

Fall 10-8-2011

# Requiem

Babette Babich

*Fordham University*, [babich@fordham.edu](mailto:babich@fordham.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://fordham.bepress.com/phil\\_papers](https://fordham.bepress.com/phil_papers)

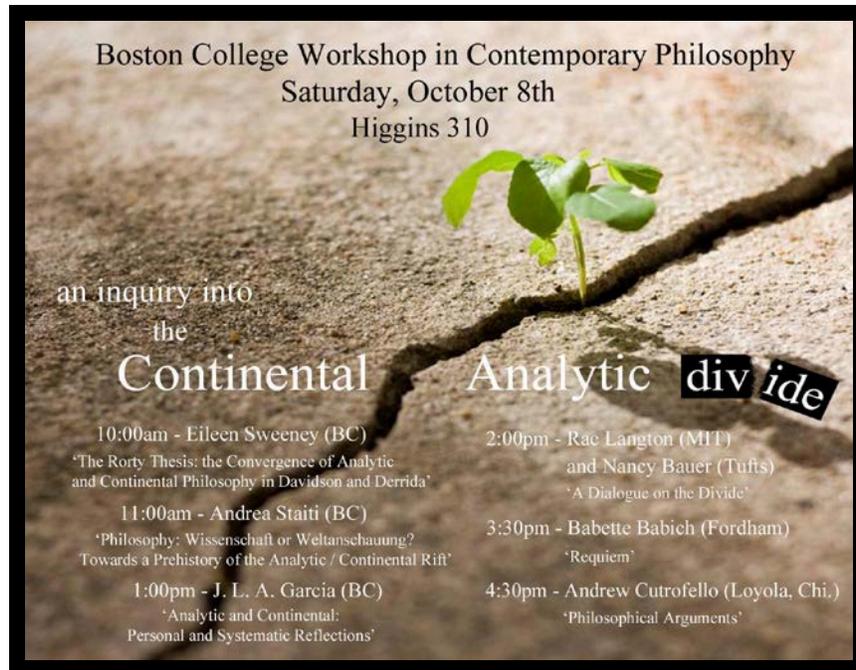
Part of the [Continental Philosophy Commons](#), [Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons](#),  
[Feminist Philosophy Commons](#), and the [History of Philosophy Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Babich, Babette, "Requiem" (2011). *Working Papers*. 5.  
[https://fordham.bepress.com/phil\\_papers/5](https://fordham.bepress.com/phil_papers/5)

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by the Hermeneutic and Phenomenological Philosophies of Science at DigitalResearch@Fordham. It has been accepted for inclusion in Working Papers by an authorized administrator of DigitalResearch@Fordham. For more information, please contact [considine@fordham.edu](mailto:considine@fordham.edu).



## Requiem

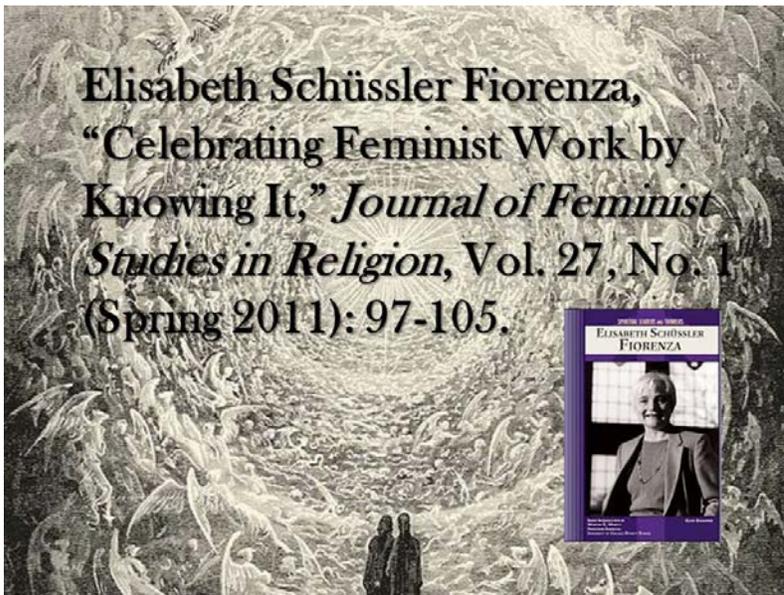
### Reflections on the Analytic-Continental Divide

Babette Babich

I'd like to begin by thanking Shane Ewegen for this invitation — it is grand to be back, of course, it always is (although without Shane I cannot imagine having been invited back otherwise). Although I haven't lost my admiration for the department at Boston College, it is manifestly very different from what it was when I was studying here. I say this because it is obvious and because it is a point to which I will return in my conclusion. I am also grateful to Shane, because it also does not go without saying that I'd be invited to a discussion on the distinction between continental and analytic philosophy and this is true although I have been writing quite vociferously about this topic for more than twenty years.<sup>1</sup> That's 2 long and lonely decades in print. And I have to underline this, because most other people who write on the same topic manage to do so without engaging anything I might have said, though on occasion I might get a nod in passing that cheerily manages to miss the substance of my contributions.

**So what?** So one might/could say? Happens all the time. No biggie.

That is true. I am interested in tracing what follows from this? For here things become more interesting than the (perforce) empty gripe that one is not read: a common fate in philosophy and one has both marvelously good company — Hume, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche — and numerous and rightly unknown fellow travelers. For by lumping these the analytic and the continental together as mainstream scholarship wishes to do (useful as this lumping is for its own purposes), this same mainstream practices not scholarship but political division. That is: suppression, snuff tactics, the internecine war about which Kant — who did **not** suffer from it — and subsequently Derrida — who suffered somewhat at the start until going on to enjoy wide academic popularity while still being excluded from the academy as such, rather like Žižek these days — both wrote with regard to the academy).<sup>2</sup>



For better or for worse, there is a method to academic exclusions. And I am grateful to Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza for noting this, and underlining the effects of the same in her recent essay, “Celebrating Feminist Work by Knowing It.” I

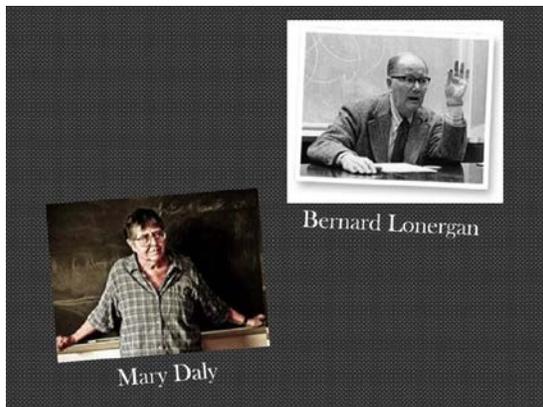
want to underline the strikingly elegant challenge of what appears to be a simple expedient — becoming familiar with an academic colleague’s work — as she raises this very point in this very context.<sup>3</sup>

Merely by failing to mention alternate observations, scholars are able (this is how it is done) to define the problem (just and only) on their own terms, solve things (just and only) as they see them and if they have colleagues who do the same, this is the end of the story or the beginning of a research programme.

For my own part, I prefer not to join such programmes but to reflect on them just to the extent that as I conceive it, this is what critical reflection and philosophy of philosophy and philosophy of science and technology and media, etc., is (or should be) all about. Thus I bring in things other academics like not to engage because I talk about the political as it affects us directly, as academics, in our philosophical lives. I talk about the economic, raise uncomfortable (for whom?) *cui bono* issues and so on. These are applied, practical issues that philosophers sometimes like to pretend inapplicable, supposing one might address the distinction by *recommending* that it be abolished (cue the absence of women on conference programs) or more commonly by simply insisting that it isn't a distinction that makes a difference anyway, or that it's **nowadays** (this is the get-with-it argument, cue feminism again) another story altogether.

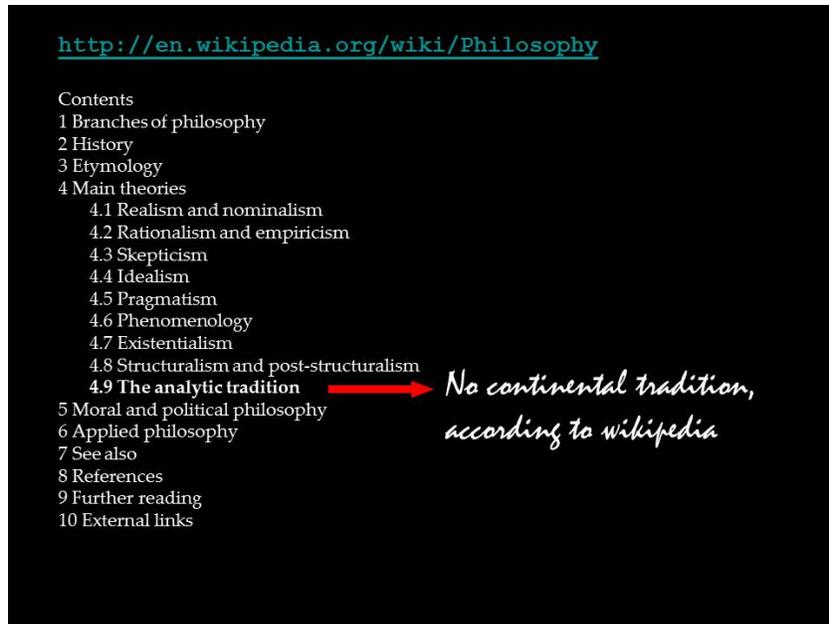
Old news you might say.

We are all so very beyond that now.



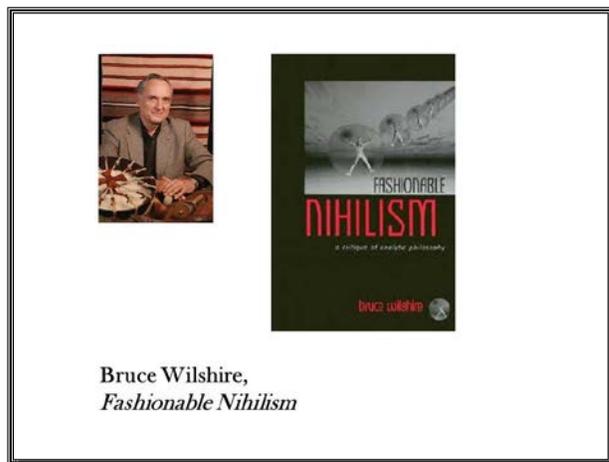
But as with feminism itself (here I am thinking of Mary Daly and her reputation, by contrast with other Boston College theologians, like my teacher, Bernard Lonergan, but others also come to mind), as with communism even, this is a nice idea that has yet to be put in practice.

Here I begin my discussion of analytic and continental philosophy by noting that, as of the present date (and I am fairly long in the tooth of my own career as a continental philosopher, and I note that it was old when I got here in 1980), although analytic philosophy counts as a “tradition,” and is named as such, the continental tradition does not rate such a denomination.<sup>4</sup>



What is continental philosophy? the analysts say, whereby they propose to answer that it is anything that has to do with one or other historical figure (history of philosophy is a code word for analytic approaches to continental philosophy in nuce) and proceed to staff whatever positions there may be from their own ranks.

Analytic philosophy, be it note, has gained no small part of its academic capital from the openness or pluralism that is characteristic of its traditional, i.e., so-called classical continental colleagues — by which I mean to refer to the tradition prior to its analytic or appropriated sense as it is understood say, at Harvard or Oxford or Toronto or Chicago or UCSD and even Stanford and so on), the same openness also shared by analytic



philosophy's Pragmatist colleagues, who have also long hoped to be invited to the philosophical table as well.<sup>5</sup> This was made clear some years ago by an important but unappreciated book by Bruce Wilshire and this too, although it is complicated by the fact that most pragmatists share an analytic formation, I will return to below.

Somewhat, but not too recently, the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (which is duly open to continental philosophers analytic and not) finally posted a kind of informal, alternative guide to Leiter's Philosophical Gourmet Report (and it is also true that it is a little silly to have to note that there *has been no serious alternative* to date apart from such desultory attempts begun and abandoned by grad students and young professors along the way of their careers) and this is why some say that Leiter simply plays the internet [brilliantly] and we play along, [helplessly one is left to assume].<sup>6</sup>

I am fond of regarding the Leiter report as a kind of cheat card for fans of the Rutgers philosophy department just to the extent that these days Leiter seems to have gotten over his lionization of Michigan by means of a personal move to the University of Chicago, not in philosophy, of course, but in law. Leiter — who has attacked me personally online but seemed to have not a word to say to me (or about me) when we met in person — tracks philosophy moves with a passion only avarice or a confusion with baseball trading (players or cards) can sustain. But just this is the kind of social media effect that ensures the interest of his colleagues, favored or unfavored.

Now the APA itself long ago sanctioned or more accurately said 'disapproved' of Leiter's report (because, to be sure, he simply made it up in the first place)<sup>7</sup> just as SPEP itself was none too happy about it and this is because one of the things (social media fans take note) that Leiter liked to do was not merely to declare one philosophy department better than another but insisted upon listing the best places to do continental philosophy — by which notion Leiter himself meant not reading Gadamer but something like the sort of thing he himself did when he himself read Nietzsche.<sup>8</sup>

And many undergraduate and many more graduate students and quite a few professors of philosophy took the list to heart. Students (and professors) like lists, especially lists on the internet (this was before Twitter and Facebook where they still like them) and they like positive, unambiguous statements even more. The Leiter report provided them with such non-ambiguous lists (i.e., **the truth**) and a lot of "fun" stuff, meaning mockery of others, just to spice things up.

I call this testosterone philosophy. So and so is a jerk. I haven't read his/her stuff but I shouldn't have to because I don't understand it and it sounds wrong anyway.

And we'll come back to that.

The larger problem for the most recent online fit of aggression was, as it turns out, SPEP, which will have its 2011 meeting in just a few weeks. For it had transpired that Linda Martín Alcoff (Hunter College, Grad Center, CUNY) and Paul Taylor (Penn State) and William Wilkerson (University of Alabama-Huntsville) had collated an alternative guide to the Leiter guide, a guide — because I like to think of this in German — to the guider guide. Now none of the men were attacked by name and only one aspect of the guide, namely the guide to the climate for women in philosophy was *engaged*, i.e., taken up at all.



The rhetorical dynamics of the approach in question are well-known enough to anyone who has read *Rumpole of the Bailey* or what is just as, anyone who has seen the BBC production starring the late Leo Kern (Rumpole enjoys theoretical and incidental reflections on the rhetorical ploys of his fellow Barristers) or even and just an old Perry Mason novel.<sup>9</sup>

When Alcoff and Taylor and Wilkerson set up their counter lists, Leiter plus acolytes attacked Alcoff. Thus nasty blog exchanges ensued, nicely getting Leiter in the public eye (ah! again) and Leiter had in the interim, as noted, already and neatly shifted the focus to Alcoff's and Taylor's and Wilkerson's listing of woman friendly places to study philosophy, which Leiter proposed to denounce as inaccurate (fairly easy to do simply because **any** place can be argued to be a difficult place to be a woman in the profession — I was participated in my first Chilly Climate for Women committee here at BC billions of years as a grad student — and study after study has in the intervening years has had to conclude that there are no specifically women-friendly places to study philosophy.<sup>10</sup> This is **because** there is sexual harassment but also this is **because** (and this is perhaps the most important reason, and Leiter's attack on Alcoff, alas, bears this out), when a woman speaks, wherever she speaks and whatever she says, thus when a

woman does philosophy, of whatever kind she does and wherever she does philosophy, **and this does cross the analytic continental divide**, she is simply not taken as seriously as a man.<sup>12</sup>

Women philosophers simply do not count as much which means that it is safe to attack philosophers like Alcoff as Leiter and company did do.<sup>13</sup> In the interim the pluralism movement in philosophy has also happened to attract the interest of widely broad concerns centered neither on the exclusion of continental voices or on the exclusion of American pragmatism and its quite distinct discontents, but now focuses, as queering philosophy, on gay and lesbian and gender/transgender issues, and race and most recently disability.<sup>14</sup>

I am not taking sides on this one, except to say that in my mind, SPEP has as much a right as Brian Leiter to put a list on the web.

I actually think anyone has the right to go and put a list of anything they like on the web.

What concerns me is that Leiter for his part proceeded to issue a call for the APA, I kid you not, to **issue a recall** of Linda Martín Alcoff as Vice-President, which position, as we all know, is in effect the position of president-elect, i.e., the president to be, of the APA itself. Note that this is an elected position which Leiter, in good legalese renames as “quasi-elected,” kind of like the Nobel-Prize winning discovery in chemistry, of quasi-crystals. But at the same time, let us take care to note that Linda Alcoff was not quasi- but in fact legitimately, there is no quasi- about it. elected.

On Leiter’s say so, supported by means of a poll (fairly cooked in its design as folks immediately noticed and which he subsequently shut down), the recommendation, as addressed to the APA itself, was that Alcoff be recalled (hey, it worked for Arnold Schwarzenegger against Gray Davis in California).

Now the APA, which has of late been having trouble keeping its own web page on line, has other worries than what Brian Leiter proposes to tell it to do.

But not so Linda Martín Alcoff, who, unlike the APA, is a real person. She was the victim of Leiter's attacks, she bore the brunt of his mockery and the mockery of his acolytes and, this is the nature of mockery, there was nothing she could do about it, nothing her defenders, and she has them, could do about it either.

Why is this so?

Well it is so because if I say to you that you are no good whether behind your back or to your face, and *especially* if I happen to say this in public, if I say that you don't deserve to be vice-president of the APA, even if you happen to be Vice-President of the APA, what exactly can you do about it?

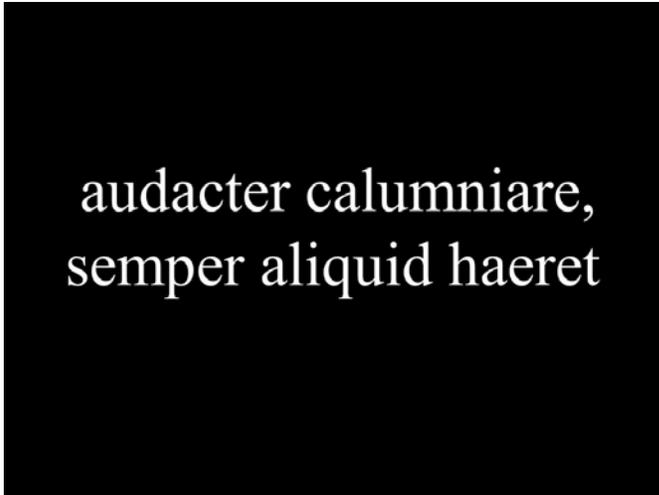
What can you say?

*I do too!*

*You're wrong?*

This is the beauty of calumny. Whatever you say, sheerly by saying it, the damage is done.

This is how libel works and the reason it works has exactly nothing to do with the rightness or the wrongness of it.<sup>15</sup>



audacter calumniare,  
semper aliquid haeret

To quote Lord Bacon here, *audacter calumniare, semper aliquid haeret*.<sup>16</sup> Sling mud, something always sticks. It is one of the oldest rhetorical tricks and it is of course a typical lawyer's gambit.

It's also as recent politics has made all too clear, the mainstay of political campaigning. That's what candidates do on TV, they attack the other guy. But this is not limited to professional politics this rules the profession of philosophy. And if you post such attacks in a public place, which is what we have been talking about, or if you tell students that this so, what is the injured party going to do about it? Argue? Or just ignore it, waiting for the defamation, the vilification to fade. The powerless and everyone, anyone attacked in this way, *is* powerless, have no words to counter such attacks. It can't be done.

This, for those who wish a philosophical account, is what Nietzsche analyzed as the functional or working mechanics of *ressentiment*, there is no counter to it, and it has been so un-utterably successful, as Nietzsche reminds us, *because* it cannot be countered. It is the engine of what we think of as morals, philosophical and practical, everyday morals today. It is what Nietzsche named *The Genealogy of Morals*, it is how morality comes to be.

### **Continental Philosophy and Analytic Philosophy**

In general (and of course this is not always true and Hegelians and Levinasians, according to Peter Sloterdijk, at least, are noteworthy exceptions here), continental philosophers tend, to think that analytic philosophy and all philosophic approaches including Hegelianism, Levinasianism, and so on including Sloterdijk and Zizek and Badiou and so on, are *valid*, that is to say *valuable ways of doing philosophy*. And continental philosophers also tend to think one ought to hire analytically trained, analytic philosophers to teach and write on analytic philosophy and indeed they think that one should hire analytic philosophers and have them teach philosophy in their own department, lets call that RIMBY, right in my backyard — rather than, say, in someone else's, say a neighboring school's philosophy department.

Continental philosophers at the notoriously continental Stony Brook and BC and even Penn State, of course, of course, **all** think that their philosophy departments ought to

include properly trained analytic philosophers, *and so they do*.<sup>17</sup> Thus, not only do continental philosophers hold that analytic philosophy is a viable mode of philosophy, one that has a place in the profession and in one's own department but empirically, in fact, as I can reasonably attest, all the departments I have mentioned have indeed already and for many years now hired analytic philosophers.

By contrast, analytic philosophers **do not think** that continental philosophy unless it happens to be pursued in an analytic fashion, that is in analytic style, that is, in a fashion that is up to analytic snuff, **is either valid or valuable or viable as philosophy**. The AP, to use abbreviations here, thinks instead that what passes as CP should be re-defined as pursued analytically. This may be seen in nearly any internet rant by Brian Leiter, he speaks of those who do "serious scholarship in the Continental traditions," i.e., "good" continental philosophy as opposed to the "weak" or "bad" kinds of continental philosophy (the value distinctions employed are his terms). Or one might just ask some of my analytic colleagues about the distinction in question.

The analytic philosopher (and dominant or ruling mainstream departments bear this out in practice, that is as can be confirmed by a look at their faculty rosters) does not think that one should have traditionally formed or classically trained continental philosophers in **his** (it is alas usually a his) department, however he (or she) is very willing to have analytically trained philosophers with a continental philosophy AOS (whatever that means and it means Stephen Mulhall or Bernard Reginster, who is a lovely man but utterly analytic as are indeed Taylor Carmen or Manuel Delanda and so on) as those are, per force, the only, maybe, 'good' continental philosophers. Thus to go with abbreviations APs who do CP would be acceptable = CPA.

And when departments like my own at Fordham and like Stony Brook and like BC or Penn State, just to keep to places I know something about, hire analytic philosophers they hire people who, even if they say they support the character of the university, largely tend to mean and to understand by that that they are down with Catholicism, say, or down with having to be at Stony Brook or Penn State, say, and may even be very enthusiastic Catholics or indeed state university enthusiasts (vs. fans of the private school ethos) and so on.

But such appointees do not (I say this in general for and of course there are exceptions) believe that the people who are already in place, teaching continental philosophy (or anything else) should “**really**” be there. As time goes on and aging helps with this, they seek to hire more and more analytic philosophers perhaps if only in the relatively benign hopes of blocking their view of the continental philosophers but also of course all the other types in their departments. And ultimately this strategy does, and that is the reason for my title, succeed.

Francis Bacon knew what he was talking about: for not only does something always stick but after a relatively short interval, the problem resolves itself all by itself.

### **Crossover Cases**

Where there are no teachers, there is no tradition.

When a scholar’s work is left out of scholarship by non-advertence, non-mention, be it deliberate or accidental, here I am thinking of Nietzsche and Classics as Classics is taught in universities all over the world, it is as if that work never existed. The results are literally fatal for scholarship. At best one can be, as Nietzsche said, posthumous, at best, as a later scholar to cite on exception in classical philology, Hugh Lloyd Jones, one gives “blood to the ghosts.” But in either case we are not talking about life, here and now.

As with Brian Leiter’s conflicts with Linda Martín Alcoff, there is very little possibility for discourse between analytic and continental philosophy because the tradition that is committed to interpretation and translation, to generosity and curiosity and above all to scholarship (without needing to describe such scholarship as doing “history” or some such) will be more likely to read or make efforts to read the analytic tradition. By definition, given the kind of program that it is, the analytic approach to philosophy *does not read* and *does not wish to read* work in the continental tradition. At best they might want to read so-called continental authors, the big names, but and in fact not even these.

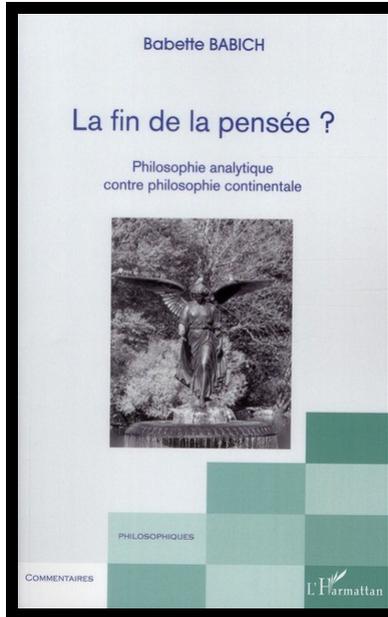
What do analytic philosophers with a specialization in continental topics look like? Well just to stay with Nietzsche they look like Leiter, like Reginster, like Poellner, like

Richardson, like Schacht, like Clark who puts the program best by noting, very like Lakatos with regard to the actual practice of science, that one can ignore most bits of Nietzsche (this is my gloss but she says exactly this and I quote her elsewhere) to concentrate on as Clark says, I am now glossing her directly, what is “coherent in Nietzsche.”

What does someone who **crosses** the analytic-continental divide look like? Note to begin with and this is a quasi *diriment impediment*, that an analytic philosopher just by reason of his or her lack of formation, this is Nietzsche’s *mangel an Philologie*, cannot *become* or *turn into* a continental philosopher.

Even a pragmatist cannot manage such a feat, hence, Rorty never became a continental philosopher but and only and this is quite a bit Richard Rorty. Instead, just as I have argued elsewhere, one has first to begin as a continental philosopher, for example Ernst Tugendhat or Jacques Bouveresse.<sup>18</sup> Thus I recently met Lorenz Puntel, a German systematic philosopher who is persuaded that he has turned into analytic philosopher at the end of his life. I met him informally and for a late dinner after teaching earlier in the day, a course on Heidegger and ending it with a lecture on technology, media, virtual reality, reading Marcuse and Baudrillard’s *The Intelligence of Evil*, it is relevant to add that the night before, I had led my graduate class in a discussion of Heidegger’s notion of being-in as he details this in *Being and Time*.

I was obviously exhausted but we had a thoroughly enjoyable and very philosophical conversation despite Puntel’s self-description as an analyst. Here I have to smile for Puntel, however stout his self-description, couldn’t possibly be mistaken for an analyst by an analytic or mainstream philosopher philosopher (of metaphysics or mind) if he tried, no matter how very many or how very large or how very, very, very systematic his books.



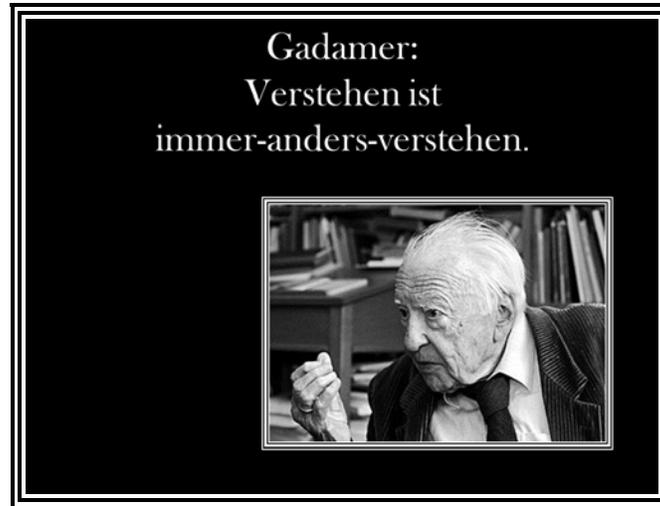
Of course the characteristic of not fitting an analytic philosopher's sense of what an analytic philosopher looks like does not make of Puntel a continental thinker either and despite his Bavarian origins. Thus and in a sense Puntel is indeed what someone who bridges, who links the continental analytic tradition would look like — as is likewise Jacques Bouveresse, just mentioned above, although it is also relevant to point out that this observation would frustrate the two of them, albeit in different ways and for different reasons. For and in spite of Puntel's joke to me that he and his friends thought that France was exactly the kind of country that was constitutionally incapable of an analytic turn, it is the case that Bouveresse himself, and indeed both Pascal Engel and my former colleague at Fordham, Claudine Tiercelin, among quite a few others in fact, have long been dedicated to putting philosophy in France on the path of, to borrow from and modify Kant: a *scientism*. And it is telling in fact that the dedication to analytic philosophy in France among the power breakers has had the consequence that my former colleague, Claudine, has indeed and as of this past June, been singled out among all other possible candidates for the honor of being elected, and not quasi-elected either, to the College de France.

All of France, as the French like to say, meaning only the philosophy professors and those interested in philosophy, were baffled because and to an extent Puntel is right, they could not fathom what she was talking about, with all their background in philosophy, they did not recognize her topics.<sup>19</sup> But the point is not to connect with the tradition of

philosophy in France, as Bouveresse gave the press to understand in no uncertain terms,<sup>20</sup> but to participate in a globally dominant movement, that is analytic philosophy, however much that also happens to be an Anglo-Saxon tradition. But the nomination and election of Claudine Tiercelin to the College de France demonstrates (had it needed demonstration after the massive success of Sokal's and Bricmont's *Intellectual Imposters*), that analytic philosophy reigns in Europe just as much as it does in the United States. Only the theological turn in France, the one that gave my friend Dominique Janicaud a heart attack of the spirit to go with the heart attack he suffered in body, and all because of what it meant about a particular *constriction*, as Janicaud regarded it, of phenomenology in France.

Puntel was delighted to argue in conversation, notice this because I did, and he continued the Carnap tradition, as we may call it, of mocking Heidegger for inconsistency or triviality — tautology is the word here — that Heidegger's focus on finitude already presupposed the non-finite, the infinite. This is a nicely Heideggerian move, of course, for where Descartes, as we all recall, pointed to the impossibility of accretionary finitudes (as it were) generating a positive infinity (but and merely a very large but finite array), the idea for Heidegger would be the pretheoretical, preconceptual move, one already assumes infinity, it is just that *given* that Descartes says it is. Thus if Heidegger told Puntel and my friend who now divides his time with his wife Anke Bennholdt-Thomsen between Berlin and Greece, Lev Guzzoni who happened to be the editor of *Time and Being* that the charge is to think finitude, Heidegger is claiming something that his own argument disallows, literally and in advance.

But, of course, Heidegger is not dictating or claiming that what is **is** only *Endlichkeit*, finitude. Exactly not and this is the continental move, and this is why Puntel is not a continental philosopher and my teacher Gadamer always emphasized a generosity of intellect, in addition to the important spin this gives to the notion that understanding is always understanding otherwise, *verstehen ist immer anders verstehen*. For Gadamer, who was the one and only reason I came to Boston College in the first place, as for Heidegger as for Nietzsche there is instead a *recognition that this is one way, there are other ways, there is always more to be thought*.



To borrow the line that Heidegger, for his part, takes over from Hölderlin (if indeed and in order to read Rilke), now speaking not of finitude but mortality, *Sterblichkeit* — deity in the sense of whatever divinities there are, and Hölderlin tells us that they have fled the world, and as he names them in his *Bread and Wine* we recognize them all as sons who cross over, who join, who translate, who transcend another divide: the limits between the divine and the mortal as he also names them: every one of them a bastard god of a kind: Herakles, Dionysos, Christ. The first two identical as sons of the Olympian father, Zeus, and Heidegger catches Nietzsche's echo of the same, speaking of the play of the world Hero, Demi-god, God, and Christ of course, son of God, son of man.

That in turn is nothing but the mystery of what Nietzsche calls the body, of blood, of flesh itself, the incarnation, as Hölderlin, who refused all of his life to be a priest as he was trained to be one, and of course, never did anything but priestly things in all that he did, what mortals do is turn, what mortals do, they can do because they are hung, as they are, over an abyss.

### Hölderlin

...The heavenly powers  
Cannot do all things. It is the mortals  
Who reach sooner into the abyss. So  
the turn is  
With these. ...

*Mnemosyne* IV 225

Nietzsche and Hölderlin take these reflections to a reflection not on the indigence of the mortal, for this is *Endlichkeit* not *Sterblichkeit*, but the indigence of the divine and to ask what Nietzsche names the most painful question of what such a god knows about love.

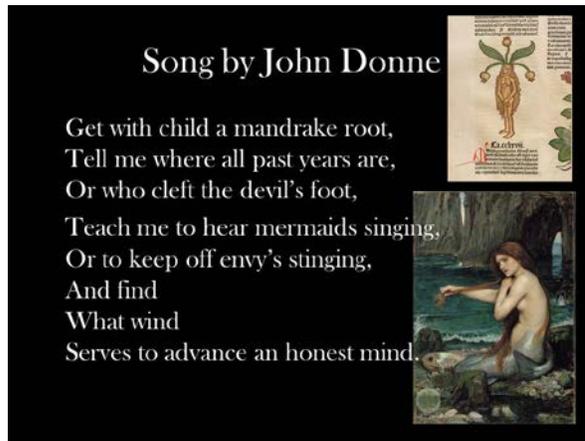
To go further here would take us in another direction. For the moment, it is enough to observe that Heidegger is neither contradicting himself nor is he is inconsistent. What he is doing when he suggests that we are to think the finitude of finitude, to think the limit of the limit as of the limitless, the edge of being on the edge as mortal beings, as created being, as of uncreated being, the risk or the wager that intrigues Rilke but is for Heidegger still not enough about what this finitude means, just in the horizontal context of time and being. And so too Being, and so too, obliquely indeed time. But what is asked for there is not a sentence, not a proposition, not a claim, but *thinking* and that is of course, always caught up with *questioning reflection*. And to see that we need, this is the continental move for me, to cut Heidegger a break.

How might what he says make sense, what sense does it have for him, how can it be made to make sense for us. In what sense? And here we pay attention to style and to go with style, we listen to the tone.



This is also for me the *harder* way to go about philosophy. I have seen dozens and dozens of EZ ways, “refutations” of Heidegger, finishing him off nicely, just as I have seen numerous instauration of EZ Nietzsche, what I call the sophomore’s because it requires so very little in the way of prerequisites, refutation of Nietzsche. As it is argued: Nietzsche simply contradicts himself: hey, so the “argument” goes, Nietzsche claims as true, can you believe it, that there is no truth. Indeed, but and as Nietzsche says, that would be the point: begin there, think there.

What follows if we assume that there is no truth, if indeed we assume that truth is a woman, inconstant? Here we might remember the point of John Donne's poem, *Song*.



And sexist as it is — and it is precisely sexist — Donne's poem is all about the impossibility of finding a woman “true and fair” — and nothing at all about the impossibility of finding a man of the same character, caliber, qualities.

Here, along with Nietzsche's inconstant lady Truth, we ask the ontological question *what if*, we ask what follows if there *is* no truth, rather than basking in the “hypothesis of the simple,” as Baudrillard calls it? And as Baudrillard knew, such a question needs to be asked today, just given the ontological sea change that is the virtual or let us now call it “digital” — it is the same but we prefer one word to another from time to time — these are the fashions of mind, adumbration of everything we know and everything we see and hear. The adventure of thinking such things belongs to continental philosophy, classically, that always means, broadly conceived.

Some recent young interviewers got my attention by reminding me (and thus I here fulfill one promise made at the start of my talk), that I had claimed (and I should say here that I stand by the analogy), that analytic philosophy “...stands to science as scholastic philosophy once did to theology.” I stand by this and plan to come back to it below, but they moved not to the context of that discussion of analytic philosophy but to my claim that

Continental philosophy differs from analytic philosophy in its openness to questioning which also means that it is less concerned with solutions than it is with critical questioning (including the question of its own presumptions or prejudices). But this focus on critical questioning also means, at least ideally, that continental philosophy does not aspire to take its rational warrant from science itself.

The question these young students went on to ask bears directly on the theme of today's graduate workshop: "Nearly a decade on, there remains heated discussion about this 'analytic/continental divide. What is the usefulness of this term and its possible future?" Great question, if a bit over-familiar to us by now.

There are two points to be made here. Firstly, what my interlocutors left out was prepared in the context of my article, where I emphasize that analytic philosophy is as the Germans say, *zurechtgenannt*, justifiably so named: it is dedicated to dissolving itself and its heritage (that means your department of philosophy if we drop from the heights of theory to the saw of university budget cuts). In other words, the program, and I am only borrowing from mainstream philosophy when I say this, is to resolve problems, to dispose of problems, clear up difficulties, eliminate questions. End of story.

And this is someone else's requiem.

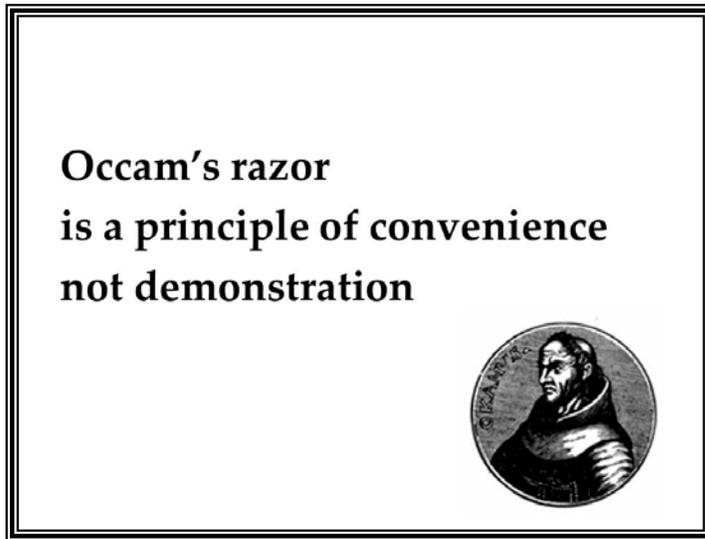
To the second point, which was what I addressed in my reply, I argued that popular treatments of the debate usually tended to want to deny its very existence. And I can give you footnote after footnote to justify this point.

But consider the question of the question as posed, just because when one speaks of "the usefulness of this term" as my young questioners, they were undergraduates, did do, they too seemed to be pointing in the direction of popularity and its values. Thus it is most "useful" to pretend (here the Brian Leiter-report and associated blogs are good instantiations of this particular "use" or desire as nerdy *wish fulfillment*) that scholars such as those whose work one does not like can be not merely ignored, or simply not cited, this is the *ostrich effect*, but and ultimately "designated" out of existence.

This is old hat in academia, which has always been a competitive arena (going as far back as Heraclitus who recommended junking everyone else but himself) and it's also emblematic of the modern, thus we hear the trope at the penultimate level of Nietzsche's short "History of an Error," which is more about the natural history of what Bill Richardson after Heidegger calls errancy and illusion than it is what it appears to be, namely an account of the difference between the "real" world (which originally of course meant the *ideal world*) and the apparent, the "phenomenal" world where Nietzsche writes that that "real" (ideal) world is:

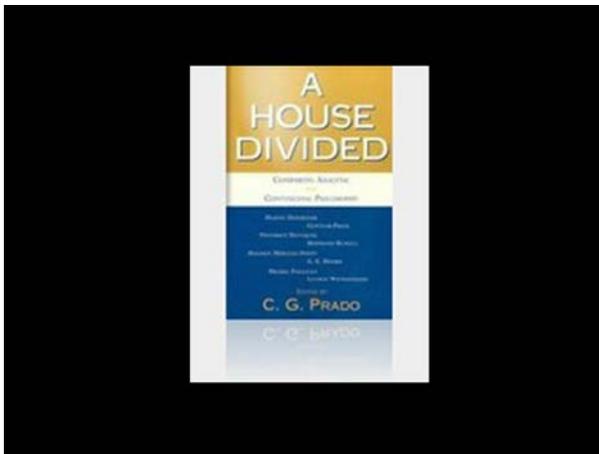
— an idea no longer of any use ...— an idea grown useless, superfluous, consequently, a refuted idea: let us abolish it! (Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols, How the Real World at Last Became a Myth*)

It goes without saying that abolishing “an idea grown useless” is inherently risky not for reasons of, say, reverential regard but both logically and effectively or practically or really because the supererogatory is not therefore or thereby “refuted.”



Occam's razor is a principle of convenience not demonstration: it is not a matter of ontology (though it can become one). In the case of Nietzsche's particular example, if we proceed to abolish the so-called “real world” what we find, whether we will this result or not is that “we have also abolished the apparent world.” (Ibid.) The case

of the real and the apparent turn out to be, as many things are in context, a case of co-relevant concepts. Nietzsche's joke is in the rhetorical array: it because the idea may be said to be “useless” that one supposes that one may do away with it: because it is “superfluous,” one concludes that it has, as a result, been “refuted.”



And why ever not get rid of the distinction? Especially where there are fewer and fewer continental philosophers — even in traditionally “continental” philosophy departments?

More than one person has told me (obviously not in print or they would have had to *cite* the text) that one of the more compelling points in my article as

quoted from Carlos Prado's *A House Divided*,<sup>22</sup> is that I bring the closed-off, and perversely and inherently self-immolating character of analytic style philosophy into relief. I emphasize that and by contrast with Nietzsche and Heidegger, contemporary analytic philosophy isn't open to questioning. It is closed not because I say so but on its own terms. Thus I describe traditional continental philosophy in its critically hermeneutic and reflectively phenomenological character as the practice of *intensifying* questions — making them even worse as I like to put it.

Here, I follow Heidegger, who follows Nietzsche: the point of philosophy is not as Karl Popper has claimed, to solve problems but to make them still more problematic.

I go on to contrast this with analytic philosophy's ongoing passion for deflating, puncturing, or otherwise dissolving questions, here, again, just to use the rhetoric of the mainstream.

It is a common place in analytic philosophy to dismiss questions and whole traditions of philosophical problems altogether by "unmasking" them as not (really) "real" questions, declaring them *pseudo-questions*. In this sense, analytic or mainstream philosophy regards its task as the *solving* of problems, dissolving all other problems and issues as irrelevant, as pseudo-problems.

Similarly, as we have seen, analytic philosophy adjudges, evaluates, rates continentally trained philosophers as "poor," or "weak," or "bad" philosophers, who are thus similarly unmasked as not really being philosophers, after all, certainly not ones who should have appointments, speak at conferences, or hold office at the highest level in the profession.

In the same way that continental philosophy as such describes a *philosophical style* and is thus otherwise than a description of philosophy as currently, say, practiced on the continent,<sup>23</sup> analytic philosophy which is not accidentally also called "mainstream" philosophy and which we may thus refer to as *received philosophy*, i.e., as the dominant tradition in the profession, is itself and likewise a *style*, referring to be sure, to more than one kind and thus not referring only to a single or specific method or indeed, to bring geography into the mix, a particular locus.

If one asks whether it is ‘useful’ to distinguish between maintaining and dissolving problems, perhaps simply by stipulating them as solved or else by declaring them useless or meaningless, as so many distinctions to be “abolished,” one thereby purposes or intends to eliminate what is problematic: as a consequence one gets to dismiss those who present or maintain such problems.

And that turns out to be the point.

This is what makes the focus on what may be designated as ‘useful’ or ‘efficient’ so very expeditious (and not just in ways that the economist Lester Thurow once argued). And it is done by the difference-quashing power of the first person plural. One says (note the neutralized first person): “**we**” don’t need to talk about continental and analytic philosophy any longer, “**we**” don’t find the distinction “useful.”

But such a way of speaking has its own utility and the result of that is a patently monolithic conception of philosophy.

My worry in response has always been, firstly, that philosophy is all about making distinctions.<sup>24</sup> “I’ll teach you differences,” says Wittgenstein, himself quoting Shakespeare or would that be Lord Bacon again, in his turn.

Secondly, and this has been the sideline focus of my talk all along, I am struck by how self-serving such claims tend to be. When I first wrote on this topic in 1991, not ten years ago as my optimistic undergraduate interlocutors but twenty years ago and I first learned of the distinction a decade before then in 1980 when Rorty gave his own presidential address at the APA, I noticed that when authors claimed as they did in book after book on the post- this or post- that “turn” in analytic philosophy, the same authors always went on to point out how very advanced analytic philosophy was, how open-minded it was, and so on *but* I also noted that such books tended almost without exception to use such claims as the basis for excluding or limiting not encouraging dialogue, conversation, exchange.

Hence If one wanted to talk, as one of my teachers did, about Husserl and Heisenberg in the philosophy of science, or about Nietzsche and about Heidegger in the philosophy of science as I did, one met closed doors: there was and is no dialogue, no conversation,

certainly no exchange. And as I noted at the start, I am now come back to that point as I promised when it comes to the profession simple non-mention, not quoting people, that is utter exclusion, is far more efficient than refutation.

It does not seem to me that claiming that the distinction isn't 'useful' or that it is 'meaningless' is terrifically different.

The purpose to be served is exclusion.

*We all already know all that, say the powers that be, but analytic philosophy isn't that way at all, it has changed, analytic philosophy is now so various and so new, hence it is, as my colleagues at Fordham will tell me, that there are so many "different" kinds of philosophy of mind and analytic metaphysics and so on, the logic of which adverting to such proliferation of kinds and kinds translates in effect to saying 'we need to hire more people to do analytic metaphysics or philosophy of mind: don't talk to us about your concerns, about the kinds of things you do, we're not interested, we don't want to hear from you, we don't want to hear from those like you, we already know what you have to say. And besides: we don't 'understand it.'*

*'Instead of engaging in dialogue, instead of talking about has been done in your tradition or about your research interests, what you ought to do is listen to us. Rather than exchange and conversation: it is just and only analytic philosophy that should be read, you should hire scholars trained in analytic philosophy who do so-called 'continental' work, you ought to dialogue with analytic philosophers only, converse solely on our topics, using only our terminology and style. Because that is what philosophy ought to be.*

It seems to me that this only serves the purpose of enshrining one particular style of doing philosophy which one designates as "good" philosophy, as the only style of philosophy. And this is the effect whenever one says, as many younger scholars who also describe themselves as "continental" (in good analytic fashion, let it be noted) and despite an

analytic formation (that means: their training, their background, their reading), *let's just not perpetuate such distinctions, but let's talk instead of 'good' and 'bad' philosophy.*

The problem is that what counts as *good* and what counts as *bad* always turns out to be just those kinds of philosophy defined from the perspective and on the standards of that same analytic formation.

Let's go back a bit to Nietzsche. He claims he is the first to raise the question of science as a question and he also raises the related question of truth. He questions causality along with our presuppositions about the very idea of cause and very fundamentally indeed, he raises the question of the origin of logic itself, in logical and on historical terms (and in the case of the last he reminds us of the oddity of our universal conviction that we can proceed from non-knowledge *to* knowledge, transition from error *to* truth, and in general and thereby manage to advance *from* mythic thought and convention *to* logical and rational thinking.

How, Nietzsche asks, does that work? How can one ever, logically speaking, begin with error and proceed to truth?

If we begin with superstition and ignorance, that'd be the cavemen, exactly how do we progress to enlightenment and knowledge? Everything in what Nietzsche writes on this question depends upon the question of foundation and Nietzsche asks the ultimate question of ground.

Logic conserves or preserves what truth one has to begin with. Reasoning logically, we do not deviate from correct insights, whereas illogical process leaves us anywhere and everywhere, even when our premises are true.

The problem for Nietzsche and for Heidegger, as for Kant, Hume, Descartes, this is a traditional problem, is to find a secure foundation.

But today philosophers no longer worry about such a so-called crisis of foundations as concerned Nietzsche and Husserl and Heidegger, and they do not worry because science

is our mighty fortress, our foundation. Thus we take what science says as our point of departure for philosophy: we take ‘as true’ whatever science says is true.

And maybe it is true, that is not my point here, but rather and just that philosophy, even the philosophy of science, does not and I have argued elsewhere that I think that it should,<sup>25</sup> pose critical questions to science or indeed for the sake of science, as I hold that Heidegger also argues.

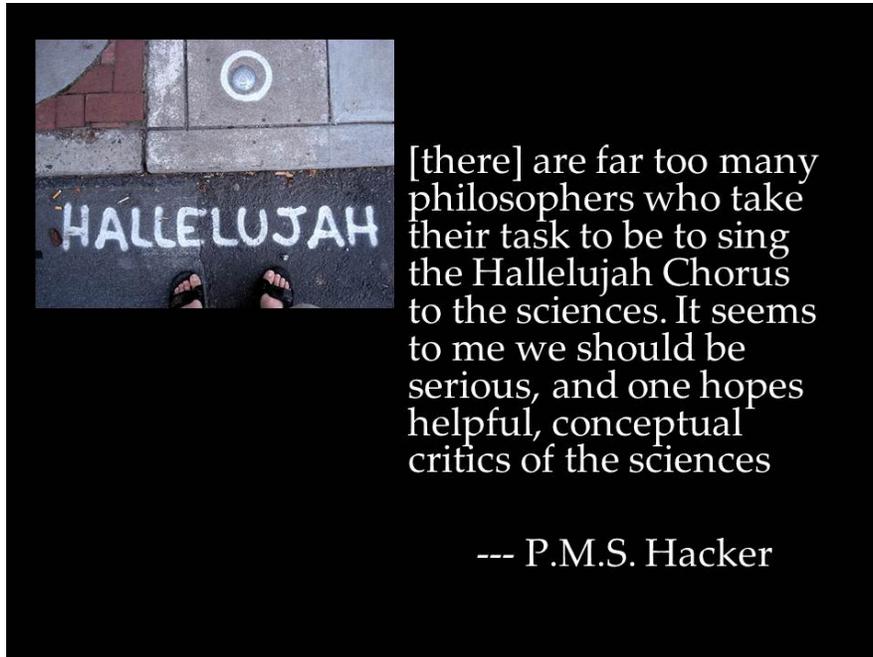
To return as I promised, to the parallel cited above, where scholastic philosophy once served theology and where theology very conscientiously, even anxiously required the services of philosophy (even if this anxiety tended to lead to an ultimate movement to “deny reason” in order, as it were, to make room “for faith”), today’s science does not similarly stand in need of philosophy’s contributions quite irrespective (and this is why I pay attention to this) of whether those contributions happen to be analytic or continental. This sovereignty, autonomy, or *disinterest* on the part of modern science, those would be one’s colleagues in the natural science departments, those would be the folk at CERN, people working on stem cells (provided they don’t have to pass an ethics review board regarding their experimental plans), is particularly problematic for the dominant mode of philosophizing, that is, analytic philosophy in particular, just to the extent that it embraces science as its model, or ideal.

Here we note again that for its part, traditional philosophy never ‘embraced’ scholastic theology (*per impossibile*, in the case of Plato and Aristotle never mind the Pre-Socratics) as its ideal.

Once again: analytic philosophy embraces an enterprise, that would be the natural sciences, that for its own part does not require its services --- although and of course, unwanted attentions also happens to define not a lovers’ but a stalkers’ relationship.

Such an attempted embrace of science does not characterize the critical, continental kind of philosophy of science, that, like Nietzsche’s as I have argued, does not model itself on science and does not aspire to be taken “as” science but instead and much rather seeks to put science itself in question.

In this way and although analytic philosophy emphasizes what is called ‘critical thinking,’ there is a radical avoidance of critique especially where it concerns science and I have noted that I have always found this problematic for the philosophy of science in particular. I have some small comfort, though it may not comfort *him* to have me cite him here, that the perfectly analytic British philosopher, P.M.S. Hacker makes a similar point.<sup>26</sup>



If analytic philosophy does not question science, science in turn as I have noted does not regard philosophy, no matter whether analytic or continental, as theology once regarded philosophy. This is where a certain pathos, already described as philosophical stalking rather than philosophical cruising, say, comes in. For it is not the case that science gives a hoot about the distinctions between philosophical kinds that we are talking about here. And accordingly, when it comes to the relevance of the philosophy of science of any flavor (be it analytic *or* continental), for “practical scientific endeavors” just to refer to the work of contemporary scientists, science proceeds without referring to philosophy of any stripe.

Thus although analytic philosophers of science may regard what they write as having more significance to practical scientific endeavors (as opposed, say, to Nietzsche’s philosophy of science), the scientists themselves do not depend upon philosophy of *any*

*kind* and are, it would appear, universally united in *not* taking it to be particularly significant for their own practice.

And indeed that has always been true. If Quine could say as he did that mathematics is philosophy enough, the physicists, and this is why Nietzsche addresses himself directly to the physicists (“my dear Messieurs Physicist,” he writes), might counter that physics is philosophy enough. If yesterday’s scientist, scientists like Heisenberg and like Einstein and like Neurath and like Bohr and Schrödinger, and so on, enjoyed a background that included philosophy in addition to classical studies, this background did not mean that they revered the philosophers of science of their day.

The scientists just named all from the era of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, *always* held themselves perfectly capable of philosophizing all by themselves — and many of them did just that. They did not need to and they did not in fact appeal to their colleagues in philosophy to help them out.

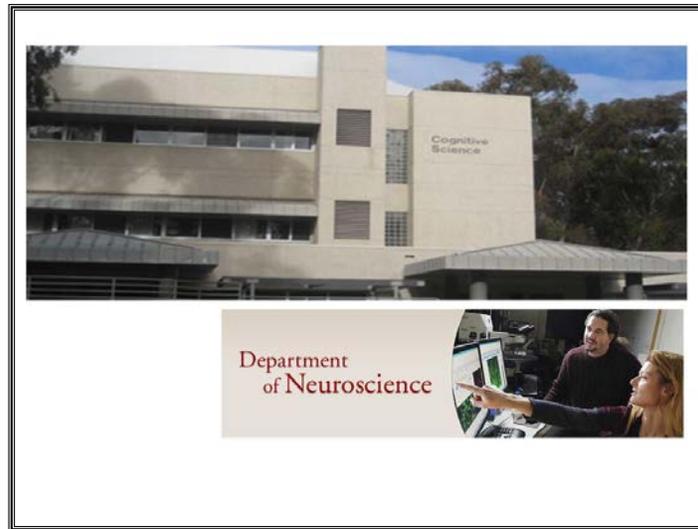
Let me note further that analytic philosophers, especially analytic philosophers of science, especially the cognitive sciences, are not at all sanguine about this state of affairs and they often undertake to do whatever they can to get scientists to pay attention to them. Hence it is precisely analytic philosophy — and precisely to the extent that it very deliberately patterns itself on science — that is concerned to persuade science to take its efforts seriously, to find its efforts “useful,” there’s that word again, and so on. This may well be behind the recent turn to empirical philosophy, which is philosophy by survey (think of Leiter’s poll), an amusing ennobling of the appeal that is called the *argumentum ad populum* (and which is, of course, a textbook fallacy).<sup>27</sup>

Even if this move turns out to be successful, this turn will at best make of philosophy a *social science*, and we ought not to forget that the social sciences themselves have their own anxieties about presenting themselves *as* sciences. In place of 19<sup>th</sup> century method, we have 20<sup>th</sup> (and so far or to date 21<sup>st</sup>) century quantificational analysis.

In short, I don’t think analytic philosophers have had much success persuading the scientists *per se* that they need analytic philosophy.

But and this is the key, analytic philosophers by claiming to speak for the scientists, have had success in persuading university deans that they in fact represent the sciences. I don't know how long this will last, thinking of the mindset of administrators it might last forever, but I have often thought that if there are, as indeed there are, many universities that host Departments of Cognitive Science along with Departments of Linguistics *and* Departments of Neuroscience as well as Departments of Cognitive Psychology, Departments of Robotics, and so on, that a Department of Philosophy taken as translator of the sciences to the sciences, might well seem to be redundant or unnecessary, assuming, as I assume, a competent faculty in the aforementioned disciplines, all of whom can teach what analytic philosophers regard as 'critical thinking' and all of whom know the sciences to which analytic philosophers appeal (say, regarding brain states) far better than the philosophers themselves.

Unlike theology that conscientiously drew upon philosophy, science faculty are well able to explain their own ways to themselves and to students and others and do not need such handmaidens or (*ancillae*).



Perhaps it might be useful to replace departments of analytic philosophy, dedicated as many are today to a kind of simplified science literacy (and not the critical analysis of science, as that last has died the death of the so-called "strong" or Edinburgh program of the sociology of science along with the evaporation of the anthropology of science into actor network analysis), and to the celebration of what it takes to be the content of

science, with real science studies programs that would teach stock or standard accounts of the aims of science to the general public.

This issue is not the same for continental philosophy which for the most part and because it is less and less what it used to be and more and more what analytic philosophy has left over for it to be, means that most continental philosophy dutifully avoids reflection on science like the plague. This is not the case for continental philosophy of science but, as if I needed to emphasize this once again, that is a very small subfield.

I'm going to conclude by returning once more to the interview with the undergraduate editors of the new journal *Purlieu*, as they quoted Mario Bunge as "one of the many authors thinking about the 'crisis of philosophy.'" Bunge's claim as he writes in *Philosophy in Crisis: The Need for Reconstruction* is that "all the philosophical schools are in ruins."

What they asked me did I think.

And this is the sort of question that causes me to cringe. One's colleague has said X, what does one think about X?

I cringed in part because and in fact I agree, just empirically, with Bunge, although and of course I do not agree with him for his reasons (Bunge is strongly anti-hermeneutic) yet I too believe that things are as bad from his point of view as they are from mine.

For my own part, agreeing as I do that "all" the schools of philosophy are in "ruins," I hold little hope that it is possible to reconstruct or rebuild or start anew. That is the reason for my title.

Once one loses the teachers (and we *have* lost them, not all but most), it is not just hard, it is *impossible* to proceed with what deserves the name of philosophy. Here although I would say that most of the great minds are lost and I would also say, with apologies all around, that those who take their place are not, just to say this politely, *as great*, it remains the case that we still have to proceed as best we can.

I end this essay as honestly and as practically and as politically as I began it.

The trouble as I see it is that those who now occupy positions of prestige (here we are back to our original reference to standards and the ‘rigor’ of the profession) are, as newer scholars also are, as mediocre as they tend to be. For me, this only means that they are poorly trained and ill read, and these, my younger colleagues, become angry examples of what Nietzsche called *ressentiment* if this is suggested, and I cannot do otherwise than suggest it.

This is also what Nietzsche meant when he talked about getting oneself an “educator,” which is to say, doing what it takes (that means reading and more reading) to acquire an “education” or a “culture,” and it should go without saying that Nietzsche’s standards were much higher than mine could possibly be, just given my own inevitable limitations compared with Nietzsche. This is what Isaac Newton also meant when he talked about the giants of a past intellectual formation.<sup>28</sup> It is simply mind-blowing what people once knew and we do not (notice that we always think we know more), and perhaps as the Google project of the decimation of books continues and university libraries proceed, with the sanction of professors on library committees, to cut book budgets and to discard large parts of their collections.

This is a kind of digital snow-blindness.

I would point out that, and I blame myself as well, although I did my damndest, albeit without success, that it is today’s philosophy professors who have presided over the current state of the profession. Bunge himself is to blame; I am to blame. Of course Bunge has had vastly more power and influence than I have had (this is easy to claim because I have had almost no influence), and his failures are for those reasons far more significant than mine just because I am not as important as he is.

There is no doubt in my mind that Bunge has read not a word written by continental philosophers of science.<sup>29</sup> By contrast I have, of course (of course I say: of course) read Bunge (and many, many others). Analytic philosophers of science take themselves to be reading continental philosophy of science if they read Foucault — just as analytic philosophers take themselves to be continental if they read, say Heidegger or Nietzsche.

What they do not do is read those traditionally continental authors or even very many analytic authors who write on Foucault, Heidegger, Nietzsche. And yet by discounting

the broader array of philosophy and of philosophical authors and commentators, analytic philosophy has painted itself into its own smaller and smaller corner.

What is most regrettable perhaps is that at this point there seems to be no robust alternative. Thus it is that today in most departments of philosophy there is no other style of philosophy than the analytic kind. Analytic philosophy has had the power in the academy (and it takes the power because it is a tradition of entitlement and not mutuality) and the result of its dominion has been an impoverishment of philosophy.<sup>30</sup>

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Ouch. See footnote #19 below...

<sup>2</sup> This is not only Kant's point in his essay *Perpetual Peace*, it is also his reflections on the difficulty of finding reception for his critical philosophy, see for example his introduction to the *Prolegomena*. Eva Schaper has a nice discussion of this with reference to the regrettably forgotten Kant and Nietzsche scholar, Hans Vaihinger, see Schaper, "The Kantian Thing-in-Itself as a Philosophical Fiction," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 64, (Jul., 1966): 233-243. The usual reference to Kant is cited by Derrida himself and his title provides the subtitle for his own 1980 lecture at Columbia University, "Mochlos; or, The Conflict of the Faculties," trans. Richard Rand and Amy Wygant and subsequently included in Richard Rand, ed., *Logomachia: The Conflict of the Faculties* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), pp. 3-34. See Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties/Der Streit der Fakultäten*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (New York: Abaris Books, 1979).

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Celebrating Feminist Work by Knowing It," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Spring 2011): 97-105.

<sup>4</sup> And just this summer there was another online tiff, not attacking me directly, just casually and along the way, as being antipluralist or insufficiently "open." This particular strategy, condemning anyone who speaks of differences *per se* as not being "open" to one's colleagues happens to be no kind of accident.

<sup>5</sup> Wilshire, *Fashionable Nihilism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002)

<sup>6</sup> This is blog praxis and blog prowess.

<sup>7</sup> "The American Philosophical Association neither conducts nor sponsors the development of national 'rankings' of philosophy departments and their graduate and undergraduate programs. It further neither endorses nor approves of the use of any such rankings compiled by others. The reasons for being highly skeptical of all general rankings are many; and reliance upon rankings that are fundamentally unreliable is to be deplored. It does harm to those to whom rankings do not do justice, and also to those who are led by such rankings to make ill-advised decisions adversely affecting their own interests." And so on, pointing to the inherent and often self-serving bias of such evaluations. APA 2007. See Margaret Urban Walker, "Waiter, There's a Fly in My Soup! Reflections on the Philosophical Gourmet Report," *Hypatia*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Summer, 2004): 235-239.

<sup>8</sup> And although he is not a Nietzsche scholar by formation he's read a Nietzsche and he has read him, free of any encumbering scholarly details, as many doctors and lawyers and just think of the psychiatrist Irving Yalom who wrote the charming if inaccurate *Nietzsche Wept*, and the journalist, Lesley Chamberlain. Nietzsche attracts far more than his share of non-expert interest, which is a perfectly fine thing but it does not make experts, which I understand in a scholarly sense, of those

authors. But for Leiter it is his way or the highway and so he set about and he's a lawyer and fairly good at such strategies to denounce other readings, whereby, so I suppose he imagined, his valorizations would become the standard in the field.

Not as yet.

<sup>9</sup> See Babich, "[Great Men, Little Black Dresses, & the Virtues of Keeping One's Feet on the Ground.](#)" *MP: An Online Feminist Journal*, Volume 3, Issue 1 (August 2010): 57-78 and Babich, "Hey Can't You Smile" — not my title, thank you editors — "Women & Status in Philosophy," *Radical Philosophy*, 160 (March/April 2010): 36-38., just for the footnotes. I say this to say that I am assuming that Leiter did not learn this strategy in law school.

<sup>10</sup> See again: Babich, "[Great Men, Little Black Dresses, & the Virtues of Keeping One's Feet on the Ground.](#)"

<sup>12</sup> See again: Babich, "[Great Men, Little Black Dresses, & the Virtues of Keeping One's Feet on the Ground.](#)"

<sup>13</sup> Hence in Leiter & Co.'s subsequent attacks, it was just Linda Martín Alcoff and just Linda Alcoff alone who figured as the target for their collective wrath (this is how mass blogs work, and this is what is meant by hive thinking, and as if everything that bothered them were all her doing.. See, among others, Jussi Parrika's new book on media archaeology, *Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Which same online group has spent the better part of the summer lobbying to have the APA eliminate the term "blind review" and so on. I hope they are successful — I hate amphiboly as much as anyone, if I also find it rhetorically significant for their purposes.

<sup>15</sup> "It is not the truth or falsehood that makes a libel, but the temper with which it is published." J. Best, *King v. Burdett* (1820), 1 St. Tr. (N. S.) 49.

<sup>16</sup> See Bacon's *De Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623). I think it worth noting in passing that true to his own style and philosophic project, Bacon's praise of calumny is exactly calculating, as contrasted, say, with Erasmus's *In Praise of Folly*.

<sup>17</sup> And I can say this a pretty classically formed continental philosopher, I studied myself at Stony Brook, first of all too much biology, but remained a full extra year (I graduated with lots and lots of credits) in order to take the requisite courses for a degree in philosophy before coming to BC for my doctorate, studying too at Tübingen and Berlin topped off with a year at Louvain-la-neuve, I was too late to have been at the good Louvain as Bill Richardson was, that is the real Leuven in Belgium. But both Jacques Taminiaux and Jean Ladrière were at Louvain la Neuve (plus I really lived in Brussels and spent lots of time in Paris). Through David Allison I count myself lightly familiar with Penn State and its stories (or tragedies). I know the continental field in the United States and Canada, in the UK, and in Europe as well as anyone. And I leave Australia and New Zealand out not because they should be left out but because like India and Africa and South America my direct knowledge is limited to reading knowledge alone.

<sup>18</sup> I take this up in a forthcoming book: Babich, [La fin de la pensée? Philosophie analytique contre philosophie continentale](#) (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2012).

<sup>19</sup> Babich, [La fin de la pensée?](#)

<sup>20</sup> References can be found in Babich, [La fin de la pensée?](#)

<sup>22</sup> My essay, Babich, "[On the Analytic-Continental Divide in Philosophy: Nietzsche's Lying Truth, Heidegger's Speaking Language, and Philosophy](#)" in Carlos G. Prado, ed., *A House Divided: Comparing Analytic and Continental Philosophy* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus/Humanity Books. 2003), pp. 63-103 goes back quite a bit as an initial version of it was originally written for a conference I organized in Dubrovnik in 1991 just before the "war(s)" that dismantled Yugoslavia and what had been other countries of the time (countries to be sure that were themselves drawn, borderwise, following the previous world war(s). It was revised and published four years after that as "Against

Analysis, Beyond Postmodernism” in the collection I edited (together with Debra B. Bergoffen and Simon V. Glynn, eds.), *Continental and Postmodern Perspectives in the Philosophy of Science* (Avebury. Aldershot, UK/ Brookfield, USA. 1995), pp. 31-54.

- <sup>23</sup> I have a book on this topic, forthcoming in French where the distinction and the divide is similarly problematic: Babich, *La fin de la pensée?*.
- <sup>24</sup> Thus Aquinas cites Aristotle’s *de Anima* on the matter of such distinctions: “*scientiae dividuntur quemadmodum et res, ut dicitur in III de anima. Sed philosophia est de ente; est enim cognitio entis, ut dicit Dionysius in epistula ad Polycarpum. Cum ergo ens primo dividatur per potentiam et actum, per unum et multa, per substantiam et accidens, videtur quod per huiusmodi deberent partes philosophiae distingui.*” Aquinas, *Librum Boetii de Trinitate Expositio* Quest. 5. Art. 1. In addition, we remember Descartes’ identification of the “clear and distinct” as the distinctive characteristic of what might (ultimately, promissorially) be known with certainty. In an article on this topic, Robert Sokolowski notes that entire impetus Aristotle’s characterization of his predecessors depended upon distinguishing their lack of distinctive distinguishing. Sokolowski cites Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* 1.7 988a180-b15, noting as he does that Aristotle’s own method proceeds by ‘clarifying’ what his predecessors confusedly knew. See Sokolowski, “The Method of Philosophy: Making Distinctions,” *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Mar., 1998): 515-532. Prior to Sokolowski, see too Hannah Arendt’s letter entitled “Distinctions” which she sent to *New York Review of Books*, Volume 13, Number 12 (January 1, 1970) in reply to a review published on her book, *Men in Dark Times*. Although by her own self-assessment, a political theorist rather than a philosopher, Arendt draws upon her clearly philosophical background to argue against her reviewer that “the point at issue is not the past but tradition, and the *distinction* between them: Tradition orders the past, hands it down (*tradere*), interprets it, omits, selects, and emphasizes according to a system of pre-established beliefs. Tradition is a mental construct and as such always subject to critical examination. If I say that no tradition can claim validity today, I do not say that the past is dead but that we have no reliable guide through it any more, from which it follows that tradition itself has become a part of the past.” *Ibid*.
- <sup>25</sup> See Babich, “[Towards a Critical Philosophy of Science: Continental Beginnings and Bugbears, Whigs and Waterbears.](#)” *International Journal of the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (December 2010): 343-391.
- <sup>26</sup> See “[‘Hacker’s Challenge’ James Garvey interviews P.M. S. Hacker.](#)” *TPM, The Philosopher’s Magazine*, Issue 51 ( October 25, 2010).
- <sup>27</sup> I am sure that Michael Wreen, who argues nicely that fallacies typically regarded are only qualifiedly so, would be comparably enlightening on the matter of this traditional informal fallacy. I cite Wreen (and others) in Babich, “[Towards a Critical Philosophy of Science.](#)”
- <sup>28</sup> Read Principe’s book just for the philosophical frisson of the first few pages, and read the rest for its own sake (not to mention for useful bits on Newton). See text indicated in above note for citation details.
- <sup>29</sup> Being unread is, of course, what it means to be non-influential, that is why I discussed the elusive quality of the readerly public above.
- <sup>30</sup> This concluding word would be used for the title of an interview: Babich, “[An Impoverishment of Philosophy](#)” in: Dennis Erwin and Matt Story, eds., *Purlieu: Philosophy and the University* (2011): 37-71.