

# The *Wednesday* at Albion-Oxford



The Magazine of the Wednesday Group at Albion - Beatnik

## Editorial

### Moving Forward

I am pleased to say that the experimental issue has been a success. We have received great encouragement from our members; the Wednesday regulars at Albion, as well as friends and supporters. I thought that we should keep the momentum going and took the decision to print the new issue of the magazine - issue number 1.

It was my belief for a long time that individually and as a group we have great potential but the point is to realise it. Many who would be good writers on philosophy, poetry, art, travel and society will discover their potential in the very act of writing in *The Wednesday*.

We must remember that the new magazine is founded to serve the Wednesday group at Albion. It aims at giving our discussions and thoughts a concrete shape. The meetings will move forward by going over the debate of previous week and developing it. The magazine will move forward too.

Sometimes you have to move backward to be able to move forward. I have been looking through ideas in my email inbox to see what have we been debating in the past months and to develop these.

This is the new issue of a new publication. Some readers might expect big declarations and statements; something like the manifesto of the Romantic poets or the French Surrealists, the Futurist movement in Italy, but also the famous The Oldest System Programme of German Idealism and the Marx and Engel's Manifesto! These were

great moments of history and they all left their mark on their age and became part of the human intellectual and aesthetic heritage. They started with new vision and determination to change thought, sensibility and the world. They pushed vision and action to the extreme in an attempt to awaken the thought and will of their age. They might have got carried away by their enthusiasm to think that they have said the last word and have created the last revolution to change history and to start fresh in a new Messianic era; a Human History! (My apology to Marx.)

But these views turned out to be partial. There is always a new vision and a new way the world will take. No one has said the last word or closed the door of creativity and the birth of the new. A well known sentence by al-Ghazali that has been repeated by Leibnitz often gets misunderstood. It says that this is "the best possible world". It has been taken to mean there will not be anything new to add. But this is wrong.

We start with no such declarations and our prospect is limited to what we can do. We much prefer to take things gradually and develop them overtime through conversation, dialogue and debate. We will, as individuals and as group, get the benefit of this gradual movement. This is a sure way to proceed rather than coming up with a declaration that will falter very quickly.

There is a wise slogan by Mao Tse-Tung that has been misused in the past. It says: 'Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thoughts contend'. This is what we are calling for. We have created a cultural space to sow the seeds of new thoughts and I hope we'll all till the land.

*The editor*

### ***A Thought..***

"Though genius isn't something that can be produced arbitrarily, it is freely willed - like wit, love, and faith, which one day will have to become arts and sciences. You should demand genius from everyone, but not expect it. A Kantian would call this the categorical imperative of genius."

*(A fragment From the Athenaeum)*

# Follow Up

## *The Wednesday's meeting, July the 19th*

**W**e met as usual on Wednesday and discussed several issues. One of them was the Analytical vs. the Continental philosophy debate. The Analytic School seems to be following science and getting subservient to it (see for example the Eliminative school in the philosophy of mind). It is also becoming materialistic and mechanistic (for example the physicalist view of the world and mind or the argument about banishing meaning, ethical values and phenomenological aspects from the description of the world).

The history of philosophy has been that of science taking away philosophical issues so to speak. But George Steiner thinks that Metaphysics is essential, as values and morals cannot be derived from science. But Science is very useful and amazing in many ways. It is not the total explanation though, and the way we use technology in society is the problem. Heidegger has argued that the Logical Negation is based on the Ontological Nothing and that science pre-supposes metaphysics. The point is not that science has to be rejected but that the trend toward mechanical explanation and materialism has to be restrained. Art and music in particular prove to be resistant to the such explanations and a problem to the Analytic school. We find most writers on Cinema for example are from the Continental school of thought.

Language came up. The contradictions found in words was discussed but only briefly and it needs more discussion. For example: Does the word “mean” (ungenerous) have the same root as “meaning”? Freud wrote a whole chapter on this which has been published in his complete work under the title: “The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words” which discusses a number of ancient languages. He uses it for interpreting dreams and the contradictory aspect of one and the same image in the dream, and relates it to this phenomenon that the philologists of old language have found. What one could say is that the Understanding (as opposed to Reason in the Kantian sense) is in the realm of clarity and individuation but there might be another faculty (or level of consciousness) where contraries are eliminated and all join as one. Mystics and poets said the same or something similar.

We also mentioned other debates but did not have the time to go through them in details. One of them is: “My kind of philosophy”. why do we have inclination towards certain philosophies or philosophers? Nietzsche thought philosophy is the confession of the philosopher and Fichte thought if you believe in Freedom, you should follow his Critical philosophy and if you don't value Freedom, then you'll follow Dogmatism. Fichte was writing in 1794 with the French Revolution in the background and he was also trying to awaken the will of the German nation. He had dedicated many lectures to the latter task. He was all for the primacy of the will rather than theoretical reason.

Finally, the talk drifted towards natural scenery, travel, architecture and their relation to philosophy. How are buildings linked to philosophy or mysticism? See for example, the book by Samir Akkash: *Cosmology and Architecture in Pre-Modern Islam: An architectural reading of mystical ideas* (SUNY, 2005). Jung, the psychologist and philosopher, built a house on Lake Zurich to keep himself sane. Artists and writers have shown great interest in architecture, and a mention was made of J.K. Huysmans and his novel *Cathedral* which is one long contemplation of Chartres cathedral. A statesman, King Ludwig II, built the Neuschwanstein Castle, but was accused of insanity. Gardening has its place in philosophical writings. David Cooper's book “*A Philosophy of Gardens*” was published in 2006 by OUP. But then he is more in the Continental camp. Nietzsche, in a fragment, compares the English and Italian attitudes to gardening and he was, as usual, derogatory of the English because, in his view, they try to imitate nature while the Italians managed to impose their will on nature when they built Venice. However, the English created the picturesque. Heidegger built his hut and took the action of clearing the wood and made the word a philosophical concept; Clearing (Lichtung).

The debate on Logos vs. Mythos, rationality vs. emotions couldn't make it this week but could be picked up in the coming weeks.

*Paul (with additional writing by Rahim)*

## Follow Up

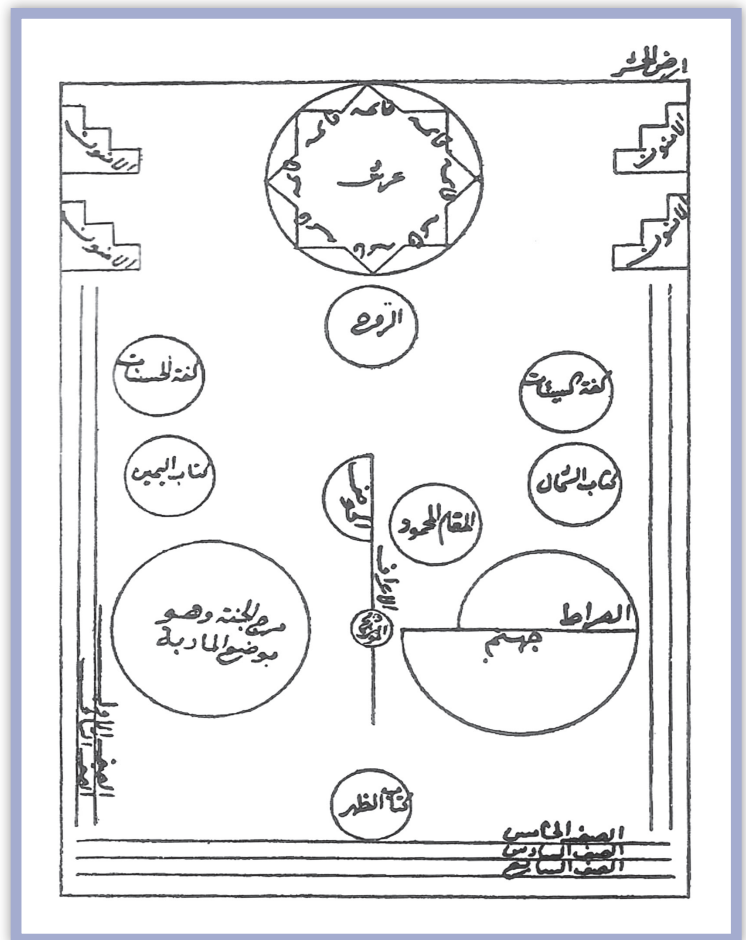
### Could the mystic **Ibn Arabi** be the designer of **Taj Mahal**?

I have mentioned during the Wednesday's meeting that someone suggested a link between the mystical reflections of the Ibn Arabi and Taj Mahal. I had the impression from a mention that was made by my lecturer Jane Clark when I did the course on Ibn Arabi that the link concerns the design of the whole building. But it turned out that it is related to the garden of Taj Mahal.

Ibn Arabi's scholar Wayne E. Beggley put forward an interpretation in 1979 that exploits the Islamic idea that the 'Garden of paradise' is also the location of the Throne of God on the Day of Judgment. In his reading, the Taj Mahal is seen as a monument where Shah Jahan has appropriated the authority of the 'Throne of God' symbolism for the glorification of his own reign. (Beggley: The myth of the Taj Mahal and a new theory of its symbolic meaning, 1979).

In 1996 Begley stated that it is likely that the diagram by Ibn Arabi was a source of inspiration for the layout of the Taj Mahal garden. Ibn Arabi was held in high regard at the time and many copies of the Futuhat, that contains the diagram, were available in India.

The diagram shows the 'Arsh (Throne of God; the circle with the eight pointed star), Pulpits for the Righteous (al-Aminun), seven rows of angels, Gabriel (al-Ruh), al-A'raf (the Barrier), the Hud al-Kawthar (Fountain of Abundance; the semi-circle in the center), al-Maqam al-Mahmud (the Praiseworthy Station; where the prophet Muhammad will stand to intercede for the faithful), Mizan (the Scale), As-Sirat (the Bridge), Gehannam (Hell) and



*A diagram of «Plain of Assembly» (Ard al-Hashr) on the Day of Judgment, from autograph manuscript of al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya (The Meccan Openings) by the Andalusian mystic and philosopher Ibn Arabi, ca. 1238. (see also the Beirut edition, Vol.3, P425).*

Marj al-Janna (Meadow of Paradise). The general proportions and the placement of the Throne, the Pulpits and the Fountain show striking similarities with the Taj Mahal and its garden.

The information comes from the website below. You can read more on it: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origins\\_and\\_architecture\\_of\\_the\\_Taj\\_Mahal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origins_and_architecture_of_the_Taj_Mahal).

**Rahim**





# Beyond Ressentiment:

## Macmurray

### and the Form of the Personal

Part 2

PAUL COCKBURN

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**Part one of this article discussed the development of the Form of the Personal in early stages of life. Macmurray traces the complex relationship between the child and his mother and other members of the family. In this second and last part, the argument gets generalised to society and state:**

According to Macmurray, there are three moral 'ways of life'. He calls these 'dispositions'. They are categories of apperception in a Kantian sense (i.e. they present the world in a certain way to us). They determine the general form of our experience of others. They are derived from our childhood experience; the

pair-bonding with our mothers and experience of family. So, groups in society also exhibit the three typical modes of morality we have mentioned – contemplative (passive), pragmatic (aggressive) and community.

In the positive communal mode, we act not for the



sake of ourselves but for others. We have to overcome fear and the hostility arising from fear: 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. Unity in the community is achieved. But there are the two negative modes: the contemplative, which is rooted in submission and the pragmatic (which is rooted in aggression).

In the contemplative mode, the adult develops from the child who copes with the apparent hostility of the mother by withdrawing into a life of phantasy. His real life to him is one of reflection; he consciously ceases to intend the practical life. As this mode is reflected in society, social norms are created which unite society. They are basically a matter of style, beauty or grace in social relations, and manners. The danger here is that our fear of others makes us withdraw. We become spectators, following the world which we see as a show. We try to use thinking and reason in a detached way, as though thought had no motive. It is passive: it is the desire to know the truth without having to live by the truth, to escape from moral commitment, from responsibility. Others, the powerful, effectively command my actions, so it is their responsibility to do right not mine. Emotionally in this mode, the child, and then the adult, feels resentful. There are echoes of Nietzsche's 'ressentiment' here.

In the aggressive mode, the adult follows the child who rebels against his mother. The child does not withdraw; on the contrary he throws tantrums, fights his mother. He grows up to be a rebel. Aggression is used in an effort to overpower the resistance of other agents and compel them to submit. So how in this scenario is any unity in society maintained? We need laws which limit the freedom of the aggressive individual to harm others.

Here Macmurray looks at the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes says the persons who compose society are by nature isolated, afraid of one another, and in competition with one another. Each individual uses all his powers to secure his own preservation and satisfaction; in this state of nature there is war of every man against everybody else. Human life is poor, nasty, brutish and short. But these aggressive individuals are rational. They realize they have to unite in a society to survive. So, in pragmatic mode they seek to achieve long-term ends, subjugating short-term interests, establishing laws which a power external to us can force all of us to keep. This

is the power of the sovereign state which maintains the necessary unity of society by force. Hobbes assumes there is a Stoic dualism between Reason and Passion. He thinks our motives, our passions, are ego-centric and base.

So in society or community, we may have incompatible goals or intentions of a number of agents. Macmurray takes the relation of one person with another as the basic structure of community. A community is the network of active relations between all possible pairs of its members. He says that to have a positive personal relation with another is to be heterocentric: the centre of interest and attention is the other. This is a unity of differences: each person retains their individuality. Each person realizes himself in and through the other. I must trust the other. If we quarrel we each withdraw, and fear replaces the trust. We can be reconciled as friends or we may agree to co-operate on conditions which impose restraints on each of us. But we will then be isolated from one another, not so satisfied in the relationship.

In the simple case of two agents who disagree, one might yield to the other, or one might force the other to submit. The criticism of Hobbes is that he assumes there is nothing in man to act as a bond of unity between people. But we could argue that benevolence is as natural to man as self-love.

Rousseau inverts the Hobbesian case: to him human nature is inherently good, the existing social structures are based on reason but they prevent us going back to a more original state where our natural impulses will enable us to form a better society. Reason can reveal to us the goal that society is moving towards in its full organic maturity, and we assume this future harmony is already here, or at least that we are moving towards it, fooling ourselves. We seek a mystical identity with the whole of which I form a part. We want a consensual harmony of wills with self-interest suppressed in favour of the general good. This is the contemplative mode, where the child submits to the mother's will, and gives up his own self-will to a world of phantasy and imagination. What about politics? The state has two main functions - to run the economy and maintain justice. The economic sphere is primarily about indirect relations, where we co-operate as workers and have functional roles. It is pragmatic, concerned with efficiency. The state can be totalitarian, treating people as just a means to an end, a cog in the economic



machine. Macmurray contrasts justice with mercy, generosity, benevolence, those moral qualities which involve a readiness to sacrifice self-interest for the sake of others. While justice is just the minimum you get in the courts.

The state is only necessary because there is a breakdown in the customary community of direct personal relations. Macmurray thinks the transition to indirect relations is shown in the history of Greece, in the growth of the city state. Here the growth of indirect personal relations, with other city states, superimposed on the direct relations which existed within the cities, necessitated politics. The cities became interdependent instead of self-sufficient, and power struggles for control of the cities emerged. Just like today, there are a number of independent societies, (read countries) with each one seeking to control in its own interests an economic nexus of interests of which it constitutes only a fragment. (US spying on Germany, Russia and Ukraine).

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The Romans solved the problem of heterogeneous states: to keep the peace the super-state (the Romans) imposed laws. But the law imposes only a minimum standard and there are instances where if I obey the law I might act immorally, so it should not take moral precedence. Are there two kinds of obligation, one moral the other political? No - the political is derived from the moral. Morals generally apply to people we know, our direct relations:

the law generally applies when our actions affect people we do not know. Each one of us intends to maintain the system of co-operation in general in an indirect way (i.e. mediated by the state). The State system of justice is pragmatic, and the State is a device created to develop and maintain law. However, the State can grow into a monster – Hobbe’s Leviathan. Because law is universal, it has great power, and megalomaniacs who wish to exercise

more and more power can use the State for the wrong purposes. What is the state Macmurray asks – if we track the state to its lair, we find a collection of overworked bureaucrats who are pretty much like us. Those who are wise enough to realize their limitations, and immune to the gross adulation of their fellows, realize they cannot solve everything and resign – and then the power-mad enter who think they can solve everything. He cites Hitler as an example of this.

If we assume that the State can solve all our problems, then we make power the supreme good. Power becomes the end instead of the means. The State cannot create a community, united in a common life, with the members in communion, in fellowship. If fear dominates, then proper community is not possible. For Macmurray religion unites people in this proper community where fear has been overcome, and to create community is to make friendship the form of all personal relations.

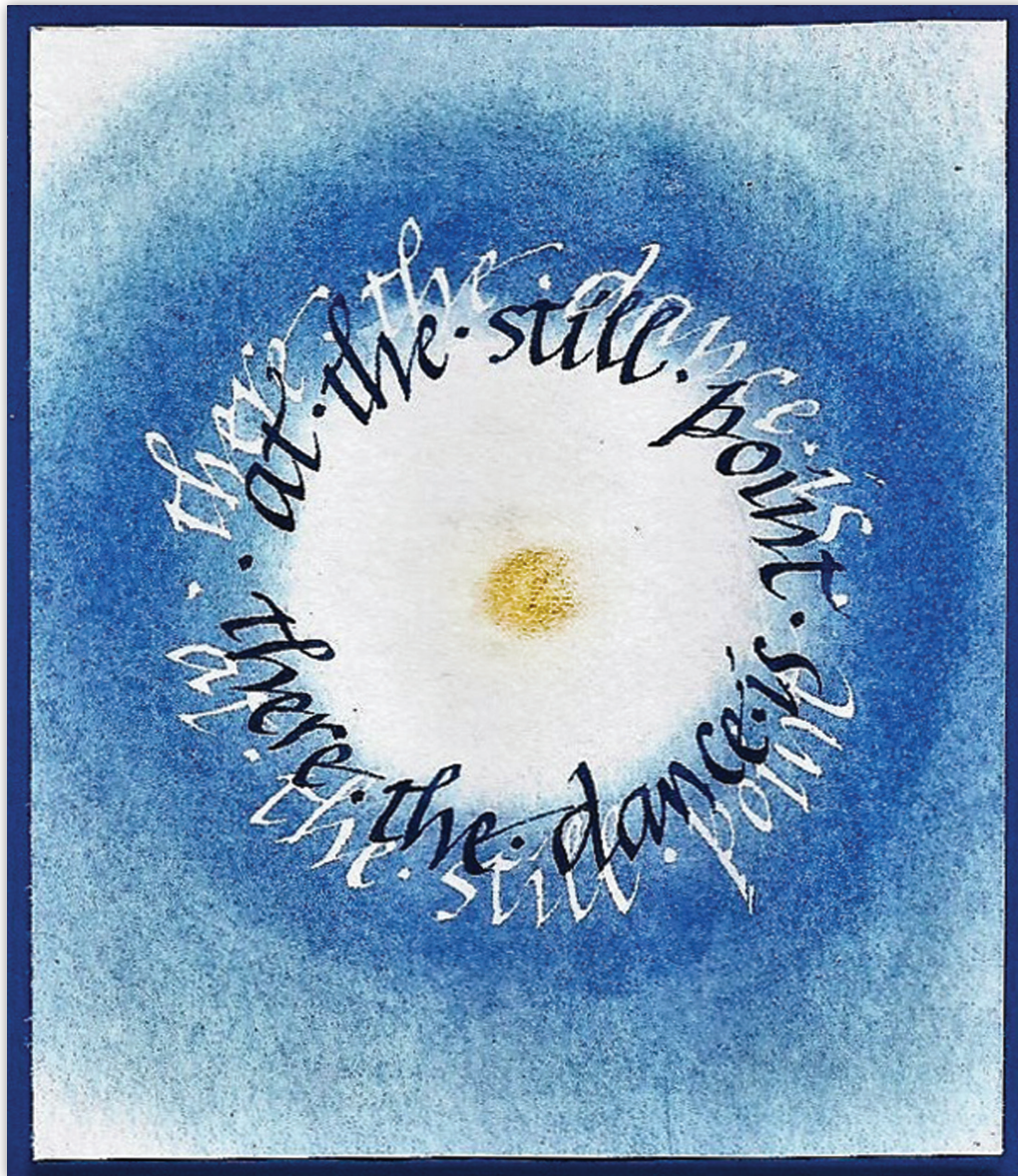
So, to summarise - we develop moral dispositions in our relations to others based on the mother-child relation. These are either aggressive, or contemplative, based on fear, or in community, based on love. Societies and nations exhibit these same dispositions as all human social identity is defined in terms of these dispositions.





# Creative Art

*“At The Still Point...”* Painting by **Barbara Vellacott**



*At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.*

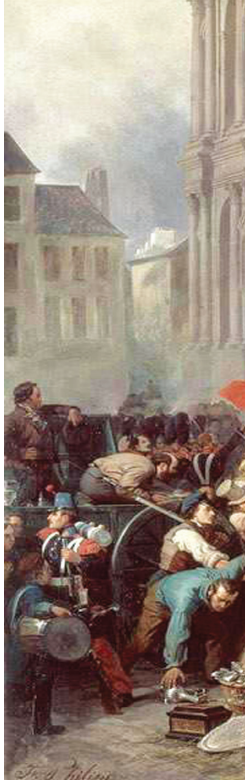
***T. S. Eliot, Four Quartets***



# Hegel's & Progress: Philosophy Determines History

PHIL WALDEN

**Is there progress in history? Is the progress justifiable when it seems to be going wrong? The following article considers some aspects of this question in view of Hegel's analysis of the French revolution.**



## What is Progress?

**A** growth in the extent of scientific knowledge? Improvements in the moral capacities of human beings? Or instead as in Hegel – history is the progressive embodiment of rational principles.

Can ‘thought-experiments’ lead us to progress?

If what is meant by ‘thought-experiments’ is something similar to the ubiquitous ‘trolley problems’ that some analytical philosophers are very keen on, then my answer would be that these cannot lead to progress. Trolley problems bear no relation to reality, and there is no way that we can use them to help us with historical development and progress.

## Examples of progress from the history of philosophy

One major example is the development within Ancient Greek philosophy. At the time of Hesiod and Homer (700 BC) thought was dominated by myth, whereas with the advent of the Pre-Socratics (600 BC) and then Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle (500 BC to 300 BC) thought became increasingly suffused by reason. This was not understood by Robin Lane Fox, Professor of Ancient History at the University of Oxford, in his otherwise excellent and beautiful recent BBC4 programme “The Greek Myths”.

Another major example is the development from the Scilla and Charybdis on the one hand empiricist positivism and on the other hand Cartesian rationalism. The archetypal representative of empiricist positivism is David Hume, and that of Cartesian rationalism is

of course Descartes. The problem with these is that both in their own way fail to deal with the whole. For Hegel only the whole is true. Hegel has the idea of totality which preserves within it each of the ideas or stages that it has overcome or subsumed.

## Is Progress even desirable?

I have had some responses from philosophers who have said to me that progress is irrelevant, and instead what is important is ethical improvement. I think this is an unfortunate misunderstanding. In Hegel, the ethical is encompassed within the movement of Spirit, so it is a misconception to think that Hegel's idea of progress does not include ethics. But also, ethics is not the whole story because there is in some ways separate question of our cognition of the ontology of the world. (which is not always ethical – e.g. advances were made in our knowledge of human anatomy as a result of unethical experiments carried out by the Nazis).

## Hegel's attitude to war

Of course, people bring up the fact that sometimes Hegel almost seems to have a positive attitude towards war. But the way I would respond to this is that war was an unavoidable and integral part of the world at the time that Hegel lived. However, this does not mean that war is unavoidable in the times in which we live today, and part of the reason for this is the great philosophical contribution made by Hegel in his lifetime (1770-1831). Anyone who wants to read a biography of Hegel should read Terry Pinkard's book Hegel (available in paperback).



The French Revolution

### Philosophical progress & historical progress

Philosophical progress is the Spirit which interacts with history. History is teleological. History is a coherent, rational development, because the rise and fall of nations is governed by a single spirit.

Hegel's claim that Geist is the absolute does not mean that everything is mental, but that:

- (a) the unified system of thoughts and rational structures that form the core of the subjective Geist are immanent in nature and in the development of Geist itself; and
- (b) spirit/mind 'overreaches' and 'idealizes' what is other than spirit, by its cognitive and practical activities.

So the truth is not that history determines philosophy, but that philosophy determines history.

Why is the French Revolution a problem?

And why does Hegel think it is a key part of historical progress?

As most people know, the French Revolution was fought against the Ancient Regime for the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. To the dismay of many across Europe, and certainly to the dismay of all the leading philosophers in Prussia, the revolution degenerated into the Terror in which thousands were brutally killed by the Robespierre regime. Here is Hegel's philosophical diagnosis of the Terror, taken from the section of *Phenomenology of Spirit* headed "Absolute

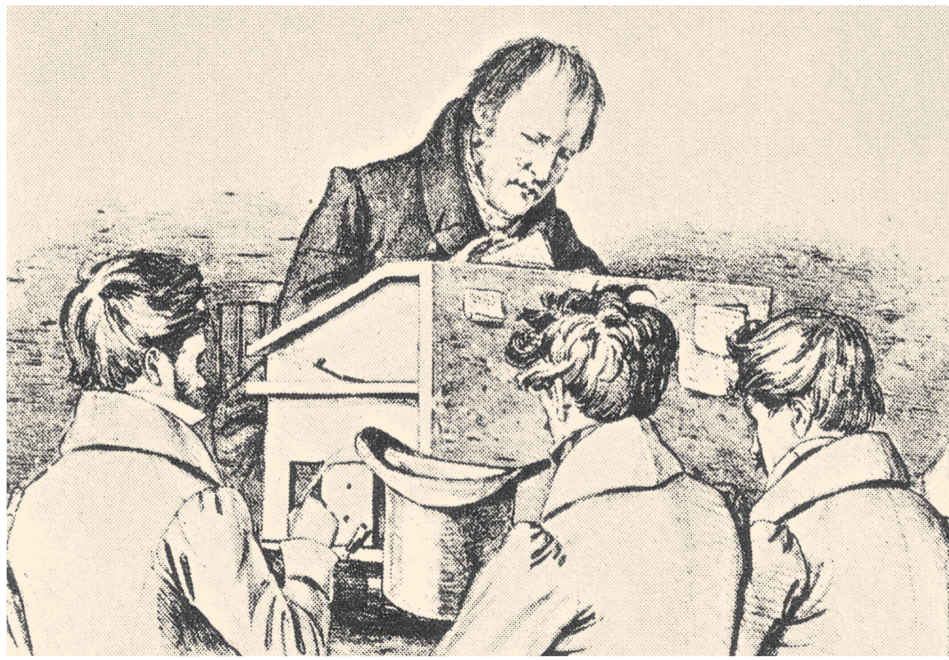
### Freedom and Terror":

"Just as the individual self-consciousness does not find itself in this universal work of absolute freedom qua existent Substance, so little does it find itself in the deeds proper and individual actions of the will of this freedom. Before the universal can perform a deed, it must concentrate itself into the One of individuality [Robespierre! - PW] and put at the head an individual self-consciousness; for the universal will is only an actual will in a self, which is a One. But thereby all other individuals are excluded from the entirety of this deed and have only a limited share in it, so that the deed would not be a deed of the actual universal self-consciousness. Universal freedom, therefore, can produce neither a positive work nor a deed; there is left for it only negative action; it is merely the fury of destruction."

So, Hegel is criticizing the narrow purity of the French Revolution under Robespierre, and Hegel is claiming that it was the contradiction between the ideas of the leadership of the Revolution on the one hand, and reality on the other hand, which led to the regression after the initial historical advance of the ending of the Ancient Regime.

After the Terror, all the Prussian philosophers, including Schelling, were despairing about how the French Revolution could be defended and taken forward. Hegel himself admits to a six-month period of depression over this. But unlike Schelling and the others Hegel overcame the difficulties. Who knows what the world would be like now, or if human society would even





Hegel with his Berlin students, Sketch by Franz Kugler

exist, if Hegel had not done humanity this immense service. So how did Hegel justify the French Revolution? This is laid out in Joachim Ritter's book *Hegel and the French Revolution* from which I take some quotes. Firstly:

"...in Hegel's relation to revolution there belongs the enthusiasm for what has entered history with revolution together with the knowledge of the unresolved nature of its problems and of the necessity of its "collapse" into tyranny. The Revolution has posed the problem which the epoch has to work out. In its unresolvedness, it thrusts out the question why neither the Revolution itself nor the revolutionary and restorative attempts of the following decades could succeed in arriving at political stability." (page 47)

## Then:

"Just as the people had raised it as their banner, so Hegel takes up the idea of freedom and makes it the "basic element" and "sole matter" of his philosophy. This also signifies, however, that Hegel in this way makes philosophy the theory of the age; it is given the task of conceiving the political freedom of the Revolution in its essence; the foundation upon which the Revolution "bases all" shall be philosophically determined." (page 48)

## And:

"The problem which has been raised through the Revolution by the demand for political freedom consists in finding the legal form of freedom and, that is, in developing a legal order which accords with the freedom of selfhood and does it justice, and enables the individual to be himself and achieve his human determination." (pp 49-50)

## And crucially:

".... the Revolution has set before the age the task of making the Idea politically the content of law and state, which is from the start the principle and meaning of European world history.

Therefore, not the restoration, but the Revolution represents the principle of European history. For this reason, the political restoration suffers from an inner contradiction; its inverted character consists in that it opposes itself antithetically to the present-day principle and thus negates the historical substance itself, which it yet wishes to preserve and reestablish. That necessarily entangles it in an empty formalism and ultimately condemns it to political impotence over and against the real problems of the age, which thereby remain unresolved. (pp 56-57)

## Further Readings:

- ♦ **Introducing Hegel:**  
*A Graphic Guide (Icon Books)*
- ♦ **Terry Pinkard: Hegel**
- ♦ **Hegel: *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by A V Miller**
- ♦ **Hegel & the French Revolution**  
*Joachim Ritter*
- ♦ *David Hawkes,*  
*Ideology (2003, second edition)*
- ♦ *Anything by David Hawkes*  
*or Yvonne Sherratt or Brian Fay or Gerard Delanty*  
*is worth reading.*



# The Limits of Philosophy

How much space in our lives should philosophy take?

PAUL COCKBURN

**Philosophy is the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline. This covers how we can know or obtain knowledge (epistemology), and what exists (ontology).**

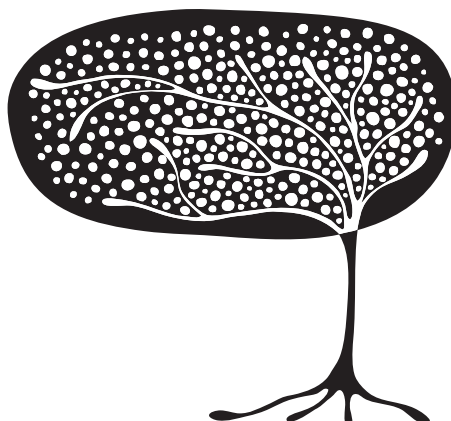
Philosophy in the modern world has some problems. This is because scientism, rationalism and logic dominate philosophy, especially academic philosophy. But in fact art in its various forms (music, novels, plays, films, painting, videos) also gives us fundamental truths, especially relating to knowledge about ourselves as individuals and as members of the human (and global) community. They are generally subjective, while science aims to be objective. Science has been very successful, and has powerful methodologies to obtain knowledge of the natural world, of which we are a part.

One big advantage that science has over philosophy is that scientists have to act, conduct experiments which can verify or refute their theories. They are 'doers', and the success of technologies derived from science is evidence of this. But science cannot explain or derive the values, morals and ethics by which we live. Many Scientists seem to dis-courage on every subject matter under the sun while remaining unable to arrive at any statement about what anything really means. And as Hume asked 'How can you derive an 'ought' from an 'is'?

Modern academic philosophy is generally rational (often in an abstruse sense), and

generally neglects the role of emotions in our lives. It usually does not talk about our sense of identity and the self. It presents a false picture because of this. Philosophy needs to engage productively with other disciplines: sociology, religion, biology, psychology and psychotherapy.

Another problem is how to 'ground' philosophy. Philosophy covers a very wide subject matter (everything?) but where do you start? Different philosophers choose different starting points, emphasizing particular aspects of reality which they think are fundamental. Rationalistic power battles then develop between opposing sides. It is simply not healthy – individuals want to verbally annihilate those who disagree with them, they want their ideas and opinions to take over the world so to speak. So perhaps we should try to be 'rounded' individuals, incorporating into our studies and life a number of disciplines, not limiting the knowledge we 'take in' so to speak to philosophy or philosophers. There is a wonderful world of nature, art and other people out there which can speak to us in many ways besides the rational! It may not be certain knowledge, but then life is not certain and perhaps we have to try to use all our faculties to live truly. This will include such faculties as our imagination and our sense of the mystical and divine (as well as the rational of course, which should work with our other faculties).





## Madness on the edge of Lake Zurich:

# A Journey to Remember

FRED COUSINS



**I set out a year ago today on an adventure. The point of the trip was to find and feel the Bollingen Tower, built by CG Jung on the banks of Lake Zurich. I got the ferry from Harwich to the hook of Holland; just me and my Volvo estate.**

**F**irst day was a trip to Amsterdam. There was a Van Gough exhibition, called "On the edge of Madness". I spent a night there. I went to the exhibition which was of his last few paintings. I left there the following day and drove to Cologne. I went to a Picasso exhibition in the Ludwig museum, and enjoyed the Irish bar there. I had two nights there. I left Cologne and headed to Basel in Switzerland, Nietzsche and Jung both attended the university there, Nietzsche in his capacity as a professor. It was Nietzsche's first and last academic appointment at the age of 24. So, I visited the university they had attended. Two nights in Basel and I left for Lucerne, I camped there for 3 nights next to the lake. Weather was lovely, swam a lot in the lake, and read.

It was from here that the main point of my trip now comes to life. I left Lucerne and headed for lake Zurich. I found the village Rapperswil near Bollingen Tower easily enough with the help of Google maps. A trek down some lanes and I found the tower. I had to climb some fences and cross some fields, but I got there. I was fascinated by it from reading "Memories dreams and reflections", where Jung talks of Bollingen Tower. I just had to go there. The windows were mostly boarded up and it was empty, I stayed there for around 4 hours. I swam in the lake and relaxed with a book. Mission almost complete. I then headed towards Zurich and found the Jungian Institute of Psychology. I walked around the grounds. It was shut for the summer. I knew this but just wanted to experi-





**On Lake Zurich**

ence it. From here I went to Zurich and found a hotel for the night. I'd been camping and a shower and a mattress was very appealing.

I left the next day. I drove from Zurich to Breda in Holland in one day, it took me around 8 hours. Found the Irish bar in Breda, that night I slept in the car. From reading so much Jung I just wanted to go and experience Bollingen Tower, and I did. It looks like it's just being left to decay, which is a shame. It may well be the family still own it, but I don't know. Anyway, that was a twelve day road trip I created out of places of interest to me. Cologne cathedral was outstanding and my Journey followed the Rhine from Rotterdam all the way to Basel, so I kind of followed the river too. It was a trip to remember and I met some great people along the way. I hope you enjoy reading this and get inspired to create a trip of your own.



**Jung's House at Bollingen**



**The front door**



**Walking to Jung Institute**



**The Jung Institute**



# Current Debate

## Mythos & Logos

Dear Friends,

I woke up to the following idea: *Mythos* and *Logos*; which one do we need?

Philosophy, so far, is the story of rise of the Logos and the diminishing of the *Mythos*. The *Pre-Socratics*' struggles alerted them to the two aspects in their attempt to understand the natural order. They suggested that there is *Nous* but they gave explanations in a more Mythological and experiential way. However, it has been claimed that *Socrates* killed the Mythological and sided with the Logos. But *Plato* discover to his surprise that we cannot understand or express all that we think: he said that there are thoughts that we can't express with full rational clarity and they are better talked about in *Myths*. he realised this near the end of his life. A similar thing happened to *Ibn Sina (Avicenna)*. He was a staunch Aristotelian but just before he died he said that he had realised that all the *Peripatetic* logic was not worth it (I am summarising crudely) and that there is another way to *Wisdom*. He called it the *illumination (or the Oriental, the Levant, Light) Wisdom*. Not much is known about this aspect of his thinking and I am not sure that he wrote a book on it but it became characteristic of Persian thought up to the present time. They call it: *Irfan* (direct knowledge or the unity of the knower and the know.) *It is Mystical*.

The debate between Logos and *Mythos* was ignited again during the *Enlightenment*. Theirs was the opposite of *Ibn Sina*. You can call it a *«Profane Illumination»* to borrow a phrase from *Benjamin*. It is the attempt to *disenchant the world* (a phrase from *Weber*) and to get ride of all ghosts. It is the attempt to reduce all thinking and feeling to a pure rational mind. the *Romantics* and some of their contemporaries fought against this idea and tried to explore mythological imaginative literature and folkloric songs, poetry and tales. They were influenced by the *Arabian Nights* and German oral folkloric tradition. But the rise of science was again pushing their attempt back by going into mechanical explanations which they had countered with the *Organic Form* since Kant. the struggle showed itself clearly in the intellectual development of Nietzsche (for example, contrast *The Birth of Greek Tragedy from the Spirit of the Music with Human-all-too-Human*).

The debate is still with us in two forms: one is the argument by *Adorno* and *Horkheimer* that the *Enlightenment's* insistence on reason is the root of *Instrumentalism* and the loss of meaning and has resulted in the tragedies of the 20th Century. By extension, what they are saying is that the project of Modernity has failed because it went too far. This has promoted the backlash of *Habermas* who has insisted that the project of modernisation has not been completed and we need more rather than less Reason. He is siding with the Logos, *Adorno* and his co-worker sided with the *Mythos* and relied heavily on Nietzsche for this end.

The other form of the debate is the question about the direction of *Analytical philosophy*. There is a wide spread feeling that Analytical philosophy has run its course and that we should either abandon it and take up music and the arts or mix it with other genres (*Bowie, Cavell, Rorty*). But there are

those who think that we need more and not less *Analytical philosophy*.

I leave it at this stage and see what you think if we are going to debate it this week or in future weeks.

Sorry for writing a too long email but I couldn't stop thinking and didn't want to suppress the thought.

Best wishes

Rahim

## Limitations of Logos

This «rivalry» between Myth and Logos, Rahim, also touches on the discussion about Von Hardenberg's (Novalis) project. It was perhaps a dissatisfaction with the limitations of logos (our ability to discourse analytically on every subject matter while we remain unable to arrive at any statement about what anything really means), that drove Hardenberg's attempt to raise modern knowledge to «a higher power» by «poetising» the discoveries of science in a «Biblical» compendium.

Hardenberg, of course, abandoned this project, but turned instead to the myth of Isis. (Am I right in thinking that this myth, or at least the City of Sais, is mentioned more than once in Plato, including in the *Timaeus*?)

Perhaps this was playing on your mind when you went to bed, Rahim?

Paolo

## The importance of Novalis

I think you are right Paolo. I found Novalis very interesting and a mine for thought. I am completely in his debt. Thanks for the thought. You may want to develop your thoughts about Novalis or the issue I have raised about Mythos and Logos or both in one or two articles of between 600-1000 words (more or less!)

Thanks Paolo for your support. I wish that you are in Oxford to take part in the regular Wednesday meetings but the email helps. I will copy you in my emails and send you the next issue. I highly recommend you to contribute to The Wednesday, especially at this stage.

Best wishes

Rahim

## What is “meaning”?

Hi Paolo

I love your sentence:

(our ability to discourse analytically on every subject matter while we remain unable to arrive at any statement about what anything really means).

It really is great. But what is «meaning»?

A negative thought: why does «mean» in English mean nasty? As well as «what is the truth» or something like that (a positive thought I think). When we ask «what is the meaning of life?» do we mean «How does it all hang together?».

Just a thought.

Pavlos (Paul)

## Letters to The Editor

### Reading philosophical & religious text

Wonderful first issue, Rahim!

I enjoyed learning a little more about Macmurray's developmental theories - which I would love to discuss with Paul - but also about ash Shabbi, and some very learned contributions on Hegel.

The debate about Novalis' encyclopaedic 'Bible' is also intriguing - I would find it hard to defend Novalis' idea of a bible (or perhaps poetry?) as being 'science raised to a higher power', but I have recently been reading some interesting thoughts about the differences in the way we should read philosophical and religious texts, which might provide a response to Phil's provocative call to «Get real». I would be happy to prepare a short paragraph or two in response to Phil for your next edition if you wish.

Also, I would be more than happy to pay for a regular online subscription to any issues as you manage to publish them, to help cover the inevitable costs.

Best wishes to all at the Beatnik's

*Paolo Enock*

### Turning point in the history of philosophy!

Hi, Rahim,

I'd just like to say how impressed I am with your work, Maybe this will be a world-historical turning point in the history of philosophy!

Keep up the good work.

*Peter Wood*



### Philosophy is good for your health

You all look younger today than in the photo c.2008-09. Is it the philosophy that keeps you young and trim?

*Dennis Harrison*

### Fabulous

I am not a member of your group, but it looks fabulous, seriously fabulous, seriously good. And if I am allowed, I shall read it, and will look forward to doing so.

*Dennis Harrison*

Well done on your first issue, Rahim.

*Barbara Vellacott*

## The Wednesday at Albion-Oxford

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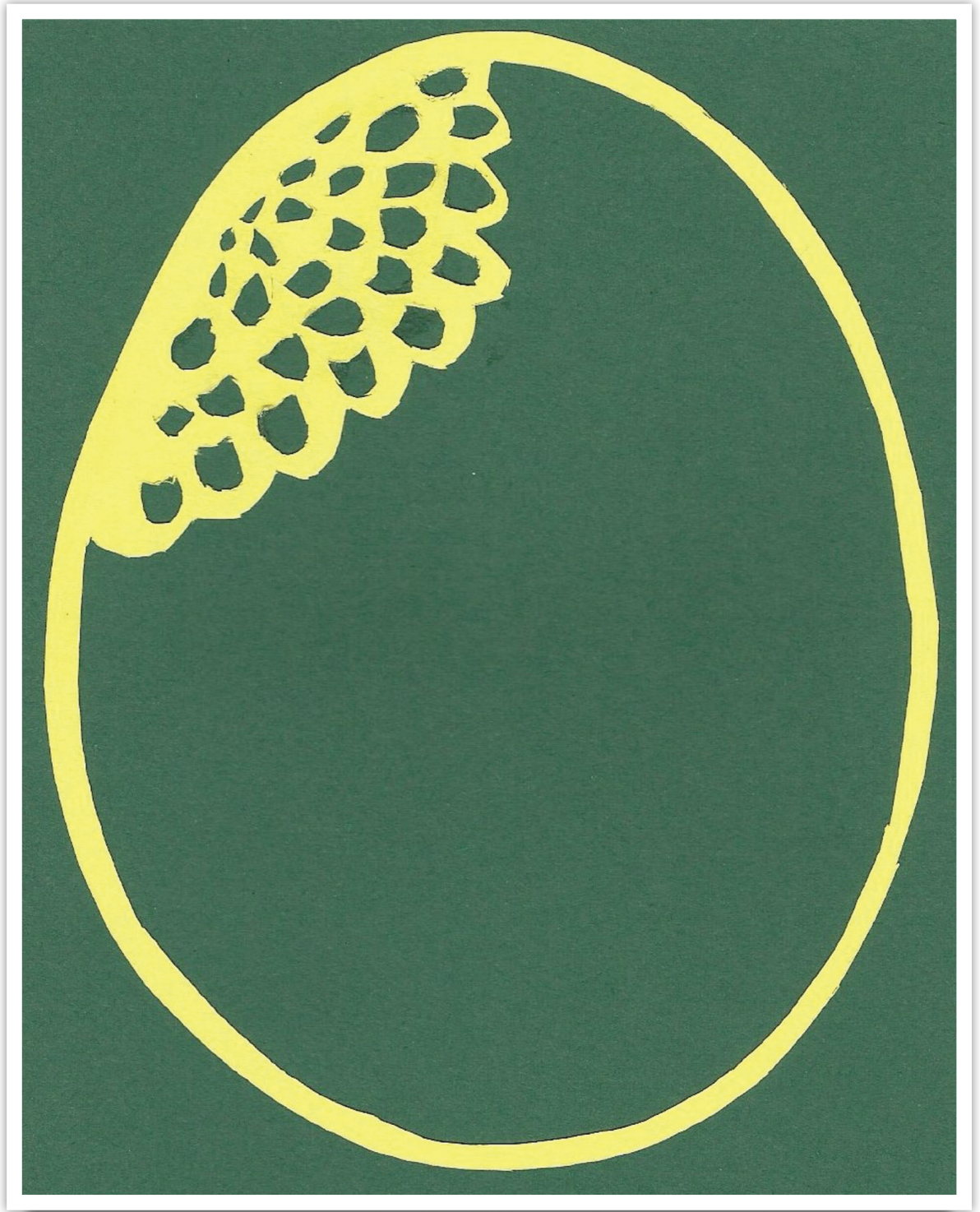
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## A New Beginning

*“An Easter Egg”* By Anona Greening



*Making history: Only if it hatches...*