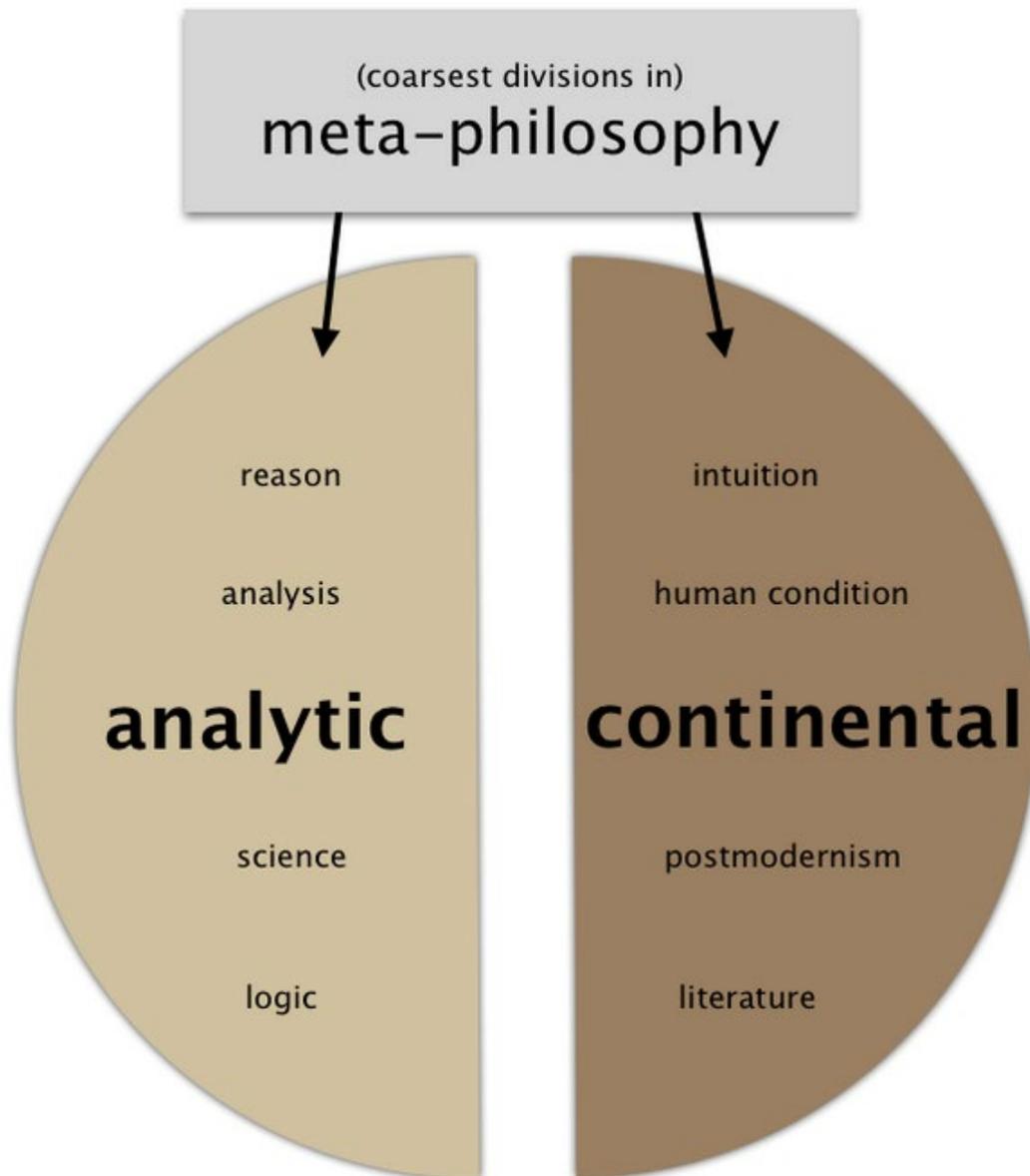


# The Analytic-Continental Divide, and How to Transcend It

*Robert Hanna*



(Murphy, 2021)

The online *Philosophical Papers* survey of mainstream professional academic philosophers conducted by David Bourget and David Chalmers in November-December 2009 and again in October/November 2020, showed that roughly 80% of the respondents self-

identified as belonging to the Analytic tradition, with little or no change in numbers across the two surveys (Bourget and Chalmers, 2014, 2023). The survey population included professional philosophers from 40 different countries, although principally the USA and the UK. Between those two surveys, in 2013, Michael Beaney, the editor of *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Analytic Philosophy*, wrote in Whig-historical mode that

Analytic philosophy is now generally seen as the dominant philosophical tradition in the English-speaking world, and has been so from at least the middle of the last century. Over the last two decades its influence has also been steadily growing in the non-English-speaking world. (Beaney, 2013: p. 3)

In a social-institutional sense, therefore, little or nothing has changed in professional philosophy since 2013. The Analytic tradition enjoys and exerts intellectual and social-institutional domination, and indeed cultural hegemony, over how philosophy is conceived and practiced in the recent and contemporary professional academy, worldwide.

In recent work, I've thoroughly criticized Analytic philosophy, and especially what I call *post-classical* Analytic philosophy—that is, the (mostly) Anglo-American tradition of Analytic philosophy from 1950 to the present—but also the (mostly) Anglo-European tradition of Analytic philosophy from the 1880s until 1950, *classical* Analytic philosophy (Hanna, 2021a, 2022a: sections II-IV). Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, *generally speaking*—so, I'm explicitly allowing for some exceptions here-&-there, as minor anomalies within the overall sweep of the Analytic tradition—is basically committed to the following doctrines.

**First**, Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *the rejection of idealism*, especially including *Kant's transcendental idealism* and *Hegel's absolute idealism*, and correspondingly, to *anti-Kantianism* and to *anti-Hegelianism* (see, e.g., Hanna, 2001: section 2.3, 2021a: chs. 1-4).

The Analytic tradition inherited this basic commitment from its early 20<sup>th</sup> century revolutionary rejections of German neo-Kantianism and British neo-Hegelianism.

Then these rejections, originally issued as burning, stirring philosophical calls-to-arms for the new modernist generation of anti-Victorian, platonistically-minded, logically-minded, mathematically-minded, or natural-scientifically-minded young Turks, like early G.E. Moore, early Bertrand Russell, early Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Frank Ramsey (see, e.g., Hanna, 2021a: chs. I-VIII), hardened into core dogmas, and as such, etched in philosophical stone, have survived for more than a century now,

transmitted through the blanket rejection of so-called “Continental philosophy,” from the 1980s onwards, which includes Kantian philosophy, Hegelian philosophy, classical Marxian/Marxist philosophy, German neo-Kantianism, British neo-Hegelianism, Bergsonian and Whiteheadian process philosophy, Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenology, Camus-style and Sartrean existentialism, French post-structuralism, neo-Marxist Frankfurt School critical theory, post-modernism especially including Rorty’s controversial version of Deweyan pragmatism—and also, in effect, every other non-Analytic kind of philosophy under the sun (see, e.g., Hanna, 2021a: ch. XVII, 2022b: section II).

**Second,** Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *modal monism*: namely, the thesis that there’s one and only one kind of necessary truth (see, e.g., Hanna, 2001: ch. 3, 2015: ch. 4).

In classical Analytic philosophy, the one and only kind of necessary truth was held to be *analytically* necessary truth, but this part of the doctrine was undermined by W.V.O. Quine’s devastatingly influential critique of the analytic-synthetic distinction in his 1951 essay, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism,” and in some thematically closely-related earlier and later essays (Quine, 1961, 1976b, 1976c); nevertheless, the modal monist commitment persists, usually under the rubric of “conceptual or logical necessity” (see, e.g., Chalmers, 1996: section 2.4).

**Third,** Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *the mechanistic worldview*, including the Standard Models of cosmology (i.e., Einsteinian general relativity) and particle physics (Bohrian atomic theory and the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics), the block universe and time-symmetry, the Conservation Laws and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Laws of thermodynamics, hence the ubiquitous and unceasing increase of entropy from the Big Bang unto the heat-death of the universe in an equilibrium state, and the in-principle Turing-computability of all basic material or physical quantities (see, e.g., Kim, 2005: ch. 6; Hanna, 2018b: ch. 2, 2024).

**Fourth,** Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *scientism*, that is, the valorization of the epistemic methods and results of the formal sciences, especially including logic, mathematics, and computational science, and of the natural sciences, especially including evolutionary biology and physics (see, e.g., Sellars, 1963a, 1963b, 1963c; Haack, 2017).

**Fifth,** Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *materialism* or *physicalism*, either *reductive* or *non-*

*reductive*, about human consciousness, intentionality, and rationality, which says that the conscious, intentional, and rational human mind is logically or nomologically supervenient on fundamentally physical facts or properties (see, e.g., Chalmers, 1996: chs. 1-4; Kim, 2005, 2011: chs. 3-6).

**Sixth**, Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *ethical or moral naturalism*, which says that *all normativity*, and especially all *ethical or moral normativity* (the “ought”) is logically or nomologically supervenient on purely natural facts or properties (the “is”), which, in turn, are logically or nomologically supervenient on fundamentally physical facts or properties (Lutz and Lenman, 2021; see also Hanna, 2018c: section 1.5).

**Seventh**, Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *conceptualism about representational content*, which says that all representational content is exclusively and strictly determined by our conceptual, discursive capacities (see, e.g., Dummett, 1993; McDowell, 1994, 2009).

**Eighth** and finally, Analytic philosophy, especially including post-classical Analytic philosophy, is basically committed to *the computational-functionalist model of rational human thinking*, which says that all rational human thoughts and thinking are strictly determined by Turing-computable algorithms that, in turn, are realized in the human brain by formal systems of causal input-output mappings to and from the human brain, which, again in turn, can *also* be realized by real-world digital computers, thereby producing *artificial intelligence* (see, e.g., Block, 1980: part 3; Kim, 2011: ch. 6).

Shortly after the turn of the millennium, I published a book in which I critically explored some of the deep connections between Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and the historical and conceptual foundations of the European and Anglo-American tradition of Analytic philosophy, from Gottlob Frege’s 1884 *Foundations of Arithmetic* to W.V.O. Quine’s 1951 “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” (Hanna, 2001). More specifically, in that book I argued (i) that Analytic philosophy emerged by virtue of its intellectual struggles with some of the central doctrines of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, (ii) that a careful examination of this foundational debate shows that Kant’s doctrines were never refuted but instead, for various reasons, only rejected, and (iii) that ironically enough it’s the foundations of *Analytic* philosophy, not the *Critical* philosophy, that are inherently shaky. In 2006, I followed that up with another book—actually the two books were originally parts of the same 800- or 900-page, single-spaced, monster-manuscript—which extended the same general line of argument, by critically exploring some of the equally deep connections between the *Critical* philosophy and Analytic philosophy from 1950 to the

end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Hanna, 2006). And in 2008, I published a long essay in which I wrote this:

Alfred North Whitehead ... quotably wrote in 1929 that "the safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato" [Whitehead, 1929/1978: p. 39]. The same could be said, perhaps with even greater accuracy, of the twentieth-century Euro-American philosophical tradition and Immanuel Kant. In this sense the twentieth century was the post-Kantian century.

Twentieth-century philosophy in Europe and the USA was dominated by two distinctive and (after 1945) officially opposed traditions: the analytic tradition and the phenomenological tradition. Very simply put, the analytic tradition was all about logic and analyticity, and the phenomenological tradition was all about consciousness and intentionality. Ironically enough however, despite their official Great Divide, both the analytic and the phenomenological traditions were essentially continuous and parallel critical developments from an earlier dominant neo-Kantian tradition. This, by the end of the nineteenth century, had vigorously reasserted the claims of Kant's transcendental idealism against Hegel's absolute idealism and the other major systems of post-Kantian German Idealism, under the unifying slogan "Back to Kant!" So again, ironically enough, both the analytic and phenomenological traditions were alike founded on, and natural outgrowths from, Kant's Critical Philosophy.

By the end of the twentieth century, however – and this time sadly rather than ironically – both the analytic and phenomenological traditions had not only explicitly rejected their own Kantian foundations and roots but also had effectively undermined themselves philosophically, even if by no means institutionally. On the one hand the analytic tradition did so by abandoning its basic methodological conception of analysis as the process of logically decomposing propositions into conceptual or metaphysical "simples" as the necessary preliminary to a logical reconstruction of the same propositions, and by also jettisoning the corresponding idea of a sharp, exhaustive, and significant "analytic-synthetic" distinction. The phenomenological tradition on the other hand abandoned its basic methodological conception of phenomenology as "seeing essences" with a priori certainty under a "transcendental-phenomenological reduction," and also jettisoned the corresponding idea of a "transcendental ego" as the metaphysical ground of consciousness and intentionality.

One way of interpreting these sad facts is to say that just insofar as analytic philosophy and phenomenology alienated themselves from their Kantian origins, they stultified themselves. This is the first unifying thought behind this [essay], and it is a downbeat one. The second unifying thought, which however is contrastively upbeat, is that both the analytic and phenomenological traditions, now in conjunction instead of opposition, could rationally renew themselves in the twenty-first century by critically recovering their

Kantian origins and by seriously re-thinking and re-building their foundations in the light of this critical recovery. Or in other words: *Forward to Kant*.

In Davos, Switzerland, from 17 March to 6 April 1929, an “International University Course,” sponsored by the Swiss, French, and German governments, brought together the leading neo-Kantian Ernst Cassirer, famous author of the multi-volume *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1925, 1927, 1929), and the soon-to-be leading phenomenologist Martin Heidegger, famous author of *Being and Time* (1927), in an official and more or less explicit attempt to bring about a philosophical reconciliation between Marburg (or science-oriented) neo-Kantianism and phenomenology. The soon-to-be leading logical positivist Rudolf Carnap was there too, along with many other professors and students from across Europe. And a good time was had by all: “It appears that the Davos encounter itself took place in atmosphere of extraordinarily friendly collegiality” [Friedman, 2000: p. 5].

The key sessions at Davos were two lecture series by Cassirer and Heidegger, followed by a public disputation between them. Strikingly, both the lectures and the disputation dealt with the question of how to interpret the *Critique of Pure Reason* correctly. In other words, it was all about Kant and the neo-Kantian origins of phenomenology. Now for this reason it can be argued, and indeed has been argued, that the Davos conference was emblematic of the death-by-mitosis of the neo-Kantian tradition, during the 1930s, into two fundamentally distinct and irreconcilable philosophical traditions: the analytic tradition (whose paradigm case was logical positivism), and the phenomenological tradition (whose paradigm case was existential phenomenology).

According to this historical reconstruction, the basic disagreements between analysis and phenomenology were latent in the period 1900–30, during which ... Moore, Russell, and Carnap all started their philosophical careers as neo-Kantians, went on to reject neo-Kantianism and Kant by means of foundational work in philosophical logic and the influence of the contemporary exact sciences, and then correspondingly worked out various new logically-driven conceptions of a priori analysis. And then, so the story goes, the latent eventually became manifest, and the post-Kantian stream of philosophical influence consisting of Brentano → Husserl/ Meinong → Heidegger was officially divided from the other post-Kantian stream consisting of Moore → Russell → Wittgenstein → Carnap, basically because the phenomenologists rejected the Frege–Russell conception of pure logic while contrariwise the analysts affirmed pure logic. And never the twain shall meet.

But although this makes a conveniently neat story, it is at least arguably not quite true to the historico-philosophical facts. The highly collegial atmosphere at Davos was no polite put-on. Obviously there were some important differences and disagreements between logical positivism and existential phenomenology. Nevertheless Heidegger took Carnap very seriously as a philosopher well into the 1930s, and Carnap also took Heidegger very seriously as a philosopher well into the 1930s. (As did Wittgenstein, and as also did Gilbert

Ryle at Oxford—who, according to Michael Dummett, “began his career as an exponent of Husserl for British audiences and used to lecture on Bolzano, Brentano, Frege, Meinong, and Husserl” [Dummett, 1993: p. ix] throughout the 1920s and 1930s.) For his part, Heidegger was every bit as dismissive of traditional metaphysics as Carnap was. And while it is quite true that Heidegger significantly criticized the Fregean and Russellian pure logic of the *Begriffsschrift* and *Principia Mathematica*, and challenged its metaphysical commitments, so too did Carnap; after all, that is the main point of the *Logical Syntax of Language*.

Furthermore, objectively considered, Heidegger’s existential phenomenology is not essentially more different from or opposed to pure logic, or logical positivism for that matter, than is Dewey’s pragmatism, which despite its radical critical philosophical implications ... cohabited very comfortably with mainstream analytic philosophy in the USA after 1945. Nor, objectively speaking, is Heidegger’s existential phenomenology essentially more different from or opposed to either pure logic, or logical positivism, than is Wittgenstein’s later philosophy as expressed in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), which despite its equally radical critical philosophical implications, also cohabited very comfortably with mainstream analytic philosophy in the USA and England after 1945.

So it appears that the Great Divide between analytic philosophy and phenomenology did not actually happen in the 1930s. And it also appears that the Divide is not the consequence of any fundamental philosophical disagreements between analysts and phenomenologists about pure logic. On the contrary, it appears that the Divide happened almost entirely after 1945, and that it was the joint result of the three following factors:

(1) The sharply divisive cultural politics of anti-fascism and anti-Communism in Anglo-American countries after World War II: Heidegger publicly and notoriously supported the Nazis in the mid-thirties; Vienna Circle exiles in the USA were understandably very eager to avoid being persecuted during the McCarthy Communist-trials era for their pre-war radical-socialist and Communist sympathies, so were generally playing it safe (Carnap however being a notable exception) by not rocking the boat; and the leading French phenomenologists Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty were both closely politically associated with the radical Left.

(2) The sharply divisive debate about the cultural-political significance and philosophical implications of the exact sciences after World War II; taking his cue from Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, but also reflecting on the worsening cultural-political situation in Europe, Husserl had seriously criticized the epistemological and metaphysical foundations of the exact sciences in his *Crisis of European Sciences*; and then taking his cue directly from Husserl, Merleau-Ponty further deepened and developed this critique in his *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945).

(3) The sharply divisive struggle for control of the major Anglo-American philosophy departments after World War II: given the aging and retirement of historically-trained philosophers, neo-Kantians, and neo-Hegelians, it was going to be either the analysts or the phenomenologists who took over, but not both.

In other words, I am suggesting that although the Great Divide between analytic philosophy and phenomenology is real enough, nevertheless it didn't happen until after 1945, and was essentially the result of cultural-political factors. (Hanna, 2008: pp. 149-150, 174-176)

My line in the late 00s, then, was that both Analytic and Continental philosophy are nothing but outgrowths from and spins on Kantian philosophy: a series of footnotes to Kant. Or otherwise put, they are at bottom nothing but *Kantalytic* philosophy and *Kantidental* philosophy. So now it's time for everyone to recognize this and go *forward to Kant!* And I continue to think that I am right about all this.

But there's still an important leftover problem. Even supposing for a moment that I'm indeed right that all philosophy since Kant is really, at bottom, all about Kant's philosophy and Kantian philosophy, then what explains the robustly persistent opinion amongst contemporary professional academic philosophers that there is a genuine, important, and even unbridgeable difference between Analytic and Continental philosophy? During the eighteen years since that essay appeared—alongside other projects—I've worked on elaborating and extending those ideas, and writing them up, thereby completing a twenty-year trilogy about the conceptual, epistemic, and metaphysical foundations, history, and fate of Analytic philosophy, all from a Kantian point of view, that began with *Kant and the Foundations of Analytic Philosophy* (Hanna, 2001), and *Kant, Science, and Human Nature* (Hanna, 2006), and concluded with *The Fate of Analysis: Analytic Philosophy From Frege To The Ash-Heap of History, And Toward A Radical Kantian Philosophy of The Future* (Hanna, 2021a).

In the early 1980s, Richard Rorty wrote:

In saying that "analytic philosophy" now has only a stylistic and sociological unity, I am not suggesting that analytic philosophy is a bad thing, or is in bad shape. (Rorty, 1982b: p. 217)

Now forty years later, in the mid-2020s, with 20-20 hindsight and then some, I'm going one or two radical steps beyond Rorty by suggesting *and* asserting, not only "that analytic philosophy is ... in bad shape," but also that it's "a bad thing." And this is so, **first**, because classical Analytic philosophy was theoretically hobbled by Kurt Gödel's profoundly important first and second incompleteness theorems in the early 1930s,

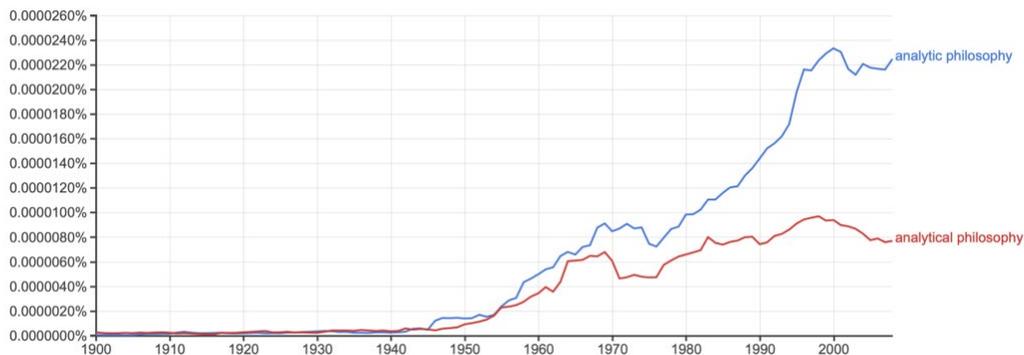
which, when they're taken together with Alfred Tarski's semantic conception of truth in formalized languages, amount to a logico-mathematical 1-2 punch that collectively killed the classical Frege-Whitehead-Russell logicist project for reducing mathematics to logic—i.e., Gödel and Tarski collectively showed that every attempt to formalize the concept of truth leads to contradiction (Gödel, 1931/1967; Tarski, 1943, 1956), **second**, because what remained of classical Analytic philosophy as a serious and substantive philosophical program was in fact effectively brought to an end in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by W.V.O. Quine's devastating critique of the analytic-synthetic distinction—indeed, the demise of “the old analysis” was even explicitly noted by J.O. Urmson a decade after the end of World War II (Urmson, 1956), **third**, because of the dogmatic obsession of post-Quinean, post-classical Analytic philosophy with scientific naturalism after 1950, and above all, **fourth**, because of post-classical Analytic philosophy's spiraling descent into academic hyper-professionalism and mind-manacled complicity with the neoliberal nation-state and what I call the *military-industrial-digital complex*, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, *therefore fifth*, the 140-year tradition of Analytic philosophy has actually bottomed out and burned up from within, existing now only as a dominant and indeed culturally hegemonic social-institutional husk and Potemkin village inside professional academic philosophy, that most urgently needs to be and ought to be replaced by something essentially different and essentially better.

By the end of World War II, the early Cold War, and the period of the sociopolitical triumph of advanced or late capitalism and technocracy in the USA, classical Analytic philosophy had triumphed in a social-institutional sense; Whiteheadian 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 all-purpose social-institutional Other and professional academic slave of Analytic philosophy (Akehurst, 2008, 2011; Bloor, 2017; Katzav, 2018; Katzav and Vaesen, 2017; McCumber, 2001, 2016; Rorty, 1982b; Vrahimis, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2021; Wilshire, 2002).

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, for all the reasons I’ve provided in earlier chapters of *The Fate of Analysis* (Hanna, 2021a). 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<sup>1</sup> shortly after the smash-hit appearances of Richard Rorty’s two highly controversial books,

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<sup>1</sup> 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](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).

*Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* in 1979, and *Consequences of Pragmatism* in 1982. 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 proposal that there’s an important connection between the appearance and impact of Rorty’s books *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Rorty, 1979) and *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Rorty, 1982a), 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 by means of creating its own social-institutional Other, so-called “Continental philosophy”—until the late 1970s and early 1980s, when Rorty famously or notoriously pointed out these facts.

In any case, by the early 1980s, The Great Divide between post-classical Analytic philosophy and so-called “Continental philosophy” was fully in place; and Rorty and others more or less systematically fused post-structuralism, deconstructionism, and what was left of Deweyan pragmatism (Rorty, 1982a; Hanna, 1983, 2020) into philosophical *post-modernism* (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. Po-Mo also gradually fused with what was left of 1970s New Left and emerging identity politics in the USA, thereby creating, inside the American professional academy, the social-institutional powerhouse of *identitarian multiculturalism* by the mid-90s (Rorty, 1994). More precisely, identitarian multiculturalism is the ideological patchwork composed of what I’ve acronymistically called *PARNS* (i.e., postmodernist anti-rational nihilist skepticism), social justice activism, post-colonialism, Foucauldianism, critical race theory, neo-neo-Marxism, and posthumanism. Most importantly, it had become a juggernaut by the turn of the millennium, finally achieving a social-institutional domination and hegemony of its own by the end of first two decades of the 21st century, especially inside the professional academy (Mann, 2019). By 1950, existential phenomenology had been discredited by Heidegger’s disastrous association with the Nazis (Sluga, 1993), together with Sartre’s and Merleau-Ponty’s association with Marxism; and during the early Cold War and McCarthy era from the early 1950s into the early 60s, the professional academy was gradually purged of any remaining “Continental

philosophers” who might have been brave enough to challenge the hegemony of the post-classical Analytic mainstream (McCumber, 2001, 2016). So by the 1980s—mainly in order to hold onto their comfortable tenured jobs, upper middle-class lifestyles, and professional academic social-status—like tragically unfortunate house-slaves who have fully “internalized the oppressor” (Gare, 2021), the remaining so-called “Continental philosophers” inside the professional academy gave up their trouble-making ways, gradually outsourced leftist Existentialism to writers, artists, and literary critics outside the professional academy, replacing their erstwhile neo-Marxism or anarcho-socialism with a politically harmless “life-style” radicalism in the post-1968 French academic mode, while also jumping on the French-driven theoretical bandwagons of post-structuralism, deconstructionism, Po-Mo, and posthumanism.

In 1996, all these bandwagons ran headlong into *The Sokal Hoax*. Alan Sokal, a physics professor at NYU, submitted a deliberately nonsensical article to the cultural studies journal *Social Text*, which was then accepted and duly published (Sokal, 1996). The article “argued” that quantum gravity was a linguistic and social construct. Three weeks later, Sokal revealed that the article was a hoax, and that the entire setup was to test the intellectual integrity and rigor of the emerging postmodernist elite. Professional academic “Continental philosophers” were, thereby, publicly shamed and scandalized by The Hoax. An anticipation of this public shaming and scandalizing had already been delivered in the 1970s and 80s by the post-classical Analytic philosopher John Searle, via his extended vituperative debate with Jacques Derrida in the pages of various journals and books. In this way, 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.”

In a recent book, Schuringa argues that Analytic philosophy has always been explicitly apolitical and implicitly aligned with centrism or right-wing politics—for example, with McCarthyism in the 1950s—and with neoliberal technocratic capitalism (Schuringa, 2025). But in a scathing critique of Schuringa’s book, EJ Spode, aka Peter Ludlow, argues that on the contrary many Analytic philosophers were and are leftists and even Marxists or neo-Marxists. I agree with Ludlow that many individual Analytic philosophers have been Leftists. And I agree with Schuringa and Ludlow alike that the Analytic-Continental Gap should now be decisively and finally closed, and that philosophers of all stripes should jettison their dogmatic, ideological squabbles and work together against contemporary Trumpism and neo-fascism everywhere. But it’s also true that to the extent that professional academic Analytic philosophy, as a *social institution*, has been and still is profoundly scientistic, it’s explicitly or implicitly aligned with the

military-industrial-digital complex and neoliberal technocratic capitalism: so to that extent, I agree with Schuringa. Ludlow, by contrast, focuses on the political commitments of *individual* Analytic philosophers, not on professional academic Analytic philosophy as a hegemonic social institution, so he mostly overlooks the deleterious impact of professionalism and academicism on the Analytic tradition; and of course professionalism and academicism have also had a similarly malign impact on the Continental tradition inside higher education. For a detailed, extensive, and long-running critique of professional academic philosophy as such, whether Analytic or Continental, see (APP, 2013-2026).

Now, what can be done? If I'm correct that The Great Divide between Analytic philosophy and Continental philosophy is essentially an artifact of the social-institutional structure of the professional academy in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the first three decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, then it follows that the only way to transcend The Divide is for philosophy to situate its center *outside* the professional academy. For most philosophers, that would mean *exiting* the professional academy altogether and becoming philosophical nomads. What would a nomadic, post-Divide philosophy look like? As I've indicated, my line since the 2000s has been that both Analytic and Continental philosophy alike are nothing but outgrowths from and spins on Kantian philosophy: a series of footnotes to Kant; at bottom, nothing but *Kantalytic* philosophy and *Kantidental* philosophy. Therefore, the future progress of philosophy consists in facing up to its Kantian origins, and creating a critically refined and updated version of Kantian philosophy that's centered outside the professional academy.

My own preferred model of this extra-professional-academic refined and updated Kantian philosophy is what I call *rational anthropology* (Hanna, 2015, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2018d). Now, by a point-by-point set of diametric contrasts with Analytic philosophy, rational anthropology is basically committed to the following doctrines.

**First**, rational anthropology is basically committed to *weak transcendental idealism*, which says that (i) necessarily, the basic metaphysical and ontological structures of the manifestly real world conform to the basic innate structures of our rational human cognitive and practical capacities, especially including our *sensible* capacities for first-order consciousness, affect or emotion (including desire, feeling, and passion), sense-perception, memory, and imagination, and also our *discursive* capacities for conceptualization, thinking, self-consciousness, and rationality, (ii) necessarily, if the manifestly real world exists, then if sensible, discursive, conscious, and self-conscious rational human cognizers *were* to exist, they *would be* able to cognize that world veridically to some salient extent, which in turn is fully consistent with sensible, discursive, conscious, and self-conscious rational human cognizers *not* actually existing at any given

time, and (iii) the existence of the manifestly real world necessitates *the real possibility* of sensible, discursive, conscious, and self-conscious rational human cognizers, but *not* their actual existence at any given time (Hanna, 2015: section 7.3, 2024: ch. 7).

**Second**, rational anthropology is basically committed to *apriorist modal dualism*, which says that there are *two irreducibly different kinds of necessary truth*: analytic and synthetic a priori (Hanna, 2001: chs. 3-5, 2015: ch. 4).

**Third**, rational anthropology is basically committed to *the neo-organicist worldview*, which says (i) that everything in nature is fundamentally processual, purposive, and self-organizing, and essentially centered on (ia) the organism and (ib) the metaphysical continuity between mind and organismic life, especially as represented in the non-Standard models of cosmology and particle physics provided by (ic) Prigogine-style non-equilibrium thermodynamics (id) Bohmian quantum mechanics, and by the cosmological-topological model of (ie) what I call *the rubber-sheet cosmos*, and (ii) that all mechanical facts, properties, and systems are essentially *abstractions from*, and logically or nomologically strongly supervene on, fundamentally organic facts, properties, and systems (Bohm, 1952; Bohm and Hiley, 1975; Prigogine, 1997; Goldstein, 2017; Torday, Miller Jr, and Hanna, 2020; Hanna and Paans, 2020; and Hanna, 2024: esp. chs. 12-14).

**Fourth**, rational anthropology is basically committed not only to the *rejection* of scientism, but also to the *affirmation* of all the formal and natural sciences precisely insofar as they fully bear witness to their own inherent limits, by means of what I call *creative piety*, and thereby fully conform to the neo-organicist worldview (Hanna and Paans, 2022; Hanna, 2024).

**Fifth**, rational anthropology is basically committed to *the rejection of materialism or physicalism*, whether reductive or non-reductive, as well as to the equal and opposite *rejection of dualism*, whether ontological dualism or property dualism, by virtue of its *affirmation of the essential embodiment theory*, which asserts not only (i) the irreducibility of human consciousness, cognition or intentionality, self-consciousness, and rationality, but also (ii) their necessary and complete embodiment in appropriately complex living human organisms, precisely insofar as (iii) they're nothing more and nothing less than the causally efficacious global dynamic immanent forms or structures of those very organisms (Hanna and Maiese, 2009; Hanna, 2011).

**Sixth**, rational anthropology is basically committed to *ethical or moral anti-naturalism*, but *without* platonism (Hanna, 2018c: esp. chs. 1-2, 2022b).

**Seventh**, rational anthropology is basically committed to *essentialist content non-conceptualism* about representational content, together with *the theory of thought-shapers*, which conjunctively say (i) that *not all* representational content is strictly determined by our conceptual capacities, (ii) that *some* representational content is strictly determined by our non-conceptual capacities, (iii) that this content is *essentially distinct* from conceptual content, (iv) that this essentially non-conceptual content can also *inherently combine* with conceptual content in order to form the propositional content of thoughts, and (v) that in so doing, essentially non-conceptual content *shapes* those thoughts by partially causally determining, forming, and normatively guiding those thoughts and human thinking more generally (Hanna, 2015: ch. 2, 2021b; Hanna and Paans, 2021).

**Eighth**, and finally, rational anthropology is basically committed to *the epigenetic model of rational human thinking*. So, what do I mean by that?

The doctrine of *epigenesis* (as opposed to the doctrine of *preformationism*<sup>2</sup>) says (i) that all organic development occurs by uncomputable increases in the complexity of formal or structural organization of organic systems over time, and (ii) that in order to account for this fact, it's necessary to postulate the existence of an initially undeveloped yet innately specified *proto-state* of each organic system—for example, an embryo or seed—such that in this proto-state there's an inherent potentiality or power spontaneously to operate in such a way as to generate irreducibly novel forms and structures, both inside itself (endogenously) and also outside itself (exogenously) in its local environment, in response to various environmental causal inputs, stimuli, and contextual conditions, that's inherently and self-regulatively aimed at some overall guiding goal or purpose: for example, homeostatic self-maintenance, or survival (see, e.g., Mason, chs. 30-32; Weber, 2018).

Generalized to the rational human mind, the epigenetic model of rational human thinking proposed by rational anthropology says that the basic cognitive and practical activities and products of the environmentally-triggered and context-sensitive spontaneously generative operations of the innately specified proto-state of the essentially embodied rational human mind are irreducibly *creative* and *uncomputable*, not merely *recursive* and *computable*, and that therefore *they cannot be realized by digital computers*, although the epigenetic rational human mind is *also* capable, in a *non-basic* way, of generating recursive computable activity and products as well, under certain special conditions and restrictions (Hanna and Paans, 2022; Hanna, 2025: ch. 2).

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<sup>2</sup> The doctrine of *preformationism* says that all organic systems are formally or structurally complete in their original state, and develop only by the computable and naturally mechanical addition of bulk over time.

Otherwise and more simply put, the epigenetic model of the rational human mind says that essentially embodied rational human minds are inherently capable, by means of their cognitive and practical activities, of generating, applying, and following *irreducibly new rules*, even, and especially, *over transfinite, non-recursive domains*, not merely of following Turing-computable *algorithms* that operate recursively over finite or infinite *only-denumerable domains*: so, rational human animals are *a-priori-rule-creating organisms*. Or, most simply put: *our minds are not machines, they're inherently creative forms of life*.

This brief summary of rational anthropology is focused on presenting rational anthropology in direct dialectical and diametric opposition to Analytic philosophy. For this reason, it also naturally leaves out *other* core features of rational anthropology that don't fit neatly into this presentational format; and in particular, it leaves out rational anthropology's basic *moral* and *sociopolitical* commitments, which are *dignitarian* and *anarcho-socialist* (Hanna, 2018c, 2018d: part 2). But of course, acceptable models of philosophy other than Analytic philosophy and Kant-inspired rational anthropology, with different moral and sociopolitical commitments, also exist or at least are possible. And even *non-Kantian* alternatives to the Analytic-Continental straitjacket will mark genuine progress in philosophy, provided that they're centered outside the professional academy (see, e.g., Rothfeld, 2020, 2024; Chatterjee, 2024).

In any case, it's high time for everyone who truly cares about real philosophy and wants to pursue it as a full-time, lifetime calling, to exit the professional academy and transcend The Great Divide.<sup>3</sup>

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