

1506

The cornerstone of the current **St. Peter's Basilica** is laid.

1518

Bona Sforza is crowned as queen consort of Poland.

1521

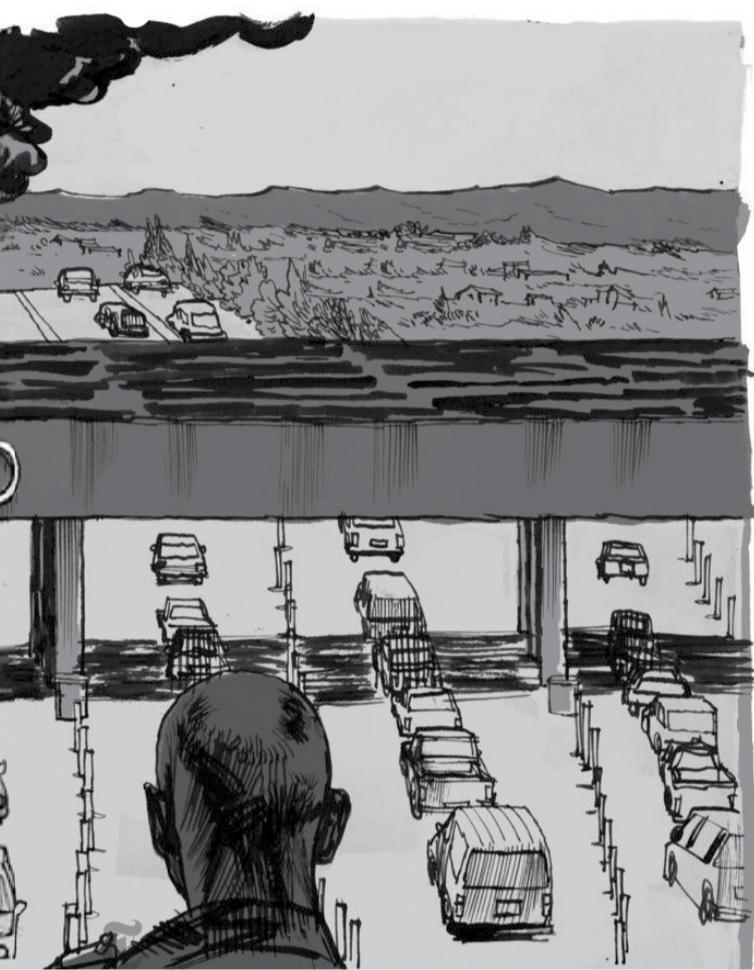
Trial of **Martin Luther** begins its second day during the assembly of the Diet of Worms. He refuses to recant his teachings despite the risk of excommunication.



1618

Bostonians rise up in rebellion against Sir Edmund Andros.

Mexico for our drug problem



the crackdown, but it did lead to frustration on the part of US businesses whose goods and labourers were being held up.

Half a century on, Trump has held back so far from such action, despite his threats. With over \$600 billion in cross-border trade last year, it would be far more costly today than it was in the 1960s.

His main priority is really to stop the flow of migrants and asylum-seekers, and it was the rise in their numbers that triggered the latest round of rhetoric. But from his 2016 presidential campaign until now, he has also railed against the flow of drugs from Mexico and used it to bolster his arguments to "build a wall" and beef up security.

"Our southern border is a pipeline for vast quantities of illegal drugs, including meth, heroin, cocaine and fentanyl," he said in a January speech, pushing for wall funding.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico has avoided answering Trump's ultimatum on drugs, at least publicly. When asked about it on April 5, he said he had no problems with the White House.

The problem is that even when Mexico has made major seizures in recent years, the northward flow of narcotics to Americans hasn't stopped.

"Relations are good. We have no confrontation with the government of the United States."

Meanwhile, he seems to be placating Washington by stepping up arrests of undocumented migrants heading through Mexico.

Seizures of drugs in Mexico appear to be down in the first quarter, according to early reports, which may have helped prompt Trump's ultimatum.

The problem is that even when Mexico has made major seizures in recent years, the northward flow of narcotics to Americans

hasn't stopped. But then, regardless of Washington, Mexico does face the herculean problem of organised crime ravaging its society.

A better way forward would be for the two nations to work together on real policies that reduce the damage unleashed by drugs and cartels.

US and Mexican agencies should team up to target the most violent gangsters, to lower the number of homicides in Mexico and to lower the number of people fleeing over the border as refugees.

Mexico could do far more to weed out the narco corruption, which is destroying its political system. And the United States could provide considerably more rehabilitation services to reduce addiction and overdoses, many of which are actually from prescription drugs.

There are real problems, from the corners of Baltimore to the mountains of Mexico. But they need integral long-term solutions, not simplistic ultimatums and threats.

(Ioan Grillo is a contributing opinion writer.)

Going to the soccer gods

connection to today's athenians

thing really exciting happens and then I stand and retreat backward to the door of the pub, so I don't block anyone's view. For reasons that completely escape me, I often crouch with my arms at a right angle and fists softly clenched. It's almost an attitude of prayer.

There's a large wooden central rectangular table with benches where the hard-core fans sit, with John in pole position, top left. Most of them are smoking (Athens is a great place to pick up a passive smoking habit. Smoking is banned, of course, but Greeks tend to do what they want), drinking beer or coffee and betting online on their phones. Just behind the central table is another, smaller table with about four or five seats, marked "reserved" (although it turns out that all the tables are "reserved"). This is where I sit, usually with some familiar faces. We talk to one another as much as we can, in broken English and fragmentary Greek, but in great detail about the qualities of particular players, tactics, formation and the strength of the opposition. Although we don't really know one another that well, there is an immense feeling of familiarity, affection and trust.

For the nonfan, it's hard to explain how detailed these discussions are and the extraordinary levels of knowledge that ordinary fans possess. Although this might sound stupid, there is an amazing rational intelligence to soccer talk, bolstered by a common passion for the team that we all love.

The teams emerge, I sit up straight, and there is the usual

fluff of TV commercials and dumb graphics before kickoffs. We all clap when the whistle blows, and then we enter the shared and strangely meditative flow of the game. Things get really quiet. There is always an odd experience of tension in watching a game with a group of fellow fans, waiting for your team to score or at least have a shot or engage in a compelling passage of play. The TV in the Wee Dram has useless speakers, and it is a real strain to catch the Greek commentary. Not really understanding the words, I listen eagerly for the names, which have an almost magical aura: Van Dijk, Robertson, Sadio Mane, Milner, Alexander-Arnold.

Of course, there are a lot of complaints, when there is a misplaced pass or especially when our star forward player, Mohammed Salah, shoots and misses, which has been happening a lot of late. The most frequently heard word in the bar is "malakas." Let's just say this is a word with a wide range of semantic connotations, many of them connected with the sin of onanism. There is a visceral connection between soccer and swearing, and I am at my most disgustingly foul-mouthed when watching Liverpool play. I am not proud of this fact and often try to swallow the vowel after the first consonant of the bad word has spilled from my lips.

When we score, the place explodes. Skintight anxiety suddenly releases into ecstasy. Everyone leaps to their feet, with wild scenes of joy, hugging and loud cries. I

high-five everyone around the table, often inaccurately. I don't know why I do it. It's not my style. But I started the habit at my first match in January and somehow feel obliged to continue because they expect it from me. It's a little awkward.

When the opposing team score, there is absolute silence in the bar. Not a word. And barely any reaction. The mood shifts entirely and no one speaks for at least 10 seconds, then: "Malakas."

My three months in Athens has been a very tense time to be a Liverpool fan. A six-point January lead in the English Premier League has been whittled away by the relentlessness of our main opponents and reigning champions, Manchester City, and the fact that we drew a number of games that we should have won. We've lost some of our flair, flow and attacking rhythm. But we're still in there fighting, match by match, grinding out victories often with last-minute goals. A nerve-shredding experience.

Today, March 31, is an absolutely vital game. I arrive very early at the Wee Dram, about 45 minutes before kickoff, around 5:45 p.m. There is a lot of banter, more beer is being drunk than usual, and servers slide through the crowd setting down pizzas that are always shared. Liverpool are playing Tottenham Hotspur, and my son Edward is at the Anfield Road stadium with his mate Ben watching live. Edward is a large part of the reason the fate of Liverpool Football Club in this season's English

It is hard to describe the feeling of sheer unconfined joy when your team wins. Everything is right with the world and the mind is free of any concern, distance or gnawing introspection.

Premier League matters so much to me. I deviously programmed him in his childhood years to support Liverpool, and he is now a better, more knowledgeable fan than I. But he has never seen Liverpool win the league; it is 29 years since it last happened. Liverpool won it 13 times during my first 30 years on planet Earth. But that history feels as ancient as Athens itself.

Spurs are a fine team. Some of my best friends are Spurs fans. They didn't deserve to lose. But, very obligingly, they did, thanks to a goalkeeping blunder from the World Cup-winning French captain Hugo Lloris off a cheeky header from the sinuous Salah that ricocheted into the net off the shin of Toby Alderweireld in the 90th minute of the match. Call it luck, if you like. I choose to call it destiny.

It is hard to describe the feeling of sheer unconfined joy when your team wins. Everything is right with

the world and the mind is free of any concern, distance or gnawing introspection. Here at the Wee Dram, there is a genuine feeling of warmth and solidarity among fans. Despite the linguistic limitations, we understand one another very well because we have a team in common. And there are 300 official Liverpool supporters clubs all around the world and countless other millions watching in whatever way they can. After the Spurs game, Ross played the Liverpool anthem, "You'll Never Walk Alone" by Gerry and the Pacemakers and everyone sang along, bellowing out of tune at the top of their voices. It was really something.

I realise that such rituals are pretty stupid, shallow and far too sentimental, but at such moments I feel a real sense of disinhibited belonging, and other people feel the same.

After the song climaxed and the final chorus faded, I finished my beer and looked for John to say goodbye. But he'd already left.

Will we win the league? Probably not. Manchester City are a better football team. But today we won. I don't so much walk as glide down the hill to the subway station, texting with Edward and reading the early match reports. I pick up a loaf of bread at the bakery and head back into the center of the city. Life is good.

(Simon Critchley is a professor of philosophy at the New School for Social Research and the author of "What We Think About When We Think About Soccer" and the forthcoming "Tragedy, the Greeks, and us.")



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Effective May 2, under Title III of the LIBERTAD Act, U.S. citizens will be able to bring lawsuits against persons trafficking in property that was confiscated by the Cuban regime. After more than 22 years of delays, Americans will finally have a chance at justice.

@SecPompeo

02



When we talk about "democratic socialism," we're talking about making sure everybody can live with dignity in the richest country on Earth. That means making sure everyone has the basic necessities of life: decent housing, good health care, good education and a good retirement.

@BernieSanders

03



Bernie Sanders and wife should pay the Pre-Trump Taxes on their almost \$600,000 in income. He is always complaining about these big TAX CUTS, except when it benefits him. They made a fortune off of Trump, but so did everyone else - and that's a good thing, not a bad thing!

@realDonaldTrump

04



Fact: Charges have been framed against Sadhvi Pragma in Malegaon 2008 blast case, trial is on and she is yet to be acquitted by the court. And she is the BJP candidate from the great city of Bhopal: what does one say but welcome to a 'new' India. #IndiaElects

@sardesaiarajdeep

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