

~Philosophical Terms and Definitions~

A

- **a posteriori** - term applied to knowledge, justifications or arguments, indicating that they are dependent on experience or empirical evidence (for example 'Some bachelors are very happy').
- **a priori** - term applied to knowledge, justifications or arguments, indicating that they are independent of experience (for example 'All bachelors are unmarried'). A *a priori* justification makes reference to experience; but the issue concerns how one knows the proposition or claim in question—what justifies or grounds one's belief in it. Galen Strawson wrote that an *a priori* argument is one of which "you can see that it is true just lying on your couch. You don't have to get up off your couch and go outside and examine the way things are in the physical world. You don't have to do any science."^[1]
- **Absolutism** – the position that in a particular domain of thought, all statements in that domain are either absolutely true or absolutely false: none is true for some cultures or eras while false for other cultures or eras. These statements are called absolute truths. A common reaction by those who newly criticize absolutism is the absolute truth statement: Absolute truths do not exist.
 - **Enlightened absolutism** – a term used to describe the actions of absolute rulers who were influenced by the Enlightenment (eighteenth and early nineteenth century Europe).
 - **Moral absolutism** – the position that there are absolute standards against which moral questions can be judged, and that certain actions are right or wrong, regardless of the context of the act.
 - **Political absolutism** – a political theory which argues that one person should hold all power.
- **Absurdism** – philosophy stating that the efforts of man to find meaning in the universe will ultimately fail because no such meaning exists (at least in relation to man). Absurdism is related to existentialism, though should not be confused with it, nor nihilism.
- **Accidentalism** – any system of thought which denies the causal nexus and maintains that events succeed one another haphazardly or by chance (not in the mathematical but in the popular sense). In metaphysics, accidentalism denies the doctrine that everything occurs or results from a definite cause. In this connection it is synonymous with tychism (chance), a term used by Charles Sanders Peirce for the theories which make chance an objective factor in the process of the Universe.
- **Acosmism** – in contrast to pantheism, denies the reality of the universe, seeing it as ultimately illusory, (the prefix "a-" in Greek meaning negation; like "un-" in English), and only the infinite Unmanifest Absolute as real. This philosophy begins with the recognition that there is only one Reality, which is infinite, non-dual, blissful, etc. Yet the phenomenal reality of which we are normally aware is none of these things; it is in fact just the opposite: i.e. dualistic, finite, full of suffering and pain, and so on. And since the Absolute is the only reality, that means that everything that is not-Absolute cannot be real. Thus, according to this viewpoint, the phenomenal dualistic world is ultimately an illusion ("Maya" to use the technical Indian term), irrespective of the apparent reality it possesses at the mundane or empirical level.
- **Aestheticism** – another name for the *Aesthetic movement*, a loosely defined movement in art and literature in later nineteenth century Britain. Proponents of the movement held that art does not

have any didactic purpose, it need only be beautiful. Life should copy Art. The main characteristics of the movement were: suggestion rather than statement, sensuality, massive use of symbols, and synaesthetic effects - that is, correspondence between words, colors and music.

- **Agnosticism** – the philosophical view that the truth values of certain claims — particularly theological claims regarding the existence of God, gods, or deities — are unknown, inherently unknowable, or incoherent, and therefore, (some agnostics may go as far to say) irrelevant to life. Agnosticism, in both its strong (explicit) and weak (implicit) forms, is necessarily a non-atheist and non-theist position, though an agnostic person may also be either an atheist, a theist, or one who endorses neither position.
 - **Agnostic atheism** – the philosophical view that encompasses both atheism and agnosticism. Due to definitional variance, an *agnostic atheist* does not believe in God or gods and by extension holds true: 'the existence and nonexistence of deities is currently unknown and may be absolutely unknowable', or 'knowledge of the existence and nonexistence of deities is irrelevant or unimportant', or 'abstention from claims of knowledge of the existence and nonexistence of deities is optimal'.
 - **Agnostic theism** – the philosophical view that encompasses both theism and agnosticism. An agnostic theist is one who views that the truth value of claims regarding the existence of god(s) is unknown or inherently unknowable but chooses to believe in god(s) in spite of this.
 - **Strong agnosticism** – also referred to as *explicit agnosticism* and *positive agnosticism*, it is the view that the evidence in the universe is such that it is impossible for humans to know whether or not any deities exist.
 - **Weak agnosticism** – the position that the evidence is such that the existence or nonexistence of deities is currently unknown, but is not necessarily unknowable. Also called *implicit agnosticism*, *empirical agnosticism*, and *negative agnosticism*.
- **Altruism** – the belief that people have a moral obligation to serve others or the "greater good"; term coined by Auguste Comte. Generally opposed to *self-interest* or *egoism*.
- **Anarchism** – in politics, any of a number of views and movements that advocate the elimination of rulership or government. Other than being opposed to the state, there is no single defining position that all anarchists hold. Compare and contrast libertarianism.
- **Anarcho-primitivism** - an anarchist critique of the origins and progress of civilization. Primitivists argue that the shift from hunter-gatherer to agricultural subsistence gave rise to social stratification, coercion, and alienation. They advocate a return to non-"civilized" ways of life through deindustrialisation, abolition of division of labour or specialization, and abandonment of technology.
- **Anarcho-syndicalism** – a form of anarchism which allies itself with syndicalism, that is, with labor unions, as a force for revolutionary social change. Anarcho-syndicalists seek to replace capitalism and the state with a democratically worker-managed means of production. They seek to abolish the wage system and most forms of private property.
- **Animism** – "animism" has been applied to many different philosophical systems. It is used to describe Aristotle's view of the relation of soul and body held also by the stoics and scholastics. On the other hand monadology (Leibniz) has also been termed animistic. The name is most commonly applied to vitalism, which makes life, or life and mind, the directive principle in evolution and growth, holding that life is not merely mechanical but that there is a directive force which guides energy without altering its amount. An entirely different class of ideas, also termed animistic, is the belief in the *world soul*, held by Plato, Schelling and others. Lastly, in discussions of religion, "animism" refers to the belief in indwelling souls or spirits, particularly so-called "primitive" religions which consider everything to be inhabited by spirits.

- **Anthropocentrism** – also called **Homocentrism**, is the practice, conscious or otherwise, of regarding the existence and/or concerns of human beings as the central fact of the universe. This is similar, but not identical, to the practice of relating all that happens in the universe to the human experience. To clarify, the first position concludes that the fact of human existence is the point of universal existence; the latter merely compares all activity to that of humanity, without making any teleological conclusions.
- **Anthropomorphism**^[2] – a form of personification (applying human or animal qualities to inanimate objects) and similar to **prosopopoeia** (adopting the persona of another person), is the attribution of human characteristics and qualities to non-human beings, objects, or natural phenomena. Animals, forces of nature, and unseen or unknown authors of chance are frequent subjects of anthropomorphosis. Two examples are the attribution of a human body or of human qualities generally to God (or the gods), and creating imaginary persons who are the embodiment of an abstraction such as Death, Lust, War, or the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.
- **Antinomianism** – in theology is the idea that members of a particular religious group are under no obligation to obey the laws of ethics or morality as presented by religious authorities. Antinomianism is the polar opposite of legalism, the notion that obedience to a code of religious law is necessary for salvation. The term has become a point of contention among opposed religious authorities. Few groups or sects explicitly call themselves "antinomian", but the charge is often levelled by some sects against competing sects.
- **Anti-realism** – any position involving either the denial of the objective reality of entities of a certain type or the insistence that we should be agnostic about their real existence. Thus, we may speak of **anti-realism** with respect to other minds, the past, the future, universals, mathematical entities (such as natural numbers), moral categories, the material world, or even thought.
- **Aristotelianism** – tradition of philosophy that takes its defining inspiration from the work of Aristotle. Sometimes contrasted by critics with the rationalism and idealism of Plato, Aristotelianism is understood by its proponents as critically developing Plato's theories. Most particularly, Aristotelianism brings Plato's ideals down to Earth as goals and goods internal to natural species that are realized in activity. This is the characteristically Aristotelian idea of teleology.
 - **Neo-Aristotelianism** –A view of literature and criticism propagated by the Chicago School -- Ronald S. Crane, Elder Olson, Richard McKeon, Wayne Booth, and others which means "A view of literature and criticism which takes a pluralistic attitude toward the history of literature and seeks to view literary works and critical theories intrinsically."
- **Arminianism** – a school of soteriological thought in Protestant Christian theology founded by the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius. Arminianism is closely related to Calvinism (or Reformed theology), and the two systems share both history and many doctrines in common.
- **Asceticism** – denotes a life which is characterised by refraining from worldly pleasures (austerity). Those who practice ascetic lifestyles often perceive their practices as virtuous and pursue them to achieve greater spirituality. In a more cynical context, ascetic may connote some form of self-mortification, ritual punishment of the body or harsh renunciation of pleasure. However the word certainly does not necessarily imply a negative connotation.
- **Ascriptivism** [1]–"The view that human beings are to be held responsible for their actions even if determinism is true."
- **Associationalism** – a political project where "human welfare and liberty are both best served when as many of the affairs of a society as possible are managed by voluntary and democratically self-governing associations".^[3] Associationalism "gives priority to freedom in its scale of values, but it contends that such freedom can only be pursued effectively if individuals join with their fellows"^[3]

- **Atheism** – a condition of being without theistic beliefs; an absence of belief in the existence of gods, thus contrasting with theism. This definition includes both those who assert that there are no gods and those who have no beliefs at all regarding the existence of gods. However, narrower definitions often only qualify the former as atheism, the latter falling under the more general (but rarely used) term nontheism.
 - **Agnostic atheism** – the philosophy that encompasses both atheism and agnosticism. Due to definitional variance, an *agnostic atheist* does not believe in God or gods and by extension holds true: 'the existence and nonexistence of deities is currently unknown and may be absolutely unknowable', or 'knowledge of the existence and nonexistence of deities is irrelevant or unimportant', or 'abstention from claims of knowledge of the existence and nonexistence of deities is optimal'.
 - **Strong atheism** – the philosophical position that deities do not exist. It is a form of explicit atheism, meaning that it consciously rejects theism. Some strong atheists also claim that the existence of any and all gods is logically impossible. Also called *positive atheism*, *hard atheism* and *gnostic atheism*. It should be noted that a strong atheist also fits the definition of a weak atheist, but that the reverse is not necessarily true: a strong atheist believes there is a lack or absence of evidence for justifying a belief in God or gods, but a weak atheist does not necessarily deny the possibility of God or god(s) existence.
 - **Weak atheism** – disbelief in the existence of God or gods, without a commitment to the necessary non-existence of God or gods. Also referred to as *negative atheism* or *implicit atheism*. The weak atheist generally gives a broad definition of atheism as a lack or absence of evidence justifying a belief in God or gods, which defines atheism as a range of positions that entail non-belief, unjustified belief, doubt, or denial of theism.
- **Atomism** – the theory that all the objects in the universe are composed of very small, indestructible elements. (This is the case for the Western [i.e., Greek] theories of atomism. Buddhists also have well-developed theories of atomism, and which involve momentary, or non-eternal, atoms, that flash in and out of existence).
 - **Social atomism** – the point-of-view that individuals rather than social institutions and values are the proper subject of analysis since all properties of institutions and values merely accumulate from the strivings of individuals.
 - **Logical atomism** – Bertrand Russell developed *logical atomism* in an attempt to identify the atoms of thought, the pieces of thought that cannot be divided into smaller pieces of thought.
- **Authoritarianism** – The term **authoritarian** is used to describe an organization or a state which enforces strong and sometimes oppressive measures against those in its sphere of influence, generally without attempts at gaining their consent and often not allowing feedback on its policies. In an authoritarian state, citizens are subject to state authority in many aspects of their lives, including many that other political philosophies would see as matters of personal choice. There are various degrees of authoritarianism; even very democratic and liberal states will show authoritarianism to some extent, for example in areas of national security.
- **Automatism** – * or **Surrealist automatism**, to be more specific, is an artistic technique of spontaneous writing, drawing, or the like practiced without conscious aesthetic or moral self-censorship.

B

- **Baianism** – a school of thought credited to the Roman Catholic theologian Michael Baius (1513–1589). It is related to Augustinianism, and is considered to be the immediate historical predecessor of Jansenism.

- **Behavioralism** – (not to be confused with behaviorism (the learning theory), behavioralism is an approach in political science which seeks to provide an objective, quantified approach to explaining and predicting political behavior. It is associated with the rise of the behavioral sciences, modeled after the natural sciences.
- **Behaviorism** – (not to be confused with behavioralism of political science) is an approach to psychology based on the proposition that behavior can be researched scientifically without recourse to inner mental states. It is a form of materialism, denying any independent significance for the mind. Its significance for psychological treatment has been profound, making it one of the pillars of pharmacological therapy.
 - **Classical behaviorism** – The behaviorism of Watson; the objective study of behavior; no mental life, no internal states; thought is covert speech.
 - **Methodological behaviorism** – The objective study of third-person behavior; the data of psychology must be inter-subjectively verifiable; no theoretical prescriptions. It has been absorbed into general experimental and cognitive psychology.
 - **Radical behaviorism** – Skinner's behaviorism; is considered radical since it expands behavioral principles to processes within the organism; in contrast to methodological behaviorism; not mechanistic or reductionist; hypothetical (mentalist) internal states are not considered causes of behavior, phenomena must be observable at least to the individual experiencing them. Willard Van Orman Quine made use of many of radical behaviorism ideas in his study of knowing and language.
 - **Logical behaviorism** – Established by Oxford philosopher Gilbert Ryle in his book The Concept of Mind (1949).
 - **Teleological behaviorism** – Post-Skinnerian, purposive, close to microeconomics.
 - **Theoretical behaviorism** – Post-Skinnerian, accepts observable internal states ("within the skin" once meant "unobservable", but with modern technology we are not so constrained); dynamic, but eclectic in choice of theoretical structures, emphasizes parsimony.
 - **Biological behaviorism** – Post-Skinnerian, centered on perceptual and motor modules of behavior, theory of behavior systems.
 - **Inter behaviorism** – Founded by Jacob Robert Kantor before Skinner's writings and currently worked by L. Hayes; E. Ribes; and S. Bijou. centered in the inter behavior of organisms, field theory of behavior; emphasis on human behavior.
- **Buddhism** – a dharmic religion and philosophy based on the teachings of the Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama. The basic teachings of Buddhism have to do with the nature of suffering or dissatisfaction (*dukkha*) and its avoidance through ethical principles (the Eightfold Path). Buddhism originated in India, and is today largely followed in East Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, and Thailand. Buddhism is divided into different sects and movements, of which the largest are the Mahayana, Theravada, and Vajrayana.

C

- **Capitalism**^[2] – an economic system in which all or most of the means of production are privately owned and operated (usually through employing wage labour, and for profit), and in which the investment of capital and the production, distribution and prices of commodities and services are determined mainly in a free market. Capitalism has also been called *laissez-faire economy*, *free market economy*, *free enterprise system*, *economic liberalism*, and *economic individualism*.
 - **Anarcho-capitalism** – a philosophy based on the idea of individual sovereignty, and a prohibition against initiatory coercion and fraud. It sees the only just basis for law as arising from private property norms and an unlimited right of contract between sovereign

individuals. From this basis, anarcho-capitalism rejects the state as an unjustified monopolist and aggressor against sovereign individuals, and embraces anti-statist laissez-faire capitalism. Anarcho-capitalists would aim to protect individual liberty and property by replacing a government monopoly, which is involuntarily funded through taxation, with private, competing businesses.

- **Careerism** – the desire to advance one's own career as a sole aim in life, often at the expense of personal and social growth or development.
- **Cartesianism** – a philosophy based on the ideas and works of René Descartes.
- **Christianism** – another name for *Christianity*, the monotheistic religion recognizing Jesus Christ as its founder and central figure. With more than two billion adherents, or about one-third of the total world population, it is the largest world religion. Its origins are intertwined with Judaism, with which it shares much sacred lore, including the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible). Christianity is sometimes termed an Abrahamic religion, along with Judaism and Islam.
- **Classicism** – in the arts, refers generally to a high regard for classical antiquity, as setting standards for taste which the classicist seeks to emulate. Classicism is usually contrasted with romanticism; the art of classicism typically seeks to be formal, restrained, and Apollonian (nothing in excess) rather than Dionysiac (excess), in Friedrich Nietzsche's opposition. It can also refer to the other periods of classicism. In theater, **Classicism** was developed by 17th century French playwrights from what they judged to be the rules of Greek classical theater, including the Classical unities of time, place and action.
- **Cognitivism** – In ethics, cognitivism is the philosophical view that ethical sentences express propositions, and hence are capable of being true or false. See Cognitivism (ethics). More generally, cognitivism with respect to any area of discourse is the position that sentences used in that discourse are cognitive, that is, are meaningful and capable of being true or false. In psychology, cognitivism is the approach to understanding the mind which argues that mental function can be understood as the 'internal' rule bound manipulation of symbols. See Cognitivism (psychology).
- **Coherentism** – There are two distinct types of coherentism. One refers to the coherence theory of truth, which restricts true sentences to those that cohere with some specified set of sentences. Someone's belief is true just in case it is coherent with all or most of their other beliefs. Usually, coherence is taken to imply something stronger than mere consistency. Statements that are comprehensive and meet the requirements of Occam's razor are usually to be preferred. The second type of coherentism is the belief in the coherence theory of justification, an epistemological theory opposing foundationalism and offering a solution to the regress argument. In this epistemological capacity, it is a theory about how belief can be justified.
- **Colbertism** - a variation of mercantilism, which has applied in France between 1661 and 1683 by the superintendent of Finances Jean-Baptiste Colbert.
- **Collectivism**^[2] – a theoretical or practical emphasis on the group, as opposed to (and seen by many of its opponents to be at the expense of) the individual. Some psychologists define collectivism as a syndrome of attitudes and behaviors based on the belief that the basic unit of survival lies within a group, not the individual. Collectivists typically hold that that the "greater good" of the group, is more important than the good of any particular individual who is one part of that larger organization. Some collectivists argue that the individual *incidentally* serves his own interests by working for the benefit of the group.
- **Communalism** – Outside of South Asia, communalism describes a broad range of social movements and social theories which are in some way centered upon the community. Communalism can take the form of communal living or communal property, among others. It is sometimes said to put the interests of the community above the interests of the individual, but this is usually only done on the principle that the community exists for the benefit of the individuals

who participate in it, so the best way to serve the interests of the individual is through the interests of the community.

- **Communism**^[2] – a theoretical system of social organization and a political movement based on common ownership of the means of production. As a political movement, communism seeks to establish a classless society. A major force in world politics since the early 20th century, modern communism is generally associated with The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, according to which the capitalist profit-based system of private ownership is replaced by a communist society in which the means of production are communally owned, such as through a gift economy. Often this process is said initiated by the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie (see Marxism), passes through a transitional period marked by the preparatory stage of socialism (see Leninism). Pure communism has never been implemented, it remains theoretical: communism is, in Marxist theory, the end-state, or the result of state-socialism. The word is now mainly understood to refer to the political, economic, and social theory of Marxist thinkers, or life under conditions of Communist party rule.
- **Communitarianism** – a group of related but distinct philosophies that began in the late 20th century, opposing aspects of liberalism and capitalism while advocating phenomena such as civil society. Not necessarily hostile to liberalism in the contemporary American sense of the word, communitarianism rather has a different emphasis, shifting the focus of interest toward communities and societies and away from the individual. The question of priority (individual or community) often has the largest impact in the most pressing ethical questions: health care, abortion, multiculturalism, hate speech, and so on.
- **Compatibilism** – also known as "soft determinism" and championed by Hume, is a theory which holds that free will and determinism are compatible. According to Hume, free will should not be understood as an absolute ability to have chosen differently under exactly the same inner and outer circumstances. Rather, it is a hypothetical ability to have chosen differently if one had been differently psychologically disposed by some different beliefs or desires. Hume also maintains that free acts are not uncaused (or mysteriously self-caused as Kant would have it) but caused by our choices as determined by our beliefs, desires, and by our characters. While a decision making process exists in Hume's determinism, this process is governed by a causal chain of events.
- **Comtism** – Auguste Comte's positivistic philosophy that metaphysics and theology should be replaced by a hierarchy of sciences from mathematics at the base to sociology at the top.
- **Conceptualism** – a doctrine in philosophy intermediate between nominalism and realism, that universals exist only within the mind and have no external or substantial reality.
- **Confucianism** – an East Asian ethical and philosophical system originally developed from the teachings of the early Chinese sage Confucius. It is a complex system of moral, social, political, and religious thought that has had tremendous influence on the history of Chinese civilization down to the 21st century. Some have considered it to have been the "state religion" of imperial China.
 - **Neo-Confucianism** – a form of Confucianism that was primarily developed during the Song dynasty, as a response to the dominance of Taoism and Buddhism at the time. Neo-Confucians such as Zhu Xi recognized that the Confucianism lacked a thorough metaphysical system, and so synthesized one based on previous Confucian concepts. There were many competing views within the Neo-Confucian community, but overall, a system emerged that resembled both the Buddhist and Taoist thought of the time.
 - **New Confucianism** – a new movement of Confucianism since the twentieth century applying Confucianism to modern times. Not to be confused with Neo-Confucianism.
- **Consequentialism** – the belief that what ultimately matters in evaluating actions or policies of action are the consequences that result from choosing one action or policy rather than the alternative.

- **Constructivism** – the view that reality, or at least our knowledge of it, is a value-laden subjective construction rather than a passive acquisition of objective features.
- **Consumerism** – attachment to materialistic values or possessions
- **Contextualism** – a collection of views which emphasize the *context* in which an action, utterance or expression occurs, and argues that, in some important respect, the action, utterance or expression can only be understood within that context. Contextualist views hold that philosophically controversial concepts, such as "meaning *P*", "knowing that *P*", "having a reason to *A*", and possibly even "being true" or "being right" only have meaning relative to a specified context. Some philosophers hold that context-dependence may lead to relativism; nevertheless, contextualist views are increasingly popular within philosophy.
- **Conventionalism** – philosophical attitude that fundamental principles of a certain kind are grounded on (explicit or implicit) agreements in society, rather than on external reality. Although this attitude is commonly held with respect to the rules of grammar and the principles of etiquette, its application to the propositions of law, ethics, science, mathematics, and logic is more controversial.
- **Cosmotheism** – synonym for pantheism (see theism, below).
- **Creationism**^[2] – also referred to as **creation theology** is the belief that humans, life, the Earth, and the universe were created by a supreme being or deity's supernatural intervention. The intervention may be seen either as an *act of creation* from nothing (*ex nihilo*) or the emergence of order from pre-existing chaos.
 - **Day-age creationism** – a type of Old Earth creationism, it is an effort to reconcile Creation as presented in Genesis with modern scientific theories on the age of the Universe. It holds that the six days referred to in Genesis are not ordinary 24-hour days, but are much longer periods, thus interpreting Genesis as cosmic evolution.
 - **Evolutionary creationism** – A lesser used term for theistic evolution, the general opinion that some or all classical religious teachings about God and creation are compatible with some or all of the modern scientific understanding about biological evolution. Theistic evolution is not a theory in the scientific sense, but a particular view about how the science of evolution relates to some religious interpretations.
 - **Gap creationism** – also called *Restitution creationism* or *Ruin-Reconstruction*, are terms used to describe a particular set of Christian beliefs about the creation of the Universe and the origin of man. The concept of the Gap Theory is widely thought to have been promulgated by William Buckland and Thomas Chalmers in the early 1800s, though some adherents maintain that it can be traced back to biblical times. Certainly it became quite popular when it was promoted by the Scotfield Reference Bible in 1909.
 - **Old Earth creationism** – a variant of the creationist view of the origin of the universe and life on Earth. As a theory of origins it is typically more compatible with mainstream scientific thought on the issues of geology, cosmology and the age of the Earth, in comparison to Young Earth creationism.
 - **Young Earth creationism** – the religious belief that Heaven, Earth, and life on Earth were created by a direct act of God dating between 6,000 and 10,000 years ago. Its adherents are those Christians, Jews and Muslims who believe that God created the Earth in six 24-hour days, taking the Hebrew text of Genesis as a literal account.
 - **Omphalos creationism** – named after the title of an 1857 book, *Omphalos* by Philip Henry Gosse, in which Gosse argued that in order for the world to be "functional", God must have created the Earth with mountains and canyons, trees with growth rings, Adam and Eve with hair, fingernails, and navels (*omphalos* is Greek for "navel"), and that therefore *no* evidence that we can see of the presumed age of the earth and universe can be taken as reliable. The idea has seen some revival in the twentieth century by some modern

creationists, who have extended the argument to light that appears to originate in far-off stars and galaxies, although many other creationists reject this explanation (and also believe that Adam and Eve had no navels).

- **Cynicism** – was originally the philosophy of a group of ancient Greeks called the Cynics (*main article*), founded by Antisthenes. Nowadays the word generally describes the opinions of those inclined to disbelieve in human sincerity, in virtue, or in altruism: individuals who maintain that only self-interest motivates human behavior. A modern cynic typically has a highly contemptuous attitude towards social norms, especially those which serve more of a ritualistic purpose than a practical one, and will tend to dismiss a substantial proportion of popular beliefs, conventional morality and accepted wisdom as irrelevant or obsolete nonsense.

D

- **Darwinism** – a pejorative term for the scientific theory of evolution used mostly by its opponents. This theory was first presented by Charles Darwin in his 1859 book The Origin of Species. It stated that the variety of life found on Earth is due to the process of evolution driven by the mechanism of natural Selection. It is to be contrasted with Creationism and Intelligent Design. There is a lively debate as to whether or not the theory of evolution is compatible with any, all or some religions.
- **Deconstructionism** – school and a set of methods of textual criticism which aim at understanding the assumptions and ideas that form the basis for thought and belief. Also called "deconstruction", its central concern is a radical critique of the metaphysics of the Western philosophical tradition, in which it identifies a logocentrism or "metaphysics of presence" which holds that speech-thought (the *logos*) is a privileged, ideal, and self-present entity, through which all discourse and meaning are derived. This logocentrism is the primary target of deconstruction.
- **Deductivism** - A philosophy that holds that scientific inquiry proceeds by formulating a hypothesis in a form that could conceivably be falsified by a test on observable data.
- **Defeatism** – Defeatism is acceptance and content with defeat without struggle. In everyday use, defeatism has negative connotation, and is often linked to treason and pessimism. The term is commonly used in the context of war: a soldier can be a defeatist if he or she refuses to fight because he or she thinks that the fight will be lost for sure or that it is not worth fighting for some other reason. The term can also be used in other fields, like politics, sports, psychology and philosophy.
- **Deism** – the view that reason, rather than revelation or tradition, should be the basis of belief in God. Deists reject both organized and revealed religion and maintain that reason is the essential element in all knowledge. For a "rational basis for religion" they refer to the cosmological argument (first cause argument), the teleological argument (argument from design), and other aspects of what was called natural religion. Deism has become identified with the classical belief that God created but does not intervene in the world, though this is not a necessary component of deism.
 - **Pandeism** – a type of deism that combines the deistic belief in a rationally determined, non-intervening God with the idea of pantheism (under theism, below) of God being identical to the Universe.
- **Deontologism** – ethical theory considered solely on duty and rights, where one has an unchanging moral obligation to abide by a set of defined principles. Thus, the ends of any action never justify the means in this ethical system. If someone were to do their moral duty, then it would not matter if it had negative consequences. Therefore, consequentialism is the philosophical antithesis of this theory.

- **Descriptivism** – also called the *Descriptivist theory of names*, is a view of the nature of the meaning and reference of proper names generally attributed to Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell. The theory consists essentially in the idea that the meanings of names are identical to the descriptions associated with them by speakers, while their referents are determined to be the objects that satisfy these descriptions.
- **Determinism** – the philosophical proposition that every event, including human cognition, decision and action, is causally determined by an unbroken chain of prior occurrences.
 - **Historical determinism** – the philosophical proposition that events in history were determined by a series of occurrences previous to the event.
- **Dialetheism** – a metaphysical doctrine according to which there are true contradictions.
- **Disjunctivism** – a direct realist view that rejects the existence of some sense data.
- **Distributism** – A co-operative economic theory in which productive property is distributed among all individuals, rather than being held by the state or in common as in socialism or under the control of the few in capitalism.
- **Dogmatism** – Inflexible adherence to rigid belief or doctrine established by a religion, ideology or any kind of organization, held to be authoritative and not to be disputed, doubted or diverged from. A dogmatic position is not open to rational argument, and is "established" only according to a particular point of view, and therefore of doubtful foundation.
- **Dualism** – a set of beliefs which begins with the claim that the mental and the physical have a fundamentally different nature. It is contrasted with varying kinds of monism, including materialism and phenomenalism. Dualism is one answer to the mind-body problem. Pluralism holds that there are even more kinds of events or things in the world.
 - **Substance dualism** – is a type of ontological dualism defended by Descartes in which it is claimed that there are two fundamental kinds of substance: mental and material. The mental does not extend in space, and material cannot think. It holds that immortal souls occupy an independent realm of existence, while apparently bodies die. This view contradicts physicalism.
- **Dynamism** – term coined by Gottfried Leibniz (1646–1716) and developed into a full system of cosmology. The Dynamism idea in metaphysical cosmology explains the material world in terms of active, pointlike *forces*, with no extension but with action at a distance. Dynamism describes that which exists as simple elements, or for Leibniz, monads, and groups of elements which have only the essence of forces. It was developed as a reaction against the passive view of matter in philosophical mechanism.

E

- **Eclecticism** – a conceptual approach that does not hold rigidly to a single paradigm or set of assumptions, but instead draws upon multiple theories, styles, or ideas to gain complementary insights into a subject, or applies different theories in particular cases.
- **Egalitarianism**^[2] – a political doctrine that holds that all people should be treated as equals.
- **Egoism** – beliefs that are consistent with one's self-interest.
- **Emanationism** – belief that reality necessarily proceeds from a first Principle.
- **Emotionalism** – an inclination to rely on or place too much value on emotion. It could be argued that very few, if any, people would label themselves "emotionalists", but rather that it would be a derogatory term applied to them, possibly for exhibiting a zealous demeanor, which may be interpreted as an appeal to emotion.
- **Emotivism** – the non-cognitivist meta-ethical theory that ethical judgments are primarily *expressions* of one's own attitude and *imperatives* meant to change the attitudes and actions of

another. It is heavily associated with the work of A. J. Ayer and C. L. Stevenson, and it is related to the prescriptivism of R. M. Hare.

- **Empiricism** – the doctrine that all knowledge ultimately comes from experience, denying the notion of innate ideas or *a priori* knowledge about the world. It is opposed with rationalism.
- **Environmentalism** – a concern for the preservation, restoration, or improvement of the natural environment, such as the conservation of natural resources, prevention of pollution, and certain land use actions. It often supports the struggles of indigenous peoples against the spread of globalization to their way of life, which is seen as less harmful to the environment.
- **Epicureanism** – while often considered to be the philosophy of pleasure seeking, in fact refers to a middle-path philosophy defining happiness as success in avoiding pain, in the form of both mental worry and physical discomfort, in order to produce a state of tranquility.
- **Epiphenomenalism** – the view in philosophy of mind according to which physical events have mental effects, but mental events have no effects of any kind. In other words, the causal relations go only one way, from physical to mental. In recent times it is usually considered a type of dualism, because it postulates physical events but also non-physical mental events; but historically it has sometimes been thought a kind of monism, because of its sharp divergence from substance dualism.
- **Equalitarianism** – another spelling of egalitarianism.
- **Essentialism** – the belief and practice centered on a philosophical claim that for any specific kind of entity it is at least theoretically possible to specify a finite list of characteristics, all of which any entity must have to belong to the group defined.
- **Eternalism** – a philosophical approach to the ontological nature of time. It builds on the standard method of modeling time as a dimension in physics, to give time a similar ontology to that of space. This would mean that time is just another dimension, that future events are "already there", and that there is no objective flow of time.
- **Ethical egoism** – the normative ethical position that moral agents ought to do what is in their own self-interest. It is distinguished from psychological egoism and rational egoism. It contrasts with ethical altruism, which holds that moral agents have an ethical obligation to help or serve others. Ethical egoism does not, however, require moral agents to disregard the well-being of others, nor does it require that a moral agent refrains from considering the well-being of others in moral deliberation. What is in an agent's self-interest may be incidentally detrimental to, beneficial to, or neutral in its effect on others. It allows for the possibility of either as long as what is chosen is efficacious in satisfying self-interest of the agent. Ethical egoism is sometimes used to support libertarianism or anarchism, political positions based partly on a belief that individuals should not coercively prevent others from exercising freedom of action.
- **Ethnocentrism** – the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one's own culture. It is defined as the viewpoint that "one's own group is the center of everything (better than all other cultures)," against which all other groups are judged. Ethnocentrism often entails the belief that one's own race or ethnic group is the most important and/or that some or all aspects of its culture are superior to those of other groups.
- **Eudaimonism** – A system of ethics that evaluates actions in terms of their capacity to produce happiness.
- **Existentialism** – the philosophical movement that views human existence as having a set of underlying themes and characteristics, such as anxiety, dread, freedom, awareness of death, and consciousness of existing, that are primary. That is, they cannot be reduced to or explained by a natural-scientific approach or any approach that attempts to detach itself from or rise above these themes.

- **Christian existentialism** – the philosophical movement shares similar views to existentialism with the added idea that the Judeo-Christian God plays an important part in coping with the underlying themes of human existence.
- **Experientialism** – the philosophy that knowledge is to be measured according to experiences and first hand accounts.
- **Experimentalism** – a philosophy that uses data obtained from experiments in order to ascertain the integrity of an idea or proposed concept.
- **Expressionism** – an aesthetic and artistic movement that distorted reality for enhanced or overexaggerated emotional effect. It can also apply to some literature; the works of Franz Kafka and Georg Kaiser are often said to be expressionistic, for example.
- **Expressivism** - a theory about the meaning of moral language. According to expressivism, sentences that employ moral terms—for example, “It is wrong to torture an innocent human being”—are not descriptive or fact-stating; moral terms such as “wrong,” “good,” or “just” do not refer to real, in-the-world properties. The primary function of moral sentences, according to expressivism, is not to assert any matter of fact, but rather to express an evaluative attitude toward an object of evaluation.^[4] Because the function of moral language is non-descriptive, moral sentences do not have any truth conditions.^[5] Hence, expressivists either do not allow that moral sentences have truth value, or rely on a notion of truth value that does not appeal to any descriptive truth conditions being met for moral sentences.
- **Externalism**^[2] – in epistemology, the theory that justification can hold elements which are not known to the subject of the belief.
- **Externism** – pseudo-philosophical theory, developed – by fictitious genius Jára Cimrman. It deals with our knowledge and learning process.
- **Extropianism** – also referred to as **extropy**, and originated by Dr. Max More, extropianism is an evolving framework of values and standards for continuously improving the human condition. Extropianism describes a pragmatic consilience of transhuman thought guided by a conscious, pro-active, self-directed approach to human evolution and progress. (*See posthuman*). Extropians were once concisely described as libertarian transhumanists, and some still hold to this standard.

F

- **Fallibilism** – doctrine that absolute certainty about knowledge is impossible; or at least that all claims to knowledge could, in principle, be mistaken. As a formal doctrine, it is most strongly associated with Charles Sanders Peirce, who used it in his attack on foundationalism. Unlike scepticism, fallibilism does not imply the need to abandon our knowledge- we needn't have logically conclusive justifications for what we know. Rather, it is an admission that because empirical knowledge can be revised by further observation, all knowledge, excepting that which is axiomatically true (such as mathematical and logical knowledge) exists in a constant state of flux.
- **Falsificationism** – the idea that a proposition or theory cannot be scientific if it does not admit the possibility of being shown to be false. For example, the proposition "All crows are black" is a scientific proposition because it can be falsified by the observation of one white crow.
- **Fascism** – political ideology and mass movement that seeks to place the nation, defined in exclusive biological, cultural, and historical terms, above all other loyalties, and to create a mobilized national community. Many different characteristics are attributed to fascism by different scholars, but the following elements are usually seen as its integral parts: nationalism, authoritarianism, militarism, corporatism, totalitarianism, collectivism, anti-liberalism, and anti-communism.
- **Feminism** – a diverse collection of social theories, political movements, and moral philosophies, largely motivated by or concerning the experiences of women, especially in terms of their social,

political, and economic situation. As a social movement, feminism largely focuses on limiting or eradicating gender inequality and promoting women's rights, interests, and issues in society.

- **Fatalism** – the view that human deliberation and actions are pointless and ineffectual in determining events, because whatever will be will be. One ancient argument, called the *idle argument*, went like this: "If it is fated for you to recover from your illness, then you will recover whether you call a doctor or not. Likewise, if you are fated not to recover, you will not do so even if you call a doctor. So, calling a doctor makes no difference." Arguments like this are usually rejected even by causal determinists, who may say that it may be determined that only a doctor can cure you.
- **Fideism** – In Christian theology, the position that reason is more-or-less irrelevant to religious belief, that rational or scientific arguments for the existence of God are fallacious and irrelevant, and have nothing to do with the truth of Christian theology. Its argument in essence goes: "Christian theology teaches that people are saved by faith. But, if God's existence can be *proven*, either empirically or logically, faith becomes irrelevant. Therefore, if Christian theology is true, no proof of God's existence is possible." The term is occasionally used to refer to a belief that Christians are saved by faith alone: for which see *sola fide*. This position is sometimes called *solifidianism*.
- **Finalism** – the philosophy that any event is defined by an already-set final outcome and that all events leading up to that outcome are shaped the end result.
- **Formalism** – means a number of different things:
 - A certain school in the philosophy of mathematics, stressing axiomatic proofs through theorems specifically associated with David Hilbert.
 - A school of thought in law and jurisprudence which emphasises the fairness of process over substantive outcomes. See Legal formalism.
 - In economic anthropology, **formalism** is the theoretical perspective that the principles of neoclassical economics can be applied to our understanding of all human societies.
 - A certain rigorous mathematical method: see formal system.
 - A set of notations and rules for manipulating them which yield results in agreement with experiment or other techniques of calculation. These rules and notations may or may not have a corresponding mathematical semantics. In the case no mathematical semantics exists, the calculations are often said to be *purely formal*. See for example scientific formalism.
 - In the study of the arts and literature, **formalism** refers to the style of criticism that focuses on artistic or literary techniques in themselves, in separation from the work's social and historical context. See formalism (art), formalism (literature).
 - In the study of film and film theory, **formalism** is used to refer to a style of criticism that focuses on the technical aspects of filmmaking (e.g., lighting, sets, costumes, etc.). It was also used to describe an avant-garde experimental film movement, often seen as odd or extremist, which was concerned with the beauty of the actual physical form of film (i.e., the celluloid itself).
- **Formulism** – meaning adherence to or reliance on formulas, is also a school of philosophy that states that good, evil and choosing the correct actions can all be determined from a simple formula.
- **Foundationalism** – any justification or knowledge theory in epistemology that holds that beliefs are justified (known) when they are based on basic beliefs (also called foundational beliefs). Basic beliefs are beliefs that are self-justifying or self-evident, and don't need to be justified by *other*

beliefs. Basic beliefs provide justificatory support to other beliefs, which can in turn support further derivative beliefs. Foundationalists hold that basic beliefs are justified by mental events or states (such as experiences) that do not constitute beliefs (these are called nondoxastic mental states), or that they simply are not the type of thing that can (or needs to be) justified.

- **Freudianism**^{[6][7]} – the beliefs and practice of psychoanalysis as devised by Sigmund Freud; particularly, the mechanism of psychological repression; the situation of sexual desire as central to the development of the persona; and the efficacy of the "talking cure" or psychoanalytic technique.
- **Functionalism** – the dominant theory of mental states in modern philosophy. Functionalism was developed as an answer to the mind-body problem because of objections to both identity theory and logical behaviourism. Its core idea is that the mental states can be accounted for without taking into account the underlying physical medium (the neurons), instead attending to higher-level functions such as beliefs, desires, and emotions.

G

- **Gnosticism**^[2] – various mystical initiatory religions, sects and knowledge schools, which were most prominent in the first few centuries CE. It is also applied to modern revivals of these groups and, sometimes, by analogy to all religious movements based on secret knowledge gnosis, thus can lead to confusion.

H

- **Hedonism** – the ethical view that pleasure is the greatest good, and that pleasure should be the standard in deciding which course of action to pursue. It is usually associated with a more physical, egoistic, or unrefined definition of "pleasure" than that found in the related doctrine of utilitarianism.
- **Hegelianism** – a philosophy developed by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel which can be summed up by a favorite motto by Hegel "The rational alone is real". Which means that all reality is capable of being expressed in rational categories. His goal was to reduce to a more synthetic unity the system of transcendental idealism.
- **Henotheism** – *see its entry under theism, below.*
- **Hereditarianism** – *see Social Darwinism.*
- **Hinduism** – arguably the oldest religion in the world.
- **Historicism** – the theory that claims 1) that there is an organic succession of developments (also known as historism or the German historismus), and 2) that local conditions and peculiarities influence the results in a decisive way. It can be contrasted with reductionist theories which suppose that all developments can be explained by fundamental principles (such as in economic determinism).
- **Holism** – the idea that all the properties of a given system cannot be determined or explained by the sum of its constituent parts alone. Instead, the system as a whole determines in an important way how the parts behave. The general principle of holism is concisely summarized by the phrase "The whole is more than the sum of its parts." Holism is seen as the opposite of reductionism.
- **Humanism**^[2] – a range of ethical views that consider human nature to be the source of values.
 - **Posthumanism** – a development of humanism that rejects a special position in nature for humanity.
 - **Secular humanism** – a system of belief that upholds ethics and reason as the sole means of gaining knowledge. Secular humanists reject blind faith and dogma in favor of scientific

inquiry, and most agree that science and rationality can be supplemented with help from the arts. Also known as **scientific humanism**.

- **Transhumanism** – (sometimes abbreviated >H or H+) an emergent philosophy analysing or favouring the use of science and technology, especially neurotechnology, biotechnology, and nanotechnology, to overcome human limitations and improve the human condition. Dr. **Robin Hanson** describes it as "the idea that new technologies are likely to change the world so much in the next century or two that our descendants will in many ways no longer be 'human'."
 - § **Democratic transhumanism** – a **transhumanist** philosophy which is generally **socially progressive**. It also encompasses **radical democratic** political views.
- **Religious humanism** – a philosophy based on the integration of religious rituals and/or beliefs with **humanistic** philosophy that centers on human needs, interests, and abilities (such as **art**).
 - § **Christian humanism** – a philosophy in which human freedom and individualism are compatible with the practice of **Christianity** or intrinsic in its doctrine. It is a combination of **humanist** and Christian values.
 - § **Christian existential humanism** – a philosophy that argues that humans can make choices based on **free will** through **Christ's teachings**.
- **Humanistic naturalism** – *see its entry under naturalism, below.*
- **Hylozoism** – the **philosophical** conjecture that all or some material things possess life, or that all life is inseparable from matter.

I

- **Idealism** – the doctrine that reality or knowledge is founded on ideas (mental experience). Depending on the specific *ideal*, idealism is usually juxtaposed with **materialism** or **realism**.
 - **Objective idealism** – is an idealistic metaphysics that postulates that there is in an important sense only one perceiver, and that this perceiver is one with that which is perceived.
 - **German idealism** – a movement in philosophy, started with **Immanuel Kant's** transcendental idealism, centered in Germany. Many prominent exponents include **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel**, **Johann Gottlieb Fichte** and **Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling**.
 - **Subjective idealism** – a philosophy in which human experiences are based on perceptions.
 - **Transcendental idealism** – the philosophy of **Immanuel Kant** and later Kantian and German Idealist philosophers; a view according to which our experience is not about the things as they are in themselves, but about the things as they appear to us. It differs from standard (empirical) **idealism** in that it does not claim that the objects of our experiences would be in any sense *within* our mind. The idea is that whenever we experience something, we experience it as it is *for ourselves*: the object is real as well as mind-independent, but is in a sense *corrupted* by our cognition (by the **categories** and the forms of sensibility, space and time). Transcendental idealism denies that we could have knowledge of the thing in itself. A view that holds the opposite is called transcendental realism.
- **Ignosticism** – a philosophy questioning the existence of **God** relating to a lack of proof while at the same time arguing for a strong **faith**
- **Illusionism** – a philosophy that holds that there is no **material world** but rather a collection of **illusions** formed by human consciousness that results in an environment for all humans to live in.
- **Immaterialism** – a philosophy that holds that there are no **material objects**, but rather all **reality** is a construct of a flawed perception.

- **Immoralism** – The philosophy that man should try to strive for the perfect aesthetic of eternal life.
- **Immortalism** – another name for immortality (or eternal life), is the concept of existing for a potentially infinite, or indeterminate length, of time. Throughout history, humans have had the desire to live forever. What form an unending or indefinitely-long human life would take, or whether it is even possible, has been the subject of much speculation, fantasy, and debate.
- **Incompatibilism** – the belief that free will and determinism are not logically compatible categories.
- **Indeterminism** – the philosophical belief contradictory to determinism: that there are events which do not correspond with determinism (and therefore are uncaused in some sense).
- **Individualism** – in political philosophy, the view that the rights or well-being of individuals are to be protected, rather than the well-being of groups such as nations or states, ideologies (such as communism or democracy), or religious communities (such as Christendom). Individualism is often associated with classical liberalism and opposed to the various sorts of communalism and nationalism.
- **Inductionism** – the scientific philosophy where laws are "induced" from sets of data. As an example, one might measure the strength of electrical forces at varying distances from charges and induce the inverse square law of electrostatics. See also inductive reasoning.
- **Inductivism** – a philosophy that holds that scientific research is guided by the various observations and data produced by previous science experiments; In other words, that science progresses in a direction that has prior experimental data. It exists both in a classical naive version, which has been highly influential, and in various more sophisticated versions. The naive version, which can be traced back to thinkers such as Abū Rayhān al-Bīrūnī^[8] and David Hume, says that general statements (theories) have to be based on empirical observations, which are subsequently generalized into statements which can either be regarded as true or probably true.
- **Infinitism** – is the view that knowledge may be justified by an infinite chain of reasons.
- **Innatism** – doctrine that holds the mind is born with ideas or knowledge, and is not a 'blank slate' at birth as early empiricists such as John Locke claimed. It asserts that not all knowledge is obtained from experience and the senses.
 - **Knowledge innatism** - doctrine that asserts that humans have access to knowledge that is possessed innately.
 - **Idea innatism** - (also known as **concept innatism**), doctrine that asserts that humans have access to certain inborn ideas.
- **Instrumentalism** – the idea that knowledge should be judged by its usefulness and that the truth-value of knowledge is irrelevant. Generally invoked in philosophy of science
- **Intellectualism** – doctrine about the possibility of deriving knowledge from reason alone, *intellectualism* can stand for a general approach emphasising the importance of learning and logical thinking. Criticism of this attitude, sometimes summed up as *Left Bank*, caricatures intellectualism's faith in the mind and puts it in opposition to emotion, instinct, and primitivist values in general.
- **Internalism** – in epistemology, the view that all evidence involved in justification must be knowable to the subject.
- **Intentionalism** – a philosophy that questions the underpinnings of original intent and explores whether or not humans are the source of their own actions or are controlled by a higher power.
- **Interactionism** – a philosophy that explores the relationship between cause and effect in regards to the human perception of the universe.
- **Interpretivism** – in epistemology, the view that all knowledge is a matter of interpretation.
 - **Legal interpretivism** – school of thought in the philosophy of law, in which law is not considered to be a set of data or physical facts, but what lawyers aim to construct. It holds that there is no separation between law and morality although there are differences (this is

the opposite of the main claim of legal positivism). According to legal interpretivism, law is not immanent in nature nor do legal values and principles exist independently and outside of the legal practice itself (this is the opposite of the main claim of natural law theory).

- **Intrinsicism** – a philosophy which holds that the intrinsic value of an object cannot be judged by humans.
- **Intuitionism** – in the philosophy of mathematics, **intuitionism**, or **neointuitionism** (opposed to preintuitionism), is an approach to mathematics as the constructive mental activity of humans. That is, mathematics does not consist of analytic activities wherein deep properties of existence are revealed and applied. Instead, logic and mathematics are the application of internally consistent methods to realize more complex mental constructs.
- **Irrationalism** – a philosophy which claims that science is inferior to intuition, with art and the conquest of the aesthetic being the ultimate transcendence of the humanity.
- **Irrealism** – a philosophy combining the phenomenalism and physicalism in epistemology with the view that either could be used interchangeably as agents of free will and study of the aesthetic.
- **Islamism** – a set of political ideologies derived from various religious views of Muslim fundamentalists, which hold that Islam is not only a religion, but also a political system that governs the legal, economic and social imperatives of the state. Islamist movements seek to re-shape the state by implementing a conservative formulation of Sharia. Islamists regard themselves as Muslims rather than Islamists, while moderate Muslims reject this notion.

J

- **Jainism**^[2] – a dharmic religion centered around asceticism and ahimsa, or nonviolence.
- **Jansenism** – a branch of Catholic thought that emphasized original sin, human depravity, the necessity of divine grace, and predestination. Named after Cornelius Otto Jansen.
- **Judaism** – a monotheistic, Abrahamic religion descended from the ancient Hebrews.

K

- **Kantianism** – the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher born in Königsberg, Germany (now Kaliningrad, Russia). The term Kantianism or Kantian is still often used to describe contemporary positions in philosophy of mind, epistemology, and ethics.
- **Kathenotheism** – an extension of "henotheism", from *kath heno theon* – "one god at a time".
- **Kierkegaardianism** - a set of philosophical, theological and psychological positions based on the work of the 19th century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard's work focuses on the existing individual and the struggle to become an authentic individual. Kierkegaard's work was the intellectual foundation for the 20th century philosophical movement, Existentialism.

L

- **Legalism**^[2] – in the Western sense, **legalism** is an approach to the analysis of legal questions characterized by abstract "logical" reasoning focused on the applicable legal text, such as a constitution, legislation, or case law, rather than on the social, economic, or political context. Legalism has occurred both in civil and common law traditions. Legalism may endorse the notion that the pre-existing body of authoritative legal materials already contains a uniquely pre-determined "right answer" to any legal problem that may arise. In legalism, the task of the judge is to ascertain the answer to a legal question mechanically.

- **Legal interpretivism** – see *interpretivism*, above.
- **Legal naturalism** – term coined by Olufemi Taiwo to describe a current in the social philosophy of Karl Marx which can be interpreted as one of Natural Law. Taiwo considered it the manifestation of Natural Law in a dialectical materialist context.
- **Legal positivism** – school of thought in the philosophy of law which claims that laws are made (deliberately or unintentionally) by human beings, and that there is no *inherent* or *necessary* connection between the validity of law and what is ethical or moral.
- **Liberalism** – in politics, a position which favors liberty as a political value. Liberalism has taken many meanings throughout history, but commonalities include a focus on individual liberty, democratic republicanism (liberal democracy), and equality under the law.
- **Libertarianism** – in metaphysics, the claim that free will exists; generally opposed to determinism. (But see compatibilism.) In political philosophy, either of two anti-statist political positions.
- **Logical positivism** – a philosophy (of science), that originated in the Vienna Circle in the 1920s, which holds that philosophy should aspire to the same sort of rigor as science. Philosophy should provide strict criteria for judging sentences true, false and meaningless. Although the logical positivists held a wide range of beliefs on many matters, they all shared an interest in science and deep skepticism of the theological and metaphysical. Following Wittgenstein, many subscribed to the correspondence theory of truth, although some, like Neurath, believed in coherentism. They believed that all knowledge should be based on logical inference from simple "protocol sentences" grounded in observable facts. Hence many supported forms of realism, materialism, philosophical naturalism, and empiricism. Logical positivism is also referred to as *logical empiricism*, *rational empiricism*, and *neo-positivism*.
- **Logicism** – one of the schools of thought in the philosophy of mathematics, putting forth the theory that mathematics is an extension of logic and therefore all mathematics is reducible to logic.^[9] Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead championed this theory fathered by Gottlob Frege. Frege gave up on the project after Russell recognized a paradox exposing an inconsistency in naive set theory. Russell and Whitehead continued on with the project in their *Principia Mathematica*.^[10]

M

- **Manichaeism** – was one of the major ancient religions. Though its organized form is mostly extinct today, a revival has been attempted under the name of **Neo-Manichaeism**. However, most of the writings of the founding prophet Mani have been lost. Some scholars and anti-Catholic polemicists argue that its influence subtly continues in Western Christian thought via Saint Augustine of Hippo, who converted to Christianity from Manichaeism and whose writing continues to be enormously influential among Catholic and Protestant theologians.
- **Marxism** – a set of philosophical, political and economic positions and movements based on the work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marx's philosophy of history included the notion of class struggle within dialectical materialism. Marxism was the intellectual foundation for the 20th-century political movement known as Communism, and was developed into various factions such as Leninism, Stalinism, Maoism, and Trotskyism, each hewing to the ideas of a particular political leader.
 - **Neo-Marxism** – loose term for various twentieth-century approaches that amend or extend Marxism and Marxist theory, usually by incorporating elements from other intellectual traditions (such as critical theory)^[11].

- **Materialism** – the philosophical view that the only thing that can truly be said to 'exist' is matter; that fundamentally, all things are composed of 'material' and all phenomena are the result of material interactions.
 - **Christian materialism** – the philosophical view that the only thing that can truly be said to 'exist' is matter due to the teachings of Christ.
 - **Dialectical materialism** – considered to be the philosophical basis of Marxism, it states that ideas and arguments can only exist as matter and that the subconscious protohuman does not exist.
 - **Historical materialism** – the methodological approach to the study of society, economics, and history which was first articulated by Karl Marx. His fundamental proposition of historical materialism can be summed up in the following: *It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.* — Karl Marx, *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Historical materialism looks for the causes of developments and changes in human societies in the way in which humans collectively make the means to live, thus giving an emphasis, through economic analysis, to everything that co-exists with the economic base of society (e.g. social classes, political structures, ideologies).
 - **Eliminative materialism** – absolute version of materialism and physicalism with respect to mental entities and mental vocabulary, according to which our common-sense understanding of the mind (what eliminativists call folk psychology) is not a viable theory on which to base scientific investigation: behaviour and experience can only be adequately explained on the biological level. Therefore, no coherent neural basis will be found for everyday folk psychological concepts (such as belief, desire and intention, for they are illusory and therefore do not have any consistent neurological substrate. Eliminative materialists therefore believe that consciousness does not exist except as an epiphenomenon of brain function and some believe that the concept will eventually be eliminated as neuroscience progresses.
 - **Emergent materialism** – a philosophy which asserts that the mind is an irreducible existent in some sense, albeit not in the sense of being an ontological simple, and that the study of mental phenomena is independent of other sciences.
 - **Evolutionary materialism** – the philosophical view that the only thing that can truly be said to 'exist' is matter and that the process of observing such existence evolves and changes over time.
 - **French materialism** – a philosophy which holds that both the associationist psychology and Empiricism of John Locke with the Totality of Isaac Newton are correct and compatible with each other.
 - **Reductive materialism** – Reductionism
- **Mazdaism** – the religion that acknowledges the divine authority of Ahura Mazda, proclaimed by Zoroaster (see Zoroastrianism) to be the one uncreated Creator of all (God).
- **Mechanism** – theory that all natural phenomena can be explained by physical causes. It can be contrasted with vitalism, the philosophical theory that vital forces are active in living organisms, so that life cannot be explained solely by mechanism.
- **Meliorism** – the idea in metaphysics that humans can, through their interference with natural processes, produce an improvement over the natural outcome. It is at the foundation of contemporary liberal democracy and human rights, and is contrasted by the concept apologism.
- **Mentalism** – the view, in philosophy of mind, that the mind and mental states exist as causally efficacious inner states of persons. The view should be distinguished from substance dualism, which is the view that the mind and the body (or brain) are two distinct kinds of things which nevertheless interact (somehow) with one another. Although this dualistic view of the mind-body

connection entails mentalism, mentalism does not entail dualism. Jerry Fodor and Noam Chomsky have been two of mentalism's most ardent recent defenders.

- **Metaphysical naturalism** – *see its entry under naturalism, below.*
- **Modernism** – describes a series of reforming cultural movements in art and architecture, music, literature and the applied arts which emerged roughly in the period of 1884-1914. The term covers many political, cultural and artistic movements rooted in the changes in Western society at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. It is a trend of thought that affirms the power of human beings to create, improve, and reshape their environment, with the aid of scientific knowledge, technology and practical experimentation.^[12]
- **Mohism** – the philosophy of Chinese philosopher Mozi, distinguished for its principles of universal love and mutual (utilitarian) benefit.
- **Molinism** – a religious doctrine which attempts to reconcile the omniscience of God with human free will. Named after 16th Century Jesuit theologian Luis de Molina.
- **Monism** – the metaphysical and theological view that there is only one principle, essence, substance or energy. Monism is to be distinguished from dualism, which holds that ultimately there are two principles, and from pluralism, which holds that ultimately there are many principles.
- **Monistic theism** – *see its entry under theism, below.*
- **Monolatry** – a philosophy which holds that there are many gods, with a worshiper of any God receiving his or her blessing.
- **Monotheism** – *see its entry under theism, below.*
- **Moral absolutism** – The belief in a single set of ‘rights’ and ‘wrongs’, with no variation. These are known by all people and to not respect them is a choice.
- **Moral realism** – *see its entry under realism, below.*
- **Moral relativism** – the view that there are no universal moral truths.
- **Moral universalism** – the view that there are moral propositions that apply universally.
- **Mysticism** – the pursuit of achieving communion, identity with, or conscious awareness of ultimate reality, the divinity, spiritual truth, or God through direct experience, intuition, or insight. Traditions may include a belief in the literal existence of dimensional realities beyond empirical perception, or a belief that a true human perception of the world goes beyond current logical reasoning or intellectual comprehension.

N

- **Nativism** – an opposition to immigration that originated in United States politics, that distinguishes between Americans who were born in the United States, and "first-generation" immigrants. It is based on fears the immigrants do not share supposedly American values.
- **Naturalism** – any of several philosophical stances, typically those descended from materialism and pragmatism, that do not distinguish the supernatural (including strange entities like non-natural values, and universals as they are commonly conceived) from nature. Naturalism does not necessarily claim that phenomena or hypotheses commonly labeled as supernatural do not exist or are wrong, but insists that all phenomena and hypotheses can be studied by the same methods and therefore anything considered supernatural is either nonexistent, unknowable, or not inherently different from natural phenomena or hypotheses.
 - **Humanistic naturalism** – the belief that human beings, as well as plants and animals, are divine and intricate extensions of nature. Followers share a mutual respect for things created directly by nature, even though life must feed upon life for continuance. While most believers are able to adapt to modern change, naturalists prefer the a fair exchange of

resources, as was in the case of former agricultural and hunter-gatherer societies. Industry and technology are in exact opposition to naturalism.

- **Legal naturalism** – term coined by Olufemi Taiwo to describe a current in the social philosophy of Karl Marx which can be interpreted as one of Natural Law. Taiwo considered it the manifestation of Natural Law in a dialectical materialist context.
- **Metaphysical naturalism** – the belief that nature is in fact all that exists. The term applies to any worldview in which nature is all there is and all things supernatural do *not* exist (including spirits and souls, non-natural values, and universals as they are commonly conceived).
- **Necessitarianism** – a metaphysical principle that denies that any facts or events are contingent or indeterminate, from human actions to the laws of physics themselves.
- **Nihilism** – philosophical view that the world, and especially human existence, is without meaning, purpose, comprehensible truth, or essential value. It is more often a charge leveled against a particular idea than a position to which someone is overtly subscribed. Movements such as Dada, Deconstructionism, and punk have been described by various observers as "nihilist".
- **Nominalism** – the belief that universals or mental concepts have no objective reality but exist only as words or "names" (Latin *nomina*).
- **Non-cognitivism** – the meta-ethical view that moral statements do not assert propositions i.e. they do not express factual claims or beliefs and therefore lack truth-value. This view should be distinguished from moral realism, skepticism, subjectivism, relativism, and nihilism; proponents of these views avow that moral statements are either true or false.
- **Nontheism** – the absence of belief in both the existence *and* non-existence of a deity (or deities, or other numinous phenomena). The word is often employed as a blanket term for all belief systems that are not theistic, including atheism (both strong and weak) and agnosticism, as well as certain Eastern religions like Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism.

O

- **Objectivism** – in ethics, the belief that certain acts are objectively right or wrong.
- **Occasionalism** – philosophical theory about causation stating that created substances cannot be efficient causes of events. Instead, all events are taken to be caused directly by God Himself. (A related theory, which has been called 'occasional causation', also denies a link of efficient causation between mundane events, but may differ as to the identity of the true cause that replaces them).
- **Ontologism** – ideological system which maintains that God and Divine ideas are the first object of our intelligence and that the intuition of God the first act of our intellectual knowledge. Note that Martin Heidegger used the term *Onto-theology*, that is answering questions of being with direct reference of belief in God.
- **Operationalism** – the philosophy of defining a concept as the operations that will measure the concept (variables) through specific observations.
- **Optimism** – historically, the philosophical position that this is the best of all possible worlds, usually associated with Gottfried Leibniz. More often used to describe a cheerful or positive worldview.
- **Organicism** – philosophical orientation that asserts that reality is best understood as an organic whole. By definition it is close to holism. Benedict Spinoza and Constantin Brunner are two philosophers whose thought is best understood as organicist.

P

- **Pacifism** – in ethics or politics, an opposition to war or violence. Can range from advocacy of peaceful solutions to problems, to a stance where all violence or force is considered morally wrong.
- **Pandeism** – combines deism (above) with pantheism (under theism, below) to propose a deistic God that becomes a pantheistic Universe; coined by Moritz Lazarus and Heymann Steinthal in *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* (1859).
- **Panendeism** – is deism combined with the belief that the universe is part of God, but not all of God. Some panendeists have established numerous additional beliefs, and use more specialized terminology to describe them. However, any deist who believes that the universe is a part (but not the whole) of God, can be considered a panendeist.
- **Panentheism** – *see its entry under theism, below.*
- **Panpsychism** – either the view that all parts of matter involve mind, or the more holistic view that the whole universe is an organism that possesses a mind. It is thus a stronger and more ambitious view than hylozoism, which holds only that all things are alive. This is not to say that panpsychism believes that all matter is alive or even conscious but rather that the constituent parts of matter are composed of some form of mind and are sentient.
- **Pantheism** – *see its entry under theism, below.*
- **Particularism** – in the study of knowledge, particularism refers to the approach where one asks the question "What do we know?" *before* asking "How do we know?" The term appears in Roderick Chisholm's "The Problem of the Criterion", and in the work of his student, Ernest Sosa ("The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge"). Particularism is contrasted with Methodism, which answers the latter question before the former. Since the question "What do we know" implies that we know, it is fundamentally anti-skeptical.
- **Pelagianism** – the belief that original sin did not taint human nature (which, being created from God, was divine), and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without Divine aid.
 - **Semipelagianism** – a Christian theological understanding about salvation, derived from the earlier Pelagian teachings about salvation. It teaches that it is necessary for humans to make the first step toward God and then God will complete salvation.
- **Perfectionism** – a philosophy which holds that the persistence of will should be used in obtaining the optimal quality of spiritual, mental, physical, and material being.
- **Personalism** – school of thought that consists of three main principles: 1) only people are real (in the ontological sense), 2) only people have value, and 3) only people have free will. Personalism flourished in the early 20th century at Boston University in a movement known as Boston Personalism and led by theologian Borden Parker Bowne.
- **Perspectivism** – philosophical view developed by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche that all perception and ideation takes place from a particular perspective in terms of inner drives as elucidated by the "will to power"
- **Pessimism** – a belief that the experienced world is the worst possible. It describes a general belief that things are bad, and tend to become worse; or that looks to the eventual triumph of evil over good; it contrasts with optimism, the contrary belief in the goodness and betterment of things generally. A common conundrum illustrates optimism versus pessimism with the question - does one regard a given glass of water as: "Is the glass half empty or half full?" Conventional wisdom expects optimists to reply with half full and pessimists to respond with half empty, but this is not always the case.
- **Phenomenal conservatism** – a philosophy that holds that it is reasonable to assume that things are as they appear, unless there are positive grounds for doubting this.

- **Phenomenalism** – in epistemology and the philosophy of perception, *phenomenalism* is the view that physical objects do not exist as things in themselves but only as perceptual phenomena or sensory stimuli (e.g. redness, hardness, softness, sweetness, etc.) situated in time and in space. In particular, phenomenism reduces talk about physical objects in the external world to talk about *bundles of sense-data*.
- **Philosophy** - broad field of inquiry concerning *knowledge*; in which the definition of knowledge itself is one of the subjects investigated. Philosophy is the pursuit of wisdom, spans the nature of the universe and human nature (of the mind and the body), the relationships between these, and between people. It explores what and how people come to know, including existence itself, and how that knowledge is reliably and usefully represented, and communicated between and among humans, whether in thought, by language, or with mathematics. Philosophy is the predecessor and complement of science, and its foundation. It develops notions about the issues which underlie science, and ponders the nature of thought itself. In science, the scientific method, which involves repeated observations of the results of controlled experiments, is an available and highly successful philosophical methodology. Within fields of study that are concerned directly with humans (economics, psychology, sociology and so forth), in which experimental methodologies are not generally available, subdisciplines of philosophy are developed to provide a rational basis of study in the respective fields.
- **Physicalism** – the metaphysical position asserting that everything which exists has a physical property; that is, that there are no kinds of things other than physical things. In contemporary philosophy physicalism is most frequently associated with philosophy of mind, in particular the mind/body problem, in which it holds that the mind is a physical thing in some sense. Physicalism is also called "materialism", but the term "physicalism" is preferable because it has evolved with the physical sciences to incorporate far more sophisticated notions of physicality than matter, for example wave/particle relationships and unseen, non-material forces.
- **Platonism** – the school of philosophy founded by Plato. Often used to refer to Platonic idealism, the belief that the entities of the phenomenal world are imperfect reflections of an ideal truth. In metaphysics sometimes used to mean the claim that universals exist independent of particulars. Predecessor and precursor of Aristotelianism.
 - **Neo-Platonism** – was a school of philosophy that took shape in the 3rd century A.D. The school was characterized by a systematization of Platonic metaphysics along with a pursuit of mystical union with the divine.
- **Pluralism** – in the area of philosophy of the mind, distinguishes a position where one believes there to be ultimately many kinds of substances in the world, as opposed to monism and dualism. (See also cosmotheism).
- **Polylogism** – the belief that people who associate with one group or another think differently.
- **Polytheism** – the belief in or worship of multiple deities (usually assembled in a pantheon) together with associated mythology and rituals.
- **Positivism** – philosophical position that the only authentic knowledge is scientific knowledge. It is an approach to the philosophy of science, deriving from Enlightenment thinkers like Pierre-Simon Laplace (and many others). See also logical positivism.
 - **Legal positivism** – school of thought in the philosophy of law which claims that laws are made (deliberately or unintentionally) by human beings, and that there is no *inherent* or *necessary* connection between the validity of law and what is ethical or moral.
- **Postmodernism** – philosophical movement characterized by the postmodern criticism and analysis of Western philosophy. Beginning as a critique of Continental philosophy, it was heavily influenced by phenomenology, structuralism and existentialism, and by the philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. It was also influenced to some degree by Ludwig Wittgenstein's later criticisms of analytic philosophy. Within postmodern philosophy, there are numerous

interrelated fields, including deconstruction and several fields beginning with the prefix "post-", such as post-structuralism, post-Marxism, and post-feminism. In particular postmodern philosophy has spawned a huge literature of critical theory.

- **Pragmatism** – philosophy which originated in the United States in the late 1800s. Pragmatism is characterized by the insistence on consequences, utility and practicality as vital components of meaning and truth. Pragmatism objects to the view that human concepts and intellect represent reality, and therefore stands in opposition to both formalist and rationalist schools of philosophy. Rather, pragmatism holds that it is only in the struggle of intelligent organisms with the surrounding environment that theories acquire significance, and only with a theory's success in this struggle that it *becomes* true.
- **Prescriptivism (philosophy)** – meta-ethical theory about the semantical content of moral statements, introduced by the philosopher R. M. Hare in his book *The Language of Morals*. It holds that moral statements functions similarly to imperatives. For example, according to prescriptivism, the statement "Killing is wrong" means something like "You shouldn't kill". What it expresses is an *imperative*.
- **Probabilism** – practical doctrine which gives assistance in ordinary matters to one who is skeptical in respect of the possibility of real knowledge: it supposes that though knowledge is impossible, a man may rely on strong beliefs in practical affairs. This view was held by the skeptics of the New Academy (see skepticism and Carneades). Opposed to "probabilism" is "probabiliorism" (Latin *probabilior*, "more likely"), which holds that when there is a preponderance of evidence on one side of a controversy that side is presumably right. Academic skeptics accept probabilism, while Pyrrhonian skeptics do not.
- **Psychological egoism** – the descriptive view that humans are always motivated by self-interest.
- **Psychologism** – a philosophy that holds that human knowledge can be expanded solely through philosophical study.
- **Pyrrhonism** – a sub-philosophy of skepticism that holds that any assent with regard to non-evident propositions will always remain in a state of perpetual inquiry; therefore, proof or disproof of an observation is not necessarily a valid reason for holding an opinion on the matter.
- **Pythagoreanism** – the esoteric and metaphysical beliefs held by Pythagoras and his followers, the Pythagoreans, who were considerably influenced by mathematics. Pythagoreanism greatly influenced Platonism. Later revivals of Pythagorean doctrines led to what is now called Neopythagoreanism.

Q

- **Quasi-realism** – a non-cognitivist, expressivist meta-ethical and epistemological theory developed by professor Simon Blackburn. It holds that although propositions supervene on states of mind, they have many realist characteristics, such as only being able to change slowly or in response to changes in natural properties.

R

- **Randianism** – the individualist movement founded by Ayn Rand, known by its adherents as objectivism.
- **Rationalism** – a theory or method based on the thesis that human reason can in principle be the source of all knowledge. In the modern period, rationalism was initially championed by René Descartes and spread during the 17th and 18th centuries, primarily in continental Europe. It is opposed with empiricism.

- **Critical rationalism** – the philosophy that tenants of science should always be criticized and questioned so as to continually prove their worth.
 - § **Pancritical rationalism** – a sub-concept of critical rationalism, it argues that every tenant of science or commonly held truth should be questioned regardless of an authority figure's justification or assurance that it is true.
- **Realism** – a view of a reality ontologically independent of conception, perception, etc. Objects have certain properties regardless of any thought to the contrary.
 - **Critical realism** – a view that certain types of sense data accurately represent a mind-independent reality while other types do not. A key example is the primary/secondary quality distinction.
 - **Modal realism** – the view most notably put forth by David Lewis that possible worlds are as real as the actual world.
 - **Moral realism** – the philosophical view that there are objective moral values. Moral realists argue that moral judgments describe moral facts. This combines a cognitivist view about moral judgments (they are belief-like mental states that describe the state of the world), a view about the *existence* of moral facts (they do in fact exist), and a view about the *nature* of moral facts (they are objective: independent of our cognizing them, or our stance towards them). It contrasts with expressivist or non-cognitivist theories of moral judgment, error theories of moral judgments, fictionalist theories of moral judgment, and constructivist or relativist theories of the nature of moral facts.
 - **Naïve realism, direct realism, or common sense realism** – the common view of the world including the claims that it is as it is perceived, that objects have the properties attributed to them, and that they maintain these properties when not being perceived.
 - **Platonic realism** – A belief in the existence of universals as articulated by Plato. Platonic realism is often called Plato's theory of Forms.
- **Reconstructivism** – a philosophy which holds that societies should continually reform in order to establish a more perfect government or social network.
- **Reductionism** – a number of related, contentious theories that hold, very roughly, that the nature of complex things can always be reduced to (be explained by) simpler or more fundamental things. This is said of objects, phenomena, explanations, theories, and meanings. In short, it is philosophical materialism taken to its logical consequences.
 - **Ontological reductionism** – the idea that everything that exists is made from a small number of basic substances that behave in regular ways. Compare to monism.
 - **Methodological reductionism** – the idea that explanations of things, such as scientific explanations, ought to be continually reduced to the very simplest entities possible (but no simpler). Occam's Razor forms the basis of this type of reductionism.
 - **Theoretical reductionism** – the idea that older theories or explanations are not generally replaced outright by new ones, but that new theories are refinements or reductions of the old theory in greater detail.
 - **Scientific reductionism** – has been used to describe all of the above ideas as they relate to science, but is most often used to describe the idea that all phenomena can be reduced to scientific explanations.
 - **Linguistic reductionism** – the idea that everything can be described in a language with a limited number of core concepts, and combinations of those concepts. (See Basic English and the constructed language Toki Pona).
 - **Greedy reductionism** – this term was coined by Daniel Dennett to condemn those forms of reductionism that try to explain too much with too little.
 - **Analytical reductionism** – as used in "Is Reductionism A Good Approach In Science?" "is the underlying a priori of ontological reductionism".

- **Relationalism** – a philosophy that holds that space and time are basic entities ontologically on a par with matter and radiation.
- **Relativism** – the view that the meaning and value of human beliefs and behaviors have no absolute reference. Relativists claim that humans understand and evaluate beliefs and behaviors only in terms of, for example, their historical and cultural context. Philosophers identify many different *kinds* of relativism depending upon what allegedly depends on something and what something depends on.
 - **Moral relativism** – the belief that there is no one universal set of morals; i.e., that each individual has his or her own moral beliefs, usually based on personal experience or perception, and that those morals are valid and true for those individuals.
 - **Linguistic relativism** – the idea that differences in language are related to differences in cognition of the language users. It is an idea inferred from Linguistic determinism, and subject in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis.
 - **Methodological relativism** – the idea that a researcher must suspend his or her own cultural biases while attempting to understand beliefs and behaviors in their local contexts. See ethnocentrism.
- **Reliabilism** – in epistemology, the claim that the status of a belief as *knowledge* should be judged by whether it was arrived upon through a reliable method. For instance, scientific experiment may be considered a more reliable method than intuition or guesswork.
- **Representationalism** – A philosophical concept that states that we do not (and can not) perceive the external world directly; instead we know only our ideas or interpretations of objects in the world. Thus, a barrier or a veil of perception prevents first-hand knowledge of anything beyond it. The "veil" exists between the mind and the existing world.
- **Romanticism** – A philosophy that expresses art as an emotional experience based on the appreciation of the aesthetic. In other words, Romanticism is a philosophy where art is celebrated due to the emotional reaction on the part of the receiver.
- **Ruppelism** – the Maritime and Science Technology Academy movement towards true college experience while still in High School.

S

- **Scholasticism** – school of philosophy taught by the academics (or **schoolmen**) of medieval universities circa 1100–1500. Scholasticism attempted to reconcile the philosophy of the ancient classical philosophers with medieval Christian theology. The primary purpose of scholasticism was to find the answer to a question or resolve a contradiction. It is most well known in its application in medieval theology but was applied to classical philosophy and other fields of study. It is not a philosophy or theology on its own, but a tool and method for learning which puts emphasis on dialectical reasoning.
- **Scientism** – the belief that science has primacy over other ways of obtaining knowledge. This term is often used in a derogatory manner, to refer to a level of trust or reliance upon scientific progress which the speaker deems excessive.
- **Scotism** – the philosophical school and theological system named after John Duns Scotus. It heavily criticized the Old Franciscan School and thomism.
- **Secularism** – in politics, the notion of the independence of the state from religion; the advocacy of a state which is neutral on matters of religious belief. Secularism, or religious freedom, is usually considered to go both ways: the state should not compel the people to follow (or not follow) a religion; and likewise religious doctrines should not control the actions of the state.
- **Sikhism** – a monotheistic dharmic religion based on the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev.

- **Sensualism** – philosophical theory in which sensations and perception are the basic and most important form of true cognition. This opposes realism. The base principle of sensualism is "there is not anything in mind, which hasn't been in feelings". Philosophers of sensualism include John Locke and Étienne Bonnot de Condillac.
- **Singularitarianism** – a moral philosophy based upon the belief that a technological singularity - the technological creation of smarter-than-human intelligence - is possible, advocating deliberate action to effect and ensure its safety. While some futurologists and transhumanists speculate on the possibility and nature of this supposed singularity (often referred to as *the Singularity*, a term coined by Vernor Vinge), a Singularitarian believes it is not only possible, but that it can also be guided, and acts in ways that he/she believes will contribute to its safety and early arrival.
- **Situationalism** – another name for *Situation Ethics*, which is a Christian ethical theory that was principally developed in the 1960s by the Episcopal priest Joseph Fletcher. It basically states that sometimes other moral principles can be cast aside in certain situations if love is best served; as Paul Tillich once put it: 'Love is the ultimate law'. The moral principles Fletcher is specifically referring to are the moral codes of Christianity and the type of love he is specifically referring to is 'Agape' love.
- **Skepticism** – a school or method of doubt regarding what is held as knowledge.
 - **Pyrrhonian skepticism** or **pyrrhonism** – a Hellenistic school of skepticism that inquired about, but did not reject, dogmatic beliefs because the lack of belief is not the same as disbelief.
- **Social Darwinism** – a 19th century political philosophy which attempted to explain differences in social status (particularly class and racial differences) on the basis of evolutionary fitness. Social Darwinism is generally considered unscientific by modern philosophers of science.
 - **Hereditarianism** – the philosophy developed by Francis Galton and expressed in his book 'Hereditary Genius' in 1869 that people inherit mental characteristics from their parents such as personality and intelligence. a component of "Nature" in the phrase "Nature versus Nurture" It was opposed by Lamarckism but the discovery of genetics helped verify Hereditarianism and is considered to hold true today.
- **Socialism** – ideology with the core belief that a society should exist in which popular collectives control the means of power, and therefore the means of production. Though the de facto meaning of socialism has changed over time, it remains strongly-related to the establishment of an organized working class; created through either revolution or by social evolution, with the purpose of building a classless society. Socialism had its origins in the ideals of The Enlightenment, during the Industrial Age/Age of Industrialization, amid yearnings for a more egalitarian society. It has also increasingly become concentrated on social reforms within modern democracies.
- **Solipsism** – the view that only direct mental experience is certain, as things external to one's mind cannot be known.
- **Sophism** – in Ancient Greece, the teaching of rhetoric and persuasion; in modern times, a deceptive argument not based on logic.
- **Speciesism** – belief that rights, and moral standing and/or moral personhood ought to be assigned on the basis of species membership. Usually involves the belief that humans have greater value or worth than other animal species.
- **Spiritualism** – a religious movement, prominent from the 1840s to the 1920s, found primarily in English-speaking countries. The movement's distinguishing feature is the belief that the spirits of the dead can be contacted by adepts. These spirits are believed to lie on a higher spiritual plane than humans, and are therefore capable of providing guidance in both worldly and spiritual matters.
- **Statism** – the belief that the state or government should do everything.

- **Stoicism** – a Hellenistic school with the principle that self-control, both emotional and physical, leads to an inner strength and character that enables one to harmoniously interact with the natural world. It is often contrasted with Epicureanism.
- **Structuralism** – an approach or theory that studies underlying structural relationships between concepts.
 - **Post-structuralism** – a varied reaction to structuralism that views the signifier and signified as inseparable, but not united.
- **Subjectivism** – a doctrine that associates objects with subjective experience rather than independent existence.
- **Substance monotheism** – *see its entry under theism, below.*
- **Substance dualism** - *see its entry under dualism, above.*
- **Substantialism** – the philosophy that there are sentient entities behind phenomena
- **Surrealism** – ^[13] cultural movement that began in the early-1920s, best known for the visual artworks and writings of the group members. The works feature the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions and non sequitur, however many Surrealist artists and writers regard their work as an expression of the philosophical movement first and foremost with the works being an artifact, and leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion that Surrealism was above all a revolutionary movement.
- **Symbolism** – applied use of any iconic representations which carry particular conventional meanings. "Symbolism" may refer to a way of choosing representative symbols abstractly rather than literally, allowing broader interpretation of their meaning than more literal concept-representations allow.
- **Syncretism** – the attempt to reconcile disparate, even opposing, beliefs and to meld practices of various schools of thought. It is especially associated with the attempt to merge and analogize several originally discrete traditions, especially in the theology and mythology of religion, and thus assert an underlying unity.

T

- **Taoism** – a group of Chinese religious and philosophical traditions. Philosophical Taoism emphasizes various themes found in the Daodejing and Zhuangzi such as "nonaction" (wu wei), emptiness, detachment, receptiveness, spontaneity, the strength of softness, the relativism of human values, and the search for a long life. Religious Taoism is not clearly separated from philosophy, but incorporates a number of supernatural beliefs in gods, ghosts, ancestral spirits, and practices such as Taoist alchemy and qigong.
- **Teleologism** – the supposition that there is design, purpose, directive principle, or finality in the works and processes of nature, and the philosophical study of that purpose. Teleology stands in contrast to philosophical naturalism, and both ask questions separate from the questions of science. While science investigates natural laws and phenomena, Philosophical naturalism and teleology investigate the existence or non-existence of an organizing principle behind those natural laws and phenonema. Philosophical naturalism asserts that there are no such principles. Teleology asserts that there are.
- **Theism** – the belief in one or more gods or goddesses. More specifically, it may also mean the belief in God, a god, or gods, who is/are actively involved in maintaining the Universe. A theist can also take the position that he does not have sufficient evidence to "know" whether God or gods exist, although he believes it through faith.
 - **Monotheism** – the belief in a single, universal, all-encompassing deity. Zoroastrianism and the Abrahamic religions are considered Monotheist.

- § **Classical theism** – refers to traditional ideas of the monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Classical theism holds that God is an absolute, eternal, all-knowing (omniscient), all-powerful (omnipotent), and perfect being. God is related to the world as its cause, but is unaffected by the world (immutable). He is transcendent over the world which exists relative to him as a temporal effect.
- § **Deism** – a form of monotheism in which it is believed that one god exists. However, a deist rejects the idea that this god intervenes in the world. Hence any notion of special revelation is impossible, and the nature of god can only be known through reason and observation from nature. A deist thus rejects the miraculous, and the claim to knowledge made for religious groups and texts.
- § **Cosmotheism** – synonym for pantheism (see below).
- § **Monistic theism** – the type of monotheism found in Hinduism. This type of theism is different from the Semitic religions as it encompasses panentheism, monism, and at the same time includes the concept of a personal God as a universal, omnipotent supreme being. The other types of monotheism are qualified monism, the school of Ramanuja or Vishishtadvaita, which admits that the universe is part of God, or Narayana, a type of panentheism, but there is a plurality of souls within this supreme Being and Dvaita, which differs in that it is dualistic, as God is separate and not panentheistic.
- § **Pantheism** – the view that everything is of an all-encompassing immanent God; or that the universe, or nature, and God are equivalent. More detailed definitions tend to emphasize the idea that natural law, existence and/or the universe (the sum total of all that is was and shall be) is represented or personified in the theological principle of 'God'. The existence of a transcendent supreme extraneous to nature is denied. Depending on how this is understood, such a view may be presented as tantamount to atheism, deism or theism.
 - § **Pandeism** – a type of pantheism that combines the pantheistic belief of God being identical to the Universe with the idea from deism (above) that God is revealed by rational examination and does not intervene in the Universe.
- § **Panentheism** the theological position that God is immanent within the Universe, but also transcends it. It is distinguished from pantheism, which holds that God is synonymous with the material universe. In panentheism, God is viewed as creator and/or animating force behind the universe, and the source of universal morality. The term is closely associated with the Logos of Greek philosophy in the works of Herakleitos, which pervades the cosmos and whereby all things were made.
- § **Substance monotheism** – found e.g. in some indigenous African religions, holds that the many gods are different forms of a single underlying substance, and that this underlying substance is God. This view has some similarities to the Christian trinitarian view of three persons sharing one nature.
- § **Transtheism** – assumes the existence of God as an absent deity and the ultimate concept of God's existence is transcendent and external to all other forms of existence, which implies an impersonal, non-anthropomorphic, non-universe-morphic or even non-cosmos-morphic being and view of God. In transtheism, God has one primary attribute, transcendence.
- **Nontheism** – the absence of belief in both the existence *and* non-existence of a deity (or deities, or other numinous phenomena). The word is often employed as a blanket term for all belief systems that are not theistic, including atheism (both strong and weak) and

agnosticism, as well as certain Eastern religions like Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism.

- **Polytheism** – belief in, or worship of, multiple gods or divinities. Most ancient religions were polytheistic, holding to pantheons of traditional deities, often accumulated over centuries of cultural interchange and experience. The belief in many gods does not contradict or preclude also believing in an all-powerful all-knowing supreme being.
 - § **Henotheism** – devotion to a single god while accepting the existence of other gods. Coined by Max Müller, according to whom it is "monotheism in principle and a polytheism in fact". Variations on the term have been *inclusive monotheism* and *monarchial polytheism*, designed to differentiate differing forms of the phenomenon.
- **Open theism** – A religious approach combining Classical Theism as well as Ancient Greek beliefs that question the ideas of free will and the timeless nature of God.
- **Philosophical theism** – the belief that God exists (or must exist), independent of the teaching or revelation of any particular religion. Some philosophical theists are persuaded of God's existence by philosophical arguments, while others consider themselves to have a religious faith that need not be, or could not be, supported by rational argument.
- **Theological noncognitivism** – the argument that religious language, and specifically words like "God" (capitalized), are not cognitively meaningful. It is cited as proof of the nonexistence of anything named "God", and therefore is a basis for atheism. There are two main arguments: Kai Nielsen used verifiability theory of meaning to conclude that religious language is meaningless because it is not verifiable, proving weak atheism. George H. Smith used an attribute-based approach to argue that the concept "god" has no meaningful attributes, only negatively defined or relational attributes, making it meaningless — leading to the conclusion that "god does not exist", thus proving strong atheism.
- **Thomism** – the philosophical school that followed in the legacy of Thomas Aquinas. The word comes from the name of its originator, whose summary work Summa Theologiae has arguably been second to only the Bible in importance to the Catholic Church.
- **Totalitarianism** – a typology employed by political scientists to describe modern regimes in which the state regulates nearly every aspect of public and private behavior. Totalitarian regimes mobilize entire populations in support of the state and a political ideology, and do not tolerate activities by individuals or groups such as labor unions, churches and political parties that are not directed toward the state's goals. They maintain themselves in power by means of secret police, propaganda disseminated through the state-controlled mass media, regulation and restriction of free discussion and criticism, and widespread use of terror tactics.
- **Transcendental idealism** – the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and later Kantian and German Idealist philosophers; a view according to which our experience is not about the things as they are in themselves, but about the things as they appear to us. It differs from standard (empirical) idealism in that it does not claim that the objects of our experiences would be in any sense *within* our mind. The idea is that whenever we experience something, we experience it as it is *for ourselves*: the object is real as well as mind-independent, but is in a sense *corrupted* by our cognition (by the categories and the forms of sensibility, space and time). Transcendental idealism denies that we could have knowledge of the thing in itself. A view that holds the opposite is called transcendental realism.
- **Transcendentalism** – a group of new ideas in literature, religion, culture, and philosophy that advocates that there is an ideal spiritual state that 'transcends' the physical and empirical and is only realized through a knowledgeable intuitive awareness that is conditional upon the individual. The concept emerged in New England in the early-to mid-nineteenth century. It is sometimes called "American Transcendentalism" to distinguish it from other uses of the word transcendental.

It began as a protest against the general state of culture and society at the time, and in particular, the state of intellectualism at Harvard and the doctrine of the Unitarian church which was taught at Harvard Divinity School. The term *transcendentalism* sometimes serves as shorthand for "transcendental idealism". Another alternative meaning for *transcendentalism* is the classical philosophy that God transcends the manifest world. As John Scotus Erigena put it to Frankish king Charles the Bald in the year 840 A.D., "We do not know what God is. God himself doesn't know what He is because He is not anything. Literally God is not, because He transcends being."

- **Transhumanism** - a term often used as a synonym for "human enhancement", is an international, intellectual and cultural movement supporting the use of new sciences and technologies to enhance human mental and physical abilities and aptitudes, and ameliorate what it regards as undesirable and unnecessary aspects of the human condition, such as stupidity, suffering, disease, aging and involuntary death.
- **Transtheism** – *see its entry under theism, above.*

U

- **Universalism** – synonym for moral universalism, as a compromise between moral relativism and moral absolutism.
- **Utilitarianism** – theory of ethics based on quantitative maximization of total welfare for a specific population of humans. It is a form of consequentialism. Welfare is generally described hedonistically. Utilitarianism is summarized as "The greatest happiness for the greatest number."
- **Utopianism** – the many various social and political movements, and a significant body of religious and secular literature, based upon the idea that paradise is achievable on earth. See Utopia.

V

- **Value pluralism** – the idea that two or more moral values may be equally ultimate (true), yet in conflict. In addition, it postulates that in many cases, such incompatible values, may be rationally incommensurable. As such, value-pluralism is a theory in metaethics, rather than an ethical theory or a set of values in itself. The Oxford historian of ideas, Isaiah Berlin, is accredited with having done the first substantial work on value-pluralism, bringing it to the attention of general academia.
- **Verificationism** – an epistemic theory of truth based on the idea that the mind engages in a certain kind of activity: "verifying" a proposition. The distinctive claim of verificationism is that the result of such verifications is, by definition, truth. That is, truth is reducible to this process of verification.
- **Vitalism** – the doctrine that "**vital forces**" are active in living organisms, so that life cannot be explained solely by mechanism. That element is often referred to as the "vital spark" or "energy" which some equate with the "soul".
- **Voluntarism** – school of thought which regards the will as superior to the intellect and to emotion. Introduced into philosophical literature by Ferdinand Tönnies and developed further in the writings of Wilhelm Wundt and Friedrich Paulsen.
- **Voluntaryism** – theory advocated by Auberon Herbert, stressing "voluntary taxation" and the boycott of electoral politics. The original sources for voluntaryism can be found in Herbert's book "The Right and Wrong of Compulsion by the State." Some, such as Benjamin Tucker view Herbert's philosophy as anarchism, however he never called himself an anarchist as he considered anarchism to be a philosophy that does not provide for defense of person and property.

Y

- **Youthism** – the view that youths possess the same rights as adults.

Z

- **Zen Buddhism** – A fusion of Mahayana Buddhism and Taoism, practiced chiefly in China and Japan. It places great importance on moment-by-moment awareness and 'seeing deeply into the nature of things' by direct experience. The name derives from the Sanskrit word dhyana referring to a particular meditative state.
- **Zoroastrianism** – the religion and philosophy based on the teachings ascribed to the prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra, Zartosht).

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12. [^] "In the twentieth century, the social processes that bring this maelstrom into being, and keep it in a state of perpetual becoming, have come to be called 'modernization'. These world-historical processes have nourished an amazing variety of visions and ideas that aim to make men and women the subjects as well as the objects of modernization, to give them the power to change the world that is changing them, to make their way through the maelstrom and make it their own. Over the past century, these visions and values have come to be loosely grouped together under the name of 'modernism'" (Berman 1988, 16).
13. [^] In 1917, Guillaume Apollinaire coined the term "Surrealism" in the program notes describing the ballet *Parade* which was a collaborative work by Jean Cocteau, Erik Satie, Pablo Picasso and Léonide Massine: "From this new alliance, for until now stage sets and costumes on one side and choreography on the other had only a sham bond between them, there has come about, in *Parade*, a kind of super-realism ('sur-réalisme'), in which I see the starting point of a series of manifestations of this new spirit ('esprit nouveau')."