

Yves M. Larocque

EOS FROM EPISTOLIA

Α Ω Υ Ι Α Μ Υ Τ Ψ

Illustrated by the Author



icscis

To my three children, the New Epistolians.

THE NEW EPISTOLIANS

THE LAND UP ABOVE AND NOT FAR BEYOND

HERE IS THE ROUTE TAKEN BY EOS &
TIME LINE BEFORE COMMON ERA

XVI XV XIV XIII XII XI X IX VIII VII VI V IV III II I

Epistolia & Muzendean Periods Archaic Period Classical Period Hellenistic Period





The Great Plateau

The Old Couple

The Unknown One

The Sly

No-No the Scaredy-Cat

The Workers's Plain

The Hoarder

The Keeper of Secrets

Veteltis

The Great Clock Watcher

The Juggler



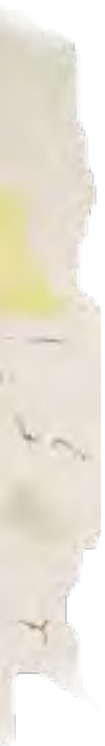
Here is a fairly similar rendering of Eos from his remnants. I represent him here as he begins his journey on the shores of the Being. On the horizon lies the edge of the Great Promontory as I know it and as Eos probably saw it for the first time.

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Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Ψ

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The Story

Prologue³

- I — My childhood 5
- II — By myself 7
- III — A Kouros 8
- IV — Epistolia 11
- V — Let me tell you a story 17
- VI — I, Eos! 18
- VII — Fore Moon 18
- VIII — The Great Promontory 21
- IX — The Adventurer 22
- X — The Great Vizu 27
- XI — The Hoarder 33
- XII — “No-No”... the Scaredy-Cat 40
- XIII — The Great Clock Watcher 43
- XIV — The Workers’ Plain 51
- XV — The Keeper of Secrets 57
- XVI — The Unknown One 65
- XVII — The Old Couple 71
- XVIII — The Aphrodite of the Wise 81
- XIX — Lady of the Stars 87
- XX — The end of the story 93
- Epilogue 95
- Glossary 97

Melody for Eos

Transcribed by *Maximus*



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Prologue

Many geologists, biologists, and archaeologists devote their lives to so-called lost continents, such as Mu, for example, sunk deep beneath the waves of the Pacific Ocean, and allegedly evident from the giant carved stones on Easter Island. Another is Lemuria, a land bridge believed to have spanned the Indian Ocean. More well-known is Atlantis, the mythical island evoked by Plato himself, which lies buried in the Atlantic Ocean's depths. Yet, there is another country, neither lost nor legendary but mostly unknown, whose existence I wish to impress upon you. It is not underwater; rather, it hovers just a few meters above the Mediterranean Sea.

THIS COUNTRY IS EPISTOLIA



I – My childhood

When I was in grade school, I loved geography. I learned about people who lived their lives in ways unknown to me. I was fascinated by the different peoples and their dwellings, by the varied climates, waterways, farm animals, and especially by the wild beasts. I learned that in one place, with the use of large windmills, the sea had receded, making way for expansive tulip fields. In other places, it would rain incessantly for six months, while farther away the air was so dry that only camels survived, thanks to their water-filled humps. Farther north, a white blanket of ice and snow was peacefully covering the ground, and even farther south, rushed fiercely one of the world's largest rivers. Beneath the surface of the globe given to me for my eighth birthday, swam mammals with bird-like beaks. I knew the flags and names of all the capital cities of the world, something that irritated my brother and sisters but made my parents smile. For hours, I would lose myself in the maps of our family's Great World Atlas.

“I will become an aviator!” I had decided. Like a bird, I would fly away to explore the different lands that make up our planet. I would be instructed: “Your passengers are on board. Your cargo is loaded. They are waiting for you over there.” From the cockpit, I would land in such and such a jungle or desert, or on such and such a river. But I was a dreamer and not especially good at mathematics. “You will crash on your first flight!” my brother laughed. “You lack self-discipline, and you need this to be a pilot,” my father repeated. Back then, dreaming was almost impossible. The reasonable thing to do was to attend university, which I did, to study geography. I had therefore decided to become a geographer.

But what I was not taught at grade school was that geography also involves mathematics, statistics, politics, and economics, fields that held no particular interest for me. It was the people, their customs, and their land that captivated me. And so, following many years at university, I became not a geographer but a historian, an archaeologist, and most of all, an expert in ancient Greek culture, more specifically, the culture of Epistolia*, a country considered by most to be all of a myth. Still today, I am the only person in the world to believe in its existence. Still today, thousands are pilots but only one is an epistolist.



* An asterisk refers to the glossary at the end of the story.



II – By myself

I have lived a solitary life, alone in my madness, dividing my time between apartment, university, and the southern coast of the Peloponnese, more precisely, Laconia, below Mycenea. I have been frequenting this tiny Mediterranean peninsula for almost half a century.

Once, as a young professor, I explored a dried-out riverbed. There, between two layers of sedimentary gravel, I discovered an ancient papyrus*. Thrilled, I was able to gently ease it free from the dry clay gangue* and unfolded it. On the wonderfully preserved document was written a text in the ancient Greek syllabic script Linear B, in which I was immediately able to decipher the number 321 by the symbols 000--|. A few topographical sketches and what seemed to be a map accompanied the words. Thanks to a rather sparse vegetation, the map outlines appeared to closely match the terrain of my precious find. “Were they of the very place I was standing?” The unusual upright position of some very large boulders suggested the existence of an underground gallery or a cave. This had to be true!

At last, two years after that initial discovery, on the fourth of July 1957, during a heatwave hot enough to kill a camel, I discovered the secret passage. The boundless enthusiasm of my childhood overcame me, and with it, a wave of doubt that left me feeling uneasy: but I had to know! And so, rucksack on my back, flashlight and walking stick in hands, I entered a sloping corridor. A few steps in, I saw walls covered with a strange, bioluminescent moss emitting a bewitching turquoise light showing the way. The descent was steep. After some time, as I was carefully working my way down, my footing suddenly faltered. I fell and all went black.

III – A Kouros*

It took me some time before I regained consciousness. Limping along, I found myself inside a large cave dimly lit by a daylight that worked its way through a small opening situated a bit farther. The walls shimmered with a Prussian blue hue sparkling with silver. My vision was clouded. I had struck my head. I was wet and shivering. I needed to find warmth and to fully return to my senses. Following a blinding shaft of light, I struggled to clamber up the opening and out of the cave. I found warmth, for the sun was at its zenith. I checked my watch: I had entered the tunnel in late afternoon ... the previous day.

I was in rough shape but happy that I could still move; my right ankle was slightly sprained, and there was a cut on my scalp that had already begun to heal. I'd brought enough supplies to last a week, and thankfully the land itself seemed bountiful. But the camera had been broken by my fall, so I had no choice but to use my notebooks and pencils for the few diagrams and sketches I include here to illustrate this story; I am sorry having to leave my watercolors as drafts. As I laid out my clothes to dry in the sun, I could hear behind me the Mediterranean surf breaking against the reef. Above me rose an impressive, cliff overhang that was being teased by a variety of birds in their playful flight. A fog suddenly rolled in and veiled the edge of the precipice, making it almost imperceptible. Around me, lush vegetation harbored a celebratory chorus of cicadas. Then, to my great joy, I discerned a stereobate*, of an ancient temple perhaps. Had I discovered Epistolia?

An hour later, having recovered from the fall, ankle bound and curiosity undiminished, I returned to the cave, this time mentally



A path led straight to this unusual structure, and naturally, curious Eos followed it unhesitatingly.



Here is my last watercolor: upon this agitated Epistolian Sea, the horizon unlocks the gate to the present.

Epilogue

You now know Eos' story. Here is my last watercolor: upon this agitated Epistolian Sea, the horizon unlocks the gate to the present. Less distant, lies the union of the Being with the wind, where a gracious mist gently veils the reefs, my torments. In the heavens, birds squawk and fly... and right before my eyes, on this eternal stone, and upon the whispering fragrance of grass: a shadow of silence, a shadow of beauty, a shadow of truth: the shadow of love. Here lies my Epistolia.

All alone, like a tightrope walker, I sway between madness and knowledge. For nearly half a century, I vanish from our world to live a wondrous existence in this stunning country. Its Great Cascade flows no longer – alas, the people of the Great Promontory remain ignorant of reciprocity with Nature. Every day, I explore, I note, and I draw its hanging gardens, creeks, groves, and meanders. I have built walls upon the ruins of an old house, added a roof, and planted a vegetable garden. I meditate daily on the banks of the Epistolian Sea. And every day, I speak with Eos of Epistolia.

Though you now know that Epistolia exists, fear not. Its Great Secret remains hidden. I have never spoken of it at any symposium, neither have I published any article on the subject. Was this out of respect, out of courage, out of selfishness? I don't know... I don't know anymore. Was it to safeguard something unique from a humanity gone astray, its edges fraying from hollow desires, to protect Epistolia from a human world still in search of meaning? Perhaps it was to leave intact some sense of mystery — indeed, one should always leave a shimmer of mystery. Had I disclosed the existence of Epistolia, I would

have been swept away by a whirlwind of suppositions, envy, and vanity; the truth is that life is simply too vast for us to focus on such pettiness.

My sole regret is not the silence that I have kept over Epistolia. No. My sole regret is not having had the tenacity to become an aviator. The Great Secret had to be guarded, and even though my youth continues to hound me relentlessly, I realize that the time has come for me to bequeath Epistolia's Great Secret. Here it is! I hereby entrust you with it and to you alone, so that my discovery may not be forgotten. You are my heir, the New Epistolian. So please reassure me. Tell me that you will ensure its longevity.



Glossary

Amphora (amphorae in pl.) — A tall ancient Greek or Roman jar made of ceramic with two handles and a narrow neck. They were used for storage and transportation.

Aulos — An ancient flute in Eos' time.

Chiton — A form of tunic that fastens at the shoulder, worn by men and women of Ancient Greece and Rome.

Crater (or Krater) — A large ceramic vase used for the dilution of wine with water.

Drachma — An ancient Greek unit of weight, equivalent to 4.31 g or 0.152 oz.

Epistolia — A still concealed region of the Greek Peloponnese.

Gangue — Worthless material that surrounds an ore, a precious stone in its natural state.

Hoplite — A heavily armed foot soldier.

Kithara — An ancient stringed musical instrument similar to a lyre.

Kouros — A statue of a nude youth made in stone (typically in marble or limestone) standing with his left foot forward, arms at his sides, looking straight ahead.

Kore — A colored stone statue of a draped, unmarried female figure, usually life-size.

Kylix (kylikes in pl.) — A ceramic drinking cup, usually beautifully painted.

Lekythos (lekythoi in pl.) — A ceramic vessel used for storing oil, especially olive oil. It has a narrow body and one handle attached to the neck of the vessel with no pouring lip. They were decorated with painted ornaments.

Mina — An ancient Greek unit of weight, but equivalent to 431 g (15.2 oz).

Papyrus (papyri in pl.) — A kind of paper used in ancient times as a writing surface. It was made from the pith of the papyrus wetland plant. It can also refer to a document written on sheets of such material, joined together on the side and rolled up into a scroll.

Salpinx (salpinges in pl.) — An ancient Greek trumpet.

Stadia — An ancient Greek unit of measurement 600 paces or 184.9 m or 202.2 yards

Stereobate — The foundation or base upon which a temple is erected.

Trireme — An ancient Greek galley having three banks of oars; usually a warship.

Sources: Wikipedia and Google



In 1957, a Greek archeologist finds a 3000-year-old Aegean artifact revealing the story of a young man named Eos, who along three rivers (the Being and its two tributaries, the Sly and the Wise), meets eleven unusual individuals revealing their grasps of the world. Conversing with them, Eos learns how their beliefs and desires had an impact on the lives of others and... on the environment. This philosophical novella tells about love, the power of imagination and... the invisible.

EOS FROM EPISTOLIA

“Beside me stood a kouros, the young man’s funerary stone, on which were carved three letters in Linear B: “E”, “O”, “S”. I voiced “E-O-S?” And “EOS” reverberated on the vault of the cave. And so, he introduced himself, smiling and confident. But what I didn’t know at the time was that we would be journeying together for almost half a century. Oh, if only you knew how, still today, I revere that moment.”



Yves M. Larocque is a professor of art history and a painter. For over thirty years, he has been teaching art, art history and art theory on a freelance basis. His students come from throughout the world. He spends his present time between Canada, France, Italy and Colombia.

“And if we can’t imagine? If we can’t make images?”

“It’s a sign that death is imminent,” answered the Great Vizu.

“But we know that we will all, one day, die.”

“But we don’t know when, Eos. As soon as the imagination loses its power, we are at death’s door. To stop imagining is to prophesy one’s own demise. To imagine is to immortalize oneself.”

www.eos-epistolia.com



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