

The Wednesday

www.thewednesdayoxford.com

Magazine of the Wednesday Group - Oxford



Editorial

Unconscious Evaluation

I suggested in last month's editorial that there is a philosophical unconscious that affects the views of philosophers. For example in matters of metaphysics, whether they are in favour of metaphysics or against it, and their choice of a system of evaluation in matters of morality and politics. I said that there could be two approaches to the philosophical unconscious, either metaphysical or natural. I gave as an example of the latter Nietzsche's view that a philosophy is the confession of the philosopher.

For the metaphysical view, I gave as an example Schelling's view of art, or creativity in general, and I included philosophy in this category. But since then, I came to know another more relevant metaphysical view that was suggested by Eduard Von Hartmann. Hartmann wrote what may be the first book with the unconscious in its title. It is called *Philosophy of the Unconscious* (1869) in three huge volumes. He adopted Schopenhauer's philosophy in his major work *The World as Will and Representation*. His view is metaphysical in the sense in which Schopenhauer's is. Nietzsche in his essay *On the Use and Abuse of History* (section 9) subjected it to severe criticism. However, Hartmann's book had a great influence on later theories about the unconscious, including those of Jung and Freud.

I must admit that I am inclined towards the metaphysical view, because in different aspects of the creative process, there is an unconscious element that goes beyond the individual creative person - especially in art, but also in philosophy. Nietzsche, in spite of being a naturalist, said that the idea of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* came to him while walking in the wood. But I am also tempted by the naturalist view because it is able to do more justice to the ideas of sociability, history and becoming. It maybe possible to join this theory with both Freud and Jung. Freud took to the unconscious in a reductive, natural, individualistic way, while Jung conceived consciousness as collective, and hence historical. In any case, the naturalist view I wish to expound here is that of Nietzsche.

Nietzsche, as I mentioned in the previous editorial, situated philosophical thinking and all evaluation within the body. The body is formed from competing instincts and drives. For Nietzsche, it is these unconscious instincts and drives, and not simply conscious activities, that control philosophical thinking. Thinking, in this view, depends on the quality of the drives, biologically inherited, and divided into weak and strong, active and reactive. Strong drives are taken to

be life promoting, while weak ones result in life-denying, resentment, nihilism and decadence.

But if this thesis is true then Nietzsche has to explain how we get from the unconscious to consciousness. According to John Richardson, in his detailed and densely argued book *Nietzsche's New Darwinism*, Nietzsche gives us a picture formed of three levels: biological (the drives and instincts), the social-historical, and the individual. What seems closely connected with the Darwinism at the first level, takes human and superhuman characteristics at the second and third levels. Even the second level could be explained on Darwinian terms, but the third level where the individual becomes conscious and responsible for his character and actions is unique for Nietzsche. In other words, the individual could revise all valuations he acquired from biology and society. That is what Richardson calls New Darwinism. It is the addition of a layer of consciousness and value to biological and social determinations.

Richardson points out that the values selected 'are "in" our drives not just by virtue of how those drives are *now*, but by their past'. This selection is first dependent on the 'selfish' drive, the interest of the particular drive, but after that comes social selection, by which the human aspects of language and self-consciousness are added. This is a human selection. Then comes what Richardson calls 'superhuman' selection where values take the individual's character, and the possibility of going beyond the natural and the human selection, and towards self-selecting.

I would suggest that the last stage is hard to attain and most, even with the training of philosophy, stay within inherited norms, customs, habits and prejudices. The philosopher beyond his given biological determinations of strong and weak drives, is also infected by internalised social norms. A strong drive could become weak, resentful and reactive, through the influence of dominant norms. A long list of philosophers accepted values that go against their better judgment, such as racism, slavery and misogyny, by submitting to their society's dominant views. This is a call for thinking the unconscious roots of evaluation and an invitation to a freedom of thinking and acting.

The Editor

Law in Time of Global Inequality and Conflict

The Rule of Law: *What is it, how would we recognise if it were under attack, and what could we do about it?*

CHRIS SEDDON

The Oxford English Dictionary defines The Rule of Law as:

The authority and influence of law in society, esp. when viewed as a constraint on individual and institutional behaviour; (hence) the principle whereby all members of a society (including those in government) are considered equally subject to publicly disclosed legal codes and processes.

The English term dates to around 1500, and it is now a recognised bulwark of democracy, but as a concept it dates back much further and has been a feature of many types of society. Long before the English Parliament challenged Charles the First's defiance of English law in the 1600s, the Danelaw of the Vikings was opposed by nascent English law under Alfred the Great in the 800s. Far from England and coincidentally also dating from about 1500 the Iriquois Confederacy is said to have codified a pre-colonial North American legal framework including a separate legislature, executive, and judiciary which inspired the modern day US constitution. Distant in both time and space the Mosaic law in the Middle East dates from almost three millennia ago, and Chinese systems of law date back at least that far.

The details of this history can certainly be challenged, but it is at least clear that the idea of a monarch or even a ruling class wielding unmitigated power over a subject population has not been a literal reality for a long time. The Mosaic law applied to men, but it limited what they would allow each other to do, not only to each other, but also to their women and slaves. Ancient Chinese law had two systems of law: one of etiquette which governed the conduct of the nobles, and the other a system of punishment which governed what they could do to the commoners and slaves. Many legal systems - for example the Danelaw of the Vikings, and the Pax Romana preceding it - arose from the need of conquerors to benefit from their conquests by publicly and reliably ceding just sufficient rights to the conquered peoples to avoid the need for continual and costly military action against a completely disempowered populace.

Private, or civil, law can usefully be characterised as an explicit or implicit contract between parties who have at least sufficient parity in power for each to be said to have agreed willingly to an exchange of goods. The law of the conqueror may involve a contract - for example in the form of a treaty signed by a representative of the vanquished - but it may not. As noted above, the goods exchanged typically include the cessation of hostilities, military protection against third parties, and a moderate or at least predictable levy by the conquerors on material goods produced by the conquered. So whilst the idea of a contract has some practical basis in public law, the willing agreement of both parties is more problematic.

Degrees of Equality

The idea of the Rule of Law outlined above, however, emphasises not just the existence of laws, but the equal application of publicly disclosed codes and processes to all members of society, including those in government.

I would like to suggest that this equality is one of degree. No doubt the ancient Hebrews felt that their law was fair to all members of society, because they regarded women and slaves as owned by men, and the members of society as men - the law gave women and slaves rights, but not equal rights. Similarly Chinese commoners and slaves had rights - and presumably their wives had rights - but those rights were not equal to the nobles'.

We might feel that in our own current legal systems all are equal before the law. But, whereas animals have some rights, they definitely do not have equal rights. Even mentioning this blatant fact may elicit derision from some. But neither do all humans have equal rights under our legal systems. Children do not have equal rights. Foreigners do not have equal rights. It may be argued that women and racial or other minorities have equal rights under the law, but in practice they do not.

The English legal system still reflects the inequality of conqueror's law, even though the last successful



**Banksy's painting on the walls of the High Court of Justice, London, last month.
It was removed by the authorities shortly after.**

invasion was almost one thousand years ago. Less than one percent of the population owns nearly seventy percent of the land, and that one percent predominantly comprises members of the aristocracy and gentry who inherited their wealth and land from Norman ancestors, who gained it as a result of military conquest. Our legal systems perpetuate this inequality through laws which favour the 'owners' of property and wealth. This same legal inequality discriminates against peoples England has since conquered through our Empire, and who paid for and continue to pay for our wealth through inequitable trade.

There is much room for greater equality under national and international law and readers may wish to discuss this. However, I want to focus on countering threats to the rule of law, quite apart from the historic inequity of our current laws.

Threats to the Rule of Law

Having said that, grossly inequitable laws do themselves comprise a threat to the rule of law in principle. By bringing the rule of law into disrepute, grossly unfair laws create an environment of unjust

treatment, disempowerment, and deprivation which are the occasion of war and rebellion against the rule of law itself. The instability of previously colonised territories bears witness to this simple fact. The history of the British Empire is responsible for much of the ongoing conflicts in Africa and the Middle East. Apartheid in South Africa and Israel's policy in the 'occupied territories' are another example of unjust laws undermining the rule of law. US imperialism has left a similar trail of lawlessness across the world, born of the lived experience of injustice.

It is perhaps easy to see the inequity in imperialist law which explicitly gives some people rights over others - English over Indian, for example. It is less easy to see the inequity in property law which apparently gives everybody the right to benefit from their 'own property' - less easy to see, that is, when we forget the circumstances of history. Capitalism is a feature of a legal system which gives greater rights to the owners of the means of production than to the labourers or consumers.

When we look at history in terms of natural resources



Oil and other resources leading to inequality

and the technology required to exploit them it is easy to see how people who by the local availability of natural resources or prior history happen to gain a small technological advantage, can multiply that advantage by building on it to the disadvantage of others, unless constrained by equitable law. Roman military technology and European naval technology have been the seeds of European supremacy, and then through the exploitation of the New World, American supremacy.

Technology, however, has also made peoples across the world more closely and obviously interdependent. Once comfortable empires in Europe and North America are now threatened by emerging economic forces such as China. Disempowered peoples in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America can no longer simply be subjugated. Global resources are limited and those who, through global inequality, were living above their means are finding it difficult to envisage equality with equanimity.

At such times, inequality creates a lack of respect for the rule of law not only in the under-privileged, but also in the currently over-privileged.

It seems that some technologies favour inequality more than equality. For example, it has been suggested that the primary motivation for fossil fuels over renewable energy sources is not so much the difficulty of developing technology for the latter, but the ability to control - and hence capitalise from - the sources of the former. I am not qualified to comment on the accuracy of that suggestion, but I do not regard it as completely incredible. Other more blatant examples of technology improperly used to make a profit at the expense of consumers include infant formula marketed as if it were preferable to mother's own milk, addictive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, sugar (and historically, opium), and addictive practices such as gambling and pornography.

The Internet has many benefits, but its global reach has also enabled immense personal wealth supported by laws which for historical reasons have favoured the owners of the means of production. At the same time, the Internet has provided the means for mass deception, enabling further inequalities through flawed democratic systems. The rise of the super-rich with more influence than many nations is a modern threat to the rule of law.



Inequality is a threat to justice

The Law in England

In England the rule of law is traditionally supported by the three branches of government:

- an elected legislature responsible for creating and maintaining laws
- an independent judiciary responsible for interpreting and applying those laws
- an elected executive responsible for setting policies within those laws

The rule of law also requires institutions ensuring that the electorate are informed, educated, and empowered:

- free and independent media
- free and independent education
- independent civil society organisations
- independent regulatory bodies

Attacks on the rule of law can take the form of undermining any of these branches of government and institutions, or the way they work together.

I would like to close with one recent well-publicised example:

Global injustice has given rise both to climate emergencies and global conflict, including genocide in the Middle East. Despite suggestions that international law does not exist, the simple fact is that nations have

signed treaties and trade agreements, including those relating to human rights, the environment, and the conduct of military operations, which they have not honoured. The existence of such written law is not nullified just because the bodies set up to monitor it have insufficient or no powers to enforce it. The suggestion that law that cannot be enforced is no law at all is just another example of disrespect for the rule of law.

Environmental destruction and military action routinely involves the breach of both local and international law, and only continues through the deliberate manipulation or disruption of a free and independent media, independent regulatory bodies, elected executives, the judiciary, and undue influence on the legislature.

In the UK, all three branches of government have sought to undermine the influence of an informed and empowered electorate by suppressing legitimate protest, particularly against government involvement in genocide and environmental destruction. Legislation has been introduced to criminalise some forms of peaceful protest and increase the powers of the executive to suppress other forms. The executive has sought to further increase its own powers to suppress



Is the UN ineffective?

protest by misinterpreting the legislation, although the judiciary has rightly reversed that attempt. However, the organisation 'Defend Our Jurors' has raised an interesting challenge to the role the judiciary has played in the suppression of the electorate.

In November, a judicial review is due of the executive's decision to proscribe Palestinian Action, a protest group engaged in criminal damage to private and government organisations alleged to be actively supporting the genocide in Gaza. The judiciary have determined that there is a case to answer that the proscription was illegal, in that it may have represented a disproportionate interference with the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and a failure to consult the proscribed organisation in breach of the right to a fair hearing, as enshrined both in common law and the European Convention on Human Rights to which the government is a signatory. The latest protests have resulted in hundreds of people being arrested as 'terrorists' for sitting peacefully holding a sign saying 'I Oppose Genocide. I Support Palestine Action'.

Meanwhile, however, judges hearing prosecutions against protestors arrested for blocking roads in protests against environmental destruction against oil companies, or for damaging arms manufacturers or military property in protests against genocide,

have attempted to rule inadmissible any evidence from the protestors as to the motives for their actions. The reason for this suppression is not denied: when juries hear about the protestors' motives and realise the penalties demanded by the prosecution, they tend to find the juries Not Guilty, despite the judges' instructions to the juries to base their verdict only on whether the prosecution has proven their case, not on their personal feelings about the justice of the defendant's motives. The aim of the protest group 'Defend Our Jurors' is not only to demonstrate how disproportionate is the proscription of Palestine Action through the spectacle of police arresting 'terrorists' for sitting silently holding up a written sign, but also to defend what they see as the historic right of jurors to decide their verdict based on their own conscience.

Who is Defending the Rule of Law ?

This leads me to question: which side is defending the rule of law?

From the judges' point of view, if jurors can base their verdict not based on evidence relating to the applicable law but rather on what they the jurors would like to happen in that particular case, the rule of law would be undermined. From the protest group's point of view, if jurors are not allowed to exercise their own conscience, then the case law established and celebrated at the old entrance of the Old Bailey



A peaceful protestor

regarding the acquittal of William Penn and William Mead in 1610 for ‘preaching to an unlawful assembly’ would be violated. In 1610 the judge had the jury locked up for two nights without food in an attempt to force them to deliver a Guilty verdict. In 2024 one judge threatened the jury with imprisonment for the same reason, but failed to stop them acquitting the environmentalist protestors.

I feel that the judges in this instance are violating the rule of law. I do agree that jurors should decide a plea not based just on what they would like in a particular instance, but based on the evidence relating to the applicable law. But the court should not allow the prosecution to limit what the applicable law is. The prosecution in such cases typically brings a charge under UK domestic law, relating to criminal damage or obstruction of traffic. If the actions of the defendants were judged solely on that basis, then in most cases a guilty verdict would be appropriate. However, judges have attempted to rule inadmissible the defendant’s motives, directed the jury to ignore those motives, and in some cases imprisoned defendants - who had been found Not Guilty by the jury - for contempt of court in disregarding the judge’s order not to mention their motives to the jury. These actions by the judges are an attempt to limit the applicable law in line with the prosecution’s wishes, and against the defendant’s wishes, with no legal justification for the inequity.

The wording of many offences includes wording that permits a defence of overriding necessity. Even where that is not the case, natural justice suggests that a jury ought at the very least be able to take into account the importance of preventing action that forms part of a very serious crime such as environmental destruction or genocide. The attempt by the judiciary to limit such trials in favour of the prosecution undermines the rule of law.

I think this example illustrates a tension between the pragmatic demands made on the executive and the highest principles demanded of the judiciary. Environmental destruction and the resultant increasing tension between over-privileged and under-privileged peoples call for courageous and difficult decisions by those elected by the globally over-privileged. The rapid increase in global inter-dependence and the technology which enables it leaves our traditional legal systems trailing behind. National governments including their judiciaries are not used to paying so much attention to international law. Some commentators even deny its existence. But thank goodness it does exist because it is increasingly vital. All branches of our government have to take it into account. And we, the electorate must drive this change, not merely through voting in elections, but in exercising our duties through communication, education, protest, and direct action.

Exposed To Autumn

(To Vicente Aleixandre)

**One day you will be alone,
also you.**

**You will feel the autumn
in the very depths of your being;
tactile symphony of light and shadow,
network of certainty and doubt
under sterile trees, under fog, gloom...**

**One day, you too will ask why,
when the stubborn rains
drag away the last roots and the streams fill
with difficult waters. one day you will be alone
inside this dying light
that undresses you and makes you a prisoner
of your same substance.**

**You will have to justify yourself
without anyone supporting you.**

**The swallows are already leaving you
with the blow of the wind.**

**The sea is already gushing
with more violence
and the waves form arches of justice.**

**The imminent is approaching
and the skies turn dark.**

**Believe me, everyone has to be,
in the end, alone.**

-
- ‘This poem was written in a trance when I was twenty years old, in one go. It was written in Spanish. Spanish poets at the time praised it and it appeared suddenly in a book they created for the Nobel prize winner Aleixandre’s 80 birthday homage. Me among the names like Lorca and other famous poets, a minute of fame’. *Scharlie*.



Poem and Artwork by *Scharlie Meeuws*

Expuesto Al Otoño

(A Vicente Aleixandre)

**Un día vas a estar solo,
también tú.
Sentirás el otoño
en el fondo mismo de tu ser;
sinfonía táctil de luz y sombra,
red de certeza y duda
bajo árboles estériles, bajo niebla, penumbra,.
Un día, tú también preguntarás por qué,
cuando las lluvias tercas
arrastran las últimas raíces y los arroyos
se llenen con difíciles aguas.**

**Un día estarás solo
dentro de esta luz agonisante
que te desnuda y te hace reo
de tu misma sustancia.
Habrás de justificarte solo
sin que nadie te apoye.
Ya se alejan las golondrinas
dejándote con el soplo del viento.
Ya brota el mar con más violencia
y las olas forman arcos de justicia.
Ya se acerca lo inminente
y los cielos se vuelven oscuros.
Créemelo, cada uno
tiene que estar, al fin, solo.**



Poem English/ Spanish and Artwork by *Scharlie Meeuws*

Beyond the Managerial Mind: MacIntyre, Heidegger, and the Hope of Moral Renewal

DR. ALAN XUEREB

In an age of algorithms, managerialism, and political disillusionment, Alasdair MacIntyre (12th Jan 1929 – 21st May 2025) stands out as a philosopher who dares to challenge the very scaffolding of our moral and intellectual self-image. His philosophical journey from Marxism to Thomistic Aristotelianism was not a retreat from radical critique, but its deepening, reformulated in terms of tradition, narrative, and practice. If the modern world is suffering from what he once called a ‘new dark age,’ it is not because it lacks information, but because it has lost the capacity to tell intelligible stories about what it means to be human.

MacIntyre’s *After Virtue* (1981) famously argued that the Enlightenment project had failed. The dream of grounding morality on universal reason, divorced from tradition and history, had collapsed into emotivism and bureaucratic technocracy. In place of coherent moral discourse, we find the hollow language of ‘values’, endlessly asserted but incapable of resolving conflict. Political liberalism, once hailed as the guardian of pluralism and tolerance, is seen by MacIntyre as little more than a thin veil over the ideology of possessive individualism.

What makes MacIntyre radical is not his rejection of Enlightenment rationality, but his insistence that morality cannot be divorced from historical context, community, and tradition. Human beings are not atomised choosers or managerial agents; they are ‘story-telling animals’, embedded in networks of meaning shaped by language, practices, and inherited forms of life. Concepts such as courage, justice, and compassion do not float in an abstract ethical ether but are woven into the daily fabric of lived experience — shaped by the polis, the parish, the profession.

The very notion of the ‘individual’ as the primary unit of moral reasoning is, for MacIntyre, the product of a cultural forgetting. Just as a trireme

cannot be translated as a ‘steamship,’ the self cannot be translated into a free-floating chooser, abstracted from its historical setting. Liberalism and managerialism both depend on this fiction: the former in its celebration of self-chosen values, the latter in its belief in systems that function independently of the virtues of those who manage them. Against both, MacIntyre invokes the tradition-bound practices — medicine, education, architecture, music — in which goods internal to the activity can only be realised through co-operation, apprenticeship, and the cultivation of virtue.

Yet MacIntyre is no romantic reactionary. His suspicion of liberal democracy is matched by his critique of political Marxism, which he regards as fatally wounded by a misplaced optimism. If capitalism’s evils are many, Marxism’s failure, for MacIntyre, lies in its utopian belief that material abundance and class consciousness would inevitably yield moral clarity. The working class did not become the messianic force Marx anticipated, and post-Marxist movements became increasingly fragmented, ideologically incoherent, and susceptible to their own forms of managerialism and elitism.

So what remains? MacIntyre’s call is not for retreat but for recalibration. He famously ends *After Virtue* by invoking the need for ‘another — doubtless very different — St Benedict’. Not a new ideology, but new (or renewed) forms of life: small-scale communities within which moral traditions can be sustained and transmitted. His vision is not utopian but monastic in spirit — not in terms of cloistered religiosity, but as a model of integrity, mutuality, and attention to the good.

In a consumer society obsessed with metrics, outcomes, and branding, MacIntyre reminds us that not all goods are measurable. The cultivation of virtue — courage, honesty, justice — is inseparable from belonging to practices that aim



MacIntyre

at shared excellence. This Aristotelian insight, refracted through Aquinas and tempered by Marxist concerns with power and ideology, leads him to a uniquely post-liberal position: neither nostalgic nor progressive, neither conservative nor socialist, but oriented toward what he calls ‘the common good of a polity of deliberative enquiry’.

To critics, this sounds naïve. Can virtue really flourish amid the concrete and steel of modern bureaucracies, or in the fragmented pluralism of our post-traditional age? But MacIntyre’s point is not that tradition offers ready-made solutions — it is that every viable solution must emerge from within a tradition capable of self-renewal. The question is not whether we will belong to a tradition, but which one — and how critically or uncritically we inhabit it. ‘Whose justice? Which rationality?’ is not a relativist’s shrug, but an invitation to serious moral debate.

MacIntyre and Heidegger

At this point, it is worth bringing Martin Heidegger into the conversation. While the two thinkers wrote in very different idioms — MacIntyre’s ethical naturalism and Heidegger’s existential ontology — their critiques of modernity converge in striking ways.

Heidegger’s historicism is more radical and metaphysical. In *Being and Time*, he describes human beings (Dasein) as fundamentally historical: not simply because we exist in time, but because

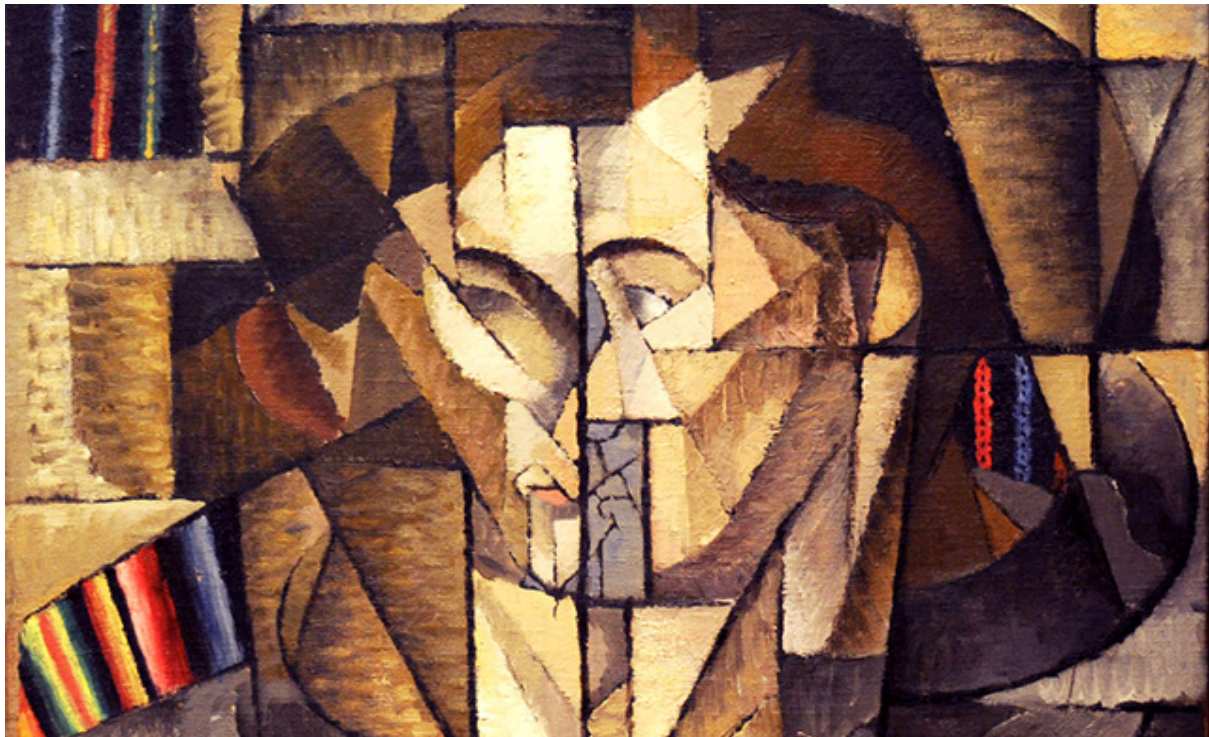


Heidegger

our being is constituted by temporality. We are ‘thrown’ into a world not of our choosing, shaped by language, mood, and tradition. Our understanding is always interpretive, always embedded. There is no ‘view from nowhere’, no morality unshaped by context. Authenticity, for Heidegger, involves owning one’s thrownness—not escaping tradition, but engaging it thoughtfully.

MacIntyre shares this suspicion of the ahistorical self. He too argues that human identity is always situated, always shaped by the stories and practices of a community. But where Heidegger’s analysis culminates in ontological self-understanding, MacIntyre’s is directed toward moral formation and the pursuit of the good life. Tradition, for Heidegger, opens up a world; for MacIntyre, it offers a concrete framework of virtues, goods, and obligations. Heidegger’s historicism leads toward ontological authenticity; MacIntyre’s leads toward moral coherence.

Moreover, both thinkers resist the modern liberal tendency to see tradition as constraint. For Heidegger, the real danger is not being bound by tradition, but forgetting it — living inauthentically under the anonymous norms of ‘the they’ (das Man). For MacIntyre, the modern loss of moral tradition has left us ethically speechless. We still invoke terms like ‘justice’ and ‘rights’, but with no shared vision of what these mean. We have inherited fragments of moral language, like tools without a workshop.



Modern fragmentation of self and society

Still, their visions diverge. Heidegger offers no moral programme; his concern is disclosure, not virtue. MacIntyre, by contrast, sees practices and communities as moral habitats, places where the virtues are taught and sustained. Where Heidegger ends in poetic dwelling, MacIntyre points to monastic life, civic practice, and narrative continuity.

They also handle relativism differently. Heidegger refuses to ground morality in any firm foundation but gestures toward a more originary openness to Being. MacIntyre, though he accepts that all moral reasoning is tradition-bound, insists that traditions can be rationally compared, through what he calls 'epistemological crises'. When one tradition begins to fail — when it can no longer make sense of its own past — it becomes possible to recognize the superiority of another. Rational progress, for MacIntyre, is possible — but only within and between traditions.

In the end, both thinkers remind us of something modernity would rather forget: that we do not reason alone. We speak from somewhere. Our thoughts are not born *ex nihilo* but are shaped by histories we did not choose and communities we

cannot fully escape. But this need not be a cause for despair. It is, in fact, the precondition for meaning.

This is also why rewriting history through the lens of contemporary values is not only misguided, but morally counterproductive. It is a disservice even to the cause it seeks to champion, because it negates the very journey that has led us to our current ideals. Erasing or sanitising the past — slavery, oppression, inequality — denies new generations the chance to feel the indignation that arises from confronting injustice. And it is precisely this moral emotion, born of historical awareness, that allows us to appreciate the fragile and hard-won nature of the progress we now enjoy.

Whether through Heidegger's poetic attentiveness or MacIntyre's narrative morality, the message is clear: if we are to recover a sense of purpose — ethical, political, or existential — we must learn once again to remember the past not as a museum of errors, but as the forge of our moral awakening. Our future depends not on forgetting, but on understanding the stories that have made us — and finding, within them, the wisdom to live well together.



The Flute Player by *Virginia Khuri*

Giving Philosophy Peace



The real discovery is one that enables me to stop doing philosophy when I want to. The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself into question.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*

CHRIS NORRIS

Well yes, we take your point: there's some who ought
To take it more to heart, make it their creed
And self-disintricate from webs of thought
Where flies may buzz once from their bottle freed.

Still there's the brusque but bracing quick retort:
What if your language-therapy should need,
To back it up, whole libraries left short
Of shelf-space, whole great forests left de-treed?

Truth is, dear Ludwig, those wise things you taught
Had all the commentariat agreed
That, lest untutored readers should distort
Your message, they be shown how best to read

Such gnomic dicta with the full support
Of specialists whose works are guaranteed
To throw up further issues of the sort
Beloved of those with families to feed.

And so the exegetes contrive to thwart,
By their excess, the very purpose he'd
Announced, although in words that seem to court
Such services despite the case they'd plead.

The Wednesday

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Website:

www.thewednesdayoxford.com

Published by:

The Wednesday Press, Oxford

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cumulative volumes of the
weekly and monthly issues.
To obtain your copy of any
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The account details are:

**The Wednesday Magazine
Santander
Account Number: 24042417
Sort Code: 09-01-29**

*The cost of individual copies is
£15 for readers inside the UK*

or

£18 for readers outside the UK

The Eternal Now

Abounding beings as starlight singing
Breathing life into worlds unceasing
Choiring voices from sphere to sphere
Energize the atmosphere
While living beings manifest
As archetypal forms becoming
Thoughts that body forth
Substance that veils so well
Their source from us in dingly dell
While continually beings sing
We cannot hear for groundswell din
Yet beings abounding continuously sing
In harmony balancing opposing things
Joyfully impulsing time
In ever and ever changing rhyme
Creating space for us dingly dwellers
In an astounding sounding seeming -
Eternal Now.

William Bishop

