

# The Wednesday



Weekly Magazine of the Wednesday Group at Albion Beatnik - Oxford

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## Editorial

### *The Limits of Subjectivity*

I suggested last week that Nietzsche could find allies in the field of mysticism. I will go further this time in showing that this alliance could be strengthened and moved to a higher level by considering the question of subjectivity.

The self (or the subject) for Nietzsche is not a given entity but must be gained through mastery of the drives. The self for him is an entitlement for exceptional individuals, not the man of decadence and nihilism. Nietzsche gives examples of those heroes of his who managed to make themselves, such as Goethe and Napoleon, the first for being such a rounded figure. He played the roles of a poet, a dramatist, novelist, philosopher, scientist and politician. All these qualities go to make up the Goethe that we know. The second is the man who attempted to unite Europe and in the process unified himself. Both men had the ability to unify their drives and gain a self.

Nietzsche starts from the stand point of naturalism to achieve this unity and become an Overman (*Übermensch*). His way is from the bottom up. But the story could be told from top to bottom, through the mystical vision. Whereas Nietzsche ground subjectivity in nature, mysticism, especially in the thought of Ibn Arabi, grounds it in the Divine but his is not the usual concept of the Divine. That is because he subscribes to the philosophy of the unity of being. According to this conception, the Divine is manifest in creation but none of it reflects God's image except the human. To use a more direct metaphor, the world is a mirror and in the human being the mirror gets its perfection. I take this to mean the birth of consciousness. Man is the place of the manifestation of all of the names of God.

For Ibn Arabi, the Absolute Reality manifested in the world but needed an eye to see through it and so He made the Perfect Man, one whose drives are all in perfect alignment. In his book *al-Isfar*, translated (by Angela Jaffray) as *The Secrets of Voyaging*, he describes a cosmos that finds the alignments of its spheres all rotating around the Perfect Man. The Perfect Man has been compared to the heart of the universe in *The Alchemy of Human Happiness* (recently translated by Stephen Hirstenstein). The existence of such a Perfect Man is an event at the beginning of creation but it is also an ideal existence. The real manifestations of it are the exceptional individuals that we come across in history, prophets and mystics who follow them, not only in past times but for all future history. For Ibn Arabi, the existence of such personalities is the justification of history and the very existence of the world.

Nietzsche thought that his Overman was a justification of human existence. But Ibn Arabi's Perfect Man seems to display a wider, cosmic, role. Mystics also talk about the Pole, or the instantiation of the Perfect Man in each age. The qualities of concentration, creativity and inspiration that the Pole has suggested to me are the qualities of poets, artists, scientists and philosophers whose creativity and inspiration keep the world moving and human existence justified. Perhaps if the individual Pole is not available, humanity as a whole provides such a role if it rethinks the foundation of its subjectivity. Subjectivity gains from a wider conception for its vision and creativity and the sense of its importance. Nietzsche himself recognised this and said that with devaluing the idea of God we devalued man as well. Maybe it is time to re-think subjectivity in a new light.

*The Editor*

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# Kant's *Critique of Judgment*

**Kant's philosophy is a landmark in the history of modern philosophy. It deals with epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, history and politics. In this issue of *The Wednesday* we present comments and readings of different aspects of Kant's thought.**

DAVID SOLOMON

Kant



**K**ant's *Critique of Judgment* was written in 1790, that is, after the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781 / 1787) and the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788). It deals with a sphere of activity intermediate between those analysed in his two earlier works.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* had been concerned with Understanding, the limits of Reason, and the difference between them. Kant's analysis of understanding analysed the way in which we construct intuitions of objects in the world outside us.

Reality is not given to us directly but presents itself as sensible appearances through pre-existing (a priori) forms of time and space, appearances to which we apply a priori categories of understanding. The result is that we formulate objects even if we cannot know the ultimate reality of things. Because we are not totally determined by sensible impressions but are actively engaged in forming intuitions of objects, we have some agency in constructing the world around us.

In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant had described the way in which we act according to

the idea of the universal moral law (Categorical Imperative). This is the realm of freedom from the natural phenomenal world, from the world of sensual motivation, from cause and effect, one which is instead part of what he calls the 'noumenal world'. The noumenal world cannot be understood theoretically in the way that objects in nature can, but is realised in the way we act, if we are acting according to the Categorical Imperative.

The *Critique of Judgment* examines the kind of judgments that go beyond our simple intuition of objects in nature, but which are still not acts according to the universal moral law. They are not moral and are not knowledge in the strict sense. Kant is concerned here with judgments about beauty (which he calls 'judgments of taste'), with analysing the experience of the sublime, and with defining the limits of teleology. Teleology – the study of ends and purposes in nature – had since Aristotle been a way of understanding the universe as a chain of mutually dependent purposes, and since the Middle Ages as a way of situating God within nature as the First Cause, that is as the Being for the sake of which all subordinate objects in the world ultimately exist. Teleology had

come under sceptical attack at the beginning of the modern period. As elsewhere, Kant took these criticisms on board and developed his own nuanced and sophisticated position.

If I find something beautiful, according to Kant, this is different from saying that it gives me pleasure. A judgment of beauty (or ‘taste’ as he calls it) is subjective in that it involves our feelings. It is not part of objective knowledge, in that I cannot argue someone into finding something beautiful. Yet if I say that something is beautiful it is a judgment that I expect others to agree with (it is different from statements such as ‘I like it’, ‘It gives me pleasure’, which are totally personal, although they might accompany it). A judgment of beauty has, what he calls a ‘subjective universality’. How does this come about? Kant says it is not about the object itself (otherwise judgments of beauty would just be another form of knowledge).

We find a thing beautiful because it stimulates our powers of matching our own concepts in general to external objects in the world. We are sensing a harmony between our concepts and our imagination (acting in what he calls ‘free play’) with what is outside us. Because we all have imagination, and concepts by which we construct intuitions, judgments of beauty although originating from our own sensations, carry the expectation of universality. The fact that he talks about ‘the free play of the imagination’ whether in creating or appreciating art, or in contemplating natural sights, suggests freedom is a factor in a way analogous to (though not identical with) the freedom of moral action.

In his treatment of the Sublime, he similarly relates these judgments to our own capacities rather than to properties of the thing itself. (‘The Sublime’ was a major theme in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as in Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the*



Edmund Burke

*Sublime and Beautiful* [1757]). When I stand before a huge Alpine mountain, or see the infinite distances represented by a starry sky, I am not annihilated by this experience. Rather I experience the paradox that my Reason demands that I comprehend the Infinite while at the same time my imagination in reaching the limit of its capacity, is exhausted and fails to do this.

The experience of the sublime is one of inadequacy but at the same time one of awe at the infinite scope of reason within myself. This we then project on to the object (for example the mountain, the huge cathedral in which I am standing, the starry sky, the moral law itself). It is the experience of the sense of infinity within me. In his critique of teleological judgments, Kant argued that just because animals, plants etc. are useful to us, we cannot conclude that there is a purpose or end for which they were put on earth. He distinguishes ‘purposefulness’ (i.e. our capacity for making things purposes for ourselves) and ‘purposes’ (the specific ends that supposedly inhered to the things themselves and explained their existence). The fact for example that certain kinds of trees and fish existed in cold regions of the world and are useful for people living there, does not explain their existence, because people never had to live there in the first place. The uses of these things can be explained, in

the case of nature by the simple principle of cause and effect, and in the case of humans by our artistry and skill. Nature itself as a whole cannot be regarded as having a purpose, because the purpose for which nature existed would therefore have to lie outside nature, and we would have no way of telling through our ordinary intuitions of things what that purpose was:

*We can easily see from this that extrinsic purposiveness (a thing's being beneficial to others) can be regarded as an extrinsic natural purpose only under the condition that the existence of what it benefits proximately or remotely is a purpose of nature in its own right. **This, however, we can never tell by merely examining nature;** and hence it follows that, although relative purposiveness points hypothetically to natural purposes, it does not justify any absolute teleological judgment. (Kant Critique of Judgment Part 2 §63)*

Teleology cannot be what he called a 'constitutive principle' of reason, that is it cannot tell anything about how things are in themselves. We cannot derive purposes from the examination of nature. Instead, Kant applies here his concept of the 'regulative principle', which is a principle that focuses and deepens our enquiries into nature or encourages a belief in a natural order or in God.

Regulative principles have a number of functions. Firstly, they can focus our attention on empirical phenomena within nature, giving us principles that we cannot explain but which we observe. For example, life forms such as trees, plants, animals are in themselves natural purposes, in which each part or organ has a function within the whole. Parts within organisms are both cause and effect and therefore are not understandable in terms of a standard mechanistic idea of causality. But we have to recognise that these organisms ('natural

purposes') even if we cannot understand the principle that they are based on. Secondly, the fact that we observe purposes in nature, holds out for us the possibility that nature is after all a system of purposes, even if we can never have any understanding of that:

*For not only are we unable to explain the agreement [Vereinbarung] of that form of sensible intuition (called space) with our power of concepts (the understanding), [inasmuch] as it is precisely this [viz., purposive] agreement rather than some other, **but this agreement also expands the mind; it makes it suspect, as it were, that there is something else above and beyond those presentations of sense, something which, although we do not know it, might hold the ultimate basis for that [agreement or] harmony [Einstimmung].** It is true that we also have no need to know this basis when we are dealing merely with formal [even though formal objective] purposiveness of our a priori presentations; but even just being forced to look in that direction inspires in us at the same time an admiration for the object that makes us do so. (Kant Critique of Judgment Part 2 § 62.)*

Regulative principles not only keep us focused on the possibility of future empirical laws which we have not yet formulated, but keep us open to the idea of a harmonious universe and a divine ordering of the world, even if this is beyond our knowledge. The *Critique of Judgment* is a neglected and underrated work compared with the other two critiques, but in it Kant is attempting to analyse in a very original way questions that do not fall neatly in the realm either of knowledge or of ethics. As in his previous works, he is concerned to rescue ideas that had come under sceptical attack and to bring them up-to-date into the context of his own time and our time.



# Kant's Politics

PAUL COCKBURN

In 'Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Stance', Kant writes that ultimately in the world there would be peace between states, and that this was the outcome of a natural and providential process: 'nature's aim is to produce a harmony among men, against their will, and indeed through their discord'. He thinks we can discern in providence the 'profound wisdom of a higher cause which predetermines nature and directs it to the objective final end of the human race'.

He thinks the state should be founded on the rule of law. The state is a union of people under law. He does not seem to be cognisant of the fact that different states could (and would?) have different laws. (It may be that he assumed that European culture and law were superior to other cultures in the world and that European culture and law would 'spread' to these other cultures over time).

He thought that democracy by imposing majority rule created a threat to individual liberty. Democracy is despotic because it establishes an executive power for the majority. There is a problem in that the views of those who disagree with the majority result are disregarded: there is a 'contradiction of the general will with itself and with freedom'. Kant preferred a mixed government involving meritocracy and probably monarchy. This does not seem to solve the problem for the modern mind.

A strong state where there is consensus and all agree what is good is fine as long

as the consensus does not involve all agreeing with morally improper goals! (And perhaps being indoctrinated into them). We presumably have to argue among ourselves and with those in other states to reach a consensus! (This sounds like something the modern philosopher Habermas would recommend). The idea that consensus (or universal agreement) will be reached seems highly problematic, and often not what we observe in this world. The elevation of rationality to a status that will bring this agreement about is also highly questionable.

In the United Kingdom with 'Brexit' we can see a situation where nearly half of those voting in the referendum (48%) had their wishes thwarted. It could be argued that a majority for leaving the European Union was obtained by those who campaigned for Brexit possibly under false pretenses, using dishonest economic arguments. Kant does not allow for the dishonesty of rhetoric swaying people; perhaps we do need a body composed of experts or at least 'wise' people to take decisions in the best interests of the general populace! Parliament comes to mind – at least Parliament will be involved in ratifying any deal!



Brexit campaign

# The Categorical Imperative: A Prototype For Dogma

DAVID BURRIDGE

I want to argue that moral judgements are only viably achieved when they are examined with examples and outcomes are evaluated in terms of their goodness and benefit to a maximum number of people. Kant differentiated between hypothetical and categorical imperatives. So with the hypothetical imperative we ought to do something because we see a good end can be achieved. That might not be something specific, it might be a general outcome such happiness. It was hypothetical because it depended on empirical outcomes. The categorical ought was like a command that needed no reference to the empirical. A maxim would be constructed from what was a universal truth. The maxim was designed to deliver an unchallengeable truth.

I do not retract from the fact that there are

some fundamental rules that do impose a duty on us, whoever we are. Not to kill or steal for example. But even for these to have credence there needs to be an examination of particular cases to say distinguish between murder, manslaughter, and self-defence.

The simple delivery of a command which doesn't address any particulars, becomes little better than dogma. It is moreover a false dogma that steps back from the world of realities, because the use of maxims requires a use of language and language is socially determined and therefore by definition is an engagement with the empirical world.

Of course, we must always be aware of what feels right and desirable, but treat this as the start of an exploration into the empirical world. A good intuition can guide us to carry out our duty as human beings, but we also need to sometimes question what and why feel something is good.

In fairness to Kant he was trying to describe an a-priori goodness, which we should seek and then our sense of duty would be determined by that and not by our inclinations. For example to satisfy ourselves to submission to a narcissistic evil person. However to find that pure goodness we have a need to explore a whole pile of prejudices which may be contrived in our minds in a way that we feel these represent for us natural goodness.

I would prefer the objective and pragmatic search in moral issues with the test always to be what is in the best of all the people involved.



*The Critique of Practical Reason*

# A Thing In Itself Or Not?

DAVID BURRIDGE

Consider an empty canvas: beside it lie brushes and a palette of paints. Before it sits an artist, who has never painted but has a talent so far unexpressed. If he now started painting that talent would come to life through the painting on the canvass. It can be argued that the talent precedes the exercise of it – it is an a-priori necessity.

It is equally to be argued that the talent would never be realised if he did not start painting. If it is not realised then it will not exist, for unrealised potential is an almost something, that has become nothing.



The *Critique of Pure Reason* where Kant presents the idea of the thing in itself and appearances



Kant

Suppose that the artist commenced painting, but his first attempts were disappointing. It might be argued that if the talent was sitting inside him struggling to get out, he would start working feverishly trying to match the expression with the inspiration that sat inside him. Or it might be argued his talent was a fantasy and he should move on. If in fact he were to develop beautiful pictures through hard work, then we would say that he realised the genius that was inside of him. But it was realised only with his engagement with the external world.

Searching for some pure reason or truth inside ourselves, stripping everything down to a thing in itself, is to my mind like scratching away the paint from a finished canvass. Appearance is the full expression.



## Exhibitions

### *Imagining the Divine* at the Ashmolean A Visual Journey through Religions of the World

The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is holding a major exhibition on religious art. The exhibition which is open until the 17th of February centres around religious symbols and texts from Judaism, Christianity and Islam, but also features artefacts from Hinduism, Buddhism, Greek and Roman religions. A team of *The Wednesday* went to the exhibition and wrote the report below.

PAUL COCKBURN and RAHIM HASSAN

A major theme was the influences that religions had on one another. Often when one empire was conquered, the victors would use motifs from the empire they had conquered in their art, perhaps so the transition to the new rulers was made easier. One example was when new coins were introduced and they replaced the old



Jewish Parochet, Venice, 1703



The footprints of the Buddha





Christian Mosaic, Hinton St. Mary, Dorset



Icon of the Deesis, Cretan School, 15<sup>th</sup> Century

emperor's head with the new ruler's head, but later on the head was replaced by a Koranic text. In the British Isles, some standing stones have pagan motifs and the old 'local' language on one side of the stone, and Christian symbols and Latin inscriptions on the other side. On some sarcophagi, pagan and Christian images are mixed together. In this way the transition is made smoother. An Irish cross was made with a stone in its centre that has Islamic inscriptions.

The Islamic architecture of Samarra north of Baghdad was pre-figured in the buildings of Hira. In actual fact the pieces were removed from Hira, first to Wasit, south of Baghdad in the first century of Islam, then the same, or similar pieces, were used in the architecture of Samarra in the third century of Islam.

In some cases, traditions carry on for centuries with little change, as in Christian Orthodox icons, which were copied by icon artists with little change for about 10 centuries. The image of St. George killing the dragon in Christianity seems very similar to that of Bellerophon killing the Chimera in Greek mythology. The exhibition makes that clear.

In Hinduism the god Vishnu has already been incarnated in nine avatars, and Hindus now awaits his tenth incarnation. In Islam, the prophets from Adam to Muhammad reveal different aspects of God's nature and man's spirituality in relation to these aspects.

The religious idea of journey and pilgrimage is probably important in all religions. The impressive footprint of the Buddha is perhaps mirrored in the scroll confirming the fact that a woman had completed the journey of the Haj in medieval times. Pilgrimage to holy sites is still a strong tradition in Christianity and Hinduism. The footprint is an early image connected to the Buddha; actual images of the Buddha did not appear for four hundred years after his death.

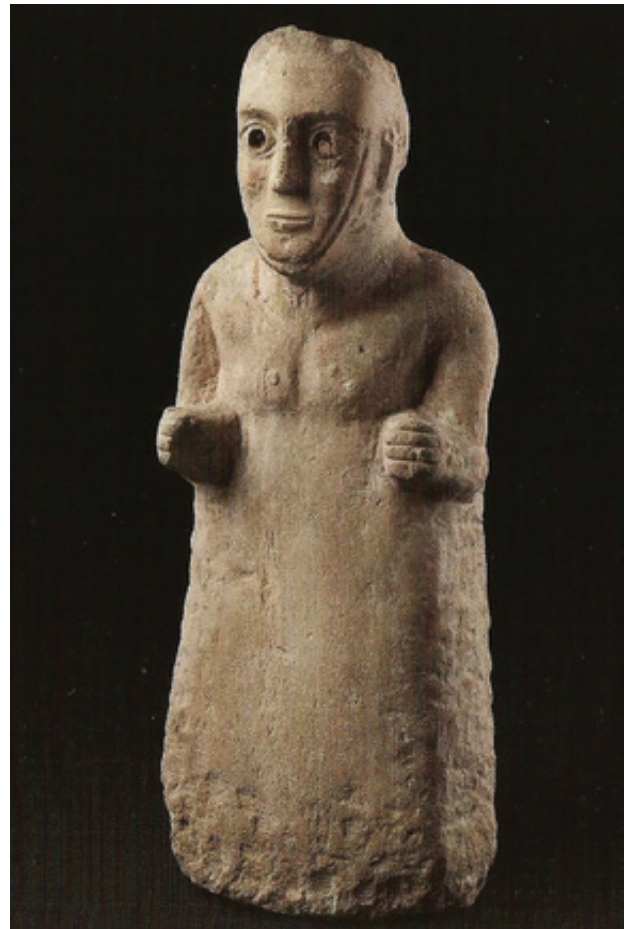
There were some intriguing pieces. For example, a replica of the Khosro Cup, also known as the Cup of Solomon. It is a stunning and intricate Sasanian Persian vessel made of gold, garnets, rock crystal, and glass. It probably dates to the sixth century AD, in the later period of Sasanian rule. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the cup was part of the Treasure of the Abbey of St Denis in Paris, where it was



## Exhibitions



Islamic Scroll, Mecca, 15<sup>th</sup> Century



Ancient statue found in South Arabia

believed to portray and have been made for the Biblical King Solomon. It was perhaps a gift to the Carolingian emperor Charlemagne from the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid in the early 9th century, or was taken to Paris after the sack of Constantinople in 1204. The original is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and is far too precious and fragile to travel.

There was also a Jewish Parochet or Ark curtain. It was made in Venice in 1703, of linen with borders of brocaded embroidered in silk and silver gilt thread in brick stitch with the Tablet of Law (the Ten Commandment) and major Jewish festivals. There was also a mosaic floor with Christian symbols found in Hinton St. Mary, Dorset, that goes back to the fourth or fifth centuries. The finest Islamic piece is the scroll which **The Wednesday** published in the last issue, depicting a journey

to Mecca in the fifteenth century. There were several copies of the Quran copied in different centuries. The oldest goes back to the first century of Islam, written in Hejaz. The characters are interesting because they show a link to the ancient cuneiform. They also developed into the Kufic style of writing that can be seen on buildings across the Muslim World. We saw copies from the Middle East and north Africa, which show the evolving styles of writing and the local variations. The danger of zealotry was illustrated well by a magnificent large picture of the statue of the Buddha in a cave in Northern Afghanistan which was blown up by the Taliban in 2001.

The exhibition is very enjoyable and the Ashmolean a very nice setting. We recommend a visit. There are talks to accompany the exhibition but these are now fully booked.

## Late Monsoon

ERICA Warburton

It is not as if the plains throb  
with paranoia and distress,  
not as if the foothills ache  
for ease, or the jungles sweat,  
waiting. India is asleep.

Goodness knows  
how much in the shade  
and all the grass dead,  
stumped, gone astray  
under some loutish hand.  
Abandoned.  
Resigned.  
Only the silver-blue flies  
go rampant.

Venus is as hot,  
and she is the image of hell.  
The sun?  
What does he know

of us, of our centuries,  
of our fetid cities?  
Poor Icarus, he fell!

Simla<sup>1</sup> forbad wheeled traffic.  
Walking was as hot, but  
there was time  
to reflect,  
to accept things.

Khudhah<sup>2</sup> himself inhabits  
these burning stones,  
accommodates rishis, gurus,  
nirvana, mandala, reincarnation.  
He is sure  
to explain it all,  
to quench the matter one day  
in torrents of *Old Testament* rain.

1- *Simla* was the summer capital of British India from 1865 to 1939. It is now a popular hill resort situated in the foothills of the Himalayas.

2- *Khudhah*: Allah, God.





# Swift's Bookshops in Oxford

**Following the previous two articles on Thornton's and Artemis bookshop, we come now to the Mr. K. W. Swift's bookshops. Artemis succeeded one of Mr. Swift's shops in Cowley and it is interesting to follow the story we told last week with a look at all the shops owned by Mr. Swift in Oxford.**

## Part 4

**RAHIM HASSAN**

Ken W. Swift's Bookshop *The Turl Cash Bookshop* has gone out of existence but there are a few in Oxford who still remember this important shop. In fact, it wasn't only one bookshop. There were three bookshops owned by Mr Swift but the most important one was this which was at 3, Turl Street, Oxford. I will start with this shop. But first I will begin with some explanation of the name of the street.

Turl Street was called St Mildred's Street in 1363, but was known as Turl Gate Street by the mid-seventeenth century. It acquired this name from a twirling gate (demolished in 1722) which was in a postern in the city wall to stop the animals escaping from the Corn Market and heading to the High Street. The part to the south of Ship Street was known as

Lincoln College Lane in 1751. Originally Turl Street came to an abrupt halt at its junction with Ship Street, where it hit the city wall and the twirling gate. By 1551, it was extended by a path (known as 'The path leading from the Hole in the Wall') to reach what is now Broad Street, and in 1722 the gate was removed altogether.

The street is located in the city centre, linking Broad Street at the north and High Street at the south. It intersects with Brasenose Lane to the east, and Market Street and Ship Street to the west. These streets link Turl Street to the busy Cornmarket, and to the iconic Radcliffe Square.

It is colloquially known as The Turl and is home to



Engraving of the shop front



Mr. Ken Swift

three of the University of Oxford's historic colleges: Exeter, Jesus and Lincoln. It meets the High Street by the early 18th century All Saints church, which has been Lincoln College's library since the 1970s. The Turl has been closed to traffic (except for access) since 1985. A rising bollard, installed by the Oxford City Council, cuts it off in the middle.

I was told by Mr. Ken Swift that Turl Street had a book market (an auction) that goes back to the 17<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. I was also told that there is a photograph of a painting that documents this book market.

3, Turl Street became a bookshop with Blackwells. It was called *The Turl Cash Bookshop* because there were two methods of payments: One was by cash, the cheap option, and the other, for students and dons of the University, by having an account. It was a bookshop for getting books on the cheap. It was acquired by Blackwells. It sold remaindered as well as secondhand books.

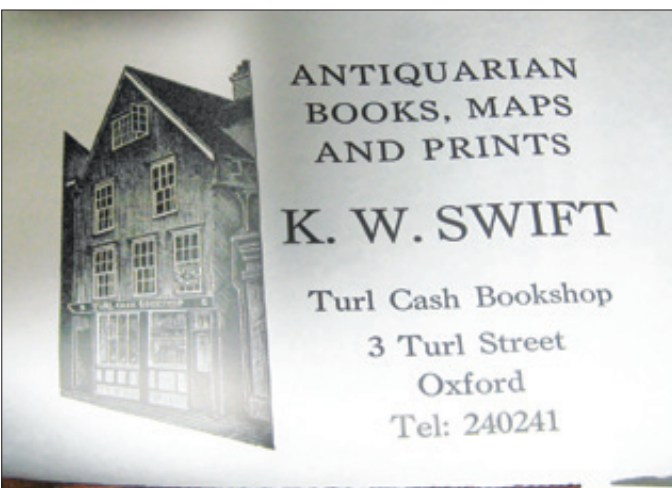
Roy Harley Lewis who visited the shop in 1975 wrote of it in his book *The Book Browser's Guide*:

‘...at the cheap end of the scale, one needs to visit a Blackwell’s subsidiary The Turl Cash Bookshop..., where remainders may seem to dominate the ground floor, but which has one of the cheaper secondhand material to be found anywhere – some 9 to 12 thousand books available at very attractive prices because the policy of the management is low profit margins and rapid turnover.’

The shop building in 3 Turl Street is owned by Lincoln College. I have been told that it is the birth place of Basil Blackwell. Blackwell had rented the whole building and overloaded it with books. This had affected the state of the building and the college re-took it. Ken Swift took it on and did the fitting and the upstairs. He was offered a one year reduction in rent for doing this. Ken rented the ground floor and one room upstairs (OR ‘part of the upstairs’). The flats upstairs were let out to students by the college. When it was in the hands of Blackwell, the latter rented the whole building. It is next to the Mitre, opposite the graveyard and the tower. The shop has a sash window to allow customers to pick up books from there. When I went around to see the premises now, the present occupier showed me the window and he was very proud of it.

Ken Swift, MA was in 3, Turl St. from 1978 to 1985. He sold the lease of *The Turl Cash Bookshop* to Philip Powel-Jones who named it *Classics Bookshop* and it came to specialise in Greek and Latin books (see below). He then opened a shop at Ludlow around 1985 where he is now.

Since Mr. Swift had such extensive relationship with the book trade in Oxford, it is worth mentioning his career in this business. Ken worked on a Ph.D. for ten years at three different universities before giving it up. He was unemployed for a while and when his parents wanted to retire, he decided to teach, but teaching wasn’t for him. He found himself with no profession. He was thirty years old (he was born



A printout advertising the shop



The Turl Cash Bookshop



# Bookshops



Inside Scriptum

1943.) He thought of studying law but instead came to Oxford. He had a friend who had a stall in the local market. Ken took up this idea and started selling books before acquiring a shop. I was told that he started his business at Oxpens Road and then moved.

The armchairs are no mere gimmick. Mr. Swift declares that no one need feel he has to buy a book before settling down and reading it first even, he says, if it means coming for a whole week to do so!

When Roy Lewis visited Oxford to write his Guide to bookshops, he reported that Mr. Swift had two bookshops: one on Cowley Rd, (76 Cowley Road), acquired by Ken 1973 (as reported by Lewis, p.88). This bookshop was founded by Robert Marshall in 1970. But when his marriage broke down, he sold it to Ken, who paid for it over a two-year period. Lewis wrote of it:

This shop was later on sold to Diana Burfield in September 1980. Swift's other shop was in town.

Both shops were called *Swift's Bookshop*. The one in town was located in 36, Holywell Street. It was opened in 1974, and shared the premises with a monumental mason. It was a tiny shop with a small stock of secondhand and antiquarian books.

'Carries 10,000 books, from Penguin to first and antiquarian, literature, illustrations and ephemera. Also offers 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century prints on Oxford, natural history, dress and caricature.

According to Lewis, Swift catered for the browser. One of the features of his two shops (76 Cowley Rd and 36 Holywell Street) were armchairs or seats so that customers could examine the stock in comfort.



Scriptum



Location of the Ludlow shop





Oxfam bookshop on Turl Street

In 1985 Ken opened a bookshop and gallery in Ludlow, where he continued to trade for another 20 years. He then sold the shop and retired to his present apartment and sold his remaining books and prints via the internet.

### Classics Bookshop

The *Classics Bookshop* was opened in 1975 by Anne and Philip Powell-Jones in Hay-on-Wye.

In 1982 the bookshop moved to Oxford, where the premises were initially on the High Street and subsequently in 3, Turl Street. The shop is still remembered by many. After twenty years in Oxford they moved the business to Burford in 2006, dealing solely through their website and by mail order.

The power behind *Classics Bookshop* was Anne, not her husband Philip Powell-Jones, since he wasn't initially a bookseller but a bookbinder. On Anne's

retirement at the end of 2015 the business (not the shop) was acquired by Martyn Shorrocks, who continued trading through the website and by mail order from premises based in Cleobury Mortimer in South Shropshire.

A new and a different shop opened on the premises of 3, Turl street. It is called *Scriptum*. It was opened 2006. It sells Oxford souvenirs but a selection of Folio society titles, not the classics of Greek and Latin. It is run by Mr. Azeem Zakria who has created a good website for his shop. I met him in *Scriptum* and enjoyed a very nice talk with him.

It is worth mentioning that there was another bookshop in 15, Turl Street and it was called *Titles*. This shop was taken over later by Oxfam. It became the second bookshop for the charity beside its main one on St. Giles. The charity also has other shops that also sell books and other items, such as the ones on Cowley Road and London Road, Headington.

## The Wednesday

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## A Poetic Invitation



*Come  
Come whoever you are  
wanderer, worshipper, lover of learning,  
it doesn't matter.  
Ours is not a caravan of despair.  
Come even if you have broken  
your vow a thousand times.  
Come, come yet again,  
come!*

*Jalaladdin Mevlana Rumi, 1207 – 1273*

Could there be a more inclusive and merciful poetic invitation than this?

Rumi was a Persian Sufi, mystical philosopher, poet and teacher. In his lifetime he was loved by Christians and Muslims alike and today thousands from any tradition or none read his poems and visit his beautiful tomb in Konya, Turkey.

*Barbara Vellacott*

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