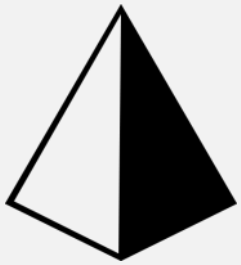
BUSINESS PLAN

THE ABS-TRACT ORGANIZATION

Metamodern Think Tank



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Metamodern Think Tank

BUSINESS PLAN

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Abs-Tract Organization ("TATO") is a nascent non-profit think tank for absolute social philosophy and global civil society, committed to definitively solving the world's systemic social problems through a high-level framework of "abstraction". TATO is looking for capital funding to cover start-up, as well as basic operational and administrative expenses. This includes setting up its legal structure, establishing its research program and academic partners, initiating an outreach campaign, and developing a long-term sustainability strategy while securing public and philanthropic support.

Broad Mission

TATO's **broad mission** is to establish a new consensus of superordinate knowledge to streamline and pacify globalization.

TATO emphasizes the urgency and opportunity to 'abstract' a unified social critique in the context of the emergent paradigm of "metamodernism," as a new cultural, political, scientific, and social movement representing a post-ideological, open source, globally responsive, paradox resolving, grand narrative. In this context, abstraction comes to refer to the cumulative pursuit of higher-order self-evident logic that transcends contradictory discourses and dissolves ideological conflict. Our process involves the depoliticization, demystification, and distillation of truth in order to directly confront the multifarious epistemic crises at present. A new enlightenment is already underway and is limited only by the persistence of detractors bounded by the constructed opportunism of the system.

Value Proposition

TATO's **essential value proposition** is found in the concept and special applications of "abstraction," a manifold term differentiated across and within many fields, including math, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, and social theory.

Such a vast methodological synthesis is resistant to summary, and is detailed within this Business Plan. Abstraction is generally defined as a conceptual process of complexity reduction that highlights the essential properties or first principles of a given object or idea. Given the wide range of expressions, from a shorthand for critical thinking to an integral process of knowledge production, the utility of abstraction cannot be understated. However, as the term 'abstract' is highly equivocal, TATO provides the necessary depth and insight to make abstraction more accessible and relevant to the public and specialists alike.

This "Proof of Concept" Business Plan details the vision, mission, and prospective advantages of TATO, the credentials and qualifications of its Executive Director and associates, our internal governance structure, strategy, and the sources and uses of funding. This document also includes a risk assessment and comparative analysis with other nonprofit think tanks. As projected in section 8, TATO is soliciting start-up capital along a spectrum from a functional minimum of $100,000 for the first year, to an idealistic scenario of $1M to cover 3-5 years of impact and growth. These funds will primarily cover its Campaign Plans, research and development, and the salary of the Executive Director. Once operational, we will pursue support from institutional philanthropists for more targeted projects. At this time, TATO's founding is dependent on you; the support of an early-adopter network of academics, civil servants, entrepreneurs, artists, and activists. This Business Plan marks the call to action for financing, membership, volunteers, and board members in order to meet nonprofit operational standards and further funding eligibility. Serving also as a meta-organization, TATO seeks membership and support from other organizations and think tanks with the shared goal of radically evolving the status-quo.

2. Policy Environment

The current policy environment is undergoing upheaval, and not exclusively due to the tumultuous 2016 US election. This poses many risks, but also opportunities. US politics has had a degenerative element for its entire history, which has led to the current collapse of trust in media, political, and economic institutions. In a word, this element is "denial." Whereas the commentariat scramble to identify proximate causes of social problems, the systemic causes are ignored and suppressed, and as such are not adequately addressed in public policy. Denial is in fact the most conspicuous factor of the decadence of the status quo. There is ample proof of the systematic denial of climate science, and thus of environmental politics, and therefore the elephant in the room is *denial*, more so than climate change itself. Given the gravity of the situation, it is highly ironic that environmentalism as a movement is marginalized, rather than being the norm. TATO argues that 'climate denial' is but the exemplar case study of a broader pattern of denial and political polarization. The second most notable case being the failed 'war on drugs.' This culture of denial is the policy environment in which we find ourselves, where the greatest social issues are tackled only superficially.

By definition, one would think that 'think tanks' would be at the forefront of knowledge production on these issues. Perhaps on some issues they are. However, the 'truth conditions' for think tanks to produce unbiased and egalitarian outcomes is virtually non-existent now, such that some of the most powerful think tanks and media organizations are merely lobbying fronts for special interests, perhaps even unbeknownst to themselves (hence denial). The "race to the bottom" for global knowledge is spearheaded by multinational corporations in the context of profit-maximization, rather than by global civil society for equitable outcomes. While there are socially responsible corporations, the general corporate worldview advanced is one political cynicism and techno- optimism that is not substantiated by sociological or ecological reality. That is to say, the current globalist agenda is pursued at the expense of social consciousness, and in many cases, through the co-option of it. What exactly the 'globalist agenda' is up for debate, but TATO can clarify the competing views and narratives, to address the big picture of globalism.

Many conventional think tanks are demonstrably partial and have been increasingly corporatized under neoliberalism, undermining their function as progenitors of objective thought. Our role is in part to compel corporate social responsibility in the marketplace of ideas, with a program of capitalist "absolution" as a system-wide process of truth and reconciliation. The central social problem identified by TATO is how all-important abstract (systemic) issues such as climate change and the "war on drugs" become obfuscated, mystified, and marginalized through market forces and cognitive biases, in turn producing self-defeating abstract wars (stateless, faceless) of attrition against populations and the environment. This status quo is exacerbated by our constant crisis of epistemic authority, where public trust is eroded, the mainstream media is corrupt and misinformative, and knowledge is instrumentalized at the expense of truth. The problem is in fact over-determined by a nexus of causal factors. In response, we seek to simplify the meta- crises in order to maximize the signal-to-noise ratio in civil discourse to correct these aberrations at the root level.

3. Business Concept

3.1. The role of think-tanks

TATO understands the important role of policy research centers, also known as think-tanks, and is planning to follow best practices and examples of major think-tanks in US and globally, but at the same time TATO will bring new ideas, philosophy, and epistemology through sociological education and bringing back the truth to public policy.

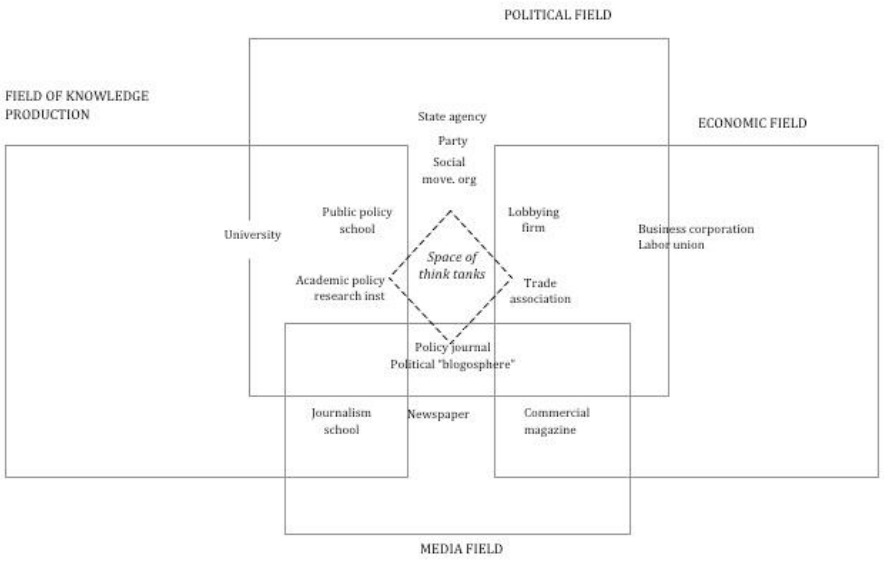
There are over 6000 think tanks worldwide. Despite their intellectual identities, funding sources often skew the quality of research, and as a result many think tanks serve an ideological agenda. In August, 2016, the NY Times hosted a series of articles and debates about "compromised think tanks" and how to protect against special interests co-opting research.[source] These reports found broad acceptance from journalists and the media, while some of the targeted think tanks rebutted the claims. Thinktankwatch.com published an aggregate list of the responses.[source] As a meta- think tank, TATO sees a role in upgrading and interconnecting the capacities of think tanks globally, as well as cutting dead weight in the form of ideological baggage. The media disclosure of think tank corruption, while important, also serves as a distraction from extant media corruption.

In a 2008 report titled *Think Tanks as an Emergent Field,* Tom Medvetz conducts a deconstruction and renewal of the concept of a think tank. The postmodern discussion of think tanks refers to it as a 'murky object' and suffers from an unresolved "dilemma of definition," which he seeks to address. His basic argument is that "the space of think tanks has its own specific laws, agents, conventions, and so on, but also that its structure mirrors that of the field of power in which it is embedded." After a thorough critique…;

> "[t]he concept of field becomes useful here as a meso-level device for steering a middle course between the micro-organizational approach that grants too much autonomy to the think tank and the macro-structural approach that tends to reduce them to a series of **abstract** determinations."

Medvetz describes the think tank as taking place in "an institutional niche with its own intelligible structure and history… [that constitutes] a hybrid *interstitial field*." The field is visualized, and can be used as a schematic interface to mediate between micro- and macro- power structures. (Figure. 1.1 from Medvetz).

Figure 1.1: Think tanks in social space



The conclusion of the report indicates that more research is needed along the lines established. The conflict between the ideal of a think tank and the limits imposed on it by the field undermine its very purpose.

> "It is thus possible to speak of a master opposition in the space of think tanks between authority based on intellectual consecration, on the one side, and proximity to political and economic power, on the other. Which is to say that any effort a think tank might make to heed the considerations of academic rigor and exactitude will run up against a set of powerful limitations, the main ones being the need to maximize political access and immediate policy relevance, the need to sustain the budget, and the need to garner continuous publicity. Each of these demands exacts a particular cost on the think tank's intellectual production, curtailing its ability to do long-term research, to gather background knowledge, to incubate ideas – in a word, to *think*."

TATO seeks to overcome Medvetz's 'master opposition' by forming an open-source global think tank based on the speaking sociological truth to power. The current turbulence in the intellectual marketplace is primed for the emergence of principle based meta- think tank. TATO can be a meta-think tank thrice over as a 1) virtual organization, 2) concerned with meta-issues, and as 3) a network of existing think tanks.

3.2. A Meta- Think Tank

The prefix "meta-" (variously denoting change, beyond, above, etc.) has many vital uses that coalesce with the advent of metamodernity and TATO's abstract agenda. The concepts of "metacognition" (thinking about thinking) and "metanoia" (to change one's mind) are central to intellectual revolution. "Meta-analysis" reveals unknown common truths across conceptually related studies, providing a 'big picture' perspective and quality control. The study of "metaphysics" as social humanism reclaims it as a 'philosophy of first principles,' and highlights the distinction between physical and social science. Marx's notion of "metabolic rift" theorizes the entropy of ecological and social systems under capitalism, granting us the necessary foresight to prevent such dehumanizing decay. Notwithstanding these grand theories, TATO seeks to serve as a meta- organization and create a think tank coordination layer, integrating humanist knowledge and policy on the global scale. In the start-up phase, TATO's virtual nature will allow for greater flexibility and adaptability to rapidly changing conditions. Meta-problems require meta- solutions, and from this perspective TATO can devise macro policies that are adaptable at the local level.

3.3. TATO's vision, mission, value proposition

- **TATO's broad mission** is to establish a new consensus of superordinate knowledge to streamline and pacify globalization.
- **TATO's vision** is to be the superlative "meta-" think tank coordinating epistemic communities and solving fundamental contradictions at an abstract level.
- **TATO's essential value proposition** is found in the concept and special applications of "abstraction," a manifold term differentiated across and within many fields, including math, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, and social theory.

4. RESEARCH AGENDA

4.1. Background Research

TATO's research agenda will focus on six major priority areas, which will be used by the research team within the development of research papers, briefs and articles. These areas are abstraction, meta-theory, public sociology, epistemic justice, globalization, and systemic-conspiracy (the military industrial complex). Abstraction is the core methodology, but the other research areas are equally important. The first task of the research program is simply to consolidate TATO's research library (currently at 4,000 journal articles and books, with about 500 constituting the core as it relates to abstraction and sociology. The second task is to associate with scholars already working on TATO's core issues, and to collaborate on the research agenda and consensus building via abstraction. A white paper on "abstraction" is attached to this Business Plan. A broad goal of the research agenda is to advance the paradigm of metamodernism.

For backgrounders on some of the core themes of TATO, ten research papers authored by the Executive Director are available for download on the website. These papers are peer reviewed but are unpublished. Abstracts are also available on the website. Collectively, they reveal a complex picture of globalization. The point of abstraction is to simplify it. TATO contends that competing globalization narratives can be mediated, streamlined, and optimized in order to construct a new policy consensus. Here is a summary list:

1. The Zeitgeist Movement: Alter-globalization, Complexity, and Conspirituality
2. Theory of Conspiracy: Analyzing Hidden Power in Globalization Processes
3. Israelpolitik: Regimes of Truth and the Clash of Definitions in the "Promised Land"
4. Corporate Cosmopolitanism: Global Citizenry and White Collar Crime
5. Lost in Space: A Realist and Marxist Analysis of US Space Militarization
6. Self-centered Social Theory: Overcoming European Ethno-history and the Crisis of Sociological Knowledge
7. Not Historicism: Contemporary Historical Materialism and Global Social Change
8. Broken Hardt, but still works: A Critique of "Empire"
9. The Quickening: The Acceleration and Growth of Global Civilization
10. Western and non-Western Systems of Thought: Socio-cognitive Worldviews, Regimes of Truth, and the Prospect of Consilience

4.2. Priority Areas

Abstraction

Abstraction is generally defined as a conceptual process of complexity reduction that highlights the essential properties or first principles of a given object or idea. It is a manifold term differentiated across many fields: math, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, and social theory.

Meta-theory

Meta-theory refers to theory about theory; studies about studies. This includes meta-analysis and other meta- tools for deconstructing the knowledge-power nexus, building consensus, and fostering epistemic communities. Meta-theory investigates the philosophy of science and asks higher-order.

Public Sociology

The public has a right to know about sociology and society, to put ideas into action. Public sociology is the field to communicate insights from social theory into the public discourse. We will produce reports, videos, lecture series, and educational tools to instill a 'sociological imagination' for global.

Epistemic Justice

Knowledge is power, and constructed ignorance creates injustices that arise as a result of the deprivation of key knowledge. Epistemic Justice seeks to address the "knowledge gaps" in society for just social outcomes. Consumer protection is an example institutional enforcement mechanism.

Globalization

A comprehensive approach of systems theory, worldviews, and the philosophy of history lays bare the collective existential threat of climate change, a key feature of which has been its systematic denial. We are advancing global civil society ahead of corporate and state hegemony.

Systemic Conspiracy (Military-Industrial Complex)

Referred to as the 'defense industrial base' by insiders, the war machine has grown to include, media, academia, congress, sports, entertainment, pharma, oil, and the war on drugs, among other industries. By definitively exposing the structure of the 'systemic conspiracy,' we can demonstrate effective demilitarization policies.

4.3. Abstraction White Paper

Coupled with this Business Plan is a white paper, *Abstraction: Map of the Problematique*. Included here is an abstract of the document:

The Abs-Tract Organization (TATO) identifies the meta- problem as how all-important abstract (systemic) issues, such as climate change and war, become obfuscated and mystified through market forces and manufactured ignorance, creating negative externalities negative feedback loops that perpetuate conflict. This white paper attempts to map the meta-problem of society to demonstrate "abstraction" as the basis for the proposed meta- think tank and subsequent system-wide knowledge and policy intervention to directly address the meta-crisis. "Abstraction" writ large is proposed as a knowledge representation (KR) framework, with novel expression under metamodernism - an emergent paradigm suggestive of universal social philosophy. Abstraction also a multivariate thought process, social process, and critique of society and its conceptual objects. A sampling of abstract tools introduces the tree of Knowledge (ToK) System, the Data-Information-Knowledge-Wisdom (DIKW) Pyramid, 'abductive logic programming' (ALP), critical discourse analysis' (CDA), 'root cause analysis' (RCA), immanent critique, and world disclosure, among other methodologies. "Vicious" (false) abstraction, on the other hand, is the errant translation of knowledge, leading to unjust or 'vicious' outcomes, the systematic habits of which are correlated with anti-intellectualism and endarkenment. Global capitalism is an 'abstract empire' that the 'open society' seeks to remedy, but falls short due to fallibility and compromising trade-offs. Global civil society and alter-globalization are emergent movements to establish social and political equilibrium, which TATO seeks to anchor in an abstract or "pure sociology" as a critical pedagogy and public policy platform, communicated through a public sociology that bridges critical theory with common sense to foster a 'critical mass society.'

5. Campaigns

To support its mission and value proposition, TATO will develop and execute public sociology and educational campaigns on social and political problems that needs abstract concepts for their solution. These campaigns will be research driven while effectively translating the core truths about a given issue in a way that explains where illegitimate debate and conflict stem from. The public will be treated as intelligent and mature, able to handle complex truths. In other words, the public will be entrusted with the necessary knowledge to make responsible collective decisions. We will encourage authority figures to embrace and echo our clear truth statements, as part of the broader campaign to foster the process of truth and reconciliation.

TATO's campaigns will be organized in **twelve major campaigns**, which incorporate distinct research fields and social issues, yet are all aligned with TATO's broader mandate.

1. Political Climate Change. TATO

Research Areas:

Environmentalism
Permaculture
Anti-corporatism
Political reform

There is concurrently a global climate crisis and identity crisis. Political boundaries are socially constructed and tentative, yet their reification locks public consciousness into national matrices. The solution is 'political climate change,' a permacultural shift in the status-quo where environmental imperatives merge, humanist policies align, and cosmopolitan values spread, into a mature and responsible civil discourse and political agenda. Although 'climate change' is a popular catch-all term, TATO considers it a misnomer and euphemism for human pollution and ecological devastation, which serves to mask the decades-long systematic suppression of this knowledge from public policy.

2. Critical Mass Society. TATO

Research Areas:

Critical thinking
Social movements
Activism

One of TATOs principle campaigns is to promote common sense through critical thinking. We perform a service of public sociology, which seeks to engage the public with critical knowledge for a better society by bridging academic social theory and folk theories of how society works (or doesn't). Our methodology is to use critical theory to depoliticize knowledge and address the root causes of social issues. TATO teaches empowerment through knowledge by producing research and media to raise awareness about the 'epistemic' knowledge gaps between obvious truths and pragmatic policy. Political correctness must be eschewed, and it must be disclosed: society (particularly the US) has inarguably suffered a 'dumbing down' at the hands of corporate imperatives and political ideologues.

'Critical mass society' suggests a minimum intellectual standard for a population to govern itself democratically. As a think tank and critical consultancy, TATO upholds a duty to call out and hold accountable leaders and lawmakers who continually breach minimum standard of reason in policy, and thereby ethics. If knowledge is power, then power to the people. When the masses are critical, society is vital and free.

3. Public relationships. TATO

Research Areas:

Media
Discourse
Disclosure
Communications
Public Relations
Propaganda
Truth and reconciliation

The public relations (PR) industry has largely devolved into whitewashing damage control firms, advertising consumerism, sanitizing corporate image, stonewalling criticism, and coordinating with media to manufacture consent. TATO emphasizes public relationships, establishing and fostering trust through honesty, disclosure, and education. The mainstream media (MSM) has disgraced itself in the 2016 election cycle by colluding with the political elite and hoisting a demagogue into the spotlight. TATO seeks to reform and rehabilitee journalistic imperatives and restore public trust. Think tanks are not exempt from image issues, and they misrepresent and skew their findings to appease donors. TATO actively bucks these trends and strives to project unadulterated truth. Accordingly, we unabashedly support the patriotic disclosures by WikiLeaks, The Intercept, The Guardian, the individuals involved, such as Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden, and countless others of the fifth estate. Citizen journalism and social media are changing the conversation, and TATO is engaged.

4. Opening the doors of perception. TATO

Research Areas:

Consciousness
Transcendence
Experiential learning
Psychedelics

TATO advocates the emerging paradigm of public health that embraces the positive role of psychedelics, and is critical of the 'medicalization of society' (pharmacological supremacy). This movement dovetails with ending prohibition and the catastrophic 'war-on-drugs', maintained via the military-industrial complex and systematic propaganda campaigns. Think tanks that support the status-quo drug policy are willfully ignorant if not demonstrably unscientific, corrupted, and politicized by special interests, working against the public interest. It is of paramount importance to TATO to transform global public policy to acknowledge of the truth about substances, which have legitimate uses including medicinal, therapeutic, recreational, and spiritual.

Partners: LSE Drug Policy Project: http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/Projects/IDPP/International-Drug-Policy-Project.aspx

5. Opening the doors of perception. TATO

Research Areas:

Education
Enlightenment
Sociology of knowledge

Dare to know, better. TATO

Education is not only a universal human right, it is an investment in social capital and is the best hedge against tyranny. Philosophy fails to solve our problems in part because we fail philosophy, therefore advancing critical thinking is a core principle of TATO, grounded in the sociology of knowledge.

6. Thoughtful Experiments. TATO

Research Areas:

Ethics
Morality
Humanism
Compassion
Experimental philosophy
Reform
Resolutions

Experimental philosophy is intellectual masturbation over big data. Real radical ideas prompt metanoia (mind change) and have definitive social justice outcomes; they are not bourgeois food for thought. TATO takes philosophy to the streets with AbstrActivism, and also conduct focus groups and social experiments. The Prisoner's Dilemma is a classic lesson in game theory, but many conventional thought experiments are impotent, if not anti-intellectual. The famous 'trolley car problem' presents a false dilemma that forces one to weigh life either numerically or selfishly, where the only true solution is to opt out of the insanity. The complex morality of the world demands better experiments; truly thoughtful ones.

7. Anatomy of the body politic. TATO

Research Areas:

Public health
Social systems

Society is sick, and TATO provides sociological diagnostics and expertise on the anatomy of the body politic to cure its chronic problems. For example, it is not a condense that the United States, one of the most advanced countries on earth, suffers from various preventable health epidemics and political regression/ retardation (delayed progress). There is a connection between the two, and public health and political science can inform each other, perhaps even solve each other's problems. Simply put, both health and social problems are mystified for profit, and their deconstruction reveal simple cost effective solutions. By combining physical and mental fitness we can save two birds with one stone.

8. Change the worldview. TATO

Research Areas:

Worldviews
Metanarratives
Globalization
Cosmopolitics
Revolution

Before you can change the world, you have to change the worldview. Ideology and belief shape and distort our social institutions for the worse, so TATO delivers worldview analysis and truth disclosure to disprove sectarian dogma and delusion. We also look at the big picture, without compromising the details at the local level. Evolutionary globalization is an inevitable abstract force determining the macro conditions of our social system. Understanding this compels collaboration to reconcile competing metanarratives. TATO is committed to the challenges of secular and cosmopolitan truth in order to actualize our common humanity. Metamodernism is emergent.

9. Reductio ad absurdum. TATO

Research Areas:

Philosophy
Logic
Irnoy
Truth
Abstraction

This technique is a way of proving the truth of a statement by demonstrating the absurdity of taking its opposite to its logical conclusion. A classic example is the World War 2; where the 'logic' of Nazism was a nonstarter and a lost cause from the beginning, yet it persisted by the will. We should not need more examples but they are countless.

10. Proof of concept. TATO

Research Areas:

Geometry
Pure sociology
Proportion
Perspective
Proof
Human rights

A 'proof of concept' is "evidence, typically derived from an experiment or pilot project, which demonstrates that a design concept, business proposal, etc., is feasible." TATO is a pilot project for abstraction, among other things, to validate its capabilties and potential as a liberatory epistemology. It is literally the proof of a concept. Abstraction proper exhibits a faithful correspondence between model and reality (ie. the blueprint matches the building, the formula embodies a physical law, etc...). In social reality, things are less clear, but not insurmountable. For example, the abstract concept of religion informs its concrete instantiations. Through this mode of critical thinking, people and institutions can better understand the complex world around them. Using infographics, dataviz, and other advanced tools, we can model complex systems and simulate the optimal provision of social goods and services, to prove our concept.

Our authority and integrity stem not merely from an aggregate of evidence, but from proof, in the definitive geometric sense. Notwithstanding our high standard of proof, TATO contends that much of what demands proof should require none at all. Case in point is human rights. That think tanks and universities expend enormous resources on progress yet perpetuate an extremely unequal and unjust status-quo is appalling. MLK Jr. said "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." We admire MLK as a progressive hero, but TATO prefers to argue that the straightest distance between two points is a line. From moral arcs to straight lines and righteous angles, as a lofty ideal we insist on immediate justice in the abstract. Concurrently, we reject satisficing, sub-optimal outcomes, horse-trading, compromising, trade-offs, lesser-evils, necessary evils, political correctness, let alone theft, corruption, or any other business-as-usual 'banality of evil.' In other words, we take a moral absolutist stance and we prove it, even if it is not practical or feasible yet. Why? Because TATO won't settle for anything less, and neither should you.

11. Reinventing the wheels of justice. TATO

Research Areas:

Natural law
Epistemic justice
Jurisprudence

When a law itself is unjust, there is often no recourse. One has a duty to break it. Some hopeful responses are nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience, but these pose lethal risks and no rewards in many cases. It takes an extraordinary act of faith, and this burden itself is unjust. Furthermore, disobeying the law does little to change it in the short term. Legal codes are unnecessarily byzantine and legislation is a tedious process. Praised for its slow evolution, the justice system is still highly dysfunctional and partisan, and sometimes in very obvious and outright criminal ways (prohibition, institutional racism, mass incarceration). TATO advocates natural law and jurisprudence, abstracting a straightforward legal code grounded in universal human rights and their provision therein. One of our central legal concepts is 'epistemic (in)justice', relating knowledge inequality to socially unjust outcomes.

12. Honesty in the best public policy. TATO

Research Areas:

Public sociology
Philosophy and
Public policy

It is a truism that politicians lie to get elected. People vote for leaders even knowing they are being lied to. Many public policies are built on fundamental lies. We propose full accountability, zero tolerance, and harsh penalties for participating in these patterns. This is where philosophy, public policy, and public sociology intersect. There is a general crisis of systemic corruption, lying, and strategic falsehoods. TATO aims to tackle deception head on, from the common person to the highest levels of government, business, and religion. TATO is a proponent of alter globalization (bottom-up, empowerment of the disenfranchised), but top-down organization is also necessary. It is time to reform (or reinvent) the United Nations, a global collective that has been (anti-)socialized from its humanitarian origins into a weak instrument of US power politics. The US is in staunch denial of many of its core pathologies, such as that it is founded on enlightened principles as much as it is founded on slavery and genocide, and it is time for global truth and reconciliation; it is time for honesty in public policy.

6. Project Potential

6.1. Methodologies and approaches

TATO will use different innovative approaches for the realization of upper-mentioned campaigns. These approaches have been selected as the best ones in order to raise the awareness, influence and increase the attention of different stakeholders to problems and present the solution.

Following methodologies and approaches will be used in TATOs work:

a) Development of journal articles

The Executive Director and other employees will work with professors to co-author articles related to the concept of abstraction, and the landscape of issues we cover.

TATO's team will be working on each of twelve selected campaigns through the development of articles and analysis for media in order to influence decision-makers.

b) Producing of an online journal (monthly);

TATO is planning to produce an online academic journal with articles, news and analysis relevant to the TATOs mission and goals. The producing of a journal will be available only in case of receiving maximum amount of target funding from philanthropists and donors. As a test, submissions may be solicited for a "special issue" on Abstraction, perhaps in coordination with another journal, or independently.

c) Podcast

TATO would like to produce various podcasts, which may include brief lectures, news reporting, and interviews. Similar podcasts include Think Again by Big Think, Waking Up by Sam Harris, and The Long Now Foundation. Podcasts are a low cost way to produce content and gain exposure. The bulk of the costs for a larger production would be dedicated to research and prep.

d) Educational videos

TATO will involve external experts along with its own experts and scholars to produce an education videos on topics related to the selected campaigns/priorities of TATO. These videos will be disseminated by TATO through its website, as well as social network in order to cover the wider audience. Similar videos from other organizations are posted on the TATO website under MEDIA. This could be developed in conjunction with online courses.

e) Documentary/Vignettes

TATO will work on producing of documentary movies (mostly short ones) related to the campaigns/priorities of the organization. The aim of such movies will be raising of awareness and education of people of selected topics. This will be depending on a stable production budget. Start-up media organizations producing similar critically minded content include AJ+, NowThis, Business Insider, Shots of Awe, GOOD, and UPROXX.

f) Infographics and Data Visualization

Experts of TATO will work on collecting data on selected priorities (specifically on small issues under these priorities) and visualize it through using of design software and other tools. The data will create a better and well-understandable image for readers and decision-makers and will have a better and deeper impact and influence them. The data will be disseminated

among media structures as well and will be available them to use the data within their publications. TATO wants to develop real-time data visualization. A good example of important real-time sociometrics is available at worldometers.info

g) Political Commentary

Experts and researchers, as well as scholars of TATO will be developing and publishing political commentaries on different issues relevant to the TATO's campaigns/priority areas. These commentaries will be published on TATO's website, social networks, as well as disseminated among well-known media structures. TATOs policy positions will be clear and simple to understand, and will challenge the narrative of lobbyists and policy-makers who politicize the issues. The blogosphere and press are already saturated with commentary, so TATOs analysis will be lean critical, always trying to bring the conversation back to the core issues.

h) App Development (Health/ Critical Thinking)

We are considering the market opportunities for various apps. The TATO brand can be applied across a suite of apps that promote a critical lifestyle. TATO observes that there are thriving apps for brain training, such as Lumosity and Elevate, but there is a distinct lack of interactive critical thinking apps. There is a lot of great resources that could be streamlined into a worldview education app.

i) Book series publication (all ages)

TATO will work on development of series of books on each of priority campaigns and based on the existing challenges and problems relevant to the overall mission and objectives of TATO. TATO will also begin to develop a global universal curriculum that integrates local information and culture, while also teaching a secular knowledge base. The process of abstraction will be instrumental in summarizing encyclopedic knowledge and distilling it to Prime Knowledge and a Core Philosophy.

j) Performance Art (AbstrActivism)

TATO will also use unique performance art options for the awareness raising and dissemination of problems and information. Flash mobs are a theatrical mode of collective action. They may be used for entertainment purposes, but could also serve a critical function. Public vigils, demonstrations, strikes, and sit-ins are also forms of activism that could be supported by TATO. Events staged in solidarity with the oppressed wherever they may be, can be considered as abstractivism.

k) Social Experiments

TATO intends to reimagine social experiments to engage people in society. Social experiments may include focus groups, collaborative online projects, data collection and analysis, and random acts of kindness. Experiments could also be carried out as host or participant in gallery events, which can be collaborate and interactive in nature, in pursuant of the mission and goals of TATO.

l) Meta- research projects

Meta- research projects look at the big picture. A prime example is meta-analyses, abstracting large data sets and comparative analysis. Meta- research can also look at the root causes of social problems. A possible meta- project is a wiki-white paper, crowd-sourced by members. Broader meta- ambitions of TATO include a think tank coordination layer.

6.2. Projected summary of key successes and achievements

Phase 1: $100,000

- Funding itself is a key success
- Officially found the organization; establish routines, homoeostasis
- Officially secure 1000+ academic membership, affiliate with 10+ organizations
- Partner with at least 1 think tank/ university.
- Consolidate library (500+) and resources; make publicly available.
- Proof of concept/ project proposals (12)
- Campaign Plans/ Policy stream demos (12)
- TATO White Papers (6)
- Secure grant funding for Year 2 of Scenario 1
- Book produced (1) on Abstraction
- Long-term strategy/ vision Plan
- Annual Report

Phase 2: up to $500,000

- Secure institutional support for growth
- Secure media partners
- Phase 1 Projects and Campaign Plans beta testing.
- Meta- think tank network and coordination layer
- Knowledge interface prototype (ThinkMap SDK)
- Hiring 2 or 3 additional full time staff. Secure grant funding for Year 2 of Scenario 1
- Book produced (1) on Abstraction
- Long-term strategy/ vision Plan
- Annual Report

Phase 3: $1,000,000+

- Secure philanthropic investment
- Partner with 10+ think tanks, 4-5 full time staff
- Sociological AI R&D
- Global outreach campaign
- Develop universal education curriculum
- Produce documentary and/or film

Phase 4: $10,000,000+

- Influence and eminence in global think tank culture/ global civil society
- Enterprise/ venture capital growth
- Meta- think tank global infrastructure and digital hub

6.3. Services

Along with the development and implementation of campaigns enabled by donors, TATO will also offer consultancy services to its members and other organizations to be more effective in the area of conceptualization of their ideas through abstraction for effective political and social change.

With the initial funding, TATO will create a mechanism that will develop the internal structure for the effective service delivery to members and client organizations in order to provide them with all relevant resources, including books, articles, and tools. In a later stage, if TATO will be able to attract more funding, the number of services for client organizations, members and stakeholders will be increased and they will be based on needs and requirements of these target groups.

Services provided by TATO will be based on its mission and goals, well as on the needs and resources of client organizations. Service for clients and stakeholders will be priced on a sliding scale, and adjusted according to market conditions, and will be valued based on efficient auditing practices and cost/benefit optimization. As per the typical large fees for consulting, this can be a major revenue stream for TATO. Ultimately, TATO aspires to found and develop a culture of critical consulting, whereby corporations and institutions openly collaborate in a publicly disclosed reform process. Along these lines, TATO envisions a line of products and services that may include, but will not be limited to;

- **Worldview Auditing**
  - Ideological deconstruction and rehabilitation
  - intelligence/ Intellectual assessment
  - conflict resolution
  - mental health diagnostics

- **Critical Consulting**
  - Corporate social responsibility (CSR)
  - Sustainable labour policy
  - Good will demonstration
  - Public sociology and education
  - Special reports

- **Social Capitalism**
  - Investing in social innovation, sustainable enterprise, and permaculture projects
  - Divestment hedge funds to reduce demand for fossil fuels and war profiteering.
  - Bitcoin and alternative monetary systems
  - Open source architecture
  - Consumer protection

- **Freethought Projects; Apostasy/ Whistleblowing**
  - Cult deprogramming
  - Enabling apostasy (leaving religion or political affiliation)
  - Encouraging, rewarding, and protecting whistleblowers
  - Elite power abdication and retirement
  - AbstrActivism

7. Organization

TATO is planning to register as a nonprofit foundation and apply for the 501c3 tax status after receiving initial funding. Based on the legal structure, TATO will be managed by a board of directors, who be initially selected by TATO's executive director and management team. Details on board creation continue in section 7.3. After the established basic corporate legal structure, the TATO will start its first operations.

TATO will also pursue forming a C3 Corporation or "Community Contribution Company," which is a type of hybrid organization for social enterprise[1]. This will allow to TATO to create new income generation options through consulting and provision of services to members and stakeholders, and reduce the demand from limited funding available for its campaigns.

A similar legal structure is a B Corporation, defined on its website as follows: "Individually, B Corps meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability, and aspire to use the power of markets to solve social and environmental problems. Collectively, B Corps lead a growing global movement of *people using business as a force for good*™. Through the power of their collective voice, one day all companies will compete to be *best for the world*™, and society will enjoy a more shared and durable prosperity for all." (source: https://www.bcorporation.net/)

7.1. Founding Partners and Management Team

In the start-up period, TATO's Management team will consist of founder Brent Cooper, who will be the Executive Director of TATO. The Management Team will be a main body, which will pursue the goals and objectives approved by the board. The Management Team will provide status updates to the board twice a year based on TATO's by-laws.

The Executive Directory will be in charge for overall management, operational functioning, and development of legal structure of organization. Along with the overall management, the Executive Director will work on empowerment of personnel and share the overall vision, plans, and knowledge in the area related to the overall mission and goals of the TATO.

Brent Cooper

Brent Cooper is the sole Founder, serving as President and Executive Director of The Abs-Tract Organization. His primary training is as a political sociologist, focusing on knowledge-power dynamics and elite-mass relations. He has several book manuscripts in the works covering the topics of abstraction, systemic conspiracy, and religion. He holds a B.A. in International Relations from UBC, where he won the Mack Eastman United Nations Essay Prize and received a Graduating Student Leader Award. He subsequently earned an MSc. in Political Sociology from the London School of Economics, where he was introduced to Marxist ecology and witnessed the UK manifestation of the Occupy movement. His varied work experience includes studying renewable energy markets at the National Research Council (Canada), internships at the Simons Centre for Disarmament and the Canadian International Council. He is currently employed in an unrelated field at the Centre for Drug Research and Development (CDRD) at UBC. Brent is also an accomplished filmmaker, and has written, directed, edited, and produced over an hour of cinematic content, including The Abs•Tract: Core Philosophy, a satirical short film about a mystery school that lays the groundwork for a

[1] "A social enterprise is a revenue-generating business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to deliver profit to shareholders and owners." (source: http://www.centreforsocialenterprise.com)

dramatic paradigm shift. Brent enjoys learning about the world through travel and has backpacked through South America, SE Asia, and India, for a cumulative 10 months.

7.2. Advisory Board

The Advisory Board of TATO will consist of experienced persons in the area of research, non-profit development, and consulting, who will advise and support the Executive Director. Members of Advisory Board will support TATO within the start-up and development stages and provide counseling support to the Management Team in order to increase organizational effectiveness and improve strategic plans in research and organizational development.

- **Dr. Thomas Kemple** – is a sociology professor at the University of British Columbia. His research expertise includes contemporary social and cultural theory (including post-structuralist, semiotic, psychoanalytic, feminist, and queer theory); the history of the social sciences; sociological classics, canons, and founders; literary and interpretive methods; aesthetic sociology; the visual representation of concepts and arguments. His work on the 'sociological imagination' and public sociology is particularly inspiring and relevant to TATO:

  The Sociological Imagination and its Imperial Shadows (abstract:) "…commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of The Sociological Imagination by recalling, renewing and updating C. Wright Mills' pledge to expand a politically aware, self-reflective and publicly accessible intellectual culture between aestheticism and scientism. We begin by sketching how Mills' 'bifocal' vision of the translation between the close-up perspective on personal milieus and the longer view of social structures contrasts with recent calls for a public sociology which would sustain its professional legitimacy while reviving its critical conscience. To illustrate this point, we argue that his project can be reframed in a way that 'provincializes' the universalizing claims and scientific aspirations of much of North American sociology by exposing its imperial unconscious in pre- and post-war movements toward the professionalization and scientization of knowledge. Here our focus turns to the prospects for a 'sociology of empire' to trace imperial forms which are symptomatically manifested both in the discipline's assumptions about historical progress and in Mills' critique of these assumptions. Finally, with an example from the history of British colonialism in Egypt, we show how, despite its blindspots, Mills' vision of the sociological imagination implicitly projects an alternative 'sociological map' with distinct vantage points that can account for the changing cultural tasks of our time, especially concerning how collectives of human and non-human agents are unequally mediated within networks of power. We conclude by revisiting Mills' distinctive approach to 'the craft of sociology', considered more as a prayer than a profession, and undertaken more as a personal and political calling than as career.

- **Ilyas Safarli** – is an experienced non-profit manager with the more than 10 years' experience in this area. He is currently working as an Executive Director of "Uluchay" Social-Economic Innovation Center – Azerbaijan-based national think-tank focusing on civil society, business environment, public sector reform, labor policy and European Integration topics. He also has an extensive experience in the area of organizational development and fundraising. Ilyas Safarli will provide necessary counselling support to the Management Team within the start-up and later stages of TATO based on his own experience in the area of organizational (think-tank) establishment and development.
  Ilyas Safarli also worked as an expert for many EU and USAID-funded programs in Azerbaijan and related to the civil society empowerment, economic development, youth, gender, public sector reform and other issues.

- **Dr. Adrian Smith** – attended the University of Wales Aberystwyth, completing a BA in Geography and an MA in Space, Place and Politics. He then then completed a PhD exploring the conceptual geographies of management consultancy. He retains an active interest in the philosophy of research, and particularly in methodological innovation that bridge the gaps between theory and empirical data at different scales.

- **Eric Godwin** – is the CEO & founder of Godwin Research Group (GRG). GRG is a research and consultancy firm based out of the Toronto Area that primarily focuses on politics, defense & security, economics, and energy & technology. Three activities the firm is actively engaged in are: geopolitical risk reporting, international integrity investigation, and economic & market advisory. GRG creates routine reports analyzing important issues so that individuals, firms, and organizations can efficiently manage their assets to better position themselves in the global community. The firm has developed a successful method of accurately forecasting global trends. Eric Godwin studied at McMaster University specializing in geopolitics and political economy. Eric has gained experience in the financial sector through contract work as well as an internship with D&D Securities where he specialized in mining, oil & gas, and internet technology sectors. He actively monitors stock market activity and uses programs such as MetaTrader and TC2000 to conduct transactions in commodities and forex markets. Eric is also skilled in computing, specializing in hardware and constructing optimized systems for different purposes. As a former varsity athlete in university that played rugby, and other sports for most of his life, Eric values the importance of good teamwork in running any successful organization. His core philosophy includes: increasing the complexity of consciousness, cheating chaos, creating innovation, focusing on the big picture, belief in cause rather than strategy, reconstructing market boundaries, and making competition irrelevant." http://www.godwinresearch.com

- **The "Chilluminati" Roundtable**

  The Chilluminati is an informal inner circle of advocates forming an online roundtable to discuss and analyze US politics, news developments, foreign policy, media narratives, and avant-garde ideas in order to brainstorm radical solutions to framing the meta- problem abstractly. The list of associates is as follows:

  - Brent Cooper (Executive Director, sociologist)
  - Keith Binkly (financial analyst, journalist)
  - Tobias Burns (journalist)
  - Bryan Williamson (consultant)
  - Adam Scislowicz (programmer/ venture capitalist)
  - Kevin Webb (lawyer)
  - Nick Orenstein (rocket scientist)
  - Alex Fairman (teacher, philosopher)
  - Ryan KT (writer)
  - Mischa Pearlman (writer)

7.3. Governance and board of directors

In a start-up period, TATOs board of directors will be formed based on the by-laws of the organization and consist of a minimum of five seats up to a maximum of twelve. We will likely seek six, to ensure that two of board seats are sociologists, and one of these seats may be designated to founder Brent Cooper as a permanent board member. The other six seats will be identified within the start-up period and will be selected based on their experience in the area of non-profits, research, as well as abstraction.

Below is a sample composition of seats reserved for the Board of Directors:

- Sociologist (2)
- Human Rights Lawyer
- AI Programmer
- Philosopher
- Social Entrepreneur
- Other specializations (6)

Within the forming of the board, TATO will consider knowledge, experience, and the sharing of common values and principles with TATO's mission and goals. Selected board members will provide part of their time for the development of TATO and bringing new ideas and innovation to the work of TATO.

The most important functions of the board in the early stages are fundraising support and mentorship. Board seats may be added based on the joint decision of majority of board members, as it will be defined in the organization's by-laws. Depending on the size of early membership, TATO may seek to form a committee of around 100 academics for experimental purposes. This committee will collaborate on research projects, workshop general think tank issues, and provide feedback to the Executive Director.

7.4. Potential for novel structure

During the formation of TATO, mass outreach will attract a large volume of academics and other professionals who could potentially contribute in many different ways. TATO will be open to suggestions and changes to the structure of the board and the organization itself. As a meta- think tank, it must be fluid in early stages, in order to settle into a functional dynamic system.

7.5. Compensation of officers, partners and directors

In the start-up period, TATO will provide a salary to the Executive Director and monthly budgets for virtual assistants. These assistants will play a major role in development phase of TATO and their involvement is crucial in order to accomplish the objective of establishing and development of the organization. It is important that the Executive Director role as manager is also flexible enough to handle the coordination of volunteers.

The Executive Director of TATO – From the $100,000 startup budget, Brent Cooper will receive $42,000 annually for his work in TATO and forming the legal and operational structure of organization as set forth in this Business Plan. He will work full-time in an executive capacity to lead and supervise the development of further strategies and plans, working with virtual assistants and TATO collaborators to build effective communication and networking protocols, as well as initiating fundraising efforts and grant proposals.

7.6. Infrastructure and staff

In the start-up period, in order to reduce costs, TATO will operate a virtual office with the involvement of virtual assistant, capable to realize the campaigns and plans of organization in cooperation with the Executive Director. For this purpose, TATO will use co-working hubs for networking and volunteer coordination, and platforms such as Upwork to optimize the virtual office. With the initial funding, TATO will involve virtual assistants throughout the process, which will be allocated a monthly budget of $200 USD, within Phase 1 funding levels.

- Data Entry Specialist: responsible for the collecting of data and resources for the online library of organization. The collected data and resources by the virtual assistant will be available for all members and client organizations of TATO;

- Grant Writer: responsible for fundraising and proposal writing processes at TATO. The person will be working in close cooperation with the Executive Director and other team members to attract the funding for the development of TATO, publishing books and articles, conducting researches and other purposes relevant to mission and goals of TATO;
- Communication Assistant: responsible for the communication processes with stakeholders and audience through e-mail, social networks and other platforms, including TATOs website. The person will be in charge for the development of communication strategy of organization and creating new channels of communication with members and stakeholders;
- Research Assistant: responsible for the conducting of researchers relevant to the mission and goals of TATO. The person will work in close cooperation with Executive Director within the conducting of researches;
- Business/legal Expert: responsible for the preparation of legal documents of TATO within the start-up period along with the Executive Director of organization;
- Accountant: responsible for the overall financial management of organization and reporting to donors.

These assistants will work part-time for TATO and realize the plans of Executive Director based on the schedule provided and deliverables to be discussed and agreed to beforehand. Detailed descriptions of salaries and service fees are incorporated in the Financial Projections section of the proposal. Staff salaries and fees will be discussed and reviewed by the Board annually and changed based on the performance and increased to reflect the real market rates for specific positions. The number of staff to be hired by TATO will be also increased based on the raised funds and growth of organization and positions will be identified based on TATOs needs.

TATO will also establish an online and physical library with all necessary books and publications relevant to the TATO's work and which can be interested for future members and client organizations. These materials will be available for members and clients of TATO through the website. With the initial funding, TATO is also planning to provide professional development opportunities for its founding members and personnel in order to bring new management, research, communication and other necessary ideas.

7.7. Locations

TATO is global in character, and in time seeks to found offices around the world. The current residence of the Executive Director is Vancouver, BC, Canada. Therefore, the bulk of the preliminary work will be done there until relocation is necessary and/or possible. The Executive Director possesses dual citizenship between Canada and the United Kingdom. Therefore, it will also be incentivized to establish Canada-UK alliances. In the growth period, TATO is also planning to establish its first US office in Washington DC in order to be close to decision-makers and funders to realize its campaigns. TATO currently has representatives in Toronto, London, and Los Angeles, and offices may be established in those cities following successful Phase 1 funding.

7.8. Communication and advocacy strategies

Communication and advocacy strategies are one of important documents and plans, in the process of development. The Communication Assistant and Executive Director will be responsible for improvement and realization of communication and advocacy strategies and plans of TATO. Following communication and advocacy tools will be used in TATO's work:

a) Primary outreach will be conducted through a personal email campaign to targeted individuals from academia, government, consulting, and media. Members will be drawn from the top universities in the US, UK, and Canada, as well as high-profile corporations and media organizations.

b) TATO is planning to use Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and AngelList for the communication and promotion of its campaigns and works among its members, clients and stakeholders. The work within these platforms will be done by Communication Assistant, who will work in close cooperation with other staff members within the publications of necessary information in mentioned platforms.
c) Upon the threshold of 1000 members registered through the website sign-up, TATO's Communication Assistant will also use MailChimp or MailJet for engagement campaigns with academics, members, donors, client organizations and interested parties, to establish their prospective relationship to TATO.
d) One of major advocacy tools to be used by TATO will be direct communication with decision and opinion-makers, and established journalists via e-mail and face-to-face (where allows) and promote its options for solving of problems.
e) TATOs website will be also one of major tools for dissemination of information and publication of articles and news related to the work of TATO. The website will be curated by the Communication Assistant and Executive Director. TATO also intends to establish and moderate an online forum and discussion board for viewers to discuss, debate, and further understand the key issues.
f) In a later stage, TATO will organize round-table discussions, debates, and focus groups, as well as other events in order to bring new ideas and opinions to decision and opinion-makers. This methodology is using by the majority of established think tanks in all around the world and will be one of effective and impact-oriented methodologies to be used by TATO.

7.9. Quality control

Quality control regulations and procedures will be formalized within the start-up period of the organization, and will reflect the veracity of TATO's epistemology. Documents and publications produced and intended for external dissemination will go through a rigorous peer review process, mediated by TATO members. Currently TATO obeys standard academic practices and formats, and new standards will be devised through the de facto crowdsourcing of the think tank itself. The quality control document will also provide mandatory procedures for different types of materials (research papers, policy briefs, articles, media and others), roles and responsibilities, and time schedules.

7.10. Networking

In order to increase opportunities and bring new ideas and resources to TATO, the organization will work to establish relationships and solicit the involvement of scholars and other partners. The network will be expanded through outreach, word of mouth, and partnerships will be attracted on the basis of mutual benefit. These scholars will be involved based on their fields of relative expertise, as it is relevant to the priorities of TATO. This will create a unique opportunity for scholars to collaborate on research projects and to publish articles with TATO, as well as participate in innovative social experiments. TATO also involve passionate volunteers to fill various roles, organized into four essential teams with sub-roles, which will work together to achieve our collective goals:

- Communications: Outreach (clients, customers, partners), PR (email, marketing, social media)
- Fundraising: Grants/ Foundation money, Equity, Revenue Streams (products), Public (crowdsourcing),
- Research: Articles (journal), Blogging, Facts/Data Management and Visualization
- Internal (+Board): Volunteer Coordinator, Directors, Legal, Accounting

7.11. Internal policies and procedures

TATO intends to build an organization with strong internal governance and procedures. These principles will be developed with respect to its core values and that of its staff and associate members, while strictly adhering to universal principles. Guidance and mentorship will be accepted from its stakeholders, but TATO will not be beholden to the agenda of any particular funder where it is at odds with TATO's general mandate for truth.

Towards these ends, TATO will develop or review all necessary internal policies and procedures regarding governance, strategy management, quality control, communication and external relations, accounting and finance, project management, evaluation and monitoring, and human resources management. Where necessary, TATO will work with professionals and consultants to revise, amend or develop new policies and procedures in order to align with customary international standards and leading practices. The Executive Director will engage in training and growth opportunities, such as start-up accelerators and incubators.

7.12. Partnership and strategic alliances

TATO is planning to create important partnerships with universities, media institutions, and other non-profits working in similar areas. With the support of a network of academics, TATO will be able to lobby universities directly for support. We will solicit other think tanks as well to work together in order to bring new and innovative solutions with the consideration of abstraction.

The following organizations are willing to cooperate with TATO:

Local Partners* (Vancouver):

- eUBC - http://entrepreneurship.ubc.ca
- Radius - http://www.radiussfu.com
- Futurpreneur - http://www.futurpreneur.ca/en/
- VISR - https://visrfreeschool.wordpress.com/about/
- Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions - http://www.democracy.arts.ubc.ca
- Liu Institute for Global Issues - http://liu.arts.ubc.ca
- Institute for the Humanities - http://www.sfu.ca/humanities-institute/
- MAPS Canada - http://www.mapscanada.org
- David Suzuki Foundation - http://www.davidsuzuki.org

8. Financial projections / Organizational Sustainability

8.1. Summary of financial assumptions

TATO is planning to involve $1,000,000 (maximum funding) to cover 3-5 years in order to fully operate and work on its priority campaigns. However, the one year start-up period and basic operational costs could be as low as $100,000 (minimum funding) in order to register the organization and pursue higher goals and objectives. The realistic and ideal amounts reflects the slower or faster pace of development, as suggested by the minimum of funding, TATO will be able to stand-up as an organization and work on minimum activities and at the same time fundraise and determine more potential sources. With the maximum amount of funding, TATO will be able to fully realize its campaigns, including the publishing of books, articles, journals, conduct new research, as well as to advocate for issues that are relevant to the mission and objectives of organization. The management of a virtual office and virtual assistants will enable us to reduce the costs and fully maximize donors' financial expectations in terms of realizing these objectives.

8.2. Sources of funding

TATO currently has no source of income to cover basic operating expenses, precluding even the ability to apply for grants and legally form the organization. Despite this hardship, a great deal of research and prep has already been accomplished, evidenced in this Business Plan and the Abstraction White Paper. TATO requires reasonable contributions to move through the first stage of development. Beyond this, TATO will depend on sponsorship from philanthropists in order to grow and carry out ambitious programs.

The first stage of funding will be crowdsourced, through a platform to be decided (ie. Kickstarter, Indiegogo). Outreach to over 50,000 individuals will ensure a reasonable degree of traction and demonstrate the prospects before making a fundraising campaign official. Venture capital networking sites such as AngelList (angel.co) will be used for maximum exposure. The incentive to crowdsource TATO financially, is that it will also be crowdsourced intellectually.

TATO is planning to involve funding from possible institutional and individual philanthropists and social capital funds. Founding partners of TATO will work to create a networking opportunities with mentioned possible sources of funding to present its mission and plans. Considering the specific work and mission of TATO, the team and founding partners will work with specific philanthropists and funds, whose work is also relevant to the TATO's mission and vision. Through the correctly developed list of possible sources of funding, TATO will be able to address this business-plan to them and discuss the possible initial funding.

TATO will also use different options in order to create benefits for individual and consortium of philanthropists. The organization will provide seats in the board for philanthropists provided the donation between $100,000 - $200,000. TATO will consider the ethical, environmental and equal opportunities as a part of its fundraising strategy and will not accept the funding which might jeopardize the independency and integrity of organization.

8.3. Total philanthropy required

There are multiple thresholds and scenarios for fundraising. Phase 1 is considered emergency funding, to immediately actualize the establishment of the organization. The funds will directly enable the full-time pursuance of TATO's research agenda and goals, which otherwise remains in paralysis. Phase 1

can be efficiently crowdsourced through the initial outreach pool of high-value prospective members, while with broader public support and media exposure it may be possible to crowdsource Phase 2 and 3. Otherwise, grants, philanthropy, and institutional support will be garnered to fund Phase 2 and beyond.

Phase 1 is $100,000, 60% of which is expenses (budget below), and 40% is the Executive Director salary. Beyond this, there will be many "flex goals" that the crowdsourcing campaign can activate by crossing a threshold. For example, if we raise $150,000, it satisfies Scenario 1, and provides an additional $50,000 for flex goals, such as PR campaigns, app development, research projects and others.

Phase 2 is up to $500,000, TATOs full plan can be activated with the minimum allocations to budget. The expenses of Scenario 1 are met, and the additional funds go towards the development of products and services, pursuit of the research agenda, the demonstration of PR campaigns, and film productions. With the scenario 2, TATO also will be able to open its first office in US and bring the virtual office into the real and hire staff members, including research, communication, advocacy, administrative and others.

Phase 3 - $1,000,000+

In the event that TATOs outreach connects with larger supporters and professionals, a higher range of venture capital is necessary. This includes the immediate hiring of 3-5 full time staff, and the purchase of 'enterprise' level products and services, to raise TATO's profile into venture capital visibility.

8.4. Projected uses of funding

Phase 1 - $100,000:

#	DESCRIPTION	1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER	3RD QUARTER	4TH QUARTER	TOTAL
1.	Executive Director salary	$10,500	$10,500	$10,500	$10,500	$42,000
2.	Virtual staff salaries	$3,060	$3,060	$3,060	$3,060	$12,240
3.	Virtual office establishment	$2,355	$2,355	$2,355	$2,355	$9,420
4.	Administrative expenses	$4,050	$4,050	$4,050	$4,050	$16,200
5.	Start-up costs / legal fees	$3,510	$3,510	-	-	$7,020
6.	Public Relations	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$6,000
7.	Establishment of library	$300	$300	$300	$300	$1,200
8.	CRM system	$300	$300	$300	$300	$1,200
9.	Professional development	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$6,000
10.	Pre start-up back pay expenses	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$6,000
Total for Year 1:						**$101,280**

Phase 2 – $250,000 - $500,000

#	DESCRIPTION	1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER	3RD QUARTER	4TH QUARTER	TOTAL
1.	Staff Salaries	$21,000	$21,000	$21,000	$21,000	$84,000
2.	Professional fees	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	12.000
3.	Projects/services	$16,750	$16,750	$16,750	$16,750	$67,000
4.	Research	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$12,000
5.	Campaigns	$13,750	$13,750	$13,750	$13,750	$55,000
6.	Public outreach/films	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$100,000
7.	Misc. expenses	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$60,000
Total for Year 1:						**$500,000**

Phase 3 – $1,000,000+

#	DESCRIPTION	1ST YEAR	2ND YEAR	3RD YEAR	4TH YEAR	5TH YEAR	TOTAL
1.	Staff Salaries	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$750,000
2.	Professional fees	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$60,000
3.	Projects/services	$67,000	$67,000	$67,000	$67,000	$67,000	$335,000
4.	Research	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$60,000
5.	Campaigns	$55,000	$55,000	$55,000	$55,000	$55,000	$275,000
6.	Public outreach/films	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$250,000
7.	Misc. expenses	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000	$300,000
Total for 5 years:							**$2,030,000**

8.5. Crowdfunding

TATO will use a crowdfunding platform to secure the funding from various sources and increase the chances for securing of initial funding and fill any temporary funding gaps. TATO's team will work on development of effective campaign through famous crowdfunding platforms, such as Ingiegogo or Kickstarter to attract more funding. TATO will preface any crowdsourcing campaign with analysis of survey data from members, to formulate specific projections and solicit feedback. To these ends, a TATO entrance survey has been established on SurveyMonkey.com, and the link is provided in the membership confirmation email.

8.6. Social Enterprise

The long-term plan of TATO is to increase the self-financing options as a social enterprise and decrease donor dependency for realization of its campaigns. Through the development of successful business model and provision of services to its members, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders, TATO will be able to generate an income from non-grant sources. Service provision will be based on core TATO values and principles and related to TATO's core activities. The development of a sustainable business model will commence with basic operations, and diverse income generation streams from services and products will be work-shopped and evaluated by the advisory board.

9. Risk assessment

9.1. Risk factors

As all non-profit organizations and social enterprises, TATO also entails a variety of risks and their mitigation options. Major risk factors identified by TATO's founders are related to the funding. A SWOT analysis is format is available on the website, and what follows is a detailed list of risks and their mitigation:

a) If TATO will not able secure the initial (minimum) funding of $100,000, the organization cannot be established and operations related to the implementation of campaigns and establishment of library cannot be launched. The reason for the development of this business-plan is to show the perspective of TATO and its expertise, along with the unique work and approaches to be used within the implementation of campaigns and research. This business-plan will be a major tool to attract the initial funding from possible sources collected by TATO's Management Team, a sample of which has been attached to the business-plan as an appendix III. TATO's Management Team will work on involvement of initial funding through crowdfunding and working with sources listed in the Appendix III.

b) If TATO will be able to secure the initial funding, the risk remains that future funding to cover operations and realize campaigns/researches will not be secured. This risk will be mitigated through the development of financial sustainability plan, which will provide in-depth details for Management Team and hired grant writer to work on selected areas and sources of funding. The Management Team and grant writer will work with selected foundations and philanthropists in order to secure the future funding to effectively conduct researches and realize its campaigns. At the same time, with the initial funding, TATO will work on increase of its credibility, visibility and image, which will decrease this risk and increase chances to get more funding to cover future expenses.

c) A third risk is related to the recognition of abstraction by media and decision-makers. The risk is one the major ones that can begin to be mitigated relative to the volume of membership, irrespective of fundraising prospects. The Management Team and staff, as well as scholars and academics to be involved in the research and dissemination of knowledge will be empowered through the collective action of TATO. The legitimacy of TATO will be proportional to the demographics and size of its membership. Through the research network, a higher social epistemology can be demonstrated and validated, manifest in the high-quality framework of "abstraction," and the publication of related articles, research, and campaigns organized by TATO. The founder of TATO is relatively unknown, but that the concept should stand on its own, without marquee names, is exactly the point of self-evident logic and truth.

9.2. Competitive analysis

TATO is the first think-tank committed to solving the world's systemic social problems through a high-level framework of "abstraction". TATO does not have not direct competition, based on the current research agenda, proposed model, and aesthetic of campaigns and approaches to be used within the implementation of these TATO's modus operandi.

There are currently thousands of think tanks operating under a stagnant status-quo that partisan , trying to lobby for policy reforms and changes, as well as to influence to decision- and opinion-makers, in a very traditional and ineffective fashion. The atmosphere of political correctness has dulled the

faculties of these established think tanks, as referenced in Section 3. The key difference in worldview orientation of TATO from such think tanks is the unique academic methodologies via abstraction. This is shaped by the expertise of the Executive Director in political sociology (knowledge and power, elites and masses), with a critical theory background and forward-thinking outlook.

TATO will also integrate best models and experience from other think-tanks within the start-up period, as it relates to knowledge management, organizational development, and the forming of internal operational structure. The methodology and approaches to be used by TATO, as well as its selected priority areas/campaigns, may seem different from the majority of think tanks, but are overarching universal values and principles are ones to which all would aspire.

This section also includes the comparative analysis of some of think tanks, which might be viewed as competitors or partners, with similar worldviews and objectives to TATO.

- **The Center for Applied Rationality (CFAR)** is a think tank that had humble beginnings and similar inspirations to TATO, which connected with the right people in Silicon Valley. We share their explicit secularism and interest in AI. http://rationality.org

- **Sociologists Without Borders (SSF)** reflects the conceptual heart of TATO, embodying the cosmopolitan cause and humanitarian agenda. TATO practices global sociology, as borders are social constructions that must be overcome. (SSF does not have its own website, but did, which became this ultimately http://www.sociologynetwork.org)

- **The Center for Design and Geopolitics** mirrors our abstract approach and concern for world affairs. They also share a critical perspective, and Benjamin Bratton's critique of TED is particularly enlightening. http://designgeopolitics.org

As for picking some more traditional think tanks to compare to, this is difficult, because policy is often so convoluted; it's hard to get a clear answer where they stand. But here is one we can that set a precedent in its own time, and is influential today.

- **Demos.** "Demos (1993) could be described as the first 'postmodern' think tank," reflecting the breakdown of belief, as opposed to a post-war ideological agenda.[Source], Google Books.

To this effect, TATO can be the first true 'metamodern' think tank. Other comparative organizations are listed on the homepage at http://www.abs-tract.org.

Appendix I - TIMELINE

Timeline

Following tables provides the detailed information on planned activities within the start-up period of TATO.

Period	Description	Details
DECEMBER, 2016	Outreach	E-mail campaign, social media and business-plan development
JANUARY, 2016	Fundraising 1.0	Crowdsourcing
FEBRUARY, 2017	Team building/ Board formation	Networking, negotiations, attract volunteer army
MARCH, 2017	Found organization	Establish logistics, administrative operations
APR-MAY, 2017	Begin operations	Writing, research, media presence, "abstraction" proof of concept
JUN-JUL, 2017	Research projects	Initiate research agenda, secure university partners, found journal
AUG-SEP, 2017	Fundraising 2.0	Grants, venture capital, philanthropic support
OCT-NOV, 2017	Public Engagement / Consulting	Public sociology, critical consulting and advice policy
DEC-JAN, 2017	Think-Tank Legitimacy	Expand staff, establish locations, long-term vision, continue global outreach.

Note: The schedule of research and activities can be changed depending on a funding attracted in a start-up period, as well as in later stages.

Appendix II – LOCAL PARTNERS

Local Partners* (Vancouver)

- **eUBC - http://entrepreneurship.ubc.ca**

The University of British Columbia's entrepreneurship lab; "Inspiring entrepreneurial thinking to create innovative ventures. A powerful combination of mentorship, education, venture creation, and seed funding to support UBC students, alumni, faculty and staff."

- **Radius - http://www.radiussfu.com**

"With people as our starting point, RADIUS Edu is re-imagining how we support the learning journeys of emerging changemakers. Systems focused, RADIUS Lab works with community partners to understand problems and design, test and launch interventions. Built to amplify promising solutions, RADIUS Ventures partners with impact ventures to get them market-, growth-, and investor-ready."

- **Futurpreneur - http://www.futurpreneur.ca/en/**

"Futurpreneur Canada has been fueling the entrepreneurial passions of Canada's young enterprise for nearly two decades. We are the only national, non-profit organization that provides financing, mentoring and support tools to aspiring business owners aged 18-39. Our internationally recognized mentoring program hand matches young entrepreneurs with a business expert from a network of more than 2,800 volunteer mentors."

- **VISR - https://visrfreeschool.wordpress.com/about/**

"The Vancouver Institute for Social Research (VISR) is an independent, para-academic, theory-based free school which began in Feb, 2013. Its intent is to move beyond the borders of the traditional university and to open up a more accessible platform in the city for the engaged discussion of critical theory."

- **Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions - http://www.democracy.arts.ubc.ca**

"The Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions seeks to advance publicly-engaged research, teaching, and dissemination of ideas and knowledge about innovation in democratic practice and institutions."

- **Liu Institute for Global Issues - http://liu.arts.ubc.ca**

"The Liu Institute for Global Issues is an interdisciplinary research hub for emerging global issues in the Faculty of Arts at the University of British Columbia (UBC). At the Liu Institute, we strive to catalyze innovative thinking and positive change, bridging the gap between academics and practitioners to transform research into actions."

- **Institute for the Humanities - http://www.sfu.ca/humanities-institute/**

"dedicated to the exploration of the critical perspectives that relate social concerns to the cultural and historical legacy of the Humanities. The Institute seeks to facilitate the development of attitudes that lead toward active engagement in society. In taking such a role, the Institute hopes to contribute reflective, contemplative, and critical public points of view on the conflicts and contentious issues of our time."

- **MAPS Canada - http://www.mapscanada.org**

"The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS) Canada envisions a world where psychedelics and marijuana are safely and legally available for beneficial uses, and where research is governed by rigorous scientific evaluation of their risks and benefits."

- **David Suzuki Foundation - http://www.davidsuzuki.org**

"We collaborate with Canadians from all walks of life, including government and business, to conserve our environment and find solutions that will create a sustainable Canada through science-based research, education and policy work."

- **New Ventures BC (tech accelerator)** - https://www.newventuresbc.com

"New Ventures BC is passionate about helping early stage tech companies grow their businesses."

Appendix III – List of sources of funding

Prospective list of sponsors and supporters

($50,000+)

- Conard Davis Family Foundation
- David A. Coulter
- Robert Epstein
- Thomas Campbell Jackson
- Christopher W. Johnson Charitable Trust
- Ilona Nemeth & Alan Quasha
- George L. Ohrstrom, Jr. Foundation
- Gerry Ohrstrom
- Dr. Kelly Posner Gerstenhaber
- The Rosenkranz Foundation
- The Mortimer D. Sackler Foundation/ Mortimer D.A. Sackler & Jacqueline Sackler
- The Paul E. Singer Foundation
- Edward Stern & Stephanie Rein

($10,000+)

- Eurasia Group
- Alex Ginsburg & Hillary Blumberg
- Roger & Susan Hertog
- Stacie & Stephan Kiratsous
- Leon Levy Foundation/Shelby White
- Lisa & Jamie Maguire
- Edward & Reka Schmidt
- Joan & Donald Sherman
- Sydney & Stanley Shuman
- Byron & Anita Wien

($5,000+)

- Stanley Bergman/Withers Bergman LLP
- Franci Blassberg & Joe Rice
- Kenneth & Nina Brody
- James Coleman & Cynthia Ott
- The Gilder Foundation
- Thomas F. & Heidi McWilliams
- Catie & Donald Marron
- Ben Nelson
- Amy & Jay Regan
- Andrew Solomon & John Habich Solomon

($3,000+)

- Alexander J. Gerstenhaber
- Jennifer & Philippe Selendy

($2,000+)

- Michael A. Carpenter
- Cindy Elden
- John Eleoterio
- Deborah & Peter Lamm
- Amb. John L. Loeb, Jr. & Sharon Handler
- Carol & John Lyden
- Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Moers Mayer
- Alan & Susan Patricof
- Bonnie & Richard Reiss
- Nathan Saint-Amand
- Jeffrey Wernick
- Robert F. Wright

($250+)

- Erika Bonner
- Christopher Brennan
- Christopher E. Buck
- Michael & Meghan Caponiti
- Rosalind Devon
- Mike & Michelle Hadden
- Keren Kalimian
- Arthur Laffer
- LogicPrep
- Philip R. O'Connor
- Ross & Alice Sandler
- Adrianne & William Silver
- Dee Wingfield

ABSTRACTION

MAP OF THE PROBLEMATIQUE

WHITE PAPER Draft V 1.0

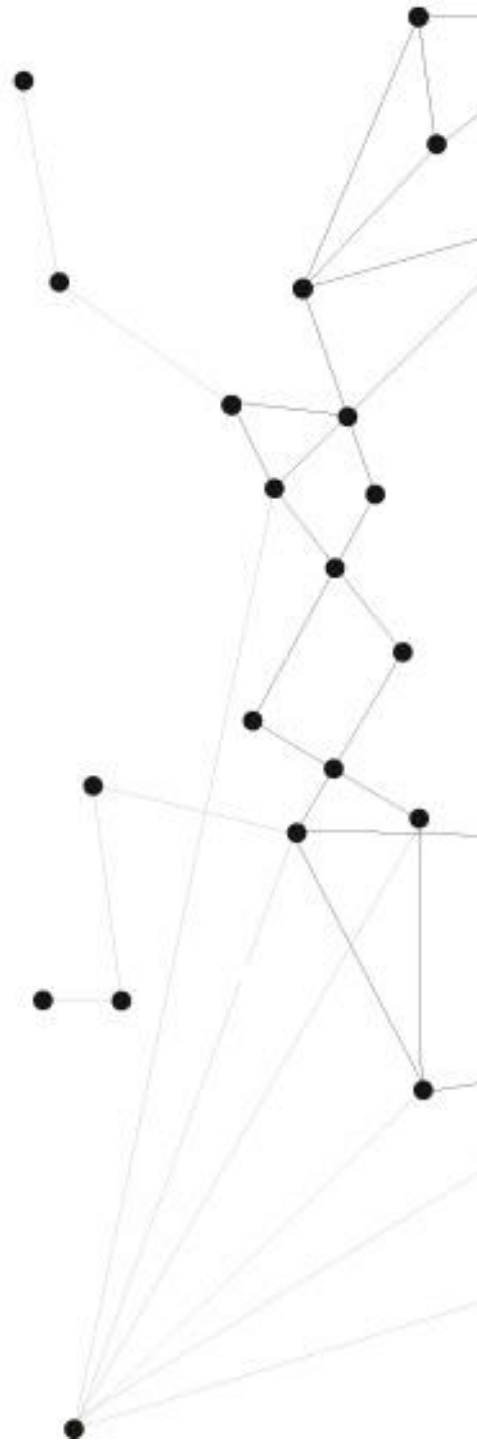
By Brent Cooper

THE ABS-TRACT ORGANIZATION

Nov. 27th, 2016

ABSTRACT

The Abs-Tract Organization (TATO) identifies the meta- problem as how all-important abstract (systemic) issues, such as climate change and war, become obfuscated and mystified through market forces and manufactured ignorance, creating negative externalities negative feedback loops that perpetuate conflict. This white paper attempts to map the meta-problem of society to demonstrate "abstraction" as the basis for the proposed meta- think tank and subsequent system-wide knowledge and policy intervention to directly address the meta-crisis. "Abstraction" writ large is proposed as a knowledge representation (KR) framework, with novel expression under metamodernism - an emergent paradigm suggestive of universal social philosophy. Abstraction also a multivariate thought process, social process, and critique of society and its conceptual objects. A sampling of abstract tools introduces the tree of Knowledge (ToK) System, the Data-Information-Knowledge-Wisdom (DIKW) Pyramid, 'abductive logic programming' (ALP), critical discourse analysis' (CDA), 'root cause analysis' (RCA), immanent critique, and world disclosure, among other methodologies. "Vicious" (false) abstraction, on the other hand, is the errant translation of knowledge, leading to unjust or 'vicious' outcomes, the systematic habits of which are correlated with anti-intellectualism and endarkenment. Global capitalism is an 'abstract empire' that the 'open society' seeks to remedy, but falls short due to fallibility and compromising trade-offs. Global civil society and alter-globalization are emergent movements to establish social and political equilibrium, which TATO seeks to anchor in an abstract or "pure sociology" as a critical pedagogy and public policy platform, communicated through a public sociology that bridges critical theory with common sense to foster a 'critical mass society.'



PREFACE

The Abs-Tract Organization ("TATO") is a nascent non-profit think tank for absolute social philosophy and global civil society, committed to definitively solving the world's systemic social problems through a high-level framework of "abstraction." TATO seeks capital to cover start-up logistics and basic operating costs. This includes setting up its legal structure, establishing its research programme and academic partners, initiating an outreach campaign, and developing a long term sustainability strategy while securing public and philanthropic support.

TATO's essential value proposition is found in the concept and special applications of "abstraction," a manifold term differentiated across and within many fields, including math, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, and social theory. Such a vast methodolo gical synthesis is resistant to summary, and is detailed within this Business Plan. Abstraction is generally defined as a conceptual process of complexity reduction that highlights the essential properties or first principles of a given object or idea. Given the wide range of expressions, from a shorthand for critical thinking to an integral process of knowledge production, the utility of abstraction cannot be understated. However, as the term 'abstract' is highly equivocal, TATO provides the necessary depth and insight to make abstraction more accessible and relevant to the public and specialists alike.

Our broad mission is to establish a new consensus of superordinate knowledge to streamline and pacify globalization. TATO emphasizes the urgency and opportunity to 'abstract' a unified social critique in the context of the emergent paradigm of "metamodernism," as a new cultural, political, scientific, and social movement representing a post-ideological, open source, globally responsive, paradox resolving, grand narrative. In this context, abstraction comes to refer to the cumulative pursuit of higher-order self-evident logic that transcends contradictory discourses and dissolves ideological conflict. Our process involves the depoliticization, demystification, and distillation of truth in order to directly confront the multifarious epistemic crises at present. A new enlightenment is already underway and is limited only by the persistence of detractors bounded by the constructed opportunism of the system.

The central problem is how all-important abstract (systemic) issues such as climate change and institutional racism become obfuscated and marginalized through market forces and cognitive biases, in turn producing self-defeating abstract wars of attrition against populations and the environment. This status-quo is exacerbated by our constant crisis of epistemic authority, where public trust is eroded, the mainstream media is corrupt and misinformative, and knowledge is instrumentalized at the expense of truth. The problem is in fact overdetermined by a nexus of causal factors. In response, we seek to simplify the meta- crises in order to maximize the signal-to-noise ratio in civil discourse to correct these aberrations at the root level.

ABSTRACTION: Map of the Problematique

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1.0 Introduction

As the namesake of this organization and cornerstone of TATO's research agenda, "abstraction" warrants a detailed exposition and validation. First of all, TATO splits 'abstract' into a pun - Abs-Tract - to draw attention to the multiplicity of the word. The separation of the etymological roots reveals the literal meaning: *ab-* (away, from) and *tract* (draw off). Together, *abstract* means 'to draw away,' which is suggestive of two meanings: 'to withdraw' and 'to write.' These are the primeval origins of philosophy. Second, abs-tract is intended to be suggestive of a breakthrough in meta-philosophy, enabled by metamodernism. Just as splitting and fusion of atoms unleash torrents of power, so can the deconstruction and reconstruction of the word.

The challenge of this white paper is not merely to define abstraction, but to abstract a deeper narrative and tie together disparate instances of a universal concept, as a 'proof of concept' to consolidate the complexity of social problems into simple workable truths. The fundamental confusion may stem from the fact that abstraction is both a thinking process and a social process unto itself, but it is the intent of this whitepaper to resolve such apparent inconsistencies. To TATO, the general problem and general solution are both abstract. The general social crisis is abstract in that the roots become politicized, masked, hidden, obscured, and mystified (eg. war on drugs, pollution). The general solution is abstract in that objective analysis and problem solving depend on higher-order thinking and a conceptual framework. External abstraction makes the world and its social problems seem monolithic., while mental abstraction segments and organizes knowledge. It would seem then a tautology that 'abstraction can solve abstraction,' but it is meta-solution to the meta-problem. TATO has no illusions about abstraction being a simple fix or panacea for the crisis in which we find ourselves, however it is the key to definitively resolving conflicts at the semantic level, to 'unblock' collective action for common good on the global scale.

The subtitle of this paper is 'map of the problematique.'* In a 2016 talk at the European Graduate School, Benjamin Bratton of the Center for Design and Geopolitics, referred to abstraction as a function of intelligence for an organism to "map its own surroundings," particularly with respect to food, friend, or foe. The formalizing of modes of reasoning is but a projection of this "primordial abstraction." As we evolve more complex forms of intelligence, 'abstraction as mapping' is the general principle of that complexification.[source]. The context of Bratton's talk was the intersection of design, philosophy, and AI, which is the essential aesthetic of TATO. An even more direct precedent for TATO to form can be found in Bratton's book *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty*, which he concludes is not a manifesto or manual, but rather, "a design brief that invites others to collaborate on the articulation and realization of the renewed modernity described here, with all their deliberate commitment and expert **abstraction**." Thus, the specificity of TATO's abstraction is highly integral to a wider project to map knowledge and social systems. The term 'problematique' comes from a Club of Rome (1970) report titled *The Predicament of Mankind: Quest for Structured Responses to Growing World-wide Complexities and Uncertainties*. "It is this generalized meta-problem (or meta-system of problems) which we have called and shall continue to call the "problematique" that inheres in our situation," the authors write. The meta-problem is reduced to 49 "Continuous Critical Problems" facing humankind, which have compounding effects and create new problems requiring broader scope solutions. These meta-problems are abstract, chief among being over-population, which acts as a force multiplier of social problems; (see Appendix for full list).

TATO seeks to map the meta-problem, starting with this survey of an abstract problematique. This white paper attempts to validate a system-wide knowledge and policy intervention to directly address the meta-crisis, to prevent many problems from being produced in the first place, and free up wasted system resources. Before an abstract exegesis can begin, the new epistemological context of metamodernity must be (re-)introduced.

1.1 Metamodernism

"Metamodernism is variously called a cultural paradigm, a cultural philosophy, a structure of feeling, and a system of logic. All these phrases really mean is that, like its predecessor's modernism and postmodernism, metamodernism is a particular lens for thinking about the self, language, culture, and meaning — really, about everything." - Seth Abramson, Attorney; Assistant Professor at University of New Hampshire [Source]. Abramson outlines 15 principles to clarify and distinguish it from postmodernism. See Appendix for a summary:	1. Negotiation between modernism and postmodernism. 2. Dialogue over dialectics. 3. Paradox transcendence. 4. Juxtaposition. 5. The collapse of distances. 6. Multiple subjectivities. 7. Collaboration. 8. Simultaneity and generative ambiguity. 9. A cautiously optimistic response to metanarratives. 10. Interdisciplinarity. 11. Reconstruction instead of deconstruction. 12. Engagement instead of exhibitionism. 13. Effect as well as affect. 14. Walllessness and borderlessness. 15. Flexible intertextuality.

The concept of metamodernism has achieved a great deal of exposure and legitimacy academically, but it is still a niche movement. Details will continue to unfold as the paradigm refines itself. Although Abramson's principles do not explicitly factor in the concept of abstraction, he does at one point mention that "the idea that metamodernism eliminates the walls and boundaries between literal and **abstract** structures is an important one to the paradigm."[Source] Abstraction is a concept independent of any paradigm or era, but metamodernism provides a new context and new tools to enable abstraction by an order of magnitude. The first use of metamodernism dates back to the 1970s, and as of 2011, two young philosophers have reinvigorated the concept (Vermeulen and van den Akker). As of late 2016, the emergent progressive social movement behind Bernie Sanders - arguably a metamodern expression - was suppressed by the bipolar two-party system in the US presidential election, resulting in the election of the nightmarish-cartoonish wildcard Donald Trump. This scenario was perfectly anticipated, in abstract terms, in Rolling Stone as of 2013.

> "This latest episode in the endless Republican reality show is not chiefly about the incompetence and incessant squabbling of ideologues and petty politicians, although it's that, too. Nor is it the outcome of the intense partisan polarization that has thrown Washington into gridlock, as if the problem is **abstract** partisanship itself, with Democrats and Republicans equally at fault. Least of all is it about rescuing the economy from the Democrats' profligate deficit spending, as Republicans claim – not with the deficit shrinking to its lowest level since the financial disaster of 2008 and with the outlook improving. This crisis is about nothing other than the Republican Party – its radicalization, its stunning lack of leadership and its disregard for the Constitution." [Source], Republican Extremism and the Lessons of History, Rolling Stone, Oct 2013.

The polarization of elites and masses is at a new breaking point, and metamodernism is the peaceful release of tension compelled by a broad consensus on truth, and to overturn the status-quo that is blocking that truth.

While the inconclusive character of postmodernism was figuratively a 'work-in-progress', metamodernism is explicitly working on 'progress,' pledged to the reconstruction of society. In policy terms, metamodernism necessarily represents simply what 'needs to be done' to solve the global crisis: social transformation to a permaculture ecology, a steady state economy, and the empowerment of secular humanist global civil society. The definitive policy objectives include: clean energy, demilitarization, universal basic income, universal health care/ drug legalization, universal education, human rights, and so on... TATO's abstract objective is thus to normalize functional socialism, not to mention put war out of business. The great irony is 'why haven't we done it yet?' Here is what it would look like, according to Metamoderna.org:

> "A metamodern society is one where the problems of modernity have been solved: a society where we are no longer alienated, that no longer has excessive inequalities, and is ecologically sustainable. The metamodern society is possible to achieve; it constitutes a higher stage of development of society. But it is no utopia in the sense that no problems are present. As humanity approaches this developmental stage, new problems emerge, many of which are yet to be known." [Metamoderna.org]

What makes abstraction particularly possible and useful now, as opposed to 20 years ago, is metamodernism (prescience) and the emergence of big data (omniscience). Social enterprise must now reclaim its own data from 'commercial sociology' (ie. Facebook), and steer away from predictive models of reality, to prescriptive and normative models. TATO does not ask 'who will win [the presidency],' but 'who should win?'; Who is the right figurehead and leader for optimal social and political justice? How can the public be better informed? Etc… The premise of Artificial Intelligence is also entirely dependent on abstraction. Thus, it is very crucial to have a meta- think tank organization dedicated to the abstraction as a science, that is also concerned with superordinate issues. We have the tools to reconstruct the world from the fragments of postmodernism, but in order to do so we must be able to resolve social issues conclusively at the discursive level. However, big data has been tried up in "commercial sociology," which is instrumental rather than critical. Abstraction is proposed as a metamodern epistemology, a way of knowing and conceptualizing of universal truth with social justice.

> "[we] have identified a very promising niche in trying to position metamodernities as a post-poststructuralist state, in that the major issue with poststructural approaches is that they fall into what I refer to as the 'Derrida Trap' - that is, that deconstruction on its own is necessarily a pointless task. Unless you re-assemble whatever you have deconstructed into a 'better' version, then it leads you to nowhere except mindless relativism. This means that most poststructural approaches to real-world problems never seem to offer any form of practical solution - the simple example of that being in terms of urban planning. Post-structuralists have long lambasted the work of Le Corbusier, the 'broken windows' theory, and the Chicago School, among others, for being based upon a series of assumptions and uneven power structures that commit all manner of sins - but crucially, after all these critiques, there are very few practical alternatives to urban planning suggested by poststructuralists. They have done half a job in many ways - deconstructed the problematic assumptions of modernism, but offered no practical alternative. So in that sense there is a promising vein of thought that sets out where the think tank is in intellectual terms." - Adrian Smith, TATO analyst.

1.2 Abstraction

At the most general level, abstraction is about thinking. The importance of thinking should be self-evident. The fact that it is not is due to a breakdown in our usage of concepts. We must rehabilitate abstraction from the ground up, starting with a basic definition;

> "Abstraction, the cognitive process of isolating, or "abstracting," a common feature or relationship observed in a number of things, or the product of such a process. The property of electrical conductivity, for example, is abstracted from observations of bodies that allow electricity to flow through them; similarly, observations of pairs of lines in which one line is longer than the other can yield the relation of "being longer than."
>
> What is abstracted—i.e., the abstraction or abstractum—is sometimes taken to be a concept (or "abstract idea") rather than a property or relation. Which view is taken on this issue depends in part on the view one holds on the general issue of universals (entities used to explain what it is for individual things to share a feature, attribute, or quality or to fall under the same type or natural kind)." [Britannica]
>
> "Abstraction in its main sense is a conceptual process by which general rules and concepts are derived from the usage and classification of specific examples, literal ("real" or "concrete") signifiers, first principles, or other methods. "An abstraction" is the product of this process — a concept that acts as a super-categorical noun for all subordinate concepts, and connects any related concepts as a group, field, or category. Conceptual abstractions may be formed by filtering the information content of a concept or an observable phenomenon, selecting only the aspects which are relevant for a particular purpose. For example, abstracting a leather soccer ball to the more general idea of a ball selects only the information on general ball attributes and behavior, eliminating the other characteristics of that particular ball. In a type–token distinction, a type (e.g., a 'ball') is more abstract than its tokens (e.g., 'that leather soccer ball')." [Wikipedia]

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a visualization is worth several orders of magnitude more than a linear description. Below (Figure. 1) are two basic models of the hierarchical and/or nested nature of abstraction. An abstraction ladder is a common metaphor to delineate levels of analysis, providing a step-by-step process of distancing ideas and objects, or the abstract from the concrete. Bessie the cow is a typically banal example, but if it is framed in terms of cows and climate change, it would be relevant.

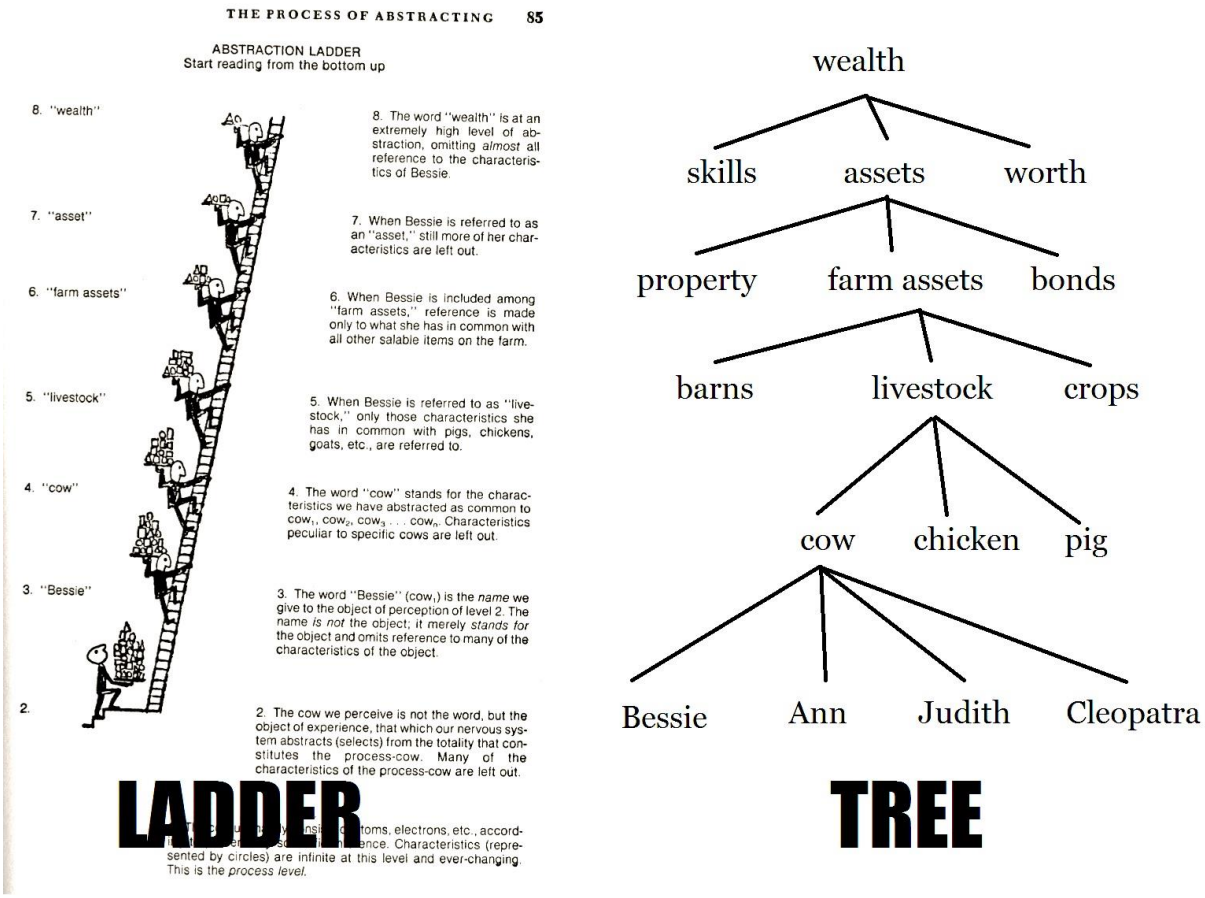

Figure. 1

A better example still is the Tree of Knowledge (ToK) System (Figure. 2), depicting a nested hierarchy of abstraction that holistically integrates knowledge across dimensions. ToK is a theoretical unification of psychology, developed by Gregg Henriques, associate professor at James Madison University. The ToK is similar to E.O. Wilson's concept of 'consilience'; agreement between the approaches to a topic of different academic subjects, especially science and the humanities. The Official Website on the Tree of Knowledge System claims that the ToK is;

> *"...a new unified theory of knowledge that maps the pieces of the scientific puzzle in a novel way that connects Quantum Mechanics to Sociological processes and everything in between into a coherent whole. The most novel aspect of the ToK is its visuo-spatial depiction of knowledge as consisting of four dimensions of complexity (Matter, Life, Mind, and Culture) that correspond to the behavior of four classes of objects (material objects, organisms, animals, and humans), and four classes of science (physical, biological, psychological, and social)." (source)*

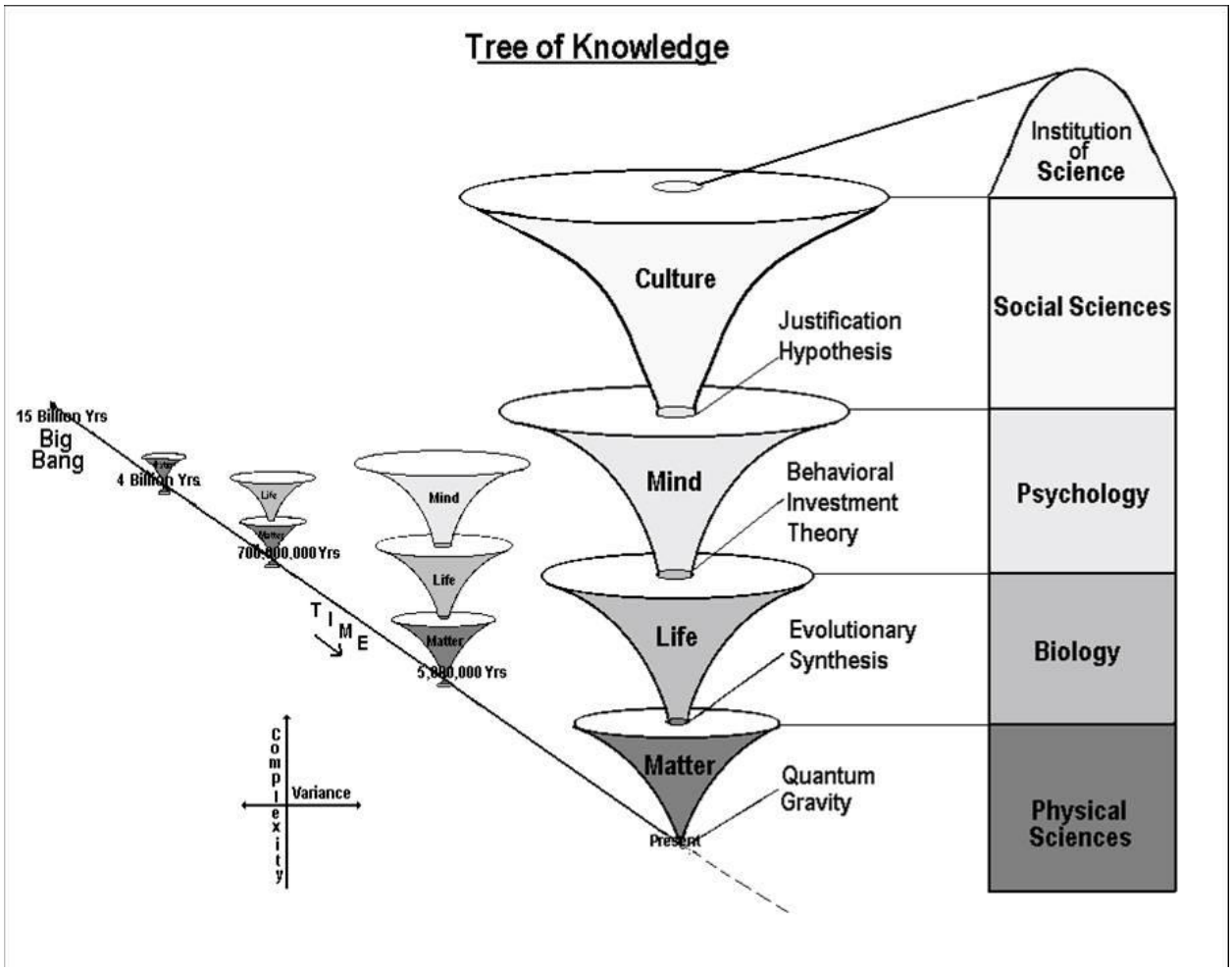

Figure. 2

A third abstract depiction of information ordering is the Data-Information-Knowledge-Wisdom (DIKW) Pyramid. The original DIKW Pyramid is not perfect, as critiqued here in the Harvard Business Review [source], however it is little more than a 'reproach' for leaving out some necessarily details, such as the question of 'what is knowledge?' or how that layer interacts. This particular version (Figure. 3) integrates the dimensions of context and understanding, which converge on wisdom.

Figure. 3

The academic abstract is a vital concept, that condenses complex knowledge while retaining information integrity and consistency. The academic abstract is generally defined as "…a brief summary of a research article, thesis, review, conference proceeding or any in-depth analysis of a particular subject and is often used to help the reader quickly ascertain the paper's purpose."[Source] Consideration of large volumes of abstracts is the basis of qualitative meta-analyses. It is also useful in the general sense of any summary or statement that encodes nested information. As such, flash cards are one of the most effective learnings aids.

TATO employs many other conceptual byproducts of (thinking) abstraction. A basic concept is a heuristic; a method of problem solving that enables self-learning and discovery, or a set of automatic rules or commands that guide decision making. Common examples include a 'rule of thumb, an educated guess, an intuitive judgment, stereotyping, profiling, or common sense.' A heuristic is a good starting point for more rigorous abstractions to model ideas, society, and ethical decision frameworks, and critical thinking heuristics especially can play a greater role in universal education. Several deeper concepts will only be noted in passing here, for the sake of brevity. 'Critical discourse analysis' (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on the performativity of language and speech acts, to examine the power relations involved in discourse. 'Root cause analysis' (RCA), a problem solving technique to end undesirable patterns by identifying and intervening at the source event. The concept of 'immanent critique' is a dialectic method for locating contradictions in rules of

society and social systems. Immanent critique questions not only the context of its investigations, but also the ideological basis of the objects in question, which are socially constructed products of history, and is rooted in Hegel and Marx, and on through critical theory. A geometry between concepts begins to emerge that creates the intellectual space for meta- problem solving. The concept of 'world disclosure' refers to how individuals experience and interpret the world as it is presented to them. It is considered a 'pre-interpreted and holistically structured background of meaning' disclosed through day-to-day interactions. TATO proposes that the term also includes 'disclosure *about* the world' through universal education and immanent critique, particularly in the ideal conceptual products of "prime knowledge" and a "core philosophy," as per TATO's vision. Going deeper, 'abductive logic programming' (ALP) is a high-level knowledge representation (KR) framework that can be used to solve problems declaratively through abductive reasoning, or inference to the best explanation. ALP is a point of entry into computer programming, machine learning, and artificial intelligence, where abstraction is a foremost concept, instrumental in the development and training of chatbots and other intelligent knowledge interface systems. The emergence of benevolent AI hinges solely on our collective ability to program (teach) it humanity. In order to do that, we also need to also teach ourselves. From the depths of code back to basic practicality, the insight is abstraction is expressed by a student, quoted on the White House blog:

> "In AP Computer Science Principles, I learned the importance of "**abstraction**", meaning to break a challenge into manageable pieces, and have applied this concept into various aspects of my studies and my life outside of the classroom." - Adrian Avalos, from National City, California, [Source: the White House blog]

TATO follows through on countless more abstractions to a *reductio ad absurdum*, or 'reduction to the absurd,' which is a method to prove a statement true by showing the absurdity of its denial. For example, war is absurd, yet it cannot be disproven or stopped but by the careful and patient definition of its futility and 'mutually assured destruction.' Slavery, segregation, prohibition, fascism, genocide - these core pathologies should be denied on the face of it, yet they become organizing principles themselves and the social organism eats away at itself for the enrichment of a privileged class. All of these abstract insights beg the question of whether 'more research is needed,' as is often explicit in the conclusion of any given paper, or if enough is enough. On many issues, notwithstanding the present research agenda, TATO concludes that more research is *not* needed, and rather, debate closure should be pursued. In other words, it is a not question of lack of knowledge, but rather of epistemology and the means to actualize emancipatory knowledge. Much more could be said in simply defining abstraction, but this paper does not have the space to dwell on its many variations. From basic ladders, trees, and pyramids, to blueprints, schematics, and worldviews; from simple math to quantum physics to AI, abstraction is the quintessential concept. Perhaps this is why, as David Bromwich observed, "[Henry Hazlitt] was able to view **abstraction** as a necessary stage in every inquiry, because he read the word etymologically, as the detachment or drawing away of one quality from a mass of others, for the sake of a certain emphasis and result."[Source] The remaining sections mainly attends to the relation to philosophy and sociology, and for the purposes of TATO.

1.3 The Reproach of Abstraction

In *The Reproach of Abstraction* (2004) Peter Osborne addresses the tension between idealism and realism, to defend philosophical abstraction from skepticism. Abstraction is not only defensible, but the "key" to solving humanity's collective problems at the universal level. TATO seeks to revive abstraction as a methodological program to simplify complexity and refine concepts as a technique to mediate contested discourse. Osborne's critique of the 'reproach' is really a counter- or meta-critique, and as such is a prescient precursor to metamodern abstraction.

> "[*The Reproach of Abstraction*] is a paper about **abstraction**, in particular, but by no means exclusively – and this 'by no means exclusively' is a large part of its point – **philosophical abstraction**.* It is concerned at the outset with what might be called the reproach of **abstraction**: the commonly held view, across a wide variety of theoretical standpoints, more or less explicit, that there is some inadequacy inherent to **abstraction** per se, which is both cognitive and practical (ethico-political) in character. I aim to cast doubt on this reproach, in its exclusive form at least, in order to clear the way for a thinking of the idea of 'actual **abstractions'** as the medium of social experience in capitalist modernities. I take 'global capitalist modernity' to be the transdisciplinary object unifying inquiries in the humanities and social sciences, if only implicitly – the idea of global capitalist modernity is the transcendental horizon of their possible unification. I therefore take the notion of actual **abstractions** to be a methodological key to a philosophically reflective form of transdisciplinarity. It is only a transdisciplinarity such as this, I believe, that can rescue the idea of philosophy as a discourse of universal mediation from the corrosive critiques of its claims to an absolute universality, familiar in recent years in various pragmatist, historicist, contextualist and deconstructive forms. As Ricoeur once put it:
>
> > "Philosophical discourse achieves universality only by passing through the contingence of cultures … its rigour is dependent upon equivocal languages … its coherence must traverse the war between hermeneutics."
> > [Source]

A complementary concept to the reproach of abstraction is agnotology, the study of culturally induced ignorance. Through pseudoscience, misinformation, and propaganda, doubt and skepticism can be systematically manufactured for political and economic advantage. Case in point, the tobacco lobby suppressed the scientific truth about smoking from public policy for 70 years, profiting off the addictive and lethal consequences at the expense of public health. In this way, abstraction becomes of hiding the truth, rather than discerning it. Like the reproach of abstraction, its own tools are used against it. A collection of case studies, including the key issue of climate change, was published as *Agnotology: The Cultural Production of Ignorance*, edited by Robert Proctor and Londa Schiebinger in 2008. Agnotology can be seen as a political sociology of knowledge, to uncover hidden knowledge-power relationships that undermine social health, education, and justice. Corporations and states engage in such psy-ops under the pretenses of epistemic authority, but TATO seeks to bestow the benefits of knowledge and power to the people themselves.

1.4 The Abstract Society

The Abstract Society: A Cultural Analysis of Our Time is an obscure sociological treatise from 1970, by Anton C. Zijderveld, which sets the metamodern stage for the present abstract sociology. The problem is that society is abstract. The inset of the jacket cover reads as follows:

> "In every modern industrial state more and more individuals find themselves confronting and revolting against an **abstract** entity - 'the system' or 'the establishment' which seems to rule their lives."

The book is a level-headed Marxist critique which relates the processes of modernization and alienation to abstraction. Society is abstract, caused by the pluralist segmentation of its institutional structure and the division of the sciences, among other factors. This abstraction poses a problem of increasingly complexity. "According to Karl Marx," Zijderveld writes;

> "Hegelian totalitarianism was utterly unreal and **abstract**. He reformulated it in terms of socio-economic reality and thus carried on Hegel's search for totality and comprehensiveness." (p.74).

Thus, 'historical materialism' provided a concrete basis for an abstract social theory. Zijderveld owes credits formal legacy for this idea to Simmel, for whom sociology is basically founded on abstraction;

> "Insofar as it is based on the notions that man must be understood as a social animal and that society is the medium of all historical events, sociology contains no subject matter that is not already treated in one of the extant sciences… Sociology thus is founded upon an **abstraction** from concrete reality, performed under the guidance of the concept of society." - Simmel

Therefore, we must construct an ideal concept of society. Notwithstanding the grand theory of Hegel and Marx, the over-specialization of contemporary science has…;

> "become so **abstract** and obscure that not only colleagues within the same discipline but even experts within a single specialty have difficulty understand each other's issues. This is the exact opposite of intellectual totalitarianism, and I propose to call it *intellectual Taylorism.*"

So here the problem is already abstract in a multiplicity of ways. Philosophy was too abstract (general), 'the system' became too abstract (complex), the sciences are too abstract (fragmented). Zidjerveld attempts to clarify by problematizing micro- and macro- abstraction separately. Beginning with the individual dimension, the author's concept of abstraction revolves around the dangers of 'false consciousness' and 'reification' (considering abstract concepts as things), which are central to TATO's sociology of knowledge. He further relates abstraction to 'commodity fetishism' as;

> "… the veneration of **abstract** realities… particularly possessed by the **abstraction** par excellence: money."

Now money too is abstract (sublime). Moving into the social dimension, he relates abstraction with increases with distance and size. As industrialization and bureaucratization grow, society becomes more abstract. The world is dominated by technocratic abstraction and modern consciousness is polarized into *intellectualization* and primitivization (or smartening up and dumbing down), hence 'the abstract society.' The general trend here is that abstraction is a variegated process with negative social implications, aside from the intellectualizing concept.

Towards the end of the book, Zidjerveld advances a critique of utopian thinking, and calls for 'intellectual ascetism… to master the forces of control on the level of consciousness first' over structural changes. For more depth on the book, a review article of *The Abstract Society* is attached in the appendix. Now, the focus shifts to negative practices of abstraction that manifest in counterproductive and anti-intellectual ways.

1.5 Vicious Abstraction

Vicious abstraction is a linguistic fallacy whereby some essential piece of information is removed. It is considered as part of a set of other semantic errors including weasel words, composition/ division, suppressed quantification, equivocation, amphibology, and the fallacy of accent. According to the semantic context, vicious abstraction comes in two main forms: 1) quoting out of context, which distorts the statement's meaning, and 2) misquotation, where paraphrasing omits or alters vital details.

> [X] = "X" (out of context)
> [X] = "[x]" (misquotation)

Vicious abstraction has many parallels outside linguistics. Vicious abstraction is invoked as the selective reduction of information that is "vicious" to the extent that it is false or inverts the meaning of the original fact. William James discusses the concept more broadly in a chapter of *The Meaning of Truth* titled "ABSTRACTIONISM AND 'RELATIVISMUS'";

> "Let me give the name of 'vicious **abstractionism**' to a way of using concepts which may be thus described: We conceive a concrete situation by singling out some salient or important feature in it, and classing it under that; then, instead of adding to its previous characters all the positive consequences which the new way of conceiving it may bring, we proceed to use our concept privatively; reducing the originally rich phenomenon to the naked suggestions of that name **abstractly** taken, treating it as a case of 'nothing but' that concept, and acting as if all the other characters from out of which the concept is **abstracted** were expunged. [Footnote: Let not the reader confound the fallacy here described with legitimately negative inferences such as those drawn in the mood 'celarent' of the logic-books.] **Abstraction**, functioning in this way, becomes a means of arrest far more than a means of advance in thought. It mutilates things; it creates difficulties and finds impossibilities; and more than half the trouble that metaphysicians and logicians give themselves over the paradoxes and dialectic puzzles of the universe may, I am convinced, be traced to this relatively simple source. THE VICIOUSLY PRIVATIVE EMPLOYMENT OF **ABSTRACT** CHARACTERS AND CLASS NAMES is, I am persuaded, one of the great original sins of the rationalistic mind." - William James, The Meaning of Truth, 1909

The phrase "vicious abstraction" is interesting terminology. The vicious effects may not be apparent, but there are implied ripple effects, and the aggregate effect of small lies is considerable. TATO argues that these pathologies are widespread and systemically reinforced. So serious and commonplace are these distortions, that perhaps this term is appropriate as an umbrella term for a whole set of abstractions with negative consequences. The following quote is illustrative of the way by which racism becomes institutionalized and invisible, and the feeling "vicious" is an apt sentiment.;

> You start out in 1954 by saying, "Nigger, nigger, nigger." By 1968, you can't say "nigger" — that hurts you. Backfires. So you say stuff like forced busing, states' rights and all that stuff. You're getting so **abstract** now [that] you're talking about cutting taxes, and all these things you're talking about are totally economic things and a byproduct of them is [that] blacks get hurt worse than whites. And subconsciously maybe that is part of it. I'm not saying that. But I'm saying that if it is getting that **abstract**, and that coded, that we are doing away with the racial problem one way or the other. You follow me — because obviously sitting around saying, "We want to cut this," is much more **abstract** than even the busing thing, and a hell of a lot more abstract than "Nigger, nigger."
>
> — Lee Atwater, Republican Party strategist in an anonymous interview in 1981

The racism example demonstrates how causation can become distanced and protracted, such that there can be effects (in this case, racist effects) that focus only the proximal cause. Racist attitudes are sublimated and abstracted away from individual interactions into institutional processes. The whip from the past still lashes the present, but now through an abstract chain reaction or ripple effect expressed across micro-relations. Consider this example as one of hundreds, if not thousands, of abstract processes subsumed in the broader racialized prohibition regime called 'the war-on-drugs.' Whether intentional or not, this abstract subterfuge is wrong as it is counterproductive. The issue needs full disclosure in the form of truth and reconciliation.

Another way an abstraction can be vicious is its denial to others. Here, Cornel West laments how the exclusivity of a given abstraction can be used to deny rights to another group. At the same time, it is suggestive of how a concept can elude people through the equivocation of language.

> "I just think it is very important that we don't sanitize and sterilize what brother Bernie Sanders talks about when he talks about health care as a right as opposed to a privilege. See voting rights was a privilege for a long time; you had white brothers with property and white brothers without property, women didn't have the right to vote. So it remained sanitized, it was an **abstraction** for a small group, but it functioned as a privilege. Black folk didn't get it til '65. So just language is so **abstract**, that when Bernie Sanders says it's a right, he wants to specify the ways in which voting rights is universal…"
>
> — Cornel West, calling out the Democratic Platform Committee for rejecting single payer health care in 2016.

There is a broader systemic pattern of vicious abstraction. The environmental crisis is abstract in several ways here. It is abstracted (mystified) through commodity fetishism. It is abstracted through containment (landfills), negative externalities (pollution), and the suppression of environmental science. It is abstracted through politicized science and manufactured ignorance, as revealed through agnotology. It its abstract in its sheer complexity, and its removal from daily life and immediate concerns. Bill Clinton may have inadvertently hit the nail on the head in 2000, when being interviewed by Leonardo Dicaprio:

> Dicaprio: "Why do you think this issue is so constantly overlooked?"
>
> Bill Clinton: "I think it's because it takes a long time for the climate to change in a way that people feel it. And because it seems sort of **abstract** now."
>
> (source: Before the Flood, at 16:40-55)

That the problem is 'abstract' is certainly a common shorthand for dealing with complexity, but it is also a critical tool for understanding and fixing the problem.

1.6 Abstract Empire vs. Open Society vs. The Open Conspiracy

The 'abstract' narrative is continued in contemporary discourse. In the book *The Open Society: Reforming Global Capitalism*, George Soros refers to global capitalism as "an abstract empire," in that capitalism is super-sovereign and deterritorialized, analogous to global empire. "the empire is almost invisible, possessing no formal structure." (p.171). He writes…;

> "The first question that needs to be answered is whether there is such a thing as a global capitalist system. My answer is yes, but it is not a thing. We have an innate tendency to reify or personify **abstract** concepts - it is built into our language - and doing so can have unfortunate consequences. **Abstract** concepts take on a life of their own, and it is only too easy to go off on the wrong track and become far removed from reality; yet we cannot avoid thinking in **abstract** terms,' because reality is just too complex to be understood in its entirety. That is why ideas play such an important role in history- more important than we realize." p.171 Soros, Open Society

Capitalism is problematized in terms of both the abstract nature of globalization and our abstract methodologies. However, Soros is skeptical that a global consensus can be formed based on principles alone, due to fallibility. In fact, he writes that "it is not possible to gain general acceptance for those principles simply by explicating them." (p.136). TATO rebukes these assumptions and contends that metamodern society is up to the challenge of universal education, knowledge disclosure, and global truth and reconciliation. However difficult it may be, honesty in public policy is the new standard TATO upholds. Soros goes further in eschewing any abstract plans, opting for a middle way;

> "The solution cannot be the same as on the state level. A global state would constitute a greater threat to liberty than the individual state. Nor can we design a solution in the **abstract**: That would also contradict the principles of open society." Soros, p.136

TATO intends to challenge Soros' assumption via a metamodern disclosure. In other words, TATO advocates designing abstract solution. A literally prototypical example of this is found in *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution*, published in 1928 by H. G. Wells. In typical visionary fashion, Wells anticipated the entropy of society, with its penchant for power and secrecy, and suggested a blueprint for global society that is on par with metamodernism's open-source nature. He describes the 'open conspiracy' as a "scheme to thrust forward and establish a human control over the destinies of life and liberate it from its present dangers, uncertainties and miseries." According to Soros, the most important feature of the center is that it dictates its own economic policies, and because it "holds in its hands the destinies of other countries." (p.173). In the core-periphery model, the United States is at the center as a provider of capital and a "clearinghouse for information." Unfortunately, this turn of phrase is meant in the sense of banking, as opposed to knowledge delivery. For a 'knowledge-based economy,' sociological information has been poorly processed in the United States. All of this relates back to the abstract nature of 'the system' and what to do about it. An

'open society' has not been sufficient; we need an 'open conspiracy.' A summary of the key points is broken down in the book as follows:

Initial premises

(1) Firstly, the entirely provisional nature of all existing governments, and the entirely provisional nature, therefore, of all loyalties associated therewith;
(2) Secondly, the supreme importance of population control in human biology and the possibility it affords us of a release from the pressure of the struggle for existence on ourselves; and
(3) Thirdly, the urgent necessity of protective resistance against the present traditional drift towards war.

Broad principles

(1) The complete assertion, practical as well as theoretical, of the provisional nature of existing governments and of our acquiescence in them;
(2) The resolve to minimize by all available means the conflicts of these governments, their militant use of individuals and property, and their interferences with the establishment of a world economic system;
(3) The determination to replace private, local or national ownership of at least credit, transport, and staple production by a responsible world directorate serving the common ends of the race;
(4) The practical recognition of the necessity for world biological controls, for example, of population and disease;
(5) The support of a minimum standard of individual freedom and welfare in the world; and
(6) The supreme duty of subordinating the personal career to the creation of a world directorate capable of these tasks and to the general advancement of human knowledge, capacity, and power;
(7) The admission therewith that our immortality is conditional and lies in the race and not in our individual selves.

The Open Conspiracy implies opposition to 'closed' conspiracies, such as war, imperialism, corruption, oppression, etc… Thus, Wells' blueprint factors into the study and reconciling of conspiracy culture and the military-industrial complex as a way to solve those very problems. To speak of any progress made in the name of the open society (via Open Society Foundations, New World Order, or otherwise), one must also concede the truth about the dark underbelly of globalization. The open society, for all its good intentions, has not been pursued exclusively in the light of day, as H.G. Wells advocated. Liberal democracy has been spread around the world by force via neocolonialism and intervention. Neoliberal trade policies have widened inequality, although can claim some success by reducing poverty in general. Organized crime and corruption pervade the highest levels of business and government around the world. What this amounts to is 'systemic conspiracy,' defined as the "broad array of social controls" institutionalized in a "large organization, technology, or system -- a powerful and obscure entity so dispersed that it is the antithesis of the traditional conspiracy" (Melley). US foreign policy, and to some extent the world order, is controlled through a nexus of special interests within the military-industrial complex referred to as the 'deep state,' a more substantiated term than the conspiratorial 'shadow government.'

H.G. Wells himself considered this obscure book the definitive statement of his worldview, and pinnacle of his life's work, yet it has fallen by the wayside, even to the extent that it doesn't appear to be a part of the "conspiracy theory" canon. Though Wells does not discuss 'conspiracy' in the modern sense, it is implicit that his 'open conspiracy' is an open opposition to the systemic forces of globalization that shape society in secretive and

coercive ways. The open conspiracy could be seen as a precursor to 'alter-globalization,' the global justice movement for environmental protection, economic fairness, human rights, and civil liberties, among other issues. The concept of an open conspiracy is an awakening to a group of ideas; a synthesis of realizations, historical, biological, and sociological.

The juxtapositions of abstract empire and open society reflect a postmodern diagnosis and treatment, which have subsequently failed. The metamodern turn does not invalidate these concepts, but it synthesizes them and, most importantly, addresses all anomalies. Therefore, we can juxtapose ['abstract empire/'open society'] with ['open conspiracy'/'abstract society'] and focus on the latter paradigm as the path forward. Soros' notion of 'radical fallibility,' made explicit in his aversion to blueprints (despite having them), intended as a precautionary principle against pure reason, could be considered part of the 'reproach of abstraction' that Osborne critiqued, and that TATO must address. Open conspiracy is introduced here as a metamodern solution proposed ahead of its time; an open-source open-ended anti-war knowledge-based society. In this vision, Wells had nobly inscribed the hope of reconstructing the world order before World War 2 was even on the horizon. Instead, society has become more abstract and in denial of its own core pathologies.

1.7 Abstract Sociology

Sociological abstraction is the study of theoretical concepts across different levels, and is related to philosophical abstraction. Such concepts are mental constructs, for example, the idea of 'class' or a 'nation.' A distinction is made between a concept and *operationalized* concept, which is tied to concrete forms. Sociological theorizing (between concepts) is typically understood across three levels;

> "The most abstract level of sociological theory is often referred to as *Grand Theory*. Grand Theory attempts to explain the inter-relationships among numerous concepts and intends to be independent of time and space. In other words, it intends to be universally applicable. An example would be Talcott Parsons' Action Systems Theory, which attempted to explain the workings of society at a very abstract level. Another example would be Marx's Historical Materialism, which argued economic relations were the foundation of social structure.
>
> *"Middle-range theories* are also explanations of human behavior that go beyond one particular observation but are limited in scope and do not attempt to explain all of society. A classic example (with Grand Theory implications) would be Durkheim's research on suicide. He proposed a relationship between the breakdown of social bonds found in religions (Protestantism vs. Catholicism) as the reason for higher rates of suicide in specific areas.
>
> *"Micro-level theories* are limited to explanations of specific observations and are not intended to be universal. For instance, current work on religious activity in the U.S. seems to indicate that religious pluralism and market forces have played a role in reducing the apparent amount of secularization (defined here as 'decreased levels of religiosity'). As the U.S. is one of few examples of a modernized country where levels of religiosity have remained relatively high over time (perhaps the only example), the theory seems applicable only to the U.S. and only during a specified time period." [Wikipedia]

The key for TATO is how sociology is abstract, and how abstraction can renew sociology. On this, Simmel writes…

> "The first problem area of sociology, it will be remembered, consisted of the whole of historical life insofar as it is formed societally. Its societal character was conceived as an undifferentiated whole. The second problem area now under consideration, consists of the societal forms themselves. These are conceived as constituting society (and societies) out of the mere sum of living [humans]. The study of this second area may be called "pure sociology" which **abstracts** the mere element of sociation. It isolates it inductively and psychologically from the heterogeneity of its contents and purposes, which, in themselves, are not societal." [Source]

TATO approaches abstract sociology in the sense of "pure sociology" (Simmel), and further develops it along the lines of the abstract society (Zijderveld), as well as philosophically (as a thinking process, and metaphilosophy). However, TATO also implies a kind of radical sociology to address the 'reproach of abstraction' and 'vicious abstractions' as have been discussed. To this effect, the United States has a well-documented history of anti-intellectualism, which strongly persists in the present moment, despite the US being a highly advanced 'knowledge economy' (according to the OECD). Anti-intellectualism has been a targeted process in many cases, but is also an unconscious social process that affects everyone (elites as well as masses.) The paradoxical rift between knowledge and power, TATO argues, is the root cause of political polarization that has poisoned the well of public discourse, and caused anti-socialist sentiment at the expense of the public interest. This in turn has bred an anti-sociological character that has impaired not only society, but the study of it as well. In 2013, conservative former Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, was criticized for invoking the phrase "commit sociology," (as if it were a crime to study society). [Source] The context was whether to address the root causes of terrorism or to prioritize dealing with its proximate causes. It prompted Michael Adams, the President of the Environics Institute, to write an impassioned op-ed titled "I commit sociology, and I don't intend to stop." [Source] Anecdotes aside, sociology, through its critical and emancipatory character, is threatening to the status-quo and the establishment. Moreover, the state, historically, is not above killing intellectuals and activists who speak truth to power. It is time for the pendulum to swing in the other direction.

> "[The social sciences] is in the unfortunate position of still having to prove its right to exist. Yet this is fortunate, too, for sociology's struggle for existence is bound to lead to a clarification of its basic concepts (which is good and necessary in itself) and to the establishment of its specific manner of investigating reality." [Source, Simmel]

Simmel's insight is truly ahead of its time, and confers a humility and responsibility to the thankless task. The problem lies in definitions, at the level of semantics. It is simple; sociology must prove itself by defining itself. Sociology validates itself by its conceptual contributions to society. Metamodern abstract sociology is precisely about the 'clarification,' or perhaps more accurately, resolution. The solution to social problems is a new sociological turn, to broad truths and pure ideas. The insights from this knowledge base must be communicated as well, hence public sociology.

1.8 Public Sociology

The Division of Sociological Labour	Academic Audience	Extra-Academic Audience
Instrumental Knowledge	PROFESSIONAL	POLICY
Reflexive Knowledge	CRITICAL	PUBLIC

Table. 1

Public sociology is a subfield that emphasizes the transmission of knowledge to the wider public. With respect to the four domains of sociology, our main task is to bridge critical and public spheres, and revitalize the professional and policy realms. TATO aims to educate the public and its representatives about social theory and the non-obvious insights into how society does or does not work. The goal is to inspire in everyone a 'sociological imagination,' defined by C. Wright Mills as "the vivid awareness of the relationship between personal experience and the wider society." (Source) To this effect, a call for public sociology was made in 2004, by ASA President Michael Burawoy.

> "As mirror and conscience of society, sociology must define, promote and inform public debate about deepening class and racial inequalities, new gender regimes, environmental degradation, market fundamentalism, state and non-state violence. I believe that the world needs public sociology - a sociology that transcends the academy - more than ever. Our potential publics are multiple, ranging from media audiences to policy makers, from silenced minorities to social movements. They are local, global, and national. As public sociology stimulates debate in all these contexts, it inspires and revitalizes our discipline. In return, theory and research give legitimacy, direction, and substance to public sociology. Teaching is equally central to public sociology: students are our first public for they carry sociology into all walks of life. Finally, the critical imagination, exposing the gap between what is and what could be, infuses values into public sociology to remind us that the world could be different." - Burawoy, M. 2004 American Sociological Association Presidential address: For public sociology. American Sociological Review, 2005, Vol. 70, Issue 1, 4-28.

Within sociology there has also been a defensive reaction to its optimistic and normative character, but objectively this conservative skepticism is misguided. TATO reaffirms the dire need for public sociology. Public intellectuals are being drawn from the hard sciences, while economics and psychology uphold the popular front for the humanities, which mystifies the root causes of social problems. Sociology is relegated to the classroom, and other disciplines continue to encroach on what's left of it. This is particularly the case with neuroscience; specifically, the nascent field of neurosociology and the discovery of 'mirror neurons.' We are continually drawn away from dealing with the problem of society itself.

1.9 Critical Mass Society

In socio-dynamics, critical mass is reached when the minimum number of adopters of innovation in a social system cross a tipping point, creating and sustaining further growth. Mass society refers to a managed working class population, culturally homogenized and socially alienated via industrialization, bureaucratization, and large-scale impersonal social institutions. Critical mass society combines these concepts in a novel way to empower grass roots action and social progress. It all begins and ends with education and critical pedagogy. The essences of critical mass society are mass enlightenment against the 'false consciousness' of social myths, consumer culture, and oppressive institutions.

As outlined in our Campaign section, one of TATO's public sociology strategies is to champion "critical mass society," by fostering a movement of distributive epistemic justice (universal knowledge equality) through a public sociology of knowledge. We can accomplish this by producing and distributing research and media to raise public awareness about the epistemic 'knowledge gaps' and 'blind spots' in society that prevent obvious truths from being realized in pragmatic policies. Our methodologies draw on *critical theories* to depoliticize knowledge and address the (hidden) root causes of social pathologies that sabotage and obstruct progress, justice, and equality everywhere in the world. The research agenda of TATO emphasizes meta-theory and abductive reasoning, or abstraction, as a core aspect of critical thinking and critical social theory.

One strategy we employ is to *incentivize* critical thinking (and critical outcomes) at both the individual and institutional level, prompting chain reactions that catalyze the widespread support of progress. The theory behind this strategy is centred around the ability to make categorical truth statements that conflicting parties are compelled to agree upon, which necessarily must appeal to both the people and their representatives independently. thereby reconciling micro-macro dynamics. Authoritative self-evident declarations constitute the top-down approach, while a bottom-up approach involves *selling* the reflexive benefits of critical thinking as value-generating positive feedback loops. Supposing that mass enlightenment in itself is not considered valuable enough, we also propose that this venture, like renewable energy, is a *profitable* opportunity that will stimulate equitable economic growth, thus making investment and adoption a 'no brainer.'

2.0 The Quantum Turn in Social Science

The line between the social sciences and physical sciences is often referred to as "the demarcation problem" because there is no clear answer to where physics ends and sociology begins, or how to apply scientific models to the social. A philosophical assumption that is problematic is "dualism," in how the distinction of mind and matter imports assumptions from classical physics. These problems are effectively 'solved' through a quantum turn in the social sciences, insofar as society is metaphysical, rather than physical. Simply put, the answers to classical problems are 'either/or' and for quantum problems are 'both/and.' A recent quantum turn in social science literature further clarifies the potential. For example, the 'quantum consciousness hypothesis' (QCH) ties abstraction into the cognitive basis for a quantum social science:

> "When considering a quantum-like model of the functioning of the brain … **abstract** mental images, such as concepts, are processed on the basis of the quantum-like representation of information. A physical mechanism of creation of the quantum-like representation of classical signals is presented. Quantum-like images are encoded by covariance matrices of classical signals. In the quantum

terminology, these are density matrices. Thus concepts are represented by density matrices (which are in fact classical covariance matrices). The same model can be applied to "collective brains" and thus social systems. " p. 27, Quantum Social Science, Cambridge University Press, 2015

A decisive proposal for a quantum turn, titled *Quantum Mind and Social Science* (2015), suggests society is a holographic organism. Each individual is an instantiation, embodying particular collective notions. Like a pixel, or holon, we encode information from the whole. After laying the methodological ground work in chapters 1-5, the book communicates an immediate relevance to the reformulation and reformation of sociology and society;

> "Chapter Six ("A Quantum Model of Man") develops a quantum rival to the machine model of man, emphasizing free will, creativity, and the performative nature of agency. Chapter Seven ("A Quantum Model of Society") interprets holist or discursive theories of meaning in terms of the concept of quantum information, to argue that society should be conceptualized as a super-organism with collective consciousness. Chapter Eight ("A Teleological Model of Social Evolution") asks if society has a kind of consciousness, then could it also have "purposes"? This leads to a teleological view of social evolution at odds with the orthodox Darwinian account."
> (source)

Notwithstanding these advances, there are parallel discourses in the social sciences that must be integrated first. The details and implications of Wendt's thesis will be returned to. In *Social Humanism: A New Metaphysics*, Brian Ellis discourses on the prospect for a universal basis of agreement. The book precedes Wendt's new thesis, and the word 'quantum' is not present, so any quantum connection is not self-evident. Nevertheless, TATO proposes that the connection is staring us in the face with the subtitle 'a new metaphysics.' The themes of social idealism and meta-theory, which TATO is predicated on,

> "In this book, Ellis argues that moral and political objectives are not independent of one other, and so must be pursued in tandem. Social humanism is a moral and political philosophy that does just this. As a political philosophy, it justifies the implementation and maintenance of many of the characteristic social policies of welfare states. As a moral philosophy, it provides the foundation required for most human rights legislation… To this end, Ellis elaborates on the theory of social humanism and the need to reconsider the metaphysical foundations of morals. He develops the theory of social idealism as a meta-theory for both morals and social policy, exploring the global consequences of this new approach." [Source: Social Humanism: A New Metaphysics, Ellis, 2012, Routledge]

In advocating for a global perspective, Ellis guides the reader through a decidedly 'abstract' narrative in the history of philosophy. Whereas *synderesis* is defined as the inclination of the mind to practical reason and further, to universal first principles, he continues…;

> "This **abstract** point of view was seen as being a natural counter to self-interest, which, it was thought, would otherwise dominate our thinking. The Thomists argued that synderesis provides us with knowledge of the Natural Law, which provides us with the universal premises required for moral reasoning. Aquinas believed that any actions taken freely in accordance with the universal premises supplied by synderesis would be acts of conscience, and therefore have **special authority** (D'Arcy, 1961). Secular moral objectivists do not, of course, believe in Natural Law theory or necessarily in the right of conscience. But **many still believe that there is a set of objectively true moral principles**

that we could arrive at successfully, if only we were to cultivate the habit of thinking about them in this special way." (emphasis added)

> "The 'view from human kind' inherent in the Thomistic theory of synderesis is essentially the same as Rawls's view from behind his 'veil of ignorance'. For, it is the view at which you would arrive by **abstracting** from your own position, characteristics, and so on and see yourself as just another member of the human race. It is what I would call 'the humanistic or cosmopolitan point of view'. It is much less **abstract** than Thomas Nagel's (1986) conception of a view from nowhere. But it is more **abstract** than what I would call 'the social point of view', which is just the view that you would obtain by thinking of yourself as simply another member of your own society. There are other **abstractions** too that lie in between the humanistic point of view and the view from nowhere. For, you could cut your human identity out of the equation altogether and see yourself as just another biological organism. This would yield 'the biological point of view'. To reach the view from nowhere, you would have to take the process of **abstraction** still further. For, to do so, you must **abstract** from yourself as knower and consider how the world would be in itself, independently of our perception of it. This process of **abstraction** is the one that results in what we call 'the physical point of view'. From this point of view, there is no normativity left to talk about. So, physically considered, there is no best of all possible worlds." p. 161

Ellis is searching for a universal, humanistic, cosmopolitan point of view that could be validated based on a universally accepted moral principle. He continues;

> "There is, at present, no global social contract in which such a principle could be embedded… [and] if any such principles could be found, they would have to be included as basic principles in this global contract."

TATO would like to develop a global social contract, as well as the vital principles it would be based on. To be clear, abstraction as a process is not itself a vital principle, but rather a tool to devise those principles. Abstraction *is* a vital principle in so far as on the most abstract level of conceptualizing human nature, we are all identical and sacred, indispensable, instantiations of the whole. Along with an abstract social contract, comes the prospect of an abstract constitution, and other new legal precedents.

A final note on the quantum turn concerns communication. Language too is meta-(physical), and cannot be easily reduced to a universal architecture. Quantum linguistics is a recent field which models how language is a basis for quantum entanglement between human beings. Complex equations aside, the simple insight of the quantum approach to language, is the multiplicity of meaning (potentiality) of a given word or phrase. The quantum physicist David Bohm contributes a practical application for breaking through discursive stalemates, in what has come to be known as a Bohm Dialogue (or Bohmian Dialogue or "Dialogue in the Spirit of David Bohm"), which is a…;

> "freely flowing group conversation in which participants attempt to reach a common understanding, experiencing everyone's point of view fully, equally and nonjudgementally. This can lead to new and deeper understanding. The purpose is to solve the communication crises that face society, and indeed the whole of human nature and consciousness. It utilizes a theoretical understanding of the way thoughts relate to universal reality. It is named after physicist David Bohm who originally proposed this form of dialogue." [Source: Wikipedia]

2.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, "abstraction" writ large is proposed as a knowledge representation framework, with novel expression under metamodernism - an emergent paradigm suggestive of universal social philosophy. Abstraction also a multivariate thought process, social process, and critique of society and its conceptual objects. "Vicious" (false) abstraction is the errant translation of knowledge, leading to unjust or 'vicious' outcomes, the systematic habits which are correlated with anti-intellectualism and endarkenment. Global capitalism is an 'abstract empire' that the 'open society' seeks to remedy, but falls short due to fallibility and compromising trade-offs. Global civil society and alter-globalization are emergent movements to establish social and political equilibrium, which The Abs-Tract Organization seeks to anchor in an abstract or "pure sociology" as a critical pedagogy and public policy platform, communicated through a public sociology that bridges critical theory with common sense to foster a 'critical mass society.' The concept of abstraction is a meme tracked through various discourses to highlight its versatility as a semantic signifier and unifier. The quantum turn in social science promises that a complete metaphysics of society is within reach, though it may exceed our grasp. As per the tradition of ending research papers, more research and knowledge production on abstraction is needed, and thus TATO is worth supporting. Statement of potential conflicts of interest or corruption by funding sources: absolutely none.

APPENDIX I

Book review
London School of Economics
Anton C. Zijderveld, The Abstract Society: A Cultural Analysis of Our Time. London:
Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1972,
xii + 180 pp., £2·95·

"The title of this book may suggest yet another routine pop-sociological account of man's 'alienation' in modem society. In fact, it is a serious contribution, readable and unpretentious, meriting considerable attention.

Zijderveld would not, I suppose, reject the label 'phenomenologist'. Yet the book is undogmatic and unencumbered with the ponderous jargon of the-if I may be paradoxical- thoroughgoing phenomenological determinist. Its theoretical foundations are laid in an excellent survey of the 'homo duplex theorem' (of which we sociologists, I fear, make rather heavy weather) from Luther through Marx and Simmel to Mead, Thomas and Schutz. Existentialism is mentioned, but there is no outpouring of metaphysical nonsense about man's 'being'. Quite the contrary; the author has his feet on the ground, and sees that kind of thing more as a sign than an explanation of the problem.

Zijderveld makes the familiar point that 'modem society has become abstract in the experience and consciouness of man'; this has happened because of a discrepancy between the objective autonomy of institutions and the subjective autonomy of the individual. The individual is subject to the social control of many institutions, but none of them control him totally. 'Because of segmentation, the social structure leaves voids ... which the individual fills up with his private meanings, his dreams, phantasies, explanations and justifications. Since they lie between the institutional segments of pluralistic society, these private meanings escape control and rationality of the rest of the social structure and are experienced as the subjective and unalienable [sic] foundation of human existence. The individual calls this his private autonomy or even "freedom", but is unaware that this freedom is merely residual: it is, so to speak, put together from the leftovers of a segmented social structure'. The seemingly greater freedom of pre-modem man is very different, stemming from much nearer total and unquestioned social control.

The most stimulating section is Zijderveld's long chapter analysing the revolt, mainly by young people, against the 'abstract society' in the 1960s. He draws three ideal-types of protest movements: The Gnostic (ex orienteand drugs-lux); the Anarchist (cultural rather than political, as exemplified by the Amsterdam Provos in their earlier, white bicycle phase); and the Activist, seen in much student protest. Zijderveld demonstrates that each is a form of 'romantic absolutism'. Activist protest has focussed on the university. Originally it attacked the rationality of the bureaucracy, which curbed the pursuit of knowledge; latterly it spilled over to a rejection of the rational pursuit of knowledge itself, and into a desire to smash the institution altogether. But, writes Zijderveld, 'All reactionary Gemeinschqft utopias and "back-to-nature" dreams are doomed to fail because they blindly deliver the individual to the coercive forces of abstract society'.

What, then, is the alternative? In a last, avowedly social philosophical chapter, Zijderveld pleads for 'intellectual asceticism'. 'Modem man has to learn to master the forces of control on the level of consciousness first, before he proposes structural changes'. Ralph Nader, not Cohn-Bendit, is Zijdeveld's man of the future. There is more solid sociology here than this brief sketch has perhaps suggested. Incidentally, the book is not translated; the author writes good plain English and has a nice turn of phrase, as witness 'intellectual Taylorism' in his discussion of the academic division of labour."

STEPHEN MENNELL
1972

APPENDIX II

[From Club of Rome report]

CONTINUOUS CRITICAL PROBLEMS: AN ILLUSTRATIVE LIST

1) Explosive population growth with consequent escalation of social, economic, and other problems.
2) Widespread poverty throughout the world.
3) Increase in the production, destructive capacity, and accessibility of all weapons of war.
4) Uncontrolled urban spread.
5) Generalized and growing malnutrition.
6) Persistence of widespread illiteracy.
7) Expanding mechanization and bureaucratization of almost all human activity.
8) Growing inequalities in the distribution of wealth throughout the world.
9) Insufficient and irrationally organized medical care.
10) Hardening discrimination against minorities.
11) Hardening prejudices against differing cultures.
12) Affluence and its unknown consequences.
13) Anachronistic and irrelevant education.
14) Generalized environmental deterioration.
15) Generalized lack of agreed-on alternatives to present trends.
16) Widespread failure to stimulate man's creative capacity to confront the future.
17) Continuing deterioration of inner-cities or slums.
18) Growing irrelevance of traditional values and continuing failure to evolve new value systems.
19) Inadequate shelter and transportation.
20) Obsolete and discriminatory income distribution system(s).
21) Accelerating wastage and exhaustion of natural resources.
22) Growing environmental pollution.
23) Generalized alienation of youth
24) Major disturbances of the world's physical ecology.
25) Generally inadequate and obsolete institutional arrangements.
26) Limited understanding of what is "feasible" in the way of corrective measures.
27) Unbalanced population distribution.
28) Ideological fragmentation and semantic barriers to communication between individuals, groups, and nations.
29) Increasing a-social and anti-social behavior and consequent rise in criminality.
30) Inadequate and obsolete law enforcement and correctional practices.
31) Widespread unemployment and generalized under-employment.
32) Spreading "discontent" throughout most classes of society.
33) Polarization of military power and psychological impacts of the policy of deterrence.
34) Fast obsolescing political structures and processes.
35) Irrational agricultural practices.
36) Irresponsible use of pesticides, chemical additives, insufficiently tested drugs, fertilizers, etc.
37) Growing use of distorted information to influence and manipulate people.
38) Fragmented international monetary system.
39) Growing technological gaps and lags between developed and developing areas.
40) New modes of localized warfare.
41) Inadequate participation of people at large in public decisions.
42) Unimaginative conceptions of world-order and of the rule of law.
43) Irrational distribution of industry supported by policies that will strengthen the current patterns.
44) Growing tendency to be satisfied with technological solutions for every kind of problem.
45) Obsolete system of world trade.
46) Ill-conceived use of international agencies for national or sectoral ends.
47) Insufficient authority of international agencies.
48) Irrational practices in resource investment.
49) Insufficient understanding of Continuous Critical Problems, of their nature, their interactions and of the future consequences both they and current solutions to them are generating. *

APPENDIX III

15 Principles of Metamodernism

(The following list is combined from two articles ('10 principles,' and '5 more…', by Seth Abramson, and is otherwise excerpted verbatim.)

Metamodernism is variously called a cultural paradigm, a cultural philosophy, a structure of feeling, and a system of logic. All these phrases really mean is that, like its predecessors' modernism and postmodernism, metamodernism is a particular lens for thinking about the self, language, culture, and meaning — really, about everything.

1. Metamodernism as a negotiation between modernism and postmodernism. Because postmodernism was a direct response to modernism, these two cultural philosophies include a number of diametrically opposed first principles.

2. Dialogue over dialectics. Postmodernism favored "dialectics" over dialogue, whereas metamodernism explicitly advances the cause of dialogue.

3. Paradox. Metamodernism embraces the paradoxical. For instance, in negotiating between modernism's belief in universality and postmodernism's belief in contingency, metamodernism posits that certain ideas can be "objectively" true for an individual even though the individual also understands that they are not universally true.

4. Juxtaposition. Juxtaposition occurs when one thing is super-imposed atop another thing from which it would normally be deemed entirely separate. A good example of a metamodern juxtaposition is the juxtaposition of sincerity and irony that we often find in metamodern literature.

5. The collapse of distances. The distance between the self and others, and between the self and society, is one that postmodernism celebrates by finding myriad ways to put the self (or groups of selves) in a dialectic with opposing selves or groups.

6. Multiple subjectivities. Postmodernism required the "Balkanization" of self-identity — the partitioning of the self and groups of selves into clear boxes of race, religion, gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, and so on — in order to establish its dialectics.

7. Collaboration. Metamodernism encourages not only dialogue but collaboration. In a world in which we are constantly being influenced by innumerable forces — some we recognize as influential for us, some we don't — metamodernism literalizes this experience by encouraging us to consciously join our efforts and perspectives with those of others.

8. Simultaneity and generative ambiguity. Early descriptions of metamodernism suggested that an individual thinking metamodernistically "oscillates" between opposing states of thought, feeling, and being — almost as though human beings were pendulums swinging between very different subjectivities.

9. An optimistic response to tragedy by returning, albeit cautiously, to metanarratives. Since the term "metamodernism" was coined in 1975, metamodern theorists have all agreed that metamodernism is used by individuals and societies as a generative response to tragedy; indeed, the phrase "a romantic response to crisis" is often used to describe metamodernism.

10. Interdisciplinarity. The reason metamodernism is so oriented toward crisis-response is because its tendency to dismantle and rearrange structures is a tacit acknowledgment that those structures — as they were previously arranged — are what likely caused the crisis in the first place.

11. Reconstruction instead of deconstruction. If postmodern deconstruction encouraged us to use "dialectics" — a zero-sum tug-of-war between opposing principles — as a way of understanding how meaning is constructed differently depending upon where one is standing, metamodern reconstruction attempts to unite opposing principles even if the result is a paradox.

12. Engagement instead of exhibitionism. Too often, meaning-making processes in contemporary society revolve around staking out a position and defending it — and being seen publicly so staking and defending — rather than engaging an issue collaboratively with an eye toward enacting positive change (however subtle and gradual).

13. Effect as well as affect. In the arts, we often look for evidence of poststructuralist principles in either the absence or dominance of affect.

14. Walllessness and borderlessness. These are unwieldy words that don't really exist in common parlance — and with good reason — but the idea that metamodernism eliminates the walls and boundaries between literal and abstract structures is an important one to the paradigm.

15. Flexible intertextuality. "Intertextuality" refers to the presence of relationships between individual texts. Traditionally, when we find intertextuality in artwork it's intentional — a clearly "authored" effect that's achieved through conspicuous devices like allusion and quotation.

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