

# The Philosopher

Journal of the Philosophical Society

Volume [Rom], No. [n] [seas] [yr]



Have We Lost Our Heads?

*Sinead Murphy*

My Interview with Heidegger

*J. L. H. Thomas*

Popper's Formulation of Scientific Knowledge:

*William Godfrey & Christopher N Haggarty-Weir*

Beautiful Souls

*Ian James Kidd*

ISSN 0967-6074



## Contents

Editorial .....	4
Have We Lost Our Heads? - Sinead Murphy .....	5
The Question of Judgment .....	5
My Interview With Heidegger - J. L. H. Thomas .....	11
Popper's Formulation of Scientific Knowledge: A shift from an inductivist account - William Godfrey & Christopher N Haggarty-Weir .....	16
Beautiful Souls - Ian James Kidd .....	22
A Philosophers' Quiz - set by J. L. H. Thomas .....	26



*The Philosopher*

EDITOR  
Alan Brown

REVIEWS EDITOR  
Zenon Stravrinides

COVER IMAGE  
by Alan Brown

# The Philosopher

---

1913–2013

VOLUME CV, No. 1

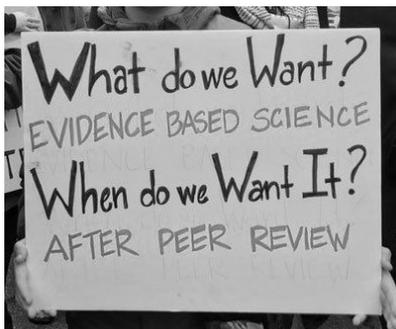
## Editorial

Do philosophers have to take some blame for the post-fact, post-truth era we seem to have entered? One thing is certain - there is more than enough blame to go around. John Gray (*The Guardian*, Saturday 20th May 2017) accuses the remoaning liberal elite of using the phrase 'post-truth era' as a way of categorising the duped voters 'who disregarded argument and evidence in favour of manipulated emotion and fake news.' The same elite, he suggests, contributed to the relativist spirit of times 'in which the gap between the real and the imaginary disappeared'.

The point of referring to an era and not just the permanent tendency in public life to deceive is to claim that something new is occurring: we all connive in the disregard for the truth. The cynical 'They are all liars' is not a challenge to the spirit of the times but a contribution to it. The boast of 'telling it the way it is' - on the surface an appeal to the un-garnished truth - is a licence to ignore the courtesies and restraints of civilised life. Political rallies become exercises in identity reinforcement. They become pop concerts. Fans engage in a communal expression of frustrations and enthusiasms. Trump supporters bay for Hillary Clinton's imprisonment, but it is a chant not a policy proposal.

Our personal and political failings are magnified by fast changing technologies of communication. Social media encourage instant extreme reactions: make the maximum impact and move on. Revisiting issues is made to seem like anti-democratic churlishness. 'Move on' is preferred to 'own it'. Tweets are things of the moment, casually thrown out, remarks around the water cooler. But once posted they are there forever - and multiplying.

Discounting facts and denigrating truth takes many forms. Despairing self-harm is only one. We may lock ourselves into self-interest and cynicism, adopt irony as our default voice or strive to insulate ourselves from the worst aspects of contemporary life.



The March for Science took a stand against the trend. But the controversies concerning objectivity, neutrality and commitment that enveloped the movement (see *New Republic*, March 1, 2017) show the impossibility of keeping facts and values apart in real life. Evidence-based science is a start but it is not enough. One-word slogans are not enough, not even if the slogan is 'Education, education, education'. Human life cannot be guided by a single value.

Philosophy should remind us that to bear witness to the truth involves engaging with all aspects of experience. It may not help to say that the truth is socially constructed but the real-world platforms - the institutions, the cultural traditions, the political structures - on which we stand when we try to work anything out, certainly are. The clever trick is to devise reasonable ways of living given the rickety base on which we stand.

## Have We Lost Our Heads? - Sinead Murphy

### The Question of Judgment

What follows here is a paper I gave at a day-symposium of the British Society for Phenomenology, held at Newcastle University in December 2016, on the theme of 'Intentionality and the Human.' My interlocutors on that day were Tony O' Connor (University College Cork) and Francis Halsall (National College of Art and Design, Dublin), as well as David Cooper, who acted as a respondent. The paper begins by recalling another day on which Tony, Francis and I were interlocutors, at the annual joint conference of the Society for European Philosophy and Forum for European Philosophy, held at Regent's University, London in August 2016.

In his paper, Francis suggested that intentionality is a feature, not only of human beings, but of non-human animals, plants, and stones too. His conclusion was that we might begin to attribute intentionality to many complex systems, including those systems that are 'without a head' (Michael Marder, *Plant Thinking*).

In his paper, Tony gave an account of human intentionality as embodied and embedded, subject, not to invariant conditions, but to changing historical conditions. Even our most basic experiences, he claimed, are interpretations, refractions of the prejudices of our cultural milieu.

When these two papers are juxtaposed ...

...human intentionality emerges as eminently compatible with claims about the intentionality of plants etc. – once we accept that human intentionality is cultural, then we may also accept that humans too are complex intentional systems whose 'head' is not as operative as we may have presumed.

Given that one of the implications of this is that the line between 'reason' and 'experience', or 'thinking' and 'feeling', is blurred – 'thinking' is an embedded orientation and 'feeling' an

interpretive achievement – then it arises that sunflowers think in a way we may have thought they didn't; and humans don't think in a way we may have thought they did.

We might be prepared for this conclusion, by...

...Foucault, who not only shows us complex intentional systems at work when he shows us the trajectories of particular historical epochs, but warns us that any resistance to the attribution of intentionality to systems that don't have a head may be a prejudice of our modern epoch, which has, quite strategically and with wonderful effect, 'failed to cut off the head' of the king *and* his erstwhile human subjects. What Foucault shows is that the modern failure to cut off the head has been the manner in which we are continually, though unwittingly, subjected to disciplines of all kinds, which do not bother to go via the 'heads' on which we are all so focussed but which work on our bodies, which we're hardly attending to at all! – minutely, without cease, making hay from the fact that we humans, after all, are complex intentional systems like all the rest but that we flatly refuse to admit it.

...and Gadamer, whose life's work was devoted to persuading us that human beings are 'historically-effected' beings, that is, embedded in traditions of thought and action in a manner that makes the human 'head' not quite as operative as we may have thought.

And yet...

...any good Foucaultian or Gadamerian will be aware that philosophical discussion, like all discussion, is not an innocent pursuit, but works within a particular context, producing particular effects. It seems to me that philosophical discussion of the intentionality of plants (as well, perhaps, as philosophical discussion of the embodiment and embeddedness of humans) works, *within our particular context*, as part of a more general move against the human capacity for *judgment*, that is, for the situational, interpretive, always-



underdetermined and negotiable, applications of 'rules of thumb,' which might be considered as constitutive of what have been quintessentially *human* horizons. Does the current enthusiasm for unmooring the conditions of possibility for thinking from human subjectivity work as part of a more general contemporary assault on the conditions of possibility for judgment, which might be to say, the conditions of possibility for the *human*?

Sinead Murphy

It is the case that Gadamer too was, in much of his work, concerned that the capacity for judgment was under threat. But, for Gadamer, it was under threat from those who attribute to human beings, if I may, *too much* ‘head,’ those for whom human experience is, in the end, stabilized by universal and necessary features of human consciousness or human history in a manner to diminish the importance of our capacity for judgment. For Gadamer, ‘historically-effected’ beings are not regulated by universal and necessary features of consciousness or history, and so our capacity for judgment is crucial and must be protected, enhanced. Gadamer’s position, in short, was that every human experience already is an achievement of judgment, an interpretive achievement, and the question is the extent to which that judgment is tacit or explicit – the extent to which it is merely prejudiced or more deliberate, more reflective.

My claim is that the capacity for judgment continues to be under threat, but no longer from the side that Gadamer was mostly turned towards. It is now under threat from the view that human beings have *much less* ‘head’ than we may have thought. And so, I would take up Gadamer’s work but with very different interlocutors.

But on what grounds do I do this? Not on the grounds that the capacity for judgment is an *essential* possibility for human beings, ‘native’ to us, but requires greater recognition. No. Indeed, if I thought that the matter might not be so pressing. On the contrary, the capacity for judgment - for *tact* in thought and action – much like the capacity to play the piano for instance, requires to be sustained, practised, constituted; if you don’t do it much, then you cease to do it well and cease to be able to teach anyone else to do it and it falls out of the realm of human possibility altogether.

I claim that we are now living at a time in which social, political and economic conditions require that the capacity for judgment fall out of the realm of human possibility; my concern is the extent to which the ‘non-human turn’ in philosophy is contributing to this.

To flesh out this claim, I have recourse to two texts:

The first, from 2007, is Tiquun’s *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*. Tiquun gives an account of the human person typical of a late-capitalist society such as ours, that person having been formed through their society’s continual appeal to the marginalized elements of more traditional societies – women, youths, homosexuals and immigrants – folding those margins into each and every one of us such that the human person emerges as what they call a ‘Young-Girl,’ characterized by an intensity of affect, sentiment, the avoidance of risk, the reneging of opinion, and the continual remaking of sexual identity.

What does this mean? Take the case of women: it means very basic things like the marketing of products to women and the encouragement of women into the workforce. It also means the folding of the feminine into each and every one of us, so that affect, sentiment, social skills are the order of the day, and the primary mode of the blurring of work and non-work which is one of the characteristics of our society's mode of oppression. Take the case of youths: it means marketing to children, and the bringing of children into institutions of all kinds, but it also means the folding of the child into each and every one of us, generating our propensity to, with the help of new technologies, defer experience to a future time and our ever-increasing emphasis on safety and on hedging against risk in all walks of life.

This was ten years ago.

I suggest that we posit the 'non-human turn' as the latest phase in the trajectory that Tiqqun describes – plants, after all, have 'populated the margin of the margin,' as Marder puts it. But what might that mean? For an answer, I turn to...

...my second text, Deleuze's essay from 1992 on 'the societies of control,' in which Deleuze places at the centre of our society, not the prison with its military manoeuvres, but the corporation with its social skills. Deleuze points out the significance of the fact that the corporation, though without a 'head,' is not without a 'soul,' which, according to Deleuze, 'is the most terrifying news in the world' – the corporation, indeed, is constituted and operates as a complex intentional system without a head, which means things, which thinks things, and which has increasingly the most extraordinary and objectionable rights to things (to contribute as much money as it chooses to election campaigns, for instance – which is the upshot of the controversial Citizen's United Ruling by the US Supreme Court in 2010). The trend for attributing intentionality to complex systems without a head has certainly facilitated the rise of corporate control.

But there is more. According with Marder's prediction that 'plant-thinking' – the attribution of intentionality to systems without a 'head' – renders human thinking 'plant-like,' the human person in the societies of control is also without a 'head,' transformed into what Deleuze refers to as the 'dividual,' through whom trends, propensities, orientations run and events happen *without refraction by anything we might recognize as interpretation or judgment*. The 'dividual' does not trade in ideas but channels what are called 'memes,' which are like thoughts that blow through you, lacking both the organic emergence conditions and the propensity for revision or 'application' characteristic of old-style ideas. In our society, the human person is merely the conduit for corporate categories, working both to oil the passageways of consumerism and to iron out the differences between people and the

widening inequalities in their conditions of life. The ‘meming dividual’ is the human person under corporate control.

But there is still more. Deleuze’s essay, after all, is 25 years old. And there are changes afoot. Foucault tells the story of how the societies of discipline disassembled the crowd into individuals, only to reassemble it again but without its solidarity, in factories, armies and schools; we might not be surprised to learn, then, that the societies of control, having disassembled the individual in the manner Deleuze describes, more recently work to reassemble it but, crucially, *without its head*: the dividual is no longer typically part of a corporation – corporations are gradually ceasing all operations but financial ones; the dividual must now itself corporatize, that is, operate as a mini-corporation and compete with multi-national colossi on their terms – hence the rise of the entrepreneur, who does not ‘start-up’ a business but who ‘logs-on’ to waves of work that pass through them in precarious ways, as with ‘Uber,’ ‘Deliveroo,’ ‘Airbnb’ etc. Academics too are susceptible here, increasingly on short-term contracts during the fulfilment of which they are under pressure to cover their wages and more by drawing down funding from anonymous sources according to such generic research categories as Newcastle University’s themes of ‘sustainability,’ ‘ageing,’ and ‘social renewal.’

But there is yet more. Michael Marder would persuade us that ‘plant-thinking’ must cease to be the thinking *about* plants that Marder regards as aggressive and environmentally disastrous and begin instead to think *in the presence of* plants, which, according to Marder, amounts to the admission of ‘a profound non-knowing.’ And it is this ‘profound non-knowing’ – which, arguably, is the most lasting effect of any effort to address the question of ‘what it is like’ to be a sunflower – that may fast be becoming the most pernicious aspect of our current condition. Let me explain...

...perhaps the original complex system without a head to which we attribute intentionality is the ‘market,’ which, famously, was to manage things with its ‘invisible hand’ so long as we human beings did not presume to do more than act according to our selfish impulses. One of the marginal elements that Tiqqun identifies our society as appealing to in its support is minorities – not only because minorities can be marketed to too, and not only because they can be more easily exploited to provide the lower-level services, but because, by folding ‘the minority’ into each and every one of us, there occurs a destabilizing of heretofore established principles, commitments, ways of life, all under the aegis of a ‘liberal’ ‘tolerance’ and ‘openness,’ a ‘knowing you don’t know’-ness essential to the unobstructed operation of market forces.

But openness to other ways of life, knowing you don’t know, is not yet the profound non-knowing, the admission the impenetrability of other forms of life, that Marder speaks of,

which, I would suggest, is an entirely new condition, one closely tied to the fact that the market is no longer working at all. What is needed in our twenty-first century ‘developed’ economies is not a willingness to accept that there are perspectives of which I am unaware but a certainty that there are things that are fundamentally and irreducibly beyond my understanding – that is the attitude expected of the population now; hence the outrage expressed by the establishment when this population presumes to know anything – as in the votes for Brexit or for Trump. Marder explains that plant-thinking involves ‘letting plants be in their profound obscurity’ – the vitriol unleashed recently when voters have not let things be in their profound obscurity might suggest the extent to which ‘plant-thinking’ is tied up with what has been the social, economic and political status quo.

Which is all the more evident when one appreciates that those in the so-called 1% have risen to that position on the strength not only of the profound non-knowing of

the 99%, for whom the workings of the economy have been profoundly obscure, but by an active knowing on part of the 1%, who have, very deliberately, and with their heads in full sail, colluded with quantitative easing and negative interest rates, to bypass the markets of old, to hollow out the corporation from within, and to siphon off the world’s resources for their own gain.

Both Tiqqun and Deleuze, in closing the opening sections of their respective diagnoses of the societies of control, make a similar claim. There is nothing for his readers ‘to hope or fear,’ says Deleuze (despite the fact that he has described the fact that corporations have a soul as ‘the most terrifying news in the world’!). The task is not to look for ‘moral comfort or vice in need of condemning,’ says Tiqqun. Instead we are to take up ‘arms for a struggle,’ says Tiqqun, to ‘look for new weapons,’ says Deleuze. In this, both submit to the parameters for thinking laid down by the societies they describe.

I suggest that, once we untether the conditions of possibility for thinking from the human ‘head,’ we relinquish the kind of judgments that are at stake in hope and fear, in moral comfort and the condemnation of vice, and are left with nothing but the resort of those without judgment: weaponry and war. Donald Trump’s victory is being described as a triumph in a ‘meme war’ – with ‘memes,’ one does not judge, one fights.

One of Gadamer’s most memorable lines, by contrast, is that ‘we are always affected, in hope and fear, by what is nearest to us.’ This, for Gadamer, is the *human* condition – embodied, embedded, affected by what is nearest to it, but *in hope and fear*, that is, in and through the exercise of the capacity for judgment, in and through processes (explicit as well as tacit) of interpretation ...in short, in and with our ‘heads.’

## My Interview With Heidegger - J. L. H. Thomas

I visited Heidegger at his home in Freiburg im Breisgau on the afternoon of Friday, 19 May 1972, almost exactly four years before his death ; so far as I know, I am the only Briton (excepting German refugees) ever to have met him. My visit was arranged by Professor Ernst Tugendhat, who had been a student of Heidegger's in the early 1950s, and was then teaching at the University of Heidelberg, where I had studied in the summer semesters of 1969 to 1971. (I had first hoped to visit Heidegger in the spring of 1970, but he had suffered a stroke not long before: I possess both letters which Tugendhat received after writing to Heidegger on my behalf, the earlier typewritten letter of Frau Heidegger, explaining that her husband was not well enough to receive me, and the later letter of invitation from Heidegger himself, written by hand with a felt pen in the old German script.)

At the time of my visit, Heidegger was living at Fillibach 25, Freiburg-Zähringen, in the flat he had had built for his retirement (*Alterssitz*) at the bottom of the garden of his main house at Rötebuck 47, which one of his sons was then occupying, I believe, and I did not see. I called upon him at four o'clock in the afternoon, as arranged, and our conversation, which was in German throughout, lasted about an hour and a half. Heidegger awaited me at the front door of his flat, at the top of a short spiral staircase leading up from the street door, where I had rung the bell; we did not shake hands. He was a short, rather stout man, conventionally dressed, with a markedly hoarse voice (naturally hoarse, he was not indisposed). He led me into his small study, perhaps four or five yards square, overlooking the garden: he sat at his desk facing the window, whilst I sat in an armchair on his right; there was small bookcase behind him, and a circular table with books on it to my left; I do not recall any pictures on the walls. (A photograph of Heidegger at his desk, looking very much as I saw him, was reproduced on the cover of the brochure announcing the publication of his collected works at about that time.) He offered me a glass of Cinzano, I think it was, standing ready on his desk; when I declined it, his wife brought in a jug of blackcurrant juice instead (of which Heidegger himself was plainly not fond).



**Martin Heidegger**

Heidegger's manner during our conversation was one of close concentration, punctuated by occasional, slightly theatrical outbursts, when he made some pronouncement. He looked at me intently whilst I spoke, as though I were someone from whom he could learn something, and usually out of the window whilst he spoke: I had the feeling generally that he treated me more or less as an equal. I was also struck by Heidegger's timid manner when he called his wife by her name, Elfride: she was a brisk woman who, when she failed to hear my greeting, said '*Sie können also kein Deutsch*' ('So you don't speak German'); I was then obliged to correct her and apologise for not having spoken audibly.

Heidegger and I did not, to be honest, get on very well. The fault was not altogether my own: rather, the reason was in part that I had been warned beforehand that Heidegger did not like talking about his own ideas; this proved subsequently not to be entirely correct, but I avoided asking Heidegger direct questions about his thought, so, I fear, giving him the impression that I was not as well informed or as interested in it as I was – there are certainly plenty of things I should like to ask him now! As a consequence, our conversation was somewhat desultory, although we touched upon some important questions, and he made some memorable remarks; in any case, I doubt that it would have been possible to have had with him the kind of sustained, closely argued philosophical exchange favoured in Oxford. For the most part, we discussed the interpretation of Kant and Hegel, on which I had prepared some questions, and the teaching of philosophy. I made only the very briefest of notes, about a dozen words in all, upon our conversation at the time – it was not in fact easy to do so – so that I am now almost entirely dependent upon my memory after thirty years; but I discussed the interview with others upon my return to Heidelberg, where I was staying at the time, which helped to fix the occasion in my mind, and I have also a copy of the letter of thanks I wrote to Heidegger a few days later, in which I explained further a couple of the points I had put to him in conversation (he did not reply to my letter, however). I cannot now reconstruct the course of our conversation in detail, the precise order being in any case immaterial, but I remember clearly a fair number of things which were said; at all events, my account is at least as full as that, for example, left by the Russian traveller, Karamzin, who visited Kant in 1789.

I forget how our conversation began, probably with some reference to the common acquaintance who had facilitated our meeting, but quite early on I caught Heidegger out when he had expressed the view, with which I had much sympathy, that secondary literature in philosophy was of little value: for I reminded him that he had recommended Tugendhat (as the latter had told me) at his first interview with him to study commentaries on Kant, whereupon Heidegger surmised '*Vielleicht die Marburger*' ('Perhaps the Marburgers', i. e. members of the neo-Kantian school of Hermann Cohen and his followers in Marburg, where he had once taught). Heidegger plainly did not forget this exchange, for at the end of our meeting he pointed to two de luxe volumes of van Gogh's correspondence on the side table, given him by his French friends (he had read a German translation of the letters in his youth, he said), and exclaimed in an irritated fashion '*Die sind die ganze sekundäre Literatur der Philosophie wert !*' ('They are worth the entire secondary literature of philosophy !'). Earlier on, he had remarked that he had used the commentaries of Ross on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, but that philosophically they were worthless. (He had some difficulty in pronouncing Ross' name correctly, and I was later told that Heidegger could just about read English for scholarly purposes, but not speak the language.) He mentioned that he had often given seminars on Aristotle's *Physics*, and I also have a note, now incomprehensible, of Aristotle's *De Anima* with the date 1906 : I did not know that he was interested in the work, but perhaps he had first studied it in that year. Heidegger did not otherwise evince any interest in England or

English philosophy (apart from Wittgenstein), although he must have known that I came from Oxford; it is possible that I briefly explained the tutorial system to him, but I do not recall doing so.

Knowing the importance which Heidegger attached to the precise words used by philosophers, I raised some detailed textual points in the Schematism chapter of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (B 176-87), relating principally, I think, to the very first sentence: thereupon Heidegger took down his copy of the book from his shelves, remarking that he kept his editions of the poets (presumably above all Hölderlin) in the big house, and examined the passage in question closely for a minute or two, keeping his eyes without spectacles only a few inches from the book on the desk (he had some difficulty in finding the passage on the page, and I had to point it out to him); finally, he said that the two alternative readings proposed amounted to the same, not taking the point (genuine or imagined) which I was trying to make about Kant's shifting use of terms (I think it related to Kant's use of a word like *Vorstellung*, representation, to mean both a representing and the represented, an important ambiguity which, I believe, has been recognised more recently by others). In my letter of thanks, I recalled that Heidegger had reminded me that Kant often used his *termini technici* in their everyday sense, not their specifically Kantian one. He also drew my attention to the passage at B 376-7, where Kant summarises his terminology in the form of a *Stufenleiter* (ladder or series), saying that he had found this summary very useful when teaching (it is not one to which I have seen much importance attached otherwise). I noticed, with some surprise, that Heidegger had highlighted this and other passages in his copy, in yellow ink as I recall: he said that he had several copies of the work, in order to have a fresh one when giving another seminar on the same text.

I tentatively proposed an idea relating to the meaning of *Begriff* (concept) in Hegel, which, I had learned, in Hegel's time could also bear the sense of *Inbegriff* (totality): I thought that this ambiguity might throw light on the Hegelian idea of the self-realisation of the Concept, a movement from concept in the sense of an abstraction to that of concept in the sense of totality (the 'concrete universal'), but Heidegger did not take my suggestion on board. I referred to the eighteenth-century German dictionary of Adelung, hoping that this would please him, given his liking for restoring the original senses of words: but he only looked puzzled, remarking that the dictionary was rather old. We also discussed Hegel's *Logic*, whereupon he illustrated the closed nature of the system in dramatic fashion by drawing a large circle in the air with his arm whilst standing, and repeating Hegel's own characterisation of it as expounding the thoughts of God before the creation of nature and finite spirit: he then gave me a look as though he feared that I would be so naïve as to take this as evidence that he believed in God, and added the word '*Gleichsam*' ('So to speak'); altogether, Heidegger had a very expressive face, despite his rather heavy, rustic features. Earlier, however, he had, quite spontaneously, made a point of mentioning that he owed some skill (I forget what, perhaps exegetical) to his early theological training.

He recalled that Jaspers (who by then was dead) had once given a seminar on the whole of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and when Heidegger asked him how he organised it, said that he gave each chapter to a different student to prepare, who then presented a paper on it: Heidegger plainly did not think much of this method; his own, which was also mine, was to examine a short portion of the text very closely instead. I mentioned the difficulties I encountered when teaching Hegel because my students knew little German, and we agreed that philosophical texts could not properly be studied in translation. Heidegger said that one could no more translate philosophy than poetry, because the meaning of the words used was

'schillernd' (itself a difficult word to translate, roughly 'flickering').

He asked whether, when I gave a seminar on a text, I had a question in mind or just read it 'nur so' ('any old how'); to draw him out, I asked him in return what kind of question he meant, and he replied 'Meine Frage, zum Beispiel' ('My question, for example'), and then gave me statement of it, gazing into the distance. I was so nonplussed that I did not take the question in, let alone note it down, but it was something like 'Wie die Dinge in der Welt heute auf unser Dasein zukommen' ('How things in the world today impinge upon our Being'). Tugendhat suggested afterwards 'Wie die Dinge sich zeigen' ('How things show themselves'), but I am quite sure that it contained the word *Dasein* (I am less sure about *Dinge* and *Welt*) and also a vague contemporary reference which lent it a sense of urgency.

He said at one point that he was still (after nearly fifty years) waiting for the right kind of criticism of *Sein und Zeit*; unfortunately, I forget the precise German phrase he used, although he repeated it to emphasise the point: it may well have been 'Kritik an der Sache' ('criticism of the subject matter', as opposed to criticism of the author). That was not quite candid of him, for he had already responded in print to Tugendhat's book on his notion of truth, but without naming the latter. I did not, alas, pursue the matter by asking him what precisely he was looking for: probably he just meant criticism he would recognise as such.

When I told him of my own systematic ambitions in philosophy, he disapproved strongly, declaring emphatically 'Wir müssen heute mit dem Verzicht in der Philosophie leben!' ('Nowadays we must live with renunciation in philosophy!'). That is the utterance of his which imprinted itself most clearly upon my memory; it is also the one I have been least inclined to heed. Heidegger plainly had a gift, very valuable in a philosopher, for devising striking formulations of his ideas on the spur of the moment (although in this case it is possible that the idea came ultimately from Husserl). He then explained, in a way which I did not fully understand or accept, that only philosophers in the German idealist tradition had produced philosophical systems, and that the *summae* of the Scholastics, for example, which I mentioned, were not systems: evidently he gave 'system' a narrower sense than I.



At home in Freiberg

Heidegger advised me not to write too much; when I retorted, somewhat forwardly I now feel, that he himself had written a lot, he demurred, but did not seem offended. (In fact, Heidegger had not written a great deal, at any rate by German standards: the bulk of his collected works are lectures not intended for publication.) He also recommended me to read poetry, exclaiming in a portentous fashion, as though it were an original idea,

*'Shakespeare !'*: I remember thinking at the time that I had not come all that way to be told to read my national poet. According to a note of mine, *'Sprache entwerten'*, he had said something at some point about the devaluation of language.

We got on to Wittgenstein, and Heidegger asked me how he had taught. I am not sure that I grasped his question at first, for he asked *'Wie hat er gewirkt ?'*, which I took to mean 'What effect did his teaching have ?' rather than 'How did he teach ?': in general, I found Heidegger's German a bit old-fashioned, scarcely surprisingly, given that he was educated before the First World War. Heidegger certainly knew a little already of Wittgenstein, for he is reported somewhere as quoting the passage comparing a philosopher to a man who believes himself locked in a room and tries every means of escape except the open door.

At one point, Heidegger told me that he had never examined, *'nie geprüft'*, but simply conducted a conversation like our own. I did not quite understand what he meant, but was told later that he had, of course, as professor examined candidates for doctorates.

I asked Heidegger whether he would be giving any more seminars, hoping perhaps to attend: he intimated, however, that his teaching days were over (I learned not long ago, however, that in fact he held one in France after my visit). I had unfortunately missed a private seminar he had given at the home of Professor Gadamer shortly after I arrived at Heidelberg in the spring of 1969, probably the last he ever gave in Germany. Tugendhat told me later that had he known of my interest in Heidegger he would have secured me an invitation. My visit was, then, in a way a compensation for the missed opportunity of the seminar, which would probably have been more instructive.

It was I who brought the interview to an end by standing up, because I thought we had gone on long enough, although Heidegger himself seemed willing to continue : he simply remarked *'Sie haben einen günstigen Zug ?'* ('You have a convenient train ?'). On leaving the study, I found Frau Heidegger sitting in the corridor knitting, presumably monitoring our conversation as well (and perhaps also making sure that I did not assassinate her husband !): she merely said *'Guten Tag'*. Heidegger himself on saying goodbye gave me look which suggested that he did not understand why I had come. I fear I may well have disappointed him: I read recently that he had suffered from depression towards the end of his life, and the prospect of a visitor from a foreign country which had hitherto expressed little interest in his ideas had probably cheered him momentarily. For me, the significance of our interview from the outset was, I think, principally symbolic, a kind of confirmation or passing on of the philosopher's mantle, so to speak. Certainly, of all the philosophers I have met, Heidegger, for all his faults as a thinker and as a human being, is the one who made the deepest impression upon me (although it is probably also true that I went prepared to be impressed), and came closest to my own ideal of philosophical seriousness.

*J. L. H. Thomas is a freelance philosopher, whose work has been published in several countries.*

## Popper's Formulation of Scientific Knowledge: A shift from an inductivist account - William Godfrey & Christopher N Haggarty-Weir

This essay will critically examine A. F. Chalmers' inductivist description of science (Chalmers, 1976, 1) in light of Karl Popper's hypothetico-deductivist account. Inductivist claims state that science has epistemic superiority because it utilizes a rigorous and specifically applied method, based on sensory experience, with intellectual detachment (Chalmers, 1976); this is not an accurate formulation in a descriptive or normative sense of how scientific knowledge is attained or how science is conducted (Popper, 2002, 3-27 & 74-80). In this instance one would be presented with a set of objects in the material world and a description which would be derived through observation using one's faculties of perception, and once these facts are established a theory which takes into account the existence of these facts is formulated. This formulation from the specific observations to the more general theory, are typically only possible due to the shared characteristics each object has with other objects insofar as they can form a class of objects. Further the relationship and interaction between each object or class of objects with other objects which are not of the same class, would also inform the formulation of any general theory concerning facts about the objects in question. This *prima facie* would account for the methodological naturalism (Jones J, 2005) which informs the 'act' of science, where one conducts an experiment by isolating a specific object in a certain condition noting the factual outcome, and then performing the same experiment but exposing the object in question to a different condition and then observing the facts in that instance and then compare it to the facts in the former instance.

One would then repeat the experiment multiple times in order to find a pattern of observable phenomena from which a pattern of facts can be derived and then a generalization be made, using the pattern of facts as proof of the theory. However, this is problematic – it does not follow the form of a logical argument, where the truth of the conclusion must follow from and is dependent on the truth of the premise(s). The most one can say about the same outcomes and facts arising in each instance of the repeated experiments is that that outcome has occurred in that instance only, it says nothing about whether the same outcome will occur in the next instance even with the same set of conditions, it does not necessarily follow as a logical argument, it is temporally narrow the consequence of which is that it has no predictive power which one would expect from an account of scientific knowledge.

The notion that the same outcome will occur again based on previous experience is a psychological fiction highlighted in the example of Russell's chicken (Deutsch, 1997, Ch. 3), where a chicken is the subject of a routine in which it is fed at the same time every day, this psychologically imprints a mental reflex action on the chicken where it has become so accustomed to the regimen that it starts to associate that particular time each day to the outcome of receiving food, only to meet its end one day when instead of being fed it becomes the subject of the main course. The recurrence of the observation of the farmer delivering food at the same time each day led the chicken to believe incorrectly that this would occur ad infinitum, until one day it did not. Through its previous experience, there was no way the

chicken would have predicted its demise – mere repetition is not sufficient to sustain the conclusion.

The Popperian hypothetico-deductivist account of scientific knowledge rejects proof as forming a necessary component of science (Popper, 1957, 79 & 155). Popper disregards the notion that the central purpose of science was to reach theories backed by observation and evidence, as supporting observational statements are too easily attained as they are just interpretations in light of an epistemological predisposition (for example – an already established theory which may not be necessarily correct or complete). Rather, Popper took into consideration that science is inherently a human endeavour, and therefore exposed to the shortcomings of humans themselves, such as bias and prejudice (Popper, 1957, 74-80).

What Popper offers instead is that scientific knowledge should, if formulated correctly, be falsifiable, to be fallible to a counter example (Popper, 1957, 57-70, 95-110 & 159). In this formulation we assume a current theory to be true in the broad sense and continue to conduct science based on this assumption, whilst strictly acknowledging that a current theory may in fact prove to be false or incomplete at the presentation of evidence or observation for which that theory failed to sufficiently account for. Therefore, our knowledge is merely provisional and conditional on new facts and new (although logically coherent) interpretations, we suspend judgment as metaphysical certainty can never be attained in an epistemic sense, thereby ridding the requirement of proof as a component of scientific knowledge. This permits both an intellectually honest and rigorous pursuit of any scientific endeavour.

In contrast to the inductivist account, Popper shifts the source of the epistemic authority of science to a self-corrective mechanism based on a social account of scientific inquiry. The notion of authority from ‘objectivity’ is not derived from rigid methodological scientific practice as Chalmers describes but through inter-subjective critical interactions with others where conjectures are postulated, which are then subjected to the rigorous scrutiny and criticism which comprise refutation - successful theories continue until they are refuted, in which case a new theory displaces the previous, less accurate one or is itself modified to accommodate new observations and evidence.

Popper offers a stronger account of scientific inquiry and knowledge. Occam’s razor favors Popper’s view in that it eliminates of the problem of induction because it need not be considered at all, and in Popper’s formulation, the assumptions of causation are removed. During scientific inquiry, Occam's razor can be employed as a heuristic technique to facilitate the development of theoretical models. Whilst it is true that Occam’s razor is not on its own a proof against a given hypothesis or theory, it does allow for enhanced testability and therefore simpler falsifiability. This of course means that Popper’s formulation is not necessarily correct; however it does makes his formulation safer.

Further Popper’s formulation is more acceptable because it is epistemically modest, it limits knowledge by temporal means by constraining what one can know to the present, what

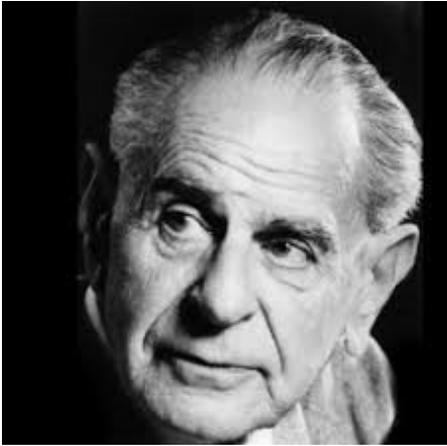
follows is a rejection of certainty which leads to a conclusion that a scientific theory is just 'more true' or 'less false' than other theories, a strict result which accurately describes the development of scientific knowledge, and satisfies the philosophical principle of being conscious of the great extent of one's own ignorance.

Popper's formulation rightly dismisses the inductivist fictions based on unattainable ideals of the psychological states of human beings (pure objectivism, detachment, and absence of opinion). These unsafe assumptions undermine the inductivist position, because any conclusions which follow from these unattainable ideals are themselves unattainable; they are not grounded in reality in either the inductivist or the Popperian hypothetico-deductivist account of science, therefore denying that inductive reasoning forms the basis of scientific knowledge. Popper gives a more accurate account of reality than the inductivist does which strengthens his case. He accounts for what the inductivist overlooks - that scientific knowledge and science itself is muddled through the prism of personality.

Another strength of Popper's formulation is that it exposed the permissiveness of inductivism in relation to the problem of demarcation – how to differentiate between legitimate science and what is either non-science or an illegitimate pseudoscience. Induction is merely an operation of thought and, strictly speaking practitioners of the pseudosciences such as phrenology and astrology do utilize inductive process, they fit data and make conclusions as to how their current theory dictates. In this sense they are not precluded from making truthful claims in the same sense that a broken clock with its hands fixed are correct twice a day. In fact, phrenology did predict the phenomenon of the localization of brain function (Cooter, 1984), but failed to correctly categorize the precise nature of each region to the level of accuracy one attains from modern neuroscience. Astrology does account for the various spatial movements of celestial bodies in relation to one another, but fails to show why these phenomena affect human affairs (Cover & Curd, 1998).

In both instances the truthful claims derived from the use of experience whether it be intervening in neuroanatomy of mammals or using telescopes and mathematical calculations whilst observing the night sky. This accumulation of observable data would not seem out of place in university laboratories, when presumably what we call 'legitimate' science is being done. The truth claims whilst legitimate in themselves, are muddled by the *ad hoc* indiscriminate confirmations of the particular narrative (which one must accept as a phrenologist or astrologist) based on conclusions drawn from the 'data' accumulated when doing phrenology or astrology. Any observation or fact which can confirm the pervading narrative is seen as proof of the narrative's legitimacy, on the other hand the narrative cannot be falsified by anything since any objection can be explained away by the *ad hoc* operation of the narrative itself. The formation of a body of data is itself insufficient to give an account of a theory, it only gives a trivial veneer of epistemic authority.

In contrast, Popper's formulation is able to exclude the pseudosciences: their epistemic authority is eliminated because their hypotheses are not even testable, they occupy the lowest rung of the epistemic hierarchy insofar as they relate to scientific claims, in that they are 'Not



Karl Popper

even wrong' (that is, a statement which can be neither correct nor incorrect as the idea posited failed to even meet the criteria by which correctness or incorrectness, is determined) (Peierls, 1960, 174-192). Current pseudoscientific fields such as astrology, homeopathy and alchemy were once what could be called 'protosciences'. Here we shall define a protoscience as a field which emerged before the scientific method was developed, and thus due to the scientific method and Popper's solution to the demarcation problem, have now been relegated as pseudosciences. The currently understood foundations of fields such as alchemy and astrology have been proven wrong and thus when one tries to add actual science to their reasoning for their perceived validity of these fields they often find

themselves being 'not even wrong'.

Ideas that are proven incorrect are useful, progress can be made by virtue of constructing a theory, challenging it and demonstrating it is incorrect or incomplete. Pseudoscience is illegitimate because it is useless, no advance or improvement of knowledge can be drawn from its operation (Popper, 1957, 162-165); in other words it is not able to predict or react to corrections or new observations which challenge its legitimacy, resulting in pseudoscience being conceptually fixed and epistemically inward. This lack of intellectual agility inherent in pseudoscience manifests itself in its absorption of unfalsifiable claims, taking it beyond the bounds of knowledge, in terms of what can and cannot be known about the universe whereas a Popperian scientific theory being dynamic in nature avoids this default altogether. Therefore, Popper's formulation is able to make this crucial distinction between science and pseudoscience which inductivism cannot highlighting its superior utility.

Falsifiability is in a sense a fragile criterion in terms of determining what one needs to falsify a theory – one need only find a legitimate counterexample or phenomena which the theory did not predict in order for a re-evaluation or total replacement of the current theory to occur. This makes current theories acutely sensitive to even the slightest challenge, which counter-intuitively elevates the epistemic authority of current theories which persist and ones the ones which legitimately replace them. This ability to identify what is needed to challenge an idea is a strength in the Popperian formulation. Further, what follows from this is that there is a democratization of knowledge in which anybody can participate in scientific inquiry although only legitimate conjectures are considered; this balancing of factors in Popper's formulation allows challenges from within the area of knowledge that that theory is founded on as well as those from another area of science the ability exploit isomorphisms in nature through heuristics they have already acquired elsewhere and laterally apply their expertise in another field, allowing novelty, creativity and collaboration to form part of scientific inquiry.

This accounts for the multidisciplinary character of modern scientific research. Take for example the determination of the structure of DNA by two people who trained as physicists (Crick and Wilkins) working with a molecular biologist (James Watson), where they used the physical and chemical principles and methods of X-ray crystallography to derive the double helix. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, neuroscience necessitates the need for knowledge at different levels of abstraction, therefore in order to form a comprehensive account of brain function at each scale one must engage in principles and methods from a suite of scientific disciplines.

However, it should be noted that exposing the theory to a wider intellectual audience for scrutiny and therefore potential legitimate methods of falsification does not necessarily make falsifying the claims any easier, as a potential challenger would have to be familiar with the field in order to be well acquainted with the minutiae of the corpus of knowledge which makes up the theory.

#### Conclusion:

Karl Popper's formulation provides the most accurate descriptive and normative account of how scientific knowledge is reached and how science is and should be conducted. He has given a novel solution to the problem of induction (denying its utility altogether) by challenging old assumptions and theories and has also given an accurate account of the social, creative and inventive elements of science, which is elegantly analogous to Popperianism itself. Future work will further explore the issue of the demarcation of science and pseudoscience, by way of comparing and contrasting Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn, and their approaches to explaining and solving this problem.

**References:**

Chalmers, A. *What Is This Thing Called Science?* Queensland University Press and Open University Press, 1976.

Cooter, R. *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organization of Consent in Nineteenth Century Britain.* Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Cover, J.A and Curd, M. *Philosophy of Science: The Central Issues.* Ch. 'Why Astrology Is a Pseudoscience' by Thagard. W. W. Norton & Co. 1998

Deutsch, D. *The Fabric of Reality, the Science of Parallel Universes and it's Implications.* Viking Adult 1997.

Jones, J. *Kitzmiller V. Dover Area School District.* 400 F. Supp. 2d 707 (M.D. Pa. 2005).

Peierls, R.E. *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society: Ernst Wolfgang Pauli* 5. 174-192, 1960.

Popper, K. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery.* Routledge Classics 2002.

Popper, K. *Philosophy of Science: A Personal Report.* British Philosophy in Mid-Century 1957.

**Affiliations:**

William Godfrey L.L.B

Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland, St. Lucia 4072, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Christopher N Haggarty-Weir B.Sc(BioMed), M.Mol.Biol, Ph.D

Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, 1G Royal Parade, Parkville 3052, Victoria, Australia.

University of Melbourne, Department of Medical Biology, Parkville 3010, Victoria, Australia.

University of Edinburgh, EaStCHEM School of Chemistry, Joseph Black Building, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3FJ, Scotland, United Kingdom.

Corresponding author: Christopher N Haggarty-Weir, [C.N.Weir@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:C.N.Weir@sms.ed.ac.uk).

## Beautiful Souls - Ian James Kidd

Many ancient philosophical traditions maintained that virtuous people manifest a distinctive sort of beauty. Plato and Plotinus talked of a ‘beautiful soul’, one that radiates wisdom and virtue. Confucius aspired to the ‘harmony and ease’ of a ‘consummate’, morally excellent character, while the Buddha described the distinctive, radiant beauty enjoyed by monks and nuns. Other traditions speak of ‘charisma’, ‘magnetism’, and a morally-inflected ‘charm’ of certain exemplars of virtue. Such talk is often met, these days, with scepticism or suspicion. To describe someone as having an ‘inner beauty’ or ‘lovely personality’ is, at best, a polite tribute to the unlovely, or a kiss of death, at worst. The very idea of an ‘aesthetics of character’ – of an ‘inner’, moral beauty – therefore no longer enjoys the esteem it once did. But that is a pity, since for the ancient Greeks, Indians and Chinese, a primary aim of philosophical practice was the cultivation of a morally beautiful character. A virtuous, consummate, or enlightened life is marked, not only by moral excellence, but also by an aesthetic enhancement. Inner beauty, one might say, represents the good in human form, and is for that reason a source of delight, pleasure and joy.

I am sympathetic to the idea of inner beauty, and of its close relation to philosophical life. To make these thoughts plausible, though, we need a better understanding of the relationship between virtue and beauty. After all, the things we find beautiful – sunrises and sonatas, paintings and places – are concrete things, available for sensory experience. Souls, character, and virtue, by contrast, are not – or, at least, not as obviously. Fortunately, those ancient advocates of inner beauty explained to their disciples the relationship between virtue and beauty. Indeed, what we see in the writings of those traditions are, first, accounts of the inner beauty of various sages, who, second, explain for us what that beauty consists of. Put another way, they offer examples of, and explanations for, inner beauty. Those explanations invoke *virtues*.

Philosophical ways of life naturally involve virtues. Platonism, Confucianism, and Buddhism are replete with a variety of virtues. Some are of a general kind, like courage and truthfulness, while some are peculiar to certain traditions, as ‘filial piety’ is for the ancient Chinese. But though the table of the virtues might vary, the general conviction that living philosophically means, among other things, cultivating a set of virtues is held in common. Just as courage is a virtue for soldiers, and care and compassion are for nurses, so, too, the philosopher has their own set of virtues. Truthfulness, courage, integrity, tranquillity, sociability, wisdom – the list is a long one, but these are the qualities we see in figures like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Buddha, Confucius, Zhuangzi, and other sages. An important dimension of virtue, stressed by these figures, is that it shows itself in one’s conduct and comportment. Truthfulness shows itself in speech, courage in behaviour, humility in posture, and so on. Put another way, one’s virtues can be perceived, in one’s posture, stance, acts, gestures, facial expressions, and demeanour. The *Analects* of Confucius, for instance, is filled with descriptions of his behaviour, mannerisms, and ways of acting, right down to how he would greet a guest or arrange his mat before sitting. Such virtuous forms of comportment are, I want to suggest, as much aesthetic as moral in their nature: or, better, they dissolve a familiar, modern distinction between the aesthetic and the moral, between beauty and goodness. In so doing, they help us understand moral beauty.

Consider the Buddha, who, according to witnesses, was ‘radiant in his beauty’, of a sort able to inspire people to ‘devote’ themselves to his and ‘offer reverence’. A man reports how he came to faith in the Buddha by witnessing his serene calm during a storm at sea, marvelling at ‘one able to live life in such peace’. Disciples of the Neoplatonist, Plotinus, reported that, when he spoke, ‘his mind was manifest’ in his ‘countenance, which radiated light’, and was ‘lovely to see’, indeed, ‘beautiful’. So attractive, in fact, that many people were inspired to go and live or study with Plotinus in his school, so powerful was the sense of beauty that he radiated. Similar remarks have been made about other sages, from ancient times to the modern age. Often the language is of a ‘charisma’, ‘radiance’, or ‘magnetism’, of a palpable energy that one can feel radiating from the sage, something attractive that inspires delight, even joy.

In some cases, the beauty of these virtues was of a more familiar physical, even erotic sort. The Buddha, for instance, was reputed to be very physically attractive and handsome. But others, like Plotinus, were not, being physically unexceptional. Socrates, famously, was potbellied and rather ugly in looks. So inner beauty is not outer, physical beauty. Nor could it be, given that these sages were typically critical of beauty as defined erotically or sensually, as something apt to inspire vices like vanity and greed, undermining the self-discipline that the philosophical life requires.

Inner beauty, explain the sages, relates to virtue. Plotinus says that ‘genuine’ beauty, in a person, resides in the ‘integrity of their soul’ as shown in the ‘noble conduct’ – their truthful speech, gentle manner, and so on. The Buddha explains that beauty, for a monk, is found in their ‘rightness’ and ‘restraint’ they show in their ‘conduct’, in their ‘perfect behaviour and habits’ – their friendly smiles, tranquil demeanour, and wholesome charm. Indeed, in the Buddhist monastic manuals, the virtues are always characterised in both moral and bodily terms. Faith, for instance, requires ‘removal of the mind’s purities’, manifested in calm comportment, free from expressions of ‘craving’. Tranquillity involves a ‘quieting of disturbances’, like sensual craving and erotic lusts, and shows itself in ‘peacefulness and coolness’ in conduct.

Based on such remarks, we can say that the beauty of the philosophical sage is a matter of their virtues – of the ‘integrity’ of their soul’ – as it shows in their habits, conduct, behaviour, and demeanour. It is, one might say, an ‘inner beauty’ of the mind or soul: or, if you don’t like those terms, a moral beauty, a beauty of character. That is to be expected given that the sage is a person who is (or almost is) morally excellent, authentically virtuous, and enlightened. As they become more virtuous, so they become more morally beautiful – more ‘radiant’, as Plotinus’ disciplines put it.

But this might sound odd. For isn’t the word ‘beauty’ more at home in the world of sense experience – of things seen, heard, and felt, like sunsets and sonatas? The worry is that ‘soul’ or ‘mind’ sound too abstract, too ‘inner’, to be properly talked about using the language of beauty, which is rooted in the ‘outer’ world, of things as available to our senses.

The worry is a good one, but it can be met if one can somehow connect the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’. An effective way to do that is to say that talk of ‘inner beauty’ is only legitimate when our virtues or ‘excellences’ find ‘outer’ expression in things that we can see, hear, and feel. Now, that is exactly what those ancient traditions give us: for they explained that the beauty of sages is to be found in the demeanour and conduct – in kind facial expressions,

compassionate gestures, gentle tones of voice. In these sorts of behaviour, we see, hear, and feel the virtues that constitute a person's character. That is why those Buddhist monastic manuals describe not only the 'psychology' of the various virtues, but also the sorts of bodily conduct that go with them.

A beautiful soul, then, is not something that we sense through some strange 'sixth sense'. It is something that we see, hear, and feel in and through the bodily behaviour of the beautifully souled person; put another way, we see and hear and feel the virtues that a person has – or, indeed, their vices. For we do see malice in a person's face, cruelty in their voice, and can sense contempt in how a person acts. As Ludwig Wittgenstein once put it, the human body offers the best picture of the human soul. The fact that our bodily conduct – our gestures, speech, demeanour, voice – does express our character, our virtues and vices, is evident in the fact that it is otherwise very difficult to explain how we do come to know about the characters or 'souls' of the people around us.

The process of 'reading' a person's character off their behaviour is not infallible, of course. A person might *look* unsociable because they have had a bad day, or they suffer the pain of chronic illness, or they are just not naturally gregarious in their manner. (I am often told that, if you see me in the street, I look quite stern and unfriendly, but usually that's because I'm deep in thought!) But this just means that we should not rush to judge a person's character on the basis of a quick glance. In most cases, it takes time to get to know a person, encountering them over and over, at different times and among different people. Perhaps you find a colleague to be cold and distant, but only because he is intimidated by the boss at work – so meet them out of work, and their friendliness and spontaneity can show itself. Indeed, if we take the care not to prejudge people and to be proactive in getting to know them, we might find that they in fact have a beautiful soul – even if it takes care, effort, and patience to get to know it. Since care, effort, and patience are virtues, too, then we can say that there can be beauty in coming to perceive the beauty in others.

Suppose, though, that a critic is still not quite persuaded. Maybe they have had experiences of those with what I called a 'beautiful soul', even if only occasionally. But why talk about that person as being *beautiful*, rather than just 'good' or 'virtuous'? Why not just say that the Buddha and Plotinus were enlightened and wise, rather than add 'beauty' into the mix? And why do we also use an aesthetic vocabulary to describe not only virtuous people, but vicious ones, too – as when we say, of a horrible person, 'Oh, I can't bear to look at him! He's so repellent!'

There are different ways to answer that question, but the best one, perhaps, is that given by the ancient traditions. I said, at the start, that they recognised a triad of values, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. But they also recognised the unity of those values. Rather than being three separate values, they form a tight set. In the West, it has been popular, for instance, to explain the relationship of the Beautiful and the Good by arguing that we desire and long for that which is, or that remind us of, the Good. 'Beauty', as one modern philosopher says, 'is the object of longing'. To find something beautiful is to long for it, to yearn for it, and the reason for such longing and yearning is, ultimately, our desire to possess or relate to or unify with that which is Good. I find certain natural places beautiful, not simply because they are pretty to look at, but because they invoke in me a sense of peace, calm, and stillness – those qualities being ones that I associate with the Good. But those qualities can be found in people, too, and I find beautiful those friends of mine who are peaceful, calm, and still. The beauty isn't of an erotic or sexual sort, but nor is there any

reason to narrowly define Beauty in those terms. Certainly that is not what the ancient sages did, when praising as beautiful people who are good, virtuous, holy, or enlightened, rather than those who are conventionally physically attractive.

We can say, then, that a philosophical life does have a special relationship to the Beautiful, as well as to the True and the Good. This relationship is of the most intimate sort possible – for the sage does not just appreciate or enjoy Beauty, but by cultivating and expressing their virtues, they become Beautiful, by virtue of their beautiful mind, soul, or character. If so, to really live as a philosopher is not to learn certain arguments or develop certain doctrines or master a sort of cleverness. Instead, it is to develop and exercise certain virtues that, when expressed in one's life, are deeply and genuinely Beautiful. Not everyone will be able to see a beautiful soul, of course, since it takes care, effort, patience, and an overcoming of the flatter conceptions of beauty as, essentially, sexiness or sensuality that are popular today. If a beautiful soul is only visible to those with certain virtues, though, then that is perhaps not such a bad thing. It lends to the beautiful soul a degree of intimacy or distinction that, I think, adds to its specialness and importance. It also ensures that the truly beautifully souled people will only be visible to each other.

Ian James Kidd  
ian.kidd@nottingham.ac

## A Philosophers' Quiz - set by J. L. H. Thomas

### Famous last words

*(Alternative last words are recorded of several philosophers.)*

The first of three parts.

Which philosopher's reputed famous last words were:

1. 'We owe Aesculapius a cock: please offer it, and don't forget.'
2. 'I am about to take my last voyage, a great leap in the dark.' / 'I am taking a fearful leap in the dark.' / 'I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world at.'
3. 'It is good/enough.'
4. 'I have sought truth sincerely in a disinterested fashion.' / 'The last word of philosophy is not "to become" but "to do", and in doing to make oneself.'
5. 'My name and memory I leave to foreign nations, and to mine own after some time has passed over.'
6. 'The great mountain must crumble, the strong beam must break, and the wise man wither away like a plant.' / 'There is no prince who will make me his master: my time has come to die.'
7. 'I have not written or taught anything for thirty years which I did not consider true and conformable to the thought of St Thomas.'
8. 'Elizabeth !'
9. 'Just when men are beginning to live, they die.'
10. 'I am dying at my work.'
11. 'You know that I have done my work.' / 'My work is done.'
12. 'I now feel that I am dying; our care must be to minimise pain.'
13. 'Give the boys a holiday.'
14. 'You may go home; the show is over.'
15. 'I am going to see the sun for the last time.' / 'My dear wife, be so kind as to open the window so that I may have the pleasure of seeing the greenery once more.' / 'See the sun whose smiling face calls me, see that immeasurable light. There is God ! Yes, God himself, who is opening his arms and inviting me to taste at last the eternal and unchanging joy.'

16. 'It is today, my good friend, that I am to perform the *salto mortale*.' / 'Do let me die in peace.' / 'In God's name, let me die in peace. What, the flames already?'
17. 'A dying man can do nothing well.'
18. 'The mountain is passed, we are going better.'
19. 'See me safe up; for my coming down, I can shift for myself.' / 'My beard has not offended the king.'
20. 'We perish, we disappear, but the march of time goes on for ever.'

**Answers will appear in the next edition of *The Philosopher*, (Autumn 2017)**