

21 February 2014

Continuing into Modern & Contemporary Philosophy from the Dorling Kindersley Philosophy Book:-

**The Interaction of History and Culture and the Way We Think.
p259 Marcuse p260 Gadamer p292 Midgley p298 Lyotard p302 Foucault p306
Habermas and p242 Ortega y Gasset**

The meeting showed that studying modern and contemporary philosophy is a fair bit trickier than older philosophers where we have a longer and more stable historical perspective. We discussed the impact – or otherwise – of philosophy on aspects of contemporary life, particularly responses to modern warfare and genocide and on community versus self interest. (we noted a paper on the advantages of co-operation – and The Prisoners' Dilemma. We picked up on Adorno's attack on the media as degrading our critical faculties, and the power of the owners of the media as highlighted by Lyotard. We debated the feeling of political powerlessness – and related that to Habermas's emphasis on the need for public spaces. Despite that feeling, we can relate to Ortega y Gasset's call for philosophers to expose the assumptions that lie behind our beliefs, look at our own existence and change the world. We did get the idea that history shapes us and our culture, and that it is difficult to break free from our culture when the world changes – at it does at an accelerating pace. We are aware of other cultures – we looked at a diagram showing a study of cultural differences across nationalities.