch", pre-marital intercourse, etc)	In-depth dialogue with selected partner(s) and stakeholder(s), demonstrating strengths, and discovering weaknesses, and determining basic foundation for future relationship
Proposal of marriage (betrothal, engagement, publishing bans, refusal, etc)	Formal proposal and agreement on basis for a relationship
Pre-nuptial agreement (dowry, etc)	Preliminary agreement (notably with respect to any failure of the initiative, "seed funding", etc)
Marriage (vows, commitment, religious ritual, civil registration, contract, celebration, gifts, elopement, expectations, etc)	Conclusion of binding agreement between partners (partnering) with due symbolism, celebration and appropriate social and contractual recognition
Intercourse (facilitation, consummation, compatibility, seduction, "joy of sex", submission / dominance, rape, etc)	Creative interaction between partners (appropriately facilitated) to engender joint initiative ("union of forces", "getting into bed with each other", "bouncing ideas around")
Conception (infertility, artificial insemination, contraception, parthenogenesis, sexually transmitted diseases, etc)	Conception of new initiative embodying the memes of all partners (cross-fertilization of ideas)
Pregnancy (gestation, surrogate, protective context, womb, nourishment, disorders of pregnancy, etc)	Gestation of new initiative ensuring its appropriate formal development ("incubation")
Possible premature termination of pregnancy (gender preferences, premature birth, miscarriage, abortion, ethics, etc)	Premature termination of new initiative whether due to external pressures (concerns regarding responsibility for its viability), other priorities, or dissatisfaction with its orientation

Birth (natural birth, <i>contractions, labour pains, still birth, breach birth, caesarean</i> , midwifery, obstetrics, after birth, etc)	Completion of internal formative processes and launching the initiative into the world (project launch, etc)
Significance and <i>misconceptions</i> of birth (symbolism, auspiciousness, reincarnation / rebirth, "brought by the stork", etc)	Recognition of significance of the initiative in response to the wider context (possibly as the re-emergence of an earlier pattern, etc)
Inheritance (characteristics, "cuteness " for survival, disposition, assets, <i>perinatal disorders, congenital deformities</i> , etc)	Unique characteristics and attributes of the initiative, its orientation and the advantages and disadvantages it inherits from its progenitors
Status of infant (social rank, <i>illegitimacy, born "out of wedlock", orphan, sibling rivalry</i> , etc)	Status of the initiative (legal, social, ownership, etc)
Acquisition of infant (adoption, <i>kidnapping</i> , fostering, etc)	Acquisition or pre-emptive takeover of the initiative by other parties
Child care (bonding, feeding, weaning, <i>maternal deprivation, toilet-training</i> , etc)	Initial support of the initiative (responsibility for its development, supportive network, operational checks and balances, etc)
Parenting (protection, education, family values, <i>neglect, abandonment, child abuse</i> , etc)	Ongoing support (protection, development of ethical framework, abandonment, etc)

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