

# Foreword

I am please to say that we have made good progress with this our sixth volume. Since the start of the project a year and a half ago, there have been many developments which have made us feel that the magazine is progressing well and the group of friends behind it is more united and productive. Recently, the owner of Opera Café, Saleh El-Masri allowed us to put up our sign above the door of the room where we meet. This room in the basement of his Café has been a home to our meetings every Wednesday since the closure of our last meeting place at Albion Beatnik Bookstore (AB).

We have called the room '*The Wednesday Philosophers' Cave,*' although we have amongst us poets and artists. There are so many associations of philosophy with caves. Plato's cave comes first to mind, but also the cave/ basement room of Nietzsche in his *Genealogy of Morals*. But both caves have negative connotations. Plato thought we were the prisoners of the cave of shadows and that we need to work our way back to the light. Nietzsche thought his basement was the place where bad philosophy was made and that he needed fresh air. Descartes once wrote that his Jesuit critics were blinds and were trying to drag him into a dark basement where they would have advantage over him.

None of the above thoughts worry us. We are happy in our cave with lots of supplies: teas, coffees, water and cakes. It reminds me of the chapter in Quran that is entitled *The Cave*. A group of youths were persecuted for their beliefs and sought refuge in a cave. The *Quran* says of them: 'They were youths who believed in their Lord, and We advanced them in guidance' (Ch.18/ Verse 13). They were discovered after a long time and their cave became a place of worship and pilgrimage. Visitors to Oxford may make their way to Opera Café in Walton Street to visit the group now or in years to come. Lots of visitors to Oxford head towards The Eagle and Child on St. Giles to look at and photograph the portraits of the *Inklings* group of writers on its walls.

Finally, housing the Wednesday group in the AB Bookstore and Opera Café has proved a good omen for us, and it is with thanks and gratitude I dedicate this volume to both venues and their owners.

*The Editor*