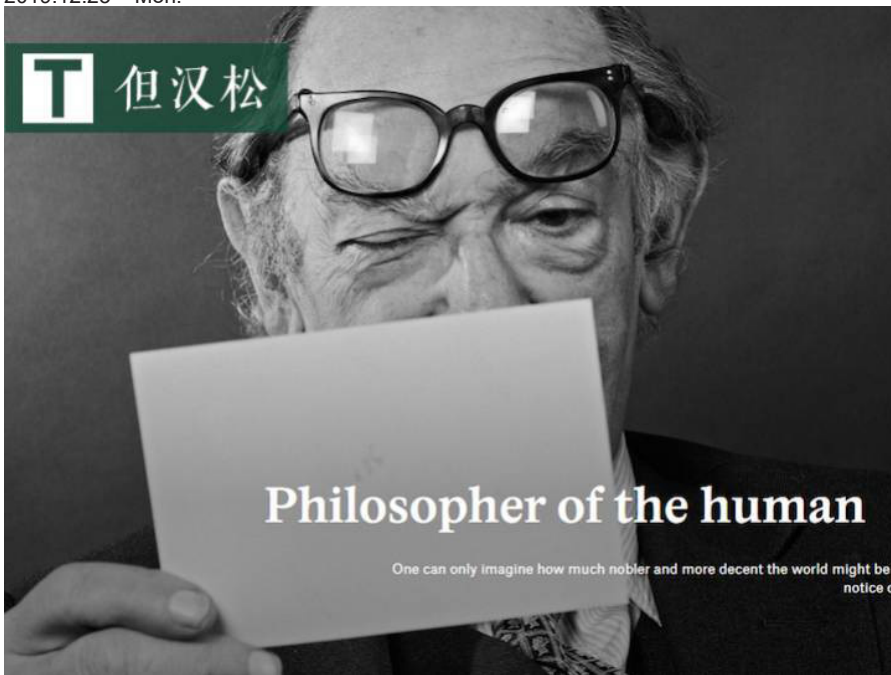


2019.12.23 Mon.



以赛亚·柏林，为消极自由辩护的人类哲学家

来源: Aeon 讲师: 但汉松

- 你知道有浓厚俄国口音的柏林出生在何地吗?
- “以赛亚”在《圣经》中是一个怎样的存在?
- 为什么柏林对两种自由的区分会有如此重大的意义?
- 20 世纪的灾难如何体现了积极自由的失控危险?
- 你知道《极端年代》、《苏联的心灵》和《柏林传》这些好书吗?
- 短语 “on the part of” 是什么意思?

Philosopher of the human

One can only imagine how much nobler and more decent the world might be if it took more notice of Isaiah Berlin

By Johnny Lyons

December 10, 2019

Isaiah Berlin's lecture on political liberty 'Two Concepts of Liberty' (1958) created a new standard for understanding the individual and society. It has become a classic work. Berlin sought to treat our personal and public lives in the only way he felt they can be **grasped**, that is, as reflecting our interaction with ideas and ideals in their particular historical context. In short, he produced a uniquely **arresting** political theory for real human beings.

听课笔记

扫码听课



Berlin was born in Riga on 6 June 1909, the then capital of the **governorate** of Livonia, which formed part of the Russian Empire. As a **youngster**, he lived through the February and October revolutions of 1917, and witnessed on a walk with his governess in Petrograd policeman being dragged away by a **mob** to his certain death. The memory of this event, he said in 1992, 'gave me a permanent horror of physical violence which has remained with me for the rest of my life'. The **turbulence** of Bolshevik rule eventually led the Berlins to **emigrate** to England in 1921. Having won a place at Oxford, Berlin became the first Jew to be awarded a prize fellowship to **All Souls College**.

Berlin's **seminal** essay on liberty – which, like so many of his essays, began as a lecture – starts by differentiating between two notions of political freedom. The first of these is described as 'negative liberty', since it refers to the extent to which I am free from the **interference** of other individuals or authorities. Being negatively free, according to Berlin, does not mean that I am free from physical or psychological **constraints**. It simply refers to the degree of freedom from human interference or **coercion** such as the freedom to be left alone from engaging in politics. Contrasted with it is 'positive liberty', so-called because it is the freedom to do something rather than the freedom from something. In many ways, this is a far richer, if more **nebulous**, notion that 'derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master'.

So far, one could be forgiven for thinking that we are being presented with a rather obvious distinction between two sides of the same coin. But what distinguishes his account is that he treats each of these concepts realistically and historically. The key point here is that Berlin switches the **default** understanding of things by making theory more **answerable** to reality. Negative freedom has been the beating heart of political liberalism, with its insistence that individuals be left alone to their own devices, so long as their actions do not **unduly** harm others. Similarly, positive liberty has lain at the heart of **emancipatory** theories of politics from democratic and republican

doctrines to those of nationalism and communism.

In this **vein**, Berlin shows that one of the major insights of modern history and contemporary reality is just how **catastrophically** the concept of positive liberty is vulnerable to, or **exploitable** by, the most **atrocious** types of **totalitarianism**. The 20th century, in particular, has shown just how tragically brief the leap can be from a desire for self-realisation to the sense of having discovered a real or rational self and ending in the embrace of oppressive and murderous forms of **despotism**. The history of the Soviet Union in the previous century has shown how potent this Rousseauian urge can be when it is coupled with the widespread, if **tacit**, belief that the genuine goals of all rational human beings must fit into a single, universal and all-embracing system. You can't have everything: 'freedom for the wolves has often meant death for the sheep', he writes.

At a time when liberal humanism is facing the very real and present threat of **eclipse**, one can hardly be blamed for imagining how much nobler and more decent the world might be if it took more notice of Berlin. His ideas, which have lost none of the **bite** of relevance, also remind us that the main barrier we face in making the world a better place is the entirely **untranscendent** one of humanity itself.

词汇

grasp /gra:sp/ v. 理解; 领会
[not in progressive] to completely understand a fact or an idea, especially a complicated one
e.g. Some people find the idea of relativity difficult to grasp.

arresting /ə'restɪŋ/ adj. 引人注目的; 很有吸引力的
(formal) attracting a lot of attention; very attractive
e.g. He was an arresting figure.

governorate /'gʌvənərɪt/ n. 省 (伊拉克或苏丹独立行政区, 也指伊朗的地方行政区)
an administrative division of a country. It is headed by a governor.

youngster /'jʌŋstə/ n. 孩子; 少年
[old-fashioned] a child or young person
e.g. But not all the youngsters want a career in the arts.

mob /mɒb/ n. 〔成群的〕暴民, 乱民
a large noisy crowd, especially one that is angry and violent
e.g. They were immediately surrounded by the mob.

turbulence /'tɜ:bjələns/ n. 〔政治上的〕骚乱, 骚动; 〔情感上的〕波动
a political or emotional situation that is very confusing
e.g. A period of political turbulence followed the civil war.

emigrate /'emɪgreɪt/ v. 移居外国
to leave your own country in order to live in another country
e.g. He emigrated to Australia as a young man.

All Souls College 牛津大学万灵学院

seminal /'semɪnəl/ adj. 〔文章、书等〕开创性的, 有重大影响的
a seminal article, book etc. is important, and influences the way things develop in the future
e.g. a seminal study of eighteenth-century France

interference /,ɪntə'fɪərəns/ n. 干涉; 干预; 介入
an act of interfering
e.g. I resent his interference in my work.

constraint /kən'streɪnt/ n. 限制; 束缚; 约束力
something that limits your freedom to do what you want
e.g. There have been financial and political constraints on development.

coercion /kəʊ'ɜ:ʃn/ n. 强迫; 胁迫, 逼迫
the use of threats or orders to make someone do something they do not want to do
e.g. The defendant explained that he had been acting under coercion.

nebulous /'nebjələs/ adj. 模糊的
an idea that is nebulous is not at all clear or exact
e.g. 'Normality' is a rather nebulous concept.

default /dɪ'fɔ:lt/ n. 默认
[singular] the usual and expected way in which something is done, unless you decide to do something different
e.g. This way of working seems to be the default these days.

answerable /'ɑ:nsərəbl/ adj. 向某人 (对某事) 负责
having to explain your actions to sb in authority over you
e.g. She was a free agent, answerable to no one for her behaviour.

unduly /ʌn'dju:li/ adv. 过度地; 不适当
more than is normal or reasonable
e.g. She doesn't seem unduly concerned about her exams.

emancipate /ɪ'mænsəpeɪt/ v. 解放某人 (尤指摆脱法律、政治的束缚)
[adj.] emancipatory
[formal] to give someone the political or legal rights that they did not have before
e.g. During the Civil War, he aided newly emancipated slaves.

vein /veɪn/ n. 风格; 方式
a particular style or manner
e.g. A number of other people commented in a similar vein.

catastrophic /,kætə'strɒfɪk/ adj. 灾难性的
[adv] catastrophically 灾难性地
Something that is catastrophic involves or causes a sudden terrible disaster.
e.g. A tidal wave caused by the earthquake hit the coast causing catastrophic damage.

exploitable /ɪk'splɔɪtəbəl/ adj. 可利用的; 可借以获益的
An exploitable situation can be used by someone to their own advantage.
e.g. Your hope was I'd make some exploitable mistake.

atrocious /ə'trəʊfəs/ adj. 恶毒的;
残忍的

extremely bad

e.g. Her singing was atrocious.

totalitarianism

/təʊ,tæɪ'tæɪtənɪzəm/ n. 极权主义
the ideas, principles, and practices
of totalitarian political systems

despotism /'despəʊtɪzəm/ n. 专制统
治

rule by a despot, someone,
especially a ruler, who uses power
in a cruel and unfair way

e.g. It was the judges' commitment
to freedom that was the main

guarantee against despotism.

tacit /'tæsɪt/ adj. 暗示的; 不言而喻
的

tacit agreement, approval, support
etc. is given without anything
actually being said

e.g. It is a tacit acknowledgement
that neither office nor a peerage
awaits them.

eclipse /ɪ'klɪps/ n. 黯然失色

[singular] a situation in which
someone or something loses their
power or fame, because someone
or something else has become more
powerful or famous

e.g. Many people expected the
growth of television to mean the
eclipse of radio.

bite /baɪt/ n. 影响力; 感染力
a quality that makes sth effective or
powerful

e.g. The performance had no bite to
it.

transcendent /træn'sendənt/ adj.
卓越的; 至高无上的

[opp.] untranscendent
going far beyond ordinary limits
e.g. the transcendent genius of
Mozart

今日习题

1. 根据英文释义写出文中出现的对应单词

_____ : to entirely comprehend a fact or a thought, especially a sophisticated one

_____ : indicated by indispensable connotation through not expressed directly

2. 一词多义

Which of the following "default" has the closest meaning to the one in "Berlin switches the default understanding of things by making theory more answerable to reality."?

- A. You can change the default settings to suit your needs.
- B. The company is in default on its loan agreement.
- C. He defaulted on his child support payments.
- D. Type the first paragraph using the default paragraph format.

3. 汉译英

如果人们都去了解一下以赛亚·伯林，他们就会发现这个世界变得更高尚更体面了。

听课笔记

今日习题答案:

1. grasp; tacit;

2. D;

3. One can only imagine how much nobler and more decent the world might be if it took more notice of Isaiah Berlin.

讲师

林伯虎
但汉松
斯明诚
Connie
查克
一零

编辑

老徐
习习
点点
欣欣
大雪
雅辉
倩云
sasa 梨

习题

李猫咪的姐姐

校对

老徐
点点

设计

凤阙龙城

网址
微信公众号

www.linbohu.com
在下林伯虎 (linbohu404)

