



Lecture: Friday,
November 7, 2025, 1:30pm
(Pre-Lecture Reception, 1pm)

Marcello Ruta, “From Opposition to Intertwinement: Rethinking Tradition and Progress Through Dewey”

In this presentation, I will develop some preliminary remarks concerning the relationship between tradition and progress. Although both Western modernity and postmodernity tend to oppose tradition and progress, for several centuries, tradition was regarded as a *precondition* of progress rather than as an *obstacle* to it. Within a contemporary context, the term is often used in a *reactionary* way, as an ideological cover for the defense of unjustly acquired privileges. I explore how John Dewey’s thought offers today some elements that help to reactivate—albeit necessarily with different connotations—a *progressive* notion of tradition, rather than a reactionary one.

Dr. Marcello Ruta is Privatdozent at the University of Bern. After completing his musical studies, Ruta pursued philosophy in Milan (BA), Strasbourg (MA and PhD), and Bern (Habilitation). In 2021, he co-edited The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and Improvisation in the Arts (with Alessandro Bertinetto). From June 2022 to October 2024, he was a Research Associate at the ZHdK.



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