



EDITORIAL

Celebrating the 95th birthday of Professor Karl S. Pister

Part 3 - Memory lane

Received: 22 September 2021 Accepted: 24 September 2021

There are four items in Part 3, which begins with the section “On friendship: Our secret regret of growing old”, an excerpt from the 1939 novel titled “*Wind, Sand and Stars*” by the well-known French fighter-pilot literary-writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

How this excerpt came as part of this special issue is described at the end of the Supplements section, which follows the Memory-lane section, a collection of photos of the participants in this Karl Pister Special Issue, from way back when, at the beginning or at the height of their interaction with Professor Pister.

The Supplements section contains additional photos of the participants, arranged in reverse order of the photos in the Memory-lane section.

Closing Part 3 is a biographical timeline of Professor Karl S. Pister.

Contents of Part 3

- On friendship: Our secret regret of growing old
- Memory lane
- Supplements
- Biographical timeline



On friendship: Our secret regret of growing old

“ Thus is the earth at once a desert and a paradise, rich of those secret gardens, hidden, difficult to access, but to which our work always leads us back, one day or another. Life may scatter us and keep us apart; it may prevent us from thinking very often of one another; but we know that our comrades are somewhere “out there”—where, one can hardly say—silent, forgotten, but deeply faithful. And when our path crosses theirs, they greet us with such manifest joy, shake us so gaily by the shoulders! Indeed we are accustomed to waiting...

Bit by bit, nevertheless, it comes over us that we shall never again hear the laughter of a friend, that this one garden is forever locked against us. And at that moment begins our true mourning, which, though it may not be rending, is yet a little bitter.

For nothing, in truth, can replace that lost companion. Old friends cannot be created out of hand. Nothing can match the treasure of common memories, of trials endured together, of quarrels and reconciliations and generous emotions. It is futile, having planted an acorn in the morning, to expect that afternoon to sit in the shade of the oak.

So life goes on. For years we plant the seed, we feel ourselves rich; and then come other years when time does its work and our plantation is made sparse and thin. One by one, our comrades slip away, depriving us of their shade. And from then on, our sorrow is mixed with our secret regret of growing old.

” 🍀

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Wind, Sand and Stars*, 1939. Translated by Lewis Galantière.

“ La terre ainsi est à la fois déserte et riche. Riche de ces jardins secrets, cachés, difficiles à atteindre, mais auxquels le métier nous ramène toujours, un jour ou l'autre. Les camarades, la vie peut-être nous en écarte, nous empêche d'y beaucoup penser, mais ils sont quelque part, on ne sait trop où, silencieux et oubliés, mais tellement fidèles ! Et si nous croisons leur chemin, ils nous secouent par les épaules avec de belles flambées de joie ! Bien sûr, nous avons l'habitude d'attendre...

Mais peu à peu nous découvrons que le rire clair de celui-là nous ne l'entendrons plus jamais, nous découvrons que ce jardin-là nous est interdit pour toujours. Alors commence notre deuil véritable qui l'est point déchirant mais un peu amer.

Rien, jamais, en effet, ne remplacera le compagnon perdu. On ne se crée point de vieux camarades. Rien ne vaut le trésor de tant de souvenirs communs, de tant de mauvaises heures vécues ensemble, de tant de brouilles, de réconciliations, de mouvements du cœur. On ne reconstruit pas ces amitiés-là. Il est vain, si l'on plante un chêne, d'espérer s'abriter bientôt sous son feuillage.

Ainsi va la vie. Nous nous sommes enrichis d'abord, nous avons planté pendant des années, mais viennent les années où le temps défait ce travail et déboise. Les camarades, un à un, nous retirent leur ombre. Et à nos deuils se mêle désormais le regret secret de vieillir. ” 🍀

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Terre des Hommes*, 1939.



Editor’s note: For years in my itinerant life, I had this book with me wherever I was, across oceans and continents. From time to time, I would open randomly at any page, and reread a few passages. I made a few small changes to the translated English version to follow closely the original French version, and added the last poignant sentence on our “secret regret”, which for some reason did not appear in the English version. LVQ