

# SHARE

PHILOSOPHY SHARING FOUNDATION

Issue 14

November 2020



An Interview with Philip Carr Gomm  
Philosophy of Law  
Blasphemy  
A Philosophical Manifesto

Coronavirus and Philosophy  
The Order of Chaos  
Easeful Death  
Martial Arts

€ 5.00

# SHARE

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ISSUE 14 - NOVEMBER 2020

The fourteenth edition of SHARE magazine was published against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. The magazine SHARE felt it would be most appropriate at this moment in time to obtain some philosophical viewpoints on how philosophy can help humanity in this time of crisis. We thank all the fourteen contributors who kindly offered to share with us their valuable insights. This was indeed a novel feature of SHARE magazine and something that will be pursued in future editions.

Another interesting feature of the magazine is the interview that was conducted with English psychologist and writer Philip Carr-Gomm. Philip was scheduled to deliver a talk in October 2020 on 'Embodied Awareness and Sense of Self' but this had to be postponed to an undetermined date in 2021 due to the Covid-19 measures. There are other interesting articles on blasphemy, the order of chaos and the philosophy behind martial arts. The magazine also covers two recent publications – *Easeful death* by Marta Obiols Fornell and *The Philosophy of Law* by Silvio Meli.

Finally the magazine SHARE launched in this issue an experimental project to stimulate discussion on a manifesto that can address certain public policy areas from a philosophical perspective. The Foundation believes that philosophy can be effective if it contributes certain thinking on how we ought to live and organise our societies on economic, political and social terms. We are always delighted to receive any comments and feedback. They can also be posted in the forum of our website [www.philosophysharing.org/forum](http://www.philosophysharing.org/forum).

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We invite any person to submit an article on SHARE. Any subject matter may be dealt with but articles must be of a philosophical nature, in English and no longer than 1,000 words. References, if any, are to be placed within the text. It shall be the sole prerogative and responsibility of the Editor to determine which contributions to include or exclude from the magazine. The ideas expressed in the authors' articles represent their views and may not necessarily reflect or concur with the views of the board members of the Philosophy Sharing Foundation.

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## 2020 - A Year to remember or to forget?

Many people have been constantly following and posting on social media to comment about all the upheaval caused by Covid-19 during the year while expressing their hopes for an imminent return to normality. But the painful images of the Covid-19 experienced during the year - deserted places during lock-down, people wearing masks, mass coffins lined up for burials without funerals - will remain stuck in human memory for years to come.

In this fourteenth edition of SHARE magazine we asked various philosophers and academics to express their views on how philosophy can help humanity to cope with the exigencies of such a crisis. From the insightful answers that have been offered from a very broad perspective, I would like to offer my own personal reflections.

It cannot be denied that 2020 was a year of crisis. However one must not forget that at times it is thanks to the effect of such a crisis that we have been forced to suspend our daily habitual thinking and find some time to refresh our philosophical insights.

Let us take for example the emergency measures that were introduced by governments worldwide to combat the Covid-19 crisis. Is it legitimate for the Government to impose lock-downs and limit freedom of movement to safeguard the health of some individuals? Can people in exercising their right to freedom of action behave in ways that other people deem to be reckless and detrimental to the common good? Are the people in favour or against government policy truly inspired by the ideas they believe in, or is this crisis another smoke screen for the promotion of their hidden agendas?

While refraining from entering into the merits of any particular case, I would like to highlight how the study of philosophy can prevent us from walking into a blind alley that attempts to defend one position to the detriment of the other. The most important contribution that philosophy can give to humanity is the way it enables a dialectical reflection on how arguments are constructed and evaluating their consequence.

The year 2020 might be remembered as the year that in spite of all the hardships and sacrifices all humans had to endure, it provided at the same time the opportunity to reflect deeply on our lives and the socially constructed view of reality.

# How can Philosophy help us in this time of coronavirus?

SHARE Magazine asks some philosophers and academics how philosophy could help us in these troubled times of the Covid-19 pandemic. Here are their responses.

## Joe Friggieri

In direct contrast with Hume, Covid-19 offers a clear example of how an ought can follow from an is. Knowing how dangerous the virus can be, and how fast it travels, entails the moral obligation on the part of adults to protect themselves against it and avoid spreading it. No actions are purely self-regarding. As social beings, we form part of a community to which we owe a wide range of benefits and for whose

well-being we should feel responsible. By taking the necessary precautions to preserve our own health, we are also at the same time minimising the risk of others contracting the disease through our actions or omission.

*Prof Joe Friggieri is a professor of philosophy at the University of Malta and is also a poet, playwright and theatre director.*

## Mark Montebello

In a neo-liberal world which excessively exults individuality, in a globalised world which adulates everything American, the pandemic respectively demonstrated that our future depends more on cooperation than mutual estrangement, and that the United States is woefully fallible and is, to say the least, just one, not the world player. In other words, the pandemic might have put us in better perspective.

As a minimum, it halted the runaway of those who, forsaking the probability of change, just saw the future as an inevitable or obvious prolongation or extension of the present. In other words, more fragmentation, more individualism, more isolation; and more USA, more Western capitalism, more post-Fordism. The lack of imagination which this mind-set has plagued us with, the dearth of alternative ideas for the status quo, the very absence of politics, all of this caused the pandemic to surprise us.

Covid-19 exposed the unreality of a world to which we assigned a fantasised construction; it showed our pretended world for what it is; it reminded us, lest we forget, that what in the first place made us what we are as a human race, and that which will bring us through any hardship, was and remains the mutual aid we proffered to each other on an equal playing-field. The post-covid-19 world should hopefully reflect these revelations. They are, after all, the tenets that philosophy has always imparted, and for which innumerable minds have splendidly dedicated themselves for the wellbeing and betterment of humankind.

Terrible as it is, covid-19 might prove to be our benefactor yet. Not by its havoc, of course, as with its admonitions. We only have to heed, as always.

*Rev. Dr Mark Montebello is a philosopher, author and visiting lecturer at the University of Malta. He has set up various foundations including the Philosophy Sharing Foundation.*

## Kurt Borg

Since antiquity, philosophy has suffered from a bad reputation: of being a fruitless activity, or of being gratuitous speculative thinking detached from the responsibilities and realities of everyday life. But this could not be farther from the truth. Humans have turned to philosophy in times of personal and social crises as a source of solace, consolation or inspiration. Humans have sought philosophy as a practice of the self, a mode of healing, a form of therapy, and a way of life. Especially in the present moment of the pandemic we are living through, philosophy can help us by being a reminder on various counts.

Philosophy is a reminder of our human, all too human condition, an embodied situation that subjects us to love and care or, conversely, to violence, illness, infection and forces that reveal our vulnerability and the limits of agency. Philosophy is a reminder of our being in the world, our being with others – with friends as well as strangers – that marks the fragility of social bonds and the precariousness

of cohabiting the world. Philosophy is a reminder of our ethical ties with others, ties we actively seek as well as those which implicate us in the lives of others without our choosing. Philosophy is a reminder of the politics of life and death, whereby some lives are allowed to flourish at the expense of others for whom life is rendered unbearable, whereby some lives are more exposed to death than others, and whereby one's breath can be extinguished by a lack of support and sustenance. Ultimately, doing philosophy in the present time of crisis is to apprehend what is at stake when we speak of care of the self and for others.

In an age when the vices of accelerationism, calculability and instrumentalism continue to plague us, the space for urgent transformative thinking and affectivity that philosophy promises can help us now as ever.

*Dr Kurt Borg is a lecturer in Philosophy of Education at the Department of Education Studies, University of Malta.*

## Marta Obiols Fornell

All of us might have heard at some point the funny and bitter diagnosis about life as a sexually transmitted disease with a 100% mortality rate. During this virus outbreak, it looks like death has become a reality among us. Death is constantly on the news as we watch in fear and anxiety with eyes wide open. Every day we ask: 'How many deaths or infected people have been reported today, here or in any other place? It seems like the virus has become 'the' enemy, in absolute terms.

I am just wondering if once the pandemic is over, we will be disappointed as we will still die of another health condition. This is not to imply that I do not take the current situation seriously.

On the contrary, with the aid of philosophy, we can question what is going on, try to broaden the perspective, identify the enemy and see what price we are prepared to pay in order to be protected from our enemy. The question 'How do I want to live my life', should never be displaced from our horizon, even if it is not possible to live as we desire. At least, philosophy always offers us the chance to think about life and question it continuously.

*Marta Obiols Fornell is a graduate in philosophy and ex-chairperson of the Philosophy Sharing Foundation. She currently manages the Arthall in Victoria, Gozo.*

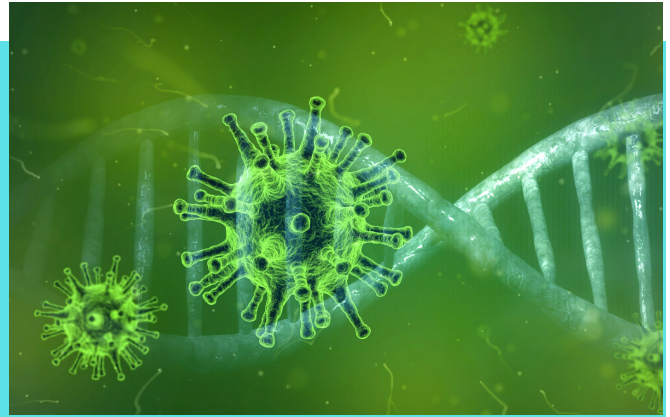


## Stephen Law

What has philosophy got to do with Covid? Here are some obvious answers. Philosophy involves taking a step back and questioning what we ordinarily take for granted. This can be a disturbing experience. In our day-to-day lives we live in a small bubble of concerns - whether or not to see friends, what to have for dinner, whether to buy a new car, where to go on holiday this year. Philosophy encourages us to massively expand the range of questions we are asking. We may find ourselves considering why there is *anything* at all, perhaps. Or whether robots could think and feel. Or whether there's life beyond death. Or what makes things morally right or wrong.

As Wittgenstein points out, pressing philosophical questions can cause a sense of intellectual vertigo. I *thought* I knew I had an immaterial soul (or that I am an entirely material being). I *assumed* that I could justify my moral beliefs. I *supposed* I knew there was an external world and that there are minds other than my own. But then I read a little philosophy and suddenly these beliefs may be thrown into serious doubt. What I took to be the firm ground beneath my feet - the foundations of my worldview - can suddenly vanish leaving me suspended over a terrifying void.

Large scale threatening and destabilising events - such as financial crashes, pandemics, and huge natural disasters - can have a similar effect on us. They too can starkly confront us with life's bigger questions - about life and death, the meaning and purpose of our lives, our duties to others, and whether we are good or bad people. As a result of Covid, many of us who would have been focused on a pretty narrow envelope of perhaps quite trivial concerns suddenly find ourselves staring up at the ceiling in the middle of the night and fretting about these much bigger questions.



Of course, religion has traditionally stepped in to provide us with answers to such questions. Religions tell us what's morally right and wrong, how to lead meaningful lives, what we essentially are, what our purpose is. Religion gives us a clearly defined place in the grand scheme of things. However, Westerners are increasingly finding the answers offered by mainstream religion to be implausible, and sometimes even immoral. So where else might we turn for answers?

The answer, of course, is philosophy. However, unlike religion, philosophy doesn't just tell you the answers. Rather, it gives you a tool kit so that you are better placed to figure out the answers for yourself. The philosophical toolkit involves applying reason calmly and dispassionately as far as we are able, of course. It also encourages good habits of mind - including not just believing what it would be most *convenient* or *reassuring* to believe but trying to figure out what's true.

Philosophy also provides us with a vast resource in terms of ideas and suggestions when it comes to finding answers. There are philosophers who have some pretty interesting advice to offer when it comes to dealing with worry, stress, and disasters like Covid, for example (the Stoics, most obviously). So, why not try a little philosophy during lockdown?

*Dr Stephen Law is an honorary research fellow at Roehampton, editor of Think magazine and author of many books on philosophy.*



## Philip Larrey

The recent pandemic concerning covid-19 has taught us many lessons, on a global scale. What has provoked my thinking most has to do with the 'digital revolution'. New technologies are transforming so much of our lives every day. One technology, in particular, continues to capture headlines constantly, i.e., artificial intelligence.

Two realities emerge from the pandemic in terms of digital technology: one positive and one negative.

The positive aspect stemming from the pandemic has to do with the drastic increase in digital communication. Not being to meet personally or congregate as groups, we have been forced to communicate through digital means. The year 2020 will be known as the year of Zoom, Webex, Meets and so on. It will be remembered as the year in which Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon became the richest person on the planet. The digital giants grew even more because of the various lockdowns around the globe. Covid has taught us that "smart working" can (and will) replace so many dimensions of the normal work force: so much so, that we will probably never return to how things were before. Software companies are selling their physical buildings because they no longer will use them.

Twitter has announced that all of their employees can work from home even after the state of emergency has been lifted.

The negative aspect coming from the experience of the pandemic has shown us the limits of digital technology. New technologies are not our present-day Messiahs. Just how a tiny, invisible clump of molecules wreaked havoc on the world boggles the mind. For all of our know-how and technological progress, an infinitely small virus taught us that we are still in the infant stage when it comes to biological organisms. Our finest minds and greatest scientists have not come up with an instant and effective cure.

Conquering this virus will take time, just like all things which are truly human. There are simply no quick remedies and effortless solutions. Our bodies are not biological machines: they are so much more and so much more complex. So many promises and predictions have not panned out, and we are forced to recognise our fragile, yet supremely unique, biological make-up.

*Rev. Dr Philip Larrey is the dean of the Department of Philosophy at the Pontifical Lateran University. His publications deal with the philosophy of knowledge and critical lateral thinking.*





## Alexander Gungov

If we take seriously Gilles Deleuze's conviction that philosophy deals predominantly with concepts and is in charge of creating the universal concepts, this can shed light on the current covid-19 situation from a philosophical perspective. One of the most popular concepts since the beginning of the pandemic is 'social distancing.' It has acquired the rank of a philosophical concept determining our world outlook today. By social distancing is actually meant physical distancing. Apparently, keeping two metres distance is a physical distancing. However, do we really want to weaken our social ties and distance from each other socially? No, of course. Why is it called 'social distancing' then and not 'physical distancing?' Just because it has become a philosophical concept, which touches the profound grounds of our thinking about society.

Only on the surface, it seems that members of society are human beings linked by social ties. Looking deeper, it becomes crystal clear that members of society are statistical units as I tried to show in my 2016 public lecture at the University of Malta. Statistical units (voters, creditors, taxpayers, protestors, Covid-19 transmitters, etc.) by their very nature are isolated because they are atomized; they are linked only externally by the area of statistics they pertain to. Speaking about social distancing we unveil the real status of members of society, their being statistical units.

The above conclusion is confirmed by yet another timely concept aiming at the philosophical essence of current globalized society, 'self-isolation.' Self-isolation is not simply staying under quarantine. Being self-isolated is a part and parcel of what today means to be a social individual. 'Social distancing' and 'self-isolation' are two mutually complementary concepts. It is paradoxical that taking care of individual society members and the society as a whole leads to exhausting their social substance and transforming them into a material for statistics reports. The solution of this paradox could be abandoning and overcoming the unilateral approach to humans as sheer biological bodies and restoring their status of social beings and human persons.

Along the same lines of thought, philosophy might turn out capable of bringing some hope during this pandemic. Discussing the Covid-19 discourse, which unmask the statistical unit status of social individuals, we might succeed in starting pondering philosophically this problem and figuring out a solution to the present dehumanizing predicament.

*Prof Alexander Gungov is a professor of logic and continental philosophy at the Department of Logic, Ethics, and Aesthetics, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.*



## Francois Zammit

The term crisis, originally referred to the decisive moment of a disease, the point of recovery or tragedy. The term itself derives from the Greek word 'krisis' which means decision or choosing one possibility over another. Both of these meanings, decision and critical point, define the essence of our current state of affairs.

It is within this context that philosophy may play a pivotal role. Philosophy offers us the necessary critical and discursive tools to help us ask the right questions and to evaluate the discourse that surrounds the current pandemic. Through philosophical debate, we can ask ourselves what has led us to this situation and more importantly what lies beneath the decisions that were taken by those in positions of authority. Through ethical thinking and political analysis, we should ask the more difficult and pertinent questions. However, the ultimate role of philosophy during these trying times, is to redirect once again the myriad of debates

towards discussing the value of life. We have to bring back onto the national and international agendas the value of life as a main priority. Policies and measures taken in different places by different authorities have highlighted the precarity of the value of life. The covid-19 crisis has shown that economic inequality also translates in the unequal value ascribed to different categories of people.

It is therefore the role of philosophy to ask the pertinent and difficult questions, to diagnose the social malaises that have been further uncovered by the crisis and to evaluate the possibilities that lay ahead. Contemporary society is at a critical point and it is our collective duty to decide what potential future we want to strive for.

*Francois Zammit works in the education sector. His research explores the nexus between the ethical and political within the structures of economic and political institutions.*



'Boethius being consoled by Philosophy' –  
Mattia Preti



## Jean-Paul De Lucca

It was perhaps a fortuitous coincidence that the return to Malta of Mattia Preti's painting of Boethius being consoled by Philosophy was announced just before the first Covid-19 cases were reported here. Boethius wrote *The Consolation of Philosophy* in a situation of confinement, as he awaited the trial that led to his execution. The long philosophical tradition of '*consolatio*' may help us find comfort and happiness in adversity, accompanying us through a time of introspection and appreciation of experiences, activities, places and so on.

Preti's painting brings to my mind a very specific passage from the 6th-century text, where Lady Philosophy tells Boethius: 'If you expect to be healed, then it is necessary that you should uncover the wound' (bk 1, pr. 4). The fear of illness became very palpable over the past months, but perhaps even more deep-seated fears were exposed by the 'yet unknown' causes and consequences of the virus, which also showed us the limitations of medical science. Here too, a broad range of philosophical literature can help us think things through.

The depth of some wounds uncovered by the pandemic have little to do with the virus itself. Inequality, lack of access to rights and necessary resources, poverty, racism, loneliness, and exploitation are just some of the maladies that have harmed or killed more people than Covid-19 did.

If philosophy encourages us to think critically, then we should also be looking at how 'crises' are constructed and used to create situations where structural vices remain unacknowledged, if not justified or even exacerbated. The more common usage of the term 'crisis' could easily conceal or excuse the inadequacy of systems, states, and policies. From a philosophical perspective, the pandemic is also a time for critique.

Giorgio Agamben – a philosopher who has been very present, and controversially so, in the debate over Covid-19 – reminds us not only of the dangers of the politics of crisis, but also that the original meaning of the word (krisis) denotes a moment of decision, of judgement and choice. In medical terms, incidentally, a 'crisis' refers to a turning point. Philosophy in general, but also its specific applied branches, can certainly encourage and sustain important conversations that need to take place at a time when radical decisions need to be made on a personal level but also in the social, economic, political and other spheres. There is hope of healing – as Philosophy reminds Boethius – only if wounds are uncovered. Philosophy reminds that even a pandemic can be a moment of hope.

*Dr Jean-Paul De Lucca is a senior lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Malta.*



Valletta is completely deserted in March 2020 after Government introduced stringent rules on public gatherings to combat the covid-19 outbreak.

## Claude Mangion

The question presupposes that: (a) we know what it is that constitutes the nature of philosophy and (b) that philosophy can provide help during the time of the coronavirus crisis.

Let me elaborate on these presuppositions in the hope that they can help in answering the question: with regards to (a) I find it best to consider philosophy as a practice. I use the concept of practice to point out that the idea of philosophy as a purely reflective or contemplative process limits unnecessarily the richness of the concept of philosophy; this way of thinking usually opposes reflection to more engaging or experiential ways of living. But I include both reflection and action within the concept of practice insofar as they operate along a continuum with both holistically combined within a person's life.

With regards to (b) it is clear from the previous answer that philosophical practice can 'help' us live our lives in this time of the coronavirus crisis. I hesitate to use the word "help" as I do not want to suggest that philosophical practice can prescribe to others how they should live their lives.

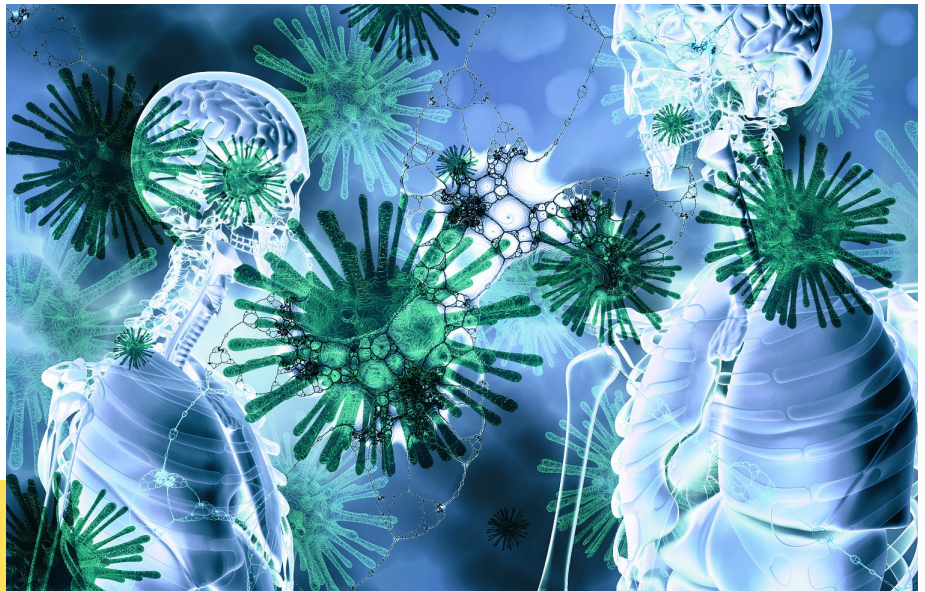
Rather, I prefer to think of the philosophical traditions that one can consult as providing a guide on how to live in this time. It is not the

first time that have been crises (and not only health related ones) in the world such that many have sought guidance: I will mention two possible ways in which philosophy can help the person deal with the situation. There is the fatalist approach: in this case, one accepts that there is something much bigger going on and that we must be resigned to the situation. This is beyond our control and therefore getting anxious about it will not change anything; rather one must find a space within oneself and focus on those things that a person finds fulfilling. The other approach might be that of indulgence: while following the instructions from the authorities, some might still find it possible to enjoy the pleasures – physical and intellectual – that life has to offer. For some, the crisis has intensified the search for and consumption of these pleasures.

But perhaps the best kind of guidance that philosophy can offer is transformative; by engaging with the philosophical tradition a person can transform his/her life into something that makes them bigger than the crisis that might overwhelm them.

*Prof Claude Mangion is a professor of philosophy and the present head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Malta.*





## Robert Farrugia

I believe that genuine philosophy can make us both sincerely rethink our way of life and also highlight our fallenness condition as creatures depended on an other-than-me. This entails that we must understand ourselves as immanent beings already open and called for transcendence. As much as I love to think that these strange days can be a gift which makes us ponder on the essence of life, we must also use philosophy as a means to reach out with compassion, care and empathy to the suffering in the world and, as gracefully as possible, make sense of it.

It would be unfortunate if philosophy comes to be understood as an exercise of the mind alone, as if the one who is philosophising, is merely coming up with new ideas and solutions. Philosophy, in its original and truest sense, I believe, must captivate our full being, placing our hearts at the centre, and help us learn to abide there and think through it whilst never losing track of transcendence. In this sense, philosophy would help us live from the inside-out,

understanding that we are together outwards as much as inwards. For philosophy ought to help us also come to terms with the pre-political realm as well! As Michel Henry, one of my favourite 20th century thinkers, would have it, 'the community is a subterranean affective layer. Each one drinks the same water from this source and this wellspring, which it itself is' (Material Phenomenology, 2008, p.133).

In these unfortunate times, one should also, of course, recourse to texts spanning from antiquity up till this very day which can really enlighten us on how to cope and live in dark times. I guess, what I would add here is that the philosopher need not be confined to texts that belong to the canonical corpus alone. The essential intuitions of philosophy can be found elsewhere: in poetry, literature and religious texts.

*Robert Farrugia is a PhD student researching in the field of phenomenology and the intersection between philosophy, theology and psychology.*



## Ian Rizzo

The question mark is the most commonly recognised symbol of philosophy as it continuously urges us to question those concepts that humans take for granted. Beyond questioning, another valuable role of philosophy is to raise awareness of why certain developments have led to the situation we find ourselves in.

The case of the coronavirus has surely brought to the fore that the destruction of the natural habitat and the abusive treatment of animals for food production, have made it much easier for viruses to be transmitted from animals to humanity. As is the case with climate change, it remains a tragic fate to this day that most of humanity remains in denial with regards to such issues concerning the natural environment. Humans tend to toil continuously in their daily lives without ever questioning whether the present economic and political systems can be maintained.

Philosophy can be of valuable help in this coronavirus crisis because it can help humanity rethink certain concepts. In this time of crisis, serious reflections on the meaning and value of our life calls for a radical review. Only then, perhaps, can we become conscious of whether we really need to keep working long hours to feed our unrestrained material wants.

Perhaps by thinking about the meaning and value of life, humanity might appreciate the need to have a better work-life balance that would in turn slow down the depletion of the earth's resources. Naturally, a better work life balance does not mean leisure that seeks to escape from the existential angst of life through the pursuit of sex, drugs and booze.

Humans must maintain a healthy work-life balance by engaging in the enjoyment of the natural world, the pursuance of artistic and creative activities or any other activity that brings a sense of tranquility to the mind - the concept of 'ataraxia' that the ancient Greek Epicurus constantly referred to. If such a path could be pursued, humanity might be ready to accept different economic and political systems that are so crucial to safeguarding our planet's resources. If we cling on to providential hope for the solution of such crises or remain plodding on with our busy and indifferent lives, we will eventually become our own gravediggers.

*Ian Rizzo is at present the deputy chair of the Philosophy Sharing Foundation.*





## Marianne Talbot

I think the best way philosophy can help through the crisis is by distracting us! It can do this either by providing reading matter that we can get our teeth into, or providing a topic that is so interesting to think about that it keeps us occupied for hours.

The trouble with this recommendation is that the details will be individual-specific. The book that will occupy one person for hours will bore another person to tears. The topic that would interest one person might go right over the head of (or be far too trivial for) another. But to offer an example, I have occupied myself during lockdown with a question posed to me by my brother: 'what do you think of Jordan Peterson?' This is a Canadian psychologist who has gained something of a reputation as a guru to young people, young men especially. The difficulty with Peterson is that he is highly controversial – especially with respect to his views on feminism and socialism.

It is difficult to get to grips with what Peterson is actually saying given hugely different interpretations of his views offered by, on the one hand, his friends, and on the

other his enemies. I have spent some of the time that lockdown has freed up for me reading Peterson's books and listening to his podcasts, and also listening to podcasts and articles written by both his friends and his enemies.

I now feel able to answer my brother in a way that satisfies me. It doesn't satisfy me as the truth about Peterson, but it enables me to offer an account of both sides of the story, and even to explain my own beliefs about his views and why I hold them (you'll notice I am not sharing these with you – why would I rob you of the chance to form your own!).

So this is what I am recommending to you – find a controversial topic that you have often wished you knew more about – and set out to find out more about it. Do not neglect to consider each side of the story, and only start to consider seriously your own views when you feel in command of both sides of the story.

*Dr Marianne Talbot is director of studies in philosophy at Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education.*



## Maxim Cassar

Any crisis, of whatever nature, brings about disruption, confusion, fear and instability. This is more so if the crisis is not simply a personal affair nor a local or national disaster but a worldwide phenomenon as is the actual coronavirus pandemic. We all know that this is not the first pandemic to hit mankind; previous pandemics include the relatively recent Avian Flu in 2009, the Spanish Flu at the end of World War I which took between 20 to 50 million people and the more distant Black Death caused by the bubonic plague in the 14th century which decimated between 75 and 200 million people.

What is different in the case of the coronavirus pandemic is the fact that it is truly a global pandemic where practically no country or nation has emerged unscathed. Every person, group, society and nation, directly or indirectly, has been affected in one way or another. The question which thus arises is 'What can we do in the face of such a global phenomenon? Where can we seek help in such a difficult time?'

Without excluding the valid contributions which such fields as medicine, psychology, psychotherapy, counselling and others still can give and are actually giving, I would like to focus my attention on the contribution which philosophy can give in these rather unusual times.

Yes, the discipline which came into being in the West in the 6th century BC can, yet another time rise to the occasion and offer valid as well as practical suggestions and recommendations.

This is corroborated by many instances in the history of Western Philosophy where the discipline was of great help in shedding a beacon of hope in very dark and obscure times. One immediate effect which Covid-19 brought about is the fact that our lives suddenly changed; what was considered normal or a matter of routine did not remain so. We had to adapt to new conditions, new routines, new way of relating and communicating with others, be they relatives, friends or colleagues.

We have to admit that no one was prepared to face such a completely new situation and thus it is not difficult to understand the uneasiness, frustration and helplessness experienced by many people. In this regard, philosophy can help us by focusing attention on what really matters in life. We have to take stock of all our choices, activities and decisions and put aside all that is incompatible with what really is at stake in such a way that we set our priorities in the right way. Issues such as health, physical and mental well-being, solidarity, human resilience should be at the top of our priorities' list. Social bonding, social cooperation and social responsibility have to lead the way through this pandemic if we want to see a ray of light at the end of the tunnel. In this way philosophy can once again be the right remedy or therapy of the soul in these difficult and unstable times.

*Dr Maxim Cassar is a lecturer in philosophy at the Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School. He is at present the chairperson of the Philosophy Sharing Foundation.*

# An Interview with Philip Carr-Gomm

*Author of over twenty books in Psychology and Druidry, founder of Druidcraft, Chief of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, and therapist, Philip Carr Gomm is another public figure who was invited by the Philosophy Sharing foundation to deliver a talk in October 2020. His visit to Malta has been postponed to next year due to the pandemic. Early this year, Ian Rizzo asked him a few questions.*

**You are a psychologist who believes strongly in the link between psychology and spirituality. Do you believe in a soul or consciousness that exists separately from the physical body and which can possibly direct our life?**

Yes! And that comes out of certain personal experiences and my preferred philosophical position of Absolute Idealism - the approach that can be found in the Dharmic traditions of the East, Neoplatonism in the West, and then, I believe, though haven't studied, more recently in the German and Anglo-American Idealisms of Schelling, Hegel, Bradley, Royce, and others.

**What arguments can you present to the materialists and physicalists who believe that the idea of spirituality is an illusion which can easily be confused with emotional states and feelings?**

The gulf between the positions of the Materialist and the Idealist is hard to bridge. Some suggest that Panpsychism offers a way, but even in the specific field of neuroscience the issue that has become known as 'the hard problem' revolves around how we understand conscious experience, so I am not sure I will be able to offer any arguments that will convince a materialist. For example, Massimo Pigliucci, Professor of Philosophy at the City University of New York, even denies the hard problem exists because in his understanding consciousness is quite clearly a biological phenomenon, whereas the whole point is that the Idealist believes quite the reverse: that biology is a phenomenon of consciousness. I once gave a talk for a fantastic project 'Philosophy in Pubs'. To be provocative and stimulate discussion (we were in a pub after all!)



I suggested the Idealist view was superior simply because it was the more pragmatic and cited the Royal College of Psychiatrists findings that a spiritual perspective is beneficial for mental health. Later, I spent an entire evening trying to convince a friend, a Professor of Physiology, to 'switch sides' from the Materialist to the Idealist camp without success, but his parting words were: "The one thing you have in your favour is that we Materialists only know about 0.5% of 'reality' - of matter. We know nothing about the nature of the 99.5% dark matter and energy that seems to be out there'. Perhaps that's where the soul resides!

**To what extent do you agree with the claims of evolutionary psychology that our behaviour is shaped and adapted for survival by genetic makeup and environmental influences ?**

Completely, but into that combination of genetic and environmental influences I would add a third factor: the driving influence of the Soul. The Jungian analyst James Hillman, in his book entitled 'The Soul's Code', has developed an interesting theory about this, which he terms the Acorn Theory. This theory turns conventional psychological understanding about the formative influence of the past on its head and suggests instead that in certain people we can see their future destiny forming them. As Rainer Maria Rilke once wrote "The future enters into us long before it happens."

**Your biographical record mentions that you have a range of interests in Wicca, Druidry and Jainism. What is your counter-arguments to the claims that these interests like other forms of religious beliefs are based on faith in a supernatural world that cannot be proved?**

My interest in these different approaches is not so much driven by religious faith as by an interest in philosophy, psychology, and the variety in human culture. But to answer the question, 'Why are you an Idealist, and believe in the reality of a non-physical world, when no proof of this can be given,' I would say: So much in our lives cannot be proved.

Perhaps some of the best parts of it. Offer proof that the person you love should be your choice, when logic tells you that someone else is more beautiful and more intelligent. Certain experiences, whether interpersonal, artistic or spiritual, can feel deeply significant, elevating, and meaningful to you in way that you cannot even fully articulate, and none of us would want to be deprived of these experiences, and yet we cannot prove precisely how or why they occurred. There are exceptions, though. The research on Near-Death Experiences is an attempt to scientifically evaluate whether human consciousness can exist separately from the body and is ongoing. And the biologist Dr Rupert Sheldrake has conducted a number of experiments in telepathy, for example, which suggest that the materialist view is quite simply inadequate.

**In your website you promote a mind/body technique known as Sophrology. What exactly does this technique consist of? How did you discover it?**

The technique consists of combining a focussed or heightened awareness with different postures and movements, which are then combined with the deliberate exercise of different cognitive functions, such as memory, imagination, visualisation and so on. It was born out of the philosophy of Phenomenology and then, via phenomenological psychiatry, a neuropsychiatrist combined these approaches with techniques he had learnt in the East, such as mindfulness meditation and yoga. I discovered it in France when I was looking for a way to incorporate more body awareness into my practice of psychotherapy. There is more information on the method in the website you mentioned: [www.sophrology.institute](http://www.sophrology.institute)



**One of your most positively reviewed books has been 'A Brief History of Nakedness'. In the opening pages of the book you ask a very illuminating question on why nakedness upsets so many people while it provides excitement to others. In what way do you think your book manages to explain why nakedness has been the cause of so many contradictory thoughts and feelings?**

Well I take a two-pronged approach I suppose: one is to use humour, because for some reason nakedness can be a very amusing affair. The second is to apply the lens of psychology. The book then explores the subject in three areas: religion, politics and culture. There are so many illustrations in the book, and many of them are so unusual and surprising I'm not entirely convinced people aren't buying it just to look at the pictures!

**Do you believe that people who espouse a naturist/nudist lifestyle share some common philosophical beliefs in the way they live? [If yes what do you think it is?]**

Yes it was quite common in the naturist world in the first half of the 20th century for people to write about the 'nudist philosophy' and the central ideas are really that (a) the lifestyle or activity promotes physical, psychological and spiritual health, and (b) that it promotes egalitarianism, that we are all equal when we are unable to use clothes as markers of status. In a way, a philosophical question prompted my whole interest in the subject. I had been walking all morning on a hot day. I came to a deserted spot in the countryside and took my shirt and trousers off to cool down. I then thought: well, I'll take everything off. But then I wondered if that act would be illegal. It was then that the question arose: 'Is simply being myself, with nothing covering me, not allowed?' If so, then that is an extraordinary and troubling fact to absorb. Out of interest, it is not illegal per se in the UK.

**Next year you will be delivering a talk to the Philosophy Sharing Foundation on Embodied Awareness and Sense of Self What do you want the audience to reflect upon after attending your talk?**

I would love the audience to leave the talk feeling somewhat liberated in their attitude towards their bodies, and perhaps with an experience of how their body awareness can act as a gateway to altered states of consciousness, which include reduced levels of anxiety and increased feelings of ease and happiness.

**Do you believe that the world is in a crisis with the problems surfacing in the last decade of the 21st Century?**

The pace of change seems to be accelerating so fast that even between the time you emailed me these questions a few months ago, and today, our knowledge of the gravity of the situation has greatly increased. A few days ago the leader of the UN conference on climate change has warned that 'the point of no return is fast approaching', and last week a group of UN Scientists issued a report warning that we may already have passed several tipping points, which means the ecosystem might be hurtling into a state which endangers not only vast numbers of humans, but even perhaps humanity itself. There are some scientists and thinkers who believe it is too late to save humanity, and James Lovelock, who developed the concept of the Earth as Gaia, before he died stated that 'the party was over' and that we may as well just enjoy ourselves because there is no way we can halt the rapid decline. It has to be said, though, that he changed his mind and in the end thought robots might take over the world and stated 'Anyone who tries to predict more than five to 10 years is a bit of an idiot, because so many things can change unexpectedly.'



This is probably not the place to go into a subject that is so tragic and existentially threatening, and hence needs more space than we have here, but I would say this: now - more than at any other time - it makes sense to consider Ontology. What is the nature of Being? Is it only the physical cosmos, or is there more to life than the material world? I adopt an approach which I call 'metaphysical absurdism' which states that much of life is absurd (just think Trump and Brexit!). It is tempting to then see all of life as meaningless. But I choose to believe that that undeniably absurd (and tragic and surreal) side of life is contained within a wider context which is meaningful, and in fact sacred or divine - hence metaphysical. And so we arrive at the perspective of Absolute Idealism (and a detail for philosophers: Cosmic Absolutism, rather than Acosmic Absolutism!)

**I would like to refer to the book *Homo Deus* of Yuval Noah Hariri in which he paints a very bleak future for humanity with computer algorithms and data banks taking control over our daily lives. What are your views on the future of humanity?**

Well, risking Lovelock's suggestion that anyone predicting the future is 'a bit of an idiot', I think it's more likely another kind of bleakness will render Hariri's vision untenable.

I'm not convinced that the majority of humanity will survive the consequences of environmental catastrophe. I fervently hope I am wrong though, and this may well be far off in the future, although as each day passes this possibility seems to move closer. I find my hope in an ancient teaching from the Dharmic traditions of the East, that sees the evolution of humanity in vast cycles of time. According to this idea, we are currently in the downward arc of a cycle that will leave just a small population on Earth. That's the bad news. But the good news is that this cycle will continue so that in thousands of years we will be on the upward swing and life will be unimaginably beautiful.

**Which favourite book of yours on philosophy would you recommend as a must-read for our readers?**

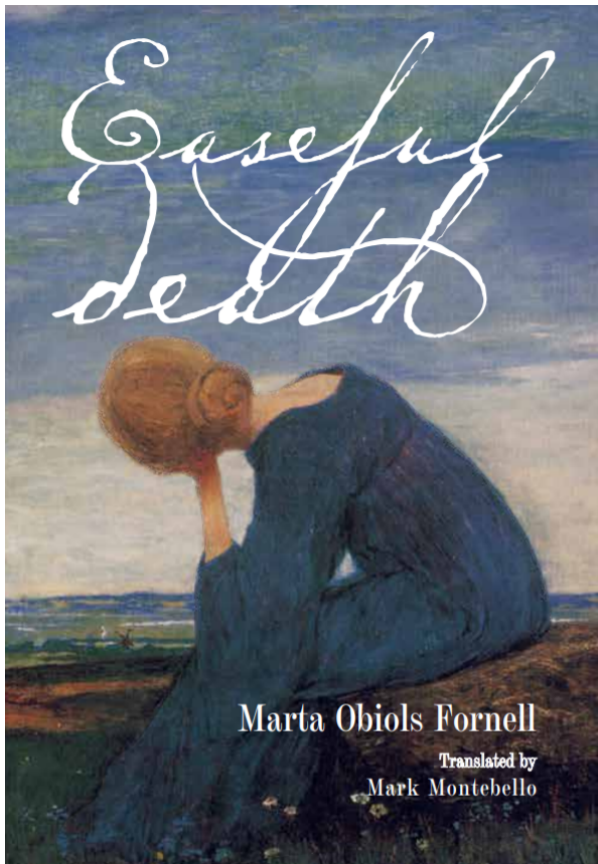
I have a great fondness for the novels of Hermann Hesse which deal with philosophical and spiritual questions in an appealing and accessible way, although I haven't read them for a while, and they might feel a little dated. I'm also fond of all of Alain de Botton's work. He seems able to combine psychological ideas with philosophical ones in a very contemporary way.

# Easeful Death - Marta Obiols Fornell

## A foreword by Mark Montebello

Published by Horizons Malta, November 2020

*Marta Obiols Fornell will have her book 'Easeful Death' officially launched on the 14th of November 2020. The book published by Horizons Malta, was originally written in Spanish and then translated into English by Mark Montebello. Marta has kindly shared the foreword of the book penned by Mark Montebello with SHARE magazine and authorised its publication.*



Evidently, it was. But I wouldn't see it. The last five days of his mortal agony, while he stalwartly clung to dear life, denying death the satisfaction to gloat, I still couldn't, wouldn't, believe the end was nigh. Only when it finally came, only when it finally came, only when it finally came, my incredulity stunned me. It wasn't just too late. It was simply ludicrous.

The thing is, how extraordinarily apt we are, we of all animals, to feign to ourselves. Our brain, our stupendous competitive edge in the animal kingdom, the bedrock of our identity natures, when confronted with the irreconcilable, goes into denial. It reverses upon itself. It doesn't simply block out what's starkly evident but actually devises a surreptitious way around it. In all earnestness, the brain deceitfully puts up its own show, one it can stomach, and, what's really startling, it candidly tricks itself into taking it for a fact. The amazing thing throughout this process is not that it is done at all but that it is genuinely believed. The brain accepts its own lies as true. In the long run, any truth is a falsehood not yet exposed.

My dear friend Lizio passed away at just thirty-five years of age. I had known him since he was eleven. Never had I imagined that I would see him go. Incredible as this might sound (certainly it is still rather incomprehensible to me), throughout his cruel six-year illness I had never, not for one single moment, believed that his passing away so soon was a probability. In fact, it was a certainty. But I couldn't see it. Neither did he. If ever there was someone in denial until the end, that was he. Throughout his final six months, beside him in hospital every single day for hours on end, I kept trusting that his condition could not be so fatal.

Perhaps all of this resonates on more than one level with what appears to be the main drift of what Marta proposes in this hauntingly austere tract you have in your hands. In some way, I find *Easeful Death* somehow echoing philosophical facets of Milan Kundera's 1984 perspicacious tale, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, or even some, albeit in a different way, of Arundhati Roy's 1997 enthralling narrative, *The God of Small Things*. Lest the stories of these narratives do not lead the hasty to miss the wood for the trees, in their own absorbing way all of them seem to insist on bringing

us face to face with perhaps the most profound of philosophical knots: the meaning of our lives; or, even more, the meaning of life itself. This would not necessarily signify that for them life in general, or our lives in particular, have any intrinsic meaning. As they generally do, life, our lives, might have a meaning ascribed to them. This, however, would only be subjective, artificial and arbitrary; signifying that life, in general as much as in particular, has no in-built, integral sense, value or direction.

This, of course, is a case for nihilism. Sartre, for one, would deign a complacent nod. Though I'm not sure Nietzsche would've. Whatever, throughout her narrative Marta presses her point for the hollowness of being more than once and in diverse ways. Perhaps without forgetting Madonna or Mr Probz, both of whom recorded Nothing-Really-Matters songs (1998 and 2014 respectively), Marta somewhat echoes more Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody and Mercury's mesmerising lyrics: "Nothing really matters. Anyone can see. Nothing really matters, nothing really matters, to me". Anyone? Yes, every single one, Marta seems to insist; if not actually seeing or realising it, for that maybe would be expecting too much from anyone, at least sensing or perceiving it deep down. And what, we might ask, does anyone make of this?

Marta's categorical answer perhaps would be: They pretend that things, or some things, do indeed matter. And so, she might add, though somehow knowing or intuiting that everything, everything, is vain (oh vanity of vanities!), we play-act, we ham it up, we lay it on, we lay it on thick. In other words, we become professional liars. If this is the case, we might additionally ask: Does anyone cease pretending? Perhaps Marta's response would be: no, most of us keep devising weightier and busier things that seem, only seem, to have some sort of inherent significance, to contain some intrinsic importance; things that matter, that matter greatly.

At this point, it looks like Marta leaves us very little options. We either lie to ourselves or ... we despair.

## *I find Easeful Death somehow echoing philosophical facets of Milan Kundera's 1984 perspicacious tale, The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

Or else, to put it more pointedly, we lie to ourselves in order not to despair. Here might be the crux of Marta's argument, her most striking thrust, the place where she reveals her greatest philosophical inquisitiveness. Not in the fact that we lie at all (pretending to be hopeful), nor that we despair (acknowledging our hopelessness), but rather that we do not despair when we know that what we believe (i.e., that life has intrinsic meaning) is manifestly false. It is with the following questions that she seems to throw down the gauntlet: How can we possibly bear masking our desperation? How can we conceivably stomach hopelessness? How can we plausibly endure the vainness? Frankly, these questions seem to draw a blank, perhaps even summoning suicide as a truly mercy killing or easeful death. Alternatively, Marta appears to propose hedonism. Mind you, not in principle, as an Epicurus would have it, nor even to mitigate despair, but merely as a relief to the insufferable ennui. Wilde would draw a smile to this, surely.

So, what of those who actually contrive the artful masking? This possibly brings us to a somewhat tricky turn in Marta's enquiry. Theism. Of course, none of what has been stated above about life's meaning or lack of it holds water for a theist. A theist would hold that God is Truth, and thereof flows sense, value and direction to all creation and life. It seems, however, that the main issue in Marta's enquiry is not God qua God but rather those presenting themselves as God's spokespersons. It looks like her quarrel is with them. In her narrative, these appear as members of an institution which Marta finds much fault with.





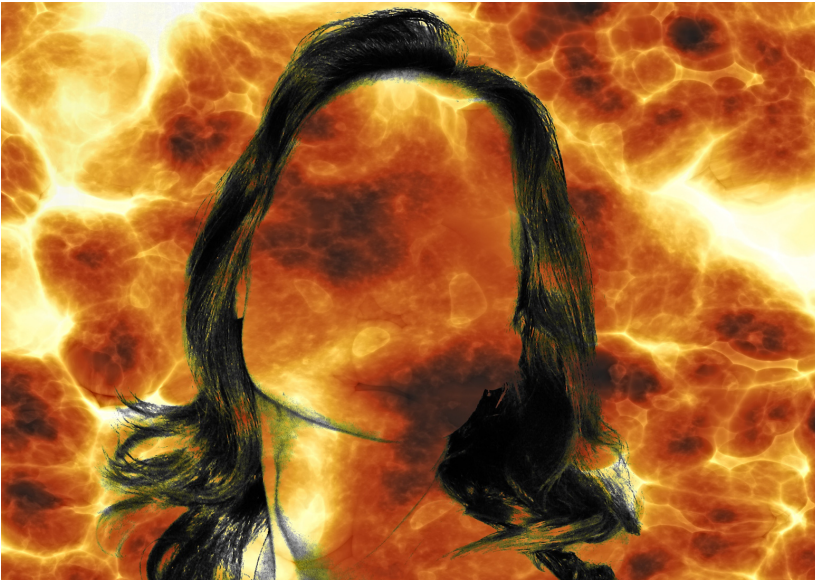
And maybe quite justifiably, for I would consider this particular institution, and many others similar to it, to be pseudo-religious. I call them so because, considering religion to be a relationship with God, such institutions only have a relationship with a god of their own fashion. Or, to put it perhaps better, their only relationship is with themselves posing as God. Though here is surely not the place to fully deal with this matter, I might just state for the record that I should think that a genuine relationship with God would not mask life's despondency, but neither would it give us cause to plumb the depths or alternatively play God.

Marta would perhaps hear none of this. Philosophically, of course, we can concur. At least for the sake of the argument. Nonetheless, God or no God, what can we make of a situation, such as the one I mentioned at the beginning, when the brain goes in denial as a natural mechanism of defence and protection. However ludicrous, or maybe foolish even, the brain certainly recognises something that matters, that has substance, that is intrinsically meaningful, when it comes face to face, so to speak, with such a thing. The brain would not react in such a dire way had it discerned the thing as meaningless or insubstantial.

In other words, things might not matter in an absolute sense (for any absolute, after all, is wishful thinking), but they nevertheless seem to matter, objectively, to life in a rather impermanent, transient or ephemeral way. Why should such an evanescent state be considered to be less substantial, or not intrinsically meaningful, than the supposedly absolute hollow one? The very fragility of life suggests this. Life, in its brittleness, tenuousness and frailty, in its ineffable tenderness and delicateness, matters in itself. It cannot be so in some subjective, artificial or arbitrary manner, surely. Neither can it therefore be senseless, valueless or purposeless. In other words, life, all life, might very well encapsulate its very own meaning and its very own significance. It might need nothing beyond itself to explain it or give it sense. Its own being suffices.

Perhaps, then, after all, being half in love with easeful death, as Keats would have it, is nothing else than being half or more in love with bubbling life. Call soft names to that, if you will, in many a mused rhyme.

*Signed copies of *Easeful Death* by the author Marta Obiols Fornell are available from Arthall at Victoria, Gozo*



# Blasphemy

By Olivier Magro

On February 14th 2020, I facilitated a talk and discussion on Blasphemy at Arthall, Gozo.

Blasphemy is a subject I've always found intriguing. I'm not one that likes to cause religious offence (if I can avoid it) and I have to admit that I personally find swearing – the mentioning of the Lord's name in vain – unnecessary and distasteful. But when a censorship board bans a theatrical production because it finds some of its scenes blasphemous then the question begs itself: why should a performance be banned because of blasphemy? Who exactly does it offend and why would someone who would find it offensive want to see the play in the first place? Who ultimately decides what is blasphemous and what isn't?

Blasphemy and the sanctions it entail have, in many ways, changed over the centuries. In biblical times, if one blasphemed (and this applied particularly in Judaism and Christianity) you offended God thereby committing a 'sin' and if you offended God you deserved to be punished by your fellow mortals. This changed over time and blasphemy morphed into something more akin to a seditious challenge to the sanctity of Law (as Law emanated from above), essentially committing an act that jeopardised public order.

The punishment varied, but whether or not it matched the severity of the offence is not only debatable but also irrelevant: you were punished. In the UK, for example, the ultimate price – the noose – was most recently paid by one young student at the University of Edinburgh in 1697 but the offence remained in the statute books for centuries and lesser punishments have been meted out.

More recently, a number of countries in the UN (coming mostly from an Islamic tradition) have promoted blasphemy laws on the basis that they arise from what they consider another human right: that not to be offended, introducing the concept of 'defamation of religions' which they consider as harmful to those offended. Respect, they would have us argue, requires us to essentially not offend – 'defame' – the religious sensibilities of others.

This is flawed for a number of reasons, most notably because it attempts to invoke a human right ('not to be offended') that is entirely subjective in its interpretation, often requiring those in government and/or with judicial powers to interpret. In effect, it tramples on the rights of others to express a contrary belief to those it purportedly offends.



Ordinarily, the language of human rights is used to protect us from those who, in a position of authority, may deprive us of those rights and not to use a 'right' to selectively deprive others of their freedom of expression. Indeed, in some cases, the very religious beliefs of a community can be considered blasphemous. Take the Ahmadiyya community as an example. When the Ahmadis employ the 'azan' (the call to prayer) they are blaspheming against conservative Sunni belief. Yet, it is part of their very own spiritual practice. Their so called 'blasphemous' behaviour is in itself not just an exercise of their own freedom of expression but an exercise of their freedom of religion or conscience. Should this right be denied to them simply because they are a minor religion?

And if I were to claim that I was a Pastafarian, a believer in the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, why should my beliefs be subjected to ridicule and why should I not be afforded the same rights? Who decides?

Whilst I alluded to an effort by Muslim countries to retain blasphemy laws it is pertinent to note that the offence of vilification of religion in Malta (and specifically the teachings of the Catholic Church) was only removed from our Statutes as recently as 2016. The Parliamentary debate at the time did feature arguments that the law should be extended (not removed) to include other religions and atheism itself precisely to protect the sensibilities of those who felt offended! The striking of the law saw the Archbishop tweet that it was indeed a 'sad day for Malta'. I point this out merely to illustrate that blasphemy laws have not been confined to Muslim nations – where blasphemy leads to violent protests in the streets.

As recently as 2019, a judge in Rio, Brazil, on a complaint, ordered Netflix to withdraw a satirical film named 'The First Temptation of Christ' in which Jesus brings home his boyfriend Orlando for a surprise birthday party. The judge argued that 'exhibiting the artistic production... may cause graver and more irreparable damage than its suspension' – the implication being that the greater good was served by its withdrawal.

**Why should a performance be banned because of blasphemy? Who exactly does it offend and why would someone who would find it offensive want to see the play in the first place?**

However, the Supreme Court found that freedom of speech was fundamental in a democracy. As the judge put it, 'One cannot suppose that a humorous satire has the ability to weaken the values of the Christian faith, whose existence is traced back more than two thousand years, and which is the belief of the majority of Brazilian citizens.' And it is precisely this latter point which struck a chord. If punishing blasphemy aims at protecting major religions, the vilification of which could purportedly lead to public disorder, how can it be claimed that the act itself weakens the values of its followers? Is faith so weak that it needs the protection of the law? As Austin Dacey put in 'The Future of Blasphemy' –

*In a pluralistic society that embraces unbelievers and religious dissenters, de jure Blasphemy Laws constitute a failure of equality before the law, for they fail to provide comparable protection of the consciences of the secular and heterodox. De facto blasphemy laws empower judicial elites – or vocal groups of citizens – to bar some viewpoints from public discourse. However, in a democracy, a free and open public discourse is a condition of the legitimacy of the state.*

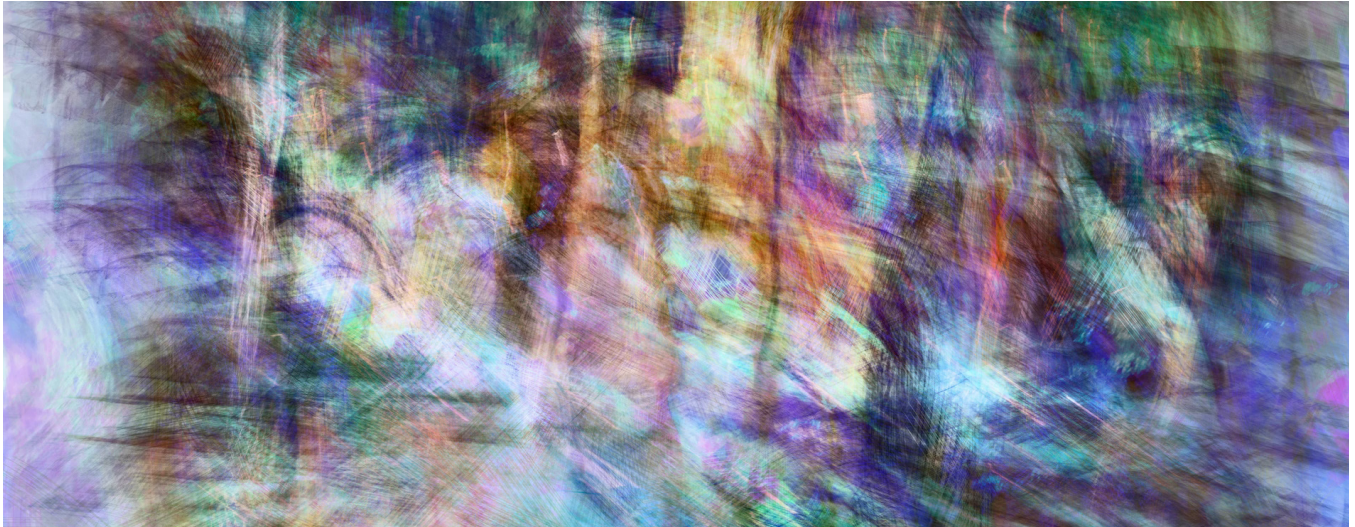
So, in conclusion, any critical utterance about practically any religion could be considered blasphemous – intentional or not. But to go beyond that and ban it, or indeed contemplate punishing it, goes a step too far.

*Dr Oliver Magro graduated in Law and Philosophy from the University of Malta with a keen interest in Law and Information Technology. He works with a number of universities worldwide on administrative and IT systems.*



# The Order of Chaos

By Sergio Muscat



*Beautiful Chaos by Sergio Muscat - The use of mathematical order to deconstruct an artwork*

Order, Chaos, Entropy What are these? We look at order as something needed, necessary for civilisation to work. But is this the case? We follow rules, we 'need' rules to feel safe. But is this really order, or an illusion?

Order, as we know it, brings monotony. Why do we need to shelter ourselves in our boxes? Why do we feel that these boxes protect us? When faced with difficult times, we see our boxes dissolve around us, and we panic.

But this could be a good thing. There is beauty in chaos, in entropy, the seemingly random organisation of things. Art is entropy. Love is entropy. Community is entropy. Life is entropy.

We see chaos as random, but what is random? Is the universe random? Maybe, possibly, but there is order in the chaos, and that creates beauty.

Society – education – has brainwashed us into associating the lack of order with 'wrong' – chaos is dangerous, they tell us. Anarchy is what you get when there is the complete dissolution of social order: riots, violence, selfishness.

But isn't this, in reality, part of the social plan to keep everything – everyone – under control? Society as it 'wants' to be, or rather, as it was designed to be since the introduction of farming, needs to have us all in our pigeonholes, living out our lives in photocopy. You're born, go to school, find a job, find a companion, have kids, retire and die. Is that life, or existence?

We keep touting the fact that we're "higher animals", we are self-conscious, we have decision power, ability to reason, but that is possibly the greatest illusion of all – the illusion of freedom. Maybe, however, it is chaos that is freedom – the freedom to be, to live, to decide.

The lack of order does not equate to randomness. Chaos does not equate to 'disorder'. Chaos is the natural order. Look at evolution. Millions - billions - of years of apparent randomness leading to what we have around us.

We look at nature and we do not see what we would interpret as chaos. It is, however, our interpretation that is wrong. Unless we want to believe that someone or something is sitting up there, meticulously designing every single object in the universe and placing it in the exact position that it should be, nature is the pretty much the definition of chaos. Now look at, say, a soviet era building. It represents what is supposed to be the epitome of order. Square, smooth, perfect. Boring. Order is what societies have tried to create for millennia in order to keep us in check. And one cannot have order and freedom at the same time. So we have been made to believe that order is freedom, in order to avoid rebellion, which would then lead back to 'chaos'.

What we have created – what we are born in – is a boring, limiting, strangulating, suffocating, blinding system that makes us believe that in order for everything to work we have to stay in a single file, sorted from the shortest to the tallest, thinnest to fattest, poorest to richest. That we need to wake up every morning at 7am, go to work for 8 hours, take a 30-minute break to eat, go home, sleep and repeat. If we look back at history, who are the people that really left an impact on our world? It isn't a question that needs answering, as we all know who they were/are.

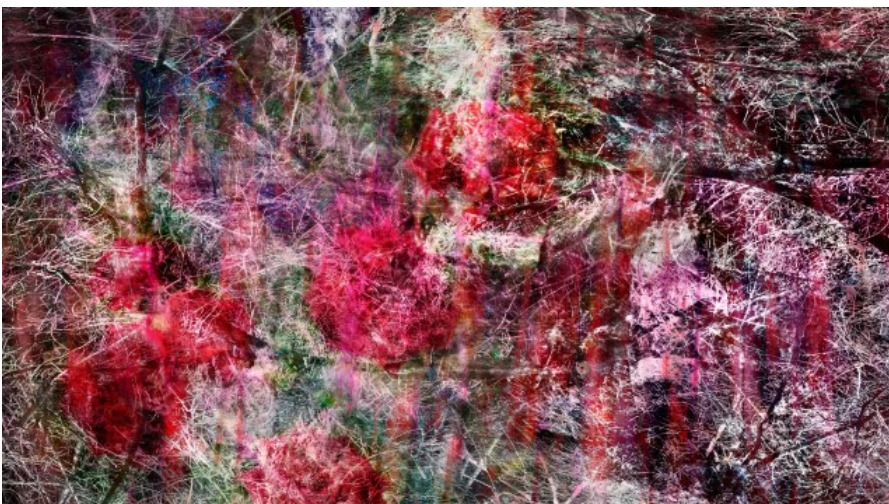
However, there is one quote, which is absolutely befitting the subject, coming from a person who befits his place in history.

*"Here's to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes... the ones who see things differently — they're not fond of rules... You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do." — Steve Jobs, 1997.*

Unfortunately, we are made to believe that life, happiness, freedom, are not about what we want, need or love. It's not about our passions, self-discovery or the fulfilment of our being. What we are led to believe is that the order must take precedence over our individualism. We are led to believe that order is for the benefit of everyone, and that we have no choice but to follow the rules. Are we just insignificant points in space and time?

What happens if we embrace some chaos? What happens if for once, rather than looking outside at what the order wants, we looked inside at what we want?

Where do you want to be? What do you want to be? Embrace yourself, embrace your chaos, find a new order, and you might be surprised at the beauty we can create when we work together not based on the order that is imposed on us, but on the one we evolve together as individuals.



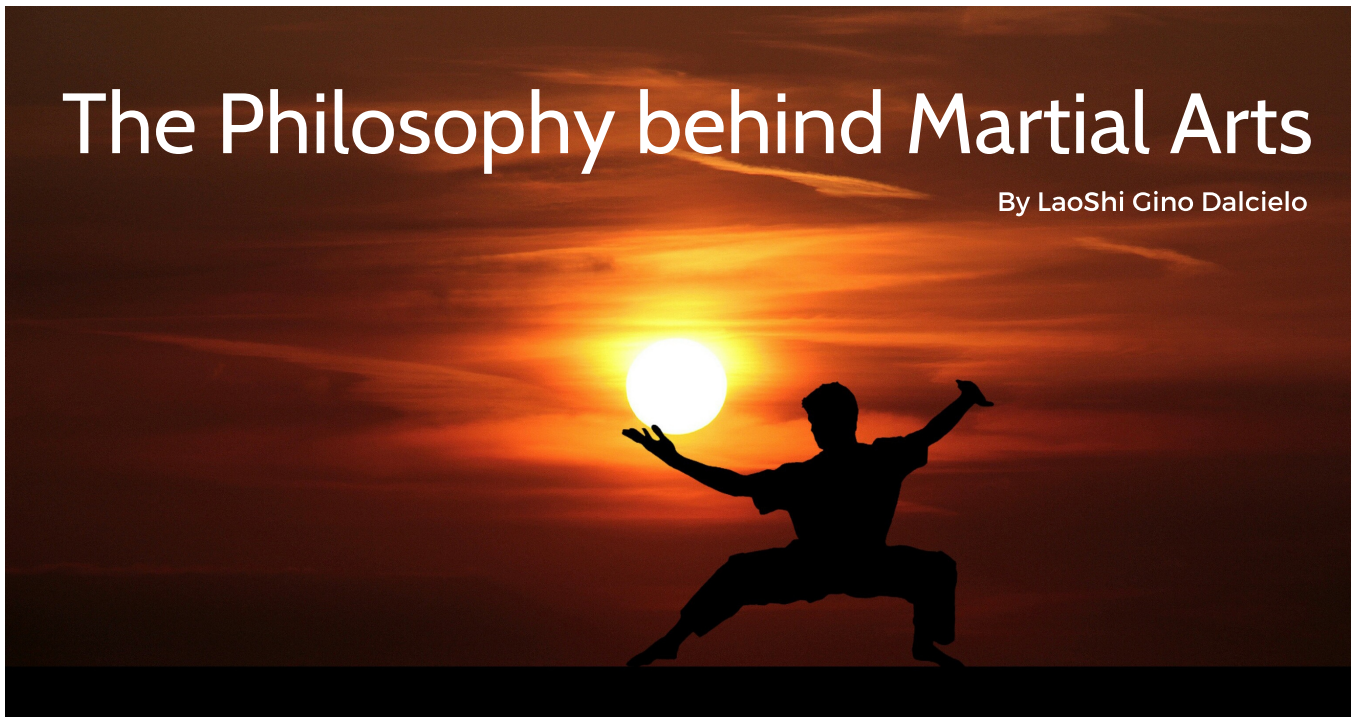
*Sergio Muscat is an artist and technologist. He has a BSc in Computer Science and an M.A in Digital Art. He works at the intersection of art and science.*

[www.sergiomuscat.com](http://www.sergiomuscat.com)



# The Philosophy behind Martial Arts

By LaoShi Gino Dalcielo



Wushu, or Kung Fu as most commonly referred to, is a Chinese Martial Art that has very ancient origins. In China it represents the first sporting discipline par excellence, that involves an audience with both young people and adult practitioners. thanks to its many varied styles.

The remit of this article is to establish a short timeline of the origins and evolution of this art, underlining the benefits for the practitioners but more specifically to illustrate the difference between the Western and Eastern approach.

Historical records proved that from the 1st Century BC, fighting techniques were already in place with weapons such as the bow, halberd, or sword. These are all mentioned in historical and legendary texts.

However, there is one legend that should capture our attention more than others, and which as often happens in the East, is steeped in mystery. A long time ago, a Zen Buddhist monk named Bodhidharma, travelled from India to China to spread Buddhism and its virtues. He settled on a particular mountain where eventually, after converting the local population, he founded the first temple dedicated to this religion.

As Zen Buddhism required a lot of time spent meditating and praying, he taught the monks a set of techniques for muscular stretching and strengthening which could eventually also be used for self-defence. This temple was later referred to as the 'Shaolin Temple'.

In ancient times, knowledge of Kung Fu was only transmitted by a master. In fact, the master was the main source of knowledge and the one who would eventually become like a father - hence the expression of Shifu (Father Master). Many of the values of Chinese martial art can be traced back to the principles of Taoism and later to Buddhism. However, when we talk about the philosophy behind martial arts, it is important that we appreciate the contrast between Western philosophy and Eastern philosophy.

While Western philosophy is based on a division or even a dualism between body and soul, mind and brain, Eastern philosophy tends to see the human person as unity where body and soul, mind and brain are a single entity. Eastern philosophy must be viewed as a whole that incorporates several aspects such as cultural origins and its fusion with religions. Among the most important philosophical concepts of Chinese culture rooted in the martial arts we find:





o **The concept of Yin and Yang:** The two opposite forces of the universe. Within the martial forms and techniques, the concept of Yin and Yang is upheld thanks to the alternation of movements, the method of execution and achievement of physical and inner balance.

o **The concept of Wuwei:** To achieve a certain result, it is important to be committed and dedicated. But it is likewise important to ensure that actions are effortlessly aligned with a natural rhythm.

### Benefits of practicing martial arts

- Helps develop elasticity in children, coordination, control, and discipline, while teaching respect;
- Improves physical coordination;
- Improves the posture of the spine;
- Mental / spiritual benefits;
- Enhances the memory capacity;
- Strengthens the muscular system;
- Enhances physical resistance to an effort;
- Develops instinctive reflexes;
- Strengthens character;
- Great for self-confidence and helps in taking actions in everyday life;
- Good for stress relief;
- Improves focus in daily activities that they have obtained excellent; and
- Improves mental concentration and self-control.

Wushu combines the art (the beauty of movement) with its martial aspect, the study and strategies of combat with both bare hands and weapons. This art differs greatly from other combat sports, whose sole objective is precisely to effectively win the fighting duel.

As the martial art discipline evolved over the years, some of this art has been recognised to display a much sportier version than the original Wushu, characterized by gymnastic and athletic movements. It is why nowadays we speak of 'Traditional Wushu' and 'Modern Wushu'.

If you wish to join a Wushu Kung Fu or Tai Chi club, it is important to search for a programme that suits your purpose. When approaching a Kung Fu or Tai Chi path within a school, it is a good idea to ask yourself what types of objectives you want to achieve and make sure that the course programme is complete and tailored to your needs.

Here are some essential elements to recognize a good Chinese martial arts path:

1. A recognized school head with good martial training and which includes national and international qualifications, degrees, and recognition by great Chinese masters. This ensures you have a great foundation from which to develop and a well-prepared guide to refer to.
2. A programme that contains all the elements that a complete practitioner should know. Optimal growth to the practitioner is guaranteed when there is a right balance between forms and combat and when all the tools required for the development of the martial artist can be provided.
3. A group with whom to share moments of practice and moments of confrontation. The latter aspect is important because Kung Fu is not just a path towards personal growth but also a means to expand one's horizons.

*Mr. Gino Dalcielo is a qualified internationally renowned teacher of Traditional Chinese Wushu Kung Fu and Taijiquan and founder of Malta School of Wushu.*

# Book Review

## The Philosophy of Law - A Brief Introduction

Author: Silvio Meli | Publishers: Kite Group | October 2020

Philosophy of law is a most fascinating legal discipline. It not only imparts specific focus on issues of extreme relevance, but it also helps to gain an understanding of one's historical roots and to instil a well-grounded sense of identity. It presents a properly oriented knowledgeable attitude towards legal matters and enhances the promotion of a well-structured intellectual compass upon which one's professional outlook can be based.

This discipline helps one to charter an accurate private and professional itinerary basing one's orientation on well-established objective, academic and practical grounds. Synthetically speaking, it is perhaps the single most important legal discipline as it helps one to achieve those professional deontological standards required and secures a solid foundation upon which to erect a lasting professional edifice.

The book 'The Philosophy of Law - A Brief Introduction' by Judge Emeritus Silvio Meli addresses three broad categories.

Primarily it is directed towards law students and so tries to be as clear, concise and as pleasing as is humanly possible aiming at attracting the interest and attention of this targeted group – one which is unfortunately already faced with so many distractions.

Secondarily, it is addressed to seasoned legal practitioners who, whilst absorbed in their fast-paced daily practice, might find it intellectually stimulating to take some time-off to pause and ponder about perhaps, the long-forgotten motivations which made them choose this particular profession as their career.

Thirdly, it also aspires to be refreshingly gratifying to those lacking a legal background but who might just happen to be genuinely interested and are favourably inclined to approach these issues in good faith and with an open mind.

This book strives to instil that degree of confidence when confronting such academic difficulties as might arise by strengthening one's scientific knowledge of the subject while reinforcing the essential historical background that is necessary for the proper understanding of the personalities encountered and diverse themes discussed.

Readers are gently assisted in entering into a constructive dialogue with past and present masters so that they may then attain that level of constructive resolve to accept or reject the various theses presented. This also helps them surmount all philosophical and academic difficulties that may uselessly hinder their intellectual evolution. It is then solely up to the readers to come to their own personal, well-reasoned, objective and discerning conclusions, adopting whatever preferences might attract their imagination, inclination and judicious outlook.



This is but a brief introduction. In embarking on this endeavour, the book first attempts to familiarize the reader with the true protagonists who introduced, established and developed the major issues involved in this subject. Following this general, albeit subjective panorama of philosophers, the book addresses the thorny question of addressing the definition of law giving as broad an overview thereof as possible.

The book then flows into an examination of the major schools of philosophy of law starting with an examination of the Positivist School of Law, which may broadly be seen as either structuralist or linguistic, even venturing into concrete practical situations emerging therefrom. It subsequently drifts into an analysis of the Natural School of Law, tracing its historical-philosophical origins from inception to modern times. This compendium then addresses the pressing issues of the rule of law and the notion of juridical personality which are very topical in the modern socio-legal scenario. Finally, feminist jurisprudence is addressed perhaps for the very first time in a local opus on the subject.

The book is further enriched with a foreword by Rev. Dr Mark Montebello and an afterword by Dr Jean-Paul de Lucca – two leading philosophers who are very active in the local academic and practical arenas.

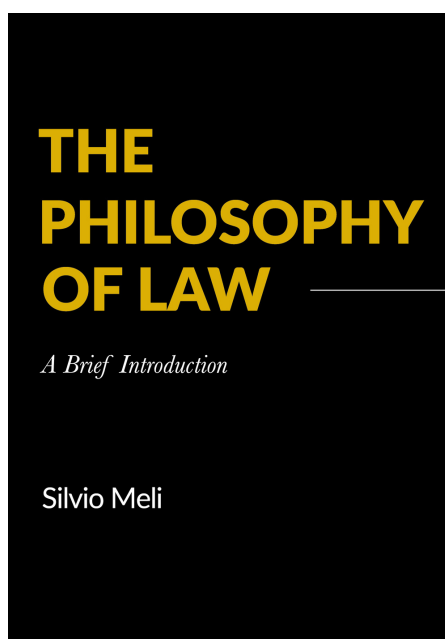
This book is an important contribution to academia. It aims at giving structure, meaning and orientation to this particular branch of learning. It delineates the boundaries of the subject-matter discussed, encapsulates precise definitions and establishes a structured organisational set-up of the issues discussed.

This book gently introduces rigorous academic methodology enabling readers to relate to the subject-matter from a pleasantly advantageous point of view making it possible for them to compare and evaluate precepts, notions, and outlooks appertaining to the various legal doctrines encountered. It is only after submitting to the rigours of such exercise that the interlocutor may then decide to prefer one particular school of philosophy of law over another. This book therefore nourishes and incentivises the reader by giving focus, stimulus, orientation, meaning and ultimately, much required manageability.

Echoing the immortal words of Oliver Wendell Holmes, a solid background of philosophy of law strengthens the reader's insight and confidence as:

*'The remoter and more general aspects of the law are those which give it universal interest. It is through them that you not only become a great master in your calling but connect your subject with the universe and catch an echo of the infinite, a glimpse of its unfathomable process, a hint of the universal law.'*

The Path of the Law, 1897, 8  
 Harvard Law Review 457, p.478



*Signed copies of the publication are available from Kite's bookshop at 13, Triq il-Frangiskani, Hamrun and from their website [www.kitegroup.com.mt](http://www.kitegroup.com.mt)*





## A Philosophical Manifesto



Assassination of Julius Caesar – Rome

The Philosophy Sharing Foundation is launching a manifesto that will be published in future serial issues.

The point of departure of this manifesto is a quote from Karl Marx in which he asserts that 'philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; however, the point is to change it.' The manifesto is in line with Plato's insight that the only cure for the ills of contemporary society is the establishment of philosophical rule. Philosophers should become rulers and rulers should become philosophers.

Before launching any proposals, we need to look at the past to learn from human blunders and at the same time understand why certain problems have persisted and remain unsolvable unto the present day. We need also to examine where humanity is standing at the present time and ask ourselves:

Is humanity in general happy with the present style of living? It has to be acknowledged that humans are by far living much more convenient and enriched lives propelled by the technological progress that has risen exponentially since the dawn of the Industrial Age. There has been a dramatic improvement in the quality of life for many, as a result of which the life span of many people in developed countries has increased considerably, reaching an average age of eighty years.

Nevertheless, the ills of society that have bedevilled humankind since the onset of modernity - such as crime, mental illness, community breakdown, stress, longer hours of work and suicide - remain rampant. Wars, violence, corruption and pollution are ongoing, and they seem to be persistent and endemic on a global level.

The disparities in income and wealth within and between the developed countries in the West and the developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America are still glaringly visible and wide open. While there seems to be a lurking fear among people of the developed West about the number of asylum seekers crossing over and immigrating to the developed world, few people understand and empathise with them and may not be aware of the risk of dangerous journeys they undertake to seek pastures new. The ironic contradiction is that, while the developed world has in the not too distant past exploited most of the territories it colonised, some politicians with the express support of a segment of the electorate are demanding that walls be built to prevent immigrants of poorer countries from entering their own jurisdictions. Unless the problem of the persistent vast inequalities in the wealth of countries is adequately addressed, there can never be a long lasting peace in this globalised economy. Instead, the current scenario tends to breed desperate acts of mobility, violence, terrorism and racial hostility.

The future of humanity does not augur well either. Much remains to be done on climate change, the safeguarding of the natural habitat, oceans, water and other resources, the management of plastic waste, oil, nuclear power and other energy needs if our planet is to survive within a century's time.

The present march towards artificial intelligence, robotics, genetics, algorithms and dataism could possibly end with humanity wiping itself out to create an artificial human construct that could lose any feeling, thought and experience of what it means to be human. Is this not a terrifying thought lurking in the unconscious of many people, as they feel they are losing their control over their lives being tethered to their mobile, computer and Netflix TV screens?

The manifesto identifies nine areas in which philosophy can contribute towards a new way of thinking that could offer better solutions to an

alternative lifestyle. The manifesto will seek to present a comprehensive and critical view of the basic prevalent mode of thinking within the context of these nine areas. Provocative questions will be raised, aimed at challenging pre-established concepts. A philosophical disposition will be pursued in order to subject any analysis, propositions and thoughts to logical scrutiny.

## MANIFESTO TOPICS

### 1 THE SOCIETY WE LIVE IN

What are we living for? How do we want to employ our time?

### 2 THE ENVIRONMENT

How can it be saved, protected and sustained to satisfy our voracious material wants and desires?

### 3 THE ECONOMY

How can we find a balance to ensure the distribution of products and services? How can we justify the right proportion for wealth disparities? How can work become more meaningful and self-fulling?

### 4 POLITICS

How do we want to be governed? How can Government truly represent the interests of its citizens? What are the checks and balances required without hindering government operations?

### 5 JUSTICE, LAW AND ORDER

How can we ensure that justice is being served in the eyes of the people? How can we tackle the causes of crimes?

## 6 HEALTH AND ETHICS

How can we live a life with less pain and suffering? Where is the limit that the scientific community can intervene in nature and not play God'?

## 7 FUTURE OF HUMANITY

Is our future subtly pointing to the achievement of immortality? Will we manage to retain our humanity if technological progress radically transforms our lives? What does it mean to be human in our contemporary world?

## 8 GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

How can different nations and cultures come together to tackle global problems? What is the best model of international governance? Or is nationalism here to stay?

## 9 EDUCATION

What should be the priorities of education? Thought control or independence of the mind? Would anarchy result if we become endowed with independence of the mind?

The manifesto will be wary of the political and economic divide between the political left and the right movements. It will not be seeking or advocating utopian solutions that are likely to be a non-starter to the actors of the polarizing camps. It has to be recognised that the free market economy is here to stay. The belief in the benefits of the free market has become deeply rooted. Any government intervention that seeks to undermine privileged positions is likely to find strong resistance and run aground. At the same time, we also have to keep in mind that the values of equality, cooperation and inclusion are the bedrock for a stable and just society.

History has taught us that instability is the premise for revolt and violence. The premise on which this manifesto is based is that Government cannot take complete control of the economy as it will crush the individualistic human spirit and aspirations that have maintained the creative impulse of humanity throughout its history. At the same time, the free market cannot be left operating to its own devices and in the process create wider gaps of inequality. Such a scenario may foster resentment, anxiety and tension. Furthermore, certain public goods such as roads, energy and health have to be adequately provided. Guided by Aristotle's concept of the golden mean, the manifesto will attempt to strike a balance between these two positions at the end of the tightrope.

Likewise, a further divide between the political left and the right manifests itself between liberals and conservatives. Apart from their beliefs in free markets, liberals espouse a wide array of views that include secularism, civil rights, freedom of speech, gender and racial equality as well as liberal internationalism. Conservatives on the other hand believe that social order comes first and strongly express their belief in the authority of the family, the church, tradition and local associations aimed at controlling or slowing down change.

Both camps need to be kept in balance. The flourishing liberal philosophy of the West during the 20th century has no doubt contributed to individual freedoms on a global scale. And this is indeed considered as a positive factor to the affluence of developed democratic countries.

However, if social order, tradition and institutions are discarded at the expense of individualism and personal freedom, a chaotic vacuum could result that would affect political governance and prudent stewardship of the economy. In its edition of 6-12 July 2019, The Economist rightly pointed out that conservative philosophy is losing its influence, as the right is being hijacked by a populist movement that intends to erode trust in society's institutions and championing the will of the populace.



This populist movement has teamed up with a neoliberal movement that is attacking the forces of globalisation, open borders, free trade and international cooperation, while upping the mantra that national identity, the local market and local jobs must be protected and championed at all costs. The 2008 global financial crisis galvanised this movement into action, riding on the citizens' fear and lack of trust in an international system that in its opaqueness benefited certain privileged professionals, most notably bankers.

The manifesto will be based on an awareness of the potency of the two opposing viewpoints. Citizens must feel that their jobs and livelihood is secure; and that national customs, traditions and symbols will continue to provide them with a sense of identity in their daily life struggles. However, it must also be recognised that increase in the number of people who have attained a degree of affluence, so visible during the last thirty years, is the result of globalising forces that opened more market borders, trade and jobs. Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has made us aware of our mutual dependence on other countries and the need to think and collaborate together both on the local and global level.

To sum up, the manifesto will be consistent in advocating two sides of the same coin: competition and cooperation, individual freedom and social order, respect for local culture and open borders, free markets and government intervention, self-interest and altruism.

It will also attempt to seek common ground on certain divisive and controversial issues such as abortion, sexual relationships outside marriage, euthanasia, drugs, crimes sentencing where moral differences tend to be relativised on an individual basis. What may be felt to be wrong for me might be right for you. Nevertheless, the manifesto will not shy away from adopting a fundamentalist stance against certain issues such as capital punishment, slavery and exploitation and the use of torture and violence as means to justify ends.



The manifesto adopts Socratic reasoning when viewing certain values as absolutes but at the same time does not see a contradiction in also embracing the utilitarian philosophy of promoting happiness and reducing suffering. The manifesto will not hold back from criticising practices that most people accept as natural and inevitable conditions of human existence.

Above all, the manifesto is fully aware that human nature must always be considered. As philosopher Peter Singer commented in his book 'The Darwinian Left' – '... to be blind to the facts about human nature is to risk disaster.' Thus, he gives a very apt example of how human beings cannot do away with hierarchical forms of society. Analysis of past revolutions such as the French or the Russian prove this point. Revolutions end up replacing hierarchies they have fought so hard to eradicate with new ones based on other factors.

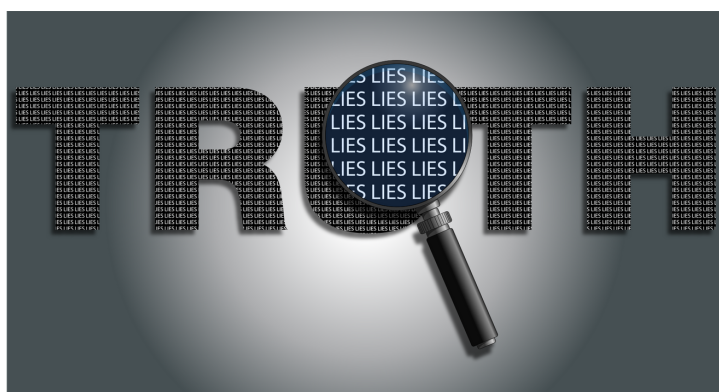
The manifesto will ultimately be based on humanistic principles, with the same old ancient question coming to the fore: what does it mean to be human? Many people associate the humanist movement as a secular attack on traditional religious sentiment and a call to replace it by scientific material progress.

Humanism, however, encompasses a diverse range of philosophies that share a common theme but at the same time cannot be subjected to one single definition.

In his publication 'Civilization', art historian Kenneth Clark refers to the reply that the Duke of Urbino Federico da Montefelto gave to his librarian Vespiano di Bistici when the latter asks him - 'What is necessary in ruling a kingdom?' The response of the Duke was 'Essere umano' – 'To be human'.

And this concept encompasses all the human virtues that Kenneth Clarke reflected upon in his analysis of the history of civilisation in his publication. These are kindness, empathy, gentleness, forgiveness, courtesy, rituals, learning from history, seeking order, respecting nature and humankind, and finally making the existence of certain geniuses possible. One can also add cooperation, tolerance, diversity, inclusion, equal universal access to health, education, housing, work and other basic rights.

The question of what it means to be human has become all the more important as technological progress seems to be pushing us onwards to artificial and comfortable digitized environments that could enable us one day to become immortal gods who dabble with nature.



Is this the life we are heading to - a life whereby we can control the natural world and subject it to algorithms, genes editing, artificial insemination, etc? Is this the life we want?

The manifesto in the next series commences with the fundamental question of philosophy – what is the value and meaning of our life? The answer to that question is what determines what kind of societies we want to build for the present and the future. This answer is also linked to the value we place on the environment and how it is perceived to be the way we choose to live our human lives.

In order for humanity to survive in the future, the safeguard, protection and sustainability of our environment must come before political, economic and business considerations. Economic growth cannot remain being sought as an objective unto itself, at the expense of environmental degradation. Restoring our moral compass and standards on the environment has become an urgent issue. These two aspects – society and environment that we both need to live in and with, is the topic to be addressed in the next instalment.

*The manifesto will be published on the discussion forum of the website. Feel free to add your comments and ideas as the manifesto will always remain a work in progress. Just one thing has to be emphasised: in expressing your thoughts and making your comments, try to adopt as far as is humanly possible a value-free approach that is not shackled by stereotypical political, religious or ideological bias. A multi-dimensional approach is highly recommended.*



# philosophysharing

## News

The Covid-19 outbreak in March that was the cause of severe restrictions on public gatherings before the second wave struck again in July, totally disrupted the planned activities by the Foundation for 2020.

The much expected annual philosophy lecture on 'Ethics and Animals, Global Poverty and Effective Altruism' that had to be delivered by world renowned philosopher Peter Singer on the 20th of April 2020 had to be postponed to 2021 to a date that has yet to be determined.

The same situation occurred with respect to the talk 'Embodied Awareness and Sense of Self' that had to be delivered by English psychologist Philip Carr Gomm on the 16th of October 2020. Meanwhile the course on philosophy of law by Judge Emeritus Silvio Meli which was in progress during March 2020 had to be suspended after two sessions when the Government announced the first drastic measures to contain the spread of Covid-19.

All the monthly talks and courses that were scheduled from April to December had to be put on hold. The situation has become highly unpredictable as the second wave of virus does not give any reliable indication when our activities can resume.

The Foundation being a voluntary organisation with limited resources finds it difficult to coordinate activities online as some established educators have been doing since the outbreak of the virus. Such online activities require additional efforts in logistical preparation with the speaker / lecturer for the delivery of the event and an additional challenge to manage the access and participation of an unknown audience.

The raison d'être of the Foundation is to stick to its basic mission aiming at building a philosophical community that engages in a lively and critical discussion of the subject matter of philosophy.

In spite of the Covid-19 outbreak, the Foundation did not rest on its laurels. The magazine SHARE no.13 was published in April 2020 and delivered to members. This current issue no.14 has been published six months afterwards in November.

Meanwhile on the 31st of August, a new revamped website was launched for the Foundation which apart from being more presentable, introduced some new interesting features such as site membership, forum discussions, blogs, online shop. This new website allows any visitor to sign up freely as a member of the website by logging in with his/her Gmail, Facebook or email account. Through this facility, signed up members may access the members area and network with other members.

The Foundation has through this current issue launched another experimental project that will consist of a manifesto of philosophical ideas in serial issues to address contemporary public policy areas. Our aim is to involve the members of Philosophy Sharing and academics to propagate ideas that call for new ways of understanding, thinking, and analysing on such areas.

The Foundation augurs that in 2021, life returns to normality. The Foundation hopes that the postponed annual philosophy lecture of Peter Singer and the postponed talk of Philip Carr Gomm will take place in 2021.

The Foundation has another speaker booked for the annual philosophy lecture of 2022. He is Professor Alexander Gungov, Professor of Logic and Continental Philosophy at the Department of Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics at University of Sofia, Bulgaria. The title of the planned lecture for 2022 is 'Logic Of Deception: Principles and Outcomes'.

We trust that our members recognise and appreciate that the will and spirit of the Foundation remain alive in spite of the difficult challenges and obstacles caused.



# Philosophy Sharing Foundation

The mission of the Philosophy Sharing Foundation is the stimulation of philosophical activities aimed at contributing towards a more comprehensive view of society, through the dissemination and critical analysis of philosophical thinking and its key concepts

Newly revamped website:  
[www.philosophysharing.org](http://www.philosophysharing.org)