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A Critical Appraisal of Amini's 'Consciousness and the Alleged Failure of Analytic Philosophy'.

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While Amini's critique of Livingston contains as much with which this author finds agreement as disagreement, I have focused, in the short space available, on those points of divergence from the analysis given. It is my contention that the criticisms are being offered from within the context of a vastly divergent tradition than the one from within which Livingston is writing. The upshot of this is that Livingston's position is at times assumed to be incorrect prior to particular criticisms being made.

If, for example, we were to gratuitously allow that the problem of consciousness has been hijacked and confounded within the frame of semantic structuralism, then Livingston may wish to make the case that his 'allusions to non-structural explications are negative and in contrast to structural explications' as a matter of necessity. What first appears as a criticism now seems only to further Livingston's claim that what we currently face is 'a dialectical struggle' between 'totalizing structuralist theories of language and the world and the repeated complaint that consciousness escapes or resists them.' (Livingston, 2004, p.xi) That is to say, only by assuming that Livingston is incorrect in supposing that one is necessarily confined to early analytic forms of 'the explainability of consciousness' can one then criticise him on this very account. If, on the other hand, the dominance of the applied structuralist picture has, as Livingston suggests, 'threatened to render the language of consciousness unintelligible' (Livingston, 2004, p.xi), then one ought not to marvel at the fact that Livingston avails of strictly negative allusions to non-structural explications. At the very least, these two authors between them have served to illustrate Livingston's point that the 'dialectical struggle' is a methodological one, which has, in the case of Husserl and Schlick, been recognised as insurmountable long since. Inherent in the criticism of Livingston's 'anti-scientific' and 'anti-systematic' method of philosophising is a critique of the entire

Wittgensteinian enterprise of philosophical elucidation. The further suggestion that the dialectic in question may point to 'a more fundamental metaphysical dispute' is thus entirely lost on Livingston, whose philosophical methodology is that of the anti-metaphysical later Wittgenstein. However, Livingston's own charge that structuralist theories of consciousness suppose 'the neutrality of a pure inquiry' (Livingston, 2004, p.232), while not incorrect, is no more correct of one philosophical tradition than it is of another. There remains a sense in which, although they avail of similar terminology, these two authors are speaking a different language. The division between their schools of thought certainly constitutes a malady in contemporary philosophy of mind, and any attempt to offer a therapy ought to be commended, whether it succeed or fail.

Having stated in his Introduction that he does not intend any definitive explanation of consciousness, any charge that Livingston fails to do so is ill-founded. Likewise, the charge that recent developments in the field of consciousness have eluded him ignores the stated aim of Livingston's work, which is an historical enquiry into the problem of consciousness to the stated expense of contemporary relevance. (Livingston, 2004, p.ix) While Livingston's claim that he 'can bring the debate to substantial resolution' (Livingston, 2004, p.ix) is over-stated, an historical investigation into the origin of contemporaneous concepts and terminology serves, at the very least, as an initial step in this direction. Perhaps the more limited claim made by Livingston in the short article *Experience and Structure* offers a more appropriate appraisal of his success: 'Though this work does not itself offer solutions, it points the way to an expanded set of concepts and concerns in terms of which new kinds of solutions become possible (Livingston, 2002, p.18)

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