

## Both Academic and Cultural.

### Quantifying Two “Souls” of Bernard Williams’s Style

#### Introduction

As Krishnan and Queloz recently showed in *The Shaken Realist. Bernard Williams, The War, and Philosophy as Cultural Critique* (2022), Bernard Williams’ work can also be read as the work of a cultural critic and not just as that of an academic philosopher. In their paper, Krishnan and Queloz focus on the interpretation of two aphorisms found in the epigraph to *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, by Wallace Stevens and Albert Camus. These are two authors who will not appear again in the plot of *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, but are used by Williams to allude to a broader cultural context in which his book fits. A similar operation is also carried out in Williams’ last work, *Truth and Truthfulness*, in which he places a passage on war from Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* as an epigraph to the text. Similarly to the case of *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, here too Proust (like Stevens and Camus before) will no longer make an appearance within *Truth and Truthfulness*. He will remain an author that Williams wants to leave at the margin of his text, almost as if to signal a threshold that will be crossed as he begins the book. This threshold, simplifying a bit, is that of the academy of philosophy.

All of Williams’ books, in fact, however much they make the effort to use a ‘moderately plain speech’, are full of references that will almost exclusively be grasped by an audience already familiar with the themes, debates and works of authors of professional philosophy contemporary to him, perhaps with the sole exception of the presence of some ancient authors or classics of thought. Of course, there is no lack of scholarly references in Williams’ overall work. But even the reader most sympathetic towards Williams (i.e.: willing to read most of the erudite references as more than a mere display of culture) will assume that they represent a minority within his oeuvre. (In *Morality* and *Moral Luck*, first Luther and then Pelagius are to be found, but not as much as, in the respective books, Peter Geach and Derek Parfit).

One of the aims of this paper will be precisely to measure the amount of references of non-academic authors in Williams’ work. I will be particularly interested in those authors who are not professional philosophers contemporary with him, and who have a more generally cultural relevance, as, for instance, they are read by a wider audience and not only within philosophy

departments – just like Wallace Stevens, Albert Camus and Marcel Proust. These three are, respectively, a poet and, to simplify, two novelists. But are they? To limit ourselves to Camus, it would be unfair to deny him (at least) the titles of essayist, polemicist, philosopher and cultural critic. (Williams himself, in *Truth and Truthfulness*, writes that those who want to deny Camus the label of philosopher, as being insufficiently professional, will find it much more difficult to deny him the label of ‘intellectual’ – of *honest* intellectual, Williams specifies, marking his judgement even more).

Therefore, I can further circumscribe my research by claiming that I am interested in seeing how many and which intellectuals are mentioned in Williams’ work. These intellectuals, whom I can also call, as before, and for greater precision, ‘cultural references’, can be contrasted with the professional philosophers contemporary with him. My guiding question is therefore: how many references, and of what kind (academic or cultural), are to be found in Williams’ work?

Moreover, in my view, Williams’ work itself can already be divided, *a priori*, i.e. regardless of the authors cited, into more *academic* work and more *cultural* work. By that I mean that all ten books published in Williams’ lifetime can reasonably be described as more ‘academic’: this is because of the audience to which they are addressed and the specialism of the issues dealt with. While there is only one major book, published posthumously, in which all the essays and reviews written by Williams, and published in newspapers and magazines with a wider circulation, not strictly academic, such as *The Spectator*, *The Statesman*, *London Review of Books*, and *New York Review of Books* (just to name a few of the most famous places), have been collected. This work can be described as more ‘cultural’ in that its intended audience is different, and broader, than its academic books, and the issues examined concern problems of greater intellectual scope.

### **The reasons for the quantitative**

(Paolo)

[...]

### **How did we extract the surnames?**

(Michele)

Let us look at the data.

# ACADEMIC WORK

Descartes	1290
Plato	661
Aristotle	517
Socrates	424
Nietzsche	318
Sidgwick	216
Kant	204
Wittgenstein	185
Strawson	175
Rawls	158
Hare	150
Moore	123
Hume	117
Homer	116
Collingwood	108
Rousseau	90
Thucydides	85
Nagel	82
Ayer	77
Herodotus	64
Smart	64
Parmenides	62
Rorty	56
Sophocles	54
Berkeley	52
Mill	49
Euripides	49
Wiggins	49
Leibniz	47
Gorgias	46
Hegel	45
Protagoras	45
Snell	44

Dworkin	43
Nozick	41
Mackie	41
McDowell	39
Berlin	39
James	35
Hobbes	35
Napoleon	33
Kutchinsky	33
Mersenne	32
Locke	32
Diderot	32
Frankfurt	31
Aeschylus	30
Davidson	30
Shoemaker	29
Tertullian	28

#### CULTURAL WORK

Wagner	136
Rorty	120
Rawls	116
Nagel	110
Russell	104
Nozick	104
Nietzsche	100
Plato	72
Kant	63
Eco	60
Chomsky	57
Taylor	54
MacIntyre	54
Descartes	53
Dreyfus	52
Wittgenstein	51

Hampshire	46
Moore	41
Cowling	39
Parfit	39
Austin	38
Minsky	35
Ayer	34
Sen	34
Hegel	31
Sartre	31
Aristotle	30
Ryle	29
Heidegger	29
Goldmann	28
Nussbaum	27
MacKinnon	27
Wisdom	26
Putnam	26
Dworkin	26
Mackie	25
Johnson	24
Wiley	23
Schelling	22
Hume	21
Clark	21
Galileo	20
Bok	20
Crossman	18
Rousseau	18
Skinner	18
Ponting	18
Marx	17
Lasch	17
Locke	16

These two tables collect the top fifty most frequently used surnames in the academic corpus and in the cultural corpus. (I have not taken into account capitalised adjectives: such as Kantian, Wittgensteinian, Marxist, etc. Furthermore, I have removed from the tables both the surname ‘Williams’, because I am not interested in self-reference, and the surname ‘Smith’, because, after checking, it turns out to be a sum of references to different philosophers, all called ‘Smith’, and not just Adam Smith).

Looking at these two tables, it occurred to me to divide the cited authors into four categories: non-philosophers; non-Anglo-American philosophers who lived after 1900; philosophers who lived before 1900; professional Anglo-American philosophers who lived after 1900. Of course, these four categories are contestable and others can be proposed. Their usefulness will depend on the quality of the observations they succeed in inspiring.

So, as far as the first table (*Academic Work*) is concerned, we can make this quick calculation: non-philosophers are 10 (Homer, Thucydides, Herodotus, Sophocles, Euripides, Snell, Napoleon, Kutchinsky, Aeschylus, Tertullian); non-Anglo-American philosophers who lived after 1900 are 0; philosophers who lived before 1900 are 20 (Plato, Descartes, Aristotle, Socrates, Nietzsche, Sidgwick, Kant, Hume, Rousseau, Berkeley, Mill, Leibniz, Gorgias, Hegel, Protagoras, Hobbes, Mersenne, Locke, Diderot); professional Anglo-American philosophers who lived after 1900 are 20 (Wittgenstein, Strawson, Rawls, Hare, Moore, Collingwood, Nagel, Ayer, Smart, Rorty, Wiggins, Dworkin, Nozick, Mackie, McDowell, Berlin, James, Frankfurt, Davidson and Shoemaker).

On the other hand, as regards the second table (*Cultural Work*): the non-philosophers number 14 (Wagner, Chomsky, Cowling, Minsky, Sen, Johnson, Willey, Schelling, Galileo, Clark, Crossman, Skinner, Ponting, Lasch); the non-Anglo-American philosophers who lived after 1900 are 4 (Eco, Sartre, Heidegger, Goldmann); the philosophers who lived before 1900 are 9 (Nietzsche, Plato, Kant, Descartes, Hegel, Aristotle, Hume, Marx, Rousseau); the professional Anglo-American philosophers who lived after 1900 are 23 (Rorty, Rawls, Nagel, Russell, Nozick, Taylor, MacIntyre, Dreyfus, Wittgenstein, Hampshire, Moore, Parfit, Austin, Ayer, Ryle, Nussbaum, MacKinnon, Wisdom, Putnam).

For the two corpora, then, taking into account both the number of authors per category and the number of total occurrences of each author in the respective corpora – the number marked, in the table, to the right of the author – these percentages came out.

	ACADEMIC	CULTURAL
<b>No Phil</b>	10: <b>20%</b> (631: <b>9,5%</b> )	14: <b>28%</b> (482: <b>21%</b> )
<b>No Anglo</b>	/	4: <b>8%</b> (148: <b>6,5%</b> )
<b>Phil &lt; 1900</b>	20: <b>40%</b> (4576: <b>69%</b> )	9: <b>18%</b> (455: <b>20%</b> )
<b>Phil &gt; 1900</b>	20: <b>40%</b> (1549: <b>23,5 %</b> )	23: <b>46%</b> (1183: <b>52%</b> )
<b>Tot.</b>	50 (6576)	50 (2268)

From these percentages, we can already make four main observations.

1. Contrary to what might have been expected, Williams refers to a great many professional Anglo-American philosophers of the 20th century in *Essays and Reviews*. On closer inspection, here, in the cultural corpus, these references are even greater than in the academic corpus: 46% (23) vs. 40% (20). But, above all, the number of occurrences of this type of author within both corpora is truly significant: 1183 occurrences (52% of the total number of references to authors) of Phil anglo> 1900 in *Essays and Reviews* compared to 1549 occurrences of Phil Anglo> 1900 in the academic corpus.
2. Another observation that can be made is that, in the top fifty most recurring authors' surnames, there is no trace of non-Anglo twentieth-century philosophers (so-called continental philosophers). Not a single one. Whereas in *Essays and Reviews* we find four references to these authors (as we have seen, these are Eco, Sartre, Heidegger and Goldmann), with 148 occurrences, i.e. 6.5% of the total occurrences.
3. There are also many references to pre-1900 philosophers in the entire academic corpus, and many in the cultural corpus. A data – like that concerning Phil Anglo>1900 – that goes against the initial expectations. There are 20 references to more classical authors in *Academic Work* (40 %), with a total of 4576 occurrences (69 %) – a result that suffers from the strong influence of Williams' 1978 book on Descartes. The references to classical authors in *Cultural Work*, although more than halved, are still quite high: 9 references (to philosophical classics such as Nietzsche, Plato, Kant, Descartes, Hegel, Aristotle, Hume, Marx, Rousseau), i.e. 18 % of the first fifty references.

4. As a fourth and final observation, we can note (this time more in line with the initial expectations) that many references to non-philosophers are found in *Essays and Reviews*, precisely 14 in the top 50 most used (i.e., 28 %), and even more precisely 482 occurrences out of the total 2268 (i.e., 21 %). These references to non-philosophers are many, yes, but not so many more than the non-philosophers cited in the academic corpus. Here, too, their numbers are rather high: 10 out of 50 (20%) and 631 occurrences out of 6576 total occurrences (9.5%). Moreover, at a quick glance, we can observe that in the No-Phils of the academic corpus, ancient authors prevail (6 out of 10), whereas in the No-Phils of the cultural corpus, contemporary authors prevail (12 out of 14).

These are the data. Before trying to interpret them, however, let us see how these references evolve over time. I decided to divide both corpora into three time intervals, all three (roughly) of 15 years:

#### ACADEMIC WORK

1. 1959-1973: *Morality, Problems of the Self, Utilitarianism, Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* (chapters: 1-4), *In the Beginning Was the Deed* (chapter 8), *The Sense of the Past* (chapters: 7-12-18);
2. 1974-1988: *Descartes, Obscenity and Film Censorship, Moral Luck, Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy, Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* (chapters: 6-7; 14), *The Sense of the Past* (chapters: 1-9-13-14-15-16-19-25);
3. 1989-2002: *Shame and Necessity, Making Sense of Humanity, Truth and Truthfulness* (chapters: 5; 8-13; 15-17), *In the Beginning Was the Deed* (except chapter 8), *The Sense of the Past* (chapters: 2-3- 4-5-6-8-10-11-17-20-21-22-23).

#### CULTURAL WORK

1. *Essays and Reviews* (1959-1973): p. 3 - p. 100;
2. *Essays and Reviews* (1974-1988): p. 101 - p. 282;
3. *Essays and Reviews* (1989-2002): p. 283 - p. 412.

Dividing the two corpora into these three parts and searching for the 50 most frequently used surnames in each of these parts yielded the following results:



### ACADEMIC WORK 1 (1956-1973)

	No Phil		Phil No Anglo		Phil<1900		Phil Anglo>1900	
	Napoleon	31	Schlick	7	Aristotle	58	Strawson	166
	Tertullian	27	Sartre	4	Hume	56	Smart	54
	Cardinale	15			Plato	54	Hare	33
	Beauchamp	11			Kant	34	Shoemaker	29
	Marcion	9			Lucretius	14	Coburn	15
	Giorgione	6			Descartes	11	Moore	11
	Unamuno	5			Berkeley	9	Nagel	11
	Sen	5			Mill	7	Russell	9
	Luther	4			Spinoza	6	Hampshire	6
	Gresham	3			Cleanthes	4	Geach	5
	Boyer	3			Nietzsche	3	Rawls	5
					Spencer	3	Ryle	4
					Hobbes	2	Austin	4
					Rousseau	2	Dummett	3
							Leibniz	3
							Wittgensteinian	3
							Wiggins	3
							Ross	3
							McTaggart	3
							Searle	2
							Sidgwick	2
							Kenny	2
							Pears	2
<b>TOT:</b>	50							
	11	22%	2	4%	14	28%	23	46%
<b>TOT:</b>	771	119		11		263		378
		15%		1%		34%		49%

### CULTURAL WORK 1 (1956-1973)

	No Phil		Phil No Anglo		Phil<1900		Phil Anglo>1900	
	Wiley	23	Goldmann	28	Descartes	47	Dreyfus	52
	Galileo	19	Sartre	21	Kant	27	Hampshire	43
	Skinner	18	Heidegger	4	Plato	25	Austin	38
	Crossman	16	Lukács	3	Aristotle	9	Rawls	34
	Lewis	8			Hegel	7	Ayer	29
	Tillich	3			Hume	7	Moore	22
	Brahms	2			Socrates	7	Wittgenstein	19
	Butterfield	2			Rousseau	6	Russell	17
	Chomsky	2			Locke	5	Warnock	14
	Darwin	2			Berkeley	4	Popper	4

	Freud	2			Kierkegaard	4	Ryle	2
	Hitler	2			Nietzsche	4		
	Kepler	2			Spinoza	4		
	Leavis	2			Bacon	3		
	Minsky	2			Leibniz	3		
	Newton	2			Marx	3		
	Paley	2			Pascal	2		
					Pericles	2		
<b>TOT:</b>	50							
	17	34%	4	8%	18	36%	11	22%
<b>TOT:</b>	608	109		56		169		274
		18%		9%		28%		45%

#### ACADEMIC WORK 2 (1974-1988)

	No Phil		Phil No Anglo		Phil<1900		Phil Anglo>1900	
	Kutchinsky	33			Descartes	1166	Sidgwick	118
	Galileo	22			Aristotle	252	Hare	106
	Sen	15			Plato	153	Wittgenstein	95
	Lloyd	11			Socrates	147	Rawls	83
	Yaffé	10			Kant	98	Moore	52
	Anderton	9			Parmenides	44	Ayer	36
	Chomsky	8			Mersenne	31	Hacker	26
					Berkeley	28	Parfit	26
					Hume	26	Kenny	25
					Locke	21	Rorty	22
					Mill	20	Frankfurt	19
					Leibniz	19	Nozick	18
					Pascal	16	Nagel	18
					Gassendi	16	Blackburn	16
					Arnauld	14	Harman	14
					Hobbes	13	Wiggins	14
					Nietzsche	11	Ross	12
					Burman	11	McDowell	11
							Mackie	10
							Fried	10
							Burnyeat	9
							Scanlon	9
							Hintikka	9
							Smart	8
							Richards	8
<b>TOT:</b>	50							

	7	14%	0		18		25	
<b>TOT:</b>	2968	108		0		2086		774
		4%		0%		70%		26%

### CULTURAL WORK 2 (1974-1988)

	No Phil		Phil No Anglo		Phil<1900		Phil Anglo>1900	
	Chomsky	54	Heidegger	19	Nietzsche	59	Nozick	104
	Cowling	39	Kolakowski	6	Plato	32	Russell	82
	Minsky	33	Derrida	5	Hegel	17	Rorty	64
	Schelling	22			Locke	9	Parfit	39
	Clark	21			Kant	8	Nagel	32
	Ponting	18			Marx	8	Rawls	31
	Lasch	17			Rousseau	6	Ryle	27
	Thompson	13					Dworkin	24
	Elster	11					Wisdom	24
	Sutherland	10					Mackie	23
	Dawkins	8					Wittgenstein	21
	Leavis	8					Bok	20
	Powell	6					Moore	19
	Silk	6					MacIntyre	16
	Wilson	6					Ramsey	14
	Dalyell	5					Shklar	11
	Goudsblom	5					Murdoch	10
	Stern	5					Midgley	7
	Wagner	5					Dewey	6
							Searle	6
							Ayer	5
TOT:	50							
	19	38%	3	6%	7	14%	21	42%
TOT:	1046	292		30		139		585
		28%		3%		13%		56%

### ACADEMIC WORK 3 (1989-2002)

	No Phil		Phil No Anglo		Phil<1900		Phil Anglo>1900	
	Homer	116	Nino	27	Plato	450	Collingwood	107
	Thucydides	82	Benjamin	15	Nietzsche	304	Wittgenstein	85
	Herodotus	63			Socrates	257	Moore	54
	Sophocles	51			Aristotle	204	Nagel	53
	Euripides	49			Descartes	113	Ayer	40
	Snell	41			Sidgwick	96	Rorty	34
	Aeschylus	29			Rousseau	88	Wiggins	32

	Pericles	20			Gorgias	43	Mackie	31
	White	20			Protagoras	39	McDowell	28
	Levi	17			Hegel	37	Vlastos	24
	Dodds	17			Hume	35	Davidson	24
	Vernant	17			Diderot	31	Habermas	23
	Redfield	16			Mill	22	Berlin	23
					Hobbes	20	Burnyeat	18
					Parmenides	18	Singer	18
					Marx	16	Shklar	18
							MacIntyre	16
							Taylor	16
							Austin	16
TOT:	50							
	13	26%	2	4%	16	32%	19	38%
TOT:	3013	538		42		1773		660
		18%		1%		59%		22%

### CULTURAL WORK 3 (1989-2002)

	No Phil		Phil No Anglo		Phil<1900		Phil Anglo>1900	
	Wagner	130	Eco	60	Nietzsche	37	Nagel	78
	Sen	34	Foucault	12	Kant	28	Rorty	56
	Johnson	23	Sartre	7	Plato	15	Rawls	51
	Gergen	7	Heidegger	6	Hume	10	Taylor	51
	Gutman	7	Adorno	4	Aristotle	9	MacIntyre	38
	Tolstoy	7	Derrida	3	Hegel	7	MacKinnon	27
	Culler	6			Marx	6	Nussbaum	27
	Hitler	5			Rousseau	6	Putnam	25
	Ibsen	5			Seneca	5	Wittgenstein	11
	Proust	5			Diderot	4	Russell	5
	Orwell	4			Godwin	4	Scruton	4
	Shakespeare	4			Nikidion	4	Aquinas	3
	Booth	3			Feuerbach	3	Augustine	3
	Cosima	3						
	Dumas	3						
	Eliot	3						
	Goethe	3						
	Lawrence	3						
TOT:	50							
	18	36%	6	12%	13	26%	13	26%
TOT:	864	255		92		138		379
		29,5 %		10,5 %		16%		44%

From these tables we can draw the following observations:

1. There are more Phil Anglo>1900 in *Cultural Work* than in *Academic Work* and this trend also increases over time. In *Cultural Work* 1 (1959-1973) we find 45% references to Phil Anglo>1900, while in *Cultural Work* 2 (1974-1988) these references grow to 56%, and then settle down to around 44 % in *Cultural Work* 3 (1989-2002). In contrast, in *Academic Work* there is no growth and no readjustment. On the contrary, over time the references to Phil Anglo>1900 drop considerably and more than halve. It goes from 49% in *Academic Work* 1 (1959-73) to 26% in *Academic Work* 2 (1974-1988), and then to 22% in *Academic Work* 3 (1989-2002).

How can these trends be explained? They seem to indicate an increasing disinterest on Williams' part to consider the work of his colleagues within an academic context (in the form of the pager, and the collection of specialised papers). However, this does not mean that he stops considering the work of his colleagues, contemporary Anglo-American professional philosophers. On the contrary, there is a context in which this interest in discussing with them, their themes and publications, remains constant (and even increases over time). This context is that of the cultural essay, in which we can assume that Williams feels freer to express himself, and in which he can do public philosophical work that is relatively accessible to the educated and interested person. The technicalities and difficulties will undoubtedly also be present in that context; but they will be filtered through the more public sphere, in which the debate becomes a matter of interest to the cultured adult, who will find in these texts elements of popularisation and mediation by Williams.

2. Phils<1900 are higher in academic corpus and tend to rise in this context. Indeed, we go from 34 % in *Academic Work* 1 (1959-1973) to an actual peak in *Academic Work* 2 (1974-1988), 70%, certainly influenced by the publication of Williams' book on Descartes. In any case, in *Academic Work* 3 the references to Phil<1900 remain high, the highest among the four categories of authors. In *Cultural Work*, on the other hand, these references drop slightly: from 28% in *Cultural Work* 1 to 13% in *Cultural Work* 2 (1974-1988), to remain around 16% in *Cultural Work* 3 (1989-2002).

Here again, a similar problem to before arises: how to interpret these opposing and contrasting trends? One hypothesis is to link the increase of references to classics of thought in *Academic Work* to the decrease of references to contemporary authors. Indeed, it seems that Williams is interested in continuing to write more academic contributions in the historical-philosophical sphere. Here, in fact, the professionalisation of research finds one of its best expressions, allowing the historian of philosophy to better handle, and eventually advance, one's own field. Let us say: this more historical-philosophical sphere seems to be more immune to the problems of professionalisation that make Williams move the philosophical (mainly ethical-political) debate elsewhere. While that the essays and thereviews are increasingly becoming the place to discuss contemporary problems is confirmed by the decline of Phil<1900 in this corpus.

3. Finally, we can see how both No Phils and No Anglos increase over time in the cultural corpus. No Phils start at 18% in *Cultural Work 1* (1959-1973), grow to 28% in *Cultural Work 2* (1974-1988), and then settle at 29.5% in *Cultural Work 3* (1989-2002). Furthermore, we can observe how the No Phils, from less than half of the Phils<1900 in *Cultural Work 1* (15 per cent vs. 34 per cent), come to be around twice as many as the Phil<1900 in *Cultural Work 3* (29.5 per cent vs. 16 per cent). The growth of references to No Anglo in *Cultural Work*, however, is much smaller. It starts with 9 per cent in *Cultural Work 1* (1959-73), declines to 3 per cent in *Cultural Work 2* (1974-1988) –the period of the publication of the book on Descartes – and finally settles down to around 10.5%, increasing a little from the beginning (and approaching the Phils<1900, which, as we have seen, have since halved). While as far as the academic corpus is concerned, the almost total absence of references to the No Anglo is very significant (the percentages never exceed 1% in all three periods). The references to No Phil are more substantial, but still rather small. The 15% in *Academic Work 1* (1959-73) collapses to 4% in *Academic Work 2* (1974-88) - like all other references apart from Phil <1900, moreover – but then becomes 18% in *Academic Work 3* (1989-2002).

That of No Phil and No Anglo is another interesting area from an interpretative point of view. First of all, the initial hypothesis that Williams uses many more cultural references, from non-philosophical fields, or not strictly related to twentieth-century Anglo-American professional

philosophy, is confirmed but in a rather restrained manner. In fact, while it is true that in *Cultural Work* 3 the No-Phil comes to count for 29.5%, in *Academic Work* 3 they are only around ten points below, at 18%. More significant – though still around a ten-point gap – is the distance between the No Anglos in the two corpora. Within *Academic Work*, as we have seen, there is never more than 1% (whereas in *Cultural Work* 3 there are 10.5% No Anglos). This absence of No Anglos in the academic corpus sheds quite clear light on the philosophical influences of the professional philosopher Williams: they come, almost exclusively, from the Anglo-American sphere. As much as Williams may be considered one of the philosophers least prejudicially averse to other traditions, these data show well that an openness to them – however small – certainly does not take place in the academic context; in the few times it does, we can instead find it in his essays and reviews.

## Conclusion

Within the *Nightwaves Interview with Williams* we find the following assessment by Ben Rogers of Williams' philosophical work:

**Rogers:** [...] I've no doubt that Williams will be read in a hundred years time, there are not very many moral philosophers of whom that's true. But I think he'll be read mainly by academics and sort of students, much as he is today. I don't know how Williams feels about that. I mean, on the one hand, he values rigour and sophistication and intellectual discipline. On the other, he does want to bring philosophy closer to life. And he thinks that novelists and playwrights and poets and painters are often much better at doing that than academic philosophers. So you might have expected him to make a transition to a more literary sort of philosophy like Isaiah Berlin, who he learnt from and who was close to, but he didn't. I can't help feeling a bit of him must regret that, it would certainly have been in the spirit of his work if he had.

Williams responds sympathetically to this comment, even though he is keen to reiterate certain aspects:

**Williams:** I see what, I see what Rogers means. I'm extremely flattered that he thinks that anybody will want to read it in 100 years time, and I've no very good conception of what academics and students will look like [laughs] in a hundreds years time. But, I would be sorry if that meant persons sitting in classrooms and less...I would hope that somebody somewhere who was interested in such topics would want to pick up, perhaps, one of my essays and want to read it in a hundred years time who wasn't necessarily doing Philosophy 206 or whatever it'll be in a hundred [laughs] in a hundred years time. On the other hand, that it's *technical*, that it's got a technical basis, I'm not ashamed of at all.

I find it extremely revealing that Williams responds with that “perhaps, one of my essays”. My mind went back to this interview after reading and commenting on these quantitative results. The characteristics that Williams ascribes to this kind of essay – still of interest to hypothetical future readers – resonate with some of the considerations drawn above. In fact, this hypothetical essay is described as: 1. not necessarily having the appearance of a paper assigned for an academic course (“Philosophy 206”); 2. being nonetheless technical or having a technical basis.

Of course, with my limited quantitative work, I could not go into the details of the close analysis of these two elements. A distant view, however, made it possible to observe some significant facts related to them: for instance, the relevance of Anglo-American academic philosophers of the 1900s in Williams’ cultural essays, along with his ever-increasing philosophical-historical work in academia. Perhaps Williams, in this interview, means by “one of my essays” to refer only to the essays collected *Essays and Reviews*. What was observed in my paper is too little to be able to take a definite position on the matter.

Certainly, however, this paper has shown how Williams was aware of the difference between the two contexts and how he changed his interests, over time, in response to the evolution of his own aspirations (which he does not wish to relegate just to academia). Furthermore, it has shown how on many points (e.g. the presence of non-philosophers, and of non-Anglo-American philosophers) Williams’ two works, academic and cultural, are not so distinct. Perhaps even a more academic paper or book by him could be picked up by educated people in 100 years’ time and spark their interest. In fact, the two souls we analysed did not seem so different as to prevent these kinds of readers from drawing less inspiration and instruction from an academic paper than from a cultural essay by Williams. We can imagine that they will find a bit of both souls in both writings.