

# Philosophical Amnesia

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Many Individuals currently identified within the academic world as “professional”<sup>1</sup> philosophers’ spend a great deal of time arguing about the meaning of their discipline. The situation has recently become so critical that the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, for example, self-consciously excludes the term ‘philosophy’ from its list of entries.<sup>2</sup> An outsider might get the impression that members of the profession suffer from a recurrent kind of intellectual amnesia<sup>3</sup> and need constantly to be reminded about who they are and what their function is.

The simple response to this predicament is that most of us do know what philosophy is. The present puzzlement if not obfuscation is the result of three factors: (1) intellectual flaws in the two dominant movements in the profession today (analytic philosophy and deconstruction); (2) the locus of those movements is the university; and

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This is a reflection of the fact that ‘philosophy’ is now identified with an academic department in the modern university and that these academics belong to academic associations. This has important consequences that we shall discuss below.

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See Robert Audi (ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (Cambridge: 1995), preface, xxv–xxvi. Audi believes that the meaning of the term will emerge from consideration of the particular entries. In effect, this privileges one of the alternatives I discuss below: the notion that the whole becomes intelligible by accumulated knowledge of the parts is a specifically Aristotelian (to be defined below) inductivist assumption. The *Blackwell Companion to Philosophy* (1996) has two entries on contemporary Philosophy but none on ‘philosophy’ per se. The online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* also lacks an entry on ‘philosophy’. The *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* has no entry. The *Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (1995) has a substantial entry by Antony Quinton which acknowledges the controversy surrounding the term. The older (1967) *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards, has a long and useful entry by John Passmore, but it too acknowledges controversy.

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In less charitable moments I am inclined to identify the intellectual malady as a form of ‘Alzheimer’s disease’ since many of those afflicted occasionally seem to regain a sense of personal identity, sometimes brilliantly so. Seriously, this is a helpful metaphor in that I do believe there is a common ground that is occasionally recaptured and then lost again.

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(3) the university has become the home of self-alienated intellectuals.<sup>4</sup> We shall have more to say about this later.

The complex response to this situation can be summarized in the following argument:

1. There are alternative and conflicting perspectives<sup>5</sup> on what constitutes philosophy.
2. These views are articulated within the framework of a larger conversation<sup>6</sup> or cultural context.
3. These conflicting perspectives on what constitutes philosophy have been present from the very beginning of the history of the discipline.
4. Within this seemingly vast variety of perspectives we can identify three fairly stable patterns in constant dialogue with each other.
5. Each of these three alternatives provides both an account for why there are alternative and conflicting views, that is, on why (1) is the case; proponents of each of the recognized perspectives in (1) provides an account of the alleged errors in the other perspectives.
6. There is at present no consensual<sup>7</sup> or conceivable way in which to adjudicate among these perspectives. That is, there is no set

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Eric Hoffer, 'Men of Words,' 130–142 in *The True Believer* (2002); E. Shils, 'The Traditions of Intellectuals,' in Huszar (ed.) *The Intellectuals* (The Free Press 1960); Leszek Kolakowski, 'The Intellectuals' in *Modernity on Endless Trial* (University of Chicago Press 1997); Julien Benda, *The Betrayal of the Intellectuals* (2007); Raymond Aron, *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (2006).

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We shall identify these perspectives below.

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The term 'conversation' is borrowed from Michael Oakeshott, whose views have profoundly influenced this essay.

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Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979) and *Consequences of Pragmatism* (1982); A. MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* (1981); – Jean-Francois Lyotard, 'Introduction: The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,' 1979: xxiv–xxv. 'Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences: but that progress in turn presupposes it. To the obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation corresponds, most notably, the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institution which in the past relied on it. The narrative function is losing its functors its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements—narrative, but

also denotative, prescriptive, descriptive, and so on [...] Where, after the metanarratives, can legitimacy reside?

of premises on which all of the disputants can agree and from which we can deduce a specific and contentful conception of philosophy.<sup>8</sup>

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Tris Engelhardt has made the following powerful case against the possibility of a philosophical resolution of moral diversity. It applies as well to why there is no resolution of the conflict among rival versions of philosophy. It is not simply the case that there are significant moral disagreements about substantive issues. Many if not most of these controversies do not appear to be resolvable through sound rational argument. On the one hand, many of the controversies depend upon different foundational metaphysical commitments. As with most metaphysical controversies resolution is possible only through the granting of particular initial premises and rules of evidence. On the other hand, even when foundational metaphysical issues do not appear to be at stake, the debates turn on different rankings of the good. Again, resolution does not appear to be feasible without begging the question, arguing in a circle, or engaging in infinite regress. One cannot appeal to consequences without knowing how to rank the impact of different approaches with regard to different moral interests (liberty, equality, prosperity, security, etc). Nor can one without controversy appeal to preference satisfaction unless one already grants how one will correct preferences and compare rational versus impassioned preferences, as well as calculate the discount rate for preferences over time. Appeals to disinterested observers, hypothetical choosers, or hypothetical contractors will not avail either. If such decision makers are truly disinterested, they will choose nothing. To choose in a particular way, they must be fitted out with a particular moral sense or thin theory of the good. Intuitions can be met with contrary intuitions. Any particular balancing of claims can be countered with a different approach to achieving a balance. In order to appeal for guidance to any account of moral rationality one must already have secured content for that moral rationality. See *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics* (2000).

Not only is there a strident moral diversity defining debates regarding all substantive issues, but there is in principle good reason to hold that these debates cannot be brought to closure in a principled fashion through sound rational argument. There does not seem to be a rational way of securing moral agreement in our culture. The partisans of each and every position find themselves embedded within their own discourses so that they are unable to step outside of their own respective hermeneutic circles without embracing new and divergent premises and rules of inferences. Many traditional thinkers find themselves in precisely this position. They are so enmeshed in their own metaphysics and epistemology, so convinced that they are committed to 'reason' when what they are committed to is a particular set of premises and rules, so able to see the 'flaws' in the positions of others who do not accept the same rules, that they quite literally do not understand the alternative positions or even how there can be other positions. More important, they fail to understand the character of contemporary moral debate. What

7. My claim is that the recognition of the foregoing is a profound truth that (a) tells us something important about ourselves, and (b) has normative implications for the practice of philosophy as a discipline. This claim is an instance of one of the perspectives.<sup>9</sup>

### Alternative Accounts of Philosophy<sup>10</sup>

To say, as I do, that there are alternative accounts of philosophy is to recognize the following historical claims: (a) the classical Greeks first articulated alternative accounts of philosophy; (b) much of the classical intellectual inheritance, including these philosophical viewpoints, was preserved as well as incorporated by Christianity and then transmitted to modernity; (c) the vast variety of perspectives can be fairly neatly categorized as one of three that I identify as Platonic, Aristotelian, and Copernican; (d) all philosophical movements up until now can be explained by reference to this Platonism-Aristotelianism-Copernicanism categorization; (e) the alternative perspectives have an on-going history of interaction. This dialogue is integral to the history of philosophy; it explains why philosophy can never truly distance itself from its history;<sup>11</sup> and why part of the great philosophic conversation is the question ‘What is Philosophy?’

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is peculiar about contemporary moral debate is not just the incessant controversy but the absence of any basis for bringing the controversies to a conclusion in a principled fashion. Philosophy has gone into a deep coma, or a state of clinical death.

<sup>9</sup> It is the Copernican perspective to be addressed below. This entire essay is self-consciously Copernican. Hence, it follows the dictum that philosophy ‘leads to no conclusions which we did not in some sense know already.’ (Collingwood, *Philosophical Method*, 161). Note MacIntyre’s observation that ‘A tradition then not only embodies the narrative of an argument, but is only to be recovered by an argumentative retelling of that narrative which will itself be in conflict with other argumentative retellings’ *The Tasks of Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2006), 12.

<sup>10</sup> The following account and categorization is historical. While I do attempt to draw some generalizations from the historical record, all such generalizations reflect the past and make no claim to any other status. The charge that this is merely a set of historical observations and of no philosophical significance is itself an expression of the Aristotelian perspective.

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‘Philosophy...has this peculiarity, that reflection upon it is part of itself.’  
 Collingwood, *Philosophical Method* (1933), 1.  
 Platonism<sup>12</sup>

1. The model is geometry.
2. A good explanation, therefore, is a deduction from first principles or axioms.<sup>13</sup>
3. First principles are a priori:
  - a. not derived from experience;
  - b. pass the logical test of non-self-contradiction.
4. The explanation of the physical world is by reference to an ideal world of mathematical forms imperfectly copied by our experience (e.g. point, line).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>

Recall Whitehead’s remark that all philosophy is a footnote to Plato. The pre-Socratics including Pythagoras did not work out fully formed views but they anticipated and inspired both Plato and Aristotle.

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There is no explanation for why deduction from first principles is the standard model of explanation in philosophy other than the historical fact that Plato took Pythagoras and geometry so seriously. See Toulmin, *Human Understanding* (1972).

<sup>14</sup>

‘Platonic Metaphysics: In the Platonic tradition (e.g. Plato, Plotinus, Porphyry, Augustine, Descartes, Leibniz, Berkeley, and Frege, to mention just a few) ... the world of everyday experience cannot be understood on its own terms. As a consequence, a distinction is introduced between the world of appearance (or everyday experience) and ultimate reality. Platonic metaphysics is marked by a series of derivative dualisms. In its modern form, it is claimed within Platonism that although science can account for the world of appearance, science cannot account either for itself or for ultimate reality. Hence, metaphysics is a kind of non-empirical pre-science. Ultimate reality is conceptual or logical, (consisting of forms, ideas, or universals, etc.), not a system of physical objects. The conceptual entities that comprise ultimate reality are related to each other in logical fashion. Platonism, moreover, rejects any distinction between a thing and its properties. A thing is a particular set of properties (ideas, forms, etc). Platonists do distinguish between essence (meaning) and existence (reference) as well as insist upon the irreducible and fundamental nature of meaning. The distinction between meaning and reference is derivative from the distinction between ultimate reality (which is conceptual) and the world of everyday experience. Finally, Platonists insist upon the dualism of subject and object, a dualism in which the subject’s knowledge of itself is more fundamental than the subject’s knowledge of objects.’ Capaldi, *The Enlightenment Project in the Analytic Conversation* (1998), 112–113. See also

Steven Weinberg, 'Nature, as we observe it, is but an imperfect representation of its own underlying laws.' New York Times, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1974, 56.

5. The social world is always construed as utopian (e.g. Republic).<sup>15</sup>
6. In ethics,
  - a. there are external absolute standards (utopia) for judging society;
  - b. to know the good  $\frac{1}{4}$  to doing the good.
7. Hence, politics is defined by the ethical.
8. (6b) accounts for why there is an intellectual elite and why they are identical with the moral elite. The elite are intellectuals who through contemplation grasp the ideal world order. Practice should conform to the order so grasped. (T/P)<sup>16</sup>
9. Since the world is not self-explanatory, philosophy is the discipline which goes beyond the limits of the special sciences.

### Aristotelianism<sup>17</sup>

Aristotelianism is also known as naturalism.<sup>18</sup> Naturalism<sup>19</sup> is the view that the world is fully intelligible in its own terms. Its

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Platonists see history as a series of events that imperfectly manifest an ideal. Moreover, since values are a priori, Platonists can dispense with a separate conception of empirical social science or history. This allowed thinkers to harmonize traditional values with their other intellectual pursuits. Think here of Augustine and Descartes, for example. The closest that Plato comes to an historical account is the logic of decay: Philosopher kings ! timocracy ! oligarchy ! democracy ! tyranny.

<sup>16</sup>

Platonists (e.g. Rousseau) are rarely advocates of revolution in the modern sense since they do not believe in actualizing the ideal. Aristotelians (e.g. Marx), on the other hand, do believe that the 'form' is 'in' 'matter' and hence that ideals can be actualized in practice.

<sup>17</sup>

My teacher in the history of philosophy, John Herman Randall, Jr. argued strenuously that Aristotle was a kind of methodological pluralist and that only later (medieval) thought turned Aristotle into a rigid system. This is a plausible reading of Aristotle, but it does not belie the point that others have found enough in Aristotle to turn him into a rigid system. <sup>18</sup>

Taking the pre-Socratics as the earliest philosophers, it is plausible to argue that naturalism is the oldest version of philosophy. The entire subsequent history of philosophy can then be viewed as a dialogue between naturalism and its critics. Think here of Raphael's painting The School of Athens.

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Naturalistic Aristotelian philosophy can be contrasted with religion. Religion's narrative is dualistic (we can only make sense of the world by appeal to something supernatural); mysterious (there is an ultimate mystery at the heart of the universe, a pre-conceptual domain that is not narrative is monistic; rationalistic (everything is in principle conceptualizable); impersonal (the ultimate principles of intelligibility have no direct reference or concern for human welfare); and secularly Pelagian (despite the world's impersonality, humanity, we are assured, can solve its problems on its own and by exclusive reference to the natural order). The most sophisticated and influential version of naturalism is Aristotle's.<sup>20</sup>

1. Aristotle's model is teleological biology.<sup>21</sup> While systematic philosophers pretend to establish their principles in an independent, abstract, and premeditated fashion (wholly autonomous reason), the fact is that in every case we can identify the specific previous intellectual practice from which it is drawn. Subsequent versions of Aristotelianism substitute the latest fashionable science.
2. A good explanation is a deduction from first principles – a notion borrowed from Plato.<sup>22</sup>
3. First principles, the major premises of a good explanation, are abstracted from experience. Truth is established through correspondence. The whole history of epistemology in western philosophy deals with the obsessive and continuous failure of Aristotelians to explain knowledge in a naturalistic manner.

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Itself conceptualizable); personal (the supernatural pre-conceptual ground of our own existence is a person who cares for us); and involves grace (humanity needs divine aid in order to deal with the human predicament).

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Aristotle survives in a distinct version when supplemented by Christianity; what is said about 'Aristotelianism' does not always apply to this Christian version. The Christianized version, in fact, is closer to 'Platonism'. Critics would argue that it survives the criticism made of purely naturalistic Aristotelianism by appeal to the 'deus ex machina'. To my mind, the Christianized Aristotelianism is an indirect acknowledgement of the shortcomings of the purely naturalistic Aristotle. See previous note.

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A clear case can be made that each major philosophical perspective takes as its paradigm the most extensive and coherent body of knowledge available to



it at the time of its articulation. Despite its claim not to be premeditated, the content of a philosophical perspective is always drawn from a previous practice. This lends weight to the Copernican position outlined below.

<sup>22</sup>

Toulmin, S.E. (1972). *Human Understanding*.

4. The physical world is to be understood by reference to teleological patterns uncovered in our experience.<sup>23</sup>
5. The social world is to be understood by reference to teleological patterns in institutions within an organic society;<sup>24</sup> there is no evolution; history is not a valid source of explanation;<sup>25</sup> change can only be teleological, cyclical, or a form of decay.

<sup>23</sup>

‘Aristotelian Metaphysics: In Aristotelianism (e.g. Aristotle, the Stoics, Aquinas, Spinoza, Locke, Hegel, Russell, etc), we understand both ourselves and the world in the same way. Hence, Aristotelianism is monistic. For Aristotelianism in its secular variants, the everyday world of experience is self-explanatory. As a substantive view, this kind of metaphysics is known as naturalism. Metaphysics is thus no more than the most comprehensive and most general characterization of existent things. As a form of knowledge, Aristotelian metaphysics is arrived at by abstraction from the specialized sciences. Hence, metaphysics is a kind of empirical super-science. One consequence of this naturalism is that modern secular Aristotelians do not speak so much of metaphysics but prefer to speak about ontology. The question of ontology, namely what constitutes the most general features of reality, is tied in Aristotelianism to epistemology, understood as the study of the basic categories or concepts used for describing and explaining the everyday world. Reality is said to consist of individual or particular things or substances. A substance (thing) is something more than its properties, and it is ultimately, though problematically, identified grammatically as the subject matter of discourse. In Aristotelian metaphysics there is a tendency to reduce meaning to reference. It is in this sense that Aristotelians approach their metaphysics through epistemology.’ Capaldi, *op. cit.*, 113.

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There are intimations in Aristotle himself of the importance of the individual, but ultimately Aristotle cannot adequately clarify the relationship between the good man and the good citizen.

<sup>25</sup>

All theorists who deny the intrinsic importance of time, supplement their timeless accounts with an historical narrative of one or more of the following kinds: an historical account of why earlier thinkers failed to grasp the alleged timeless truths; a speculative history of how we are marching toward that timeless account; a progressive account up to the work of one’s favorite author who offers the final and definitive articulation; the latter is followed by an account of decline, that is, an historical account of how once the timeless insights have been articulated later thinkers have allowed those insights to degenerate. ‘Degeneration’ is integral to the account because the timeless truths are



understood in an Aristotelian organic-cyclical-teleological sense. What's wrong with all this? It falsifies the historical account; it fails to recognize that the history of a concept is integral to the meaning of the concept; it encourages the habit of 'finding' everything in one's favorite author(s); it is unable to see or accommodate later insights; it does not appreciate how later authors help us to gain new insights into earlier authors.

6. Hence, the ethical dimension is defined by the political (institutional) dimension.
7. politics:
  - a. articulation of the goal of the state
  - b. articulation of how individual institutions organically relate to the state (classical conservatism)<sup>26</sup>
  - c. the good individual is shaped by and conforms to the goal of the institution<sup>27</sup>
  - d. habituation (not pure cognition)
8. The elite are intellectuals who through contemplation and habituation grasp the natural order. Practice should conform to the order so grasped.<sup>28</sup>
9. Since the world is self-explanatory, there is no unique discipline of philosophy. Rather, philosophy is the totality of all the sciences. Here we see the first signs of philosophy's recurrent disappearing act.

<sup>26</sup>

Classical conservatism quickly gives way to radicalism when the whole of history is seen as one teleological (and progressive) process rather than as a cyclical process. History becomes progressive with the dominance of Newtonian physics and the view that motion is in a straight line rather than circular (cyclical). An evolutionary (i.e. non-teleological) view of history, which is reflected in this essay, is not to be confused with a progressive view of history.

<sup>27</sup>

There is a serious literature (Fred Miller, Douglas Den Uyl, Douglas B. Rasmussen, Tibor Machan, and Elaine Sternberg are excellent examples) that sees Aristotle as permitting a kind of individualism. I would maintain that (a) in Aristotle the teleology of the individual can only be realized in the larger community and (b) Aristotle never fully worked out the relation between the individual and the community, hence his ambiguity about whether the good man and the good citizen are the same, as well as the interminable arguments about the relation of the Ethics to the Politics. During the medieval period, Christians debated whether the soul that survived was individual or communal, and both sides drew upon Aristotle for support. Modern day communitarians (e.g. A.

MacIntyre, Charles Taylor) can lay claim to Aristotle as easily if not better than those advocating individualism.

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Simon Blackburn, in the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (2005), in his entry on 'philosophy', asserts that 'the conduct of a discipline may be swayed by philosophical reflection' (277a). He goes on to criticize Hegel for neglecting 'the fact that self-consciousness and reflection co-exist with activity. For example, an active social and political movement will co-exist with reflection on the categories within which it frames its position.' (265a).

Copernicanism<sup>29</sup>

Copernicanism is Kant's Humean inspired revolution in philosophy, specifically a reaction to the hopeless failure of Aristotelian naturalist epistemology, especially in response to developments in modern physics.<sup>30</sup>

1. Model: human action, not contemplation, is primordial. Reflection is always ultimately reflection on prior practice.
2. Explanation is not the grasping of an external structure but the subject's imposition or projection of structure.
3. First principles: social practice is the pre-theoretical ground of all theoretical activity. How we understand ourselves is fundamental, and how we understand the non-human world is derivative. We cannot, ultimately, understand ourselves by reference to physical structures.
4. Physical world: Newtonian (atoms already in motion); science is not the observation of nature but experimentation on and with nature. It is technological.<sup>31</sup>
5. Social world is the interaction of self-directed individuals. Social knowledge and understanding do not consist of the

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Copernicanism as a separate philosophical perspective is entirely lost on MacIntyre. He completely fails to see the difference between Hume and Kant on the one hand and the French philosophes and later positivists on the other. In *After Virtue* (1981), MacIntyre argued that we in the Western World have lost our way in morality. We are besieged with a cacophonous pluralism wherein no common understanding of morality is ever possible. There can be so single impartial justification for our moral judgments. Why has this occurred, according to MacIntyre? The Enlightenment epistemological and moral theories of Bacon, Hume, and Kant, not to forget Diderot, by default lead to logical positivism and its offsprings, emotivism and post-modernism. We now recognize the failure of the Enlightenment. The failure puts us in the perplexing position of having to choose between Nietzsche or Aristotle – either moral relativism or a radical

conservatism in which humans are seen as having an essence, as social beings who need friendship and who work out over time traditions which give structure to their lives and call forth a set of virtues. Nietzsche's thought is incoherent, so only a return to Aristotle can save us.

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One can profitably view Copernicanism as, in part, the development of Aristotle's conception of practical reason as opposed to the primacy of theoretical reason.

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Gaukroger, Stephen. *The Emergence of a Scientific Culture; Science and the Shaping of Modernity 1210–1685*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006.

discovery of absolute (timeless and contextless) standards external to humanity but involve, instead, the clarification of standards implicit within the human mind and/or social practice.<sup>32</sup> Axiologically it is possible to defend the reality and universality of norms but only as part of the internal structure coupled with the contention that epistemological norms are derivative from axiological norms, that is, by making axiology primary and metaphysics and epistemology secondary.

6. Ethics is the clarification of individual autonomy and responsibility.<sup>33</sup>
7. Politics is classical liberalism,<sup>34</sup> understood as limiting the power of the state in the interest of expanding human autonomy.

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There are no hidden rigid substructures to social practice such that once one knows that substructure one can predict (or normatively require) future permutations of that practice (there are no rules for the application of rules) and no structures that would show the 'secret' logic of a practice. Hence the application of an understanding of a practice to a novel set of circumstances requires judgment and imagination. No culture dictates its own future. Human beings are always free to accept, reject, or redeploy their inheritance.

The notion of 'verstehen' as developed by neo-Kantians such as Dilthey and Weber, historian-philosophers such as Collingwood, or philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Oakeshott and Gadamer, makes clear that all understanding, even science, is interpretation.

<sup>33</sup>

'Almost all modern writing about moral conduct begins with the hypothesis of an individual human being choosing and pursuing his own directions of activity.' M. Oakeshott, 'The Masses in Representative Democracy,' 367 in *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, (ed.) Fuller (1991). Autonomy entails some version of the freedom of the will. Autonomy leads in politics to classical liberalism, wherein individuals set their own goals and require liberty as a means to freedom. 'Moral philosophy' as opposed to 'ethics' comes into being in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It reflects the recognition that there is no natural teleology (as

in Aristotle) so that the question of how the interests of the individual are related to the interests of others or to society as a whole (i.e. our moral obligations) becomes a real issue. Aristotle would never have raised such an issue because he saw a seamless web of the individual and society.

<sup>34</sup>

When liberalism is fully ‘Aristotelianized’ (in the sense I have defined) it becomes communitarian or modern liberal as opposed to classical liberal. Communitarians postulate a social good that takes precedence over the good of individuals. Aristotelian naturalists, as I have contended above, do not take internal freedom (i.e. autonomy) seriously. As a result, they are apt to see individuals as constrained by circumstances rather than

8 Since the pre-theoretical ground is not itself conceptualizable, there can be no intellectual elite!

9. Philosophy<sup>35</sup> is both (a) the explication of the logic (procedural norms) of each and every human activity<sup>36</sup> and (b) the articulation of the larger vision of how these activities relate to each other. It is both analytic (conceptual clarification) and synthetic (larger vision);<sup>37</sup> but it is not the accession of an independent cosmic order. Neither is it a form of advocacy.<sup>38</sup>

An over-simplified summary of these perspectives is to say that Aristotelians believe that philosophy is about the intelligibility of the world in itself; Platonists and Copernicans disagree that the world is intelligible in itself; Platonists appeal to something outside of nature; Copernican think philosophy is about the interaction of humans with the world as seen from the human perspective.

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As choosing how to respond to circumstances. As a further consequence, they are likely to see social problems like poverty as something that requires redistribution.

Classical liberalism is also conceptualized in Aristotelian terms by philosophers such as Hobbes and Locke (Natural law versions). I would argue that this is another version of pouring the new wine into old bottles. The consequences of doing so are (1) endless confusion and debate, (2) reading Hobbes as a covert authoritarian, and (3) attempts to use Locke to derive communitarian versions of liberalism.

One can, of course, defend a version of classical liberalism (or any political philosophy) using ‘some’ of the philosophical vocabulary derived from Aristotle (or almost any philosopher). The adoption of a vocabulary is not to be confused with adopting a system or conceptual framework such as I have described.

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These views are clearly expressed by R. G. Collingwood in his works *Philosophical Method* (1933) and *an Essay on Metaphysics* (1940).

<sup>36</sup>

Philosophy awakens ‘our sensitivity to realities which underpin our ordinary lives and activities ...things which are usually just out of sight of unreflective consciousness, but they are things which we all know, but darkly.’ Anthony O’Hear, *Philosophy in the New Century* (London: Continuum, 2001), 191.

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This permits us to see that the alternative philosophical perspectives do achieve a kind of consensus on the procedural norms of discourse (analysis proper) within the larger cultural context; where disagreement exists is in speculative thinking or synthesis.

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Philosophers may, of course, be advocates in other contexts but not as part of their professional activity. Philosophers can, in their professional capacity, point out with regard to social practices when others have asked irrelevant questions or spoken inappropriately. Another way of putting this is that Platonists think about ‘thinking’, Aristotelians think about ‘the world’, and Copernicans think about ‘thinking about the world’.

### The History of Philosophy Illustrated by the PAC Categorization

Let me briefly note some examples of the on-going dialogue among the three main philosophical perspectives. One might refer to these as alternative accounts of the alternative accounts.<sup>39</sup> A good deal of the history of philosophy can be understood as a conversation among these three conceptions of philosophy.

1. The Sophistic claim that ‘Man is the measure of all things’ is an early (anachronistic) expression of Copernicanism, and Socrates’ attack on Protagoras is an early ‘Platonic’ reaction to it.
2. Recall that Aristotle’s initiation of philosophical discussion typically begins with a seemingly condescending review of the inadequacies of his predecessors all of which contribute to a teleological progression to his own views.
3. Aristotle’s relation to his predecessors is recapitulated by Aquinas’ treatment of his predecessors. Aquinas refers to Aristotle as ‘The’ philosopher not ‘a’ philosopher.
4. Varro and even Cicero recognized the unique character of historical explanation as opposed to (Aristotelian) philosophical explanation. Both of these writers heavily influenced Hume. Hume’s *History of England* is a Copernican account of the rise of modern commercial republics as opposed to Hobbes’ and Locke’s appeal to the original contract, an Aristotelian notion.<sup>40</sup>

5. Notice the usual epistemological classification of medieval philosophers as either Realist (Platonic), Conceptualist (Aristotelian), or Nominalist (Copernican).
6. Epistemological skepticism is a recurrent position throughout the history of philosophy. Understand 'skepticism' generically

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These alternative views may be profitably seen as Weberian ideal types; they may also be seen as Kuhnian paradigms. It is remarkable to note the extent to which one position will accuse a second position of not answering a question when the point of the second position is to delegitimize that question.

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Rousseau's account of the original contract is Platonic. Note Rawls' Aristotelian critique of Hume's Copernican critique of the idea of an original contract.

to mean a recognition of the limits of discursive reason, limits revealed by identifying whatever is the failed current version of Aristotelian naturalism. All Aristotelian naturalistic anthologies of the so-called problems in philosophy invariably begin the epistemology section with a critique of skepticism.

7. Aristotelian naturalists (e.g. Spinoza and Hobbes) can find no room for the radical 'freedom of the will'. Platonists from Augustine to the present and some Copernicans (e.g. Kant) take this (internal) 'freedom' seriously and they do not confuse it with 'liberty' (mere absence of external constraint).
8. Hume holds the most radical version of the Copernican position; he claims only to identify how human beings structure their experience ('as long as the human mind remains the same'<sup>41</sup>); he speculates on physiological, psychological, and cultural reasons for this structuring; but he denies that either he or anyone else can give a further explanation.<sup>42</sup>
9. Kant 'Platonizes' the Copernican revolution by insisting on the absolute and timeless character of the mind.
10. Hegel 'Aristotelianizes' the Copernican Revolution both by collapsing the subject-object distinction and construing ultimate reality as teleological.<sup>43</sup> If there are no further permutations, then Hegel should be the last philosopher to offer a system of philosophy. And so he is.
11. When modern Aristotelians need to respond to the incontrovertible historical dimension to thinking that modern philosophers (usually Copernicans of some sort) have identified, they invariably teleologize that history. Positivists, for example, even though they deny the relevance of history nevertheless

endorse (without being able to establish intellectually) a progressive reading of the history of physical science such that objective truth is what scientists ultimately and eventually will agree upon ‘in the end.’<sup>44</sup>

41

Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section V, Part I.

42

See the qualifications in the Treatise, Appendix: ‘...all my hopes vanish, when I come to explain the principles, that unite our successive perceptions in our thought or consciousness. I cannot discover any theory which gives me satisfaction on this head.’

43

Hegel’s teleology allows him both to answer the Kantian (Platoniz) question of the conditions of human knowledge and to provide an account of the developing self-consciousness of God.

44

The quote is from C.S. Peirce. For the failure to prove that science progresses see Kuhn’s critique of Popper and Feyerabend’s critique of Lakatos. There is an additional respect in which Analytic philosophers

12. One modern version of Aristotelianism is Enlightenment Project scientism: The Enlightenment Project is the attempt to define and explain the human predicament through physical science and a derivative social science as well as to achieve mastery over it through the use of a social technology. This project originated in France in the eighteenth century with the philosophes. The most influential among them were Diderot, d’Alembert, La Mettrie, Condillac, Helvetius, d’Holbach, Turgot, Condorcet, Cabanis, and Voltaire. The Project continued during the nineteenth century in the work of Comte, the founder of positivism.<sup>45</sup>
13. This vision of philosophy is proclaimed in the Positivist Manifesto of 1929 in which Comte is himself named as a precursor. The leading spokesperson for positivism was Carnap, and it was Carnap who officially co-opted and incorporated the work of Bertrand Russell. Moritz Schlick once characterized positivism as the rejection of the view that there are synthetic a priori truths. Here we have the Aristotelian rejection of Kant’s version of Copernicanism.
14. The dominant Aristotelian view in the profession today is analytic philosophy.<sup>46</sup> Given its position of dominance, it is

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(who are Aristotelian) appeal to teleology. They frequently present a two tier view of human nature in which everything is mechanistic on the physiological level but



miraculously and unaccountably there is a parallel level of human consciousness in which we act teleologically. See Capaldi, *op. cit.*, 14. <sup>45</sup>

Von Wright (1971), 9–10: ‘It would be quite wrong to label analytical philosophy as a whole a brand of positivism. But it is true to say that the contributions of analytical philosophy to methodology and philosophy of science have, until recently, been predominantly in the spirit of positivism ... It also largely shares with nineteenth-century positivism an implicit trust in progress through the advancement of science and the cultivation of a rationalist social-engineering attitude to human affairs.’

<sup>46</sup> ‘The dominant mode of philosophizing in the United States is called “analytic philosophy”. Without exception, the best philosophy departments in the United States are dominated by analytic philosophy, and among the leading philosophers in the United States, all but a tiny handful would be classified as analytic philosophers. Practitioners of types of philosophizing that are not in the analytic tradition ... feel it necessary to define their position in relation to analytic philosophy. Indeed, analytic philosophy is the dominant mode of philosophizing not only in the United States, but throughout the entire English-speaking world.’ Searle (1996), 1–2.

important to examine whether it and the discipline are illuminated by the PAC categorization. I have done so at length in my book *The Enlightenment Project in the Analytic Conversation*.<sup>47</sup> I specifically exclude from the designation ‘analytic philosophy’ the movement known as ordinary language philosophy that originated with G.E. Moore. OLP was Aristotelian but it was never scientific.<sup>48</sup>

15. Wittgenstein’s revolt against analytic philosophy was a Copernican reaction to positivist Aristotelianism. Carnap understood early on that Wittgenstein was not a member of the club. Michael Dummett’s Aristotelian response to Wittgenstein’s Copernicanism is to call Wittgenstein a ‘defeatist’. Analytic philosophers like to critique their Copernican opponents as ‘anti-foundationalist.’
16. Heidegger’s philosophical relationship to Husserl is parallel to Wittgenstein’s relationship to Russell. In both cases we have a Copernican rejection of Aristotelianism.
17. Collingwood has critiqued positivism (what I mean here by analytic philosophy) for assimilating philosophy ‘to the pattern of empirical science’<sup>49</sup> and for being anti-philosophical.
18. In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988) MacIntyre developed his theme of cultural cacophony, but also defended a special kind of Aristotelianism – the Thomistic theistic version, as the most coherent account of the moral life and its justification. He sets forth the thesis that some traditions are superior to others.

His criterion is that a tradition is superior to others if it can resolve the problems and anomalies in those other traditions in such a way that supporters of the other traditions can come to understand why they cannot resolve those problems using only their own intellectual resources. MacIntyre illustrates this by showing how Aquinas' synthesis of Aristotelianism and Augustinianism produces a tradition allegedly able to resolve problems unresolvable in both of its predecessors. He would later retract

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Capaldi (1998), *op. cit.*

48

N. Capaldi, 'Analytic Philosophy and Language,' in *Linguistics and Philosophy, The Controversial Interface*, (ed.) Rom Harre and Roy Harris (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1993; Language & Communication Library series), 45–107.

49

Collingwood, *Philosophical Method* (7) and (147).

that claim and admit that you could not prove the superiority of any of the alternatives.<sup>50</sup>

Allow me to offer one extended example. Modern philosophy is usually focused on seven thinkers: Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz (so-called rationalists) as well as Locke, Berkeley, and Hume (so-called empiricists), and finally Kant. This traditional and almost universally despised distinction nevertheless survives largely because so many contemporary philosophers are engaged in the intellectually incestuous activity of thinking that philosophers only read other philosophers and because of the continuing obsession with naturalistic epistemology.

In reality, the great ages of philosophy and the great philosophers are responding to much larger intellectual challenges. It is impossible to understand modern philosophy, that is, the philosophy of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, unless one realizes the extent to which that philosophy was a response to developments in modern science. It is no accident that Descartes, a mathematician and scientist, is almost always singled out as the first modern philosopher. Among other things, modernity begins with the collapse of the Aristotelian medieval world view with its organic, teleological, and hierarchical conception of the world. One simple way to capture that difference in scientific terms is to say that whereas Aristotelian physics was based on the assumption that rest was the natural state, modern physics from Galileo on starts with the assumption that motion is the natural state.

Confronted with this new view of the physical universe, how did scientists respond? They responded in two different ways that became

identified with Descartes and Newton. Descartes argued for a homogeneous and pleonastic universe in which there is no

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In *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (1991), MacIntyre backed away from claiming that you could prove the superiority of one version. He contrasts the ninth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the idea of pure unencumbered rationality, Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*, the idea that such rationality is simply another expression of the will to power, and Pope Leo XIII's *Aeterni patris*, which sought to establish Thomism as the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. Each of these traditions has irresolvable internal problems. Specifically, Leo XIII misunderstood Thomism by building in a modernist program – of treating Thomism as an epistemological theory like *Encyclopedia* rather than as a coherent metaphysical and moral system. MacIntyre rejects any God's eye neutral nonpartisan interpretation as an illusion. Genuine rational inquiry requires membership in a particular type of moral community. Distinction between space and matter; Newton took up and advocated Gassendi's atomism (along with Galileo's momentum). We thus had two conflicting scientific paradigms.

How did philosophers respond to the new science and its major protagonists? Some poured this new wine into old bottles and others fashioned a new bottle. The old bottles were the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Committed as they were to the belief in an autonomous reason, these philosophers could not see that Platonism and Aristotelianism were themselves constructs based on earlier views of the physical universe. To be a Platonist in this context is, among other things, to believe in a dualistic universe within which first principles are allegedly known a priori. To be an Aristotelian in this context is, among other things, to believe in a monistic universe within which first principles are allegedly 'abstracted' from experience.

The new bottle is expressed as the Copernican Revolution in Philosophy, wherein the first principles are structures that we project onto the world. The Copernican turn is the full articulation of looking at the world from a Newtonian point of view.<sup>51</sup> The geography of modern philosophy looked like this:

51

I would argue that Copernicanism is Newtonianism writ large: motion, not rest is fundamental (action not contemplation is basic); motion is in a straight line, not cyclical (history does not repeat itself endlessly); every entity interacts with and influences every other entity (we cannot talk about things in themselves – only in relation to us); first principles cannot be explained – theory can only be the explication of ongoing practice. An organic (Aristotelian) universe and social world would see individuals as derivative from their communal roles; an atomistic

universe would see individuals as primordial and the community as an historical construct. Individuals are not simply ‘atoms’, rather they are atoms with a history of past interaction. The historical relation, however, is not an organic relation.

Although atomism has an ancient lineage (Democritus, Epicurus), I would suggest that modern atomism was embraced as much if not more so for its social implications. Gassendi gave both ontological and theological significance to monads as endowed with original motion by God; Bacon and Hobbes were atomists; atomism appealed to the practical success of seeing mechanical objects from an atomistic point of view; Newton’s first law of motion, I suggest, has a theological origin, certainly not an empirical origin; it is, so to speak, a projection from the human and social realm onto nature. In this it bears a striking similarity to the later doctrine of evolution, which originated in history and was then projected onto biology. See N. Capaldi, *David Hume: The Newtonian Philosopher* (1975).

	(Cartesian Physics)		(Newtonian <sup>52</sup> Physics)
Descartes		Locke	
	(Platonic Philosophy) <sup>53</sup>		(Aristotelian <sup>54</sup> Philosophy)
(Cartesian Physics) <sup>55</sup>			(Newtonian <sup>56</sup> Physics)
Spinoza	Berkeley (Aristotelian Philosophy) <sup>57</sup>	(Platonic	Philosophy) <sup>58</sup>
	(Newtonian Physics) <sup>59</sup>		(Newtonian Physics) <sup>60</sup>
Leibniz		Hume	
	(Platonic Philosophy) <sup>61</sup>		(Copernican) <sup>62</sup>
		(Newtonian Physics)	
	KANT		(Copernican Revolution) <sup>63</sup>

<sup>52</sup>

Recall Locke’s claim that space is a simple idea given in sensation as well as his defense of the existence of a vacuum (empty space) as opposed to Descartes’ pleonasm.

<sup>53</sup>

For Descartes physics is founded on a dualistic metaphysics; first principles are clearly a priori; he distinguishes between the order of knowing and the order of being; there is a clear dualism between finite human reason and

infinite will, and error is the result of the exercise of the freedom of the will. See n. 14.

54

Nothing could be more Aristotelian than Locke's critique of innate(a priori) ideas and his insistence on the distinction between primary qualities (in the object) and secondary qualities.

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Like Descartes, Spinoza rejects Aristotelian teleology (no final causes) in favor of determinism.

56

See Berkeley's *De Motu* (1721) for his analysis of Newton and Leibniz.

57

For Spinoza, God is Nature; one substance, no dualism; his epistemology is an empiricist-physiological account; freedom consists of knowledge of causes over which we have no control. See n. 23.

58

Berkeley's praise of Platonists can be found in *Siris* (1744) on Tar Water; in addition he is an immaterialist who believes that things are collections of ideas not something independent of them; he supports a dualism that distinguished between ideas in God's mind and ideas in human minds; epistemologically, he is the foremost critic of Locke's Aristotelian idea 'abstraction'; finally, he believes that we have direct intuitive knowledge of ourselves.

Current Debate on the Meaning of Philosophy: Is the Existence of Alternatives a Problem? a Crisis?<sup>64</sup>

If competing conceptions of philosophy is the historical norm, why is there a current debate? The current debate reflects a peculiar intellectual crisis. But what kind of crisis is this? No Copernican, for example, would be surprised by the existence of alternative conceptions of philosophy. That is exactly what one would expect in a world where order is a construct of the human imagination. I shall have more to say about this below. Moreover, a Platonist might be saddened but never surprised. There are those who see and those who do not; the latter live in the world of shadows. The current crisis reflects the following:

1. Philosophy is now housed within the University.
2. The recent history of the university has involved three competing models described below as the Ivory Tower Model, the German Research Model (Enlightenment Project scientism), and the Utilitarian Model.
  - a. The German Research Model has combined with the Utilitarian model,<sup>65</sup> and given the spectacular success

Space and time are relative ideas not entities as in Cartesian physics. Leibniz worked out the calculus independently of but at the same time as Newton; the calculus enables us to deal with matter in motion, matter that is not reducible to space.

<sup>60</sup>

See N. Capaldi, *David Hume: Newtonian Philosopher*.

<sup>61</sup>

Leibniz's model is the calculus instead of geometry; in his epistemology, he criticizes Locke for arguing against the existence of innate (a priori) ideas; his dualism, like Berkeley's, distinguishes between God as infinite monad and humans as created finite monads; monads 'mirror' and essentially act like Platonic forms; his God reminds us of the Timaeus because 'HE' is persuaded to act in accordance with the ultimate essences; finally, human beings always act for the seeming best and err only out of ignorance. <sup>62</sup>

Hume was never a simple minded empiricist: all of our most important ideas are complex ideas involves the structuring activity of the mind. In the *Abstract* he cites this as his most revolutionary idea.

<sup>63</sup>

'The Copernican Revolution in Hume and Kant,' *Proceedings of the Third International Kant Congress*, ed. Lewis White Beck (Dordrecht, Holland: Reidel, 1972), 234–40.

<sup>64</sup>

'The present is a time of crisis and chaos in philosophy.'

Collingwood, *op. cit.*, 6.

<sup>65</sup>

The utilitarian model by itself was originally intended to promote agricultural and technological development. The German Research model of the physical sciences<sup>66</sup> and government subvention, they have jointly triumphed over the Ivory Tower Model.

- b. As a consequence the traditional humanities (philosophy, history, and literature) have declined.
3. Philosophy has survived by becoming a social science. In its analytic form, philosophy aspires to be the social science of science.
4. Demise of philosophy as a legitimate discipline.
  - a. If scientism is correct, then philosophy is superfluous.
  - b. Analytic philosophy has failed intellectually to legitimate scientism. (Quine ! Kuhn ! Feyerabend)
  - c. Analytic philosophy, by espousing a model of social scientific thinking called exploration, has failed in its attempt to deal with norms, that is, to identify, explicate, or legitimate them.
  - d. Exploratory analytic philosophy has given rise to deconstruction.<sup>67</sup>
  - e. Deconstruction has abandoned the Socratic role of philosophy and substituted an adversarial role.

The locus of philosophy is now in the academy. Philosophy as a discipline is being marginalized in the academy (higher education). Philosophy is being marginalized in three ways: absolutely, relatively, and intrinsically. Philosophy is being marginalized absolutely and this can be seen in the declining numbers of jobs and programs.<sup>68</sup> It is being marginalized relatively in the sense that even where apparent

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Originally on its own was committed to the pursuit of truth and not any particular social agenda. The combination of the two has led to what we now describe as 'political correctness'.

<sup>66</sup>

The larger cultural context has embraced an uncritical and unreflective commitment to scientism. This has reinforced the perception that we do not need anything other than the sciences.

<sup>67</sup>

Deconstruction is the, among other things, the latest incarnation of so-called continental philosophy as opposed to Anglo-American philosophy.<sup>68</sup>

Few new colleges and universities (e.g. Cal State Monterey Bay, UC Merced), have a philosophy department or even offer a philosophy major or minor. In most cases, a token philosopher is hired into a general humanities department and pressed into service teaching composition or rhetoric to round out a teaching load that cannot be filled by the few philosophy courses (usually applied ethics and logic/critical thinking) offered.

growth takes place it is at a lower level than within other disciplines. Most of all, it is being marginalized in the sense that few people within the academic community see any crucial or central disciplinary role for philosophy in higher education, and the number dwindles as we speak.<sup>69</sup>

Why is Philosophy as a Discipline Being Marginalized? Try to understand the sense in which this question is being raised. We should not be misled by the willingness of people outside the academic world to pay lip service to the importance of philosophy. In reality, the educated public finds most of what academic philosophy has produced in the last half-century unintelligible and/or boring. Nor should we be misled by the self-congratulatory and reasonable surmise within the academy that academic philosophers are probably brighter than academics in other fields. Idiot savants get the same recognition. Nor should we be lulled by the frenetic activity we see at national meetings.

How did Philosophy lose its place? Philosophy lost its essential place along with the other humanities. So a further question is how did the humanities in general lose its place? This presupposes that we answer the question what was the place of the humanities? Going back to their origins at the University of Paris in the Middle Ages, the humanities were



custodians of the Ivory Tower and as such their essential task was the articulation, preservation, critique and transmission of the fundamental values of civilization. Higher Education was understood as the initiation into that inheritance and as an adventure in self understanding. This conservative conception of education was ‘what ancient Athenians [had] called *paideia*...it was passed on...from the schools of the Roman Empire to the cathedral, the collegiate, guild and grammar schools of medieval Christendom. Moved by a vivid consciousness of an intellectual and moral inheritance of great splendor and worth, this was the notion of education which informed the schools of renaissance Europe and which survived into... [British] grammar and public schools and their equivalents in continental Europe.’<sup>70</sup>

69

It would be easy enough to point out that the academic world in general is going through an economic downward spiral. But this in itself does not explain why when asked to cut the budget, Deans immediately think of eliminating programs and positions in philosophy.

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Michael Oakshott, ‘Education: The Engagement and Its Frustration,’ in *The Voice of Liberal Learning* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, Inc. 2001) 83.

The humanities defined and explicated the human condition. This role has been lost. Its usurpation began in the last half of the eighteenth century with the Enlightenment Project: (a) the cosmic order can be accessed through an autonomous human reason, freed of any higher authority, that (b) the human condition can be exhaustively defined by the sciences, and (c) that all human moral, social, and political problems could be resolved through a derivative social technology. Recall that this Project was doctrinairely and programmatically espoused by French philosophes. The Enlightenment Project was developed further in the 19th century by both Comte and various schools of German scientific materialism, and transmitted to the contemporary university with the German research model of higher education during the last half of the 19th century.

For almost a century, three paradigms vied for the attention of the university: the ivory tower paradigm, largely in liberal arts colleges with a religious affiliation, the German Research model and the utilitarian paradigm. The German research model is the disinterested pursuit of knowledge, perceiving the university as a set of graduate programs training professionals by focusing on the accumulation of knowledge in the spirit of the Enlightenment Project.

The utilitarian paradigm is the one wherein the university is seen as an institution for solving various and sundry social problems. In this model, the university exists as a means to social ends defined externally to the

university itself. The spectacular successes of science and engineering and government subvention of higher education combined to make it possible for the German research model and the utilitarian model to unite<sup>71</sup> in the form of the Enlightenment Project and displace the ivory tower, and along with it went the displacement of the humanities. We are familiar with this transition in the work of C.P. Snow on the 'Two Cultures.'

Philosophy survived as a discipline by embracing the Enlightenment Project. Philosophy survived as the discipline which, allegedly, articulated the fundamental truths about Science, as the social science of Science, as well as the progenitor of scientific hypotheses about social phenomena from knowledge acquisition to public policy. In practice, this is indistinguishable from other social sciences. Philosophy becomes one of the social sciences! We see as well in the academy the (pseudo)social scientization of the other humanities (history, literature, and the arts).

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The German research model pursuit of knowledge is disinterested (i.e. apolitical); when it combines with the utilitarian model it is transformed into the Enlightenment Project; that is, it acquires a social agenda.

Analytic philosophy is the current embodiment both of Aristotelianism as a conception of philosophy in general and the Enlightenment Project in particular. Aristotelians, as we have maintained above, are keenly interested in the operation of institutions. They see healthy institutions as having a clearly defined goal and successful individuals as those who help in the pursuit of that goal. Analytic philosophy as a version of Aristotelianism thereby tends to be hegemonic and monopolistic.<sup>72</sup> Aristotelians in the form of analytic philosophy insist upon an extraordinary intellectual hegemony, but they have been incapable of achieving it. My claim is that the intellectual failure of analytic philosophy, a form of Aristotelianism, exacerbates the loss of academic (and cultural) legitimacy.

The problem with the role that analytic philosophy has assumed is that it only makes sense if science is the fundamental way of accessing the cosmic order and the place of humanity with it. Philosophy as such is the self-appointed supreme discipline only if scientism is true. By scientism I understand the doctrine that science is the truth about everything and the ground of its own legitimacy. The difficulty is that science cannot legitimate itself intellectually. The Great tradition of Western philosophy has known this and repeatedly asserted this for about two thousand years (repeated critiques of Aristotelian naturalistic epistemology), but we had to spend the last half of the twentieth century waiting for most analytic philosophers to acknowledge this state of affairs. Please note that this is not a problem for the hard sciences, for they make no cosmic claims. It is

a problem for those whose status depends upon the enthronement of scientism.

There is an even stronger way of identifying the crisis. If science could legitimate itself intellectually, what need would it have of philosophy (as its social science)? Philosophy appears as no more than a pre-scientific intellectual endeavor that has been superseded by science. Technology has passed philosophy by. To establish its importance in its own eyes, analytic philosophy needs the premise that scientists, as opposed to science, are incapable of articulating self-legitimation. Philosophy is the (self-appointed) supreme discipline because it alone has the rhetorical and intellectual resources to legitimate a practically powerful science whose practitioners, it is alleged, nonetheless cannot provide for its foundation.

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Platonists and Copernicans have become the marginalized within the marginalized. For the latter raising the issue of competing conceptions of philosophy is both about (a) one's role in the profession and (b) the role of the discipline in the larger cultural context.

Unfortunately, Aristotelians in the guise of analytic philosophers have failed to legitimate scientism. The current story of the demise of scientism is by now a familiar one.<sup>73</sup> In 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism', Quine undermined traditional empiricism by asserting (a) that there is nothing independent of different conceptual schemes and (b) that different conceptual schemes are alternative readings of experience. Thesis (a) is an ontological relativism that contradicts the ontological empirical realism of (b). That is, Quine denied that there is an independent position from which to judge whether a conceptual scheme matches reality but embraced the semantic enterprise by asserting that the totality of knowledge must match reality. Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* used the history of scientodiscredittheconceptionofscientifictheoriesasexperimentally confirmable or disconfirmable. As Kuhn showed, scientists operate with paradigms that structure the way in which experiments are interpreted. Kuhn's work was followed by the more radical views of Feyerabend, who, in *Against Method*, argued that paradigms constituted the entire pre-theoretical context within which theoretical science operated. Science could not, therefore, serve as the arbiter among competing paradigms.<sup>74</sup>

By the time the failure of scientism was recognized, analytic philosophy had already done irreparable harm to the discipline. It had modeled the profession as a pseudo-social science with all of its trappings. Philosophers and students of philosophy read only articles by other philosophers in philosophical journals. The issues discussed therein were deemed worthy of discussion because other philosophers had discussed them. Whatever

the larger framework that had given rise to the discussion was soon forgotten.<sup>75</sup>

For the explication of fundamental norms it has substituted research programs. It engages in a form of speculation I call exploration, that is, beginning with our ordinary understanding of how things work it goes on to speculate on what underlies those workings. It aims to change our ordinary understanding. The new understanding does not evolve from or elaborate the old understanding; rather, it replaces the old understanding by appeal to underlying structures. The underlying structures are allegedly discovered by appeal to

<sup>73</sup>

See N. Capaldi, 'Scientism, Deconstruction, and Nihilism,' in *Argumentation*, 9: (1995), 563–575.

<sup>74</sup>

This turns analytic philosophy into an ideology, the advocacy of scientism without subscription to realism.

<sup>75</sup>

Cohen (1986), 138–39.

some hypothetical model about those structures. Unlike legitimate physical science, the alleged hidden structures to which pseudo-social science appeals never get confirmed empirically. What we get is an unending series in which one faddish language replaces another. 'As a consequence immense prestige is accorded to those individuals skillful in formulating clever, ingenious, and sometimes bizarre hypotheses. Ingenuity becomes the benchmark of success, and like present day movements in the arts leads to sudden shifts in fashion. Philosophy is the only discipline where whole careers and reputations are made on the basis of failed research programs.'<sup>76</sup> In addition to these spurious research programs, we find bogus intellectual enterprises like philosophical psychology and artificial intelligence. In real science the hidden structure explanation saves the phenomena; in bogus philosophical psychology we dismiss or we redefine the phenomena to fit the theory. The appearances are called 'folk psychology' or we deny that beliefs and desires cause action.

A further consequence has been the special damage to axiology. By turning philosophy into a speculative social science, analytic philosophy revives the whole issue of the relationship between facts and values and thereby puts itself in the position of being hopelessly unable to deal with norms. In place of the identification and explication of fundamental norms, we are given hypotheses about the hidden structure of those norms. We have witnessed things as preposterous as the idea that one can provide a 'theory'<sup>77</sup> of 'justice'.

It works something like this. The ‘theorist’ identifies in some arcane fashion a particular set of practices; the theorist speculates on the hidden structure behind those practices and formulates a model of that structure, complete with seemingly technical vocabulary; the alleged substructure licenses the theorist to decide which parts of the surface practice are legitimate and which are not. This turns axiology into a mask for private political agendas.<sup>78</sup>

76

Capaldi, *op. cit.*, 454.

77

Rawls is not simply providing an account; he is providing an exploration; this is a special kind of explanation that ultimately masks a private political agenda. Rawls, to his credit, went on to modify his account in later writings, but it is the earlier work that is taken seriously and has become canonical for those working in axiology.

78

‘This [Rawls’ book] is certainly the model of social justice that has governed the advocacy of R.H. Tawney and Richard Titmus and that holds the Labour Party together,’ (Stuart Hampshire in his review of the book in the *New York Review of Books*, 1972). Rawls’s conclusions have ‘enormous intuitive appeal to people of good will,’ Ronald Dworkin in

And it gets worse. The only growth areas in philosophy are ‘applied’ ethics, bioethics and business ethics.<sup>79</sup> To begin with, this creates the misleading impression that axiology is the application of a theory to practice – again, another invitation to promote private agendas. Many textbooks in these areas begin by treating the work of axiologists like Kant and Mill as theories called ‘deontology’ or ‘utilitarianism’. This is not only a caricature of the work of great philosophers but a gross misrepresentation. To make matters even worse, the textbooks go on to provide summaries of the major alleged flaws in these alleged theories, thereby leaving the reader with both a new ethical vocabulary and a cynical nihilistic attitude about normative issues. Curiously, applied ethicists are in great demand for providing you with a (sophistic) choice depending upon whatever public policy conclusion you want to legitimate.

The ultimate irony of the social-scientization of philosophy is that it has legitimated deconstruction.<sup>80</sup> Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida embrace scientism by arguing that mathematical science is the best and only defensible ideal construct for thinking. They relentlessly pursue the consequences to which the scientific ideal has led. They begin with a hidden structure analysis of some text<sup>81</sup> or social phenomenon. They then find themselves confronted with the existence of a multiplicity of competing exploratory hypotheses. Denied independent and objective criteria for choosing among rival hypotheses, committed to the notion that

their own hypothesis has some superior validity,<sup>82</sup> they offer a hidden structure analysis of the

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Magee(1982),213.Nozick,bytheway,doesexactlythesamethingbutends with a different agenda.

<sup>79</sup>

See D. Solomon, 'Domestic Disarray and Imperial Ambition,' in T. Engelhardt (ed.), *Global Bioethics* (Scrivener, 2006), 335–361. 'The principal irony of the turn to the ethical in the 1960s was that the academic disciplines of theology and philosophy were called on for help at precisely the moment in their history when they were least able to provide it.' (345).

<sup>80</sup>

'Deconstruction' is a controversial term coined by Derrida in the 1960's but never defined. It is not an alternative view of philosophy .I understand deconstruction to be a method, a form of exploration.

<sup>81</sup>

I do not deny the potential value of reading texts in a novel fashion; what I do challenge is the view that human beings can be understood in terms of hidden (social) structures.

<sup>82</sup>

See Rorty's critique of Derrida in 'Deconstruction and Circumvention' *Essays on Heidegger and Others* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). faults of rival hypotheses.<sup>83</sup> That is, they offer a hidden structure analysis of other hidden structure analyses. Instead of civil discourse we see the rhetorical assassination of the character of our opponents. Socratic clarification has given way to adversarial confrontation.

Far from establishing the hegemony of analytic philosophy (scientific Aristotelian naturalism), analytic philosophers have brought philosophy into disrepute, and they have opened the flood gates to irresponsible deconstruction. By making philosophy a kind of social science, analytic philosophy has promoted exploration as the model of thinking. Exploration encourages the formulation of hypotheses about hidden structure. Deconstructionists have carried this form of thinking to its logical conclusion. Both analytic philosophers and deconstructionists have abandoned the explication of the larger cultural context and have substituted programs of radical reform. They are no longer Socratic but adversarial. We have moved from the idea of rival visions of philosophy to the question of whether there is any such thing as philosophy!

## Retrieving Philosophy

What they, namely, analytic writers and deconstructionists, should both argue, but have failed to, is that the pre-theoretical context of human

values cannot be explained by any kind of theory about hidden structure. It is the failure to see this point that makes both groups anti-philosophical.

What is this pre-theoretical context? We find ourselves immersed in the world, a world in which it is not possible to talk about either it or ourselves independently of that immersion. How are we to understand ourselves? Our interaction with this world is not given to us ready made but requires an interpretive response on our part. Both our freedom and our responsibility are revealed in these interpretive responses. To be sure, our interpretive response does not occur in a vacuum but originates in a cultural context, that is, a context which is both social and historical. Epistemology is always social. Nevertheless, the cultural context does not dictate the response. There are no rules for the application of rules. This cultural context is itself something that we confront, that must be apprehended. In the course of that apprehension we are free to recognize its dissonant voices and internal tensions, to challenge parts of the

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For MacIntyre's critique of Foucault see Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (Notre Dame, 2006).

cultural context, to reject parts of it, to modify parts of it. We are also free to extend the cultural context in ways that are not dictated by the context itself. What we are not free to do is to pretend<sup>84</sup> that we can stand outside all frames of reference and by the appeal to an alleged autonomous reason privilege certain practices and de-legitimate others. Analytic philosophy proceeds from the assumption that we can rent the luxury skybox at the Archimedian Point. This is worse than epistemic hubris (thinking one can find the luxury skybox at the Archimedian Point); it's bad metaphysics—there is no skybox to rent because there is no Archimedian Point.

How can we best characterize this larger context? Since the time of the classical Greeks there has been a continuous set of reflective activities called philosophy. Those activities are designed to identify the norms of the other activities in the larger cultural context. As such, these activities fall into two categories:

First, philosophy has sought to identify the procedural norms of our thinking and discourse. We know this as analysis: explications of the logic of certain practices, and the clarification of the concepts that inform that practice. This is something that all three versions of philosophy can share. The analytic part is something that can always be taught and learned in varying degrees; from this springs the tendency for so much of philosophy to revert to a kind of scholasticism, especially in the academy.<sup>85</sup>

Let me list just a few of the prominent analyses from the history of philosophy. Notice that most if not all of these are negative in their import.

## 1. Logic



- a. Socrates' stress on the importance of non-contradiction
- b. The recognition that first principles cannot be proven (Plato's Socratic notion of reminiscence, Aristotle's conception of teleology, Hume's notion of custom, Kant's conception of the synthetic a priori, Godel on incompleteness, Wittgenstein's notion of practice, and Heidegger's 'retrieval')
- c. Aristotle's insistence that validity is not truth
- d. Epistemological skepticism is self-defeating (everybody)

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This is always pretense and not a claim since we can identify the particular historical practice that is privileged with elevation ('Euclidean' geometry, teleological biology, computer technology, etc.).

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Whenever academic philosophers are at a loss to justify their professional existence they always fall back on the value of identifying the procedural norms, that is, logic.

- e. Discursive reasoning has limits (Kant)
2. Science
  - a. The substitution of Newtonian science for Aristotelian science means that all causation is efficient causation (Hume)
  - b. The principle of verification is not itself an empirical truth
3. Social world
  - a. We cannot directly apprehend the self
  - b. Norms are not 'facts' (but 'facts' presuppose norms)
  - c. The Distinction between causes and reasons
4. Philosophy
  - a. philosophy is not a body of specific knowledge
  - b. philosophy is a meta-engagement of human immersion, studying the other forms of immersion/activity and their relation to each other (Socratic)
  - c. argumentative discourse is only one form of discourse, and it presupposes a larger cultural context that is more than discourse
  - d. When philosophy is detached from the larger context it becomes dogmatic and eristic (Adversarial)

Second, there is the identification of the norms<sup>86</sup> that undergird the larger cultural context. This is synthesis, the attempt to achieve a coherent vision of a culture's practices. The synthetic activity requires a breadth of

imagination that is much rarer and cannot be taught in the sense that there is an algorithm.

Let me note just a few of the prominent syntheses from the history of philosophy.

1. Aristotle's<sup>87</sup> explication of the Greek Polis.
2. Augustine's explication of Christianity integrating its Hebrew, Greek and Latin sources.
3. Locke's explication of modernity integrating science, commercial economies, and representative government.
4. Oakeshott's delineation of a civil association.

<sup>86</sup>

To identify these norms is not the same thing as saying that you must agree with them. Different individuals will have different narrative accounts of their own engagement with those norms.

<sup>87</sup>

The Aristotle who performed this task did not appeal to or believe in hidden social structures.

Notice what all of these syntheses have in common: they are conservative. They are conservative<sup>88</sup> in the senses that they presuppose a prior moral community; they seek to identify the norms inherent<sup>89</sup> in current institutional practice and to raise the issue of their coherence.<sup>90</sup>

What distinguishes the exploratory thinking of so many analytic philosophers and deconstructionists is that their agenda is to delegitimize current institutional practice. They are adversarial. It is not the case that being adversarial is always wrong; it is the case that being adversarial<sup>91</sup> requires or presupposes agreement on, or explication of, a prior normative framework. What analytic philosophers and

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We may characterize the differences among the three philosophical perspectives when they engage in synthesis as follows: Platonists see current practice as an imperfect copy of the ideal which if actualized would render perfect coherence; Aristotelians see current practice as aiming, albeit imperfectly, at achieving its built-in end; Copernicans see the on-going evolution of a series of practices which creates periodic tensions requiring further explication.

<sup>89</sup>

Traditions are fertile sources of adaptation. The development of a tradition or inheritance is not a philosophical act; it may be either legal or political.<sup>90</sup>

This is where I think the Sheffer stroke (j) is illuminating. Sheffer showed (and so did Peirce, independently) that all logical operators of the first order predicate calculus can be reduced to a single operator meaning 'is incompatible

with' (or 'not and'). In furtherance of my point, all (logical) argumentation is about identifying (and avoiding) incoherence.

The question then becomes: Coherence with, between, or among what and what? For the analytic philosopher, what counts is coherence between extant practices or institutions and the hidden structure (e.g. Rawls's reflective equilibrium). For the Copernican, what counts is coherence among the elements of extant practices or institutions. Another way to say this is that what H.L.A. Hart in *The Concept of Law* calls the 'internal point of view' on a practice is the only point of view – or at least, the only alternatives to it are other 'internal' points of view. His student, Raz, goes on to argue that all normative statements about the law are statements from a point of view – the point of view of one who accepts the law. My response to Raz, then, would be something like: 'And what normative statements do you suppose are not like that?'

<sup>91</sup>

One is reminded here of Hume's critique of Locke's attempt to justify revolution. Hume argues that you cannot have a theory of revolution since this presupposes an authoritative reference point. The whole point of revolution is to reject a specific authority. Situations may in the minds of some call for revolution, but it is philosophically absurd to provide a justification.

Ritual appeals to those who already agree with you are not justifications.

deconstructionists have done is to be adversarial without prior philosophical explication.<sup>92</sup> This is disingenuous. Current attempts to address normative issues by both analytic philosophers and deconstructionists<sup>93</sup> are a travesty of philosophical speculative thinking.

## Summary

Philosophy has a special role to play. That special role is comprised of two parts, pedagogical and cultural. The pedagogical role is making us self-conscious, aware of our basic presuppositions. This is analysis; it can be taught; and, thankfully, it can be practiced outside of the discipline, the profession and the academy. The cultural role is the fashioning of a narrative that brings the presuppositions of an entire array of cultural practices into some sort of coherent synthesis. This is a role that has been unique to philosophy or to those we identify as great philosophers, even though many of them have played that role outside of the academy.<sup>94</sup>

This is a special role, but it is not an authoritative role.<sup>95</sup> To engage in this activity is to offer a vision that is not an argument, although it may contain arguments within it. Moreover, identifying presuppositions is different from the application of those presuppositions or the challenging of some of those presuppositions in the light of others. It is a role that acknowledges the freedom of the imagination, the autonomy of choice, and in the contemporary context the goodness or validity of a civil<sup>96</sup> association. It is a role that can never be played by

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What is wrong with academic business ethics? – it is wholly adversarial to its subject matter. Indeed, to its practitioners and to many others, the whole point and purpose of the business ethics course is to be ‘equal time’ for the critics of business – as if the FCC’s long defunct Fairness Doctrine somehow applied to b-school curricula.

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This is why it was impossible to get a straight answer from Derrida on the status of his pronouncements.

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Questions can certainly be raised about the detrimental effect on philosophy of being situated within the present day academy.

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An individual thinker may choose to do both. However, the legitimacy of the policies derived from the vision in no way follow from the value of the vision. Others can in retrospect appreciate the value and importance and influence of the vision without endorsing the derived policies. We value Aristotle’s analysis of the polis, but most of us would choose not to live in one.

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For those not familiar with Oakeshott, an enterprise association has a collective goal to which everything and everyone is subordinated; a civil self-alienated and self-proclaimed elites who strive to reveal to others their respective roles and beliefs and actions within an enterprise association. So many prominent members of the profession are so unreflectively hostile to modern commercial societies that they have incapacitated themselves from providing a vision: Rorty, MacIntyre, Blackburn, Derrida, Foucault, to name just a few.<sup>97</sup> A large part of the hostility of many intellectuals to modern commercial societies<sup>98</sup> is that such societies are not enterprise associations requiring a clerisy.<sup>99</sup>

Let me elaborate. Oakeshott distinguished between an enterprise association and a civil association. An enterprise association has a collective goal to which everything and everyone is subordinated; when the society overall is an enterprise association it is traditional, authoritarian or even totalitarian; no other enterprise associations are tolerated. A civil association has no such collective goal but is characterized by procedural norms within which individuals pursue their personal goals. A society which is overall a civil association may contain within it a multitude of enterprise associations (families, religions, the military, a business, etc.) such that individuals may voluntarily enter and exit from them. This is what a liberal society is in the generic sense. Modern western polities are civil associations held together by agreement on the procedural norms (e.g. due

association has no such goal, rather it is characterized by procedural norms within which individuals pursue their personal goals.

<sup>97</sup>

Richard Rorty, who has influenced my thought in many positive ways, is an example of a peculiar sort of failure. In the end he found no special role for philosophy, but his professed skepticism was a claim to exempt from criticism political principles which he held (and inherited) but could not make into a coherent narrative, specifically, 'the demands of self-creation and of human solidarity,' which he asserted were 'equally valid yet forever incommensurable.' Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge, 1989), 15.

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Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1975); Bertrand de Jouvenel, 'The Treatment of Capitalism by Continental Intellectuals,' in *Capitalism and the Historians*, ed. F. A. Hayek (1974); Ludwig von Mises, *The Anti-Capitalist Mentality* (1975); Peter Klein, 'Why Economists Still Support Socialism,' *Mises Daily Article* (11/15/ 06); Robert Nozick, 'Why Do Intellectuals Oppose Capitalism?' *Cato Policy Report* (1998).

<sup>99</sup>

See Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Western Intellectuals in Search of the Good Society* (1997). Philosophy, for many, is the articulation of a moral vision for those hostile to substantive religious communities.

process). Different individuals may belong to a variety of different substantive moral communities which function for them as enterprise associations.

In civil associations such as our own, intellectuals do not play a leadership role. At best they may help to identify the procedural norms and even offer a larger vision of how the norms of various institutions interact (see below), but they cannot offer an authoritative account of the substantive norms of the entire society. Intellectuals (including clergy) cannot offer an authoritative account of the good life for that is something that each individual determines for herself or himself. In civil associations such as ours leadership comes from the business and legal community. Both Platonists and traditional Aristotelians reflect the enterprise associations of the classical and medieval world, and that is why they (a) find appeals to group membership irresistible and (b) invariably favors top-down direction of society by the government. The adherence to classical models in the modern context leads to hostility to modern economic, political, legal, and social institutions. You cannot provide a comprehensive philosophical understanding of a cultural context to which you are in permanent adversarial opposition. Modern civil associations are best captured by Copernicans.

The further analogy I would like to draw is the following. Just as Platonists, but Aristotelians especially, are unhappy with modern civil associations so they are unhappy with the idea of living with competing

conceptions of philosophy. They are inexorably driven by the logic of their position to seek hegemony.

The existence of rival versions of philosophy leads to rival versions of the university. Each of these rival views has a different conception of epistemology and therefore of academic practice. Consider some of the current standard alternatives: Bloom's notion of the Great Books is to select them, read them and discuss them from a pre-modern but non-theological Aristotelian point of view. Analytic philosophers focus on the lecture as the authoritative presentation of fact, but offer quasi-socialist hidden structure analyses of social institutions disguised as scientific fact. Deconstructionists use the lecture as a rhetorical discrediting of the analytic agenda and the 'smuggling in' of their own. MacIntyre advocates a university where 'rival and antagonistic views of rational justification' can be debated and where teachers "initiate students into conflict." What all of these foregoing views share in common is hostility to modern commercial societies.

For Oakeshott, on the other hand, liberal learning is the unique ordering of our experience in our imagination. It is what makes us individuals with a voice of our own. Before we can have that voice we must participate through the voices of others. Our inheritance is a set of cultural achievements and practices, not a doctrine to be learned (contra Bloom and MacIntyre). The inheritance is recreated through appropriation, is not homogeneous and has no definitive formulation. The Great Authors do not speak as one voice with one message, but they do provide the context in which we achieve and sustain our freedom. To hear and respond to different voices is not to be initiated into conflict. The teacher who facilitates this initiation both into the inheritance and into discovering one's own voice, in the end, helps others to discover their own freedom and responsibility. It is only through interaction with our inheritance that we become what we are. It is in this sense that education is a conversation with many voices. The role of the teacher is to help the student come to know his/her voice by hearing it echoed in the conversation and to join the conversation first by speaking in the voices of others and, eventually, in his/her own voice. Rather than initiation into conflict, the student learns the ethics of conversation.

If the discipline of Philosophy is to play a significant intellectual role, then it must provide a coherent narrative of our intellectual inheritance, situate itself within it, and accept the challenge of achieving a coherent cultural framework. In its present major forms, the discipline is unable or unwilling to do that. Contemporary philosophy must find an alternative way of proceeding if it is to avoid being marginalized within the larger cultural context, and if it is to play a significant role in the articulation of our fundamental procedural values. We are not suggesting an entirely new

direction. On the contrary, we have urged a return to the main track of western philosophy, a recapturing of the richer understanding of ourselves that is preserved in the western philosophical inheritance.

The act of retrieving this common framework is neither reactionary nor anachronistic. Retrieving our framework is not a simple matter of uncritically returning to the past. Instead, it is the re-identifying of something that is a permanent part of the human condition even though it is always expressed in specific historical contexts. The framework is not a rigid structure but a fertile source of adaptation that not only evolves but also expands to incorporate things that might from an earlier perspective seem alien. The fact that these truths are always contextualized means that the act of retrieval through explication inevitably involves a reformulation. To encompass the past is to make it our own in some fashion. Since the retrieval is not solely an intellectual act, we should not be surprised that there is (a) no definitive articulation, (b) inevitable controversy over its articulation, and (c) a necessary act of faith in its continuing apprehension.<sup>100</sup> Controversy is not a problem to be solved but an inevitable condition that requires a moral response.

In sketching an alternative to analytic philosophy and deconstructionist philosophy, we can recapture the central cultural role of philosophy – the articulation of the inheritance and the provision of a coherent framework.<sup>101</sup> Philosophy can be restored as the conscience of the culture and in a way that is Socratic. As long as professional philosophy confuses its Socratic role with an adversarial stance it cannot perform that role. A coherent narrative does not preclude (a) different voices, (b) internal tensions, or (c) critique, but it does presuppose the endorsement of the fundamental norms of one's community of discourse. Given the present estrangement of University intellectuals from modern culture, perhaps this is a welcome opportunity for philosophy as a discipline to provide constructive leadership for the entire intellectual and academic world.



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These observations were suggested by Jaroslav Pelikan, but I do not recall the specific writings.

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'The idea of system is inevitable in philosophy, and...no attempt to deny it can succeed unless it is pushed to the point of denying that the word philosophy has any meaning whatever.' Collingwood, *Philosophical Method*, op. cit., 186.