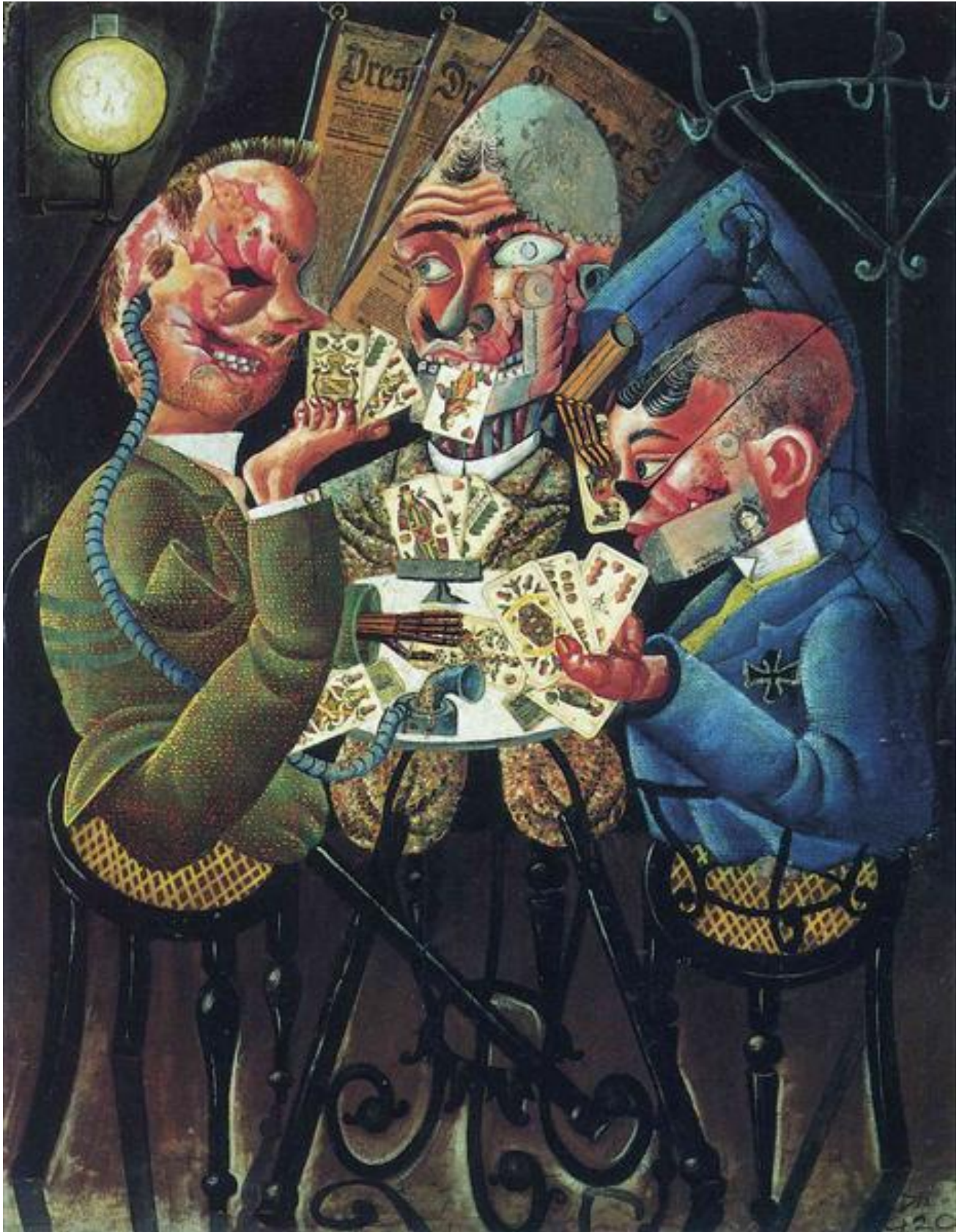


Beyond Good and Evil

by [Brian Patrick Bolger](#) (September 2022)



The Skat Players, Georg Scholz, 1920

The 'Renaissance' man—Actor, President, charming-and-brave-Ulysses—Zelensky gives the Ukraine an endearing public image. However, there is something rotten in the state of Denmark. There is a tendency in the west to dualistic thinking; good and evil, right and wrong. The culture of the west, ever since Plato, placed 'reason' and 'morality' at the forefront of thinking. Then the Enlightenment and 'humanism'—the idea that humanity is essentially good. There is truth and falsity; you just need to apply reason. It is what people want to believe. Unfortunately, the Russians weren't reading from the same playbook; in fact, they've been reading Machiavelli all along. The west always needs to pick a side, a hero and a villain, cowboys and Indians. It is how the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were sold to the public. Just for good measure, Bush and Blair pasted on another dualism: liberalism's predecessor, Christianity, became a Crusade against Islam. However, it is not only the Russians who have been versed in Machiavelli. It now appears some sections of the Ukrainian elites and military, have also been reading from the *The Prince*.

My contact and friend, an ex-US military veteran from Intelligence in Iraq and Afghanistan, has spent a long-time implementing democracy and transparency programs through a myriad of organisations such as the World Bank and the UN. He regards the work to have been a colossal failure. To those of us who have lived and worked in the former Soviet bloc, this does not come as a huge surprise. He is close to the ear of colleagues who are fighting for the 'International Legion' in Ukraine. To a man they are fighting for what they believe is a just cause. However, the stories coming out of the front line are shocking. Abuse of soldiers, verbal and physical, both men and women, is commonplace. It is also no wonder that many international fighters have been caught in Russian territory.

The leadership of the International Legion regularly sends men on 'suicide missions,' deep into enemy territory, with no desire to rescue or retrieve the men. One US veteran, a platoon commander, complained, 'We came here to help the Ukrainian people. Instead, we are forced to loot Ukrainian shops and pack goods, electronics, furniture, food, weapons in army vehicles for the commander's private business operations.' So huge and demoralising are the incidents that one unit of the International Legion has put together an 80-page dossier of incidents, sent to the parliament. Yet the worst aspect of this is that, despite complaints to the military hierarchy in Kiev, and then direct to Zelensky's office ... nothing has been done. One estimate I gained was that possibly up to 50% of funding is being stolen and a huge stock of weaponry is being recirculated on the black market. So, there is the bizarre spectacle of western funding and weaponry ending up with mercenary, terrorist groups to prosecute wars further afield. The US veteran also said the military leadership are threatening whistle blowers. The International Legion has two parts; one run by the standard Ukrainian military, another by the GUR (Defence Ministry's Directorate of Intelligence). The Intelligence wing is headed by Krylo Budanov and Vadim Popyk. Beneath them is a trio of what my contact described as 'standard Ukrainian and Polish mafia.' They have little interest in prosecuting the war, but a visceral interest in sending the likes of a colleague, Scott Sibley, to his death. Another fighter, British soldier Andrew Hill was also part of this regiment, and was captured on a suicide mission near Mykolaiv. Once the missions start, the commanders then refuse to send back up or rescue them, even when the Russians have located positions and start incessant shelling. One of the commanders, Kuchynsky, is on the run from bird time for fraud offences and possession of weapons and explosives in Poland. His real name is Piotr Kapuscinski, a Polish gangster, a previous member of the 'Pruskow Gang,' the largest mafia group in Poland, responsible for the murder of Marek Papala, the Polish Police Chief, in 1998. However, he

turned states witness, and implicated his colleagues in kidnappings, murders etc, thereby getting a pardon for a while. Being 'persona non grata' in Poland, with a price on his head, he decided to set up business in the Ukraine. War throws up huge opportunities, and Kapuscinski opened shop in the Ukraine, as a commander, as western aid started flooding in. The looting of shopping centres, near the front line of the Donbas in Lysychansk, for example, under the scowling watch of bemused locals, has become commonplace. Hence the large resignations of foreign fighters, appalled by the tolerance of criminality amidst a so called 'war of liberation.' The truth is that any morality which proclaims righteousness will fall prey to reality and the fact that, as Nietzsche noted, there is no such thing as good and evil.

Remember Aun San Suu Kyi. She was for years the doyen of the liberal media worldwide. Then, after attaining power, she supported the vicious anti-Rohingya murder and rape crimes under the auspices of the Burmese military. Saddam Hussein was, for a while, a good guy—a buffer to post-revolutionary Iran and it's Islamic theocracy. But the times change when the era of 'resource wars' takes over. Together with choosing sides—the West, without a lot of strategic or historical thinking—has opted for a policy of proxy war in the Ukraine. That has entailed the handing over of huge sums of money for armaments and aid. While the aid may be well-meaning and needed, what is now emerging is the colossal abuse which is taking place in Ukraine, of funding and hardware. The scale of the stories out of Ukraine would make the money laundering of African despots appear like cooking the books at the local Bowling Club.

The recent assassination attempt on Alexander Dugin in Moscow, has shown up the Janus-faced hypocrisy of the west. Free Speech is a tale of two speeches; the one of Salman Rushdie, the other of Alexander Dugin. The free speech outrage at the attack on Rushdie has not been echoed for that of Dugin. The

assassin of Rushdie no doubt a 'terrorist' and that of Dugin 'a freedom fighter.' Free Speech, in the Occident, only applies to 'right' speech, and you can invent the terminology to demonise anyone of a right leaning or different opinion. Dugin is a 'fascist' and we know how all-inclusive and useful is this accusation for the woke media. What about Ezra Pound? Was he a poet fascist? Nietzsche, who vilified this sense of misplaced morality, the sanctification of 'good and evil', the world of black and white, was also a 'fascist' despite his virulent hatred of antisemitism. Can we not read these writers or is there a list of accepted liberal ones, devoid of controversy or substance? It is safe to assume that we can still read Plato, him whose Ethics concerned the description of 'the Good' and Justice. And there's the rub; for Plato was the patron of one of the most tyrannical regimes in history. He worked for the dictator king-Dionysus I of Syracuse, a butcher of people and poetry. In an interesting anecdote, Plutarch tells the story of how the young poet Philoxenus had joked about the tyrant's own poetry. Dionysus sent him to the stoneworks for hard labour. However, he was reprieved and sent back to the tyrant for a further reading, for a Stalinist second chance. Dionysus read his own poetry again to his courtesans and, at the end, amidst great applause, Philoxenus was asked for his opinion. 'Take me back to the quarries' was his reply.

The honesty of poets is sorely lacking, for we live in an age of the *trahison de clerics* of government and media; where quick fixes and the universalist humanism of the west poisons serious analysis or the nuances of debate. We now stand at the cliff edge of the truth quarry; where mass media and technology has facilitated what Stalin always wanted- 'The Engineer of Human Souls.'

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Brian Patrick Bolger studied at the LSE. He has taught Political Philosophy and Applied Linguistics in Universities across Europe. His articles have appeared in newspapers and magazines such as *The European Conservative*, *The Montreal Review*, *The Salisbury Review*, *The Independent*, *The Burkean*, *The Daily Globe*, *Philosophy Now*, *The Village*, and more. His new book, *Coronavirus and the Strange Death of Truth* is available now in the UK and US.

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