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The Inheritance and Legacy of John Macmurray

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ABSTRACT

Macmurray provides a conceptual and personal reference point around which we can locate a tradition of social humanism that unfolds from the British idealists to the communitarians. Some communitarian themes appear in the thought of the idealists: these include a vitalist analysis of behaviour, a 'thick' view of the person, and a positive concept of freedom defined in relation to others. Macmurray developed these themes and introduced others largely as a result of reworking idealism so as to come to terms with the crisis of reason associated with the First World War. He rejected objective idealism with its concept of absolute mind for a personal idealism that incorporated an action-based metaphysics. Doing so prompted him to adopt other communitarian themes: these include an appeal to friendship and love, a contrast between society and community, and an appeal to religion to transcend the limits of justice. While contemporary communitarians have inherited much from philosophers such as Macmurray, they have also developed the tradition of social humanism. Philosophers such as Sandel, Taylor, and Walzer have done so through grappling with the implications of multiculturalism for the idea of a cosmopolitan community. Ethical socialists like Prime Minister Blair and Lord Plant have done so through grappling with issues such as a decline in solidarity as it influences the welfare state.

From Idealism to Communitarianism:

The Inheritance and Legacy of John Macmurray[1]

John Macmurray (1891-1976) was described recently as the best-kept secret of twentieth-century British philosophy.[2] There are signs he will not long remain so. Among scholars, his work has received growing attention as positivism has lost its dominant position and idealism has begun to receive its historical due. At least four of Macmurray's books were reissued with new scholarly introductions during the 1990s.[3] Macmurray also has come to public attention as a philosophical influence on Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of Britain. Blair became a socialist while studying at St John's College, Oxford, where he was introduced to Macmurray's work by Peter Thomson, an Australian priest, with whom he went on a pilgrimage to meet the philosopher.[4]

While a central section of this essay seeks to introduce Macmurray's ideas to a wider audience, we also want to use Macmurray as a reference point around which we can evoke a tradition of social humanism. This tradition unfolds from the Victorian and Edwardian idealists, including Edward Caird and T. H. Green, through intermediaries, such as Macmurray, to contemporary communitarians, whether politicians such as Blair or philosophers such as Ronald Beiner, Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, and Michael Walzer. The idealists characteristically deployed a concept of absolute mind to defend both a vitalist analysis of human behaviour and a 'thick' concept of the person. Their concept of the person led them to a positive vision of freedom defined in terms of the common good. Macmurray and others inherited this idealism only then to transform it in response to the crisis of reason loosely tied to the First World War. Macmurray turned to a metaphysics that

emphasized action in concert in place of thought or absolute mind. In doing so, he adopted the ideal of a community of fellows characterized by personal ties of love and a religious culture. The communitarians have developed the tradition of social humanism further in response to issues such as multiculturalism and a decline in solidarity.

Any attempt to evoke a tradition such as social humanism faces the question of what links are needed to establish its presence. How can one show that ideational resemblances reflect significant historical links? We do not want to postulate a static doctrine that defines the core of social humanism: as in the case of Macmurray, those who belong in this tradition do not always share the idealist metaphysics of its Victorian and Edwardian exponents. Rather, we want to rely on a conjunction of conceptual and personal connections to describe a constantly changing set of beliefs.[5] The conceptual connections will indicate how later social humanists reiterated themes from their predecessors while also developing relevant arguments and even grappling with new dilemmas therein. Yet conceptual connections alone cannot establish the presence of a tradition, because the later thinkers might have developed the relevant arguments and resolved the pertinent dilemmas while being entirely unaware of the work of their predecessors. Hence, we will highlight personal connections to show that the inherited themes really did provide a starting point for each group of social humanists.

An Idealist Inheritance

Macmurray was born in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland, and brought up in Aberdeen by middle-class, Calvinist parents.[6] In 1909 he entered Glasgow University to study classics. While there, he became active in the Student Christian Movement:

he was a delegate at a famous Edinburgh conference on Mission also attended by Charles Gore and William Temple, two leading Christian socialists who had been influenced by Caird and Green while studying at Balliol College, Oxford.

Balliol, together with the Scottish universities, was a birthplace and stronghold of British idealism: Green was a Fellow of the College, Caird became its Master, and numerous other idealists, including Henry Scott Holland and Gore, the founders of the Christian Social Union, studied and taught there.[7] The British idealists adopted a range of philosophical positions. Perhaps the nearest we can come to identifying a shared doctrine within their thought is to point to an objective idealism, according to which all that exists does so as part of one absolute mind.[8] In general, though, we should approach the British idealists as a school characterized by family resemblances, not shared doctrines. Many of the pertinent resemblances reflect the fact that the idealists typically grappled with the dilemmas posed for faith by historical criticism, geological discoveries, and evolutionary theory.[9]

In the first place, the idealists deployed the concept of absolute mind to defend something akin to an immanentist theology and thus to reconcile faith in God or the universal with evolutionary theory. They argued that absolute mind works through the evolutionary process found in the world so as to realize itself. In the second place, they deployed this metaphysics so as to defend vitalist analyses of human life. The presence of absolute mind within us implies that we are vital, living beings whose behaviour can be understood only in terms of our meanings, values, and purposes.[10] Although we might need a few qualifications to bring F. H. Bradley under this description, Caird and Green, and other idealists, such as Bernard Bosanquet and D. G. Ritchie, adopted at least secular versions of it, while Gore and Scott Holland defended explicitly Christian ones.

Many idealists related their immanentist metaphysics to a distinctive ethical theory.[11] Typically they argued, in the third place, that we are inherently embedded in a larger social whole. Far from being atomistic individuals, we exist within a spiritual community as related parts of the absolute. In the fourth place, the idealists believed that the unity of all within the absolute entailed a positive concept of freedom couched in terms of the common good. According to Green, we can be sure at least of making progress towards the ideal of 'universal human fellowship'.[12] By promoting the value of fellowship, the idealists, in the fifth place, provided a context within which there flourished a range of progressive political programmes that came to coalesce around the welfare state.[13]

Although some idealists, including Green, did not themselves propose much state interference, preferring to promote social welfare through the voluntary sector, many historians relate liberal welfarism and ethical socialism to their philosophy.[14] The idealists inspired many of those who laid the basis for the welfare state. While New Liberals, such as L. T. Hobhouse and J. A. Hobson, were hostile to idealist metaphysics, they deployed themes from its social theory, often combined with a more prominent evolutionary motif, to reformulate liberalism so as to emphasize community, welfare rights, and an activist state.[15] Christians drew on idealism to initiate progressive organizations and social policies ranging from the Settlement Movement associated with Arnold Toynbee to the democratic socialism of Gore and Holland.[16] Indeed, idealism constituted an important influence on a broad ethical socialism that encompasses late romantics such as Edward Carpenter as well as Christians such as R. H. Tawney.[17]

Macmurray was a student at Glasgow when Henry Jones, a prominent idealist, was there as Chair of Moral Philosophy,[18] but his acquaintance with idealist

philosophy probably dates from 1913 when he went to Balliol to read Greats.[19]

Macmurray's studies were interrupted by the First World War, during which he

served in the Medical Corps and later the Cameron Highlanders – he fought at the

Somme, was wounded at Arras, and received the Military Cross for Valour. The

experience of war marked a watershed that sets Macmurray apart from the idealists.

Most of the idealists had been optimists who believed in the rational, progressive

evolution of society. Macmurray, in contrast, became radically disillusioned with the

world and so looked for a much more decisive break with the past. 'We went into war

in a blaze of idealism', he later recalled, but 'by the end of the war we soldiers had

largely lost faith in the society we had been fighting for'.[20]

Although Macmurray referred here to idealism as a liberal political hope, the

disillusionment that followed the war also wrought a clear transformation in idealism

understood in more strictly philosophical terms. The world no longer appeared to

embody a rational mind. The absolute, especially in its immanent form, thus began to

withdraw, or even to disappear, from visions of the world. Philosophers became

increasingly wary of the belief that some sort of universal idea unfolded itself within

the world, thereby informing or ensuring a rational progress. Whereas history had

appeared to exhibit a progressive purpose that could reinforce faith, it now seemed to

expose irrational desires and violence, thereby challenging faith. Philosophers such as

Green and Caird were optimistic about the world and its unfolding; Macmurray

frequently told friends that if it were not for his faith, he would be a pessimist.[21]

The War did much to inspire the increased doubts about the absolute that we

find not only in Macmurray but also philosophers such as R. G. Collingwood and

Michael Oakeshott.[22] Although these philosophers remained profoundly indebted to

idealism, they hesitated somewhat over the first theme that we found characterized the

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idealists: they rejected, rethought, or qualified the idea of an absolute mind immanent within the world. Macmurray and his contemporaries typically foregrounded the particular and contingent in ways that retained the absolute only as a lurking presence struggling to appear in the world.[23] After the war, for example, Macmurray reworked idealism so as to give metaphysical and epistemological priority to action, not mind. Where the idealists typically conceived of truth, and truth-seeking, in organic or transcendental terms, Macmurray located them in the actions of persons situated in community. He moved away from the view that the real or universal lay in thought or spirit toward the view that people find it through active engagement with one another and the world. The personal and action supplanted the organic and mind.[24] Macmurray thus adopted a relational metaphysics within which the particular and the contingent gained prominence over the universal and the necessary. That a person acts as an expression of a higher idea or teleology became a contingent matter of human freedom, not a necessary one of logic. That an action, let alone history, will have a good end became a matter of religious faith, not metaphysical knowledge.

After the War, social humanists typically renounced the idealists' concept of absolute mind. In the case of Macmurray, moreover, the way in which he then privileged action, conceived in material terms, can raise the question of whether or not he remained an idealist: we might ask, for example, does the presence in his work of realist strands derived from Marx suggest that we should classify him as having broken with idealism rather than having developed it?[25] Whatever judgment we make in answering such questions, we should recognize the personal and conceptual ties that bound Macmurray to the idealists. Even his action-based metaphysics remained permeated by a form of Christianity that kept the themes of objective idealism lurking in the background of his writing. He believed that God made us with natures that

flourish in the context of the unity of all, defined in terms of fellowship. God wills such unity, and, moreover, he plays an active, loving role such that he will bring his creation to fulfilment.

When the war ended, Macmurray returned to Balliol to finish his studies. The Greats course at Oxford was then dominated by philosophy. Macmurray concentrated on modern European philosophy while also reading widely in the Ancients. His tutor was A. D. Lindsay, who had studied philosophy under Caird at University College, Oxford, from 1898 to 1902, and then worked under Henry Jones at Glasgow, before being appointed to his post at Balliol.[26] Lindsay used idealism to underpin democratic socialism, arguing that a Christian 'operative ideal', based on moral equality and expressed through a notion of community, underlies democratic society.[27] Balliol was at that time a centre for such social humanism, Arnold Toynbee having been elected a Fellow in 1912 and R. H. Tawney in 1918.

After completing his studies, Macmurray taught at Manchester University, and spent two years at Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg, before returning to Balliol in 1922 as Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy. Macmurray immersed himself once again in the social humanism that dominated the College.[28] He helped secure the return of Lindsay as Master of Balliol in 1924, and he taught or associated with many of the next generation of idealists and social democrats, including David Cairns, Richard Crossman, Evan Durbin, Dorothy Emmet, Hugh Gaitskell, and William Stuart Murrie.[29] In 1928, Macmurray was appointed to the Grote Chair in the Philosophy of Mind and Logic, London University, where he again worked alongside Tawney. During the 1930s, he became increasingly active on the Christian left, co-operating with, among others, Karl Polanyi and William Temple, the latter of whom became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942.[30] In 1944, Macmurray moved to the

University of Edinburgh as Professor of Moral Philosophy, a post he held until his retirement in 1958. He then lived in a Quaker community at Jordans, Buckinghamshire, until 1970 at which time he returned to Edinburgh.

Macmurray's Ethics

Although Macmurray transformed the first theme that we found to characterize idealism, he remained committed to the other four themes we highlighted – a vitalist analysis of human behaviour, a 'thick' concept of the person, a positive concept of freedom, and political sympathy for liberal welfarism or ethical socialism. His action-based metaphysics led him, however, to modify the idealist concept of positive freedom so as to emphasize an ethic of fellowship in community. For a start, the shift from mind to action encouraged him to define freedom less in terms of an idea – the common good – than in terms of relations – a community. In addition, Macmurray took the good to be something that people create through activity rather than a principle immanent in the world, and he thereby opened up greater space in which to criticize contemporary society for failing to realize the ideal. He began to contrast the reality of justice and society with the ideals of religion and community.

Macmurray used idealism to defend a thick concept of the self akin to that of the idealists. He argued that Descartes' cogito – 'I think therefore I am' - is too egocentric. Descartes depicts the Subject as isolated from the Object understood as a world composed of others and nature. In modern philosophy, the self often appears first of all in a private realm, set apart from its dynamic relations with others in the world: 'there are many "I's"; but there is no "You."'[31] Macmurray, in contrast, defended an analysis of the self as embedded in personal relations: 'the Self is constituted by its relation to the Other' – 'it has its being in its relationship'.[32] Our

dependence on others appears most forcefully in the ties binding the child to the mother. 'The mother-child relation' represents 'the basic form of human existence', that is, 'a "You and I" with a common life'.[33] Macmurray's metaphysics thus replaces an atomistic 'I' with a relational 'You and I'.

Macmurray's emphasis on action encouraged him also to denounce Descartes for an excessive focus on thinking. In modern philosophy, the self also often appears first of all in a contemplative realm, within which it withdraws from action in order to attain knowledge of itself and the world. Macmurray, in contrast, privileged action over thought. Action is the fullest expression of human nature because it involves mind and body whereas thought involves mind alone. Thought is 'less complete' in that it 'is constituted by the exclusion of some of our powers'.[34] The conceptual priority of action appears in the fact that the sentence 'I think' presupposes the general one 'I do' in a way that makes thinking a subset of acting. The capacity for thought is thus secondary to that for agency.

All of the definitions of freedom found in Macmurray's writings reflect his concern with action as well as with our relational nature. He tells us, 'freedom is simply our capacity to act . . . to form an intention and seek to realise it'; 'freedom is the ability to carry out chosen purposes, to do what we please'; 'to be free . . . is to express one's own nature in action'.[35] For Macmurray, our capacity for agency means that our choices, intentions, and actions are undetermined in a way that other objects and beings are not. Only humans can act in the light of goals and intentions they consciously adopt.[36] The defining characteristic of human beings is, therefore, 'absolute freedom'.[37]

Because the human capacity for absolute freedom can be expressed only through action in community, our absolute freedom is, however, inherently relative.

The extent of our freedom is relative in particular to material resources, the control of desire, and the extent of fellowship. For a start, a scarcity of material resources leads to the antagonistic relations with others apparent in conflict, domination, and inequality. Conditions of scarcity encourage people to attempt to maximize their resources at the expense of others. If they do so, they thereby limit the resources available to others with which to secure their own survival and freedom. Yet because the individual necessarily exists in relation to the others, the resultant limitations on the freedom of the latter are also restrictions on the initial individual. Conditions of plenty, in contrast, encourage people to look beyond themselves toward the care of the other. By thus foregoing the illusion of selfishness for the reality of selflessness, the individual helps to establish the fellowship that is the main condition of absolute freedom. In addition, conditions of plenty increase people's capacity to fulfil their desires and so the field of possible actions that are open to them. Yet Macmurray points to a tendency for 'desires' to 'grow faster than the power to satisfy them'.[38] Increased plenty can lead merely to a proliferation of desires. The selfless control of desire thus represents a further condition of freedom. When people let go of a desire, their inability to perform the corresponding action does not constitute a restriction on their freedom. For Macmurray, therefore, 'humility is the hand-maid of freedom': as he says, 'self-control' is essential 'if freedom is to be increased or even maintained'.[39] Finally, the importance given to humility and the care of the other points to the need for fellowship. Because human existence consists of a 'You and I', we can attain true freedom only in a fellowship based on moral equality. 'Human freedom can be realised only as the freedom of individuals in relation; and the freedom of each of us is relative to that of the others.'[40]

In renouncing absolute mind, Macmurray turned to an action-based metaphysics that prompted him to rework the idealists' concept of positive freedom. For Macmurray, freedom was not a logical idea – the common good – but rather a practice – the type of action made possible by fellowship. Macmurray argued, moreover, that this fellowship could exist only when our relations with others are personal. In an impersonal relationship, the dichotomy between subject and object reappears with the 'I' approaching the 'You' as an entirely separate being. Impersonal relations have an egocentric quality in that the self remains the centre of reference. Personal relations, in contrast, are heterocentric in nature, the other being the centre of reference.[41]

Macmurray illustrates the distinction between personal and impersonal relations using the example of a psychology teacher and a student who also are friends. The two meet as friends in a way that makes the relationship personal. Later the teacher comes to regard the student's behaviour as abnormal, and so, without altering his manner, he begins to analyse the student from the perspective of a professional psychologist. Once the teacher approaches the student as an object of study, he no longer regards the student as an equal, so the relationship becomes an impersonal one. The example of the teacher and the student suggests that personal and impersonal relations are not mutually exclusive but rather a bipolar unity. At no time is the relationship either wholly personal or wholly impersonal. Rather, the teacher is always both a personal friend and an impersonal psychologist. It is just that at different times one or the other role comes to the fore.

According to Macmurray, love is the dominant motive in positive personal relations, while fear dominates in negative impersonal ones. Fear undermines freedom by inhibiting action: 'so long as there is fear, we cannot act freely.'[42] Indeed,

fear precludes freedom: it isolates the 'I' from the 'You' when the 'I' needs the 'You' to affirm its existence and thus make freedom possible. The motive of fear can be either aggressive or appeasive. When it is aggressive, individuals oppose and sometimes attempt to subordinate the object of their fear, thereby creating a master-slave relationship that is incompatible with freedom. According to Macmurray, Hobbes's theory provides an example of a society based on aggressive fear: Hobbes depicts individuals setting up a sovereign power the fear of which secures social order. When the motive of fear is appeasive, individuals withdraw into themselves thereby becoming isolated from the dynamic relations of the world through which alone they can attain freedom. According to Macmurray, Rousseau's theory provides an example of a society based on appeasive fear: Rousseau depicts individuals identifying their private interests with a general interest the voluntary observance of which secures social order.[43]

The motive of love arises out of the human capacity for self-transcendence. It leads to a fellowship based on care of the other. When we love, we live in the world, not for ourselves. The reference of our activity lies beyond the self in others. Whereas fear is *of* the other *for* oneself, love is *for* the other. To let love dominate is thus to express the inherently relational nature of our being. Nonetheless, Macmurray allows that while love should dominate, it should not entirely displace fear. Once again, we have a bipolar unity as opposed to mutually exclusive terms. A limited and responsible fear helps to sustain a suitable self-control. It encourages individuals to reflect on the likely consequences of their actions instead of rushing into things.

According to Macmurray, individuals can choose to act in accord with either the motive of love, in which case they will relate to the other personally, or the motive of fear, in which case they will relate to the other impersonally. Every time people

act, they make such a choice, and so, at least implicitly, a further choice between right and wrong. Macmurray identifies three types of morality corresponding to the nature of the motive that informs an action. When aggressive fear dominates, we get a pragmatic morality. Pragmatism is a negative mode of morality in that the self constitutes the centre of reference for the good act. Here moral actions subordinate others to the will of the self: individuals seek to realize themselves through dominating others. When appeasive fear dominates, we get a contemplative morality. Contemplation too is a negative mode of morality in that the self is its centre of reference. Here moral actions entail a withdrawal from personal relations: individuals seek to realize themselves in an isolated realm of thought. When love dominates, in contrast, we get a communal morality. Communitarianism is the positive mode of morality in that the other constitutes the centre of reference for the good act. Here moral actions are those done for the sake of the other: individuals rightly seek to realize themselves through a fellowship based on personal relations with others. Once again, however, we probably should treat Macmurray's pragmatic, contemplative, and communal moralities less as mutually exclusive categories than as different extremes. Just as fear has a role to play in underpinning a suitable caution, so we should not altogether shun either a pragmatic or a contemplative morality. Nonetheless, we should adopt a predominately communal morality since it alone recognizes our nature to be one of freedom in fellowship.

Macmurray's action-based metaphysics pushed him to adopt a communitarian ethic conceived in terms of a fellowship characterized by personal relations and love. This ethic opened up a problem that had been of little concern to the idealists. If freedom consists in realizing an intention, and if freedom presupposes fellowship with others, then what happens when the self has intentions that conflict with those of the

relevant others? Absolute freedom appears to require all intentions to be compatible with one another. The idealists typically finessed this problem by defining the common good in terms of absolute mind rather than particular actions.[44] The absolute was defined as coherent in a way which implied that the common good necessarily consisted of perfectly harmonious intentions. Macmurray could not resolve the problem in this way because the First World War had left him suspicious of the harmony, rationality, and universality implicit within the concept of absolute mind. By locating freedom in the realm of action rather than thought, he raised the problem that no matter how much we increase our collective resources and capacities, there remains the possibility of a conflict of intentions.

Macmurray identifies two possible outcomes when intentions conflict. On the one hand, an individual might yield to another, thereby failing to realize his or her intention and so freedom. On the other, both individuals might prevent each other from acting so as to realize their intentions and freedom. The only way to attain freedom for all, therefore, is to prevent intentions from conflicting. We have to adopt a form of association in which each individual acts so as to avoid infringing any other's freedom. Such an association would consist of both a just arrangement to secure the freedom of others and a religious concern to limit that for which one strives. Justice places the individual under impersonal, external rules. Religion provides individuals with a personal, internal conviction that fellowship with others will secure their own freedom.

Justice is the lower limit or negative aspect of our moral relations with others. It establishes the extent to which each individual can realize what initially might be incompatible intentions. Justice moderates the individual's intentions and freedom by reference to an external idea of what is fair to all parties. As Macmurray explains, 'to

intend justice is to intend that my own claim shall not take precedence over the claims of others.'[45] When a community is characterized by direct and co-operative relations, its members readily agree about what is fair and so happily consent to the principles of justice. Complications arise, however, if people do not trust one another to honour these principles. In the absence of trust, social order requires an authority with the power to impose sanctions on anyone who breaks the principles of justice. The state, conceived as this authority, thus represents the institutional expression of a politics that attempts to secure freedom through justice. In large associations, moreover, the relations between individuals typically remain indirect, so the state has to maintain justice through law. The law seeks to adjust relations between individuals to ensure that their actions do not unfairly infringe upon each other's freedom.

Macmurray argues that religion provides a more positive way of promoting moral relations with others than does justice. Although religion and justice are not mutually exclusive, our emphasis should fall on the former because the inner control of desire enables us to promote fellowship to a much greater extent than does politics. What matters here, however, is religious faith, not religious belief. Macmurray defined religious belief as the 'creedal affirmation' of theological doctrines. He argues that the emphasis organized religions place on adherence to doctrines typically makes them authoritarian, moralizing, and self-protective in ways that have little to do with freedom in fellowship. Religious faith, in contrast, denotes a psychological attitude of confidence and trust in our relations with others.[46] Faith should not be attached to a particular object, creed, or dogma. Rather, it should be understood as a positive stance towards others. Faith promotes a community in which people moderate their own desires to live in relation to others.

According to Macmurray, 'the relation of religion to the sense of community is the most important characteristic of religion.'[47] Religion sustains and celebrates fellowship, for 'a religious group is a communion, and its ritual and doctrine express the community of its members'.[48] Religious practices – shared meals, singing, and even playing games together – express the unity of the people who perform them. Communion symbolizes the presence of a shared form of life: it celebrates the fact that we have our being only in relation to others. Yet Macmurray's communitarianism is a cosmopolitan one. He argues that only a universal belief in the one God can sustain an appropriately universal fellowship. Although religious practices within primitive tribes express a shared life, because each tribe has its own religion, the result still is not a full fellowship. On the contrary, the religious practice of each tribe celebrates the exclusive membership therein, not the inclusive fellowship that would embrace the whole of humanity. A cosmopolitan fellowship thus requires a universal religion that celebrates what all people have in common: 'the assertion that there is only one God is the assertion that there is only one community of mankind.'[49]

Macmurray's shift away from the idealists' optimism about the world opened up greater space for him to adopt a critical view of modern society. Instead of the absolute guiding us toward the common good, he evoked a world in which fellowship and love have a tenuous and perilous presence. At times, his rejection of modern society led him to flirt with communism.[50] More commonly, however, it led him to draw a stark contrast between his vision of a community based on fellowship and current societies based on individualism. Whereas community provides a setting for freedom, to live in society is to have no real freedom. All the aspects of Macmurray's thought that we have considered sharpen his distinction between the community and society. Consider his repudiation of modern philosophy. Society embodies this

philosophy, which is both egocentric and theoretical. It thus consists of isolated individuals who see themselves as prior to interpersonal interactions. Community, in contrast, is heterocentric and active. It consists of interdependent individuals who exist in and through dynamic interactions with others. Consider also Macmurray's distinction between personal and impersonal relations. Society is characterized by impersonal relations in which individuals treat one another as objects. People try to dominate each other so as to attain their own selfish ends. Community, in contrast, is characterized by personal relations in which individuals act with the other as the centre of reference – they respect each other as free and equal friends. Consider also Macmurray's categorization of motives. Society embodies appeasive and aggressive fear, so the dominant moralities are contemplative and pragmatic. Community, in contrast, embodies love and so a positive, communal morality. Consider finally Macmurray's analysis of justice and religion. Society is based on an external unity so it has to deal with incompatible intentions primarily through justice. A misguided focus on the atomistic self entails a dependence on political arrangements to impose a unity on people. At best, society can consist of individuals who, by accepting just laws, come to moderate their behaviour so as to live peacefully together. In contrast, community is an association based on an internal unity, so it can rely on religion to deal with incompatible intentions. A recognition of our independence leads to our living for one another and so exercising a voluntary self-control in order to enhance our common life. The community consists of people united by dynamic personal relations based on love and trust.

Yet again we should treat community and society as a bipolar unity. In practice all human associations contain aspects of both. Macmurray's concern is that contemporary associations are far too like a pure society and insufficiently close to a

community. He would not have us abandon all features of society – thought, indirect relations, caution, and political institutions designed to secure justice. But he would have us promote far, far greater levels of community – co-operative activity, personal contact, friendship, and a religion or culture that promotes our shared humanity.

A Communitarian Legacy

The experience of war prompted Macmurray to transform social humanism by renouncing objective idealism with its concept of absolute mind for personal idealism with its action-based metaphysics. This transformation also influenced his ethics: it prompted him to evoke a community of fellows rather than the common good, to emphasize love and religion as integral to fellowship, and to contrast community with modern society. In each of these respects, Macmurray's philosophy finds echoes in the work of the communitarians, including Ronald Beiner, Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, and Michael Walzer. Here too, however, we need to point to personal and conceptual connections to indicate that these echoes constitute significant historical links as opposed to mere resemblances. The conceptual connections reveal the communitarians continuing Macmurray's reworking of idealism. Typically they too exhibit scepticism toward absolute mind while managing to restate in other idioms many of the religious and metaphysical commitments of the idealists, including a vitalist analysis of human behaviour and a thick concept of the person. Typically they too adopt an ethic tied to a community of fellows, a religious or civic ethos, and a critique of modern society. Equally, however, they develop Macmurray's legacy in order to respond to the dilemma of multiculturalism. Before considering these conceptual connections, however, we should outline the personal ones that suggest the former are more than mere coincidences.

Taylor studied at Balliol – the birthplace and stronghold of British idealism. Thereafter he was appointed successively a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and Chichele Professor of Social and Political Theory at Oxford, before he later returned to his native Canada. His doctoral thesis reworked the idealist concern to defend a vitalist analysis of human behaviour against mechanism. Yet just as Macmurray adopted an action-based metaphysics, so Taylor drew somewhat on the emergence of analytic and linguistic philosophy in Oxford to rewrite this concern as a conceptual and empirical matter rather than one to be decided by an appeal to metaphysical categories such as absolute mind.[51] Taylor had some contacts with the inheritors of the idealist mantle in Oxford. Moreover, although he drifted away from analytic and linguistic philosophy mainly under continental influences, he did so in a way that made Green 'congenial' and led to his becoming one of the foremost Hegel scholars of his generation. [52]

We can trace personal connections, again in the context of Balliol and Oxford, from Taylor to other communitarians. Sandel's communitarian work, <u>Liberalism and The Limits of Justice</u>, was a revised version of the doctoral thesis that he wrote while at Balliol College, Oxford, where he was examined by Taylor, whom he thanks therein for introducing him to Hegel and Aristotle.[53] At Balliol, Sandel, with his fellow student Beiner, ran a graduate society named after Green. Beiner had studied at McGill, where Taylor provided him with grounding in Hegel, before he moved to Balliol.[54] At the University of Southampton, Beiner came across Raymond - now Lord - Plant (of whom more later) as well as following a course on the idealists taught by Peter Johnson, an enthusiast for Collingwood.

MacIntyre too has personal links with Oxford, having been a Research Fellow at Nuffield College, 1961-62, and a Tutor and Fellow at University College, 1963-66.

By then, he already had encountered some of the British idealists after having being
introduced to Aristotle by W. Allison Laidlaw, Queen Mary College, London. Earlier
still, the first work of philosophy that MacIntyre read, as a by-product of a youthful
interest in Romano-British archaeology, was Collingwood's *Autobiography*. Indeed,
Collingwood remains 'a continuing influence' on MacIntyre, though not on his
political views.[55]

In the case of Michael Walzer, we can trace a rather different line of influence
back to the idealists. While Walzer wrote his doctorate at Harvard, he acknowledges
therein a debt to Melvin Richter, an early student of the British idealists. More
significantly, Walzer was supervised by Samuel Beer, who, in turn, had studied under
A. D. Lindsay at Balliol. Beer's approach to politics draws heavily on the idealist
temper. His first book, *The City of Reason*, deploys Lindsay, Bernard Bosanquet, and
F. H. Bradley to develop a vision of a liberal society based on a shared understanding
of reason as an ideal of conduct guided by religious intuition.[56] In addition, Beer's
later works on British politics embody the idealists' concern to understand human life
in terms of traditions and purposes.[57] Once we recognize Beer's debt to the idealists,
we can easily trace the lineage forward to Walzer. Walzer once said that Beer's
'ideas about the proper study of politics have been the major inspiration of my own
thought on the subject'.[58] Besides, Walzer draws several times on the arguments of
Tawney in his main communitarian work, *Spheres of Justice*.[59]

We have good reason to suppose, then, that the communitarians have a direct
acquaintance with the work of the idealists and their successors. Once we thus locate
the communitarians against the background of a tradition of social humanism, we can
cast new light on some of their best-known arguments. Although the communitarians
rarely give much credence to concepts such as absolute mind, they often remain

preoccupied with reworking Judaeo-Christian thought in response to contemporary circumstances. In doing so, they, like Macmurray, typically adopt a metaphysics concerned less with thought than with action or practice. Indeed, some of the most notable differences among the communitarians reflect the varied ways in which they appeal to action. Beiner and MacIntyre draw on Aristotelian republicanism: they focus on political or civic activity as that within which we realize our human nature. Sandel, Taylor, and Walzer, in contrast, adopt a more modern focus on civil society as a possible site of ethical practices. Taylor portrays the classical republican stress on the public arena as only one source of the modern self, a source since transformed by the Protestant stress on everyday life and the romantic concern with fulfilling our inner natures.[60] Where Beiner and MacIntyre often see community as valuable principally as a background to rational deliberation or public activity, the other communitarians are willing to ascribe intrinsic value to community as an expression and location of love and friendship. Surely, moreover, it is this difference that explains why Beiner and MacIntyre have been especially reluctant to accept the label 'communitarian'.[61]

All the communitarians adopt the vitalism, the thick concept of the person, and the positive concept of freedom that we found within the thought of the idealists and Macmurray. Likewise, they typically echo Macmurray in unpacking the idea of the good in terms of a community of fellows characterized by love and something akin to a religious culture. Sandel evokes friendship to denote an especially valuable, but now endangered, form of personal relations. MacIntyre draws on Aristotle to promote friendship conceived as a virtue by which individuals come to develop shared understandings and common practices.[62] Beiner has indicated an interest in civil religion as an essential part of any viable attempt 'to hold a political community

together'.[63] Like Macmurray, the communitarians appeal to a community based on personal bonds of affection as a necessary corrective to a society based on impersonal contracts and self-interest.

Once we locate the communitarians against the background of a tradition of social humanism, we might rethink their relationship to liberalism.[64] Although the communitarians often criticize liberalism for its minimal concept of the self and the priority it gives to the right over the good, we might see these concerns as secondary to their commitment to the community of fellows. Consider the debate over the nature of the self. The communitarians are not necessarily rejecting any appeal to a minimal self as a basis for constructing principles of justice. Rather, they are arguing that a society based solely on these principles does not fully recognize our nature. As humans, we have our being in relation to others in a way that means we belong in a community, not just a society. Consider also the debate over the right and the good. The communitarians are not necessarily rejecting the role of the right in overcoming incompatible intentions so as to secure a social order. Rather, they are arguing that an exclusive focus on the right ignores the vital role of personal relations and friendship in transforming an otherwise anonymous social order into a community of fellows. A community requires not only principles of justice but also a vision of the good – a religion or culture that celebrates and promotes a shared way of life.

When we locate the communitarians against the background of a tradition of social humanism, then, we soften, or at least modify, the contrast between their views and liberalism. As Macmurray illustrates, communitarianism need not always oppose liberal institutions that are concerned with indirect relations and contracts, pragmatic morality and a *modus vivendi*, the right and justice. Communitarianism suggests, rather, that modern societies generally rely too heavily on liberal institutions, and that

they thereby prevent us from fully realizing our nature. Liberalism, we might say, needs to be combined with, but not necessarily supplanted by, a renewed emphasis on co-operative activity, friendship, and perhaps even, in one form or another, a religious culture.[65]

Once we reread the contrast between communitarianism and liberalism in this way, we open up the possibility of a cosmopolitan communitarianism akin to that espoused by Macmurray. Walzer has expressed guarded sympathy for the idea of a universal human community, saying, 'The only plausible alternative to the political community is humanity itself . . . a community that included men and women everywhere.'[66] The communitarians want to promote a fellowship based on personal relations, co-operative activity, and friendship. Such a fellowship could consist of all of humanity. Indeed, the religious background to communitarianism suggests that the idea of fellowship draws at least indirectly on the universalism found in much Judaeo-Christian thought. The communitarian ideal, as in the case of Macmurray, often derives from the concept of God's universal kingdom. The community of fellows expresses our shared humanity under God.

While communitarians have inherited a tradition of social humanism, they have also developed it in response to new issues. In particular, our reading of the communitarians suggests that we might regard cultural difference as a dilemma with which they are grappling at least as much as a position that they are affirming against liberalism. Their sensitivity to cultural difference reflects an awareness of the challenge it poses to the aspiration to a cosmopolitan fellowship. Thus, although MacIntyre defends an almost Benedictine model of community at least as rigid as anything Macmurray proposed, and although Beiner's emphasis on the virtues of an Aristotelian republicanism can seem equally restrictive, the other communitarians

have struggled to devise more pluralist versions of the community of fellows.[67]

Walzer describes parts of his work as an attempt to endorse 'the politics of difference'.[68] He presents us with a complex self constituted by multiple roles, identities, and values, and embedded in a pluralist society.[69] Likewise, Sandel evokes 'multiply encumbered' individuals embedded in overlapping communities. He advocates a 'multiplicity of communities rather than a one-world community based on the solidarity of humankind'.[70] Taylor's work on multinationalism in Canada represents yet another attempt to reconcile the ideal of a community of fellows with the reality of cultural difference. He attempts to allow for 'deep diversity' by recognising a 'plurality of ways of belonging' to the community.[71]

All of these attempts to open up social humanism to multiculturalism raise the problem of specifying what exactly constitutes a community. In philosophical terms, Macmurray, like the idealists, continually evoked the universal within the human. While he allowed for difference, occasionally even suggesting that we can approach the universal only through local cultures, he always insisted on the reality of the universal. He opposed relativism as a denial of our ability to transcend the specific so as to recognize our common humanity. Contemporary communitarians, in contrast, are often more wary of the universal in ways that make them more accommodating to difference. Yet critics might argue that their emphasis on difference precludes their identifying any shared way of life on which we might predicate a community, let alone a cosmopolitan one. Walzer himself, for example, comes close to disavowing cosmopolitanism as a utopian denial of difference. He writes, 'What we might think of as the highest form of communal life - universal brotherhood or sisterhood - is probably incompatible with any process of popular decision-making.'[72]

In more public terms, Macmurray, again like the idealists, paid little attention to the question of how we might develop the personal relations, communal morality, love, and religion that he took to be constitutive of fellowship. He largely took for granted both a Christian culture and a traditional model of the family that seemed capable of sustaining all of these things. A concern with multiculturalism, in contrast, pushes communitarians, such as Sandel, Taylor, and Walzer, to confront just this question. Sandel in particular has gone on to explore the very possibility of a suitable public philosophy today. He asks how we might reconcile the conflicting claims to rights that have arisen around issues such as abortion, pornography, homosexuality, and divorce. And he answers that an appropriate public philosophy must attempt to accommodate competing versions of the good life.[73]

In political terms, multiculturalism feeds into a broader concern about a decline in the solidarity embedded in the welfare state. As we saw, many social humanists, whether liberal welfarists or ethical socialists, took the ideal of fellowship to mean in practice the use of progressive taxation to support a welfare state. People were to sacrifice a degree of personal prosperity to contribute to the common good. Multiculturalism can reinforce a fear of social dislocation that is also associated with a profound disquiet at the individualism and selfishness that many communitarians believe was reinforced, if not created, by the neo-liberal economic policies of the New Right.[74] To see how communitarians have developed the final theme associated with idealism – a political sympathy for the welfare state – we have to shift our attention somewhat from philosophers to politicians such as Blair.

The idealists, as we saw, provided significant inspiration for the early welfare state. We can find a similar pattern in the political activities of some communitarians: Beiner and Taylor belong to Canada's socialist New Democratic Party, while Walzer

often proclaims himself a democratic socialist. We can see it also in the work of British political theorists such as Lord Plant, who has played a significant role in the British Labour Party, most notably as Chair of its Committee on Electoral Reform. Plant wrote a doctoral thesis on Hegel, under the supervision of W. H. Greenleaf, a disciple of Oakeshott.[75] Thereafter he wrote on the religious background to Hegel's thought and on the idealists before drawing on communitarianism to develop a critique of the New Right.[76] Plant argues that we cannot promote individual freedom and responsibility through a 'thin' notion of identity based on consumerism and marketization. The realization of freedom requires instead a vision of the individual as embedded in a community composed of a web of reciprocal rights and responsibilities.

Personal and conceptual connections locate Tony Blair, as well as Plant, within a tradition of social humanism. Macmurray's influence on Blair has been well documented.[77] Indeed, Blair himself has acknowledged such an influence repeadtedly. In 1994, he said, 'If you really want to understand what I'm all about you have to take a look at a guy called John Macmurray. It's all there.'[78] In 1996, he praised Macmurray specifically for delineating the starting point of a modern concept of community through his rigorous location of individuals in social settings such that they cannot properly ignore their obligations to others.[79] Thomson, who introduced Blair to Macmurray's work and with whom Blair made his youthful pilgrimage to meet the philosopher, acted as his spiritual adviser for a while after he became leader of the Labour Party. Similar influences are apparent throughout New Labour. For instance, Peter Mandelson, a key architect of New Labour, and Roger Liddle, one of Blair's policy advisers, tell us that New Labour stands for 'an ethical socialism which draws on the ideas of Tawney and Ruskin'.[80]

New Labour draws on the heritage of the liberal welfarists and ethical socialists who deployed idealism to advocate state welfare. Blair himself remains committed to the main themes that we have traced through the tradition of social humanism. He constantly evokes a thick view of the person as integral to a vision of community that he contrasts sharply with the individualistic society sought by the New Right. He adopts a positive concept of freedom, emphasizing that we can receive independence only in 'the communities to which we belong'.[81] Community provides the moral, social, and economic preconditions for the proper development of individuals. Yet New Labour also confronts the political aspects of the developments we have traced within the tradition of social humanism. Consider first the crisis of reason with its concomitant shift from absolute mind and the common good to action and fellowship. This shift opened up the problem of conflicting intentions, which Macmurray and the communitarians respond to by calling for a religious culture to celebrate and promote the community. In political terms, this problem feeds into concerns about the individualistic culture associated with neo-liberal economics. On the one hand, ethical socialists, as we have indicated, bemoan the selfishness and greed they believe neo-liberalism fosters. On the other hand, however, ethical socialists themselves often now look to a more individualistic community, that is, a community that encourages people to act so as to realize their intentions at least as much as to devote themselves to social duties and the common good. Consider also the dilemma of multiculturalism. In political terms, this dilemma feeds into concerns about a decline of solidarity that might further erode the willingness of citizens to pay higher taxes to sustain, let alone expand, welfare programmes. Equally, however, ethical socialists often try to allow for cultural diversity, not only by voicing a more

individualistic concept of community but also by adopting more decentralized patterns of administration.

New Labour responds to these developments by promoting reforms intended to shift the role of the state from that of a provider to that of an enabler.[82] The main role of the welfare state is no longer to provide a uniform and universal set of benefits reflecting a social concept of poverty. It is, rather, to enable individuals to improve and to develop themselves through their own activity. New Labour does not seek to raise benefits; it concentrates instead on providing training and advice to help the underclass enter paid employment. As Blair tells us, the welfare state should 'not be founded on a paternalistic government giving out more benefits but on an enabling government that through work and education helps people to help themselves'.[83] New Labour's concept of an enabling state repudiates the selfishness associated with the New Right by stressing our responsibilities as well as our rights. Blair insists, 'Personal and social responsibility are not optional extras but core principles of a thriving society'.[84] Nonetheless, the concept of an enabling state clearly evokes a more individualistic vision of community than that voiced by earlier ethical socialists such as Gore, Tawney, and Temple. Indeed, the welfare state now appears to offer us a chance to compete for our own benefit at least as much as a chance to express our solidarity with one another. According to Blair, for example, fellowship requires us to acknowledge 'an obligation collectively to ensure each citizen gets a stake in it [the community]', but the purpose of this stake is less to unite us around a common good than to ensure 'opportunity is available to all, advancement is through merit, and . . . no group or class is set apart or excluded'.[85] It seems, moreover, that the enabling state requires less solidarity than did the older, more paternalistic welfare state. By holding down benefits, for example, New Labour avoids testing the willingness of

citizens to contribute more through higher taxes. Finally, the enabling state appears to incorporate a range of decentralized administrative processes. Some of these involve measures pioneered by the New Right as means of increasing choice and empowering consumers as well as promoting efficiency: privatization, contracting out, corporate management techniques, and the Citizens Charter have all been embraced to some extent by New Labour. Other measures of decentralization reflect New Labour's greater commitment to a politics based on networks: the government has promoted partnerships between the public, private, and voluntary sectors, as well as various Action Zones, to address what are seen as specific local, sectoral, or community issues.

New Labour's reworking of the final theme that we highlighted in idealism raises a similar issue to that we found confronted communitarian philosophers. Just as critics might argue that the communitarian emphasis on difference precludes their giving a satisfactory analysis of what constitutes community, so they might complain that New Labour's policies effectively stand as a capitulation to the individualism of neo-liberalism. Instead of a vibrant community, they might say, New Labour offers us a future in which the well-to-do are increasingly free to go their own ways while the poor are subject to increasingly punitive responsibilities as conditions of receiving benefits. A related difficulty confronts New Labour's apparent concern to adopt more decentralized administrative processes. If the government does not impose itself upon organizations and individuals, they might not fulfil what the government takes to be their responsibilities. Hence, New Labour constantly creates standards, targets, and audits for decentralized bodies: what Blair describes as 'light touch inspection' for good performers shades into a far heavier hand on poor performers.[86] Such heavy

regulation might undermine the very flexibility and responsiveness to particular communities that New Labour wants to promote.

Conclusion

We hope that the pertinence and strength of the personal and conceptual connections highlighted provide persuasive evidence of a tradition of social humanism that unfolds from the British idealists through Macmurray and others to the communitarians. Macmurray provides the reference point around which we have sought to reconstruct this tradition. He developed an idealist inheritance so as explicitly to defend the ideal of a community of fellows. In doing so, he extended themes found in the idealists – themes such as a vitalist analysis of behaviour, a thick view of the self, and a positive concept of freedom defined in relation to others. Equally, however, he turned from absolute mind to action in a way that introduced yet other themes found among the communitarians – themes such as the appeal to friendship and love, the stark contrast between society and community, and the explicit demand for a religious culture to transcend the limits of justice.

Like all traditions, then, social humanism has undergone continuous historical development. Today its leading exponents are the communitarian philosophers and ethical socialists who are attempting to apply and develop it in the context of issues such as multiculturalism and a decline in solidarity. The extent to which they succeed in doing so will do much to determine its future viability.

[1] We thank Jack Costello, Graeme Garrard, and Peter Nicholson for their help.

[2] J. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, intro. J. Costello (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1992), p. vii.

[3] Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*; J. Macmurray, *The Form of the Personal, Vol. 1: The Self as Agent*, intro. S. Harrison (London, 1995); J. Macmurray, *The Form of the Personal, Vol. 2: Persons in Relation*, intro. F. Kirkpatrick (London, 1995), and J. Macmurray, *Interpreting the Universe*, intro. A. Duncan (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1996).

[4] C. Bryant, *Possible Dreams: A Personal History of the British Christian Socialists* (London, 1996), particularly pp. 285-311.

[5] M. Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (Cambridge, 1999), ch. 5.

[6] See J. Costello, *John Macmurray: A Biography* (Edinburgh, 2002), pp. 19-30.

[7] V. Mehta, 'The Origins of English Idealism in Relation to Oxford', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 13 (1975), 177-87. The history of Balliol traces this idealism back to the influence of Hegel on Jowett. See J. Jones, *Balliol College: A History* (Oxford, 1997), p. 202.

[8] A. Quinton, 'Absolute Idealism', in A. Kenny, ed., *Rationalism, Empiricism, and Idealism* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 124-50. Also see G. Santayana, 'Fifty Years of British Idealism', in *Some Turns of Thought in Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 48-70, and P. Robbins, *The British Hegelians 1875-1925* (New York, 1982).

[9] M. Bevir, 'Welfarism, Socialism, and Religion: On T. H. Green and Others', *Review of Politics* 55 (1993), 639-61, and M. Richter, *The Politics of Conscience: T. H. Green and His Age* (London, 1964).

[10] S. Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation: A Study in Late Victorian Thought* (Oxford, 1996).

[11] A. Milne, *The Social Philosophy of English Idealism* (London, 1962), and P. Nicholson, *The Political Philosophy of the British Idealists* (Cambridge, 1990).

[12] T. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A. Bradley (Oxford, 1884), sec. 209 (p. 222).

[13] J. Harris, 'Political Thought and the Welfare State 1870-1940: An Intellectual Framework for British Social Policy', *Past and Present* 135 (1992), 116-41; and A. Ulam, *Philosophical Foundations of English Socialism* (Cambridge, MA, 1951).

[14] On the debate between voluntary and state action see S. Collini, 'Hobhouse, Bosanquet and the State: Philosophical Idealism and Political Argument in England 1880-1914', *Past and Present* 72 (1976), 86-111. More generally see P. Clarke, *Liberals and Social Democrats* (Cambridge, 1978); A. Vincent & R. Plant, *Philosophy, Politics, and Citizenship: Idealism and the Welfare State* (Oxford, 1984); and P. Weiler, *The New Liberalism: Liberal Social Theory in Great Britain 1889-1914* (New York, 1982).

[15] M. Bentley, *The Climax of Liberal Politics: British Liberalism in Theory and Practice 1868-1918* (London, 1987), particularly pp. 76-83; S. Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology: L. T. Hobhouse and Political Argument in England 1880-1914* (Cambridge, 1979), particularly pp. 123-8; H. Emy, *Liberals, Radicals, and Social Politics* (Cambridge, 1973); M. Freeden, *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford, 1978); and Weiler, *New Liberalism*. The idealists too sometimes combined their philosophy with evolutionary theory. See D. Ritchie, 'Darwin and Hegel', in *Darwin and Hegel with Other Philosophical Studies* (London, 1893), pp. 38-76.

[16] See respectively A. Kadish, *Apostle Arnold: The Life and Death of Arnold Toynbee, 1852-1883* (Durham, NC, 1986); S. Meacham, *Toynbee Hall and Social Reform: The Search for Community* (New Haven, CT, 1987); G. Prestige, *The Life of Charles Gore* (London, 1935); and P. D'a Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival* (Princeton, 1969).

[17] C. Tsuzuki, *Edward Carpenter 1844-1929* (Cambridge, 1980); and R. Terrill, *Richard Tawney and His Times: Socialism as Fellowship* (London, 1974). More generally see S. Pierson, *Marxism and the Origins of British Socialism* (Ithaca, NY, 1973), and S. Yeo, 'A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-1896', *History Workshop* 4 (1977), 5-56.

[18] D. Boucher and A. Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: The Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff, 1993).

[19] Costello, *John Macmurray*, pp. 87-9.

[20] J. Macmurray, *The Search for the Reality of Religion* (London, 1965), p. 19.

[21] Letter from Jack Costello to the authors, 12 October 1999.

[22] Collingwood invoked the absolute in his early work – see R. Collingwood *Speculum Mentis* (Oxford, 1924) – but he did so increasingly infrequently and indirectly thereafter as he came to insist on the particularity of history. Oakeshott retained something akin to a concept of the absolute while rejecting the view, associated above all with Bradley, that it was outside experience. See M. Oakeshott, *Experience and Its Modes* (Cambridge, 1933).

[23] D. Bates, 'Rediscovering Collingwood's Spiritual History (in and out of Context)', *History and Theory* 35 (1996), 29-55, and M. Bevir, 'Universality and Particularity in the Philosophy of E. B. Bax and R. G. Collingwood', *History of the Human Sciences* 12 (1999), 55-69.

[24] Macmurray's concern with the personal overlaps somewhat with that of earlier personal idealists, such as Andrew Seth [Pringle-Pattison], who complained that the absolute tended excessively to absorb the individual. However, we should not allow this overlap to obscure the drift away from the absolute characteristic of Macmurray's generation. Seth was willing to accept the 'doctrine of the Absolute Subject': he wanted only to insist on a Leibnitian principle of individuation against too Spinozistic a rejection of the discrete and persistent identity of individual selves. Macmurray and his generation, in contrast, generally became increasingly unhappy with the very idea of an Absolute Subject. See 'Letter from A. Seth [Pringle-Pattison] to F. H. Bradley, 26 December 1894', in F. Bradley, *Collected Works of F. H. Bradley*, *Vol. 4: Selected Correspondence*, ed. W. Mander and C. Keene (Bristol, 1999), p. 118, and, more generally, A. Seth, *Hegelianism and Personality* (Edinburgh, 1887).

[25] For his discussions of Marxism see J. Macmurray, 'Dialectical Materialism as a Philosophy', in H. Levy *et al*., eds., *Aspects of Dialectical Materialism* (London, 1934), pp. 31-53; J. Macmurray, 'The Early Development of Marx's Thought', in J. Lewis *et al*., eds., *Christianity and the Social Revolution* (London, 1935), pp. 209-36; and J. Macmurray, 'The Nature and Function of Ideologies', 'The Nature of Philosophy', and 'The New Materialism', all in J. Murray, ed., *Marxism* (London, 1935), pp. 59-75, 27-42, and 43-58. For discussion see Costello, *John Macmurray*, pp. 196-202 and 222-233, and F. Kirkpatrick, 'Introduction' to Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, pp. xx-xxi.

[26] D. Scott, *A. D. Lindsay: A Biography* (Oxford, 1971). Much of our information on who was at Balliol during which years comes from the Balliol College Archives, Oxford. The most important published source is I. Gillot, ed., *Balliol College Register, 1900-1950* (Oxford, 1953).

[27] A. Lindsay, *The Modern Democratic State* (Chatham House, 1943). Also see D. Emmet, 'Lindsay as Philosopher', in Scott, *Lindsay*.

[28] Costello, *John Macmurray*, pp. 111-28.

[29] Macmurray apparently 'fascinated Gaitskell and Evan Durbin, helping them to sort out their ideas and evolve a moral basis for a non-Marxist Socialism'. P. Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell: A Political Biography* (London, 1979), p. 32.

[30] On Macmurray's influence on Polanyi, see G. Baum, *Karl Polanyi on Ethics and Economics* (Montreal, 1996).

[31] Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p. 23. For discussion see F. Kirkpatrick, *The Ethics of Community* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 66-8.

[32] Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p. 17.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 60. On Macmurray's deployment of the mother-child relationship see Kirkpatrick, *Ethics of Community*, pp. 69-70.

[34] Macmurray, *Self as Agent*, p. 86.

[35] J. Macmurray, *Conditions of Freedom* (London, 1949), pp. 16 and 20, and J. Macmurray, *Freedom in the Modern World* (London, 1944), p. 170.

[36] This is not to say that Macmurray believed animal behaviour is not purposive, only that it is not consciously so. See S. Harrison, 'Introduction' to Macmurray, *Self As Agent*, pp. xx-xi.

[37] Macmurray, *Conditions of Freedom*, p. 16.

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 23 and 24.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[41] For discussions of Macmurray's rather imprecise account of the nature of personal relations see Kirkpatrick, *Ethics of Community*, pp. 68-69; L. Roy, 'Interpersonal

Knowledge According to John Macmurray', *Modern Theology* 5 (1989), 352; and S.

Fielding, 'The Point of Politics: Friendship and Community in the Work of John

Macmurray', *Renewal* 6 (1998), 55-64.

[42] Macmurray, *Conditions of Freedom*, p. 173.

[43] Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, pp. 134-46.

[44] See, for example, the analysis of Green's views on property in Nicholson, *Political Philosophy*.

[45] Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p. 201.

[46] Macmurray sometimes identifies this notion of faith with the teachings of Jesus.

See A. Duncan, *On the Nature of Persons* (New York, 1990).

[47] J. Macmurray, *Creative Society: A Study of the Relation of Christianity to Communism* (London, 1935), p. 36.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[50] J. Macmurray, *The Philosophy of Communism* (London, 1935); Macmurray, *Creative Society*; J. Macmurray, 'The Challenge of Communism', in H. Wood & J. Macmurray, *Christianity and Communism* (London, 1934), pp. 14-32; and J. Macmurray, 'Christianity and Communism: Towards A Synthesis', in Lewis *et al.*, ed., *Christianity and the Social Revolution*, pp. 505-26.

[51] C. Taylor, 'Explanation by Purpose and Modern Psychological Theory', DPhil Thesis, University of Oxford, 1961. A revised version was published as C. Taylor, *The Explanation of Behaviour* (London, 1964).

[52] Letter from Charles Taylor to the authors, 11 June 1999. For his Hegel scholarship see C. Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge, 1975); and C. Taylor, *Hegel and Modern Society* (Cambridge, 1979).

[53] M. Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge, 1982), p. ix.

[54] Beiner's doctorate acknowledges debts to Sandel and Taylor. See R. Beiner, 'Hannah Arendt's Contribution to A Theory of Political Judgement', DPhil Thesis, University of Oxford, 1979. A revised version was published as R. Beiner, *Political Judgement* (London, 1983).

[55] Letter from Alasdair MacIntyre to the authors, 25 May 1999.

[56] S. Beer, *The City of Reason* (Cambridge, MA, 1949), particularly pp. 75, 85, 138-177, and 211. Beer saw his work as a Christian interpretation of the philosophy of A. N. Whitehead, who is considered in relation to Macmurray by F. Kirkpatrick, introduction to Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*.

[57] S. Beer, *Modern British Politics: A Study of Parties and Pressure Groups* (London, 1965), and S. Beer, *Britain Against Itself: The Political Contradictions of Collectivism* (London, 1982).

[58] M. Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (London, 1966), p. xi.

[59] M. Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defence of Pluralism and Equality* (New York, 1984), particularly pp. 118-9, 208-9, and 274.

[60] C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, 1989). Taylor's increasing concern with action and practice is traced in A. Reckwitz, *Die Transformation der Kulturheorien: Zur Entwicklung eines Theorieprogramms* (Weilerswist, 2000).

[61] R. Beiner, *What's the Matter with Liberalism?* (Berkeley, CA, 1992), pp. 28-33. Perhaps it also explains why MacIntyre says that although he 'read something of John Macmurray', he 'was not impressed'. Letter to the authors, 25 May 1999. One

reason why commentators associate MacIntyre with communitarianism is surely the religious concerns apparent in his Thomism.

[62] A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London, 1985), pp. 155-56.

[63] R. Beiner, 'Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau on Civil Religion', *Review of Politics* 55 (1993), 638.

[64] Compare C. Taylor, 'Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate', in N. Rosenblum, ed., *Liberalism and the Moral Life* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), pp. 159-82.

[65] In response to communitarian critics, liberals such as John Rawls and Joseph Raz have recast their vision in somewhat similar terms. For a prescient discussion of the impact of communitarianism on liberalism see S. Mulhall and A. Swift, *Liberals and Communitarians* (Oxford, 1992).

[66] Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, p. 29.

[67] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, pp. 256-263, and Beiner, *What's the Matter with Liberalism?* These Aristotelians can regard attempts to incorporate difference within community as a tacit submission to a liberalism that refuses properly to uphold the virtues. Hence Beiner denounces Walzer's pluralism as a form of 'hyperliberalism'. Beiner, *What's The Matter with Liberalism?*, pp. 28-9.

[68] M. Walzer, *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame, IN, 1994), p. x.

[69] Walzer, 'The Divided Self', *Thick and Thin*, pp. 85-104.

[70] M. Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), pp. 341-350.

[71] C. Taylor, *Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism* (Montreal, 1993), pp. 181-83.

[72] Walzer, *Spheres of Justice,* p. 230.

[73] Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent*.

[74] A. Etzioni, 'Too Many Rights, Too Few Responsibilities', in M. Walzer, ed., *Toward a Global Civil Society* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 99-105.

[75] R. Plant, 'From Philosophy to Community: A Study in the Identity and Significance of the Thought of Hegel', PhD Thesis, University of Hull, 1971.

[76] R. Plant, *Hegel: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1983); Plant and Vincent, *Philosophy, Politics and Citizenship*; and R. Plant, 'Citizenship, Rights, Welfare', in J. Franklin, ed., *Social Policy and Social Justice: The IPPR Reader* (Cambridge, 1998) pp. 57-72.

[77] Examples include S. Brittan, 'Tony Blair's Real Guru', *New Statesman*, 7 February 1997; and J. Rentoul, *Tony Blair* (London, 1996), p. 42.

[78] T. Blair, *Scotland on Sunday*, 24 July 1994.

[79] T. Blair, 'Foreword', P. Conford, ed., *The Personal World: John Macmurray on Self and Society* (Edinburgh, 1996).

[80] P. Mandelson and R. Liddle, *The Blair Revolution* (London, 1996), p. 4.

[81] T. Blair, 'The Third Way: New Politics for the New Century', Fabian Pamphlet, No. 588 (London, 1998), p. 4.

[82] M. Bevir, 'New Labour: A Study in Ideology', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2 (2000), 277-301.

[83] T. Blair, speech, Southampton, UK, 13 July 1994.

[84] T. Blair, 'Faith in the City – Ten Years On', speech at Southwark Cathedral, London, 29 January 1996.

[85] Blair, Speech to the Singapore Business Community, 8 January 1996.

[86] T. Blair, 'Modernising Public Services', speech to the Charter Mark Awards ceremony, London, 26 January 1999. Some commentators also complain about the growing control of the No. 10 over the rest of the government. See P. Hennessy, 'The Blair Style of Government', *Government and Opposition* 33 (1998), 3-20.