

A Conjectural History of Liberalism

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Abstract: I want to argue that liberalism *has* an essence. I do not want to do this silently, or by taking it for granted, but by stating it plainly. Liberalism has an essence, even though it emerged contingently and perhaps even unexpectedly out of history: for the reason that once it emerged it was soon understood to be a decisive novelty, not without difficulties and contradictions, but magnificent in the scale of its revision of human possibilities. In particular, I want to assert what is sometimes, though not often, asserted, that liberalism is best understood as—and the crisis of liberalism now best understood as a consequence of—an extension of a pre-political disposition of liberality (*liberalitas*) into politics, therefore not as a political ideal of liberty or consent. I do this neither by writing pure philosophy nor by writing pure history—since I think the former is a mistake, and the latter is sometimes a bit uncritical—but by writing what historians of eighteenth-century political thought called ‘conjectural history’: a style of imaginative writing which is *for a philosophical purpose* but which is *written as if in historical terms*. It is, in fact, a sort of philosophy of history.

I.

I shall begin by distinguishing an ‘ancient order’ from a ‘modern order’.

By ‘ancient order’ I mean the order of orders which can be characterised in different ways—in terms of what I have called *imperium*, what Kung-chuan Hsiao has called ‘political solipsism’, what R. G. Collingwood called ‘eristic’, what Hugh Nibley called ‘the hierocentric state’.

The key to this order is that each order within that order supposes itself to be the only order, centred on a shrine which marks the exact centre of the universe, defended by an itinerant king, who rules the order which extends as far as it can but possesses a right far in excess of the might it can muster, and generally exhibits an attitude to the outside world which involves the hope that later it will be subsumed within this order. Every king was the king of the four quarters, the *de iure* if not *de facto* lord of the world. The outside world, as Carl Schmitt put it in *The Nomos of the Earth* (2003, p. 51), was either curious, threatening or uninteresting—anyhow, set aside for later conquest, as if *might* would one day enable the king to assert his *right* to a world formally his but as yet of not much direct concern. Nibley (1951, p. 234) calls this ‘the common doctrine of the great conquerors’:

It is clear and unequivocal in each case: (1) the monarch rules over *all* men; (2) it is God who has ordered him to do so and, significantly, none claims authority as originating with himself, but even the proudest claims to be but the humble instrument of heaven; (3) it is thus his sacred duty and mission in the world to extend his dominion over the whole earth, and all his wars are holy wars; and (4) to resist him is a crime and sacrilege deserving no other fate than extermination. The most obvious corollary of this doctrine is that there can be only one true ruler on earth. ‘The eternal command of God is this,’ wrote Mangu Khan to Louis IX, ‘in heaven there is one eternal God; on earth there is no other master than Chingis Khan, the Son of God.’

This is what Kung-chuan Hsiao (1979) calls ‘political solipsism’, since it supposes that only this order exists. The world, then, is a paradox, since it is a world of worlds, in which each subsidiary world denies the right to exist of all of the others. (For more on this see Alexander 2019, especially on *imperium*.)

Since the world is *de iure* a monad but *de facto* an indefinite dyad—a world of plurality—it is, in effect, a simple dyad, a world of black and white, good and bad, us and them. As Nibley puts it (1951, p. 244): ‘The world inevitably falls into two parts, the heavenly kingdom and the outer darkness, a world of monsters and abortions.’ The world divides into the faithful and unfaithful: *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb*. Collingwood’s account of ‘eristic’ in *The New Leviathan* is interesting here. By ‘eristic’ he meant what he thought Plato meant, which was a type of discussion ‘in which each party tries to prove that he was right and the other wrong’. If ‘eristic’ was one type, the other was ‘dialectic’. ‘In a dialectical discussion you aim at showing that your own view is one with which your opponent really agrees... The essence of dialectical discussion is to discuss in the hope of finding that both parties to the discussion are right. (Collingwood 1943, p. 181). The point here is that the antique order, as I characterise it, was politically eristic, whereas, as I shall show, the modern order, at least in its liberal form, is dialectical.

Collingwood certainly considers that eristic is ineliminable. And Nibley has a good passage about this:

Men seem unable to leave the dream of a hierocentric state alone.... We cannot blame people if they yearn for (1) the grandeur, colour and unity of the great assembly, (2) the lofty and uncompromising certainty of universal kingship, (3) the sense of refuge and well-being in the holy shrine, (4) the high and independent life of a chivalrous aristocracy, (5) the luxury of hating all opposition with a holy hatred, and (6) the sheer authority of the institutions established and maintained by force. These are the strengths of the hierocentric society. Its weakness is that it doesn’t exist. (Nibley 1951, pp. 252-3)

This ‘hierocentric’ or ‘eristic’ order was solipsistic. It was also generally hierocratic, depending on sacral monarchy. The history of the world can be told as the history of monarchy, with some interesting critiques of monarchy in ancient Greek, Jewish and Roman society, but surviving until after the eighteenth century—and even in the twentieth century there being a legacy of monarchy in sovereignty and the state, even when the people is sovereign and the state secular. (For this see Oakley 2006).

We have left a ‘solipsistic’ age, and entered an age of ‘recognition’; we have left an age of ‘eristic’ and entered an age of ‘dialectic’. Yet the solipsistic and eristic elements cannot be eliminated.

||.

What is the first step away from the old order? Koselleck draws attention to the absolutist state, and he is not wrong about this. What broke the ‘hierocentric’ state? As I have explained it, the world order was an order of orders not recognising each other as equivalent. The state—or absolutist state, as Koselleck has it—was important because it was of the essence of the state that every state recognised the right of other states to exist. He speaks in *Critique and Crisis* (1988, pp. 15-6) of how ‘absolutism’ was the ‘precondition of enlightenment’ but this is only because absolutism made the state possible. The state (separated from church)

was something internally sovereign and subject to no external sovereignty: also, by way of return, the state forfeited its claim to *de jure* title over territories beyond its boundaries. The Reformation, of course, was the rejection of the sovereignty of the Pope and the rejection of the Pope's *plenitudo potestatis*. The political and religious principle *cuius regio, eius religio* became the foundation of the relations between states. By the twentieth century the principle was that states were—though difficult to define intrinsically—best defined in terms of their relation to each other, in terms of recognition. (See Lauterpacht 1948.) That is to say, the state cannot easily be defined or characterised or theorised (though, as ever, consider Skinner 1989, and perhaps also Alexander 2019): nonetheless, we know what the set of states is, and we can certainly admit that a new state has been added to the set of states when all the other states consent to recognise its right to be a state.

But there is more to be said. The most elegant statement is found in some of J. G. A. Pocock's recent writings on Gibbon and the Enlightenment. In the first volume of *Barbarism and Religion* (1999, p. 7) Pocock says that Enlightenment 'may be characterised in two ways':

first, as the emergence of a system of states, found in civil and commercial society and culture, which might enable Europe to escape from the wars of religion without falling under the hegemony of a single monarchy; second, as a series of programmes for reducing the power of either churches or congregations to disturb the peace of civil society by challenging its authority.

So what we have here is the system of states—orders which form a coherent total order because each subsidiary order *does accept* the right to exist of other subsidiary orders to exist—but also a second point about the adjustment of the foundations of each other. No longer shall the basis of an order be religious. It shall be secular. This has to be understood exactly. Here, though perhaps not elsewhere, Enlightenment is not about the successful replacement of a religious society with an unequal but opposite yet similar sort of society, a secular society, which simply supplies *better*, since secular, ideas for the maintenance of public order. Enlightenment is not about the elimination of religion from society. But it is about the elimination of religion from the foundation of that society. Religion will not be eliminated; but it will not be allowed any role in establishing or grounding the order. Instead there will be a secular frame within which religion, indeed, any religion, a plurality of religions, may continue to be practiced. This is a familiar principle: we call it 'the separation of church and state'. In his second volume (1999b, p. 19), Pocock summarises it as a 'reduction of philosophy and theology from perception of reality to sociable discourse'. Or, in his pithiest formulation yet, as 'the will to subject disputatious religion to the imperatives of civil society' (Pocock 2018, p. 269). The reason this works is that a religion like Christianity, or indeed, any religion of sin or suffering which is not simply the religion of one community is necessarily universal in its reach. It cannot be bounded within one state. Even if it could be bounded within one state it would require coercion of thought. It is only when religion is stripped out of the foundations that one can separate out politics, and make the order a secular frame. So religion becomes one discourse among others.

It is interesting to return to Koselleck because in his book *Critique and Crisis* he makes use of a comparison of Hobbes and Locke. Hobbes was the theorist of the separation of 'conscience and the needs of the situation'. Hobbes separated out conscience, allowed it to exist privately, but made it of no political significance or value at all. 'To survive,' said Hobbes in effect, 'the subject must submerge his conscience' (Koselleck 1988, p. 19). So on the one hand one has the *state* and on the other one has the *individual*, and the individual has a negative existence within the state, able to exist, but not able to express anything of political relevance out of his or her individuality. Conscience is alienated from the state and turns into private morality. (*Ibid.*, p. 31.) But there was one thing Hobbes did not understand, and this is where Locke came in. 'Hobbes did not know that reason has a gravitation of its own.' (*Ibid.*, p. 34).

Locke, for Koselleck, is the author of the *Essay on Human Understanding*. In Book II, chapter 28 Locke suggested that there are three powers which encourage us to assess and adjust our own behaviour. These are God, the Sovereign, and Public Opinion. It is the third of these—and of course the continued significance of

the first already distinguishes Locke from Hobbes and makes him in some respects more old-fashioned as a theorist—which is significant here, for it was the wholly novel element. Locke speaks of Divine Law, Civil Law and ‘The Law of Opinion or Reputation’—or ‘the law of God, ‘the law of politic societies’ and ‘the law of fashion or private censure’. It is by the third law that we decide what is virtuous and what is vicious. Moral judgements are not, as they are for Hobbes, a matter of private morality. On the contrary: moral judgements establish what is of value in a society (See Koselleck 1988, pp. 53-5; also Locke 1959, Vol. I, pp. 476-80).

III.

What we have then is a recognition that something fundamental has changed. It is not about substituting modern secular equivalents of the old religious ideas for those old religious ideas. It is about changing the frame. What has been changed is that one has replaced an exclusive unity—one which excludes other subsidiary orders—with a potentially inclusive plurality. Franco Moretti in his book *Distance Learning* found two magnificent quotations which, for him, and now, for us, may illustrate the shift from the older perspective to the newer one. The older one was religious and unitary. The newer one explicitly recognises the oblivion into which unitary positions have faded. Moretti found quotations which were particular about Europe (since he is interested in the difference between the Chinese novel and the European novel).

First we have a quotation from Novalis’s *Christianity, or Europe*, written in 1799:

Those were beautiful times, those were splendid times, the time of Christian Europe, when one Christianity inhabited this continent shaped in human form, and one vast, shared design united the farthest provinces of this spiritual kingdom. Free from extended worldly possessions, one supreme ruler held together the great political forces (Novalis quoted in Moretti 2013, p. 3).

As Moretti summarises it, ‘Europe is Christianity, and Christianity is unity’.

The second quotation, or second model, comes from Francois Guizot’s *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*, lectures given in 1828:

In the history of non-European peoples, the simultaneous *presence of conflicting principles* has been a sort of accident, limited to episodic crises... The opposite is true for the civilisation of modern Europe... *varied, confused, stormy from its very inception*; all forms, all principles of social organisation coexist here: spiritual and temporal rule, the theocratic, monarchic, aristocratic, democratic element; all classes, all social positions crowd and overlap; there are countless gradations of freedom and wealth and power. *Among these forces, a permanent struggle: none of them manages to stifle the others, and to seize the monopoly of social power...* In the ideas and feelings of Europe, the same difference, the same struggle. Theocratic, monarchic, aristocratic, popular *convictions confront each other and clash...* (Guizot quoted in *ibid.*, p. 6, with my italics).

Moretti then compares the two quotations. ‘For Novalis, disparity and conflict poisoned Europe; for Guizot they constitute it.’ Part of Moretti’s genius here is in selection, for these two quotations perfectly exemplify the shift from the ancient order to the modern order. (I refuse to date ‘modern’ exactly. In a sense Machiavelli, who saw the value of conflict, was an early ‘modern’: but then so was Polybius, his antecedent, and arguably some pre-Socratics too. But I think for the sake of argument we can settle the title ‘modern’ in *this conjectural history* on the late eighteenth century or thereabouts).

In a first stage, freedom has been let in. In a second stage, freedom has not only been tolerated within a system which does not itself exhibit freedom, but comes to saturate the system. This is the shift from Hobbes to Locke, or, in another idiom from Skinner’s ‘liberal’ liberty of Hobbes, the liberty of the Ottomans, as opposed to Skinner’s ‘neo-Roman’ or Pettit’s ‘republican’ liberty of Harrington, the liberty of the citizens of Lucca (See especially Skinner 1998). This shift is a very commonly recognised one in all of the

recent literature on political philosophy. So, for instance, Bernard Williams in his musings on politics after Rawls and Habermas (for which, see Williams 2005) speaks of a ‘basic legitimation demand’—something that can make a political order legitimate—and has a Hobbesian answer for this, before going on to discuss what would make a political order liberally legitimate—for which he has what we could call a Lockean answer.

As Guizot observed, the entrance of freedom, and the entrance of it in the way Koselleck emphasises, whereby we are not only free in our private activity and private opinions but free to impose our sense of what is virtuous and vicious within our society, means that we inevitably also allow the entrance of something Hobbes did not want to admit—and, in fact, something Locke did not really want to admit very much of. This is a plurality or diversity of opinions: the suggestion that no one set of opinions has any greater political status than any other. So we have Guizot’s permanent struggle of conflicting principles, which attempt to achieve a mutual accommodation. What this means in relation to the antique order as described by Nibley is that the monopoly exhibited by the hierocentric order is shattered. This feature of modernity was noticed by the nineteenth-century historian J. R. Seeley when he attempted to make sense of what even in 1870 he could identify as the ‘revolution of the nineteenth century’. He dated this English revolution to 1829. It was, he claimed, the third revolution in English history. ‘The revolution of the 16th century greatly increased the power of the Crown, and changed the House of Lords from an ecclesiastical to a secular assembly. The second great revolution broke the power of the Crown, and raised the House of Commons to supremacy in the State. But the present age, in which everything is called in question, has introduced no changes of this kind.’ (Seeley 1870, p. 245) So what was this third revolution, the revolution of the nineteenth century? Seeley brilliantly characterised it as an assault on every and any monopoly. It was the ‘Abolition of Monopolies’: including even, ultimately, he anticipated, the monopoly of Crown, Commons, Christianity and even Men (*Ibid.*, pp. 249-50). At first the state had abandoned its own right of creating monopolies. Then it began to break up all established monopolies, or allowed the question to be heard of whether established monopolies should be broken up. (Clearly, even in 2020, the question is still being asked of what should happen to the monopolies of Crown, Commons, Christianity, Men and now also Humans, Whites and Heterosexuals). The cause of all this is the establishment of ‘the absolute sovereignty of public opinion’—something which had been sketched before 1829 but often denied (*Ibid.*, p. 348). Seeley, writing from the vantage of 1870, found no difficulty in seeing all political parties before 1829 as conservative. ‘The name “Conservative” was before equally applicable to both sides, it has now become the name of one side.’ (*Ibid.*, p. 357). He did not say, though he could have said, as we would now say, that the name ‘Conservative’ did not exist before 1829: he would have explained this by saying that a name was not needed for such a thing because of its ubiquity. He did not need to tell his readers that the other side was named ‘Liberal’. Yet Seeley enables us to see the relation between the developments we have already discussed and the emergence of a named Liberalism which divided the political world into two.

A world divided into ‘Liberal’ and ‘Conservative’ is *at the very least* a transitional world: but a world which has broken decisively with the hierocentric, eristic, solipsistic antique order. It is a world in which the permanent and inconclusive struggle between opposite principles begins. Instead of unity, as found in the Crown, we have the established disunity of party politics. It is not for nothing that the term ‘His Majesty’s Opposition’, initially an ironic remark about the apparent establishment of a party of opposition to the party of government and opposed to ‘His Majesty’s Government,’ was first coined by a friend of Lord Byron in 1826. It is not until the nineteenth century that there was a politics which included a recognition of perpetual and legitimate opposition.

I have already mentioned Collingwood’s distinction of ‘eristic’ and ‘dialectic’. Collingwood supposed that what emerged in the nineteenth century was a properly dialectical politics, as opposed to the eristic politics of all earlier history. He called any order with such dialectical politics—politics in which one seeks to achieve mutual understanding rather than seeks to impose one’s understanding over someone else by force—a ‘civilised’ order. This word ‘civilisation’ and its close cognate ‘civility’ were important words for twentieth century political theorists. In some theorists’ hands, especially in America, the words became

interchangeable with ‘liberal’—as if a ‘civil’ order was also a ‘liberal’ one. But for some others, like Collingwood himself, and Oakeshott—who always spoke of ‘civility’ as a property of an order and of ‘liberalism’ as only the name of *one* political style within that order—thought that there was a problem in conflating the word for the entire order with the word for one principle in that order. Let us consider Collingwood since we have followed him so far.

Collingwood saw dialectical politics as fundamentally binary, so depending on the existence of at least two and perhaps even especially two—rather than too many more—parties. There were two major parties in England in the era which followed the adjustment to Seeley’s ‘revolution’ after 1829, and which dominated politics even Collingwood’s early life, until the First World War. And Collingwood preferred to see politics in these terms, even though he recognised that what had happened in the last twenty years of his life was that while the Conservative party had survived the other major party, the Liberal party, had been displaced by a Labour party. Collingwood saw civilised politics properly as a dialectic between two parties of the type of the Liberal and Conservative parties of England. The two parties divided not in any absolute sense: both were in favour of liberty. But they disagreed on how far liberty should be introduced into the system. ‘To hasten the percolation of liberty throughout every part of the body politic was the avowed aim of the Liberal party; to retard it was the avowed aim of the Conservative party’. But: ‘The relation between them was fundamentally dialectical. They were not fundamentally in disagreement’ (Collingwood 1943, p. 209).

So what went wrong? In Collingwood’s answer we find a hint about our political condition, not only in England, but elsewhere, since 1918—and perhaps especially since the Liberal university teachers, Liberal novelists and Liberal actors and musicians of the 1960s have grown old, appointed their successors and overseen the permeation of English society by a Liberalism so convinced of its own correctness that it has forgotten that Liberalism might only be an element in a transitional order. Though let us see what Collingwood says in the 1940s, looking mostly backwards. He begins by observing that ‘though the opposition of Liberalism and Conservatism was a dialectical opposition, it is doubtful whether both parties were equally aware of this’ (*Ibid.*, p. 210). ‘In a dialectical system it is essential that the representatives of each opposing view should understand why the other view must be represented.’ If one side fails to understand this ‘it ceases to be a party and becomes a *faction*, that is, a combatant in an eristical process instead of a partner in a dialectical process.’ Remarkably, the first side to fail was not the side which had entered the transitional stage reluctantly, since it had originally wanted to hold onto the hierocentric order—the conservative side—but the other side, the liberal side. Collingwood explains:

I think they [the Liberals] pictured themselves as dragging the vehicle of progress against the dead weight of human stupidity; and I think they believed Conservatives to be a part of that dead weight. Conservatives understood that there must be a party of progress. Liberals, I think, never understood that there must be a party of reaction. [In short:] Liberals did not understand the dialectic of English politics (*Ibid.*, p. 211).

Whether or not this was correct in Collingwood’s time, events since the 1960s have shown how well Collingwood anticipated the nature of the decline of the order we may call ‘modern’, ‘civil’ or ‘liberal’. The liberals themselves, in believing in the *telos* to which their activities were directed—the establishment of a fully liberal order, have failed to see that a civil, that is, a dialectical—in a sense, ‘liberal’—order depended on being a transitional order, an order which would never achieve *any* particular *telos*, since its proper status was remaining within the dynamic and dialectical exchange in which opposition was legitimate. As soon as liberals began to convict their opponents of being *wrong* in the sense of *absolutely wrong* and therefore eliminable—‘cancellable’ to use the contemporary word—they became what we would call ‘eristic liberals’ instead of being ‘dialectical liberals’.

The current ‘culture war’ can be characterised in many ways, and has many elements. But at root, as commentators like Jonathan Haidt and others have noticed, it seems to come down to the existence of a bi-

nary—between liberals and conservatives—in which, at the moment, the liberals are attempting to eliminate conservatives from that binary, and thus threaten to destroy the binary which makes a ‘modern’, ‘civil’, and even ‘liberal’ order possible (See Haidt 2012).

IV.

At this point, I want to step to one side. I have suggested, following Collingwood, that the contemporary problem of liberalism is that liberals are, or some liberals are, engaged in subverting the system they sometimes characterise as ‘liberal’. There is, I have argued, properly no *telos* for liberalism: and liberals come into crisis whenever they see their own doctrine as a teleological one. But even if there is no *telos* there is, nonetheless, an aspiration, a sort of ultimate or highest condition—and this is a meaningful one, even though its achievement would end in its own destruction. This aspiration, or hope, is the one which, I think, enables us to characterise liberalism as a political doctrine which originally came out of a pre-political disposition. I consider this disposition to be the essence of liberalism.

So far, in this essay, I have not referred to the ‘essence’ of liberalism. Many commentators have argued that liberalism has no essence, including one of the most persuasive recent accounts of liberalism, which I shall consider later, the one by David Corey. Nonetheless, I *do* want to argue that liberalism has an essence, a thinkable one, even if I also am willing to admit that, in our history, liberalism was a contingent emergence. Its contingent emergence does not mean that liberalism lacks an extremely deep grounding in a conviction of what the good life involves. And I shall call this an ‘essence’. I find this essence not in liberty, as many, including Corey, do, and nor do I find it in toleration, individualism or any of the other usual candidates. I find it in ‘liberality’.

By appealing to ‘liberality’ I am not being original. But I am contributing to a line of thought which still has not had many followers. In the eighteenth century there was no word ‘liberalism’. The word ‘liberal’ was not a political word, though it was a polite word. In Johnson’s *Dictionary* the adjective liberal meant ‘not mean; not low in birth’ becoming a gentleman; munificent; generous; bountiful’, while ‘liberality’ meant ‘munificence, bounty, generosity’ (Cited in Craig 2012, p. 477). In other words, it meant the attitudes or behaviour of someone *civilised*, someone who was *educated*, someone who was, in the eighteenth century term, *conversable*—and it meant someone who both exemplified the best of a particular culture but also through his—it was mostly his, though could sometimes be her—efforts to contribute to the maintenance and extension of that culture. Someone who was ‘liberal’ was someone who had received a ‘liberal’ education, and was generous, not only materially, but spiritually. For Roman writers like Cicero and Seneca it had made sense to write of not only *libertas* but also the man who had it, the *liber*, and the virtues he was supposed to have, *liberalitas*. This ‘liberality’ and the adjective ‘liberal’ were common in English and other languages from the Renaissance onwards, and especially by the eighteenth century were important words in modern polite and commercial society. That word acquired a political, rather than merely polite, meaning in the late eighteenth century, as the ‘spirit of liberty’ became a principle of a certain brand of politics. By the 1780s it was possible to speak of ‘a liberal’, and in the 1820s the word ‘liberalism’ was coined. (For some of these details arranged into a narrative see Rosenblatt 2018). Yet the emergence of the word did not mean that something fixed had come into existence. The word ‘liberalism’ was a political word to denote the attempt to turn the politics of liberty, or, I am arguing here, liberality, into a political movement.

If I am right—and I may be, but I also may not be—then the most important correlate of ‘liberalism’ is not ‘liberty’ (though it *is* important) but ‘liberality’. Liberalism in this sense involves ‘liberty’ and involves what Duncan Kelly (in 2011) has called ‘liberty as propriety’ but it involves more than that: it involves ‘liberty as liberality’: that is, using freedom not simply to *seem* or even to *be* a certain sort of man, but using freedom to *act* in such a way that others are the beneficiaries of one’s liberality. This is what I might call the *imperial* aspect of liberalism: that it naturally seeks to extend its sway. This is not a static doctrine, but a missionary one. It seeks to convert others to liberalism: though it does not do so through ‘conversion’ (which is eristic) but through—significantly, a related term, ‘conversation’ (which is dialectical).

Before I come to the subject of conversation, let me cite some authorities for the idea that liberalism has its roots in liberality. Long ago Guillaume de Bertier de Sauvigny went into the question of the etymology of 'liberalism. He saw that the novelty of the suffix 'ism' was that it implied something active (Bertier de Sauvigny 1970, p. 149). A 'liberal' would now be actively *for* a certain object: and, for Bertier de Sauvigny, that object was not 'liberty' but 'liberality'. (To paraphrase Koselleck 1985, p. 287, the old concept of 'liberal', 'which had previously indicated a condition, became a *telos*, and was at the same time rendered into a concept of movement, by means of the suffix "ism"). And even more explicitly than this, Bertier de Sauvigny suggested that the meaning of liberality was primarily generosity, so that 'liberalism' originally meant 'generosity applied in the field of politics' (p. 152). Bertier de Sauvigny was not alone in having related liberalism to generosity. Rather famously—since Hayek (in 1982, Vol. 2, p. 133) quoted it, John Gray has quoted it, and Matt Sleat has used it as an epigraph for a book—for Ortega y Gasset, liberalism was:

the supreme form of generosity; it is the right which the majority concedes to the minority and hence is the noblest cry that has ever resounded on this planet. It announces the determination to share existence with the enemy; more than that, with an enemy which is weak. It was incredible that the human species should have arrived at so noble an attitude, so paradoxical, so refined, so anti-natural. Hence it is not to be wondered at that this same humanity should soon appear to be anxious to get rid of it. It is a discipline too difficult and complex to take firm root on earth (Ortega y Gasset 1923, p. xviii).

Bertier de Sauvigny had a short story about the use of the term after Napoleon's use of it in 1799: Chateaubriand in 1802, the Cortes in Spain in 1812, Tories using it to name advanced Whigs in 1816. This story has been expanded by Helena Rosenblatt in her recent *Lost History of Liberalism*. What is remarkable about her book—as has been noticed by reviewers (see, for instance, Collins 2019, though he goes too far in dismissing essentialism)—is that she constructs her history in terms of 'liberality' not 'liberty'. She traces the use of *liberalitas* back to Cicero, brings it forward right through to Dr. Johnson, noticing that 'liberal' was first used to mean 'free from bias' or 'tolerant' in 1772, and, more interestingly from a historical point of view suggesting that commentators at the time were aware that the political use of the term 'liberal' in the nineteenth century (in relation to 'liberalism') was twisting its meaning from what 'liberal' had meant in the eighteenth century (in relation to 'liberality'). Certainly, 'liberal' had always been a noble or aristocratic virtue, so of course figures like Bonald thought that any use of the term in an ignoble or democratic sense was a trick. (Rosenblatt 2018, p. 69). Now, I of course find much to admire in Rosenblatt's account, in its emphasis on 'liberality' rather than 'liberty'. But there is no question that the centrality of the 'liberality' tradition is asserted rather than argued, and Rosenblatt herself does not explain how (non-political) 'liberality' did or did not flow into (political) 'liberalism'. Collins (2019, p. 686) has noticed that she ignores writers like Hegel, who declared that liberalism was 'the atomistic principle which insists on the sway of individual wills; maintaining that all government should emanate from their express power and have their express sanction'—a very important suggestion—and, even more important for my purposes, Kant, saying that 'he did not deploy the term "liberal" in any politically significant context'.

The other only historian who has observed the obvious difference between the meaning of 'liberal' in the age of liberality (Dr Johnson) and the meaning of 'liberal' in the age of liberalism (Lord Byron), David Craig, has argued (in Craig 2012) that there was *no* relation between the old noble meaning and the new meaning, or, at least, a sufficient hiatus to make any suggestion of a continuous tradition objectionable. This is not something that can be historically established: it is, I think, a matter of philosophical preference. And my preference—like Rosenblatt's—is for continuity. I would like to maintain, then, that 'liberality' became 'liberalism' as it crossed over from a non-political context to a political context. But this needs to be explained.

V.

What I am arguing is *before there was a liberal politics* there was the cultural emergence of a sort of liberal sensibility, which we may as well associate with the word ‘liberality’ (since the word ‘liberalism’ did not exist in the eighteenth century). The ‘liberal’ person was one who was a *liber* and had received the education appropriate for someone who was a *liber*, and, in addition—since the meaning of ‘liberal’ is generous—was also able and willing to bestow this education and its concomitant sensibility on others, perhaps by educating them, but also by behaving with them in a particularly ‘liberal’ way. In other words, ‘liberalism’, *contra* Hegel, was not only about individual will or sanction but about individual interest and care. (It is always a pleasure to convict Hegel of one-sidedness.)

I have not yet reached what I think is the particular essence of liberalism. It was discovered just before the word ‘liberal’ made the transition from a pre-political ‘liberality’ to a political ‘liberalism’. If the essence of liberalism is liberalism as liberality—not liberalism as liberty—then liberalism as liberality may be exactly identified as *the disposition to think oneself into the position of others*. It might be too much to say that it is to think oneself into the *thoughts* of others, but I think that this takes us further than thinking oneself into the *feelings* of others. Yet the two are obviously related. (History is a tragedy for the man who feels, and a comedy for the man who thinks, said Walpole.)

Adam Smith dealt with this in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, or, rather, dealt with a subject close to the one that concerns me. He was concerned with *sympathy* for emotions, passions, sentiments whereas I am concerned with *understanding* of arguments, opinions, positions. But there was one paragraph in which he referred to ‘opinions’ rather than ‘sentiments’. The paragraph began: ‘To approve of another man’s opinions is to adopt those opinions, and to adopt them is to approve of them...’ (Smith 2002, p. 21). He seemed to treat opinions as something fixed, not as something one would try to understand or even adopt. But he likened ‘opinions’ to ‘sentiments’—the latter, let it be repeated, was his real subject—and in subsequent pages he did raise the possibility that one might try to *extend* sympathy to someone else, that one might have to make some sort of effort to do so. ‘In all such cases, that there may be some correspondence of sentiment between the spectator and the person principally concerned, the spectator must, first of all, endeavour, as much as he can, to put himself in the situation of the other.’ But, again, his subject was ‘sentiment’, not ‘opinion’, so this very sentence continued: ‘and to bring home to himself every little circumstance of distress which can possibly occur to the sufferer’ (*Ibid.*, p. 26). So it was about *feelings* not *thoughts*. But the result, if the spectator did succeed in putting himself or herself in the position of the sufferer, would be ‘concord’. Interestingly, he also went on to say that what was required was a ‘sensibility’ which he said was ‘much beyond what is possessed by the rude and vulgar of mankind’ (*Ibid.*, p. 30).

Smith is relevant to my subject, but much less pertinent, I would argue, than Kant. In his lectures on anthropology—lectures he delivered between the 1770s and the 1790s and published in 1798—Kant discussed the several maxims we have to adopt in order to achieve wisdom. He declared that it is important to do all three of the following:

1. To think *for oneself*.
2. To think oneself (in communication with human beings) into the place of every *other person*.
3. Always to think *consistently* with *oneself* (Kant 2006, p. 124).

Kant says that the second of these is ‘the principle of *liberals* who adapt to the principles of others’. It is perhaps amusing to reflect for a moment that ‘to think for oneself’ is not liberal, and that ‘to think consistently with oneself’ is not liberal. Be that as it may. But ‘to think oneself into the place of every other person’ is liberal. And I want to claim that it is the origin and the highest aspiration of what we now call liberalism.

The first thing to say about this is that it is difficult to do. A second thing to say is that this difficulty seems to be the highest aspiration not only of what later became political liberalism but also of the literary activity which arose in the eighteenth century, flourished in the nineteenth and proliferated in the twenti-

eth century, sometimes called a ‘bourgeois’ activity, which is the writing and reading of novels. D. H. Lawrence once wrote: ‘The novel is the highest example of subtle inter-relatedness that man has ever discovered’ (Lawrence 1936, p. 528). Henry James reflected: ‘To project yourself into a consciousness of a person essentially your opposite requires the audacity of a great genius; and even men of genius are cautious in approaching the problem’ (Quoted in Lodge 2018, p. 50)¹. Many critics of literature since the 1970s have come to see the most distinctive literary trick of novelists as being something from French theorists first noticed in the 1910s—‘free indirect style’, that is, a style in which the apparent thoughts of a character are blurred together—the critics sometimes say skilfully though I think it can also show a distinct lack of skill—with the apparent thoughts of the author. What is ‘free indirect style’ but the author sacrificing old-fashioned omniscience—‘I know what is in their minds’—with something in fact equally omniscient as a matter of fact but less omniscient as a matter of suggestion—‘I can display something of what is in their minds’? The novel, when written in this subjective style—not ‘objective’, because not writing about what is on the surface—is nothing less than the highest art of liberalism in the sense of the aspiration to think ourselves into the position of others. James, Lawrence, Joyce, Woolf: the highest art of liberalism.

I said earlier that I would bring in the subject of conversation in order to show its relation to civility and liberality. Thinking oneself into the position of another takes different forms. It can take the form of studying others, reading *about* them, or reading *their* literature; or it can take the form of interacting with them. It extends from reading about or in ancient lost cultures, to reading about or in contemporary foreign cultures, to reading about or in cultures in one’s own society. It involves the use of imagination: one is learning about something *outside* one’s own culture or knowledge. But it achieves its most perfect form in the conversation.

By ‘conversation’ I mean something specific. A conversation is a form of intercourse in which both interlocutors have an interest in thinking themselves into the position of the other. We can distinguish three sorts of dialogue: between two dogmatists, between a dogmatist and someone ‘liberal’, and between two ‘liberals’—where by ‘liberal’ I mean concerned to do more than display their convictions and, perhaps, successfully impose those convictions on their interlocutor. Here is where it is useful to distinguish *conversion* and *conversation*. These two words have the same root. Conversion is from the Latin *convertere*, turn about, from *vertere*, to turn, while conversation is from *conversari*, the frequentative past participle form of *convertere*, meaning associate with, or literally, to turn about again and again. So, etymologically, a conversation is in effect a repeated conversion, while a conversion is a conversation which ends abruptly and therefore is not properly a conversation at all. Someone from the antique order, hierocentric, solipsistic and so on, wants to *convert* someone who disagrees with them to their opinion. But someone from the modern order, ‘liberal’ or ‘civil’, wants to *converse* with someone who disagrees with them so that some sort of agreement or understanding can be reached. Here we have the obvious correlate, at an interpersonal level, of the difference between the antique or eristic order and the modern or dialectical order.

The liberal disposition to think oneself into the position of others, then, is an important element in conversation and in ‘liberal’ education. A liberal education is an education in which one is encouraged to think oneself into the position of others, not only through conversation *in medias res* but also, through study, to think oneself into the position of others distant or dead—and even the less privileged. At one extreme it is the aspiration of Henry James. But at the other extreme, it is an encouragement to think of the situation and the convictions of those who lack privileges, including *especially* the privilege of a liberal education.

There is something else to be added. Thinking oneself into the position of another is also, at a further extreme, to think oneself *further* into the position of oneself. This has been a philosophical imperative since the Delphic ‘Know thyself’, right through to Lawrence’s suggestion (in 1936, p. 761) that one had to restore the wholeness which had been lost as soon as we distinguished ‘subjective and objective reality’, and to Freud’s apparent opening of the hidden unconscious. This may seem irrelevant since there is no intersubjectivity, no difficulty of encountering an obvious other, here, but as soon as we admit either that people may be divided against themselves in some pathological way, or even more eirenically but profoundly, that

the stability of the solitary self is a myth, and that we are all a flux, then we have to admit that even the encounter with the self might be understood best as a conversation of sorts.

It is probably best to leave the nature of the ‘individual’ and ‘personality’ to one side, while noting that part of the conundrum of ‘modernity’ is that such things have seemed to be very important. But I do want to deal with ‘liberty’ because liberalism is so often retrospectively reconstructed out of liberty rather than out of liberality—despite Ortega y Gasset, Bertier de Sauvigny, Rosenblatt and a few others. Take the recent very interesting suggestion by David Corey (in Corey 2020)—the most interesting suggestion made about liberalism, as far as I can see, in the twenty-first century, though it is an adjustment of the late twentieth-century consensus as found in writings by figures like John Gray and many others (See Gray 2000). The twentieth century consensus was that liberalism was plural, contradictory and had at least ‘two faces’, as Gray put it. The twos are often different, but they are almost always two. Sometimes these are called ‘classical’ and ‘new’ liberalism, sometimes ‘perfectionist’ and ‘political’ liberalism, sometimes the politics of ‘indifference’ and the politics of ‘recognition’, sometimes, simply, ‘liberalism’ and ‘pluralism’. David Corey has rather brilliantly attempted to improve this common view by suggesting that the history of liberalism—and here he is clearly engaged in something similar to what I am engaged in here—a conjectural history rather than history proper (where history proper, is, as Oakeshott put it (in Oakeshott 1999, p. 70), ‘an uncovenanted circumstantial confluence of vicissitudes’)—is best understood as a sequence of liberties. One difference is that he argues that liberalism has no essence. Another difference is that he conjugates liberalism in terms of liberty. Distinctively, he lists nine successive liberties, though the list could be lengthened or shortened. These are freedom from 1. religious domination, 2. foreign domination, 3. religious civil war, 4. arbitrary rule, 5. government interference in the economy, 6. rule by another, 7. economic exploitation by privileged groups, 8. discrimination on the basis of moral prejudices of privileged groups, and 9. biological inequality. He argues that nineteenth century liberalism was mostly about the fourth and fifth, but that liberals did not stand still in some mid-nineteenth century consensus but moved on, not only in Collingwood’s sense of advancing the spread of liberty through the order (increasing the quantity of liberty) but also in altering its quality, by introducing new sorts of freedoms. These new sorts of freedoms involve a twist, since they introduced the possibility, and later necessity, of using the state to achieve those liberties. Corey pithily suggests that the ‘new’ liberals arguably ‘usurped’ the name ‘liberalism’. This enables him to make one of the most interesting definitional claims about liberalism which has been made in recent years:

Liberalism today has three distinct significations. It may refer (1) to the theory and practice of social organization that prioritizes the first five liberties on the list above. Or (2) it may refer to the effort in theory and practice to advance newer freedoms either singly or in combination. (In this case, defense of the first five freedoms appears ‘conservative’.) Or it may refer (3) to the overarching character of regimes that have been and still are living on this historical trajectory (Corey 2020, p. 129).

What is interesting about this is that it does something which I think others have done and which ought to be done. It enables Corey to say that liberalism is one thing (‘the whole trajectory’) and yet at one and the same time a thing divided against itself. If one makes sense of liberalism in terms of liberty the division occurs with the state. Older liberalism was against the state, and newer liberalism makes use of the state. I agree with the division though I prefer to see it not in terms of newer liberties but in terms of the extension of the meaning of liberality so it shifted from being the disposition of a privileged class of individuals to being the deserts of every class, every group and every individual.

Liberalism is usually construed backwards from liberty or from something similarly political. The two most decisive definitions I have seen from the last fifty years can be characterised this way, though they are very different. Judith Shklar, who is very famous now for her phrase ‘the liberalism of fear’, declared that the ‘overriding aim’ of liberalism is ‘to secure the political conditions that are necessary for the exercise of personal freedom’ (Shklar 1998, p. 3). This is obviously Hobbesian. I myself do not think this is distinctively

liberal, though I think it clears a path for liberalism. I sometimes think that liberals who espouse some version of the liberalism of fear are in fact liberals who do not want to argue for anything more liberal than what one gets in Hobbes though they would like, without argument, to be sure of a lot more than what they get in Hobbes. This is what we could call a fear or loathing of Locke and everything that has followed. There is a lot of this about: one sees it in historical underminings of Locke in the writings of Cambridgish historians (see, for instance, Pocock 1980, Bell 2014 and Stanton 2018) since the 1970s. (Incidentally, Duncan Bell's influential and interesting article 'What is Liberalism?' should be recognised as the exact antitype of what I am attempting here, because it uses history to collect rather than divide—to use the words Plato used in *Phaedrus*. The best way of stating the problem is to say that Bell engages in a nominalism so thorough it prevents him from answering his own question). The second decisive definition, that of Jeremy Waldron, is not about liberty but about consent. In other words, it is not about freedom *from* but freedom *to*: and, in particular, the freedom to sanction the existing order. The fundamental principle of liberalism is that 'all aspects of the social should either be made acceptable or be capable of being made acceptable to every last individual' (Waldron 1987, p. 128). He adds that any political order is illegitimate 'unless it is rooted in the consent of all those who have to live under it' (*Ibid.*, p. 140). It is a theory of consent rather than a theory of liberty. It is apparently a theory of hope rather than theory of fear.

There are problems with both theories, no doubt. But my objection to them—instructive and interesting as they are—is that neither of them indicates why anyone would want to be liberal. They both seem negative, obsessed with slavery, with *not being a slave*, a lowborn creature, rather than with *being something better than a slave*, a highborn creature. Yes, one does not want to lose liberty. One would like to sanction the entire order. But the former is very abstract, and the latter is very ideal, yet still negative, since it is about fear of being dominated: the former seems only barely liberal, if liberal at all, while the latter seems more democratic or republican in its aspiration. One is a minimum, one a maximum of sorts. Both presuppose that liberalism is something everyone wants: everyone suffers from fear of losing liberty, everyone hopes to have control over their life. But both define liberalism as something *political*. The problem with both is that they begin with a reduction of the meaning of liberalism within the political frame, whereas if liberalism is to be reduced to anything it should be reduced to something substantive and positive which preceded its political framing. The significance of studying the *origins* of liberalism is that we can see *how something pre-political entered the political frame and attempted to subdue the entire frame within itself*. This, again, is liberality.

Everyone now—especially now, though this has been the case since the 1960s (consider James Burnham (1964) in America or Maurice Cowling (1963) in England)—wants to be able to explain the current 'culture war', the apparent hardening of the arteries of both left and right (of 'liberals' and 'conservatives', to use the American idiom, though, as we have seen, it was the older English idiom in the nineteenth century). Collingwood speculated that the hardening of arteries had taken place on the left, with the liberals, and not on the right. This was a surprise, and required explanation. Collingwood did not have an explanation. But one explanation is in the twist which everyone has observed, the twist in the meaning of liberalism which I interpret as a twist in the meaning of liberalism as a doctrine about liberality.

First, liberality meant that a privileged elite of those who could call themselves liberals would seek to understand each other, and then understand—put themselves in the position of—all those in their society, and, later, in other societies.

Second, liberality—because of the universalising and equalising and inclusive nature of liberality—meant that everyone counted, everyone had to be *thought into the position of* (the English language creaks as I try to express this): everyone deserved to be a recipient of liberality, or, politically, of liberalism.

It was not about freedom, *except* in so far as the liberality of the original liberals was considered to be an aspect of their being free, of being *liber*, and of exhibiting *liberalitas*. 'Freedom' was a word, a currency—like other words (rights, democracy, inclusivity, etc.) which enabled those on whom liberality was bestowed to become members of what was now called 'a liberal order'. Liberalism, having originally been the characteristic of the actors who perpetuated it, the liberals, was now the name for the society in which this charac-

teristic was exhibited, and hence the name for everyone in that society, including all of those who were not themselves liberal, in the sense that they did not exhibit liberality, and were not ‘free’ in the old humanistic sense.

The major cleavage in metropolitan high culture is not any disagreement between believers and unbelievers: it is a cleavage *within* liberal culture, between liberals who identify themselves with the old liberalism of bestowing liberality (the partial, universalising, active, elite liberalism) and the liberals who identify themselves with the new liberalism of receiving liberality (the universal, particularising, passive, subaltern liberalism).

VI.

In conclusion, I want to repeat my major claims.

Liberalism is best understood as the consequence of a tradition of liberality. Liberality was a pre-political disposition: in particular, the disposition to think oneself into the position of others, a disposition which involved the suspension of one’s own dogmas, the encouragement of others to suspend their dogmas, which, in politics, became a willingness to allow one’s dogmas to co-exist in an order which would not be constituted in terms of any of those dogmas. The idea was that instead of *conversion* everyone would come together in *conversation*.

This pre-political disposition, for various historical reasons, and out of a thousand contingencies, became first a political idea and then a justification for political practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The idea was that an order would exist which could accept opposition *within* that order.

This involved a complete break with all the assumptions of all ancient thought (and some of the other assumptions of modern thought). Let me simplify and state a rule bluntly, without noting obvious exceptions to the rule. The fundamental assumption of all antiquity was that harmony could only be established through the destruction or elimination of disharmony, that there was political truth and falsehood. The fundamental assumption of modernity, in so far as modernity is ‘civil’ or ‘liberal’, is that harmony does *not* come out of the *destruction* or *elimination* of harmony but *depends on* disharmony, *comes out of* disharmony, and can never involve the elimination of that very necessary disharmony.

Why did a prepolitical liberality become a political liberalism? Primarily it was because it appeared to solve the major problem of the antique or eristic order, which was its solipsism. In short, liberalism separated religion from politics without eliminating religion. It removed religious dispute from the roots of politics by subjecting religion to the ‘imperatives of civil society’, to use Pocock’s words. It could do this because liberalism did not involve the replacement of religious truths with secular truths—it is *very different* from Israel’s radical enlightenment, which does exactly this (see Alexander 2020)—but the reframing of religious truths within an order of civility which was accepted a certain irresolution in terms of *telos*, by allowing there to be continual contumacy, a recognition of a permanent right of justified opposition, and a concomitant distrust of all finality, universality and truth in politics. Liberalism, we have seen, arose with the absolutist state, though liberalism is not itself absolutist: it arose with it because the state allowed a step to be taken away from the antique tendency to consider one’s political order to be final, universal and true. The antique order was imperial, solipsistic and eristic: it was a ‘hierocentric state’. But the modern order is political, recognitional and dialectical: it is a ‘liberal state’. It is liberal not because the state is intrinsically liberal: Hobbes’s state was not liberal. But the state, as Locke and others saw, turned out to be importantly liberal in its development, when conscience, initially hypothesised as being only a private matter, was turned outwards and found to be a public matter.

The arrival of a modern, liberal order generated an obvious contradiction. This contradiction is that for the first time in history there was an ideal—the *telos* of a society in which everyone would think themselves into the position of all others (and with all the political consequences that should follow from that)—which, if it were achieved, would destroy its own foundations, since it would involve a reversion to the antique

principle of harmony destroying disharmony and an abandonment of the modern principle of harmony coming out of disharmony.

The modern culture war, found everywhere in universities, newspapers, television, podcasts, is in fact a result of the deep contradiction within liberalism. Liberalism is divided. Originally a pre-political elite disposition, liberality, once it was conveyed into politics as liberalism, became a party doctrine which sought to transform all of society, and then the question arose of *whether* ‘liberalism’ was truly the property of those who were liberal, hence exhibiting liberality, those actors who would defend liberalism, *or* it was truly the property of all of those who were in receipt of liberal benefits, including the passive and even the illiberal, who were not willing to defend liberalism. The division is not about the sort of liberty as such, or about consent. The division is about whether one sides with the liberals who exhibit liberality and who value liberalism as a disposition and a culture—in conversation and education—or whether one *only* values liberalism in terms of the benefits it can supply us with—whoever we are.

VII.

A last word. It is perhaps relevant to say that I am not a theoretical liberal. However, I am a practical liberal: probably a lot more liberal than I would ever want to admit. I do not think much of modern defences of liberalism—though almost every book or article on liberalism (and there are many more published every year) offers some sort of novelty or reminds us of points which do, I think, deserve some sort of systematisation or at least mnemonicisation—some way of remembering them, so they do not have to be rediscovered every time a new lecturer encounters the subject for the first time. I have a higher opinion of the criticisms of liberalism, some of which achieve a level of clarity of coruscation which at times approaches profundity—take Milbank 2016, Geuss 2005 and of course Schmitt 1996, for instance—but I think almost all the critics of liberalism have entirely failed to notice the *grandeur* of liberalism. In the current culture war, for instance, though I am far from being a theoretical liberal, I am almost entirely *pro* the defenders of high or benevolent liberalism and *contra* the defenders of low or recipient liberalism, even though I would, in the end, prefer to impose my own dogma—the one that is protected by the low or recipient side of liberalism—on high liberals. *In the end*, that is, I would want to impose my doctrine eristically on others. But until we reach that glorious end of historical time it seems wiser to dismount from the high horse of eristicism, solipsism and hierocentrism and forge a high-minded alliance with the high liberals. That is the problem for liberals: they are never high enough for everyone. But they are the highest we can get together—it seems. And that is the grandeur of liberalism. It has not the grandeur of the *Torah* or of *Caritas* or of *Nirvana* or of *Islam* but it has a grandeur all of its own, a human grandeur, a contradictory grandeur, like an Escher tower, which no one can build. And even those of us who are not liberals have to recognise the grandeur of this conception. *It is civilised*. Though, of course, to see things this way is to become to some extent a high or elite or active liberal, willing to defend liberal society against its enemies—i.e. against all of its *other* enemies (but perhaps not, in the end, *my* enmity). I hope the humour, satire and cynicism in this is evident. It should be. But I am also in earnest. One can see why Ortega y Gasset said that liberalism was ‘the noblest cry that has ever resounded on this planet’. And I think even the critics of liberalism have to recognise this, and recognise that, no matter what one believes, something marvellous was contingently engineered a few centuries ago.

NOTES

1. I found this remarkable quotation in Lodge 2018, p. 50, but Lodge said he had lost the reference. I have found it, courtesy of Google Books, in James 1971, p. 174. It comes from a piece called ‘Autobiography in Fiction’, originally published in 1865.

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