WHAT IS ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY?

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IN THIS ISSUE

The History of Analytic Philosophy Movement exploded onto the philosophic scene in 1990 with the publication of Peter Hylton’s study Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy. Though the movement had existed at least a decade before that, it was then that it reached critical mass. A flood of works in the subject quickly followed Hylton’s 1990 book, and history of analytic philosophy emerged as a prominent part of contemporary philosophy. One problem with the early work in this new field was that it did not often ask what analytic philosophy itself was, but assumed that this was already well known. As a result, these works frequently ended up uncritically fleshing out old stories about the history and nature of analytic philosophy with new details, rather than revising our pictures of what analytic philosophy is and was. However, this shortcoming of much of the new history soon became apparent, and toward the end of the 90s, historians of analytic philosophy increasingly began asking the question: What is analytic philosophy? Today there are a respectable number of studies on just this question and interest in the subject is still growing.

The Preston Challenge: In this issue of the Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly, Aaron Preston surveys the recent historical work on the nature of analytic philosophy and draws the controversial but plausible conclusion that there is not now, nor has there ever been any such school, movement, or tradition of thought as analytic philosophy, and that the idea that any such philosophy ever existed is an illusion. Call this “The Preston Challenge”. If you think there was one particular kind of philosophy that was analytic philosophy, Aaron Preston would like you to please tell him what it was, preferably defining the entity in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. He says it can’t be done.

Also in this issue, we review Michael Beaney’s study of philosophical analysis. Beaney is writing a lengthy and ambitious survey of the various ideas of philosophical analysis that have existed from Plato to Quine and beyond. A first report of his study exists as a long entry by him on “Analysis” in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, and a book by him on the subject is near completion.
While Beaney's *Stanford* article on analysis surveys the idea from Plato to the present, it focuses on analysis as it was conceived by 20th century analytic philosophy, and so has attracted much attention among historians of analytic philosophy. Beaney's work is one of the most ambitious attempts in the field to date to say what analysis is. In it, he describes the various types of philosophical analysis that have existed throughout the history of philosophy using descriptions of his own design of these different types of philosophical analysis. According to our review, sometimes his descriptions work and sometimes they don't.

Once again, Ray Perkins selects and introduces a letter to the editor by Russell. This issue's letter was written to the New York Times 6 weeks before the 1955 announcement of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto. Though unpublished at the time, the letter has recently been published in Russell's *Collected Papers*. In the letter, Russell reaffirms his commitment not just to the abolition of nuclear weapons but more broadly to the abolition of war.

In Society News, Tim Madigan shares his memories of Paul Edwards, recently deceased honorary member of the Bertrand Russell Society and editor of the 1967 Macmillan *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, which is one of the monuments of 20th c. philosophy. Also in Society News, Peter Stone reviews Warren Allen Smith's new book *Gossip from Across the Pond*. And rounding out the Quarterly, this issue's installment of the Traveler's Diary reports on the BRS session at the last Central Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association.

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Society News

The 32nd Annual Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society convened May 13-15 at McMaster University, as it has in 2001, 1990, 1983, 1981, and 1978. This year's meeting, hosted by Kenneth Blackwell and Nicholas Griffin, overlapped with the conference 'Russell v Meinong: 100 Years after On Denoting', which was organized by Griffin and Dale Jacquette to celebrate the centenary of Russell's landmark essay 'On Denoting'. The two conferences attracted an interesting mix of Russellians and Meinongians, 63 people in all. As always, the talks were excellent, the company enjoyable, and the conversation stimulating.

McMaster University, home of the Bertrand Russell Archives and Bertrand Russell Research Centre, and epicenter of Bertrand Russell studies, takes up a substantial portion of real estate on the southwest corner of Hamilton. Located in the vicinity of Niagara Falls, Hamilton is easy to reach from Toronto by driving alongside shimmering Lake Ontario on the QE2. But within Hamilton, streets become willful, seemingly intent on turning you back downtown, away from McMaster. Once arrived, however, there is always much to do—parking, dithering, checking in and registering, meeting others, and, especially, nosing about the Russell Archives. Later, a crowd of Russellians enjoyed a buffet of lasagna and listened to a recording of the July 9 1955 Russell-Einstein Peace Manifesto press conference. Ken Blackwell, Andy Bone and David Blitz also engaged in a panel discussion, *The Russell/Einstein Peace Manifesto: 50th Anniversary Reflections*.

Both the BRS AM and the OD conferences turned out to be located in the vast basement of a complex of buildings near the library and student center. In some ways the venue was ideal, with large and small classrooms, a big room for gathering between talks for snacks and coffee. But the rooms might as well have been in a maze, a fact adding much to the disorientation and mass confusion of latecomers arriving minutes before curtain call. Meanwhile, the appearance of new blood—the Meinongians!—added a frisson of excitement. What strange, pale breed was this, come to share space with us Russellians? What would the day hold?

If titles of talks are any indication of intellectual sensibilities, compared to the Meinongians, who fixed their minds' eyes chastely on *the* and *a*, Russellians are intellectually wanton, ogling any sub-
ject that comes along. This was apparent on the first morning. Chad Trainer began the day with “Solitary, Poor, Nasty, Brutish and Short: Russell’s View of Life Without World-Government”, a talk in which he compared Thomas Hobbes’ views on national governments with Russell’s views on world governments. Chad sees Russell adopting Hobbesian views on world government, despite Russell’s disapproval of Hobbes’ views on government.

With the discovery that Ed Boedeker’s scheduled discussion of Logical Platonism and the Theory of Types had been cancelled, Cara Rice took the stand. Speaking on “Who Stole the Future?”, Cara discussed the allegations that Aldous Huxley’s novel Brave New World is based on the penultimate chapters of Russell’s earlier philosophical work The Scientific Outlook. Throughout his life Russell claimed that Huxley borrowed heavily from The Scientific Outlook; Cara, who carefully scrutinized his claim, came down on Russell’s side, along the way giving us insight into Russell’s views on science.

Andrew Bone, of the Bertrand Russell Research Center, delivered the final talk before lunch. In “What Russell Got Wrong in the 1930s”, he discussed Russell’s pacifism leading up to World War II in the 1930s, suggesting that Russell’s acceptance of the need to stand up to Germany militarily was reluctant and slow in coming.

Lunch break meant work for Board members: deciding the location of next year’s meeting (Iowa City) and the like: readers may consult the meeting minutes at the back of this issue for further details of the meeting. After lunch, BRS President Alan Schwerin led a master class in a debate on Russell’s essay “On Vagueness”, asking whether objects and not merely our knowledge of them can be vague. The debate was animated in its inability to agree as to what Russell thought was or wasn’t vague. Howard Blair followed with “Russell on the Structure of Spaces (and Times)”. A mathematician at Syracuse University, Blaire explained in lay terms how Russell constructed concepts such as number, continuity, space, and time from structures of relations, while demonstrating some problems with Russell’s views; it was a pleasure to have a mathematician share his point of view with us, as he did during his own talk and in later discussions.

When Andrew Lugg addressed the Society with a talk on “Russell as a Precursor of Quine, Quine as a Follower of Russell”, he emphasized the similarities between the philosophies of W.O. Quine and Russell; he maintains that it makes more sense to view Quine as the last Russellian rather than as the last Logical Empiricist. Bernard Linsky followed with a description of his current research at the Russell Archives into the second edition of Whitehead and Russell’s Principia Mathematica, suggesting, among other things, that Russell merely experimented with the Wittgenstein-Ramsey views he is commonly thought to have embraced there.

As the day progressed a mysterious television crew appeared, and began to interview Chad and others—about j’ne sais quoi! The afternoon saw a gradual ebbing of shyness, an impulse to mingle, and ties began to be forged between the ‘Others’ and us. The evening commenced, as custom demands, by imbibing thimbles of Red Hackle and chattering over supper, this time with several of the cerebral Meinongians as guests. Over dessert Tim Madigan entertained us with “What a Character—Bertrand Russell in Fiction.”

On Sunday, Michael Potter began the session with a talk on “Impulse and Desire in Russell’s Emotivism”, in which he examined the emotivism in Russell’s 1916 Principles of Social Reconstruction. David Goldman, psychiatrist and BRS board member, then shared his discipline’s perspective on Russell in ‘A Psychiatrist Looks at The Conquest of Happiness’. Following this, a panel consisting of Tim Madigan, Bob Riemenschneider, and Peter Stone came together to discuss “Harriet Ward’s A Man of Small Importance”. Harriet Ward, it will be remembered, is the daughter of Dora Russell and Barry Griffin—Griffin is the “man of small importance” referred to in the title of the book. In the book, Ward discusses the relations between Dora Russell, Bertrand Russell, and Griffin. A review of the discussion will be published in a future issue of the Quarterly.

Concluding the conference with a bang, Stephen Heathorn, a historian at McMaster University, spoke on ‘The Eugenical Discourse in Russell’s Marriage and Morals’. Heathorn stated that his talk would show Russell’s thinking on eugenics up to the 1930 Marriage and Morals, but it delivered even more than was promised, giving us, in fact, a fairly comprehensive survey of the state of eugenic thought, along with Russell’s place in, it up to 1930. It was a delightful history lesson and a delightful note on which to end the conference. All in all, the weekend was a pleasant one indeed.
and made a strong case for combining BRS annual meetings with those of other groups in the future.

**OUR FRIENDS AT MIND**, the premier British journal of analytic philosophy, report that this October they are celebrating the centenary of Russell's landmark article “On Denoting”, which they call “the most famous paper in analytical philosophy in the first half of the twentieth century”, with a special centenary issue of *Mind*. Their October 2005 Centenary Issue of *Mind* is edited by Stephen Neale and contains articles by Ray Buchanan and Gary Oster tags (“Has the Problem of Incompleteness Rested on a Mistake?”), David Kaplan (“Russell on Denoting”), Richard L. Cartwright (“Remarks on Propositional Functions”), David Kaplan, Saul Kripke (Russell’s Notion of Scope and the Hydra Problem), Alex Oliver and Timothy Smiley (“Plural Descriptions and Many-valued Functions”), Nathan Salmon (“On Designating”), Stephen Schiffer (“Russell’s Theory of Definite Descriptions”), and Zoltán Gendler Szabó (“The Loss of Uniqueness”). To order, visit www.mind.oxfordjournals.org

**DO TELL!** Warren Allen Smith has a collection of essays out—*Gossip from Across the Pond*. (chelCpress, P.O. Box 30196, New York, NY 10011, chelCpress@nyc.rr.com). Peter Stone sends us this report of it:

Who says philosophers can’t enjoy gossip? That, in a nutshell, is the message of *Gossip from Across the Pond*, by longtime BRS member Warren Allen Smith. *Gossip from Across the Pond* collects a decade’s worth of Warren’s regular column from the British magazine *Gay and Lesbian Humanist*. The articles included cover a wide variety of topics, but all relate to two eternal subjects of gossip—who’s gay and who doesn’t believe in God. The reader encounters the “gay mafia” (p. 79), gay penguins (pp. 102, 106), Elton John checking into hotels under the name “Sir Colin Chihuahua” (p. 19), as well as plenty of humanist philosophy. Some is serious, as when Gore Vidal states, “I’m really interested now in trying to destroy monotheism in the United States. That is the source of all of the problems” (p. 8). Some is less so, as when mocking the idea that “the Good Lord works in mysterious ways” (pp. 42-43). There’s even the occasional reference to philosophy more traditionally conceived, although always spun in Warren’s inimical way. One involves Gore Vidal, Paul Newman, Nietzsche, and a horny army chaplain (p. 8). And what discussion of philosophy (gossipy or otherwise) would be complete without at least one reference to Russell? Warren tells of taking a house tour in which he met renowned architect Philip Johnson. “Johnson,” he writes, “asked me my occupation, and I replied that at the moment I was teaching Bertrand Russell’s *Why I Am Not a Christian*…. He knew Russell’s work well, so I asked if he was a naturalist. He said something to the effect that the word had many meanings but that he was no super-naturalist” (p. 121).

It’s always good to know how successful Russell is as an ice-breaker during house tours. All in all, this little book is an entertaining and refreshing journey into topics of interest to philosophers from an angle often pursued though seldom admitted.

**TIM MADIGAN REMEMBERS PAUL EDWARDS (1923-2004):** A member of the editorial board of *Free Inquiry* magazine and the International Academy of Humanism, Paul Edwards was born in Vienna, Austria. A gifted student, he was admitted to the prestigious Akademische Gymnasium. But after the Nazi annexation of Austria his family sent him to stay with friends in Scotland. He later went to Melbourne, Australia, where he studied philosophy at the University of Melbourne and was influenced by the analytic tradition that held sway there. After the war he came to Columbia University, where he completed a doctorate in philosophy. He was to spend the rest of his life in New York City, teaching at such institutions as New York University, the New School for Social Research, and Brooklyn College.

Edwards is best known for editing the monumental *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, which originally appeared in 1967 and has never since been out of print. It remains the essential reference work for the field of philosophy. Using his editorial prerogative, Edwards made sure that there were plentiful entries on atheism, materialism, and critiques of God’s existence, and he himself wrote the long entry on his own philosophical hero, Bertrand Russell. In 1959, Edwards edited a collection of Russell’s previously scattered writings dealing with religion, titled *Why I Am Not a Christian and Other Essays*, which became a seminal work in the promotion of unbelief.

Those who knew Edwards will always remember his erudition and his wicked sense of humor. An admirer of Voltaire and Russell for their great wit, Edwards had a special fondness for the life and
works of David Hume, the man he considered to be the best exemplar of a learned individual who lived life to the fullest and who remained to the day of his death a cheerful nonbeliever.

Shortly before his death, Edwards published a collection of essays entitled *Heidegger’s Confusions*, dedicated to demolishing the legacy of the man whom Edwards considered to have done the greatest damage to the field of philosophy in the twentieth century. He particularly abhorred Heidegger’s confusing writings on the nature of death and his cryptic comment that, “Only a God can save us now.” For Edwards, such an expression was beneath contempt.

Edwards also wrote a biting critique of reincarnation, *Reincarnation: A Critical Examination*. The volume he co-edited with Arthur Pap, *A Modern Introduction to Philosophy*, was one of the most influential textbooks ever published in the field, and contained copious selections from such unbelievers as Paul Rée, John Stuart Mill, Clarence Darrow, Bertrand Russell, David Hume, Ernest Nagel, and A. J. Ayer, as well as Edwards’ own insightful introductions and annotations. Never one to hide his own unbelief, Edwards often commented that his two main goals were to demolish the influence of Heidegger and keep alive the memory of Wilhelm Reich, the much-reviled psychoanalyst whose critiques of religion Edwards felt remained valid. Edwards final book, *God and the Philosophers*, a summation of the views of all the major Western philosophers on the subject of the deity, will be published posthumously.

I was privileged to get to know Paul as a person. For many years no visit of mine to New York City was complete without stopping at Paul’s huge apartment on Broadway and 72nd Street. He would regale me with stories about his teaching career, his various battles with his nemesis Sidney Hook, and the adventures he had in editing *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Given Paul’s own biting wit, it’s not surprising that he so admired Voltaire and Russell. He also had a great fondness for Benjamin Franklin, whose own wit is often unappreciated. Shortly before his death I told him about a television program devoted to Franklin—I hope that he was able to view it before his untimely demise. Paul was one of the last living links to the world of the Vienna Circle, and I miss him greatly.

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**FEATURE**

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT WORK IN THE HISTORY OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY**

AARON PRESTON

0. Introduction

Though the genre has existed since the middle of the twentieth century, reflection on analytic philosophy’s history and nature has come into its own as a field of inquiry only in the last fifteen years. In this essay, I aim, first, to survey some of the main ways in which analytic philosophy has been represented in historical work concerning it, and second, to discuss the implications of certain inconsistencies in these representations. Specifically, I will argue that (1) historical work on analytic philosophy has undergone an evolution that can be parsed roughly into three main phases, (2) work in the first phase helped to solidify a received view of analytic philosophy which, though erroneous, was crucial to the movement’s success, (3) work in the second and third phases have a shared tendency to define analytic philosophy in ways that fail to do justice to the facts surrounding the rise of analytic philosophy, especially as concerns the historical significance of the erroneous received view, and (4) all of this points to the conclusion that analytic philosophy is something of an illusion.

1. *The 3-Stage Evolution of Historical Work on Analytic Philosophy*

On my view, historical work on analytic philosophy falls roughly into three categories, which I prefer to characterize as three evolutionary stages of its development. The first stage consists of contemporaneous first-hand accounts of analytic philosophy in its early
and middle stages (approximately 1900-1950), and near-contemporaneous, memoir-like accounts of the same. Gilbert Ryle, himself an important contributor to this category, once observed that “history begins only when memory’s dust has settled” (Ryle 1963, 1). The defining characteristic of work in this category is that it came into being while memory’s dust was still loose in the air: the “analytic philosophy” of which its authors speak is, for them, either a living reality or at least one retained in living memory; the observations are largely first-hand even if retrospective, as opposed to current work which reconstructs the early history of analytic philosophy on the basis of written records.

Given its memoir-like status, we may call work in this category “proto-history”. Proto-historical works on analytic philosophy include J.O. Urmson’s 1956 Philosophical Analysis, G.J. Warnock’s 1958 English Philosophy Since 1900, and the 1963 collection The Revolution in Philosophy, which includes essays by such analytic luminaries as A. J. Ayer, P. F. Strawson, and Gilbert Ryle.2

One notable feature of work in this proto-historical stage is the tendency of its authors—especially those writing from within the analytic tradition—to act as if the “essence” of analytic philosophy was relatively easy to pick out. They seem to take it for granted that analytic philosophy originated around the turn of the twentieth century in a radical break with philosophy in the great tradition, and that this revolution in philosophy was founded primarily on a novel method—the analysis of language—and the novel metaphilosophical view it inspired, namely, that philosophers should conduct their business by analyzing language because analyzing language is the only business that philosophy can legitimately claim as its own. The tendency among proto-historical authors is to treat this meta-philosophical view as the central doctrine of analytic philosophy. They take it for granted that analytic philosophy’s other characteristic features, such as its anti-historical and anti-metaphysical tendencies, all derive from its core belief that the right way to do philosophy had been discovered, and that it was the analysis of language. Finally, they take it for granted that the main figures responsible for the revolution were, first, Moore and Russell (and Frege, insofar as Russell appropriated his techniques in mathematical logic), and, later, Wittgenstein.

Works about analytic philosophy written during this early period were guided largely by this received view. It is true that they frequently mention the fact that there were differences among analytic philosophers, and they note the confusion this sometimes caused for people (usually characterized as “outsiders”) trying to understand the movement. However, in the usual case, these differences are quickly dismissed as inconsequential in light of the deeper unity to be found in the analysts’ common acceptance of the analysis of language as the sole legitimate, or at least the most important, mode of philosophical activity.

For example, Arthur Pap claimed that, though there were significant differences among analytic philosophers, “the unanimous practice of the analytic method as a powerful instrument of criticism tends to blur these differences…” (Pap 1949, ix). What was this unanimously-practiced analytic method? Pap preferred to call it ‘logical analysis’, but it is clear that he had in mind the analysis of language, broadly construed:

> in general, all the typically philosophical questions of the form ‘what is the nature of X’ can be interpreted as questions of logical analysis, of the form ‘what is the meaning of the word ‘X’ or of any synonym thereof,’ or ‘what is the meaning of sentences containing the word ‘X’’. (Pap 1949, vii).

Thus, for Pap, analytic philosophers were united in their practice of the analytic method understood as the analysis of language.

Similarly, though Urmson notes that “the analytic practice had no clearly defined dogmatic background at all” concerning the objects of philosophical analysis, he goes on to say that analytic philosophers were united at least in the view that analysis was at least one of the most important tasks of the philosopher; and by analysis, they meant something which, whatever precise description of it they chose, at least involved the attempt to rewrite in different and in
some way more appropriate terms those statements which they found philosophically puzzling. (Urmson 1956, vii)

By emphasizing its linguistic aspects while simultaneously diminishing the significance of any theoretical disagreements among analytic philosophers that might have undermined the linguistic interpretation of philosophical analysis, Urmson's description reveals the centrality of that interpretation for the mid-century conception of analytic philosophy.

This pattern of emphasis and diminution is even clearer in a similar statement from Peter Strawson's 1963 essay "Construction and Analysis". Strawson was aware that there was considerable divergence of opinion over just what the objects of philosophical analyses were, even noting that this seemed to have an effect on the kind of enterprise a philosopher is engaged in—if they are sentences or statements, then philosophy is like grammar or linguistics, if they are thoughts or beliefs, then philosophy is like psychology. Nonetheless, Strawson affirms that the unity of analytic philosophy is grounded in the unanimous practice of the analysis of language:

"It does not matter much ... [what we say the objects of analysis are], ... Maybe it is best to say, as Moore always said, that the objects of analysis were propositions. This answer, whatever its shortcomings, emphasizes, without over-emphasizing, the linguistic nature of the enterprise, the preoccupation with meaning. For, however we describe the objects of analysis, particular analyses ... always looked much the same. A sentence, representative of a class of sentences belonging to the same topic, was supposed to be elucidated by the framing of another sentence. (Strawson 1963, 98; my emphasis)

Again we see an insistence upon the view that philosophical analysis is the analysis of language; any theoretical differences that might have suggested otherwise are shrugged off as unimportant relative to overwhelming similarity in the linguistic aspects of the practice of analysis.

In sum, then, what we see coming out of the proto-historical stage of historical work on analytic philosophy is a record of what was then, and what by and large has continued to be, the received view of analytic philosophy. On this received view, analytic philosophy is a school of philosophy that originated in a revolutionary break with philosophy-in-the-great-tradition around the turn of the twentieth century. The break was fueled by the perception that the correct method of philosophical inquiry had finally been discover-
ed, and that it was the analysis of language (hereafter, I shall call this view the linguistic thesis).

The second half of the twentieth-century saw astonishing changes in the analytic world, changes that would ultimately make it impossible for the received view to persist. In the 1960s and 70s, analytic philosophy's linguistic character began to fall away, and metaphysics reemerged as a legitimate enterprise. In the 1970s and 80s, analytic philosophy's anti-historical attitude began to loosen up, and space was made within the social scope of the movement for people to do more purely historical work on the history of philosophy (cf. Schneewind (ed.) 2004). By the early 1990s, this new historical approach was adopted by philosophers interested in applying it to the history of analytic philosophy itself.

Thus emerged a second stage in the historiography of analytic philosophy, which I call "new wave" history. New wave history is exemplified by such figures as Nicholas Griffin, Peter Hacker, Ray Monk, Peter Hylton, and Michael Beaney, among others. The title "new wave" signifies not only the use of the new historical approach, but also the fact that the results of their studies frequently challenge the received view of the proto-historical period, which persists today in a somewhat altered form, expanded so as to accommodate the developments within analytic philosophy during the latter half of the twentieth century—it is our received view (cf. Preston 2004, 2005).

In my estimation, the most important finding of new wave scholarship is that no view traditionally connected with analytic philosophy was actually shared by all and only canonical analysts—not even the linguistic thesis, which, as we have seen, seemed absolutely central to the analytic self-image in the proto-historical period.3 This lack of a common view does not result merely or even primarily from the fact that more recent analytic philosophers have abandoned the views of earlier analytic philosophers, so that, as Richard Rorty has observed, "most of those who call themselves 'analytic philosophers' would now reject the epithet 'linguistic philosophers' and would not describe themselves as 'applying linguistic methods'" (Rorty 1992, 374 n. 9). Rather, the deeper problem,

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which the new wave scholars have rooted out, is that the traditional defining doctrines of analytic philosophy never achieved universal acceptance even among core, canonical analysts in the early and middle periods of the movement.

By reading the main works of canonical analytic figures in light of each one’s broader corpus and their respective intellectual and social contexts, the new wavers have discovered what some of the proto-historians already knew: there were deep differences among the central movers and shakers in early analytic philosophy over issues so fundamental as what philosophical analysis was, and what the objects of analysis were. At least one canonical analyst, G.E. Moore, did not conceive of the objects of philosophical analysis as linguistic at all. Others did—such as Wittgenstein (in both his early and late phases), the Logical Positivists, and the Oxford ‘ordinary language’ philosophers—but they had different conceptions of what it meant to be a linguistic entity, what language was, how it functioned (i.e., how it meant, referred, etc.), and what the significance of all this might be for philosophy-at-large.

Though this has the status of newly acquired knowledge for many of the new wavers and their generation, those in the proto-historical period were not unaware of these differences; as we have seen, they acknowledged them quite explicitly. The crucial difference is that, whereas the proto-historians saw these differences as trivial, at least some of the new wavers have taken them to be significant enough to undermine the received view and to send them searching for new ways of conceptualizing analytic philosophy. I will have more to say about this shortly, but we must first turn to the third stage of development in historical writing about analytic philosophy.

We may characterize work of the third stage or type as “analytic history” for several reasons. First, it tends to be written by philosophers who work mainly in what are now called “core analytic” areas—philosophy of language, metaphysics, and epistemology—“hard-core” analytic philosophers we might call them, or to borrow John Ongley’s clever term, “high church” analytic philosophers. As one might expect from people who have their understanding of analytic philosophy as well as their general intellectual habits formed in these contexts, they exemplify a mentality and a method very different from the new wavers. In fact, it is much closer to what was standard in analytic circles prior to the historical movement of the 1970s. At that time, if the history of philosophy was studied at all, it was studied in the form of rational reconstructions of the views of historical figures, usually taken out of context and anachronistically assimilated to current interests and approaches. Thus, a second reason to call this “analytic history” is that it can be characterized as an application of the traditional analytic approach to the history of philosophy—the one against which the historical movement rebelled—to the history of analytic philosophy itself.

What is most characteristic of analytic history is a tendency to work within the parameters of the received view, in some cases despite the fact that it has been severely shaken by the findings of new wave history. An early, paradigmatic case of analytic history is Michael Dummett’s Origins of Analytic Philosophy (Dummett 1993). The influence of the received view can be discerned in his choice to define analytic philosophy in terms of a metaphilosophical view involving the analysis of language:

What distinguishes analytic philosophy, in its diverse manifestations, from other schools is the belief, first, that a philosophical account of thought can be obtained through a philosophical account of language, and, secondly, that a comprehensive account can only be so obtained (Dummett 1993, 4 f.).

Or, as he also puts it, the “fundamental axiom of analytical philosophy [is] that the only route to the analysis of thought goes through the analysis of language” (Dummett 1993, 128).

Dummett’s book was written after the historical movement but largely before the new wavers arrived on the scene. When they did, they quickly made Dummett’s definition their whipping-boy. For
example, Ray Monk has argued that, on Dummett’s characterization, even Bertrand Russell fails to qualify as an analytic philosopher (Monk 1997). Insofar as Russell is widely considered to be a patriarch of analytic philosophy, Monk’s argument amounts to a reductio ad absurdum of Dummett’s definition. A similar argument could be made putting G. E. Moore in the place of Russell. Beyond this, Dummett’s interpretation of Frege has been challenged (Hacker 1997, 52 f.; cf. Baker & Hacker 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989), so that perhaps even Frege fails to meet the criteria Dummett purports to draw from Frege’s own work. Given the utter untenability of Dummett’s definition in light of the historical and textual facts, where, we may wonder, did he get the idea for it? The only reasonable answer, it seems to me, is that he was guided by the received view.

A similar influence is discernable in what is arguably the best and most important example of analytic history to date: Scott Soames’ monumental Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century (Soames 2003). Unlike Dummett, Soames had the advantage of writing after new wave history had begun to make a noticeable mark.6 Consistent with new wave findings, Soames eschews a doctrinal definition of analytic philosophy, instead characterizing it as a “trail of influence” beginning with Moore, Russell, and Wittgenstein (Soames 2003a, xii f.). But this cannot really be Soames’ conception of analytic philosophy, for it cannot justify the principled selectivity Soames exhibits in tracing what he presents as the central storyline of analytic philosophy’s development. Trails of influence can easily be traced beyond the canonical domain of analytic philosophy, whether we understand that in historical or thematic terms. For instance, Frege and Peano influenced Russell in ways that helped him make significant strides toward Principia Mathematica. And yet, neither of them is included as a key player in Soames’ history—Frege is merely mentioned several times, and Peano not at all. Either these limitations are arbitrary, or Soames’ “trail of influence” is circumscribed by something more substantial, by a different conception of analytic philosophy according to which something other than influence holds it together and sets its boundaries. And here, again, I suggest that the best candidate is the received view, for Soames focuses on just the figures and exactly the issues it designates as being central to the rise and development of analytic philosophy.

Indeed, Soames comes close to acknowledging the received view in at least one place. By neglecting Frege, Soames is aware that he is leaving “an undeniable gap in the story” of analytic philosophy (Soames 2004b, 462). However, he excuses this on the ground that most of Frege’s work, which was done in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, “falls outside our official period” (Soames 2004b, 461). Given the scope of his history, it is clear that Soames’ official period begins around the turn of the twentieth century, with the work of G.E. Moore—exactly as the received view has it.

2. Current Definitions of Analytic Philosophy

So much, then, for the evolution of historical work on analytic philosophy. What has come of it? Despite the flourishing of work in this genre, little light has been shed on analytic philosophy’s true nature, or on the historical and intellectual factors most responsible for its advent and quickly-gained ascendancy in certain circles of academic philosophy. In fact, much current work in this genre is driving us further away from achieving this kind of understanding. This is because the inadequacy of traditional definitions of analytic philosophy, brought to light by the new wavers, has driven philosophical historians of all stripes to suggest a host of new definitions which diverge in significant ways from the received view. These definitions differ not only in respect of the particular features proposed as definitive of analytic philosophy, but also in respect of the types of features proposed as definitive.

Hans-Johann Glock (Glock 2004) has recently provided a helpful taxonomy of the definitional types currently in circulation. His categories are:

1. doctrinal (in terms of the views analytic philosophers espouse)
2. topical (in terms of which topics analytic philosophers tend to be interested in)
3. methodological (in terms of the methods they use)

Both Soames’ indices and his treatment of canonical early figures like Russell and Wittgenstein suggest that he is largely unaware of new wave history (cf. Kremer 2005). Still, “ideas are in the air”, and Soames does exhibit a much greater degree of caution than Dummett about offering defining doctrines for analytic philosophy.

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tic philosophy—is called "real definition". Real definitions are sup-
these terms synonymously, and will frequently use "school" to
phological school, movement, or tradition. In what follows, I will use
the right sort to pick out a group of the sort usually called a philoso-
types fail gw¢ types precisely because their generic content is not of
but the doctrinal type of definition. My claim is that all the other
have marshaled arguments against some one or more of these defin-
tional types, or, more frequently, against particular cases falling
under them. Important as many of these arguments are, I am going
to ignore them in order to focus on a general argument against all
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the right sort to pick out a group of the sort usually called a philo-
philosophical school, movement, or tradition. In what follows, I will use
these terms synonymously, and will frequently use "school" to
stand for them all.

It seems to have gone completely overlooked in the current de-
finitional controversy over analytic philosophy that the way we
define a philosophical school has metaphilosophical implications.
There are different kinds of definition, but the kind traditionally
aimed for in philosophy—and the kind needed in the case of analy-
tic philosophy—is called "real definition". Real definitions are sup-
pended to pick a thing out according to its most fundamental, or es-
sential, features, its necessary and sufficient conditions. With the
exception of those in the family resemblance category, most other
current attempts at defining analytic philosophy seem to be attempts
at real definition—at least their proponents make no effort to ex-
plain that they are trying to provide something different. Thus, in
proposing to define analytic philosophy topically, methodologi-
cally, or stylistically, genetically, or however, one implicitly pro-
poses that topics, methods, styles, lineage, or whatever, are most
fundamental to something's nature as a philosophical school.

But this is at variance with what most philosophers, both cur-
rently and historically, take to be true of the philosophical schools
with which they affiliate. With the exception of a few dyed-in-the-
wool Wittgensteinians of a certain variety, few in the contemporary
analytic world would deny that philosophy is a theoretical discri-
pline. Its business is, minimally, the production and critical assess-
ment of theories by means of reasoning. Theories, minimally, are
sets of views (propositions) about the way things are, or what is the
case, in some region or other—or possibly the whole—of reality.
And, again minimally, in order for philosophers to deal with such
views corporately, they must be verbally articulated in a relatively
straightforward way, in the form of a sufficiently clear declarative
sentence. I trust it will be recognized that this minimal conception
of what philosophy is and what it involves has been widely held, at
least implicitly, throughout the history of the discipline.

Now, this minimal metaphilosophical view has implications for
how the emergent social world of philosophers (academic or other-
wise) ought to take shape. On this view, what is most fundamental
to philosophy is reasoning, on the one hand, and the objects of rea-
soning—ideas, views, and so forth—on the other. The constant in
this pair is reason, and the variables are the particular ideas or views
to which reason is applied. Thus, insofar as there are philosophi-
cally relevant divisions to be made within the social world of phil-
osophy, they will be made along ideological lines.

This suggests that there is a minimum standard, a necessary con-
dition, for the initial formation and the retrospective demarcation
of groups that, like schools, movements or traditions, purport to mark
out not merely a region of social space, but of philosophical space:
such groups must rely for their cohesion, and hence also their exis-
tence, on a kind of unity that is constituted by agreement in theor-
etical matters. That is, a group is most properly called a philosophical
school (etc.) only when it has come together on the basis of a shared
philosophical view (or some set of them).

With this in mind, I shall say that a group counts as philosophical in the most proper, primary, or focal sense if and only if its cri-
terion for membership is acceptance of some set of views on the
basis of rational understanding. I will say of any group which meets
this requirement that it is philosophically unified, or that it possess-
es philosophical unity. And, when a view actually functions in this
way to ground the unity of a group, I shall call it a defining doctrine
of that group.

What is fundamental, then, to the sort of group commonly called
a philosophical school, is its defining doctrines. And, since a defini-
tion is supposed to pick something out according to its most funda-
mental features, the doctrinal approach to definition is the only legitimate one for a philosophical school. Looking to styles, topics, methods, or anything other than defining doctrines is either to mistake the accidental for the essential or to misunderstand the nature of a philosophical school.

3. An Evaluative Taxonomy

The position described in Section 2 provides the foundation for a larger taxonomy that runs somewhat skew to Glock's:

DEFINITIONS OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

I. NON-DOCTRINAL
1. Stylistic
2. Genetic
3. Family Resemblance
4. Topical
5. Methodological

II. DOCTRINAL
1. Traditional
2. Revisionist
   a. Benighted
   b. Illusionist

The categories in this taxonomy are not merely descriptive but evaluative; for, as I shall argue, falling into one of the left-hand options at any fork marks a definition as defective. The remainder of this essay will be given to explaining and systematically rejecting each of those left-hand categories until the illusionist variety is the only option left on the table.

In fact, we have already taken a first step toward this conclusion. The first division in this new taxonomy is between doctrinal and non-doctrinal definitions. A doctrinal definition is one framed in terms of a school's defining doctrines, in accordance with the position laid out in Section 2. A non-doctrinal definition is one framed in terms of anything else. We have already seen an example of a non-doctrinal definition in Soames' characterization of analytic philosophy as a trail of influence. Here are two other examples. Brian Leiter gives a stylistic definition, saying:

'Analytic' philosophy today names a style of doing philosophy, not a philosophical program or a set of substantive views. Analytic philosophers, cruelly speaking, aim for argumentative clarity and precision; draw freely on the tools of logic; and often identify, professionally and intellectually, more closely with the sciences and mathematics, than with the humanities. (Leiter 2000).

Avrum Stroll gives what is perhaps best characterized as a family-resemblance definition: "it is difficult to give a precise definition of 'analytic philosophy' since it is not so much a specific doctrine as a loose concatenation of approaches to problems" (Stroll 2000, 5). According to the position of Section 2, non-doctrinal definitions are inadequate to define a philosophical school and should be rejected.

Focusing only on the doctrinal definitions currently in circulation, we can make a further division: some doctrinal definitions of analytic philosophy are traditional, others revisionist. Traditional definitions are doctrinal definitions that keep to the received view, such as Dummett's. Other, more recent characterizations fit the received view just as well. For instance, John Searle describes analytic philosophy as the dominant school in contemporary academic philosophy in the English speaking world and in Scandinavia, as "primarily concerned with the analysis of meaning" (Searle 1996, 2), as originating with Frege, Wittgenstein, Russell, and Moore, and as perpetuated by the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle and by the Oxford ordinary language movement. Similarly, Louis Pojman has recently claimed that "Analytic Philosophy is centered on language and logic, analyzing the meanings of words and sentences even as it analyzes arguments and builds comparatively modest epistemological and metaphysical theories" (Pojman 2001, 1). This, he says, constitutes a "simplistic but meaningful" characterization of analytic philosophy.

Now these are exactly the sorts of definitions that, in Section 1, I claimed had been undermined by new wave scholarship. Indeed, this is why the perplexing variety of new definitions exists—because it has been shown that definitions involving traditional defining doctrines, in line with the received view, are not accurate. In the wake of this discovery, some have chosen to abandon the strategy of defining analytic philosophy according to doctrines, thereby implicitly rejecting the view that analytic philosophy is a philosophical school. This is a departure from the received view, but it is a subtle one. Prima facie, it allows us to preserve much of the received view, especially as concerns the extension of "analytic philosophy". For instance, we saw earlier how defining analytic philosophy in non-doctrinal terms allowed Soames to focus on just the figures and thought-trends picked out as central and canonical on the received view, despite the fact that his canonical figures held no common views. Others, though, have departed from the received view in more conspicuous ways, ways that force the extensional
scope of "analytic philosophy" well beyond its canonical domain. Definitions formed along these lines I call revisionist.

Perhaps the most striking case of revisionism comes from Ray Monk. Taking a vague conception of analysis as the defining feature of analytic philosophy, Monk suggests that we carve up the philosophical world in such a way that Frege, Russell, Meinong and Husserl count as analytic philosophers while Wittgenstein does not (Monk 1996). To count Meinong and Husserl among the analysts while excluding Wittgenstein is unquestionably contrary to tradition—in fact, it is hard to imagine a definition more at odds with the canon derived from the received view of analytic philosophy.

Another respect in which Monk’s view conflicts with the received view is that, since plenty of earlier philosophers used analysis in Monk’s sense, it detaches analytic philosophy from its customary turn-of-the-twentieth-century origin. Some revisionists acknowledge and accept this consequence. L. J. Cohen, for example, has argued that the analytic philosophers are united in that the problems they are interested in “are all, in one way or another, normative problems about reasons and reasoning, ...” (Cohen 1986, 10 f.). But certainly interest in normative problems about reasons and reasoning is not unique to those who are commonly taken to be analytic philosophers. Cohen himself admits that, on his definition, analytic philosophy turns out to be “…a strand in the total history of western philosophy from Socrates onwards rather than just a modern movement” (Cohen 1986, 49). Similarly, Dagfinn Follesdal has defined analytic philosophy as philosophy with a strong commitment to argument and justification (as opposed to the kind of philosophy done by, e.g., Heidegger and Derrida, which relies mainly on rhetoric rather than clear argument), admitting that this makes Aristotle, Descartes, and perhaps even Thomas Aquinas count as analytic philosophers (Follesdal 1997).

It seems to me that revisionism is misguided, for two reasons. First, it is self-undermining. The authors who end up proposing revisionist definitions do so only after using the received view to provide them with an initial orientation toward their subject matter. Starting off from the received view, they look for the defining doctrines of analytic philosophy. Finding none, they revise their conception of analytic philosophy in ways that utterly obliterate the received view, but then they carry on as if they had simply refined it. However, this involves what Putnam calls “excessive charity” in interpretation, similar to what would be required (borrowing Putnam’s example) to regard the concept of oxygen as a mere revision of the concept of phlogiston, rather than as a total replacement. Thus, on analogy with the phlogiston case, the original definition, analytic philosophy on the received view, doesn’t exist any more than phlogiston does. And, thus, it is clearly a mistake to carry on as if one has offered an improved definition of analytic philosophy, as the revisionists do. Moreover, this calls into question the whole line of thought involved in revisionism, since the first step taken in that line is guided by a conception that is not merely flawed, but false to the very core.

Perhaps a more worrisome problem with revisionism is this practical one: by shifting the traditional boundaries of analytic philosophy both extensionally (in terms of who gets included or excluded) and temporally (in terms of when the school originated), it draws our attention away from the locus of the phenomena that explain analytic philosophy’s meteoric rise to power and prominence during the twentieth century—and this, I think, is what most needs to be explained by work in the history of analytic philosophy. As I have argued elsewhere (Preston 2005), and as can be gleaned from the proto-historical citations given earlier, this involved the widespread impression, itself originating and flourishing in the early-to-mid twentieth century, that there had been a philosophical revolution, complete with the emergence of a new, united philosophical regime. Assuming that analytic philosophy’s phenomenal social
success in the twentieth century was to an appreciable extent due to the impression (which, from the standpoint of current scholarship, must be seen as a misimpression) that it was a united, revolutionary force armed with a powerful philosophical method (namely, the analysis of language), the problem with the revisionist strategy becomes clear: by detaching analytic philosophy from its turn-of-the-twentieth-century origins, it deprives us of any reasonable explanation for, first, analytic philosophy’s meteoric rise to power in the twentieth century, and, second, the fact that, even if there never was any real philosophical unity in analytic philosophy, it was for a long time thought that there was, and that it consisted in a metaphilosophical view according to which the nature of the philosophical enterprise was linguistic.

The foregoing would seem to recommend the rejection of revisionist definitions. In doing so, however, it may seem that we have exhausted all our definitional options, with each type turning out to be a dead-end. Indeed those working in the history of analytic philosophy are presently confronted with a surprising quandary (though few, I think, have realized it, allowing themselves to escape from it too easily and before it fully emerges). The quandary can be expressed as follows. Contemporary historians begin their work with the following two assumptions:

1. Analytic philosophy is a philosophical school.
2. Analytic philosophy originated in the early twentieth century.

Both these assumptions are grounded in the received view of analytic philosophy as I have described it, and as represented by the proto-historians. However, recent scholarship has led many to the observation that:

3. There is no set of views accepted by all and only those figures ordinarily taken to be analytic philosophers (i.e., on the received view).

Clearly, these propositions form an inconsistent triad, and one of them must be rejected. However, given that (3) is well supported, we cannot reject it; thus, the inconsistent triad reduces to a dilemma between (1) and (2). Rejecting (1) is the mark of a non-doctrinal definition; rejecting (2) is the mark of revisionism. But now, if (as per the arguments presented earlier) both these options are to be rejected, and if (3) demands the rejection of traditional definitions, what is left?

What is left is the approach I call illusionist. On the illusionist view, we accept that the received view does not correspond and never has corresponded to anything in reality. Consequently, insofar as it has ever seemed to anyone that it did, that "seeming" was an illusion. More completely, the illusionist takes current work in the history of analytic philosophy to indicate that the received view was simply a guise that enabled a non-doctrinal and so non-philosophical group of some sort to come to dominate academic philosophy in various geographic regions by masquerading as a philosophical school.

In this respect, the illusionist view can be characterized as rejecting (1): if analytic philosophy as ordinarily conceived is an illusion, then it is not a philosophical school, and (1) is false. And yet, the illusionist rejection of (1) does not qualify it as a variety of non-doctrinal definition; for the illusionist does not pretend, as those who offer non-doctrinal definitions do, that the lack of defining doctrines doesn’t matter to analytic philosophy’s nature as a philosophical school, and that the group represented by the received view can be recast as something lacking philosophical unity without destroying its philosophical nature and legitimacy. Instead, recognizing the centrality of the received view to the actual, historical developments associated with the name “analytic philosophy” (and vice-versa), illusionists allow it to exercise total control over the definition of analytic philosophy: for the illusionist, analytic philosophy is exactly what the received view says it is.

In this respect, the illusionist view endorses a traditional definition. However, while other traditional definitions conflict with (3), the illusionist is saved from this precisely by treating analytic philosophy as an illusion. Thus, the illusionist is a traditionalist concerning what analytic philosophy is supposed to be, but differs from other traditionalists concerning whether analytic philosophy exists at all.

This gives rise to a subordinate division in the category of traditional definitions: illusionist and benighted. Both adhere to the received view, but they differ in how they make use of it. Illusionism makes an enlightened use of the received view; it is analogous to the use that Wittgenstein made, and wanted his readers to make.

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9 Just what sort of group was behind the guise, and just how it carried off its masquerade, cannot be dealt with here. Preliminary answers are given in Preston 2005.
of the propositions of the Tractatus: it is a ladder to be used to ascend to a higher plane of understanding, upon which one is freed from a kind of delusion concerning the meaningfulness of what one was doing previously—in this case, trying to unearth the true nature of analytic philosophy. Editing Tractatus 6.54 to fit our topic, we might say that

The received view elucidates the true nature of analytic philosophy in this way: he who understands analytic philosophy according to the received view finally recognizes analytic philosophy as illusion, when he has climbed out through the received view, on it, over it. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.) ... He must surmount the received view; then he sees analytic philosophy rightly.

Those who attain this elevated vantage point enjoy an illumination that frees them from the spell of the received view. They are no longer convinced that they are dealing with a type of philosophy. Consequently they feel no need to salvage something of the received view by searching, as the revisionists do, for some set of views to pull its raveling threads together into some really-existing philosophical school. Thus, illusionism is enlightened traditionalism.

The alternative, unenlightened or benighted traditionalism, would be traditionalism which has not taken sufficient stock of the current state of research on analytic philosophy and its disturbing findings, and which, failing to climb out through, on, and over the received view, continues to operate under it.

REFERENCES


In this letter to The New York Times, written six weeks before the press conference announcing the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, Russell underscores the paramount importance of the abolition of war. The Manifesto, essentially completed in April, was fashioned from his earlier BBC Christmas address, "Man's Peril." There too Russell emphasizes the need for abolishing war and says that those who hope to solve the problem of nuclear annihilation by (merely) prohibiting nuclear weapons are espousing a hope which "is illusory". In his February letter to Einstein, Russell had said that an agreement to prohibit nuclear weapons would be "wholly futile". But the Manifesto concedes some positive value to such an agreement which "we should ... welcome ..., though only as a first step". Here, in this May 25 letter, Russell's tone is slightly less positive, claiming that such a ban "would do very little good".

Ray Monk (The Ghost of Madness, p. 377) speculates that the Manifesto's positive tone regarding a ban on nuclear weapons was due to Russell's giving way to Communist opinion and interests. This may be partly true. Russell at the time was trying to include perspectives on peace from both sides of the Iron Curtain. But another point seems at least as weighty. The value of a ban on nuclear weapons depends on how the ban is to be undertaken. If it is merely a substitute for the abolition of war, rather than an ingredient in a larger movement to rid the world of the institution of war, it is not likely to be very effective for the reasons that Russell states. But as part of a more radical abolition of war itself, it could be an initiating and reinforcing component of a general movement towards enforceable world law, i.e., world government.
To the Editor of The New York Times

Sir,
It has just come to my notice that in your issue of May 19 you say that I celebrate my birthday "by renewing his demand for a ban on the hydrogen bomb". This is not quite accurate. I consider that a ban on the hydrogen bomb would do very little good since it would be disregarded in the event of a major war. What I demand is a more difficult thing: a ban on war. The world has to realize that, whatever agreements may be concluded, a serious war probably means the end of the human race. Is it worth it?

Yours etc.,
Bertrand Russell

REVIEW ESSAY

WHAT IS ANALYSIS?

JOHN ONGLEY


Michael Beaney is writing a survey of philosophical analysis from ancient Greek philosophy through the 20th century. He has posted a first report of that work on the internet—in the form of an entry on analysis in the online Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy—and he will publish a book on the subject soon. Though Beaney’s survey covers the idea of philosophical analysis from Socrates to Soames, its main focus is on the types of analysis characteristic of 20th c. analytic philosophy. It is thus a part of the recent history of early analytic philosophy movement that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s and is a major force on the philosophical scene today.

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That movement has only recently focused on the nature of analytic philosophy itself, that is, on the question of what analytic philosophy is, and in particular, on what philosophical analysis is.

Beaney’s Stanford essay on “Analysis” is at the forefront of this recent turn towards examining the nature of analytic philosophy historically, and has consequently drawn a great deal of attention from the members of the new historical movement and is a frequently cited work among them on the subject. This review of Beaney’s online article will consider his account of philosophical analysis in each major historical period in philosophy.

I. SOME BASIC DEFINITIONS OF PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

Beaney groups the methods of analysis found throughout the history of philosophy into three major types: decompositional, regressive and interpretive. In general, he says, analysis breaks a concept or proposition down into elements that are used in synthesis to justify or explain it. Decompositional analysis breaks a concept or proposition down and resolves it into its components. Regressive analysis, which was invented by the ancient Greeks who modeled it on geo-
metric methods of problem-solving, works back to first principles which can then be used in synthesis to demonstrate the truth of a proposition or meaning of a concept. Finally, interpretive analysis, which Beaney claims was used by Frege and Russell, first translates a statement or concept into correct logical form before resolving it into simple components. He claims that this interpretive form of analysis also has its roots in ancient Greek geometry and in medieval philosophy.

Beaney points out that several kinds of analysis are typically going on at once in any actual analysis; for example, a regressive analysis can also be a kind of decomposition and at the same time a kind of interpretive analysis. He also notes that philosophers often practiced some form of analysis without ever using the term, as in the case of Socratic analysis though the term ‘analysis’ never occurs in a Platonic dialogue, and that fields outside of philosophy have their own different notions of analysis, such as cost-benefit analysis, functional analysis, systems analysis, and psychoanalysis, though he does not rule out the possibility that these may be related to philosophical analysis is some way.

II. GREEK AND MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

Among the ancient Greeks, the term ‘analysis’ was first used in the regressive sense to refer to the method of working backwards from a desired conclusion to first causes and principles. This method was modeled on the geometric method of solving problems or arriving at conclusions by breaking them down to known principles by which they can then be proved. Note that such analysis is also a decomposition into simpler parts, as well as a kind of interpretation that transforms what is being analyzed into different kinds of parts and concepts. Such geometric analysis influenced Plato and Aristotle, but Socrates’ concern with real definitions and essences is thought to have been a separate influence on Plato and Aristotle. In this latter method, Socrates typically asks for the definition of some concept, and then analyzes attempted definitions or examples of it or beliefs about it with a method of dialogue and questioning in order to arrive at its meaning. It is here, Beaney says, that the roots of modern conceptual analysis are to be found.

It is commonly claimed that philosophy has for most of its history been armchair theorizing – that it is apriori reasoning about the world. On this assumption, it is sometimes claimed without further argument or examination that methods of analysis used by these philosophers must likewise be apriori. Thus, analytic philosophers, who usually claim that their own method is apriori, will often also claim that what they are doing in analysis is simply what the ancient Greeks and all good philosophers since have done, namely, analyzing concepts with an apriori method. Plato himself helped foster this image of the Socratic method as apriori when he had Socrates say about the dialectical method in the Republic that “a person starts on the discovery of the absolute by the light of reason only, and without any assistance of sense, and perseveres until by pure intellect he arrives at the perception of the absolute good....”

To judge these claims that analysis is an apriori method, we must consider how those methods work in detail. Take, for example, the following argument from the Euthyphro where Socrates uses his dialectical method of analysis with Euthyphro to find a definition of ‘piety’:

**SOCRATES:** ...what sort of difference creates enmity and anger? Suppose, for example, that you and I, my good friend, differ about a number; do differences of this sort make us enemies and set us at variance with one another? Do we not go at once to calculation and end them by a sum?

**EUTHYPHRO:** True.

**SOCRATES:** Or suppose that we differ about magnitudes, do we not quickly put an end to that difference by measuring?

**EUTHYPHRO:** That is true.

[...]

**SOCRATES:** But what differences are those which, because they cannot be decided, make us angry and set us at enmity with one another? ... I will suggest that this happens when the matters of difference are the just and unjust, good and evil, honorable and dishonorable. Are not these the points about which, when differing,
and unable satisfactorily to decide our differences, we quarrel, when we do quarrel, as you and I and all men experience?

EUTHYPHRO: Yes, Socrates, that is the nature of the differences about which we quarrel.²

Here, contrary to the common view, and even to Plato’s own stated view, we can see that Socrates uses many empirical assumptions in philosophical analysis, as when he appeals to experience to know which differences do and do not cause us to be angry; he even says that he knows these things by experience, so his method cannot be apriori. By applying the same scrutiny to 20th c. methods, when we get there, we can test similar claims made for them.

Beaney does not claim that any philosophical method is apriori—in fact, he does not consider whether they are apriori or not. What he does, for the most part, is describe various instances of analysis as ‘regressive’, ‘decompositional’, or ‘interpretive’. But by simply attaching one of these labels to a method of analysis, we do not learn the details of how the method works, and it is the details that will tell us such things as whether it is empirical or apriori, that is, whether or not empirical propositions must be assumed in order to analyze some concept or proposition. With his own approach to analysis, Beaney cannot answer such questions. This is the major limitation of his approach.

While methods of analysis in the medieval and renaissance periods tended to be mixes of earlier forms, with an emphasis on the geometrical concept of analysis and synthesis, Beaney claims that an original conception of an interpretive analysis emerged in the late medieval period that anticipated 20th c. forms of analysis.¹ Beaney takes the process of minimizing, or at least revealing, our ontological commitments by transforming one concept into a set of other concepts to be a central form of 20th c. analysis. It is this method that was anticipated by medieval scholastics, in particular by Ockham, with his eponymous razor, and by Buridan, who practiced philosophy with Ockham’s razor.

Buridan’s notion of nominal definition, where expressions are clarified by explaining what the expression means, is one such anticipation of modern analysis. Medieval especially used this notion to explicate the logic of statements containing ambiguous quantifiers. The middle ages were thus both a reworking of ancient ideas and an anticipation of modern ones. During the renaissance, the general inclination was to repudiate scholastic logic, which led to a reduction of clarity among renaissance philosophers about the notion of analysis.

III. EARLY MODERN NOTIONS OF ANALYSIS

The major inspiration for early modern ideas of analysis was again the ancients’ geometrical notion of analysis, especially the Aristotelian version of it, which assimilated the process of going from theorems to axioms with the process of going from effects to causes. The early moderns thus viewed analysis “as a method of discovery, a working back from what is ordinarily known to the underlying reasons (demonstrating ‘the fact”), and synthesis as a method of proof, working forwards again from what is discovered to what needed explanation (demonstrating ‘the reason why”).¹⁴ (Note the conflation of explanation and justification or proof in the account of synthesis; to some extent, this was typical of the early modern era, but Beaney also regularly conflates the two ideas of synthesis as proof and synthesis as explanation.) The Port Royal Logic, published in 1662 and probably the most influential work on methodology from then to the middle of the 19th c., supported this basic view of analysis as discovery and of synthesis as proof or explanation.

The authors of the Port Royal Logic claimed that their views on method were principally derived from Descartes’ Rules for the Direction of the Mind. Beaney thus devotes much of the discussion in the section on early modern philosophy to Descartes. Descartes relied mostly on the geometrical regressive model, with its emphasis

² Plato, Euthyphro, my emphasis.
³ This is reminiscent of Michael Dummett’s claim that analytic philosophy made a linguistic turn that set aside the epistemological concerns and methods of modern philosophy and returned to scholastic concerns and methods where philosophical logic is foundational rather than epistemology. (Dummett, Frege: Philosophy of Language, 1973, p. xxxiii)
⁴ Beaney 2003.
on discovery and proof of principles and causes, but he also used decompositional analysis in his work, reducing something, especially a concept, to its simplest terms and dividing it into its smallest possible parts; this is then expressed in the form of a definition. Beaney sees a shift occurring during the early modern period of philosophy in general from the regressive model of analysis of finding principles and causes to the decompositional one of analyzing concepts and finding definitions.

Beaney devotes just one paragraph to Locke and does not mention Hume at all. This is unfortunate, because one of the major dramas in philosophy and psychology in the 19th century was the struggle between British associationists and Kantians over the correct nature of the analysis of concepts, with associationists following Locke and Hume in holding that all concepts are constructed from observations and experiences and can be analyzed entirely into these units, while Kantians argued that there are concepts that cannot be discovered in experience and that are necessary for the construction and definition of most other concepts (i.e., Kant's categories, or Whewell's "fundamental ideas").

What Beaney does say about Locke is that Locke viewed all ideas as resolvable into simple ones that are copies of sense impressions, so that Locke's method of analysis is "decompositional": its aim is to provide an account of ideas by explaining how they arise, showing what simple ideas make up our complex ones, and distinguishing the various mental operations performed on them in generating what knowledge and beliefs we have. But again, we do not get the details of how this method is supposed to work. If we knew this, we could compare Lockean analysis to 20th c. analysis and see if they really are the same, or even similar, and thus test the claim of analytic philosophers such as A.J. Ayer and Richard Rorty that analytic philosophy is just a type of British empiricism. Beaney's account does not go deep enough to answer such questions.

Leibniz, whose method of analysis Beaney also calls "decompositional", is a major figure in Beaney's history of analysis. Leibniz's method of analysis rests on his principle of containment, the view that the predicate of every true affirmative proposition is contained in its subject whether the proposition is necessary, contingent, universal, or particular. Given this, the task of analysis for Leibniz is to make explicit the containment of the predicate in the subject of any proposed proposition. With such an analysis, the proposition can then be proved, by synthesis, to be true.

More specifically, Leibnizian analysis proceeds by using a series of definitions to analyze the subject of a proposition and reduce the proposition to an identity. Identities are, for Leibniz, self-evident truths. But again, we are not told how Leibniz thinks we know these definitions that reduce the proposition to an identity. Are they, at least in some cases, known empirically? For example, do we know the definition 'a goose is a bird' is true, while 'a goose is a reptile' is false, by examining geese? If so, then Leibniz's method of analysis is an empirical one, at least sometimes, and a theory of meaning where we know the meanings of at least some concepts a posteriori is being presupposed. Are definitions of concepts all known a priori? If so, then the method is a priori and a theory of meaning where we know the meaning of terms a priori, as some philosophers claim, is being presupposed. Knowing how analysis works would in this way show us some of the presuppositions about language and meaning assumed by a philosopher or philosophical movement.

IV. KANT AND ANALYSIS

Kant's method of analysis is likewise 'decompositional' according to Beaney. I hope it is becoming apparent how limited the use of these metaphorical labels to describe types of analysis is. Locke, Leibniz and Kant are all called 'decompositional' analysts, yet the differences in their methods of analysis are at the center of major debates in philosophy throughout the 19th century and are important for understanding twentieth century analysis.

Kant, Beaney tells us, takes over Leibniz's method of analysis with its principle of containment, but rejects Leibniz's view that the predicates of all true affirmative propositions are contained in its subject, so that all truths are analytic. For Kant, like Leibniz, "analytic" propositions have subjects that contain their predicates, but unlike Leibniz, Kant also recognizes a class of synthetic propositions whose subjects do not contain their predicates.

In his Critique of Pure Reason and Prolegomena to Any Future

4 A150-1, B189-91; Prolegomena, Hackett, 1977, p. 12.
Metaphysics, Kant identifies analytic propositions as those whose negations are self-contradictory. Kantian analysis would thus show, according to Beaney, that a proposition is analytic by showing that its denial is self-contradictory, and this would show that the predicate of the proposition is contained in the subject, and so clarify the meaning of the subject. For Kant, Beaney tells us, analysis can at most clarify our concepts but cannot extend our knowledge.

It is odd, however, that Beaney assumes that the results of Kantian analysis are analytic statements. After all, Kant refers to the entire Prolegomena as a work of analysis, while calling the Critique of Pure Reason a “synthetic” work, and the results of the Prolegomena’s analysis are famously synthetic apriori statements, not analytic ones. Like most philosophers of the early modern period, what Kant meant by ‘analysis’ and ‘synthesis’ is that analysis is a method of discovery that uncovers the self-evident presuppositions of some desired conclusion and that synthesis is a chain of reasoning in the reverse direction, that is, a proof or explanation of the conclusion in terms of the self-evident presuppositions discovered by analysis.

For example, Kant says of the Prolegomena: “…I offer here [an outline of the first Critique] which is sketched out after an analytical method, while the Critique itself had to be executed in the synthetical style, in order that the science may present all its articulations [in this analytical sketch, i.e., in the Prolegomena], as the structure of a peculiar cognitive faculty, in all their natural combination.” (Kant, 1977, p. 8) So for Kant, the Prolegomena is an analysis and the first Critique is a synthesis.

Moreover, Kant’s analytic propositions are not to be confused with his method of analysis or the results of such analysis. As Kant says: “The analytical method, insofar as it is opposed to the synthetical, is very different from an aggregate of analytical propositions. It signifies only that we start from what is sought, as if it were given, and ascend to the only conditions under which it is possible [that is, show what is necessary for it to be true]. In this method, we often use nothing but synthetical propositions, as in mathematical analysis…” (Ibid., p. 21.)

Kant’s analytical method of the Prolegomena is thus meant to articulate the ideas of the first Critique, that is, show the synthetic apriori ideas that are necessary for knowledge. So the results of the analysis of the Prolegomena are, for Kant, synthetic apriori propositions, not analytic ones. In Beaney’s terminology, Kant’s analytic method is regressive (finding the necessary presuppositions for something to be known), not decompositional.

Why then does Beaney think that Kant’s method of analysis yields only analytic apriori propositions? Perhaps because analytic philosophers have frequently asserted that in doing analysis, analytic philosophers are just doing what all great philosophers of the past have done in analysis, and they further assume that the results of their own analyses are analytic apriori, so that the results of all philosophical analyses must be analytic apriori. But for Kant (and for Plato, Locke, Hume and probably Leibniz as well), this is not true.

For Kant, then, the Prolegomena is an analysis while the first Critique is a synthesis. But what does Kant think a synthesis is? Either a proof or an explanation, but which? Beaney is carelessness in distinguishing between synthesis as proof and synthesis as explanation throughout his essay on analysis. Here, a correct answer to this question is crucial for a proper understanding of the first Critique.

Most Kant scholars today view the argument in the first Critique, put forth in the Transcendental Deduction, as purporting to establish that objective and valid apriori categories are necessary for knowledge; that is, they view the argument of the first Critique as an analysis in Kant’s sense of the term. Beaney himself assumes that the first Critique is such an analysis when he says that Kant “recognizes a … class of … synthetic apriori truths, which it is the main task of the Critique of Pure Reason to elucidate”.

From the above discussion, however, we know that elucidation for Kant is what analysis does—in fact, this particular elucidation (establishing that objective and valid apriori categories are necessary for knowledge) is exactly the analysis that Kant says that the Prolegomena performs—and that according to Kant, the first Critique is not an analysis, but a synthesis. Therefore, the argument of the first Critique cannot be an analysis of knowledge showing that it presupposes (valid and objective) categories. Instead, Kant must...
think the first *Critique* is an argument that either justifies or explains knowledge based on self-evident principles found out through analysis.

Understanding how the first *Critique* can be a synthesis, rather than the analysis it is now standardly viewed as being, is, by my view, the fundamental problem of Kant scholarship—one that comes before all others. If Kant is explaining how categories can be objective and valid apriori, he needs to prove this point—explanations assume the truth of what they are explaining. In that case, the standard view of the first *Critique* is not particularly threatened, because an analysis doesn't prove that the categories are apriori objective and valid either, except in a question-begging way. (If there is objective and valid knowledge, there are objective and valid apriori categories. But is there objective and valid knowledge? This is just what we want the first *Critique* to tell us.) But if Kant thinks he is justifying the apriori objectivity and validity of the categories with a view to eventually justifying knowledge, this calls for a radically different reading of the first *Critique* from the way we read it today.

V. THE 19TH CENTURY

Beaney devotes just one brief paragraph to 19th century philosophical analysis. He claims that many 19th century concepts of analysis were responses to Kant's so-called "decompositional" method of analysis, for example, those of German or British idealists, who viewed such analysis as trivial and "destructive and life-limiting" and thus took a negative attitude toward it. He claims that later Kantians, such as the neo-Kantians, took a more positive attitude toward analysis and used it to disclose the essential synthetic apriori structure of science. (Due to his abovementioned confusion between Kant's analytic propositions and Kantian analysis, Beaney does not see that Kant used analysis to do this same thing.) But it was the British empiricist forms of analysis, not Kantian analysis, that 19th century Kantians and other idealists took to be trivial and incapable of correctly analyzing concepts. British empiricists ("associationists") followed Locke and Hume in claiming that concepts are constructed from and can be entirely analyzed in terms of associations of sense impressions. For Kantians and other idealists, Hume had shown that concepts such as 'causality' cannot be

defined *just* in terms of sense impressions. They felt that Kant had then shown, on the basis of Hume's arguments, that we must add metaphysical concepts (the transcendental categories) to our impressions in order to construct the concepts of science and everyday life, and that these categories can only be found in the mind, not in experience.

However, the kind of Kantian analysis preferred by the Germanic opponents of empiricism was one revised in the light of romanticism, which relied heavily upon intuition. For example, among the neo-Kantians, Wilhelm Windelband and Ernst Cassirer held a more romantic view that we come to these ideas that cannot be found in experience by a kind of artistic intuition, though some, such as Heinrich Rickert, rejected this romantic view and stuck to the more strictly Kantian one that it is by pure reason that we know of these categories. Husserl, of course, came down firmly on the side of intellectual intuitions of concepts.

There was, however, a more holistic strain in German and British idealism that view analysis not just as trivial, but as "destructive and life-limiting", as Beaney puts it, and also as a kind of falsification. The roots of this holism can be found in Goethe, parts of Kant, and of course in Hegel, among other places. It is this latter more holistic strain of idealism that early 20th century analysts like Russell and Moore attacked with their insistence that analysis is possible. But again, much of Russell and Moore's attack was actually focused on Kant, who did not deny that analysis is possible, but only that empiricist analysis is. But Russell and Moore were not defending an empiricist form of analysis! So why attack Kant? As Peter Hylton has noted, this is a puzzle that needs solving.

Though each of the other historical sections of Beaney's essay have lengthy supplements linked to them which elaborate on the ideas of analysis characteristic of that period, there is no supplement linked to Beaney's one paragraph section on the 19th century. The text says that it is not yet available. But without a careful study of 19th century analysis, basic questions such as "How much is 20th century analysis like 19th century analysis?" and "What in the

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world were the 20th century analysts rebelling against anyway?" cannot be answered. Beaney’s strategy of writing the history of 20th century analysis before doing the 19th century is unwise. As it is, we must now leap into a discussion of 20th century analysis without first understanding its background in the 19th century.

V. ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

We often hear that what characterizes 20th century analytic philosophy is a kind of decompositional analysis, where we clarify concepts by breaking them down into more basic concepts. Because Kant played down this sort of analysis, and Kantians and other idealists after him explicitly attacked it, one might expect that if analytic philosophy is a reaction to idealist claims that empiricist analysis is impossible, it would be a swing back to the empirical analysis that preceded it. This would support to A.J. Ayer’s story that analytic philosophy is just “British empiricism plus logic”—a return to the methods of Locke and Hume.

In Brazil, after the bossa nova movement, which can crudely be described as a combination of samba and jazz, there was a ‘purist’ reaction (the “tropical” movement) where the jazz was taken back out. But what was left was not, as you might expect, samba again, but something quite different, and thus MPB, or modern Brazilian pop, was born. Similarly, the turn back to analysis by early 20th c. analytic philosophers did not yield anything like earlier, empiricist forms of it. The analytic philosophers were doing something quite different. But what was it? If we could get clear on this question, we would understand this philosophy better.

Examining the twentieth century, Beaney begins with a general characterization of 20th century philosophical analysis. “What characterizes analytic philosophy as it was founded by Frege and Russell,” he says, “is the role played by logical analysis, which depended on the development of modern logic. Although other and subsequent forms of analysis, such as linguistic analysis, were less wedded to systems of formal analysis, the central insight motivating logical analysis remained.” Beaney admits that this characterization does not fit Moore or one strand of analytic philosophy, but thinks that the tradition founded by Russell and Frege is analytic philosophy’s central strand.

What is characteristic of Russell and Frege’s sense of analysis, and thus of 20th century logical analysis in general, Beaney tells us, is that it is interpretive—we first interpret what we wish to analyze by transforming it according to some system of interpretation, so that we may then solve a particular problem. Analytic geometry, for example, transforms geometric problems into algebraic ones so it may then solve them. Similarly, Frege, Russell, and 20th c. analytic philosophers in general attempted to solve philosophical problems by translating natural language sentences into predicate logic, so that a possibly misleading grammatical form, which a purely decompositional analysis would take as given, is replaced with the sentence’s true logical form. If the sentence is decomposed into its components after we have translated it into its correct logical form, we will not then be misled by grammar as to what its components are. ‘On Denoting’ is thus Beaney’s model of 20th c. analysis.

This sort of analysis is the key to reducing mathematics to logic, and many would argue that the primary motive for the development of it was to make explicit the sort of analysis necessary for reducing mathematics to logic. We translate mathematical concepts like ‘number’ into logical ones, so that we can derive mathematical truths from logical truths and show mathematics to be pure logic. The method applied to language more generally may similarly solve many philosophical problems. For example, the statement ‘Unicorns do not exist’ can be understood as saying that ‘The concept unicorn has no instances’ (‘The class of unicorns is empty’, or ‘\(\forall x \neg Fx\)’). The subject is no longer unicorns by the new translation, but the concept ‘unicorn’. In this way, we do not need to think that non-existing objects like unicorns have some reality or “subsistence” in order for statements about them to be meaningful. This analysis is a strategy used by Russell in his theory of descriptions and Wittgenstein in the Tractatus.

What is crucial to this sort of analysis is the development of modern quantification logic. For Frege and Russell, it is predicate logic that statements are to be translated into. As Beaney notes, this introduced a divergence between grammatical and logical form, so that “the process of translation itself became an issue of philosophical concern”. Hence, the need for articles like ‘On Denoting’ arose.

But what of subsequent analysts in the 20th century? Beaney asserts that though later ordinary linguistic analysts questioned...
whether there could ever be a definitive logical analysis of typical statements, they retained the idea that ordinary language could mislead. For example, in his essay ‘Systematically Misleading Expressions’, Gilbert Ryle used such analysis to avoid attributing existence to concepts, and he retained this concept of analysis to solve problems in his later years as an ordinary language philosopher. This, then, is what Beaney finds common to 20th century analytic philosophy—a method of analysis that translates ordinary expressions into more philosophically and logically respectable expressions.

There are, however, important questions that Beaney’s characterization of 20th century analysis does not address. One—already touched upon in this review—is that of the presuppositions of the method in question. In the case of the analysis of mathematical concepts in terms of logical ones, we know we have correctly analyzed a mathematical concept when the logical construction does everything the mathematical one does. But then we must presuppose mathematical theory in order to know that our logical constructions adequately replace mathematics. Similarly, logical theorems meant to replace mathematical truths can only known to be equivalent to the mathematical ones by the same sort of comparison.

Cases outside of mathematics and pure logic proceed similarly; when we reduce non-logical concepts to other non-logical concepts (for nowhere except in mathematics and logic itself are we going to reduce concepts to logical ones), we again know that we have correctly defined our concept when the definition functions identically to the original concept. But non-logical concepts are typically about the world and occur in theories about the world, so we can only know that a logical construction of such a concept is equivalent to the original one when it agrees with our best theories about the world. Such logical analysis would thus be a posteriori.

The important question, then, of whether or not analysis is apriori or a posteriori seems answered. Though commonly claimed to be apriori (though not by Beaney; his own interpretation of analysis into decompositional, regressive, and interpretive types does not ask such questions), analysis of empirical concepts and propositions must presuppose empirical theories in order for us to know that the analysis is correct.

What, then, can people be thinking when they claim that philosophical analysis is apriori? Many of them seem to be assuming this: we know the meanings of words apriori, and thus can know apriori that the reconstruction of some original concept is correct by comparing it to meanings that we “just know”. (One way it is thought that we know the meanings of words apriori is by having apriori “intuitions” of meanings.) It seems to me that this idea, that meanings are the sorts of things we know apriori, is the major unstated presupposition of 20th century ideas of philosophical analysis and 20th century analytic philosophy.

But it is unlikely that we can know the meanings of words apriori, except perhaps in the case of stipulative definitions, which clearly do not represent the majority of cases. For example, the dictionary tells us that a whale is an ocean-going mammal that suckles its young. But for ‘mammal’ to be part of the meaning of ‘whale’ required people to go out and look at whales to see this, for formerly whales were thought to be fish and only when people looked more closely and saw, e.g., that they had no gills, were warm-blooded, had lungs, had breasts that gave milk, etc., did the meaning of the word change and ‘whale’ come to include the concept ‘mammal’. Words signifying empirical concepts thus get their meaning empirically. When we try to determine if an analysis of them is correct, we must look to the world to determine that the new definition functions the same as the original term.

Analytic philosophy presents itself as apriori but is not; it presents itself as an innocent method of logical analysis that makes no controversial metaphysical assumptions when in fact it does make such assumptions; and it is likely that it makes such assumptions due to 19th century influences on it. Again, however, these are not issues addressed by Beaney.

VI. GOTTLOB FREGE AND THE ELEPHANT IN THE PARLOR

Fregean analysis translates a proposition into argument-function form rather than the subject-predicate form that decompositional (whole-parts) analyses provide. Thus, Frege analyzes ‘Socrates is mortal’ into an argument ‘Socrates’ and function ‘_ is mortal’ rather than into the grammatical form ‘S is P’. By developing a logic of functions and arguments, Frege was able to logically analyze
complex mathematical statements and achieve much (if not complete) success in the logical analysis of mathematics. This was then taken as a model for the logical analysis of sentences and concepts in other domains of knowledge and common sense. However, what makes the new logic so suitable for analyzing mathematics, namely, mathematics' own essentially argument-function structure, may well make it unsuitable for analyzing natural languages.

Take for example the statement 'All horses are mammals'. Predicate logic would analyze this as 'For all objects x, if x is a horse then x is a mammal'. Where is the copula, the verb “to be”, in this analysis, and how well does the analysis explain the copula's meaning? Well, first of all the conditional connective 'if-then' connects the concepts 'horse' and 'mammal' instead of the copula. Here of course we already have a problem, since modern logic uses the material conditional in this analysis, and the material conditional of modern logic does not really capture the sense of 'if-then'. We will return to this problem of the conditional in a moment.

In any case, the conditional connective does not entirely replace the copula, for we need the quantifier to specify that the same thing that is a horse is a mammal. Since the two quantifiers of modern logic, 'all' and 'some', can be defined in terms of each other ('All x's are F' = 'It is not the case that some x's are not F') and so reduced to one concept, let us take the existential quantifier ("some", or "there exists an x such that") as the primitive concept. So the quantifier (and the variables and apparatus of the scope of the quantifier), which is roughly the concept of 'existence', also does some of the work of the copula in our analysis.

But of course, the idea of a logical (not grammatical) predicate-as-function itself contains a copula, as when we say "x is a horse' and 'x is a mammal', so it too does some of the work of the original grammatical copula. Rather than explaining and giving us some insight into this most basic concept of natural language, modern logic seems to spread the work of the copula around in a careless, unexamined way.

An even more serious shortcoming of predicate logic is that it doesn't provide an analysis of conditional, "if-then" reasoning that works outside of mathematics. When modern logic uses the material conditional, where 'if p then q' is taken to mean 'either not p or q', to analyze mathematics, no problems arise for it. Outside of mathematics, however—in ordinary language or empirical science—numerous problems arise for the material conditional, especially in counterfactual cases, but there is to date no analysis of 'if-then' that works better. In other words, modern logic does not yet have an adequate translation of the conditional, although conditional reasoning is the backbone of all reasoning.

The ineptness of quantification logic at analyzing English grammar or conditional reasoning as it occurs outside of mathematics suggests that other logics would better serve us in analyzing English sentences and describing everyday logic. And this suggests that the logic we now have is not the logic of our language or everyday reasoning, not a fundamental part of the universe or of our minds, but merely a convenient calculus that is especially good for describing mathematical logic. This provides us with further reason for caution about claims that a logical analysis of language can solve philosophical problems. If our current logic is not the last word in the subject but merely a conventionally convenient one that could be improved upon or even radically altered for the better, there is no reason to believe that in translating English sentences into this logic we are reducing them to a more fundamental, truer form.

VII. BEANEY ON RUSSELL, MOORE, WITTGENSTEIN, CARNAP, CAMBRIDGE ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY, AND OXFORD ORDINARY LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

Although Beanev sees logical analysis the major and unifying form of analysis for 20th century analytic philosophy, he acknowledges other kinds of analysis. However, Beanev sees the idea of interpretation that lies behind logical analysis as motivating these other kinds of analysis as well, and thus being what is common to 20th c. philosophical analysis in general.

Bertrand Russell was never entirely clear on what he meant by 'analysis', his practice often did not match his words, and his clearest statement on the subject, in his 1913 manuscript Theory of Knowledge, defines 'analysis' in a decompositional sense as a "discovery of the constituents and the manner of combination of a given complex" (TK, 119). Beanev acknowledges all of this, but still

7 Jaakko Hintikka, from whom I first heard this analysis, has made this same point in print.
thinks logical analysis of language into the new logic best exemplified the analytic philosophy that emerged from his work. This, for example, is the characteristic form of analysis in Russell’s essay ‘On Denoting’, where problems that emerge from a decompositional analysis of English sentences such as ‘The present King of France is bald’ disappear upon a logical analysis of them. However, as Beaney himself admits, Russell’s idea of analysis is not clearly or entirely interpretive.

Beaney finds G.E. Moore’s notion of analysis to be of a traditional decompositional sort, where complex concepts are analyzed into their constituents. This puzzles Beaney: while he admits that Moore influenced conceptions of analysis among analytic philosophers, Beaney does not address the fact that this means that his theory that 20th c. analysis as Fregean/Russellian logical analysis does not seem to work even for the major analysts. He simply ignores this problem and goes on to Wittgenstein.

Because Wittgenstein accepted Frege’s assumption that quantification logic was the logic of language, and because he utilized Russell’s method of logical analysis from ‘On Denoting’, Beaney places the early Wittgenstein in the Frege/Russell tradition of logical analysis. At the same time, Wittgenstein’s method was also decompositional, because he claimed that an analysis of language reduced it to its simple constituents. Beaney thus sees Wittgenstein’s notion of analysis as a combination of logical and decompositional methods. And although the emphasis in later Wittgenstein is on decompositional methods, Beaney claims that a role is left by Wittgenstein for logical analysis as well.

The Cambridge school—of Susan Stebbing, John Wisdom, and Max Black, and including Oxfoardians Gilbert Ryle and C.C. Mace—who founded the journal Analysis, based their notions of analysis on Russell, Moore and Wittgenstein. While taking Russell’s theory of definite descriptions in “On Denoting” as a “paradigm” of analysis, they emphasized the logical analysis found in the article and de-emphasized the metaphysical reduction of concepts to other ones.

Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein similarly influenced Carnap, who developed a method of construction reminiscent of Russell that he first called quasi-analysis and later called logical analysis. Carnap used quasi-analysis in his 1928 Aufbau to construct simple qualities from individual experiences. At the same time Carnap developed a notion of explication he called ‘rational reconstruction’. This is a different kind of translation, where vague everyday concepts are replaced with more precise “scientific” ones.

Beaney finds Oxford linguistic “ordinary language” philosophers to be less like Frege and Russell and more like Wittgenstein in believing that the analysis of language can tell us about thought. Russell and Frege were dismissive of ordinary language as misguided and misleading. Oxfordians believed that language pretty clearly reflects our concepts. Ryle and Austin are discussed as examples of this view, as are Strawson’s more Kantian analyses. Though Beaney recognizes that they are straying from the logical analysis he thinks unifies analytic philosophy, he thinks that like the earlier forms of analysis, they all seek to clarify concepts.

This may seem to be a rather thin comparison, but perhaps after reviewing 26 centuries of philosophical analysis, Beaney is simply running out of steam. However, it should be obvious even from this brief description of Beaney’s survey of the 20th c. that his model of 20th c. analysis as based on logical analysis does not fair well even on his own terms. In the end, Beaney changes tack and defines analytic philosophy as being a set of interlocking subtraditions unified by a shared repertoire of conceptions of analysis that different philosophers drew on in different ways. But it is not clear that this definition is adequate to distinguish analytic philosophy from any other philosophy, for as Beaney himself has shown, all philosophies seem to draw on this shared repertoire of conceptions of analysis, each in its own way.

VIII. ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Beaney’s essay on analysis is a historical one, a part of the recent history of early analytic philosophy movement. Early work in this new field seldom asked what analytic philosophy is, but assumed that we already know this and simply elaborated on the standard picture of analytic philosophy with new facts and greater detail but without presenting us with a different overall picture of it. Recently, there has been a revisionist turn in the field, a turn towards asking the initial questions of what analytic philosophy and analysis are. This new trend threatens to reject conventional answers and
provide us with new ones, and Michael Beaney is out ahead of this pack, and to some extent leading it in this direction. His entry on analysis in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* has itself stimulated some of this activity, the April 2005 conference on *Varieties of Analysis* that he organized was the big event in the field for the year, and it is hoped that the publication of his book on analysis will push the field even further in this direction, and so push historians of analytic philosophy to a better understanding of their subject. For this reason alone ‘Analysis’ is a significant work. It is also significant for its ambition and scope, and, I must say, for its depth of analysis. Although I have criticized Beaney here for not digging deeply enough into methods of analysis to answer important questions about them, the amount of analysis he has done is impressive. Also impressive is his bibliography, which is an extensive survey of the literature on this subject. Anyone who likes books and has an interest in the history of philosophy, and especially in the history of analytic philosophy, will enjoy reading through it nearly as much as they will enjoy reading the article itself.

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7 This work in the history of analytic philosophy should not be confused with the parallel but separate movement in the history of philosophy of science, which has been exuberantly revisionist.
The place and time of next year’s annual meeting was the next item on the agenda. It was agreed by all to accept Gregory Landini’s offer to host next year’s annual meeting at the University of Iowa. There was less agreement about the exact weekend the meeting should occur. Cara Rice supported the idea of holding the meeting as late in June as possible. John Ongley, on the other hand, supported the idea of the meeting occurring around the end of May, or beginning of June. Peter Stone suggested taking a “straw poll” on the matter. One person voted for mid-May, three people for early June, and twelve people for mid-June. Cara Rice moved to have the next annual meeting held at the University of Iowa, Warren Allen Smith seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

On the subject of the site for 2007’s meeting, Alan Schwerin mentioned Monmouth University as a candidate. John Ongley mentioned the possibility of Drew University. Peter Stone noted the good attendance at Drew’s last meeting, but it was agreed that the availability of John Lenz as a host needed to be determined. Rosalind Carey volunteered Lehman as a candidate with the caveat that it lacked dormitories.

Next on the agenda was the subject of honorary memberships. Peter Stone read aloud the conditions for honorary members. Ken Blackwell moved to make Joseph Rotblat an honorary member, alluding to the well-known Nobel Prize-winning work Rotblat had done with Russell and continues to do with the Pugwash conferences. Ken also reminded the directors that Rotblat is 97 years old. Ray Perkins seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Peter Stone brought up the proposal that Tariq Ali be made an honorary member, citing the work he did for the Russell War Crimes Tribunal along with other related work, his correspondences with Russell, and his memorandum on Russell’s secretary Ralph Schoenman. Ray Perkins moved to make Tariq Ali an honorary member. Warren Allen Smith seconded the motion, and it carried with eleven yes votes and one abstention.

Steve Reinhardt then asked whether there was any method on the Society’s Web site for briefing members on what sort of topics the annual meetings’ papers will concern and what sort of preparatory reading members can do to get the most out of the meetings’ talks. He referred specifically to a couple of papers delivered that Saturday morning based largely on books with which he could easily have become reacquainted (and so derive more out of the talks if only he had had a way of knowing about these papers’ subject matter in advance. Alan Schwerin responded that the papers accepted for the meeting are indeed listed on the Society’s Web site with accompanying abstracts. Chad Trainer claimed that, on his computer at least, only the titles of papers could be accessed and not any of the abstracts. Rosalind Carey then suggested the possibility of a “recommended reading” list that could be compiled for each meeting.

The next matter addressed was that of funding students interested in presenting papers on Russell at academic conferences. Alan Schwerin explained that Nicholas Griffin had approached him with the idea of the Society helping to fund a student interested in delivering a paper at a conference in Portugal. The Directors considered the problems of setting such a precedent, especially in cases where students do not yet belong to the BRS. There was common agreement that a pledge, at least, to join the BRS should be a precondition for receipt of such funding, and Peter Stone reminded the directors that a student prize was already in existence.

There was then a digression about the perennial problem of how to expand membership. Peter Stone and Rosalind Carey suggested the value of membership drives, especially advertising. Alan Schwerin explained his disappointment after his experience with writing to forty-five universities inviting people to submit papers and/or become members and having had nothing to show for it as a result. Rosalind Carey supported the idea of the editors of the Society’s quarterly journal printing “free year’s membership tickets”. Dennis would give recipients interested in redeeming these tickets a free membership and they would be sent a “welcome package” of sorts. David Hennehan encouraged people to think along the lines of using World Wide Web options, and he asked for a clarification of exactly how flush with money the BRS is.

Ken Blackwell cited recent payments for a couple of lifetime memberships and university funding for printing the BRSQ as some reasons for the surplus, and he made reference to Dennis Darland’s records of ten or eleven-thousand dollars currently at the Society’s disposal. Ken Blackwell then introduced a motion to empower the executive committee to fund students attending conferences who are members of the BRS up to $200. Alan Schwerin seconded the motion. The motion passed with six of the seven directors present at this point voting in its favor and one director voting against it.
Finally, Ken Blackwell suggested coming up with an automatic method for selecting a substitute Chair for meetings such as this one when the Chairman of the Board is not in attendance. Ken suggested, as an example, that such a role could automatically devolve upon the former Chairman. Dave Henehan wondered whether the position of substitute chair could automatically go to the President, but Alan Schwerin replied that that would empower the President excessively. Peter Stone mentioned the option of mailing out ballots for such cases. David Henehan questioned the propriety of conducting such an election by mail, and Ken Blackwell made the point that this has been the settled manner in which Directors have been elected. Dave Henehan then suggested that a Vice-Chair position might be worth considering. Alan Schwerin replied that the Chairman should have to appoint a substitute or proxy.

Cara Rice made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave Henehan seconded the motion, and it passed by acclamation.

IN MEMORIAM

JOSEPH ROTBLAT, 96, died in London on 31 August 2005. A 1995 Nobel Peace Prize recipient (with Hans Bethe), knighted in 1998, and member of the Royal Society, Dr. Rotblat, a physicist, was among those scientists who signed the 1955 Russell-Einstein Manifesto. A long time Secretary General of the Pugwash initiative, which is credited with being instrumental in decelerating the cold war nuclear arms race, Rotblat was the only scientist to leave the Manhattan Project on moral grounds. For this act, he was banned from the US for several years.

WHITFIELD COBB died in Blacksburg, Virginia on 31 July 2005. A member of the BRS, and a statistician with a doctorate from UNC, Cobb first studied philosophy, receiving a BA and MA from UNC in that field before turning to mathematics. A longtime teacher of mathematics, Cobb taught at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and was retired as emeritus at State University. He is remembered for his social conscience and his willingness to defend unpopular positions in the face of threats to his person, as in his defense of school integration.

Traveler’s Diary / Conference Report

To those who identify the meetings of the APA with its Eastern incarnation, the Central division conference is a surprise. Compared to the Eastern conference, it’s small — though not as small as the Pacific — and it moves at a leisurely, dignified pace: each speaker is given a full hour in a group session at the Central; at the Eastern, each speaker has a breathless 40 minutes. Moreover, the Central conference rotates on the axis of Chicago, returning each year to the Palmer House (the Palmer House, if you please, and “Palmer” as in palmy); in contrast the Eastern careers through the orbit of New York, Boston, Washington, New York, Boston, Washington.

Satisfaction, as everyone knows, is measured in the units of time one gets to spend talking about or listening to pet ideas. This year’s crop of BRS talks (combined with sessions of HEAPS) was especially satisfying. Moving backwards, the afternoon session heard first from Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen on “Significs and Early Analytic Philosophy”. Significs is the branch of linguistics mothered by Lady Welby. Prof. Pietarinen revealed in the course of his talk the existence of correspondence between Lady Welby and Russell, and this exciting tidbit led me to read these instructive letters during a later visit to the Archives. In my opinion, they reveal Russell’s skill in giving the brush-off, though he later seems to have changed his assessment of the value of Welby’s work, and it is perhaps mostly through Russell’s intellectual honesty in attributing certain ideas to Welby that most of us know of her work at all.

In “Russell, Wittgenstein, and Logical Atomism” Prof. Paul Los argued against the view that atomism arose under Wittgenstein’s influence, giving evidence of an earlier date and a different provenance for that theory by referring us, in part, to Russell’s baldly explicit realism in his 1911 French paper “Analytic Realism”. Fellow Russellian James Connelly spoke on “Wittgenstein On Proper Names and Logical Truth” arguing for the presence in the Tractatus of an interesting and important theory of proper names. In taking this line James perhaps places himself in the overdue backlash to the current fashion of denying that Wittgenstein ever had any theories, meant to express theories - or heck! - even knew what a theory was.
Note: Treasurer's Reports in Issues 120-127 contained errors introduced in the editing process. Corrected reports were included in combined issue 128-129. This is noted on page 7 of that issue.
In the morning session, Prof. David Martens gave an exquisitely crafted argument in a paper called "MCTaggart On the Conditions for Knowledge". I have since come to realize exactly how rare MCTaggart scholars are, so this was a unique treat. Prof. Stefanie Rocknak of Hartnack College in New York spoke on "Russell’s Impact on Quine". Her paper (and those of the other speakers) was well received by a healthy audience of about 12 souls.

Aaron Preston’s paper “Current Work on the History and Nature of Analytic Philosophy” created sufficient flap and high feeling that it was necessary for the group to continue the conversation afterward in the calming presence of food and drink. His talk describes analytic philosophy as a will o’ the wisp, a façon de parler with no common feature or language game uniting its supposed representatives. What is interesting about Aaron’s treatment of the topic - for me anyway - is what it reveals about his conceptions of philosophy in general. Not everyone will agree with me that philosophy is essentially meta-philosophy; this is a matter of taste. And so, too, is the Central APA. —Rosalind Carey
7 PM
WRITERS & BOOKS’ VERB CAFÉ
740 UNIVERSITY AVE
ROCHESTER, NY

GRRS

DEC. 6 PHIL EBERSOLE,
“BERTRAND RUSSELL’S ESSAY, ‘THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION’”

4-6 PM
ROUND TABLE PIZZA
263 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
PALO ALTO, CA

BARS

DEC. 4 “WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN”
JAN. 8 RUSSELL AND CRITICAL THINKING
FEB. 5 RUSSELL AND OLD AGE
MAR. 4 RUSSELL ON WORLD GOVERNMENT
APR. 2 THE CUNY AFFAIR
MAY 18 A CELEBRATION OF RUSSELL’S BIRTHDAY*
* This event takes place on Thursday

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