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Tiananmen Square, Beijing 1989

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The Hydra of Modern Times

By James Sale



The Hydra proved a mighty foe for Hercules. J. Paul Getty Museum. Wolfgang Sauber/CC BY-SA 3.0

The Epoch Times 1/27/2021|Updated: 3/7/2026

The myths of the ancient worlds, as we have discussed before, have profound truths and insights to tell us now, if we would but listen to them. One that I find particularly relevant at this present juncture of history is the story of the Lernaean Hydra, or just the Hydra.

To recall, the Hydra was a snake-like monster who in the most authoritative sources had nine heads, one of which was immortal. On top of that, the creature's breath was a lethal poison and it spat a venom so deadly that there was no cure for it.

The Hydra was the offspring of the loathsome monster Echidna, who mated with the even more ferocious Typhon. It was Typhon who almost defeated the king of the gods himself, Zeus, and in doing so would have destroyed the whole created order if it had been successful. The Hydra lived beside Lake Lerna, guarding an ominous gate leading to the underworld.

Thus, it comes as no surprise that just as the king of heaven had fought and defeated the Typhon monster in the upper world, so here below on earth, it fell to his son, the human hero Hercules, to defeat Typhon's offspring, the Hydra. This came about as a result of Hercules's second Labor.

Hercules was ordered by the treacherous and weak king Eurystheus to destroy the Hydra, although Eurystheus's real objective in setting all 12 of the famous Labors of Hercules was for Hercules himself to be destroyed, for each of the Labors became increasingly difficult, if not impossible to achieve. But, of course, Hercules was half human and half divine; his father was Zeus. This was no ordinary man!

But even being half divine proved not quite enough for Hercules to overcome the Hydra, at least on his own, for as he cut off or clubbed each head to death, another two would sprout in its place. The Hydra thus became more powerful, and Hercules had to retire.

Fortunately, however, Hercules was accompanied by Iolaus, his nephew, and together they resumed the fight. As Hercules destroyed one head, and before it could regenerate into two, Iolaus would sear the neck stump with a red-hot brand and thus prevent its growing again.

Eventually, as one head after another died, the creature also did, leaving only the immortal head. This Hercules chopped off and buried by the roadside. The Hydra, then, was defeated and dead. So what is the relevance of this story for us?

The Many-Headed Serpent of Science

The Hydra, I think, is symbolic of mankind's efforts (often monstrous!) to solve its problems. We might call this our philosophy of "progress," and in particular this problem-solving via science and technology.

Reading a key story in today's (Jan. 18, 2021) *The Epoch Times*, I find a perfect illustration of what I mean: The paragraph reads: "Officials in Norway said they are investigating the deaths of about two dozen elderly

patients who received the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and are looking into the prospect that adverse reactions to the vaccine ‘may have contributed to a fatal outcome in some frail patients.’” We create a vaccine to save lives, but immediately the opposite occurs—another head of the Hydra pops up, just when we thought we’d nailed the problem.

The particulars of the above case are not significant here—it may be on investigation that they all died of food-poisoning! But this result is typical of the Hydra’s manifestation: a law of unintended consequences, in fact. And not only unintended, but unforeseen too. As G.K. Chesterton observed, “Science invents conveniences by design and inconveniences by accident.”

Even, apparently, the creation of self-evidently brilliant new technology, on reflection, seems to carry a sting in its tail, or to continue our metaphor, generate a new Hydra’s head that attacks us somehow. For example, who could argue that the invention of the alphabet and writing was a great new technology? Have we not been the beneficiaries of its power ever since? Indeed, without it, it is difficult to conceive of how any learning, much less science, could ever have evolved.

Yet it was Socrates, in Plato’s “Phaedrus” (circa 370 B.C.), who said: “The discovery of the alphabet will create forgetfulness in the learner’s soul, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves.”

Of course, it may be thought now that the weakening of the memory is a small price to pay for the ability to be able to write, record, and transmit information to posterity in the way that writing has enabled. But the trouble is, whereas there are very small Hydras, there are also very large ones.

Especially since the start of the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, we have become so dependent on technologies that we are scarcely aware of our dependencies ... until something goes wrong—like, for example, with COVID-19. Then suddenly we become all too aware that

globalization, which in the 1990s we were told was unstoppable, inevitable, and more or less wholly beneficial, has some serious downsides: Mass traveling spreads the virus, and supply chains are vulnerable, with a particularly negative effect on the poorest in society.

And, if we consider the Norwegian officials' investigation, we may discover that the so-called safe vaccines have not really been tested sufficiently. As Carl Sagan said: "We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology." Unlike Hercules, we are all disempowered consumers who have to take what we are given.

Considering all this, plus the Hydras of nuclear power, biological experimentation (of which COVID itself may well be a consequence), pollution, and so on, we have to ask: What can be done about it? Does the myth give us a clue? The answer is yes; it does.

Tempering Science with the Divine

We have to set a hero (or heroine) up to fight against these Hydras. But the essence of the hero is that he is semi-divine. That is, solving human problems is at least half a spiritual matter, for that is what "divine" means. Science and technology on their own are not going to solve our problems; they cannot solve our problems!

As Robert Pirsig in his famous book "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" commented: "What's wrong with technology is that it's not connected in any real way with matters of the spirit and the heart. And so it does blind, ugly things quite by accident and gets hated for that."

By its very nature, technology is spiritless. But Hercules is not; he is semi-divine and semi-human. And notice, too, that Hercules works with another human being, and they work as a team to overcome the Hydra.

In his fascinating book "Future Hype: The Myths of Technology Change," Bob Seidensticker talks about "wicked problems," and these are what I call the Hydra. "Wicked problems have complex cause-and-effect

relationships, human interaction, and inherently incomplete information. They require compromises. ... The difference between something that works in the lab, on paper, or in one's head versus something that works in the real world and is practical to real people is a characteristic only of wicked problems.”

It is, therefore, the reintroduction of what is human and spiritual into combatting the problems of our time that is of the essence; only in this way can further Hydras be prevented.

But sadly, there is yet another Hydra to confront in the myth. Even for Hercules there was a Hydra that he did not foresee.

You will remember that Hercules lopped off the Hydra's immortal head as well, and buried it. Before doing so, however, he took an ample supply of its poisoned venom with which to tip his arrows—making them fatal. The merest graze would kill any living being. He killed many enemies this way.

But finally, Hercules was caught by the technology himself. The poison was infused into a shirt that his wife inadvertently supplied him with, and he died in agony. Even the great Hercules could not escape the Hydra. Far better for him, perhaps, would have been to have buried the technology rather than to think he could actually use it for his own ends. It rather reminds one of “The Lord of the Rings” and the ring of power, which always betrayed those who sought to wield it (excepting its maker, the Dark Lord).

We need more heroes, human and divine, if we are to overcome the problems the world is currently facing.

James Sale has had over 50 books published, most recently, “Mapping Motivation for Top Performing Teams” (Routledge, 2021). He won first prize in The Society of Classical Poets 2017 annual competition, performing in New York in 2019. His most recent poetry collection is “HellWard.” For more information about the author, and about his Dante project, visit TheWiderCircle.webs.com

Former Harvard scientist convicted in the US, He rebuilds brain-computer interface lab in China



New Tang Dynasty Asia Pacific TV. 1, 5, 2026

Charles Lieber, a former Harvard University professor who was sentenced for concealing his participation in the Chinese Communist Party's "Thousand Talents Program," has recently moved to Shenzhen, China, and received funding from the Chinese Communist Party to establish the "Smart Brain Centre" laboratory. He is dedicated to developing "brain-computer interface" technology that can be implanted into the brain, raising concerns from the outside world.

Lieber, aged 67, was arrested and prosecuted in late January 2020 for accepting huge sums from China and making false statements to U.S. federal investigators. In April 2023, Lieber was sentenced by the U.S. District Court in Boston to two days in jail, six months of house arrest, a \$50,000 fine, and to repay \$33,600 to the IRS.

At that time, Lieber's defence lawyer claimed that Lieber suffered from incurable lymphoma. But just three years after his sentencing, Lieber is now the founder and head of the i-BRAIN Centre at the Shenzhen Academy of Medical Sciences (SMART), a Chinese government-funded institution, and has access to professional nanotechnology equipment and primate research infrastructure that he was unable to obtain at Harvard.

This technology also has potential military applications. According to the Pentagon, the Chinese military has been researching brain-computer interfaces an attempt to enhance mental agility and situational awareness, thereby creating **"super soldiers."**

Morris, a researcher at the Asia Society Policy Institute, said: "The PLA has been investing heavily in brain-computer interfaces (BCIs), and it's not a good thing that a top American scientist is now involved in these studies."

Some analysts point out that Lieber's ability to rebuild his laboratory in China after his release, to under the CCP's "military-civilian fusion" strategy, highlights the inadequacy of the US's legal tools.

The book How Specter of Communism is Ruling Our World can be watch on YouTub website, and can be order the books





Left-Dr Chen Yaoli, Right-MOHW building -Taiwan

Pictures from - health.ettoday.net

Taiwan's Ministry of Health expel a Doctor's Medical Qualification

Epoch Times, June 2, 2026. reporter Lai Wenru, Taipei, Taiwan.

Taiwan's renowned liver transplant surgeon Chen Yaoli and others were found guilty by the court for brokering nine patients to China for organ transplants. The Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) has confirmed the revocation of his physician license, marking the first case in Taiwan where a physician-mediated patient went to China for organ transplantation to be revoked. If relief is requested, the court will make a separate ruling.

Since Chen Yaoli has collaborated with sales representatives from a pharmaceutical company named Huang to arrange liver transplants for patients in China. Due to the patient's postoperative death, the Changhua County Health Bureau determined that it violated the Physicians Act by "violating medical ethics in performing duties," but the Changhua County Physician Disciplinary Committee decided not to discipline him. In 2012, Chen collaborated with a medical business operator named Lin, arranging for a patient to undergo a liver transplant at the same hospital. However, the surgery failed and the patient died on the spot.

In 2015, the Legislative amended the Human Organ Transplant Act, changing illegal brokerage from administrative penalties to criminal liability. Even so, from 2016 to 2019, Chen Yaoli continued as a surgeon at

the Organ Transplant Centre of Changhua Christian Hospital, acting as an intermediary for patients needing liver and kidney organ for transplant surgeries in China.

Chen Yaoli, Huang, and others used this method to arrange for six patients to be transferred to Qingdao Hospital in Shandong, China, and three to Changsha Hospital, Hunan, China. Chen then charged each patient a brokerage fee of 900,000 yuan and personally visited the Chinese operating room for guidance. At the same time, each patient would receive a fee of 200,000 NTD, and Nurse Hsieh would be assigned to teach patient's postoperative care. After everyone received their payment, Hung would use underground remittance to pay the Chinese doctors' fees.

However, among these nine patients, one received liver transplants at a cost of 14 million NTD but died less than two weeks after the procedure; Additionally, three people died within less than two years, and the last one died within five years after surgery.

Minister of Health Shih Chong-liang stated that Chen Yaoli is the first Implementation of 20-Year Transplant Announcement: Medical Community Praises MOHW's Moral Courage, disciplinary action may have surprised many, but reality, it is entirely in accordance with the law. The basis for the penalty is an administrative announcement issued by the it in 2006, which clearly states: 'Whether or not there is a fee, if a physician introduces patients to high-risk areas for organ transplantation, it constitutes a violation of medical ethics and that organ transplantation itself is not simply a medical service, it's inevitably involves another person's life, and consent. If a doctor helps a patient obtain an organ of unknown origin, they are not only caring for the recipient but may also indirectly participate in the chain that harms the donor's life and dignity.

Two Thousand Photos of June 4th Never-Before-Seen



Epoch Times, May 27, 2026

This year marks the 37th anniversary of the June 4th Incident. The Epoch Times has exclusively obtained more than 2,000 previously unreleased historical photos of June 4th, bringing back to light that period that the CCP has tried so hard to cover up and erase.

In the spring and summer of 1989, a student movement shocked the world in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, and spread throughout China. Millions of students and citizens took to the streets, peacefully and rationally expressing their demands for democracy and freedom against corruption. The CCP leadership secretly, mobilized a full-scale crackdown on these civilians with tanks and machine guns on June 4th. They estimated, the CCP killed tens of thousands of people.

Recently, an official photographer from that era witnessed the event and documented the history in its entirety. His numerous rolls of film remained sealed away for 37 years. In the final stages of his life, this elderly man entrusted these precious photographs, totalling over 2,000 images in both colour and black and white.

To fulfil the elderly man's last wish, The Epoch Times is releasing these "June 4th" photos, dormant for 37 years, in batches for the first time, leading readers back to that tragic historical scene and reminding the world not to forget the CCP's bloody massacre of its compatriots. The CCP continues to intensify its persecution and intimidation of innocent people today, including threatening Epoch Times staff not to publish these photos.



In Beijing 4th June 1989. Medical staff rescue students from CCP Amry soldiers' massacre at Tiananmen Square in 4th , June,1989.



After the Massacre in Beijing 4th June 1989