

# The Structure of RECENT PHILOSOPHY

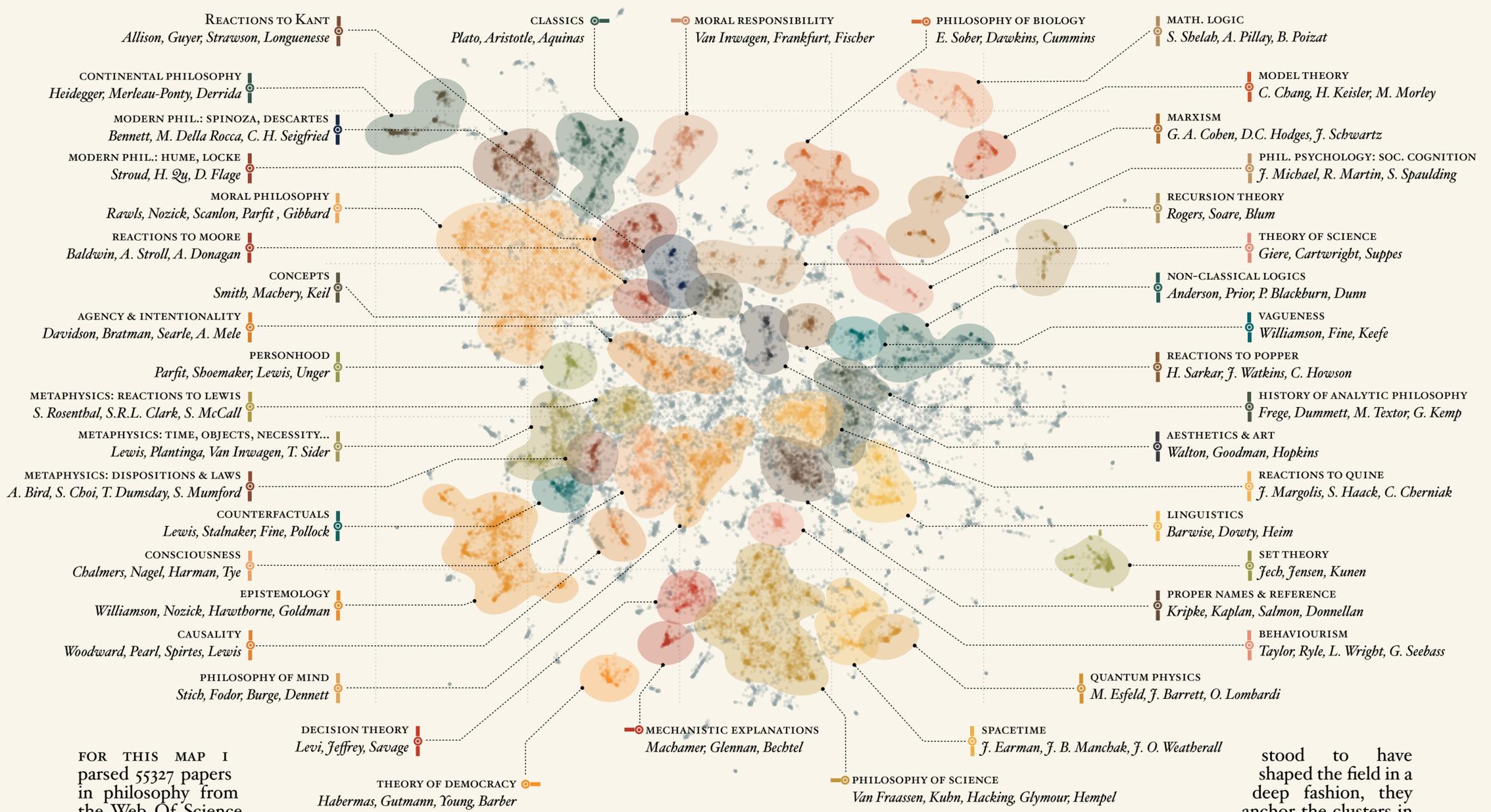
*from the 1950s to this day*

*visualized by*

MAXIMILIAN NOICHL

IN THE GRAPHIC below, 50000 Articles from various philosophy journals were spatially distributed according to their citation-patterns. Every point represents one of these papers. The papers were

then grouped by a clustering-algorithm into 42 clusters which are represented by the colored shapes, and which are labeled around the graphic. See the text below to learn more about the technical details.



FOR THIS MAP I parsed 55327 papers in philosophy from the Web Of Science-Collection. The papers were determined by snowball-sampling: I started with a small sample (a few thousand papers), and extended from there by repeatedly looking at the most cited publications. For each paper I determined the works and authors it cited. Each of these features of the papers is a dimension in the dataset, which I then embedded into two dimensions, using *Uniform Manifold Approximation and Projection*, a dimension reduction algorithm by McInnes & Healy (2018). These two dimensions form the basis of the scatterplot you see above. Note that the position of a point on the x- or y-axis is meaningless: only the relation of the points to each other can be interpreted. The reduced data was then clustered with the hdbscan algorithm into 42 clusters. The hdbscan finds

clusters above a specified size, so we could have found far more smaller clusters, if we were looking for a more detailed view of the data, or fewer, but larger clusters. Data that was too sparse to be clustered is marked grey in the graphic. I then labeled the clusters by hand, identifying them by looking at the most frequent words and bigrams in the abstracts, the authors of the most cited works, and the most productive authors in the field. To give an idea of the contents of each cluster, I added names of the most cited and most productive authors, identifying the latter by mentioning them with their initials. While the most productive authors can not always be under-

stood to have shaped the field in a deep fashion, they anchor the clusters in more recent debates, and give me an opportunity to mention more women in the graphic. The clusters are a bit heterogenic in their nature: while some are thematic, others are determined strongly by specific persons or eras, which seems in itself to be an interesting observation about the structure of the literature. But we can discover more: there is, for example, a remarkable cleft between theory of science and epistemology. And the way various historical clusters group themselves around moral philosophy suggests an internal relation. We can also observe that continental philosophy is a distinct cluster that seems to split into two halves, but is well-formed and not that far away from the rest of philosophy. I hope you enjoy the visualization and find some more informative patterns.