

Six Studies in The Decline and Fall of Professional Academic Philosophy, And A Real and Relevant Alternative

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"The Death of Socrates By Means of The American Philosophical Association," by Q (2013), after "The Death of Socrates," by Jacques-Louis David (1787)

There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. Yet it is admirable to profess because it was once admirable to live. To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates.... It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically. (Thoreau, 1957: p. 9)

I. Introduction

Being a professional and *being an academic* are different and logically independent things. Someone's being a professional means that they belong to a social institution (aka "a profession") which is composed of people (i) who are paid for doing a specific kind of work, and are also public practitioners of that kind of work, (ii) who must be accredited

or certified by the governing body of that particular profession in order to be officially licensed, or otherwise explicitly permitted, to do and publicly practice that kind of work, (iii) who are further constrained by a set of special and highly restrictive normative rules for the doing and public practicing of that kind of work, and (iv) who are even further constrained by a special and highly restrictive code of conduct that goes beyond the work itself into their social-institutional lives more generally, such that, (v) if someone refuses to comply with either the highly restrictive normative rules for the doing and public practicing of the specific kind of work or the highly restrictive code of conduct, then they are publicly reprimanded, sanctioned, or expelled from the profession. By contrast, someone's being an academic means that they belong to a scholarly or scientific (in the broad sense of "science" captured by the German term *Wissenschaft*) social institution devoted either to research alone or to research-&-teaching, originally Plato's Academy, but since the medieval or Scholastic period, and especially since the 18th century, to a university, college, or other social institution of higher education, not only including social institutions that are mainly or specifically devoted to teaching, but also including more-or-less loosely organized circles, teams, or other organizations dedicated solely to scholarly or scientific research without teaching. Academies can operate without either payment (after all, that was one of Plato's prime objections to the Sophists), normative rules for doing scholarly or scientific work, or codes of conduct. Therefore, it's really possible to be a professional (say, a doctor or a lawyer) without also being an academic, and it's also really possible to be an academic (say, a member of Plato's Academy, The Vienna Circle, or any of various contemporary scholarly or scientific research groups or institutes not affiliated with or governed by the professional academy), without also being a professional.

Academics in general, and academic philosophers in particular, have often been gently or even sarcastically mocked for "living in an ivory tower." But it's simply a brute social fact that massively most contemporary philosophers are both academics *and also* professionals, which, in turn, leads to a serious *metaphilosophical* problem. For the vocational vices of professionalism are (i) careerism, (ii) conformism, and (iii) coercive authoritarianism as specifically applied to the members of the profession working under its highly restrictive normative rules of work and code of conduct; the vocational vices of academicism are (i) dogmatism, (ii) esotericism, and (iii) hyper-specialization; and contemporary professional academic philosophy not only has all six of these vocational vices, but also has them in superabundance. This naturally yields the alienation and insulation of professional academic philosophers from the basic beliefs, concerns, needs, and activities of the rest of humanity outside the professional academy, even to the point of being fundamentally theoretically, emotionally, morally, and/or sociopolitically at odds with the rest of humanity, thereby entrenching them in an *ivory bunker*, a dire philosophical, moral, and sociopolitical situation which can be capsulized and summed

up under the rubric of *essential irrelevance to humanity*. So it's an accurate and serious criticism of contemporary professional academic philosophy that it's essentially irrelevant to humanity; as Carlo Cellucci correctly puts it, although perhaps also understating the problem,

[m]ost of the questions considered by today's [professional academic] philosophers are of interest only to academics working in a little corner of philosophy, not to those working in other corners of philosophy, let alone to people working in other subjects or to cultured people at large. (Cellucci, 2018: p. 14)

Now, the metaphilosophical problem of essential-irrelevance-to-humanity is also a *perennial* problem for professional academic philosophy, as John Dewey pointed out at length a year before the end of World War I (Dewey, 1917), as Arthur Schopenhauer pointed out at similar length sixty-six years earlier, in 1851, (Schopenhauer, 2014), and as Henry David Thoreau formulated it very crisply and indeed epigrammatically—as per the epigraph at the top of this essay—in 1854:

There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. Yet it is admirable to profess because it was once admirable to live. To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates.... It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically. (Thoreau, 1957: p. 9)

Indeed, if I'm right, then the problem of the essential-irrelevance-to-humanity of professional academic philosophy goes all the way back to 18th century philosophy, and more specifically to Leibnizian-Wolffian Rationalist philosophy, to Kant's critical (and indeed Critical, and philosophically revolutionary) response to it in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and also to Kant's little-studied long essay or short book in metaphilosophy about philosophy's relation to the professional academy, *The Conflict of the Faculties* (Kant, 1979; Hanna, 2021a: ch. XVIII).

Unfortunately—or perhaps, thinking presciently about the philosophy of the future, fortunately (Hanna, 2022a)—however, the 270 year-old metaphilosophical problem of essential-irrelevance-to-humanity has reached *its final crisis stage* in contemporary professional academic philosophy. Correspondingly, in what follows, I'll present six short critical studies in the decline and fall of 20th and 21st century professional academic philosophy into its final crisis stage condition of essential-irrelevance-to-humanity, which is the bad news, and then I'll offer a real and relevant alternative to it—what I call *life-shaping philosophy*—and *also* spell out a set of material conditions for the real-world implementation of life-shaping philosophy, which is the good news.

II. On the Meaning and Use of the Terms “Analytic Philosophy” and “Continental Philosophy”

Contemporary Analytic philosophers like to self-present as normative models of clear-&-distinct thinking, talking, and writing, and also as veritable cognitive engines of critical, cogent, and incisive reasoning: that’s their self-advertised philosophical stock-in-trade. Hence it might come as an ironically amusing surprise to learn that the term “Analytic philosophy” itself not only isn’t univocal but also in fact it’s *sixways semi-systematically ambiguous*, by which I mean that “Analytic philosophy” has six partially overlapping but still saliently different and non-equivalent senses, and that multiply muddling these senses is endemic in contemporary Analytic philosophy (see, for example, Beaney, 2017). In order to avoid these endemic confusions, however, the term “Analytic philosophy” should be defined, dictionary-style, according to those six subtly but importantly different senses, as follows:

1. prior to 1950, the tradition of late 19th century and early 20th century Anglo-European philosophy that presents and defines itself as essentially distinct from and opposed to all forms of idealistic philosophy, especially Immanuel Kant’s transcendental idealism (see, for example, Hanna, 2001) and 19th century neo-Kantian philosophy (see, for example, Willey, 1978; Köhnke, 1991; Luft and Capeillères, 2010; Beiser, 2014; Crowell, 2017; Heis, 2018; Clarke, 2019), and G.W.F. Hegel’s absolute idealism and late 19th century British neo-Hegelian philosophy (see, for example, Beiser, 2005; Hylton, 1990).
2. philosophy carried out by means of the methods of logical or linguistic analysis.
3. philosophy committed to the thesis that there exists one and only one kind of necessary truth: logical truths or analytic truths.
4. philosophy principally concerned with formulating and knowing logical or analytic truths.
5. philosophy that mirrors and valorizes the formal sciences (especially logic and mathematics) and the natural sciences (especially physics).
6. after 1950, the tradition of mid- to late-20th century and early 21st century Anglo-American philosophy that presents itself as essentially distinct from and opposed to so-called “Continental philosophy.” (Hanna, 2021a)

As regards that sixth sense of “Analytic philosophy,” Richard Rorty (1982) was bang-on-target when he pointed out that, by 1980, there was in fact *nothing* that’s universally doctrinally or methodically shared by all who self-identify as “Analytic philosophers,” apart from the strictly social-institutional fact that, as members of the “IN” group possessing hegemonic ideological domination over professional academic philosophy as a whole, they presented themselves as essentially distinct from and intellectually superior to so-called “Continental philosophers,” i.e., the non-Analytic and intellectually inferior

philosophers who belonged to the “OUT” group; and so it has remained, for more than four decades, right up to 6am this morning.

Let me explain.

The 140-year tradition of Analytic philosophy has two importantly distinct phases: *classical* Analytic philosophy (from roughly 1880 to 1950), and *post-classical* Analytic philosophy (from roughly 1950 to the present).

Classical Analytic philosophy began in the 1880s with the work of Gottlob Frege (especially his *Foundations of Arithmetic*, and his logical and semantic writings, especially his *Concept-Script* [*Begriffsschrift*] and “On Sense and Meaning [or Reference]” [*Über Sinn und Bedeutung*]), and then got fully underway in late 19th and early 20th century with the work of G.E. Moore (especially his essays “The Nature of Judgment” and “The Refutation of Idealism,” and his book *Principia Ethica*) and Bertrand Russell (especially his co-authored book with A.N. Whitehead, *Principia Mathematica*, and his essay “On Denoting”). Frege, Moore, and Russell were *the founding Trinity* of classical Analytic philosophy: the Father (Frege), the Son (Moore), and the Holy Ghost (Russell). In 1921, Russell’s research student and subsequently his collaborator, Ludwig Wittgenstein, published the most important book in classical Analytic philosophy, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, which heavily influenced the Logical Empiricist, aka Logical Positivist, doctrines of the Vienna Circle, whose most important members or fellow-travellers included Rudolf Carnap, Moritz Schlick, Otto Neurath, Frank Ramsey, A.J. Ayer, Kurt Gödel, Alfred Tarski, and W.V.O. Quine.

During the period from 1900-1940, classical neo-Kantian philosophy in Germany and France, and British neo-Hegelian philosophy (carrying over somewhat into the USA—see, for example, T.S. Eliot’s Harvard PhD dissertation on F.H. Bradley, and the philosophy of Josiah Royce more generally [Kuklick, 1977]), both came to a more or less bitter end. Slamming the door behind the idealists, and triumphantly (indeed, even triumphalistically) replacing them, and just as often also taking up their vacated university positions, a group of Young Turk *avant-garde* philosophers carrying the banner of the new tradition of classical Analytic philosophy came onto the scene, following on from Frege but led by Moore, Russell, the young Wittgenstein, the Vienna Circle Logical Empiricists/Positivists (especially Carnap), and Quine.

Despite its triumph and triumphalism, in fact classical Analytic philosophy was seriously theoretically hobbled in the 1930s and 40s by Kurt Gödel’s profoundly important first and second *incompleteness theorems* (Gödel, 1967), bearing witness to the facts that (i) adding the axioms of Peano arithmetic to *Principia Mathematica*-style logical

systems yields undecidable, unprovable true sentences, and (ii) that no such system can demonstrate its own consistency, which, when they're taken together with Alfred Tarski's *semantic conception of truth*, bearing further witness to the categorical distinction between truth and logical proof (Tarski, 1943, 1956), collectively amount to a logico-mathematical 1-2 punch that permanently KO'd the classical Frege-Whitehead-Russell logicist project for reducing mathematics to logic. And then on top of that, delivering the *coup de grâce*, by 1950 Quine's devastating critique of the analytic-synthetic distinction in "Truth by Convention," "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," and "Carnap and Logical Truth" (Hanna, 2015a: ch. 4) had effectively ended the research program of *classical* Analytic philosophy and thereby initiated *post-classical* Analytic philosophy.

In any case, classical Analytic philosophy also stood in an important elective affinity with the rise of what James C. Scott calls *high modernism*, especially in the applied and fine arts and the formal and natural sciences (Scott, 1998; see also Janik and Toulmin, 1973; Vienna Circle, 1996; Galison, 1990; Reisch, 2005; and Isaac, 2013). At the same time, during the first three decades of the 20th century, classical Analytic philosophers were also engaged in a serious intellectual competition with *phenomenology*, especially Husserlian transcendental phenomenology (Hanna, 2013) and Heideggerian existential phenomenology (Hanna, 2008a: pp. 149-150). Simultaneously, however, there was also an emerging *organicist* movement in philosophy, including Henri Bergson's *Matter and Memory* in 1896, *Creative Evolution* in 1907, Samuel Alexander's *Space, Time, and Deity* in 1920, John Dewey's *Experience and Nature* in 1925, and especially A.N. Whitehead's "philosophy of organism" in *Process and Reality* in 1929.

But it's essential *not* to confuse early 20th century *organicism in philosophy*, on the one hand, with *organic nationalism*, aka *organic romanticism*, in the arts, science, and sociopolitics (Wikipedia, 2022a), as it occurred during the rise of fascism and militarism in Germany, Italy, and Japan—for example, in Nazi architecture and visual art (Wikipedia, 2022b)—on the other. Organic nationalism followed on from J.G. Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (Fichte, 1968) and postulates a root analogy between a nation-State on the one hand, and either a single massive complex organism or a distributed organic totality like a beehive on the other. It thereby identifies individual citizens with unicellular organisms, or worker bees, whose individuality is absorbed into the single life of the whole nation, or the whole hive. So, organic nationalism is authoritarian up to and including totalitarianism, anti-dignitarian, anti-democratic in its focus on the *Führerprinzip* and/or Strong Man dictator or emperor, who personifies the nation as a single organism, or plays the functional role of the Queen Bee, and more generally, is pervasively historically backward-looking, insular, reactionary, and regressive. Sharply on the contrary to organic nationalism or organic romanticism, early 20th century organicism in philosophy is essentially intertwined **first**, with the anti-

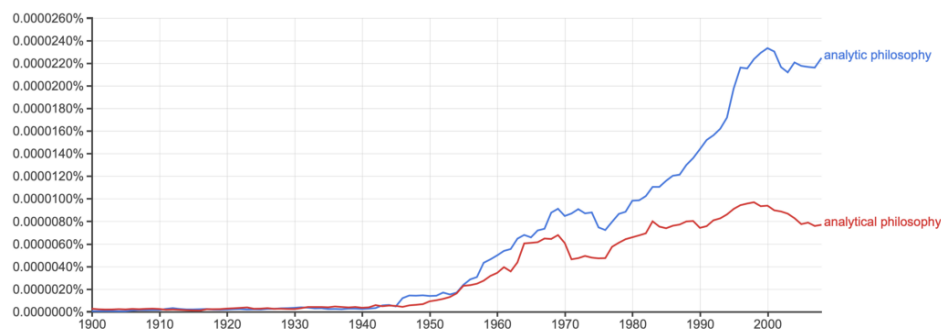
authoritarian, anti-totalitarian, dignitarian, and democratic versions of *socialism*, and **second**, with the search for a *humane modernity* that would avoid the excesses of the Industrial Revolution and extreme urbanization (Hanna and Paans, 2020: sections 2.1-2.2).

This historical and sociocultural point about early 20th-century organicism in philosophy is crucial for understanding how that organicist wave crashed upon the rocky shores of early 20th century Analytic philosophy and was lost, and how classical Analytic philosophy sailed away triumphantly from the scene of the wreck, refusing to take any survivors or salvage any of its philosophical cargo. For one of the most influential propagandist strategies that Russell used to establish classical Analytic philosophy over its leading contemporary philosophical competitors (i.e., phenomenology and early 20th century organicism in philosophy), was to criticize Bergson's metaphysical-&-cosmological organicism—and, by implication, also Russell's former co-author and mentor Whitehead's metaphysical-&-cosmological organicism—by intentionally and sophistically blurring the difference between their organicism in philosophy and organic nationalism or organic romanticism, thereby effectively impugning the former via political-guilt-by-association with the latter. Over and above Russell's role as the leading propagandist for classical Analytic philosophy up to 1950—and after 1950, the philosophically imperious and pugnacious Gilbert Ryle enthusiastically took over that role (Monk, 2019)—it's also clear from Russell's correspondence and other biographical evidence that he was jealously annoyed by Bergson's great fame during the first three decades of the 20th century (Monk, 1996: ch. 8; Vrahimis, forthcoming), and also that he and Whitehead had a falling-out during World War I for formal-scientific, philosophical, personal, and political reasons alike (Monk, 1996: chs. 6 and 11; Lowe, 1985: chs. XI-XII). In any case, it's hard to overestimate the knock-on effect of Russell's anti-Bergsonian (hence anti-French, hence anti-continental-European) philosophical propaganda on the later Great Divide between post-classical Analytic philosophy and so-called "Continental" philosophy (Vrahimis, forthcoming).

By the end of World War II, the early Cold War, and the period of the sociopolitical triumph of advanced capitalism and technocracy in the USA, post-classical Analytic philosophy had triumphed in a social-institutional sense; organicist philosophy had virtually disappeared except in a vestigial form, as an aspect of American pragmatism; and existential phenomenology and all other kinds of non-Analytic philosophy, under the convenient and pejorative catch-all label, "Continental philosophy," gradually became the social-institutional Other and slave of Analytic philosophy (Rorty, 1982b; McCumber, 2001, 2016; Akehurst, 2008, 2011; Vrahimis, 2012, 2015, forthcoming; Bloor, 2017; Katzav and Vaesen, 2017; Katzav, 2018). Indeed, the post-classical Analytic tradition and so-called "Continental philosophy" came into existence simultaneously.

Correspondingly, some have interpreted this social-institutional fact as *the creation of Analytic philosophy itself*. For example, Christoph Schuringa argues that

[i]f there is a decisive moment of birth [of Analytic philosophy], it is the publication in 1949 of *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, whose editors, Herbert Feigl and Wilfrid Sellars, consciously set out to shape the teaching of philosophy in the United States in an ‘analytic’ mould. This publication, and others such as Arthur Pap’s *Elements of Analytic Philosophy* (also published in 1949), helped crystallize the idea of “analytic philosophy,” in which a number of different approaches to philosophy were combined: the “logico-analytical method” of Russell, the commonsense/realist “analysis” of Moore, the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, the logic of the Lwów-Warsaw school, and American approaches flowing from the pragmatist and realist traditions. By 1958 a group of curious French philosophers could invite leading Anglophone philosophers to a conference at Royaumont under the title *La philosophie analytique*, to see what all the fuss was about. In the very same period, however, the death knell was already being sounded for analytic philosophy in various quarters. In 1956 the Oxford philosopher J.O. Urmson published a history of analytic philosophy, *Philosophical Analysis*, which ends in an obituary for what he calls “the old analysis.” The obituary notices have kept coming. In his book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979), the apogee of a sustained self-critique of analytic philosophy that had begun with the publication of W. V. Quine’s “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” in 1951, Richard Rorty wrote: “I do not think that there any longer exists anything identifiable as ‘analytic philosophy’, except in some [...] stylistic or sociological way.”... The claim that analytic philosophy was born after 1945 will seem startling to many. Wasn’t there widespread talk of “analytic philosophy” (or “analytical philosophy”) before that? The answer is no, at least if what is said in print is our guide. This by itself doesn’t settle whether analytic philosophy existed—perhaps it wasn’t necessary to use the phrase. But it is striking that philosophers felt the need to self-apply the label only after 1945. This Google Ngram (showing the incidence of the phrases “analytic philosophy” and “analytical philosophy” in books published over the period 1900–2010) illustrates the point well:



The term “analysis” was, certainly, much used by both Russell and Moore (even if they meant different things by it), and the founding of the journal *Analysis* in 1933 was a

significant event (not least since the question of how to do philosophical “analysis” was much discussed in its pages). But the phrase ‘analytic philosophy’ is in no way commonplace until after 1945. In the first appearances in print of the phrase “analytic philosophy,” the authors use it to express a critical attitude to the approaches they see as falling under it (R. G. Collingwood in *An Essay on Philosophical Method* and W. P. Montague in “Philosophy as Vision,” both published in 1933) — although John Wisdom had written with approval of “analytic philosophers” (in a book on Jeremy Bentham) in 1931. There seems to be nothing earlier than this, other than a lone use of “the analytical philosophy” in an anonymously authored report of a meeting of the Aristotelian Society in 1915, where the phrase appears in a description of a point made by Russell in the discussion session. (Schuringa, 2020)

Nevertheless, Schuringa’s conclusion from all this interesting and relevant information, namely, that

[t]he idea that there was one thing that philosophers were doing prior to 1945 that could be called “analytic philosophy” is, then, a retrospective interpretation (Schuringa, 2020),

is too strong, and arises from the failure to distinguish sharply between (i) classical Analytic philosophy (roughly 1880 to 1950) and (ii) post-classical Analytic philosophy (roughly 1950 to the present). Moreover, as Schuringa himself notes, it’s not a necessary condition of there being a set of philosophers who fully belong to a genuine philosophical tradition that’s later accurately dubbed “X-ian philosophy,” that at that time they typically or even ever call themselves “X-ian philosophers.” For example, obviously the Pre-Socratic philosophers never called themselves “the Pre-Socratic philosophers” — since Socrates hadn’t been immortalized by Plato’s dialogues yet — nevertheless, they were genuinely Pre-Socratic philosophers just the same. Analogously, the classical Analytic philosophers didn’t typically call themselves “Analytic philosophers,” but they were genuinely Analytic philosophers just the same.

Still, Schuringa’s overly-strong conclusion *does* also highlight a crucial point: namely, that post-classical Analytic philosophers were the first Analytic philosophers to entrench Analytic philosophy inside the professional academy, in part by officially labelling themselves “Analytic philosophers,” and in part by simultaneously creating their own philosophical Enemy of the People, so-called “Continental philosophy.” In conformity with that, the first use of the term “Continental philosophy” seems to have been in 1945, in Russell’s *History of Western Philosophy*, where he talks about “two schools of philosophy, which may be broadly distinguished as the Continental and the British respectively” (Russell, 1945: p. 643). But the term didn’t come into general use in its recent and contemporary sense until roughly 1980, as Andreas Keller points out:

An Ngram of the term “Continental Philosophy” shows that it took off around 1980 shortly after the smash-hit appearances of Richard Rorty’s two highly controversial books, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* in 1979, and *Consequences of Pragmatism* in 1982.¹ It seems that before that time, many instances of the term were meant just in a geographic sense, not implying a contrast with “Analytic philosophy.” This hints at an invention, or at least popularization, of the term in its current meaning around 1980. Perhaps there was not merely a temporal succession, but also some sort of causal connection, between the publication of Rorty’s books and the later Anglo-American entrenchment of the term. (Keller, 2018)

Schuringa’s Ngram of uses of the terms “analytic philosophy” and “analytical philosophy,” which also spikes sharply upwards in the 1980s, smoothly conforms to Keller’s suggestion that there’s an important connection between the appearance and impact of Rorty’s books *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* and *Consequences of Pragmatism*, and the entrenchment of the term “Continental philosophy.”

Post-classical Analytic philosophy emerged and became social-institutionally *dominant* after 1950, but it didn’t fully achieve a decisive social-institutional hegemonic *victory*—in part via the creation of its own social-institutional Other, so-called “Continental philosophy” — until the late 1970s and early 1980s, when Rorty explicitly and famously (or notoriously) pointed out these facts.

In the early-to mid-1950s, post-classical Analytic philosophy produced a Wittgenstein-inspired language-driven alternative to Logical Empiricism/Positivism, *ordinary language philosophy*. In the late 1950s and 1960s, powered by the work of H. P. Grice and Peter Strawson, ordinary language philosophy became *conceptual analysis* (Hanna, 1998a). In turn, during that same period, Strawson created a new “connective” — that is, holistic—version of conceptual analysis, that also constituted a *descriptive metaphysics* (Strawson, 1959, 1992). In the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, Strawson’s connective version of conceptual analysis gradually fused with Donald Davidson’s non-reductive naturalism about language, mind, and action (sometimes rather misleadingly called *semantics of natural language*), John Rawls’s holistic method of “reflective equilibrium,” and Noam Chomsky’s psycholinguistic appeals to intuitions-as-evidence, and ultimately became what can be called *The Standard Model* of mainstream post-classical Analytic philosophical methodology, by the end of the 20th century (Jackson, 1998). In the late 1990s and first two decades of the 21st century, a domestic critical reaction to The Standard Model, combining *direct reference theory*, *scientific essentialism* and *modal*

¹ Google, available online at URL =

<https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=continental+philosophy&year_start=1800&year_end=2000&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Ccontinental%20philosophy%3B%2Cc0>.

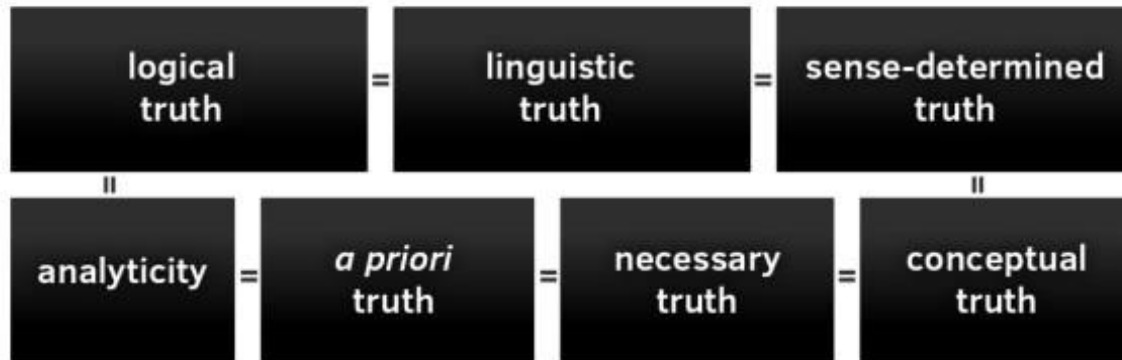
metaphysics (Hanna, 1998b, 2000, 2006a: chs. 3-4, 2015a: section 4.5), yielded recent and contemporary *Analytic metaphysics*.² In contemporary mainstream post-classical Analytic philosophy, co-existing and cohabiting with The Standard Model and Analytic metaphysics, is also the classical Lockean idea that philosophy should be an “underlaborer” for the natural sciences, especially as this idea was developed in the second half of the 20th century by Quine and Wilfrid Sellars, and their students, as the materialist or physicalist (whether eliminativist, reductive, or non-reductive) and scientific doctrine of *scientific naturalism*, and again in the first three decades of the 21st century, in even more sophisticated versions, as *experimental philosophy*, aka “X-Phi,” and the doctrine of *second philosophy* (Quine, 1969; Sellars, 1963a; Maddy, 2007; Knobe and Nichols, 2008).

More precisely, scientific naturalism includes four basic theses: (i) *anti-mentalism and anti-supernaturalism*, which says that we should reject any sort of explanatory appeal to non-physical or non-spatiotemporal entities or causal powers, (ii) *scientism* (Haack, 2017), which says that the formal sciences (especially logic and mathematics) and the natural sciences (especially physics) are the paradigms of knowledge, reasoning, and rationality, as regards their content and their methodology alike, (iii) *materialist or physicalist metaphysics*, which says that all facts in the world, including all mental facts and social facts, are either reducible to (whether identical to or “logically supervenient” on) or else strictly dependent on, according to natural laws (aka “naturally supervenient” or “nomologically supervenient” on) *fundamental physical facts*, which in turn are *naturally mechanistic, microphysical facts*, and (iv) *radical empiricist epistemology*, which says that all knowledge and truths are a posteriori. So, to summarize, scientific naturalism holds **first**, that the nature of knowledge and reality are ultimately disclosed by pure logic, pure mathematics, fundamental physics, and whatever other reducible natural sciences there actually are or may turn out to be, **second**, that this is the *only* way of disclosing the ultimate nature of knowledge and reality, and **third**, that even if everything in the world, including ourselves and all things human (including language, mind, and action), cannot be strictly eliminated in favor of or reduced to fundamental physical facts, nevertheless everything in the world, including ourselves and all things human, is metaphysically grounded on and causally determined by fundamental physical facts.

Generalizing now, the central topics, or obsessions, of the classical Analytic tradition prior to 1950 were *meaning* and *necessity*, with special emphases on (i) pure logic

² The leading figures of Analytic metaphysics include David Lewis, David Chalmers, Kit Fine, Theodore Sider, and Timothy Williamson; and some of its canonical texts are Lewis’s *On the Plurality of Worlds* (1986), Sider’s *Writing the Book of the World* (2011), Chalmers’s *Constructing the World* (2012), and Williamson’s *Modal Logic as Metaphysics* (2013). See also section IV below.

as the universal and necessary essence of thought, (ii) language as the basic means of expressing thoughts and describing the world, (iii) the sense (*Sinn*) vs. Meaning, aka reference (*Bedeutung*) distinction, (iv) the conceptual truth vs. factual truth distinction, (v) the necessary truth vs. contingent truth distinction, (vi) the a priori truth vs. a posteriori truth distinction, and (vii) the analytic vs. synthetic distinction. Correspondingly, a common and profoundly embedded thread running through all of these sub-themes is the following rough-and-ready multiple identity (or at least necessary equivalence):³



So, a very useful way of characterizing classical Analytic philosophy from late 19th century Frege to mid-20th-century Quine, is to say that it consisted essentially in *the rise and fall of the concept of analyticity*.

By vivid contrast to classical Analytic philosophy, however, the central commitment, and indeed dogmatic obsession, of post-classical Analytic philosophy since 1950 until today at 6am, continues to be scientific naturalism. Therefore, if scientific naturalism is false—as I strongly believe it is, precisely because its metaphysical foundation, *the mechanistic worldview*, is false, and its metaphysical contrary, *the neo-organicist worldview*, is true (see, for example, Torday, Miller Jr, and Hanna, 2020; and Hanna, 2022a, 2022b)—then for at least the last 35 years—i.e., since at least the mid-1980s—post-classical Analytic philosophy has been powered essentially and indeed almost exclusively by the brute fact of its social-institutional domination of, and indeed hegemony over, professional academic philosophy, especially including its mythical Enemy of the People, so-called “Continental philosophy.”

III. The Question That Quine Refused To Answer

In 1998, at The World Philosophy Congress in Boston, W.V.O. Quine, the leading Analytic philosopher of the second half of the 20th century, was asked by a *New York Times*

³ I’m grateful to Otto Paans for creating and sharing this diagram.

reporter: “what have we learned from philosophy in the twentieth century?” Quine replied: “I should have thought up an answer to that one. I’m going to have to pass.” Later he was given a second chance, but said: “I really have nothing to add” (Boxer, 1998). Now, since Quine is generally, and with good reason, taken to be the source of the barbed witticism, “there are two kinds of philosophers: those who are interested in the history of philosophy, and those who are interested in philosophy,” I think that we can safely assume that by “philosophy in the twentieth century,” Quine understood *Analytic philosophy in the 20th century*. Granting this, ever since I first read that NYT article in 1998, I’ve often wondered why Quine refused to answer that question? Finally, however, I think that I have an adequate explanation: it all has to do with *logical psychologism*, *scientism*, and *the history of post-classical Analytic philosophy*.

Logical psychologism says that logic is explanatorily reducible to empirical or scientific psychology (Kusch, 1995; Hanna, 2006b: ch. 1, 2008b, 2015b). *Scientism* says that the formal sciences (especially logic and mathematics) and the natural sciences (especially physics, but also chemistry, biology, and the cognitive sciences) are the paradigms of knowledge, reasoning, and rationality, as regards their content and their methodology alike (Haack 2017). And by *post-classical* Analytic philosophy, as per section II above, I mean the *second* seventy year phase of the 140 year tradition of Analytic of philosophy, that runs from roughly 1950 to 6am this morning; correspondingly, the first seventy years of that tradition, i.e., from roughly 1880 to 1950, is what I call *classical* Analytic philosophy (Hanna, 2021a).

Now back to logical psychologism. From Pierre Arnauld and Jean Nicole’s *Art of Thinking* (1662), through Kant’s *Jäsche Logic* (1800) (Hanna, 2021c), J. S. Mill’s *System of Logic* (1843), and George Boole’s *Investigation of the Laws of Thought* (1854), right up to the appearance of Frege’s revolutionary *Begriffsschrift* (1879), logic and psychology seemed to be, if not precisely the same subject, then at least theoretically married to one another. But the much-celebrated attack on “the sin of logical psychologism” at the end of the nineteenth century brought about a nasty divorce. According to the leaders of the attack—Frege, and especially Husserl in his 1900 book *Prolegomena to Pure Logic* (Husserl, 1970; Hanna, 2008b)—this parting of the ways was a simple matter of irreconcilable differences: the principles or laws of logic are absolutely necessary, whereas the laws of empirical or scientific psychology are only contingent generalizations; logic is true, whereas empirical or scientific psychology deals only with human belief; laws of logic are necessarily true, whereas, at best, laws of empirical or scientific psychology are only contingently true; logic is a fully formal or “topic-neutral” science, whereas empirical or scientific psychology focuses only on the species-specific or individual contents of mental states; logical knowledge is a priori or independent of all sense experience, whereas empirical-scientific psychological knowledge is a posteriori or dependent on experience;

and so on. Thereafter “pure logic,” pursued in armchairs by philosophers and other pure logicians, and by philosophically-minded or logically-minded mathematicians, went one way, and “experimental psychology,” pursued in laboratories by men in white coats, went diametrically another. To make things worse, as Elliott Sober aptly observes, “while the psychologists were leaving, the philosophers were slamming the door behind them” (Sober, 1978: p. 165). Indeed, logical psychologism is a particularly strong version of the denial that pure logic is an independent and absolutely foundational science. Logical psychologism was a widely held view in the second half of the 19th century, that grew out of the neo-Kantian and neo-Hegelian traditions alike, and it’s also closely associated with the origins of empirical psychology as an autonomous discipline (Kusch, 1995).

Husserl’s arguments against logical psychologism in chapters 1-8 of *Prolegomena to Pure Logic*, often referred to simply as Husserl’s “refutation” of logical psychologism, constitute one of the most famous and broadly influential critical set-pieces in 20th century philosophy, comparable in these respects to Quine’s famous attack on the analytic-synthetic distinction in “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” (Quine, 1961), first published in 1951, almost exactly fifty years after the *Prolegomena*, which brought about the end of classical Analytic philosophy (Hanna, 2021a: esp. ch. XVI). Indeed, the original working title of another one of Quine’s famous and closely-related essays from the same period, “Epistemology Naturalized” (Quine, 1969), was “Epistemology Naturalized: Or, the Case for Psychologism” (Kusch, 1995: p. 11). So, by the 1950s, following Quine’s lead, psychologism was making a serious comeback in post-classical Analytic philosophy.

But here’s where it gets complicated. In the fifth section of “Two Dogmas of Empiricism,” Quine somewhat abruptly switches from his attack on the analytic/synthetic distinction, to an attack on what he calls “*reductionism*: the belief that each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience” (Quine, 1961: p. 20). The rejection of reductionism enables Quine to move from the semantic atomism of the verificationists to a semantic holism (of beliefs), which in turn sets up his new form of radical empiricism in the sixth and last section, aptly dubbed “*empiricism without the dogmas*” (Quine, 1961: p. 42). In this section, he argues that what traditional philosophers had regarded as necessary a priori truths and beliefs—especially logical truths and beliefs, and mathematical truths and beliefs—differ from contingent a posteriori truths and beliefs only by their high degree of centrality or indispensability in our overall scientific conceptual scheme (our web of beliefs), not by any fundamental semantic or epistemological difference in kind. So, according to Quine, in some loose and unsystematic sense, talk about the a priori will always be with us; but, at bottom, that way of talking is ultimately holistic, altogether continuous with the natural sciences, and above all revisable. It is this thesis of universal revisability, or fallibilism, that expresses the *pragmatic* dimension of Quine’s view.

Now, it has been occasionally noticed that there exists a peculiar anomaly or gap in this dimension of Quine's view. For Quine must presuppose and use the canonical notation of *elementary logic* (Mates, 1972), and especially *monadic logic* (Boolos and Jeffrey, 1989: ch. 25 (i.e., a restricted version of elementary logic that includes sentential logic and the logic of quantification into one-place predicates—hence, the monadic truths of elementary logic include all the truth-functional tautologies, and all the logical truths involving one-place predicates and one-place quantifiers only) in order to establish his holistic, behavioristic, fallibilistic, or pragmatic naturalism (Quine, 1960), yet it's not at all obvious just how his holism, behaviorism, fallibilism, and pragmatic naturalism apply to elementary logic or monadic logic. Indeed, the very same argument Quine used to such tremendous effect against the conventionalist theory of logical truth in his breakthrough 1935 essay, "Truth by Convention" (Quine, 1976) seems to apply directly to his own positive doctrine. Just as *unreduced, preconventionalized* logic is required in order to give the reductive conventionalist definition of a logical truth (Quine, 1976: p. 104), so it appears that an *unreduced, prenatalized*, logic is required in order to naturalize logic.

One way of seeing this point vividly is to raise three questions: (i) what sense could be made of holism itself without logic?, (ii) what sense could be made of the revisability of beliefs or propositions without logic?, and (iii) what sense could be made of the natural sciences without logic? The doctrine of holism, after all, claims that every belief or proposition is related to every other by consistency or entailment; but consistency and entailment are notions straight out of logic. So too the very idea of the revisability of a belief or proposition is that its denial is logically consistent, hence it's able to be rationally discarded by the believer under suitable conditions. And, finally, by Quine's own admission, the natural sciences themselves are partially defined by their shared possession of a common or universal logic:

All sciences interlock to some extent; they share a common logic and generally some common part of mathematics, even when nothing else. (As quoted in Fogelin, 1997: pp. 550-551)

So the very idea of a pragmatically naturalized logic presupposes a common or universal logic—more precisely, what, in his 1970 book *Philosophy of Logic*, Quine calls "orthodox logic" or "sheer logic," by which, he must mean either elementary logic or monadic logic:

If sheer logic is not conclusive, then what is? What higher tribunal could abrogate the logic of truth-functions or of [monadic] quantification? (Quine, 1986: p. 81)

This leads to a more direct question: can orthodox or sheer logic really be at bottom empirical, as Quine insists? A closer look at the texts suggest that Quine was in

fact a moving target on this crucial issue; for he said at least two very different things about the revisability of logic. In “Two Dogmas,” and in chapter 7 of *Philosophy of Logic*, Quine says explicitly that even the most basic logical truths are subject to possible revision (Quine, 1961: p. 43, 1986: p. 100). But then in chapter 6 of *Philosophy of Logic*, he says this of any “deviant logician” who tries to reject the principle of non-contradiction, aka PNC:⁴

Here, evidently, is the deviant logician’s predicament: when he tries to deny the doctrine he only changes the subject. (Quine, 1986: p. 81)

That is, a deviant logician’s attempted revision of the PNC is self-undermining; he can’t continue to be a logician in the strict sense and seriously deny the PNC. For the denial of the PNC would imply that the deviant logician has changed the very meanings of the logical constants he’s using. Or, to put the same idea more positively: to be a logician is to presuppose the absolute unrevisability of some principles of orthodox or sheer logic, including the PNC.

In my opinion, Quine’s “deny the doctrine, change the meaning” argument about the absolute unrevisability of the most basic parts of logic is directly on target. But it has some implications that Quine could not happily accept. Hilary Putnam gave us a nudge in the direction of fully grasping this point, in “Analyticity and Apriority: Beyond Wittgenstein and Quine” (1983c). Here, Putnam aptly observed that skeptical attacks on the very possibility of a priori truths in classical logic or simple arithmetic are, at bottom, direct challenges to our self-defining conception of human rationality (Putnam, 1983b: pp. 110-111).

But I think that the logico-philosophical situation is even worse than that. The pragmatic naturalist Quinean skeptic claims to be able to conceive the revisability of all

⁴ In fact, there’s an important distinction to be drawn between (i) the *strong or maximal* principle of non-contradiction, which says that it’s not the case that *any* sentence (proposition, statement, belief, judgment, etc.) is both true and false, and (ii) the *weak or minimal principle of non-contradiction*, which says that it’s not the case that *every* sentence (proposition, statement, belief, judgment, etc.) is both true and false. The weak or minimal principle of non-contradiction leaves open the possibility that *some* sentences are both true and false—e.g., paradoxical sentences like the Gödel sentence and the Liar sentence—even though such “truth-value gluts” are not allowed to occur unrestrictedly, which is an apocalyptic logical condition called *explosion*. See, e.g., (Putnam, 1983b; Hanna, 2006b: ch. 2). Deviant logics that permit some truth-value gluts, but rule out explosion, and thus obey the weak or minimal principle of non-contradiction, are called “paraconsistent.” See, e.g., (Priest, 1987, 1998). In *Philosophy of Logic*, Quine presumably has the strong or maximal principle of non-contradiction in mind; but he also seems not to have recognized the possibility of, or at least seems not to have countenanced the legitimacy of, either the weak or minimal principle of non-contradiction or paraconsistent logic.

truths, including all the laws of orthodox or sheer logic. Nevertheless, conceivability presupposes the PNC, and also Quine's "orthodox" or "sheer logic" more specifically, assuming that this is either elementary logic or monadic logic. So the pragmatic naturalist Quinean skeptic is challenging our self-defining conception of human rationality by covertly using an element of that conception—elementary logic, or at least monadic logic—as a critical weapon. But, by Quine's own account, elementary logic, or at least monadic logic, is absolutely unrevisable. So this is to fall into the most extreme form of *pragmatic contradiction*—self-stultification or cognitive suicide: you are using your own skeptical weapon *on yourself*. As Kant puts it in "The Vienna Logic":

Proceeding skeptically nullifies all our effort, and it is an antilogical principle . . . For if I bring cognition to the point where it nullifies itself, then it is as if we were to regard all human cognitions as nothing. (Kant, 1992: p. 332/Ak. 24: p. 882)

If I'm right, then this was the unhappy, paradoxical, and ultimately self-defeating predicament of post-classical Analytic philosophy by 1970—the year Quine published the first edition of his *Philosophy of Logic*. By 1970, the most that Quine could do as a philosopher, was to fall on his own logical sword, and gesture mutely toward the natural sciences. In a substantive philosophical sense, therefore—as opposed to a merely social-institutional sense—the Analytic tradition has been *living on borrowed time and running on empty, for seventy years*: from 1951, when Quine published "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," through 1970, when he fell on his logical sword in *Philosophy of Logic*, to 6am this morning.

Otherwise and more comprehensively put, post-classical Analytic philosophers belonging to the seventy year pragmatic naturalist scientific tradition since Quine published "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," have set for themselves the cognitively suicidal aim of *replacing Analytic philosophy with natural science* (Mabaquiao, 2022). As we saw, Analytic philosophy began 140 years ago with the expulsion of psychologists and other natural scientists from philosophy departments, and the philosophers slamming the door behind them. But nowadays, 140 years later, in a complete and utterly ironic reversal, post-classical Analytic philosophers in the post-Quinean pragmatic naturalist scientific tradition are banging on the doors of psychology departments, and other natural science departments, begging to be allowed in, so that they can wear white coats, and commit cognitive harakiri by replacing Analytic philosophy with natural science. And *that's* why, in 1998, two years before he died, Quine, the leading Analytic philosopher of the second half of the 20th century, had precisely *nothing to say* about what we can learn from Analytic philosophy in the 20th century, and thus refused to answer the interviewer's question. Or as I'd prefer to put it nowadays, in 2022: *goodbye Analytic philosophy*, and good riddance (Hanna, 2021a: esp. chs. XVIII and XIX).

IV. Analytic Metaphysics as a Copernican Devolution in Philosophy

Human reason has this peculiar fate in one species of its cognitions that it is burdened with questions which it cannot dismiss, since they are given to it as problems by the nature of reason itself, but which it also cannot answer, since they transcend every capacity of human reason. Reason falls into this perplexity through no fault of its own. It begins from principles whose use is unavoidable in the course of experience and at the same time sufficiently warranted by it. With these principles it rises (as its nature also requires) ever higher, to more remote conditions. But since it becomes aware in this way that its business must always remain incomplete because the questions never cease, reason sees itself necessitated to take refuge in principles that overstep all possible use in experience, and yet seem so unsuspecting that even ordinary common sense agrees with them. But it thereby falls into obscurity and contradictions, from which it can indeed surmise that it must somewhere be proceeding on the ground of hidden errors; but it cannot discover them, for the principles on which it is proceeding, since they surpass the bounds of all experience, no longer recognize any touchstone of experience. The battlefield of these endless controversies is called **metaphysics**. (Kant, 1997: p. 99, Avii-viii, boldfacing in the original)

The central theme of [*Writing the Book of the World*] is: realism about structure. The world has a distinguished structure, a privileged description. For a representation to be fully successful, truth is not enough; the representation must also use the right concepts, so that its conceptual structure matches reality's structure. There is an objectively correct way to "write the book of the world." ... I connect structure to fundamentality. The joint-carving notions are the fundamental notions; a fact is fundamental when it is stated in joint-carving terms. A central task of metaphysics has always been to discern the ultimate or fundamental reality underlying the appearances. I think of this task as the investigation of reality's structure. (Sider, 2011: p. vii)

It's an ironic fact that philosophers who fail to take the history of philosophy sufficiently seriously, are doomed to repeat its errors. As a striking case-in-point, let's consider recent and contemporary Analytic metaphysics, which, for all its logico-technical brilliance and its philosophical rigor, essentially amounts to what I'll call *a Copernican Devolution in philosophy* (Hanna, 2017a), a retrograde philosophical epicycle within post-classical Analytic philosophy that brings us back, full-circle, to naive, pre-Kantian, pre-critical conceptions of mind, knowledge, the world, and philosophy itself, that are essentially Cartesian, Spinozan, and especially Leibnizian-Wolffian (see, for example, Hettche and Dyck, 2019), in their specific character and basic implications. The leading figures of Analytic metaphysics include Saul Kripke, David Lewis, Kit Fine, Theodore Sider, David Chalmers, and Timothy Williamson; and some of its canonical texts are Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* (1980), Lewis's *On the Plurality of Worlds* (1986), Fine's essays "Essence and Modality" and "Senses of Essence" (1994, 1995), and his *Modality and Tense: Philosophical*

Papers (2005), Sider's *Writing the Book of the World* (2011), Chalmers's *Constructing the World* (2012), and Williamson's *Modal Logic as Metaphysics* (2013). Characteristic of this recent and contemporary philosophical backsliding are dogmatic commitments to *noumenal realism* in ontology, and to *conceptualism* about the nature of mental representation; to a heavy reliance on *modal logic* as somehow providing direct insight into the ultimate structure of noumenal reality; and to a dogmatic *scientific naturalism*, including *scientism*, that's (usually) combined with *scientific essentialism*.

Analytic metaphysics's Copernican Devolution is, in fact, a disastrously regressive turn in philosophy. More specifically, recent and contemporary Analytic metaphysicians really and truly need to learn Kant's late eighteenth-century lessons (i) about the inherent limits of human cognition and knowledge, (ii) about the unsoundness of all possible ontological arguments from logical or analytic necessity to actual or real existence, (iii) about the essential cognitive-semantic difference between (iiia) mere logical, analytic (aka, "weak metaphysical") possibility and (iiib) real, synthetic (aka, "strong metaphysical") possibility, and (iv) about the essential ontological difference between noumena and phenomena. For without these insights, they have been, are, and forever will be inevitably led into the very same "obscurity and contradictions" that beset classical metaphysics prior to Kant (Kant, 1997: p. 99, Avii). But as they say, *it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good*: that is, few misfortunes are so bad that they don't have some unintended good side effects for somebody or another. Hence, seeing Analytic metaphysics's Copernican Devolution for what it really is, i.e., a philosophically disastrous regression, makes it really possible for us to provide a well-focused re-characterization of Kant's metaphysics in a contemporary context, looking toward the near future. Or otherwise put, seeing Analytic metaphysics for what it really is, makes it really possible to provide a broadly and radically Kantian metaphysics that constitutes not only a *Second Copernican Revolution* in philosophy, but also a *philosophy of the future* (Hanna, 2021a: ch. XVIII, esp. section XVIII.6).

In this light, Kant's, or at least a broadly and radically Kantian, critical metaphysics is decisively what I'll call a "real" (or, alternatively, "human-faced") metaphysics, and correspondingly it can be illuminatingly presented in terms that specially emphasize what I call Kant's "proto-critical" period in the late 1760s and early 1770s and also his "post-critical" period in the late 1780s and 1790s, both of which are somewhat neglected or undervalued, even by contemporary Kantians (Hanna, 2016a). Looked at this way, Kant's, or at least a broadly and radically Kantian, real or human-faced metaphysics consists, fundamentally, of the following six commitments: (i) a strict evidential appeal to human experience, which I call "the criterion of phenomenological adequacy for metaphysical theories" (Hanna, 2018a: p. 5), (ii) a radical epistemic agnosticism about both the nature and existence of noumenal reality (Hanna, 2017b), (iii) a thoroughgoing

diagnostic critique of deep confusions in “ontological argument”-style (and more generally, noumenal-metaphysical) reasoning that’s driven by modal logic, (iv) a maximally strong version of non-conceptualism in the theory of mental representation (Hanna, 2015a: ch. 2, 2021d), and correspondingly, a direct argument for transcendental idealism from the nature of human sensibility together with strong non-conceptualism, that’s essentially in place by the time of Kant’s famous letter to Marcus Herz in 1772 (Kant, 1999: pp. 132-137, Ak 10: 129-35; Hanna, 2016a), (v) modal dualism and apriorism (according to which there are two essentially distinct types of necessity, both of which are irreducibly a priori, combined with a strong commitment to the “necessity if and only if apriority” thesis) (Hanna, 2015a: ch. 4, 2017c: sections 2.2.2-2.2.3, 2021b), and finally, (vi) a theory of synthetic a priori truth and knowledge, grounded directly on strong non-conceptualism (Hanna, 2015a: chs. 6-8, 2017c: section 2.2.3, 2021b).

In freely going back and forth between Kant’s philosophy and recent or contemporary philosophy, I’m applying the following strong metaphilosophical principle that I call *The No-Deep-Difference Thesis*:

There’s no fundamental difference in philosophical content between the history of philosophy and recent or contemporary philosophy. (Hanna, 2009)

Otherwise put, in doing recent or contemporary philosophy one is thereby directly engaging with the history of philosophy, and in doing the history of philosophy one is thereby directly engaging with recent or contemporary philosophy: *there is no serious or substantive distinction to be drawn between the two.*

In the B preface of the first *Critique*, Kant says that “there is no doubt that up to now the procedure of metaphysics has been a mere groping, and what is the worst, a groping among mere concepts [*bloßen Begriffen*]” (Kant, 1997: p. 110, Bxv). A “mere concept” is the same as an *empty* (*leer*) concept or *noumenal* concept, which in turn is a concept that is minimally well-formed in both a formal-syntactical and sortal sense, and also logically self-consistent, but essentially disconnected from human sensibility and actual or possible sensory intuition and all its apparent or manifestly real natural objects, hence a concept that does not have *objective validity* (*objective Gültigkeit*). In a way that’s smoothly compatible with Kant’s, or at least with this broadly and radically Kantian, critical line of thinking, in the mid-2010s, Peter Unger entitled his bang-on-target critique of the Analytic tradition *Empty Ideas* (Unger, 2014). But going even beyond Unger’s cogent critique, according to Kant’s, or at least according to a broadly and radically Kantian philosophy, real metaphysics must be evidentially grounded on human experience. Or otherwise put, real metaphysics designs its basic metaphysical (including ontological) theses and explanations in order to conform strictly to all and only what is

phenomenologically self-evident in human experience. By “phenomenologically self-evident” (Hanna, 2018a: p. 5), I mean this:

A claim C is phenomenologically self-evident for a rational human subject S if and only if (i) S’s belief in C relies on directly-given conscious or self-conscious manifest evidence about human experience, and (ii) C’s denial is either logically or conceptually self-contradictory (i.e., it’s an analytic self-contradiction), really metaphysically impossible, i.e., it’s a Kantian synthetic *a priori* impossibility (Kant, 1997: pp. 136-148, 281-283, B1-24, A154-158/B193-197; Hanna, 2021b), or pragmatically self-stultifying for S, i.e., it’s what Kant calls “a contradiction in [S’s] own will” in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Kant, 1996: p. 75, Ak 4: 424).

In turn, this leads directly to what, as a mentioned above, I call *the criterion of phenomenological adequacy for metaphysical theories* (Hanna, 2018a: p. 5):

A metaphysical theory MT is phenomenologically adequate if and only if MT is evidentially grounded on all and only phenomenologically self-evident theses.

By this criterion, Analytic metaphysics is clearly phenomenologically *inadequate*, and so is classical Rationalist metaphysics more generally, and especially Leibnizian-Wolffian metaphysics in particular; whereas by sharp contrast, Kant’s, or at least a broadly and radically Kantian, real metaphysics of transcendental idealism is, arguably, fully phenomenologically adequate.

According to Kant, or at least to any broadly and radically Kantian philosopher, both the origins and limits of human cognition or *Erkenntnis* are determined by the nature of our specifically human sensibility or *Sinnlichkeit* (Kant, 1997: pp. 136, 172-192, B1, A19-49/B33-73; Hanna, 2016a, 2021e). In particular, there’s an inherent cognitive-semantic constraint on all fully or “thickly” meaningful cognition: a cognition is “objectively valid,” i.e., fully or “thickly” meaningful, if and only if it presupposes actual or possible externally-triggered sensory intuitions or *Anschauungen* of empirical objects (Kant, 1997: pp. 355-357, 381, A238-242/B298-300, A289/B345), presented within the global, framing structures of egocentrically-centered, orientable (i.e., it contains intrinsic enantiomorphic directions determined by a subject embedded in the space or time) phenomenal space and time. Empirical objects in this specific, anthropocentric sense are *appearances* (*Erscheinungen*) or *phenomena*; by sharp contrast, objects of cognition which, if they existed, would fall outside the scope of human sensibility, are mere “entities of the understanding [*Verstandeswesen*]” or *noumena* (Kant, 1997: A235-60/B294-315, esp. B306). In short, a noumenon, if it were to exist, would be a non-sensory, non-empirical, non-spatiotemporal, trans-human object, a *supersensible object* (Kant, 1997: p. 362, A254-

255/B355). If, in addition to being a noumenon in this supersensible-object sense (aka “a noumenon in the negative sense”), any noumenal object which, if it *were* to exist, would *also* be an individual Cartesian/Spinozan/Leibnizian/Wolffian substance, whose nature is completely determined by intrinsic non-relational properties, would be a “thing in itself [*Ding an sich*]” or “object in itself” (aka, “a noumenon in the positive sense”) (Kant, 1997: pp. 360-361, B306-307).

I’m being fairly careful about my formulations here, in two ways. **First**, I’m distinguishing between *negative* noumena (“supersensible” objects in the minimal sense of *non-sensory* objects) and *positive* noumena (things in themselves). Why? Because I think it’s arguable that Kant himself held, or at least that a broadly and radically Kantian philosopher can defensibly hold, that there are perfectly legitimate *negative* noumena, or supersensible/non-sensory objects (for example, abstract objects in the formal sciences, especially mathematical objects like numbers), that *aren’t* positive noumena or things in themselves (for example, God, immortal souls, etc.), and indeed are at least partially constituted by (by being in necessary conformity with) the forms of our sensible intuition, and hence they are thoroughly—as it were—*phenomenal*. And **second**, I’m framing the concepts of a noumenon and of a thing in itself counterfactually, hence I’m *not* committing Kant, or at least any broadly and radically Kantian philosopher, to the claim that things in themselves really exist. Why? Because I think that we should not automatically assume that Kant, or at least any broadly and radically Kantian philosopher, believes that noumena or things in themselves really exist.

This of course is one of the great controversies in Kant-interpretation and Kantian philosophy more generally. And my own view is that Kant is best and most charitably interpreted as a “methodological eliminativist” about things in themselves (Hanna, 2017b), as per these very clear and distinct statements:

The division of objects into *phaenomena* and *noumena*, and of the world into a world of sense and a world of understanding, can therefore not be permitted at all, although concepts certainly permit of division into sensible and intellectual ones; for one cannot determine any object for the latter, and therefore also cannot pass them off as objectively valid. (Kant, 1997: pp. 350-351/A255/B311, underlining added)

If by merely intelligible objects, we understand those things that are thought through pure categories, without any schema of sensibility, then things of this sort are impossible. For the condition of the objective use of all our concepts of understanding is merely the manner of our sensible intuition, through which objects are given to us, and, if we abstract from the latter, then the former have no reference at all to any sort of object. (Kant, 1997: pp. 379-380, A286/B342, underlining added; see also p. 178, A30/B45, pp. 379-382, A286-290/B342-346)

But at the very least, we need to remain open-minded and not be dogmatic about Kant's, or at least any broadly and radically Kantian philosopher's, supposed commitment to the real existence of things in themselves, especially given Kant's own deep and fully explicit insight about the basic ontological distinction between (i) logically or analytically defined objects (merely thinkable objects), and (ii) actually or really existing objects (sensibly intuited, experienceable, knowable objects).

Back now to Kant's, or at least to a broadly and radically Kantian, cognitive semantics. For Kant himself, or at least for broadly Kantian cognitive semanticists, a cognition is fully meaningful if and only if it is *empirically meaningful from the human standpoint*. Failing this, a cognition is "empty [*Leer*]" (Kant, 1997: p. 193, A51/B75), and therefore it not only (i) lacks a directly referential, empirical-intuitional grounding in actually existing empirical objects, but also (ii) lacks a truth-value (hence it is a "truth-value gap") (Kant, 1997: p. 197, A58/B83). Incidentally, element (i) is a crucial feature of Kant's famous critique of ontological arguments for God's existence: all such arguments lack a directly referential, empirical-intuitional grounding in actually existing empirical objects; hence the predicate "exists," as deployed in such arguments, is merely a "logical" predicate, and not a "real" or "determining" predicate (Kant, 1997: p. 567, A598-599/B626-627).

Now, it's important to recognize that, for Kant himself, or at least for broadly and radically Kantian cognitive semanticists, "empty" cognition *need not necessarily be wholly meaningless, or nonsense*: it *can* be partially or "thinly" meaningful if (and only if) it is logically well-formed according to the logical forms of judgment/categories, and also conceptually and/or logically consistent (Kant, 1997: pp. 115, 356, Bxxvi n., A239/B298). This is what Kant calls mere "thinking [*Denken*]," according to concepts (*Begriffen*). In turn recognizing our natural capacity for mere thinking is *metaphilosophically* important because mere thinking is characteristic of classical metaphysics, and consequently also of recent or contemporary Analytic metaphysics. Thinking about X establishes the *logical* or *analytic* possibility of X; but it *doesn't* establish the *real* or *synthetic* possibility of X. Hence a crucial mistake in classical Rationalist metaphysics, especially in Leibnizian-Wolffian metaphysics, and correspondingly a crucial mistake in recent or contemporary Analytic metaphysics, is to confuse logical or analytic possibility/necessity with real or synthetic possibility/necessity. As Kant aptly and crisply puts it, this metaphysical confusion leads directly to "obscurity and contradictions" (Kant, 1997: p. 99, Aviii).

In other words, Kripke, David Lewis, Fine, Sider, Chalmers, and Williamson, for all their logico-technical brilliance and their philosophical rigor, and even despite their high-powered professional academic status, are every bit as philosophically confused, dogmatic, and mistaken as Christian Wolff was. They make all the same old mistakes,

just as if they'd never been made before, 240 years ago. For example, when Sider asserts in 2011, without any doubt, hesitation, or irony whatsoever, just as if the previous 230 years of European philosophy (i.e., from 1781, the year the *Critique of Pure Reason* was first published, to 2011) had never happened, that "[t]he world has a distinguished structure, a privileged description," that "[f]or a representation to be fully successful, truth is not enough; the representation must also use the right concepts, so that its conceptual structure matches reality's structure," and that "there is an objectively correct way to 'write the book of the world'" (Sider, 2011: p. vii), it simply takes your Kantian breath away: *really?*, and *on what epistemic and cognitive-semantic grounds are you asserting this?* On the contrary, according to Kant, or at least to any broadly and radically Kantian philosopher, real metaphysics is based fundamentally on reasoning with real or synthetic possibilities/necessities, *not* on reasoning with logical or analytic possibilities/ necessities.

In any case, the cognitive-semantic determination of the full meaningfulness of a cognition by sensibility, in turn, sharply constrains the scope of knowledge in the strict sense of "[scientific] knowledge [*Wissen*]": objectively convincing true belief with certainty (Kant, 1997: pp. 684-686, A820-22/B848-50; Hanna, 2017c: supplement 2). Since strict or scientific knowledge requires truth, but truth-valuedness requires objective validity or empirical meaningfulness, then if a cognition is not objectively valid/empirically meaningful, then it *cannot be either true or false*, and therefore it *cannot be strict or scientific knowledge*. In particular, it directly follows from this point that in the strict or scientific sense of "knowledge," *we cannot know things in themselves*, either by *knowing their nature*, or by *knowing whether they exist or do not exist*; or in other words, we know *a priori*, by reflection on the cognitive semantics of human cognition, that we *cannot* have strict or scientific knowledge of things in themselves. This is what I call *radical agnosticism* (Hanna, 2017b)—"radical," because unlike ordinary agnosticism (epistemic open-mindedness or doxic neutrality about some claim C), it's strict or scientific *a priori* knowledge about our necessary ignorance of things in themselves, and about our necessary inability to know or prove whether things in themselves (for example, God) exist or do not exist. Given the truth of radical agnosticism, it directly follows that neither classical Rationalist metaphysics nor recent and contemporary Analytic metaphysics, since they're based on *mere thinking alone*, and *reasoning from mere logical or analytic possibilities*, is capable of having strict or scientific knowledge, despite all their highly technically sophisticated, rigorous-sounding, dogmatic claims about knowledge of things in themselves. Moreover, it also directly follows from radical agnosticism that any claim in *speculative natural science* that violates the cognitive-semantic constraints on strict or scientific knowledge—for example, any natural-scientific claim about positive noumenal entities belonging to microphysical essences, for example, molecules, atoms, quarks, neutrinos, etc., etc., insofar as these aren't merely claims *about the mental representations yielded by our use of experimental measurement devices* (Hanna, 2022a: section

4.2)—is a *truth-value gap*; nence *any form of metaphysical noumenal realism in natural science* is deeply mistaken (Hanna, 2006a: chs. 3-4). So, I conclude that recent and contemporary Analytic metaphysics is nothing but a Copernican Devolution in philosophy, a disastrous regression to the long-discarded 18th century Leibnizian-Wolffian metaphysics, gussied up with a shiny veneer of modal logic, and mutely gesturing toward the natural sciences (see section III above). —Whereas, by a diametric contrast, a broadly and radically Kantian real metaphysics would constitute not only a Second Copernican Revolution in philosophy, but also a philosophy of the future (Hanna, 2021a: ch. XVIII, esp. section XVIII.6).

V. Conceptual Engineering Debunked and Replaced

Lo and behold, there's a contemporary "movement" (Wikipedia, 2022c) in post-classical Analytic philosophy, operating under a shiny new label that looks and sounds a little like "conceptual analysis," yet is far more STEM-fields-friendly and highly reminiscent of the valorized term "software engineering," that's called *conceptual engineering*. What is conceptual engineering? Here's what David Chalmers, a (or perhaps, the) leading contemporary philosopher in the post-classical Analytic tradition, says:

Conceptual engineering is the design, implementation, and evaluation of concepts. Conceptual engineering includes or should include *de novo* conceptual engineering (designing a new concept) as well as conceptual re-engineering (fixing an old concept). It should also include heteronymous (different-word) as well as homonymous (same-word) conceptual engineering.

This definition gives us different broad stages or types of conceptual engineering. There's the design stage, where we design concepts. There are various ways to do that. One classic way would be to give a definition, or maybe an inferential role, or some paradigm cases, or something like that. Next is the implementation stage.... In the implementation stage you actually use a concept, and perhaps try to get others to use it too. This is what Herman Cappelen calls conceptual activism. And then there's the evaluation stage, which plays a central role in the conceptual ethics work by people like Alexis Burgess and David Plunkett. Here what's key is the evaluation of how good these concepts are in themselves and for certain purposes, to see how well they play key roles.

[P]hilosophy is [not] the only locus of conceptual engineering. I think it's absolutely everywhere.

Let me say something about the importance of conceptual engineering. Some people say it's all of philosophy. Is it important? Yes, some of the most important advances in philosophy have quite clearly involved conceptual engineering. That goes especially for

some of the cases I gave of de novo conceptual engineering—rigid designation, implicature, epistemic injustice, and so on. These new concepts capture important phenomena and can do a lot of work. Is conceptual re-engineering important in philosophy? It's certainly practically important, especially for practical roles in the wider world, such as achieving social justice. Philosophers have an important role to play in that project—both the activist part and the more theoretical part of figuring out which concepts can best play these roles. Aside from these roles in the wider world, conceptual re-engineering can also be theoretically useful within the philosophical community. For example, it can clean up a concept to make it more natural and powerful, modify a concept so it can better play explanatory roles, and distinguish different concepts that play different roles. (Chalmers, 2020: pp. 1-2, 4, 11)

The two-part basic idea behind conceptual engineering, then, is (i) that it is the design, implementation, and evaluation of concepts, and (ii) that contemporary post-classical Analytic philosophers can and should leave behind the boring, old-school, and in any case defunct—due to its failure to formulate a coherent and defensible theory of the analytic-synthetic and a priori-a posteriori distinctions—program of conceptual analysis (Hanna, 1998, 2015a: esp. chs. 4 and 6-8, 2021a: ch. XVII), and become highly STEM-fields-friendly experts in conceptual engineering, by practicing conceptual engineering in either one of two modes: either (iia) the “creative” mode (designing a new concept) or (iib) the “re-engineering” mode (fixing an old concept). More precisely and specifically, they can engineer concepts either (iia*) by creating new concepts by essentially the same classical conventionalist method(s) used by The Vienna Circle Logical Empiricists/Positivists, or (iib*) by substituting some deflationary or ersatz concept *C** for some existing theoretically and/or normatively high-powered, rich concept *C* (say, *beauty*, *human dignity*, *human freedom*, *good*, *right*, *truth*, *justification*, *knowledge*, *necessity*, *logic*, *rationality*, etc.) in order either (iia**) to express skepticism about *C*, or, more radically, (iib**) to debunk *C*, but in any case also (iic) to provide a new morally-and-politically loaded set of rules for using words, where these words are either (iic1) the old word or words that used to pick out *C* (for example, “human dignity”), but now, by virtue of these rules, pick out *C** (for example, the concept of *our basic status as equals in society, whatever other position(s) we may hold* [Etinson, 2020: p. 372, italics added]), or (iic2) a new word or words that directly pick out *C** (for example, the words “our basic status as equals in society, whatever other position(s) we may hold” [Etinson, 2020: p. 372]).

As I implicitly anticipated in the just-previous paragraph, *avant la lettre*, Carnap was a 20th century proponent of philosophizing by means of (i)-mode conceptual engineering, which he called “explication” (Carnap, 1950); and again *avant la lettre*, as it turns out, Nietzsche was a 19th century proponent of philosophizing by means of (ii)-mode conceptual engineering (Nietzsche, 1966), which he called “genealogy” (Nietzsche,

1967; Queloz, 2021). So, at least in principle, the “movement” of conceptual engineering isn’t restricted to contemporary post-classical Analytic philosophers alone: even so-called “Continental” philosophers influenced by Nietzsche can get in on the act too. Nevertheless, even despite all the fanfare surrounding conceptual engineering, I think that there’s a decisive and indeed knockdown objection to it, whether it’s in (i)-mode or in (ii)-mode, and ironically enough the objection is firmly embedded within the classical Analytic tradition (and by the qualifier “classical” I mean: the tradition of Analytic philosophy from the 1880s to 1950, when W.V.O. Quine first publicly presented his spectacularly influential and indeed paradigm-shifting essay, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” [Quine, 1961]) (Hanna, 2021a: chs. II-XVI).

According to the classical hard problem in philosophical logic known as *the logocentric predicament*, as formulated in 1926 by Harry Sheffer,

[i]n order to give an account of logic, we must presuppose and employ logic. (Sheffer, 1926: p. 228)

It follows directly from the logocentric predicament that any attempt to explain or justify logic in *non*-logical terms is circular and self-undermining, precisely because it must presuppose and use logic. Otherwise put, logic, in at least the minimalist form of a universal a priori *proto-logic* (Hanna, 2006b, 2006c), belongs to the essence or nature of all explanation and justification: hence there’s no self-consistent way of standing altogether *outside* logic, in order to explain or justify logic. Or, as Kant would have put it, what he calls “pure, general logic” is *transcendental* (Hanna, 2021b).

Now, riffing on the logocentric predicament and its implications—although not acknowledging its Kantian provenance—Quine pointed out to devastating effect in his 1936 essay, “Truth by Convention” (Quine, 1976), that in order to explain or justify logical truth according to conventions, *pre-conventional* or *non-conventional* logic, in at least the minimalist form of what fifty years later he called *sheer logic* (Quine, 1986: p. 81), must be presupposed and used: therefore, there are no such things as purely conventional logical truths, and the conventionalist theory of logical truth is circular and self-undermining. By the same token, then, according to what I’ll neologistically call *the conceptocentric predicament*, concepts belong to the essence or nature of all explanation and justification: hence there’s no self-consistent way of standing altogether *outside* concepts, in order to explain or justify concepts. Correspondingly, for any actual or possible process of conceptual engineering, whether in (i)-mode or in (ii)-mode, then *pre-engineered* or *non-engineered* concepts, in at least the minimalist form of a set of universal a priori logical and moral *proto-concepts*, must be presupposed and used: *therefore, there are no such things as purely engineered concepts, and conceptual engineering is circular and self-undermining.*

To be sure, with its shiny new and highly STEM-fields-friendly label, the conceptual engineering “movement” is perfectly suited to the hyper-professionalism, careerism, Scholastic cleverness, playpen creativity, and full collaboration and complicity with *Neoliberal U*—by which I mean contemporary neoliberal social institutions of higher education—that’s endemic to post-classical Analytic philosophy in particular, and to professional academic philosophy in general (Haack, 2021; Hanna, 2021: chs. XVII-XVIII). Nevertheless, none of that can change the rational fact that conceptual engineering is circular and self-undermining: so, in view of the conceptocentric predicament, we must face up to the rational fact *that conceptual engineering is nothing but pseudo-philosophy*, no matter how cool, popular, and trendy it is in contemporary post-classical Analytic philosophy.

Now, if conceptual engineering is nothing but pseudo-philosophy, and therefore it’s no adequate or authentic successor to the defunct program of conceptual analysis, then what kind of philosophy should the philosophers of the future be doing *instead*? In my opinion, instead they should be doing *the philosophy of thought-shaping*, which in turn is a basic sub-part of the overarching philosophy of *mind-shaping* and *life-shaping* (Maiese and Hanna, 2019; Hanna and Paans, 2020, 2021, 2022; Hanna, 2022a: esp. ch. 3 and section 00.1; Maiese et al., 2022), which again in turn, is a basic sub-part of what I call *The Uniscience*, aka *the philosophy of the future* (Hanna, 2022a).

What is the philosophy of thought-shaping? The philosophy of thought-shaping is grounded on the following five theses:

1. All human thinking is really possible only insofar as it’s partially causally determined, formed, and normatively guided by *thought-shapers*, either (i) in a bad, false, and wrong way, or (ii) in a good, true, and right way (*the thought-shaper thesis*) (Hanna and Paans, 2021, 2022; Hanna, 2022a: ch. 3).
2. Social institutions partially causally determine, form, and normatively guide our essentially embodied minds—our thoughts, emotions, and actions—and typically do so without our being self-consciously aware of how, or even that, we’re being significantly affected in these ways (*the mind-shaping thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: ch. 2).
3. There’s a fundamental distinction between (5.1) *destructive, deforming* social institutions that frustrate and warp true human needs, and (5.2) *constructive, enabling* social institutions that satisfy and sustain true human needs (*the two-kinds-of-social-institutions thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: esp. chs. 2-3 and 6-8).

4. Because all human thinking is mediated by language, and because language is a fundamental social institution, then the thought-shaper thesis falls directly under the mind-shaping thesis: therefore, ubiquitous mind-shaping in human social institutions and ubiquitous thought-shaping in human thinking are the essential forms of human life-shaping (*the life-shaping thesis*) (Hanna, 2022a: section 00.1; Maiese et al., 2022).

5. Logic is the set of categorically normative, innately specified first principles of human theoretical rationality, when taken together with all the supplementary humanly-constructed *ceteris paribus* principles of an open-ended plurality of logical systems, just as morality is the set of categorically normative, innately specified first principles of human practical rationality, when taken together with all the supplementary humanly-constructed *ceteris paribus* principles of an open-ended plurality of moral systems (*the morality-of-logic thesis*) (Hanna, 2006b, 2006c, 2008b, 2015a: ch. 5).

It's especially to be noted, as we go forward, that by virtue of thesis 5, the philosophy of thought-shaping *fully accommodates and bears witness to the logocentric and conceptocentric predicaments alike*. According to thesis 5, there's a *minimalist universal a priori proto-logic and a corresponding minimal set of universal a priori logical proto-concepts*, and also a *minimalist universal a priori proto-morality and a corresponding minimal set of universal a priori moral proto-concepts*, that are innately specified in our "human, all-too-human" capacity for rationality, and used by us for rationally constructing all logical systems, logical concepts, moral systems, and moral concepts, as well as all other kinds of formal or a priori concepts and material or a posteriori concepts. So, as a matter of sheer transcendental fact—echoing Quine's nice phrase, "sheer logic" (Quine, 1986: p. 81), but not being shy about admitting its Kantian provenance—it's innately, universally, and a priori built into our rational, "human, all-too-human," cognitive and practical condition, that necessarily, we can never step altogether outside logic or concepts in order to explain or justify logic or concepts. Otherwise put: the logocentric and conceptocentric predicaments are simply part-&-parcel of *the rational human predicament*. More specifically, however, *all* concepts whatsoever are *either innately specified or rationally constructed* by us, and *no* concepts whatsoever are *engineered* by us. At the same time, by virtue of theses 1 to 4, all human thinking is *neither solely or nor wholly conceptual*, and in fact it also necessarily includes a categorically distinct, essentially non-conceptual kind of of representational content: thought-shapers.

Here are some further details about the philosophy of thought-shaping.

The philosophy of thought-shaping falls fully within the broad scope of the first three Es of the contemporary *4E approach to human cognition*, by affirming that all human thought is *embodied*, *embedded*, and *enacted* (Newen, De Bruin, and Gallagher, 2018). More explicitly, the 4Es of human cognition are (i) *embodied*, which says that minds are necessarily realized in organismic animal bodies, (ii) *embedded*, which says that minds are necessarily external-context-sensitive or indexical, (iii) *enacted*, which says that minds are necessarily dynamically and practically implemented, and (iv) *extended*, which says that minds necessarily have external vehicles of consciousness &/or intentionality, aka “the extended mind.” Given my commitment to *the essential embodiment theory*, I reject the extended-mind component, and correspondingly the philosophy of thought-shaping affirms a doctrine I call *the body-bounded mind* (Hanna and Maiese, 2009; Hanna, 2011c). Moreover, although many 4E theorists are *anti-representationalists*, by contrast the philosophy of thought-shaping affirms *a dual-content version of representationalism*, which I’ll briefly spell out immediately below (see also Hanna, 2015a: chs. 1-3).

Nonideal moral or political theory is moral or political theory that’s designed to capture these two manifestly real and widespread facts about our “human, all-too-human” world: (i) that compliance with the normative principles and rules of any theory of human morality or human politics is not always or even normally ideally strict, and (ii) that context-sensitivity or indexicality is a pervasive phenomenon in our moral and political life (Hanna, 2018c, 2021h, and 2022: section 5.2). Correspondingly, *nonideal cognitive semantics* is cognitive semantic theory that’s specifically designed to capture the corresponding facts (i) that compliance with the normative principles and rules of any theory of human cognitive content or human intentionality is not always or even normally ideally strict, and (ii) that context-sensitivity or indexicality is a pervasive phenomenon in human cognition and intentionality. The cognitive semantics of thought-shapers is a nonideal cognitive semantic theory.

The notion of *shaping*, which is of course itself an analogy or metaphor, in this context more precisely means *partial but not complete determination, formation, and guidance, in a way that’s not only causal but also irreducibly normative*. As applied to human thinking, this notion of shaping has two crucial implications. **First**, thought-shaping is how human thinking is partially—but not completely—causally determined, formed, and guided by mental representations of allegories, analogies, blueprints, catechisms, diagrams, displays, icons, images, lay-outs, metaphors, mnemonics, models, outlines, parables, pictures, scenarios, schemata, sketches, spreadsheets, stereotypes, symbols, tableaux, and

templates,⁵ for better or worse. I emphasize and re-emphasize that this *partially* determinative, formative, and guiding human cognitive process is *not only* causal *but also* irreducibly normative. **Second**, thought-shaping creates a new cognitive item, *the shaped thought*, while at the same time both expressing and also modifying various features of the thinking subject's external context. So thought-shapers are not only causal and irreducibly normative (as per the first point), but also necessarily *external-context-sensitive* or *indexical* (i.e., "embedded") and therefore they cannot be adequately or fully characterized apart from the actual sets of external circumstances in which they arise, although they are not in any way either reducible to or wholly determined by those circumstances.

The dual-content nonideal cognitive semantics affirmed by the philosophy of thought-shaping is closely related to a philosophical controversy that saliently emerged in philosophy of mind in the mid-1990s, but in fact stretches all the way back to Kant: the so-called *debate about non-conceptual content* (Hanna, 2021d). More specifically, there are two basic questions at issue between the contrary theses of *Conceptualism* and *Non-Conceptualism* in the philosophy of cognition and cognitive semantics: (i) whether human cognition is necessarily, solely, and wholly determined by our concepts and our conceptual capacities, yes or no, and (ii) whether human cognizers share a fundamental pre-conceptual/pre-intellectual or "essentially sensible" capacity—or a set of such capacities—with non-rational or non-human animals, that operates in some substantive way independently of our intellectual/logical capacity for conceptualization, believing, judging, etc., while still also being able to combine substantively with those latter capacities for the purposes of socially and linguistically-mediated rational cognition, yes or no. Conceptualists, i.e., *intellectualists* about human cognition, say *yes* to (i) and *no* to (ii); but Strong Non-Conceptualists, i.e., *non-intellectualists* about human cognition, say *no* to (i) and *yes* to (ii). In short, for intellectualists, self-conscious rational, conceptual, and inferential thinking—discursivity—determines the content and specific character of all human cognition, whereas for non-intellectualists, discursivity is just one cognitive capacity that's categorically distinct from, but also interactive with, a set of inherently non-discursive *sensible* capacities, including essentially non-conceptual perception, essentially non-conceptual memory, pre-reflective consciousness, essentially non-conceptual imagination, emotion, and intentional agency.

⁵ This list *isn't* intended to be complete, but instead only to be a working list of paradigm cases I want to connect in an essential way to the nature of human thinking, and more generally, to explain. After I've provided a more precise characterization of thought-shapers below, the list could in principle be extended according to those criteria. Moreover, allegories, catechisms, and parables differ slightly from the other items on the list, in a way that I'll also briefly describe below.

In defense of Strong Non-Conceptualism, I've worked out a detailed, systematic version of this dual-content cognitive semantics, which deploys a basic distinction between (i) *conceptual* capacities and *conceptual* content, and (ii) *essentially non-conceptual* capacities and *essentially non-conceptual* content, along with a basic sub-distinction between: (iii) *formal* content (i.e., non-empirical or *a priori* content, i.e., content that's necessarily *underdetermined* in its specific character by all actual and possible contingent, sensory facts) whether conceptual or essentially non-conceptual, and (iv) *material* content (i.e., empirical or *a posteriori* content, i.e., content that's necessarily *determined* in its specific character by all or some actual or possible contingent, sensory facts), whether conceptual or essentially non-conceptual (Hanna, 2005, 2008b, 2011a, 2011b, 2013b, 2015a: ch. 2, 2016a, 2017c: supplement 1, 2018f, 2020a, 2021d; Russell and Hanna, 2012).

I'll take those distinctions as starting points. Then, according to the dual-content nonideal cognitive semantics asserted by the philosophy of thought-shaping, by *conceptual content*, I mean the inherently general, descriptive information that's expressed by (i) one-place predicates in natural language, picking out properties and ranging over domains of individual objects, (ii) n-place relational predicates in natural language, picking out relations and ranging over domains of ordered n-tuples of individual objects, or (iii) syncategorematic terms in natural language, picking out logical constants and other logical forms that unify individual propositions (judgments, predications, statements, etc.) and also capture truth-functional or other relations between complexes of propositions. Correspondingly, according to the dual-content nonideal cognitive semantics asserted by the philosophy of thought-shaping, by *thoughts* I mean either (i) ideally well-formed, logically-unified complexes of concepts and/or directly referential terms, that express propositions in the strict sense (McGrath and Frank, 2020) and inherently bear truth-values (*type-1 thoughts*), or (ii) less-than-ideally-well-formed and less-than-ideally-logically-unified complexes of concepts *and* essentially non-conceptual contents (including directly referential terms) that might or might not express propositions in the strict sense—and if not, they'll express propositions in a *non-strict* sense—and therefore might or might not inherently bear truth-values (*type-2 thoughts*). The category of type-2 thoughts captures the widespread “human, all-too-human” fact of confused thoughts, fuzzy thoughts, half-formed thoughts, hasty thoughts, muddled thoughts, vague thoughts, and so-on. And finally, again according to the dual-content nonideal cognitive semantics asserted by the philosophy of thought-shaping, by *beliefs* I mean either type-1 thoughts or type-2 thoughts that are asserted to be true by the conscious, self-conscious, and rational human subjects of those thoughts.

In this way, conceptual content is semantic content that's *propositional in either the strict or the non-strict sense*, since all propositions are built out of concepts, *inferential* (Hanna, 2014), since all strict or non-strict propositions correspondingly can enter into

strict or non-strict inferences, and *logico-linguistic*, since all strict or non-strict propositions and strict or non-strict inferences are strictly or non-strictly governed *at least to some non-trivial extent* by laws of logic and formal rules of natural language (Hanna, 2006b: esp. chs. 4 and 7). Contrariwise, essentially non-conceptual content is *sub-propositional* (in either the strict or non-strict sense), and therefore *non-inferential* (in either the strict or non-strict sense), and *non-logico-linguistic* (in either the strict or non-strict sense) semantic content. Moreover, according to the philosophy of thought-shaping, conceptual content and essentially non-conceptual content alike can be either *formal* (i.e., non-empirical or a priori) or *material* (i.e., empirical or a posteriori). But whether they're formal or material, sharply unlike conceptual contents, which are normally cognized self-consciously, logically, theoretically, and rationally, essentially non-conceptual contents are instead normally cognized in a *pre-reflectively* conscious, *emotive* (where "emotion" includes desires, feelings, and passions, and our affective capacities more generally), *practical*, and *proto-rational* way that's poised for intentional action of various kinds.

Assuming those distinctions and working definitions, and according to my formulations in *Cognition, Content, and the A Priori* (Hanna, 2015a), here's a brief summary of the theory of essentially non-conceptual content:

The theory of rational human cognition, content, and knowledge that I am proposing ... is, in part, a "bottom-up" theory about the nature of minded animals that anchors conceptual content in the primitive fact of essentially non-conceptual content. Essentially non-conceptual content ... is a kind of mental content that is categorically different from conceptual content, in the sense that both its underlying semantic structure and also its characteristic psychological function or role are inherently distinct from those of conceptual content. Furthermore, essentially non-conceptual content is a kind of mental content that rational human animals or real human persons share with non-rational minded animals, whether non-human (e.g., cats) or human (e.g., infants), who, it seems, do not possess conceptual capacities. So essentially non-conceptual content epitomizes the specifically non-intellectual or *sensible*, embodied, perception-based, phenomenally conscious side of human mindedness, whereas conceptual content epitomizes the specifically *intellectual* or discursive, reflective, judgment-based, self-conscious side of human mindedness.... [B]y way of a preliminary or working characterization to have in front of us, I will say that essentially non-conceptual content is mental content that necessarily includes essentially indexical formal spatiotemporal and dynamic representations that are fully sensitive to complex thermodynamic asymmetries in perceptually manifest natural objects and processes, and also that the primary psychological function or role of essentially non-conceptual content is to account for directly referential cognition, and to guide and mediate the sensorimotor processes constitutive of finegrained intentional body movements in rational minded [human] animals. (Hanna, 2015a: p. 25, underlining added)

Granting the theoretical backdrop of this dual-content nonideal cognitive semantics for thought-shapers, it follows that the philosophy of thought-shaping focuses on cognitive processes inherently involving the interplay between (i) various kinds of formal or material essentially non-conceptual cognitive activities and representations, with egocentrically-centered, action-poised *spatial* representations and *temporal* representations as fundamental, operating as the cognitive *shapers*, and (ii) various kinds of formal or material conceptual thinking and conceptual thought-content more generally, as what's cognitively *shaped* by the various kinds of formal or material essentially non-conceptual cognitive activities and representations, in an inherently external-context-sensitive or indexical way.

In view of (i) and (ii) these cognitive processes produce *shaped thoughts* as their cognitive products. These shaped thoughts are *holistically configured or patterned mental representations*, therefore bearing some important similarities to the *Gestalten* described by the early Gestalt psychologists Kurt Koffka, Wolfgang Köhler, and Max Wertheimer, although also, as I mentioned above, only within the broad scope of the first three Es (i.e., embodied, embedded, enacted) of the contemporary 4E approach to human cognition (Newen, De Bruin, and Gallagher, 2018). This cognitive process normally occurs in a pre-reflectively conscious mode, which typically makes it very difficult to catch thought-shapers "at work" self-consciously. Indeed, thought-shapers *almost invisibly* yet nevertheless *continuously* bridge and fuse the sensible and discursive domains. In retrospective reflection on our thought-shaping processes, it's very hard to see precisely when and how thought-shapers have exerted their influence. In this way, thought-shapers provide an all-pervasive, seemingly obvious background for human thinking, for which no special rational justification is required.

One important consequence of how thought-shapers almost invisibly continuously bridge the sensible and discursive domains, is that in the actual-world external contexts of our everyday cognitive life, the distinction between the semantic content of thought-shapers (as essentially sensible) and the semantic content of shaped thoughts (as a fusion of sensible/essentially non-conceptual content and discursive/conceptual content) will often not be perfectly sharp, but instead a relative matter of degree. For example, looking back now at my working list of paradigmatic thought-shapers—mental representations of allegories, analogies, blueprints, catechisms, diagrams, displays, icons, images, lay-outs, metaphors, mnemonics, models, outlines, parables, pictures, scenarios, schemata, sketches, spreadsheets, stereotypes, symbols, tableaux, and templates—amongst these, allegories, catechisms, and parables differ slightly from the others in containing a relatively greater amount and degree of conceptual content, even though the essentially non-conceptual content of the thought-shaping component is what determines the overall semantic specific character of those

mental representations. As an excellent 21st century example of all this, consider the novelist David Foster Wallace's famous deployment of "the-fish-&-the-water" allegory/parable, in his 2005 graduation address at Kenyon College, "This is Water":

There are these two young fish swimming along and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says "Morning, boys. How's the water?" And the two young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes "What the hell is water?" (Wallace, 2012)

In the embodied, embedded, and enacted context of Wallace's Kenyon College speech, the conceptual and essentially non-conceptual elements in his allegory/parable are indissolubly blended; and, just like the water in the allegory/parable itself, thought-shapers operate almost invisibly and yet also omnipresently in human thinking.

In view of the dual-content nonideal cognitive semantics for thought-shapers I've spelled out, the philosophy of thought-shaping naturally focuses on the *cognitive dynamics* of human conceptual thinking and conceptual thought-content, insofar as it's partially determined, formed, and guided by essentially non-conceptual mental representations of allegories, analogies, blueprints, catechisms, diagrams, displays, icons, images, lay-outs, metaphors, mnemonics, models, outlines, parables, pictures, scenarios, schemata, sketches, spreadsheets, stereotypes, symbols, tableaux, and templates,⁶ featuring egocentrically-centered, action-poised temporal representations and spatial representations as fundamental, in a way that's not only causal but also irreducibly normative, and inherently external-context-sensitive or indexical, for better or worse. As the metaphorical term "shapers" itself implies, all thought-shapers are characterized by *temporal dynamics* and *spatial dynamics*. The temporal dynamics of thought-shapers is captured by formal or material representations of *processes* of various kinds, for example, either the classical, non-complex, entropic, time-reversible, equilibrium, linear thermodynamics of mechanical motion through space or in place (for example, rotation, vibration, etc.), or the non-classical, complex, dissipative/ negentropic, time-irreversible, non-equilibrium, self-organizing thermodynamics of non-mechanical motion (for example, weather systems and organisms). In turn, the spatial dynamics of thought-shapers is captured by formal or material representations in *topology*, the mathematical theory of the continuous deformation and transformation of shapes, surfaces, etc., in a multi-dimensional (for example, two-dimensional, three-dimensional, four-dimensional, and so-on) framework, and of their universal interconnectedness, with a special focus on *egocentrically-centered* (i.e., first-person perspectival), *orientable* (i.e., inherently directional), *three-dimensional* spaces in which our own minded living rational human

⁶ See also the qualifications spelled out in note 5 above.

animal bodies, and human or non-human organisms more generally, are embedded, and in which we and they all live, move, and have our being. Hence, all thought-shapers have *processual* and/or *topological* properties that are represented by formal or material essentially non-conceptual cognition and essentially non-conceptual content, to which formal or material conceptual thinking and conceptual content naturally adheres or attaches itself, and by which they are inherently causally and irreducibly normatively partially determined, formed, and guided, in an inherently external-context-sensitive or indexical way, for better or worse. Given this inherently causal, normative, action-poised, context-sensitive/indexical, processual, and topological profile, as I've mentioned, essentially non-conceptual thought-shapers play a pre-reflectively conscious and almost invisible role in human thinking, yet they also and perhaps above all create a necessary cognitive substrate for conceptual capacities and conceptualization that contributes *diachronic and synchronic applicability, articulation, concreteness, depth, friction, thickness, scope, traction, and torque* to human thought, for better or worse.

Summarizing now, I've made the following six claims about thought-shapers and thought-shaping.

First, human cognition and intentionality are *equally* top-down (i.e., formally, non-empirically, or *a priori*, and non-contextually) and bottom-up (i.e., materially, empirically, or *a posteriori*, and inherently externally-contextually or indexically) constituted and structured; essentially non-conceptual capacities are shared by human and non-human, rational or non-rational animals alike; and conceptual capacities are grounded on this essentially non-conceptual foundation, although conceptual content is categorically different from essentially non-conceptual content.

Second, since conceptual content generally presupposes and is grounded on essentially non-conceptual content, and since thought-shapers are essentially non-conceptual contents, then thought-shapers necessarily constitute, inflect, structure, and guide all human conceptualization and propositional thinking (including belief, judgment, statement-making, and inference) in a causal, partially-determining, and also irreducibly normative, action-poised way, that's external-context-sensitive or indexical, for better or worse; and normally, the essentially non-conceptual part pre-reflectively, non-self-consciously, and almost invisibly governs conceptualization and thinking.

Third, in the shaped thought (whether type-1, i.e., ideally logico-semantically formed, or type-2, i.e., not ideally logico-semantically formed) that's the product of the process of thought-shaping, there's a *mutual interpenetration, mutual co-determination, and fusion* of conceptual content and essentially non-conceptual content into holistically configured or patterned mental representations (roughly, *Gestalten*); indeed, it's precisely

this feature makes thought-shapers so cognitively compelling and powerful: they continuously establish links between the essentially non-conceptual and conceptual contents, but do so normally only in pre-reflectively conscious, non-self-conscious mode, whereby it's almost impossible to catch them "at work," insofar as they almost invisibly bridge the sensible and discursive domains; indeed, this justly famous apothegm from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* neatly captures this insight:

One thinks that one is tracing the outline of the thing's nature over and over again, and one is merely tracing around the frame through which we look at it.... A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably. (Wittgenstein, 1953: §§114-115, p. 48^e, translation slightly modified)

Fourth, thought-shapers inherently contain action-poised temporal dynamics and spatial dynamics, and therefore *enact* inherently processual and topological properties in all shaped thoughts.

Fifth, the action-poised purposiveness with which thought-shapers are used is an integral part of their cognitive dynamics.

Sixth, and finally, although thought-shaping is a necessary feature of all human thinking, what makes thought-shapers especially difficult to identify and recognize self-consciously is the twofold fact (i) that as per the second and third points above, the partially constituting, inflecting, and structuring activity of thought-shapers normally takes place in a pre-reflectively conscious and therefore *non*-self-conscious mode, and (ii) that as per the fourth and fifth points above, in relation to the holistically patterned or configured shaped thought and its external-context-sensitive/indexical action-poised purposiveness, due to its categorically distinct essentially non-conceptual processual and topological content-properties, which as it were *pre-install* human thinking in a rich cognitive substrate so that it runs along specific *grooves*, the thought-shaper, *on its own*, appears to provide a justification for various beliefs. Indeed, it's precisely this characteristically "pre-installed" and "grooved" cognitive dynamics of shaped thoughts, for better or worse, via essentially non-conceptual thought-shaping, as per (ii), that directly connects the philosophy of thought-shapers with Francis Bacon's theory of "Idols which beset men's minds" in *The Novum Organum* (Bacon, 1620, 2021), with Marx's theory of ideology in *The German Ideology* and other works (Wolff and Leopold, 2021: esp. section 6), and with recent work in cognitive psychology and social psychology on the persistence of false belief or misinformation and the "backfire effect" (Nyhan and Reifler, 2010; Lewandowsky et al., 2012).

In short, the philosophy of thought-shaping carries us all the way from the philosophy of mind-and-knowledge and philosophical logic, to moral philosophy and sociopolitical philosophy, and then back again. So, and now by way of concluding this section, I'm strongly recommending that when contemporary post-classical Analytic philosophers have fully faced up to the rational fact that conceptual engineering is circular, self-undermining, and nothing but pseudo-philosophy, then they not only can but also should self-consciously enact a *Gestalt*-switch—and indeed a paradigm-shift—in their “disciplinary matrix” (Kuhn, 1970: p. 182), and replace conceptual engineering with the philosophy of thought-shaping.

VI. Social Justice Theory and The Paradox of Distributive Social Justice

As we saw in section II above, by the early 1980s the philosophical Great Divide between post-classical Analytic philosophy and so-called “Continental philosophy” was fully in place. At the same time, Rorty and others more or less systematically fused post-structuralism, deconstructionism, and what was left of Deweyan pragmatism (Rorty, 1982a; and Hanna, 1983) into philosophical *post-modernism* (see, for example, Rorty, 1983), aka Po-Mo, which also began to dominate in the applied and fine arts, and in Comparative Literature and Humanities Departments at colleges and universities worldwide, by vigorously rejecting and replacing modernism in all its forms, but especially high modernism. Po-Mo then gradually fused with what was left of the 1970s New Left, emerging identity politics, and social justice theory in the USA, and jointly created, by the mid-90s, inside the professional academy in general, the social-institutional dual powerhouse of *social justice theory* and *identitarian multiculturalism* (Rorty, 1994). This dual powerhouse then became a *juggernaut* by the turn of the millennium, and finally became a *hegemonic ideology* in the Marxian sense by the end of first two decades of the 21st century, not only inside the professional academy in general (Mann, 2019), but also and especially inside professional academic philosophy in particular. In this section I'll critically examine social justice theory on its own; and then in the next section I'll conjoin it with identitarian multiculturalism, and then critically examine the moral and sociopolitical implications of that social-institutional dual powerhouse insofar as it operates inside contemporary professional academic philosophy.

Social justice theory is the theory of how benefits (including wealth, opportunities, and social status) and burdens should be distributed in advanced capitalist, liberal, democratic nation-States. In turn, *distributive social justice* is the set of moral, social-institutional, and/or political principles, processes, and structures that determine the distribution of benefits and burdens in advanced capitalist, liberal, democratic nation-

States. In their *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* article on “Distributive Justice,” Julian Lamont and Christi Favor quite correctly although somewhat tautologically note that

[p]rinciples of distributive justice are ... best thought of as providing moral guidance for the political processes and structures that ... [determine] the distribution of benefits and burdens in [capitalist, liberal, democratic] societies, and any principles which do offer this kind of moral guidance on distribution, regardless of the terminology they employ, should be considered principles of distributive justice. (Lamont and Favor, 2017)

Against that theoretical backdrop, I’ll present and elaborate a basic problem, indeed, a paradox, about distributive social justice in *any* social institution or State, but especially including contemporary ultra-advanced capitalist, neoliberal, quasi-democratic States like the USA—as enshrined philosophically, for example, in John Rawls’s highly influential and indeed, as regards Anglo-American political theory since the 1970s, hegemonic *Theory of Justice*. (Rawls, 1971).

The basic problem is what I call *The Paradox of Distributive Social Justice*. Simply put, *The Paradox* is that insofar as principles of distributive social justice are applied to an oppressive social system in order fundamentally to change it or end it, then even despite its ideological overlay of “justice-as-fairness,” this actually turns out to be the most effective way to perpetuate the oppressive system itself. More explicitly, with the ideological overlay in shudder-quotes:

Suppose that an oppressive social system OSS exists in any State, such that there is an *oppressor class* who collectively and individually greatly benefit from OSS, and also an *oppressed class*, who collectively and individually greatly suffer under OSS. And further suppose that the leading members of the oppressor class in OSS recognize, at a given time, that OSS is in serious danger of collapsing if things go on in the same way. So the leading members of the oppressor class calculatingly and prudently create a “fair and therefore just” system of compensating a certain non-trivial but still strategically small number of more-or-less⁷ randomly-selected members of the oppressed class, by giving them access to some or all of the benefits enjoyed by the oppressor class. Then this “fair and therefore just” distribution of compensation for oppression not only does nothing to fundamentally change or end OSS, it actually turns out to be the most effective way of perpetuating OSS.

⁷ Usually there are also hidden criteria that pre-select prospective oppressed-class beneficiaries for docility and obedience—e.g., having a “squeaky clean” police record.

An important corollary of *The Paradox* is that if the leading oppressors *fail* to act in this calculating and prudent “fair and therefore just” way, then their oppressive social system eventually collapses. For example, let OSS be the enslavement of black people in the USA in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Then *The Paradox* guarantees that if, in the early 19th century, the leading Southern American slave-masters had, contrary to actual fact, seen the writing on the wall, then calculatingly and prudently created a “fair and therefore just” system of admitting a certain non-trivial but still strategically small number of more-or-less randomly selected slaves either into the oppressor class of slave-masters, or into a complicit class of fairly well-paid, fairly high social-status bureaucrats, professionals, managers, or skilled laborers who served the class of slave-masters, then the USA would never have experienced the Civil War of 1860-65, and would still be a slave State, at least throughout most of the South. Of course in actual fact the slave-masters did *not* do this, so the oppressive system of slavery in the USA collapsed—although, to be sure, a new non-slavery system of racist oppression soon arose to take its place, during the Jim Crow period, and has continued to exist and evolve ever since, an oppressive system that’s nowadays called *systemic racism* (Anderson, 2016).

Now, let OSS be capitalism in Europe and North America from the end of the 18th century onwards. Then we can ask: Why didn’t post-18th century capitalism in Europe and North America collapse due to its internal dialectical social and economic contradictions by the end of the 19th century or early 20th century, as Marx had fervently hoped and confidently predicted? The answer, clearly and distinctly, is provided by *The Paradox*. The leading late 19th and early 20th century capitalist bosses, rightly worried about communism, calculatingly and prudently created a “fair and therefore just” system of admitting a certain non-trivial but still strategically small number of more-or-less randomly-selected members of the working class or below, aka the *proletariat* or *lumpen proletariat*, either into the oppressor class of capitalist bosses, or into the complicit class of fairly well-paid, fairly high social status bureaucrats, professionals, managers, or skilled laborers, who serve the class of capitalist bosses.⁸ They called it “upward social mobility” and then more recently, “equal opportunity,” and currently—when it’s combined with principles of distributive racial social justice—“diversity, equity, and inclusion.” As a consequence, distributive social justice not only did nothing fundamentally to change or end capitalist oppression, it actually turned out to be the most effective way of perpetuating it.

Here, then, is the philosophico-political moral of *The Paradox*:

⁸ This is confirmed, at least for the USA, by empirical data about the size and specific constitution of the American working class during the 20th and 21st centuries. See, e.g., (Rowell, 2017).

You can *never* fundamentally change or end an oppressive social or political system by *buying off more-or-less randomly selected small numbers of its victims in a “fair and therefore just” way*; in fact, this is the most effective way of perpetuating the very system you’re purportedly trying to ameliorate.

Therefore, for example, paradoxically, and perhaps most counterintuitively, widely applying the distributive racial social justice principle of “diversity, equity, and inclusion,” is in fact *the most effective way of perpetuating systemic racism*. For, how could admitting a certain non-trivial but still strategically small number of more-or-less randomly-selected victims of systemic racism into the lower or higher echelons of an immoral social system that oppresses *all* victims of racism, thereby providing that new elite group with benefits that the *other* victims of racism—i.e., the majority of those oppressed by that immoral social system—so obviously lack and are systematically prevented from ever obtaining, *ever* fundamentally change or end systemic racism?

By way of concluding this section, I should also say that I strongly believe that there’s a completely adequate solution to *The Paradox*. In order fundamentally to change or end any oppressive social system, what’s required is devolving and dismantling that social system in a step-by-step way—thereby *exiting* it—together with the design, creation, and maintenance of a set of essentially different, coherently interlinked social institutions that *collectively guarantee absolutely universal sufficient respect for human dignity* and thereby also *collectively provide the means for satisfying everyone’s true human needs*. But because this is also a *radical* solution that requires jettisoning the theory, morality, politics, and ideology of distributive social justice *altogether*, as well as devolving, dismantling, and exiting the coercive authoritarian and inherently oppressive social system of capitalist liberal democratic Statism *itself*—namely, broadly and radically Kantian dignitarian cosmopolitan anarcho-socialism (Hanna, 2016c, 2017c, 2018d, 2020b)—I very much doubt, to put it mildly, that it will attract much support from, for example, contemporary American ultra-capitalist neoliberal quasi-democratic right-conservatives, neofascists, right-libertarians, centrists, left-liberals, faux-“progressives,” etc., etc., or indeed and above all, from anyone inside professional academic philosophy. So, short of that radical solution, *The Paradox* stands.

VII. Eminent Identitarians: Social Justice Theory, Identitarian Multiculturalism, and Moral Fanaticism

In *Eminent Victorians*, Lytton Strachey brilliantly and irreverently exposed the moral extremism and incoherence—including hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness, and implicit self-contradiction and self-stultification—of the Victorian era (Strachey, 1918/1948). In this

section, with much narrower scope, and neither by means of biography nor attempting to mimic Strachey's legendary Mandarin literary style, I want to do essentially the same thing for social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism inside contemporary professional academic philosophy.

The psychological, moral, and sociopolitical doctrine of *identitarian multiculturalism* presupposes social justice theory, as I've spelled it out and criticized it in section VI; but more specifically and on its own, identitarian multiculturalism says (i) that people are defined primarily in terms of their falling under a certain social group-type and/or their social group-allegiance (for example, race, ethnicity, gender-&/or-sex, sexual preference, national origin or citizenship, language, economic class, social roles of all kinds, social institutions of all kinds especially including religions, and so-on), (ii) that special moral virtues and special positive moral value, or goodness, are attributed to all members of that social group and to that social group itself, call it *The WE*, aka *The US*, (iii) that there is a set of identity-based social groups that are *special targets of distributive social justice*, precisely because these groups have historically been and/or are currently *being oppressed*, and therefore they are also to be *included* among those to whom special moral virtues and special positive moral value, or goodness, are attributed, and (iv) that special moral vices and special negative moral disvalue, or badness, are attributed to members of certain *other* social groups and to those groups themselves, as the historical or current *oppressors* of one or more of those oppressed groups, who are then collectively intensely distrusted, or even excoriated-and-vilified, as *The OTHER*, aka *The THEM*. A made-to-order, real-world example of this is the late-1960s Black Power group US, led by Ron Karenga, which explicitly counter-identified Whites (especially, but by no means exclusively, White supremacists) as *The THEM*, and also engaged in a struggle-to-the-death with the Black Panthers (see, for example, Davis and Wiener, 2020: esp. chs. 15-17). Referring to another Black power group, Malcolm X's Nation of Islam, Martin Luther King Jr very correctly and courageously pointed out in 1959 that Black supremacy is as bad as White supremacy (Davis and Wiener, 2020: p. 67); but that didn't (and still doesn't, 63 years later) make MLK any friends on either side of the catastrophic and tragic identitarian Black/White race divide in the USA: on the contrary.

That social justice theory, as per section VI above, and identitarian multiculturalism, which presupposes social justice theory, jointly constitute a hegemonic ideology inside contemporary professional academic philosophy can be easily confirmed by reading, on any given day of the year, any one of several online announcement or event list feeds for professional academic philosophers. For an example taken almost at random, in the 24 hour period running from 6pm GMT on 31 January 2022 to 6pm GMT on 1 February 2022, the widely disseminated *Philosophy in Europe* announcement list, run by the University of Liverpool Department of Philosophy, contained the five items

reproduced immediately below (PHILOS-L, 2022). Above all, however, it should be noted that since this is a *European* list, it also demonstrates that the hegemonic ideology of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism not only obtains in North American contemporary professional academic philosophy, but also has been exported from North America to professional academic philosophy in Europe and indeed *worldwide*. Since the purpose of quoting these is only to provide evidence for my general claim that the social institution of contemporary professional academic philosophy, not only in North America but also in Europe and indeed worldwide, is ideologically pervaded and indeed dominated by social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism, I've replaced all living individuals' names with "XYZ."

Reminder Call for Abstracts: Workshop on Injustice, Resistance and Complicity
Deadline for abstracts 11th February 2022

Organised by the department of Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, University of Groningen, 15th June 2022.

Injustice is often difficult to pin down. It manifests not only in one group using their power to inflict physical or psychological harm on another, or to limit another group's options, choices or possibilities through overt policies or political means. Recent developments in philosophy have highlighted that injustice can take more insidious forms. It can manifest at an epistemic level: depriving agents of the ability to conceptualise the harms done to them, or blocking their ability to articulate the ways in which they have been wronged. Injustice often functions structurally, in the absence of any identifiable oppressing agent. Frequently, unjust social structures have a deceptive nature, making systemic issues appear to be individual failings; thus, effectively identifying and resisting these diverse sites of injustice requires careful attention to the interplay between structural and interpersonal forces, and questions of individual, collective and vicarious responsibility and agency. These matters are further complicated by issues of complicity: the way in which agents can play a role in upholding or reinforcing their own subordination and the subordination of others. Complicity manifests itself in the 'grey zone' of agency, responsibility and choice in situations of injustice, where strategic negotiations with oppressive social structures need to be disentangled from adaptive preferences and internalised oppression, or affective mechanisms that inure agents against acknowledging, resisting and combating injustice. Epistemic and structural injustice, and our complicity in both, raise difficult questions for the possibility of resistance.

This workshop invites papers that seek to explore issues of injustice, resistance and complicity from a range of philosophical perspectives. We invite work that builds on

traditions including, but not limited to, feminist philosophy, critical race theory, global justice and disability studies, as well as work on responsibility, autonomy, agency and epistemic and structural injustice. Papers may address one or more themes from the workshop, and conceptual and applied approaches from both the analytic and continental traditions are welcome. We particularly encourage submissions from early career researchers and members of groups currently underrepresented in academic philosophy.

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Submissions

If you would like to present at the workshop please submit an abstract of max. 500 words. Abstracts should be prepared for blind review and submissions should include a separate document with the title of your paper, your name, affiliation, career stage and contact details.

Final papers should be 30 minutes long, leaving 25 minutes discussion for each paper.

The deadline for submissions is 11th February 2022.

We expect to communicate decisions in early March 2022.

This workshop is being planned as an in-person event, COVID restrictions permitting.

Please send your abstracts to injusticeworkshop@gmail.com

With the subject heading 'Injustice, Resistance and Complicity Abstract'

The DRL Reading Group Blueprints have finally landed!

If you've not followed the development of this project, here's some background: we've conducted some research on the state of UK curricula and have identified topics that are systematically under-taught. To remedy this, we've asked our wonderful volunteers to create "blueprints" so that students anywhere can take matters into their own hands and set up their own reading groups.

On our website, you'll now find you find carefully selected readings, videos, and podcasts, all arranged into a consistent narrative and accompanied by comments and questions to guide your reading and discussion on the following topics:

- Feminist Philosophy
- Postcolonial Theory, Race and Caste

- Native North American Ethics
- Sex, What is it Good For?
- The Wartime Quartet
- Reclaiming the System: New Visions for a Future of Work
- Race, Disability, and Gender in Bioethics
- Philosopher Queens: Women in Philosophy and the History of Exclusion

... And with more to come!

We would be grateful if you could share this new DRL project with your community. And whether you are someone potentially interested in taking up one of these groups, or a scholar interested in creating your own blueprint, do not hesitate to get in touch!

Proudly, The DRL Team

Blueprints this way: <https://diversityreadinglist.org/blueprints/>

Research on UK curricula this way: <https://diversityreadinglist.org/blueprints/what-is-taught/>

Contact: contact@diversityreadinglist.org

New issue of EJPE now available

Dear list members,

The latest issue of the Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics (EJPE) is now available online at <http://ejpe.org/>. It includes an article symposium on XYZ and XYZ's "Narrow Identities", an interview with XYZ, our new Critical Comments section, and more. Please see below for an overview – with links – of the issue.

EJPE is a peer-reviewed bi-annual academic journal supported by the Erasmus Institute for Philosophy and Economics at the Erasmus School of Philosophy, Erasmus University Rotterdam. EJPE publishes research on the methodology, history, ethics, and interdisciplinary relations of economics, and welcomes contributions from all scholars with an interest in any of its research domains. EJPE is an Open Access Journal: all the content is permanently available online without subscription or payment.

****OVERVIEW OF EJPE ISSUE 2, VOLUME 14, 2021****

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ARTICLE SYMPOSIUM on “Narrow Identities”

The Paths to Narrow Identities by XYZ

Deepening and Widening Social Identity Analysis in Economics by XYZ

Social Identities: Narrow and Broad, Exclusive and Inclusive, Firm and Fuzzy by XYZ

Group Membership or Identity? by XYZ

Narrow Identities Revisited by XYZ and XYZ

INTERVIEW

Grounding Equal Freedom: An Interview with XYZ

'Upcoming Conference - Decolonization and Poststructuralism'

23rd February 2022 (Online)

Department of Logic and Theoretical Philosophy

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain

Final Program:

0930–0935: Introductory Remarks

XYZ and XYZ (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)

0940–1110: Apertures

Decolonizing the Syllabus: The Name and End of Deconstruction

XYZ (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)

Ethics, Agency and Deconstructing Subjectivity in Indian Buddhist Philosophy:

Rethinking Poststructuralism from an Intercultural-philosophical Perspective

XYZ (University of Kassel, Germany)

Decolonizing Eurocentric Affect: Subaltern Affect at the Limit of Species Alterity

XYZ (Independent Scholar, India)

1115-1245: Empirical Considerations

Repurposing the Postmodern: On the Viability of Post-structures in the Postcolonial
XYZ (University of Delhi, India)

Decolonisation and Postructuralism?: A Pedagogical Case Study
XYZ (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, England)
African Philosophy in an African Language: Some Considerations
XYZ (University of Western Cape, South Africa)

1250-1350: Edouard Glissant

Glissant and Derrida: Deconstructing Colonial Imaginary from Within and from Without
XYZ (École Normale Supérieure, France)

Glissant on the (de)colonization of Time
XYZ (Royal Holloway, University of London, England)

1355–1455: Deleuze

Knowledge Production and Intellectual Instruction in Colonial Quito: An Imbricated
Rhizomatic Network
XYZ (Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, Italy)

Anthropophagy and Deleuze and Guattari through the eyes of XYZ
XYZ (Independent Scholar, Colombia)

1500–1600: Ethics

Can Poststructuralism Critique itself? Developing Foucauldian Ethics to Supersede the
Eurocentrism of Biopolitics
XYZ (University of Kent, England)

Keeping Impurity Impure: Ethical Responses to Epistemic Impasses
XYZ (Linköping University, Sweden)

1605–1735: Derrida

Unacknowledged Agency: Derrida's Postcolonial Subject
XYZ (Indiana University, USA)

"The Crisis of the Crisis": Deconstruction and Decolonization
XYZ (Northwestern University/Sarah Lawrence College, USA)

The Uninvited Guest: Hospitality, Responsibility, and Possibility
XYZ (Regis University, USA)

1740–1910: Moving Forward

“The Ripple and the Two-Tide Movement”: The Metaphorical Language of Contingent Foundations
XYZ (École Normale Supérieure, France)

If decolonization is not a metaphor, what is it then?
XYZ (Universidad Católica San Paolo, Peru)

Already Existing Decolonial Poststructuralism?
XYZ (Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Chile)

1910–1915: Closing Remarks

All times are Madrid, Spain (UTC + 1)

All welcome! The registration link and abstracts are available at the conference website:
<https://www.ucm.es/decolonization-and-poststructuralism/>

Organizers: XYZ and XYZ

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Funding: This conference forms part of the activities for the following research projects: (1) “Agency and Society: An Inquiry through Poststructuralism” (PR108/20-26), funded by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid–Banco Santander; (2) “Differential Ontology and the Politics Of Reason,” funded by the Government of the Region of Madrid, as part of line 3 of the multi-year agreement with the Universidad Complutense de Madrid: V PRICIT Excellence Program for University Professors (Fifth Regional Plan for Scientific Investigation and Technological Innovation); and (3) “The Politics of Reason” (PID2020-117386GA-I00), financed by the Ministry of Science and Innovation, Government of Spain.

Announcing the next event in the 2021/22 Feminist Political Philosophy Speaker Series, hosted on Zoom by the University of Hamburg:

XYZ, University of North Carolina, Charlotte
"U.S. Latina/x Abolitionist Feminism: Nuevos y viejos caminos/New and old pathways"
Mon., February 7, 18:15 – 20:00 Central Europe Time / 12:15 – 2:00pm Eastern

To register: <https://www.limesurvey.uni-hamburg.de/index.php/133536>

Abstract:

In this presentation, XYZ turns to sources within Chicana/x and Latina/x feminisms to develop a framing of prison abolitionism from within these feminist trajectories. In particular, XYZ examines archival sources that demonstrate Chicana feminist involvement in prisoners' rights organizing during the 1970s and 1980s, with such work foregrounding activist and scholarly contributions in later decades among Latina/x and Chicana/x feminists. Regarding the continued relevance of such a critical praxis, the second half of the presentation poses the early 2000s writings of transnational Argentine feminist María Lugones, and specifically her conceptions of active subjectivity and streetwalker theorizing as providing a novel Latina/x feminist framing of agency that supports prison abolitionist efforts today.

Organized by:

XYZ, University of Hamburg Philosophisches Seminar

~~~~~

Speaker Series website: <https://www.philosophie.uni-hamburg.de/philosophisches-seminar/veranstaltungen/rvl-fem-pol-phil.html>

Future events in the speaker series:

Nobody's Free Until Everybody's Free!

2021/22 Feminist Political Philosophy Speaker Series

XYZ (University of North Carolina, Charlotte)

“U.S. Latina/x Abolitionist Feminism: Nuevos y viejos caminos/New and Old Pathways”

Mon Feb. 7, 2022, 18.15–20.00 CET

XYZ (Northeastern University)

Book Talk: No Refuge: Ethics and the Global Refugee Crisis

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Mon Feb. 21, 2022, 16.15–19.00 CET

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Now, it's well-known that social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism emerged from the factionalization and fragmentation of the American Left during the 1970s, after Martin Luther King Jr's assassination in 1968 (see, e.g., Kazin, 2011: chs. 6-7). By 1994, that ideological 1-2 punch jointly constituted the entrenched and ubiquitous moral and political framework inside the professional academy in general and

professional academic philosophy in particular (Rorty, 1994). In the particular case of the latter, this framework was subsequently professionally and academically codified after the mid-90s, and not only consistently has been, but also is ever more increasingly being, tightly monitored and policed by college and university administrations everywhere and by—as the paradigmatic example—the American Philosophical Association (APA, 2022). But how could philosophers, who individually pride themselves on being, and publicly present themselves as, models of precise, rigorous critical thinking, intellectual autonomy, and practical autonomy, have allowed themselves to be herded into a single coercive-moralist orthodoxy, flowing essentially from a set of sociocultural and sociopolitical contingencies in the turbulent history of the American Left, whereby, since at least the mid-1990s, they’ve been told and are still being told, in no uncertain terms, what to think, what to teach, and how to conduct their working and personal lives?

Granting the entrenchment and ubiquity of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism inside contemporary professional academic philosophy, nevertheless, from a broadly and radically Kantian nonideal dignitarian moral point of view (Hanna, 2018c, 2021), it’s self-evidently a violation of sufficient respect for human dignity to regard and treat yourself and others as mere individual tokens under group-types, since you thereby regard and treat human persons as *mere things* under that group-type. In that connection, a fundamental pathology of identitarianism occurs when the creation of the OTHER/THEM leads to intense or even obsessive fears that the WE/US will be corrupted, infiltrated, and miscegenated by the OTHER/THEM culture, members of which are then perceived to exist both covertly inside (as potential or actual carriers of disease, impurities, or sedition) and also overtly outside (as potential or actual invasive threats) the WE/US culture. Relatedly, identitarian social relationships are often originally created, and can also be especially strengthened, by the actions of people belonging to a WE/US-group who systematically discriminate against and oppress innocent people who belong to an OTHER/THEM-group, simply by virtue of the latter’s possessing more-or-less adventitious, more-or-less involuntary physical, mental, or social identity-attributes such as sex, gender, sexual preference, skin pigmentation, ethnicity or national origin, language, religious affiliation, class origins, and so-on and so forth, almost ad infinitum. But although such identity-attribute-based discrimination and oppression is always and inherently false, bad, and wrong, and always and inherently a direct violation of sufficient respect for universal human dignity, nevertheless it doesn’t follow that the innocent identitarian victims of such discrimination and oppression possess any special moral value or special moral virtues *merely because* of their being discriminated against and oppressed—although, of course, not only are they to be pitied by us, but also they fully deserve our moral protection and sufficient respect for their human dignity.

In a contemporary context, whether inside the professional academy or outside it, this fallacious attribution of special moral value and special moral virtues to innocent identitarian victims of discrimination and oppression, in turn, leads to what Anthony Appiah has correctly identified as a fallacious source of identitarian moral authority (Appiah, 2018a, 2018b), which, again in turn, can easily turn into a coercive moralism that's also a special case of coercive authoritarianism. And in this way, paradoxically but also tragically, the fallacious identitarian multiculturalist belief that the victims of identity-attribute-based discrimination and oppression possess special moral value or special moral virtues merely because of their victimhood, inevitably contributes non-trivially to a spiralling increase in conflict, tension, and coercive authoritarian/ moralist violence between members of the WE/US-group and members of the OTHER/THEM-group (and sometimes also members of different sub-groups of the larger WE/US group). Race relations in the USA, from the collective original sin of slavery, through the John Brown Rebellion, the Civil War, and Emancipation, through the Jim Crow era, through the two World Wars, the new Jim Crow era, and the Civil Rights era, through the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, via "structural racism," aka "systemic racism," "mass incarceration," and "White rage," right up to the latest brutal police homicide/lynching and its righteous Black Lives Matter pushback protest—i.e., right up to 6am this morning—are not only an exceptionally immoral history of virulent racist oppression and violence against Black people, but also a particularly tragic example of this identitarian paradox.

Against that conceptual and critical backdrop, in the rest of this section, I'll develop a critical argument against a certain moral theory and its traditional and contemporary proponents. As far as the moral theory itself is concerned, many others have criticized it before me; my only claim to originality is to have identified *precisely* what is profoundly mistaken and misguided about this particular moral theory and those who act according to it, *especially including* the social justice theorists and identitarian multiculturalists inside contemporary professional academic philosophy.

Morality is primarily about actual choices and actions, and *not* primarily about attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, opinions, or speech. To be sure, one can have attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or express opinions or speech, whose meaningful contents are morally false and bad, such that *it would be* morally impermissible and morally wrong *actually to choose and act* according to those attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, or opinions or speech. But, even if *intentionally* merely having these attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or merely expressing these opinions or speech, does have *some* salient effect on one's overall *moral character*, thereby contributing something salient to the overall viciousness of that moral character, nevertheless it's *not* morally impermissible and morally wrong *merely to have* those attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or *merely to express* those opinions or speech,

whether intentionally or unintentionally—say, through ignorance, or simply adventitiously, as when various stupid or unwanted things simply “pop into one’s head” or “pop out of one’s mouth.” Otherwise, if it *were* morally impermissible and morally wrong merely to have those attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or merely to express those opinions or speech, whether intentionally or unintentionally, given the natural flow of our attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, opinions, and speech, a great many of which have meaningful contents that are morally false and bad, or at the very least a great many of which have meaningful contents that fall very far short of being ideally morally true and good, then *almost every moment of our lives*, we’d all be in mental and/or speech-act states that are morally impermissible and morally wrong, no matter *how we actually chose or acted*, and no matter *how we actually treated other people*. Indeed, then, whether we were awake or asleep—and especially during dreaming, when our moral conscience is most likely to be off-duty—we’d all *almost constantly* be committing “attitude-crimes” and “attitude-sins,” “belief-crimes” and “belief-sins,” “thought-crimes” and “thought-sins,” “opinion-crimes” and “opinion-sins,” and “speech-crimes” and “speech-sins,” no matter how actually we chose and acted, and no matter how we actually treated other people, in real waking life.

And that’s a profoundly absurd and pernicious doctrine, characteristic only of *moral fanatics*: for example, those former supporters of the Thirty Tyrants who condemned, tried, and executed Socrates for irreverence towards the Athenian gods and corrupting the youth, the Catholic Inquisition, the Protestant sect of Puritans, Stalinist communists, Nazis, McCarthyites and HUAC, and Maoists. So correspondingly, in view of the real-world historical examples I just mentioned, moral fanatics can also be quite correctly—with only a little poetic license—called *moral tyrants*, *moral inquisitionists*, *moral puritans*, *moral stalinists*, *moral nazis*, *moral mccarthyites*, or *moral maoists*.

In any case, I think it’s now self-evident that the moral doctrine—let’s call it *moral fanaticism*—which says that it’s morally impermissible and morally wrong *merely to have* attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or *merely to express* opinions or speech, whether intentionally or unintentionally, whose meaningful contents are morally false and bad, such that it would be morally impermissible and wrong actually to choose and act according to those attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or opinions or speech, is *itself a morally false and bad doctrine*.

Now, unfortunately, proponents of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism, especially inside contemporary professional academic philosophy, are *moral fanatics*, since they hold that anyone who *merely has*, for example, some racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or *merely expresses* some racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-

privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., opinions or speech, whether intentionally or unintentionally, is *thereby* doing something that's as morally impermissible and morally wrong as people who are *actually treating* other people in racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., ways, *even if the former set of people don't actually treat other people* in racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., ways, *as the latter set of people do*.

Notice particularly, that I'm assuming and also *asserting* that *actually treating* other people in racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., ways, *is indeed morally impermissible and morally wrong*, precisely because in all such cases other people are actually being treated as mere means or mere things, especially via coercion, or are otherwise actually being treated in ways that systematically prevent them from satisfying their true human needs, hence we're not only failing to respect their innate rational human dignity, but also violating it; and insofar as people are actually being treated in these ways, then they're being *morally oppressed*. So too, I'm assuming and also asserting that some *special* acts of speech, in and of themselves, do *actually* treat other people in racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., ways—for example, coercing someone or some people by threatening them with harm, for specifically racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., reasons; or encouraging or ordering others to coerce or otherwise harm someone or some people, for specifically racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., reasons; or character-assassination or slander directed at someone or some people, for specifically racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., reasons —and are *therefore* morally impermissible and morally wrong, for the reasons laid out in the first sentence of this paragraph; and insofar as people are actually being treated in these ways via these special acts of speech—let's call them, collectively, *aggressive speech*—then they're *also* being morally oppressed.

For example, by a striking coincidence, on the very same day that the five items from the *Philosophy in Europe* announcement list that I quoted earlier in this section were posted—1 February 2022—a recently-dismissed Black male post-doctoral fellow and lecturer in philosophy at UCLA was arrested by the police, more than a thousand miles away from Los Angeles, for aggressive speech aimed at several White female California-based philosophy professors (LA Times, 2022; Guardian, 2022), including death threats.

But if you *don't* actually treat other people in dignity-violating these ways, then you're *not* doing anything that's morally impermissible and morally wrong, *even if the moral fanatics of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism claim that you are*. In this connection, arguments like (i) “if you're not part of the solution, *therefore* you're part of

the problem,” (ii) “if you’re passively complicit in a sociopolitical system that’s racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., *therefore* you’re guilty of something that’s morally impermissible and morally wrong,” and (iii) “if you ever have some racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or ever express some racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., opinions or speech, whether intentionally or unintentionally, *therefore* that’s tantamount to actually treating other people in racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., ways,” are all self-evidently fallacious and sophistical, precisely because they’re morally fanatical to the core.

Contemporary moral fanaticism is widely professed and practiced by defenders of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism inside professional academic philosophy, and therefore these moral fanatics nowadays control various means of sociopolitical coercive moralist power, including various administrative command-hierarchies, mandates, policies, rules, and laws, and also their enforcement by various forms of professional and/or public punishment. The American Philosophical Association, as I’ve mentioned above, is a paradigmatic example (APA, 2022). To be sure, *other* more traditional kinds of moral fanaticism *also* obtain in most if not all contemporary not-so-liberal-or-not-so-neoliberal and not-so-democratic States across the world today. But, *moral fanaticism* is *moral fanaticism*, whether traditional or contemporary, and it’s a morally false and bad doctrine; therefore it’s also morally impermissible and morally wrong *actually to treat other people in morally fanatical ways*, even if it’s *not* morally impermissible and morally wrong *merely to have* morally fanatical attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or *merely to express* morally fanatical opinions or speech.

Two extremely important consequences of what I’ve just argued, *contrary* to the widely prevalent contemporary moral conventional wisdom or moral orthodoxy of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism, are (i) that it’s *not* morally impermissible and morally wrong merely to have some racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or merely to express some racist, sexist, patriarchal, settler-colonialist, white-privileged, xenophobic, etc., etc., opinions or speech (*except* in the special case of aggressive speech, in which case it is indeed morally impermissible and morally wrong), whether intentionally or unintentionally, and (ii) that *no one is actually being morally oppressed* by anyone *else’s* merely having racist, sexist, xenophobic, etc., etc., attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts, or merely expressing, racist, sexist, xenophobic, etc. etc., opinions or speech (again, *except* in the special case of aggressive speech), whether intentionally or unintentionally, no matter how *offended* some people might be by other people’s having or expressing such attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, or opinions or speech.

Correspondingly, the profoundly wrongheaded doctrine which says that *being offended* is the same as *being morally oppressed*—whereas *in fact*, as we saw above, moral oppression is when and *only* when people are actually being treated as mere means or mere things, especially via coercion, or are otherwise actually being treated in ways that systematically prevent them from satisfying their true human needs, hence we're not only failing to respect their innate rational human dignity, but also violating it—is a manifestation of the contemporary moral fanaticism of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism. In a closely related way, whenever, by a hyper-inflation of language, someone calls something that offends them “violence,” this does *not* magically convert their being offended into their being morally oppressed. Even being *deeply* offended, perhaps to the point of emotional anguish and suffering, does not bring about this magical conversion, since as we all know, it's entirely possible for someone to be deeply offended by X, even to the point of emotional anguish and suffering about X, *without* X's in fact objectively justifying such a reaction.

To be sure, it's entirely possible *actually* to be morally oppressed by X—and the special case of aggressive speech fully counts under this possibility—and *also* deeply offended by X even to the point of emotional anguish and suffering, whereby X *does* in fact objectively justify such a reaction; but it's *also* entirely possible to be morally oppressed by X and *not* also offended by X, as in cases of false consciousness and self-deception. Therefore, being offended, as an important *emotional* fact, and being oppressed, as an important *moral* fact, are *consistent* with one another, but also *logically independent* of one another. Nevertheless, the moral fanatics of social justice theory and identitarian multiculturalism inside contemporary professional academic philosophy systematically overlook or outright deny the applicability of this important distinction to those who belong to the identity-groups specifically designated as “victims of oppression,” *except* in the special cases of false consciousness or self-deception, for which the required therapy is vigorous *consciousness-raising*, thereby licensing again the magical conversion of being offended into being oppressed. As a consequence, this entire domain of moral and sociopolitical phenomena is pervaded with moral-fanatical confusion, fallacy, and dilemma.

Indeed, as regards the equally bizarre, ironic, sad, and tragic recent real-world case I mentioned above (LA Times, 2022; Guardian, 2022), given only the news reports as evidence, and from a distanced moral and sociopolitical vantage point *outside* contemporary professional academic philosophy, it's exceptionally difficult to disentangle the *prima facie* moral and legal fact of aggressive speech from the moral-fanatical collapse of the distinction between being morally oppressed and being offended. In any case, a counterfactual modal moral and sociopolitical critical question naturally flows from this tangle: If contemporary professional academic philosophy *hadn't been*

pervaded by social justice theory and indentitarian multiculturalism, *would* such a case *ever* have happened?

Whatever the actual and/or counterfactual modal facts about that case, other manifestations of the contemporary moral fanaticism of social justice theory and indentitarian multiculturalism inside professional academic philosophy include the fully weaponized notions of “cultural appropriation” (Wikipedia, 2022a), “epistemic injustice” (Fricker, 2007), “ideological oppression” (Haslanger, 2019: pp. 5-6), “implicit bias” (Brownstein, 2019), and “microaggression” (Wikipedia, 2022b). Significantly, in each of these manifestations, individual perpetrators are found guilty of morally impermissible and morally wrong “appropriation,” “injustice,” “oppression,” “bias,” and “aggression,” even though, *by hypothesis*, they’re *not* self-consciously aware of their own transgressions, and therefore could not have *freely* prevented them. Indeed, that’s precisely *why* the transgressions are specifically identified as “cultural,” “epistemic” (in roughly Foucault’s sense of the theory of knowledge as a theory about various largely un-self-conscious social power-relations of authority and control over belief and speech), “ideological,” “implicit,” and “micro.” Even so, individual perpetrators are *still* held morally accountable and/or morally responsible for their transgressions, and duly punished, *unless* they take preemptive action and engage in the the exculpatory therapy of vigorous consciousness-raising and public apology, which, looking back at real-world history again, the Maoists called “cultural re-education,” and the McCarthyites called “clearing your name.”

More generally, whenever and wherever “attitude-crimes” and “attitude-sins,” “belief-crimes” and “belief-sins,” “thought-crimes” and “thought-sins,” “opinion-crimes” and “opinion sins,” and “speech-crimes” and “speech-sins,” can be found inside professional academic philosophy, then there will be contemporary moral fanatics of social justice theory and indentitarian multiculturalism patrolling nearby, anxiously and yet also enthusiastically ready to pounce and then coerce the unfortunate “criminals” and “sinners” into compliance and obedience via cultural re-education and name-clearing, or else “they must face the consequences” of their noncompliance and disobedience: namely, public punishment by means of, for example, condemnation and shaming over the internet, blacklisting, secular excommunication, official reprimands, sanctions, fines, loss of employment, or even arrest-and-imprisonment.

—But it should also be self-evident by now, by an entirely ironic reversal of contemporary conventional moral wisdom or moral orthodoxy inside contemporary professional academic philosophy, that *that’s* morally impermissible and morally wrong, whereas “attitude-crimes” and “attitude-sins,” “belief-crimes” and “belief-sins,” “thought-crimes” and “thought-sins,” “opinion-crimes” and “opinion sins,” and



“speech-crimes” and “speech-sins,” are *not* morally impermissible and morally wrong (*except* in the special case of aggressive speech, in which case, they are indeed morally impermissible and morally wrong) even if they *also* might saliently contribute to the overall viciousness of the moral characters of such “criminals” and “sinners.”

## VIII. A Real and Relevant Alternative: Life-Shaping Philosophy

As I noted in section I, and in view of the six short critical studies I’ve just presented, it’s an accurate and serious criticism of 21<sup>st</sup> century professional academic philosophy—and indeed also a perennial problem for professional academic philosophy since the 18<sup>th</sup> century—that it’s essentially irrelevant to humanity, in the strong sense that it’s alienated and insulated from the basic beliefs, concerns, needs, and activities of the rest of humanity outside the professional academy, even to the point, nowadays, of being fundamentally theoretically, emotionally, morally, and/or sociopolitically at odds with the rest of humanity.

Now, a standard response to the essential-irrelevance-to-humanity problem that’s been proposed by recent and contemporary professional academic philosophers, is to wheel out what they call “public philosophy” and “popular philosophy”:

Philosophical practice is a public good and should therefore be practiced in and with various publics. Public philosophy is philosophy that has the explicit aim of benefiting public life. Public philosophy should be liberatory, i.e., it should assist and empower those who are most vulnerable and suffer injustice, particularly through a critical analysis of power structures. (Meagher and Feder, 2010: p. 9)

A civilized society has popular philosophy just as it has popular physics, popular psychology, popular history... So, one might expect the relation between popular and academic philosophy to resemble the corresponding relations for other disciplines. Thus, popular philosophy would communicate recent research in academic philosophy to a wider audience. (Williamson, 2020)

I’ve critically examined public philosophy and popular philosophy elsewhere (Hanna, 2018e, 2020c), so I won’t repeat that critical examination here. Instead, I want to present an alternative to public philosophy and popular philosophy alike, *life-shaping philosophy*, in the concrete format of a collaborative philosophical project called *The Shape of Lives to Come*, that’s not only specifically designed to be essentially-relevant-to-humanity, but also *doesn’t* presuppose that philosophy must be or even ought to be conducted and pursued in a way that’s dependent upon or inside *either* the ivory bunker of contemporary professional academic philosophy in particular *or* the social institution of

professional academic philosophy more generally. On the contrary, life-shaping philosophy in the concrete format of The Shape of Lives to Come project is specifically designed to be conducted and pursued *independently and outside of* professional academic philosophy.

The name of the project is a play on the title of H.G. Wells's 1933 classic futurological science-fiction novel, *The Shape of Things to Come*, shortly thereafter made into a spectacular movie produced by Alexander Korda, *Things to Come*, in 1936. The Shape of Lives to Come project has four parts.

The **first** part of the project is a comprehensive fusion of philosophy of mind-&-cognition and sociopolitical theory, called *the mind-body politic* (Maiese and Hanna, 2019), which has seven basic theses.

1. Human minds are necessarily and completely embodied, and identical to the complex dynamic intentional-action-guiding structures of suitably complex living organisms, i.e., human animals (*the essential embodiment thesis*) (Hanna and Maiese, 2009).
2. As essentially embodied and inherently dynamic, human minds are also inherently enactive and environmentally embedded (*the enactivity-and-embeddedness thesis*) (Hanna and Maiese, 2009).
3. Human animals are, necessarily, social animals (*the human sociality thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019; Hanna, 2021f).
4. Social institutions partially determine and form our essentially embodied minds, and thereby substantially affect and guide our human lives (*the mind-shaping thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: ch. 2).
5. There is a fundamental distinction between (5.1) *destructive, deforming* social institutions that frustrate and warp true human needs, and (5.2) *constructive, enabling* social institutions that satisfy and sustain true human needs (*the two-kinds-of-social-institutions thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: chs. 2-3 and 6-8).
6. Enacting salient changes in the structure and complex dynamics of a social institution produces corresponding salient changes in the structure and complex dynamics of the essentially embodied minds of the participants, for better or worse (*the enactive-transformative thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: chs. 2-3 and 6-8).

7. Although destructive, deforming social institutions shape human minds and human lives in an inherently bad/oppressive, unhealthy, and enslaving/heteronomous way, nevertheless it is also possible to devolve such institutions and also simultaneously to create constructive, enabling social institutions that are inherently good/non-oppressive, healthy, and emancipatory/autonomous (*the social devolution-social creation thesis*) (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: chs. 2-3 and 6-8; Hanna, 2018d: esp. parts 2-3).

The **second** part of The Shape of Lives to Come project is a synoptic philosophy of human civilization since 1900, that presents and defends a categorical distinction between *the mechanistic worldview* and *the neo-organicist worldview* (Torday, Miller Jr, and Hanna, 2020; Hanna and Paans, 2020, 2021, 2022; Hanna, 2022a, 2022b).

In order to understand this categorical distinction, here's a fairly precise definition we'll need as we go forward:

Anything X is a *natural automaton*, or *natural machine*, if and only if (i) X is constituted by an ordered set of causally-efficacious behaviors, functions, and operations (aka "causal powers"), (ii) the causal powers of X are necessarily determined by all the settled quantity-of-matter-and/or-energy facts about the past, especially including The Big Bang, together with all the general deterministic or indeterministic causal laws of nature, especially including the Conservation Laws and The 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics, and (iii) X's causal powers and their quantitative properties are all inherently effectively decidable, recursive, or Turing-computable, given two further plausible assumptions to the effect that (iiia) the causal powers of any real-world Turing machine are held fixed under our general causal laws of nature, and (iiib) the "digits" over which the real-world Turing machine computes constitute a complete set of mathematically denumerable (that is, non-real-number, non-complex-number, non-transfinite) quantities, that is, spatiotemporally discrete, physical objects.

Otherwise put, anything is a natural automaton or natural machine if and only if it's necessarily determined by the Conservation Laws and The 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics, together with all the settled quantity-of-energy facts about the past, and its quantitative properties are all entropic and Turing-computable from those laws and facts. So anything is a natural automaton or natural machine if and only if it is *inherently governed by* the Conservation Laws, entropy, and Turing-computable algorithms. Correspondingly, *the mechanistic worldview* says that everything whatsoever in the world, including all human activity, is fully and ultimately explicable by mechanical principles alone, including principles of computability and/or mathematical physics, including chemistry, and biology insofar as it is reducible to physics and chemistry. In turn, and more specifically,

the mechanistic worldview consists in the conjunction of three somewhat distinct but logically nested theses: (i) *formal mechanism*, applied to mathematics, logic, truth, and knowledge more generally, namely the theory of computability and recursive functions, including decidability (Turing, 1936/1937; Boolos and Jeffrey, 1989) (ii) *natural mechanism*, which applies the notion of a natural automaton or natural machine, as per the description immediately above, to everything in the material or physical world (see also Hanna, 2018b: esp. ch. 2), and (iii) *scientific naturalism*, applied to everything in the world, including all human activity, which includes formal and natural mechanism, scientism (i.e., the valorization of the formal and/or natural sciences and their methods), empiricism, and materialist/ physicalist metaphysics (i.e., everything in the world is either identical to or necessarily dependent on fundamentally physical contingent facts) (Sellars, 1963b. 1963c).

By a diametric oppositional contrast to a natural automaton or natural machine, anything is *organic* if and only if it's *not* a natural mechanism, and has an inherently *processual*, *purposive*, and *self-organizing* dynamics that dissipates entropy (i.e., creates negentropy by spontaneously restructuring matter and energy), running from The Big Bang Singularity forward, via temporally asymmetric or unidirectional energy flows, to organismic life, and then on to conscious mind in general and to rational human conscious mind in particular. The *Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary* defines "organism" as follows:

**1** a living individual consisting of a single cell or of a group of interdependent parts sharing the life processes. **2a** an individual live plant or animal. **2b** the material structure of this. **3** a whole with interdependent parts compared to a living being. (Hawkins and Allen, 1991: p. 1024)

Correspondingly, and consistently with that, by an *organism*, I mean an inherently processual, purposive, and self-organizing entity with any of the basic features listed in the three-part *OEED* definition. Then, according to *the neo-organicist worldview*, everything whatsoever in the manifestly real world, including ourselves, is either (i) a *simple or complex organism*, or (ii) a *society of organisms*, or (iii) a *proper part of an organism* or a *society of organisms*, or (iv) an *immanent or intrinsic structural property of an organism* or *society of organisms*, or (v) a *causal product or byproduct of an organism* or *society of organisms*, or (vi) *necessarily dependent on an organism* or a *society of organisms*, or (vii) *ecosystemic* or *proto-organismic* in that it belongs to the set of actual conditions under which an organism or society of organisms emerges or operates, or (viii) *inherently analogous or homologous to an organism* or *society of organisms*. More generally, the neo-organicist worldview says that there's a single, unbroken metaphysical continuity between The Big Bang Singularity, temporally asymmetric/unidirectional energy flows, organismic life,

conscious mind in general, and rational human conscious mind in particular, and also that anything inherently belonging to this continuity is organic in its nature and structure.

The **third** part of The Shape of Lives to Come project is a dual application of the mind-body politic together with the mechanistic worldview vs. neo-organicist worldview distinction, to the philosophy and psychology of human thinking, *the theory of thought-shapers* (TTS), as per section V above (Hanna and Paans, 2021, 2022). TTS applies the categorical distinction between (i) mechanical (i.e., computable/ recursive, entropic, and deterministic or indeterministic) systems, and (ii) organic (i.e., uncomputable/processual, negentropic, purposive, and self-organizing) systems, to fundamental issues in the philosophy of mind and cognition, with comprehensive application to the nature of human thinking in the formal and natural sciences, the applied arts and fine arts, morality, and sociopolitics, as well as in philosophy. As we'll recall, correspondingly, TTS says that all human thinking is really possible only insofar as it's partially causally determined, formed, and normatively guided by either (i) mechanical, constrictive thought-shapers in a bad, false, and wrong way, or (ii) organic, generative thought-shapers in a good, true, and right way. This is *the strong version of the thought-shaper thesis*.

In addition to the strong version of the thought-shaper thesis, however, and for the specific purposes of the **fourth** part of The Shape of Lives to Come project, what's of direct and principal relevance is the truth or falsity of *a weak version of the thought-shaper thesis*, which says that *at least some* human thinking in *contemporary* formal or natural sciences, applied or fine arts, morality, sociopolitics, or philosophy, is *actually* partially causally determined, formed, and normatively guided by *at least some* mechanical, constrictive thought-shapers or organic, generative thought-shapers, for better or worse. The real-world importance of the weak version of the thought-shaper thesis is twofold: (i) that *it is empirically testable* by means of scientific psychological studies, and (ii) that at least in principle, *it could be implemented in contemporary human moral life, philosophy, science, art/aesthetics, society, and politics* in such a way as to bring about some genuine improvement and progress in human thinking, that could be applied to contemporary moral, philosophical, scientific, or artistic/aesthetic problems, or to contemporary sociopolitical problems, by helping or priming people to substitute organic, generative thought-shapers for mechanical, constrictive thought-shapers in their own actual thinking processes. Indeed, it's precisely the possibility of such genuine improvement and progress in human thinking that directly connects The Shape of Lives to Come project with the themes of Wells's futurological novel—even though, ironically enough, Wells himself was committed to a version of the mechanistic worldview.

Now, the strong and/or weak versions of the thought-shaper thesis, together with the empirical tests and in-principle implementations of the weak version of the thesis, is the same as TTS. Moreover, since language is a human social institution and since all human thinking proceeds by means of language, *then TTS falls directly under the mind-body politic*; and if the mind-body politic is true, then both *mind-shaping inside social institutions* and also *thought-shaping in individuals and groups*, alike, are forms of *human life-shaping*. So, against the larger backdrop of the mind-body politic and the categorical distinction between the mechanistic worldview and the neo-organicist worldview, the specific question addressed by the **fourth** part of The Shape of Lives to Come project is: Is TTS cogent and true, or not?

Correspondingly, one way of experimentally testing TTS would be to isolate and track the differences between mechanical, constrictive thought-shapers and organic, generative thought-shapers in people's thinking in the larger context of the social institutions to which they belong, by starting out with two sets of people, (i) those who belong to some (by hypothesis) destructive, deforming social institution and (ii) those who belong to some (by hypothesis) constructive, enabling social institution, and then (iii) asking the members of each group to respond by telling the experimenters—either verbally, by free-hand sketches, by selecting from an array of diagrams presented to them, or by mentioning the titles of books, movies, TV programs, etc.—what spontaneously and unreflectively pops into their minds as mental representations of allegories, analogies, blueprints, catechisms, diagrams, displays, icons, images, lay-outs, metaphors, mnemonics, models, outlines, parables, pictures, scenarios, schemata, sketches, spreadsheets, stereotypes, symbols, tableaux, and templates, and so-on, when they hear or read words or phrases like “life,” “death,” “good,” “evil,” “right,” “wrong,” “true,” “false,” “reality,” “appearance,” “consistent,” “inconsistent,” “follows from,” “does not follow from,” “fallacious,” “paradoxical,” “evidence,” “counter-evidence,” “meaningful,” “meaningless,” “authentic,” “inauthentic,” “virtuous,” “vicious,” “dignity,” “justice,” “identity,” “equality,” “inequality,” “oppression,” “authoritarianism,” “coercion,” “beautiful,” “ugly,” “free will,” “nature,” “organism,” “machine,” “health,” “illness,” “sanity,” “insanity,” “mind,” “body,” “consciousness,” “rationality,” “desire,” “emotion,” “happiness,” “unhappiness,” “pleasure,” “pain,” “enjoyment,” “suffering,” “work,” “play,” “leisure,” “person,” “people,” “humanity,” “poverty,” “wealth,” “capitalism,” “democracy,” “tyranny,” “socialism,” “anarchism,” “law,” “political liberty,” “society,” “government,” and so-on. Other possible experiments could test for the cognitive impacts of thought-shapers on the roles of these and similar concept-terms in thoughts expressed by inner speech, outer speech, and beliefs. At least in principle, these responses and cognitive impacts could also be paired with simultaneous neuroimaging (Amit, Hoeflin, Hamzah, and Federenko, 2017). The response-data, impact-data, and neuroimaging data could then be collected, organized,

and critically analyzed, with an eye to (i) determining the truth or falsity of TTS, and (ii) if TTS is true, then making some specific, useful proposals or suggestions to make about (iia) how people can start to think critically and also creatively about their own shaped thinking in moral life, philosophy, science, art/aesthetics, society, or politics, as a form of self-education, self-help, or self-transformation, and also (iib) at the same time how people can start to think critically and also creatively about devolving-&-exiting existing destructive, deforming social institutions, together with designing-&-implementing new constructive, enabling social institutions.

Therefore, the answer to this question—is TTS cogent and true, or not?—which a properly-conducted series of empirical studies could effectively determine, together with (providing TTS is true) actual implementations, are of genuine importance for the unfolding of our individual and collective human lives, for better or worse, and for humanity more generally. And, when this fact is taken together with the six short critical studies in contemporary professional academic philosophy that I’ve presented above, it also follows (i) that sharply unlike contemporary professional academic philosophy, life-shaping philosophy in the concrete format of The Shape of Lives to Come project is essentially relevant to humanity, and (ii) that life-shaping philosophy in the concrete format of The Shape of Lives to Come project can and indeed should be conducted and pursued independently and outside of professional academic philosophy. In turn, life-shaping philosophy in the concrete format of The Shape of Lives to Come project is an inherently *activist, anarcho- or borderless, autonomous, collaborative, and creative* mode of philosophy; riffing on Nietzsche and Wallace Stevens, it’s philosophy done in the real world with “a hammer and blue guitar” (Hanna, 2018e, 2020d), *not* philosophy inside an ivory bunker.

Or bounded in a nutshell: life-shaping philosophy in the concrete format of The Shape of Lives to Come project is not only a real and relevant alternative to professional academic philosophy, but also an elaboration of what I’ve called *rational anthropology* (Hanna, 2015a, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2018d), which is *neither* Analytic philosophy *nor* so-called “Continental philosophy,” and above all, it’s *the philosophy of the future* (Hanna, 2022a: esp. ch. 00).

## **IX. Conclusion: Material Conditions for the Real-World Implementation of Life-Shaping Philosophy, and A Multiple-Solutions Approach to The Income Problem**

By way of concluding this essay, I want to raise an amazingly hard question: *what are the material conditions for the real-world implementation of life-shaping philosophy?* This question

is “amazingly hard,” precisely because, unlike most hard questions in philosophy, it’s essentially *practical or pragmatic*, and *not* essentially conceptual or theoretical.

Nevertheless, taking this particular philosophical bull by the horns, it seems to me that *the following three material conditions need to be jointly satisfied* in order to implement life-shaping philosophy in the real world.

**First**, there must be a worldwide loosely-structured network of *philosophy research groups*, each one composed of a small number (say, at most 10-12) like-minded people who are all committed to the pursuit and practice of philosophy as a full-time, lifetime calling, and who freely and regularly associate with one another in order to forward this purpose, thereby carrying our various philosophical projects either individually or collaboratively, not only online but also in person, such that each such group (i) has its own website(s), (ii) has its own publishing and dissemination/distribution capability, not only electronic but also hard-copy, (iii) holds at least one in-person meeting per year for the entire group, and (iv) engages in some real-world philosophical collective activism that the group has committed itself to or decided upon: for example, online or in-person teaching, empirical research, or political organizing. Obviously, it would then also be necessary to have enough money to pay not only for these websites and for their publishing capability, but also for holding at least one in-person meeting per year for the entire group and for engaging in the group’s real-world philosophical collective activism.

**Second**, there must also be a large-scale, universally freely accessible, online platform that operates essentially beyond the control of the professional academy and its associated academic presses or other mainstream publishing venues, for sharing their research group’s individual and collaborative work, and for online discussion with other philosophers or philosophically-minded people, especially those who belong to other philosophy research groups. In fact, such a platform already exists, namely, *academia.edu* (Academia, 2022), and even though it’s for-profit, it’s not paywalled and anyone can belong to it and use it for free; nevertheless, in order to screen out distracting sidebar advertising and use some other “premium” features of the platform, there’s a roughly \$100.00 USD charge per year.

**Third**, and above all, there must be a reliable, sustainable, sufficient, and above all *no-strings-attached*, source of income in order (i) to pay for the group’s website(s), for their electronic and hard-copy publishing capability, for holding at least one in-person meeting per year for the entire group, and for their real-world philosophical collective activism, (ii) to pay for “premium” features of using the large-scale, universally freely accessible



online platform, and above all (iii) to provide an income adequate for all the purposes of ordinary living, for all full-time research-group members.

In the nature of things, and in full view of the real world's being the thoroughly *nonideal* natural and social place that it is, it's the third condition that's the most difficult, and perhaps—owing to the *no-strings-attached* requirement—even almost practically and pragmatically impossible, to satisfy. In order to be fully intellectually, morally, and politically *autonomous*, members of philosophy research groups *cannot*, without practical or pragmatic contradiction and self-stultification, “sell” either themselves as philosophers, or their specifically philosophical activities or productions, in any way whatsoever: as Plato correctly pointed out about the Sophists, *selling philosophy* means *selling out*. And philosophically-minded and highly generous billionaire, millionaire, or even non-millionaire no-strings-attaching patrons or philanthropic supporters of real, relevant, and extra-professional-academic philosophy are very thin on the ground indeed, and perhaps as rare as the good or honest person for whom Diogenes searched with his lamp. (—Unless, of course, *you*, the very reader of this sentence, are one such highly generous philosophically-minded person.) Therefore, satisfying the third material condition is an amazingly hard problem on its own.

*But*, perhaps the assumption *that there must be a single, universal solution to the income problem* is mistaken. For, there might nevertheless in fact be *a finite set of structurally-related yet slightly different specific solutions*. Indeed, there might be as many as *five* of these. In what follows, for convenience, I'll abbreviate the phrase “life-shaping philosophy” as “LSP,” and the phrase “someone who pursues and practices life-shaping philosophy as a full-time, lifetime calling” as “an LSP-er.”

**First**, an LSP-er might have *a dual vocation for LSP + X*, such that (i) *X is a kind of work that's able to be done in an independent way*, (ii) *X yields a living income on its own*, and (iii) *X is also highly compatible with or even fully complementary to LSP*: for example, one of the fine or applied arts—say, architectural design.

**Second**, a philosophically-minded patron or philanthropist *who wasn't in fact wealthy themselves* might nevertheless *be highly generously willing to work at a wage-paying job, and at the same time permanently support only one LSP-er*, for example, their life-partner or a protégé(e).

**Third**, someone might in fact *be independently wealthy themselves*, perhaps by inheritance, or perhaps by making a lot of money when they were relatively young and retiring early, *and then use that income in order either to become an LSP-er themselves for the*

*rest of their life, or permanently to support only one LSP-er, again for example, their life-partner or a protégé(e).*

**Fourth**, someone might have worked at a wage-paying job for many years, thereby accumulating an adequate pension and/or quantity of life-savings, *and then retire in order to become an LSP-er for the rest of their life.*

**Fifth**, and finally, if there ever came to be *a truly generous universal basic income*, aka TGUBI (see, e.g., Hanna, 2018d: part 3), in some society or societies, then *someone could use that TGUBI in order to be an LSP-er for the rest of their life.*

Moreover, under any one of those five specific solutions, the members of a philosophy research group could pool their own resources in order to pay for the group's website(s), for their electronic and hard-copy publishing capability, for holding at least one in-person meeting per year for the entire group, for their real-world philosophical collective activism, and for "premium" features of using the large-scale, universally freely accessible online platform.

Now, let's call the thesis that there exists a single, universal solution to the income problem, *the one-solution thesis*; and let's call the thesis that there exists a finite set of structurally-related yet slightly different specific solutions, *the multiple-solutions thesis*. Given what I've written above, I think it's plausibly arguable *that the one-solution thesis is false*, and also *that the multiple-solutions thesis is true*. If so, then since it's really possible for all of the three material conditions for LSP to be jointly satisfied, *life-shaping philosophy is really possible*, even despite the fact that we live, move, and have our being in a thoroughly nonideal natural and social real world.<sup>9, 10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> I'm very grateful to Otto Paans for thought-provoking correspondence about the amazingly hard question raised in section IX.

<sup>10</sup> In fact, there already exists a prototype of life-shaping philosophy, *Philosophy Without Borders*, a cosmopolitan group project for creating and universally freely sharing original philosophy, that *roughly* satisfies the three material conditions described in this section (PWB, 2013-2022).

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