

A SHORT HISTORY OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

The twentieth century has been a time of rapid change. Science has progressed at a rate barely conceivable to most people prior to our century; new nations have arisen, and the map of the world has had to be redrawn. Every decade brings new and important changes in technology, art, and even manners and morals. Philosophy has not been an exception to this general characteristic of our age. Around the turn of the century a revolution began in philosophy which is not yet over. Like all revolutions, it has its roots deep in the past. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that within our century a fundamental shift in philosophical perspective has occurred. Standing as close to these changes as we do, it is often difficult to see clearly what has happened. Yet, some understanding of the development and growth of analytic thought is essential if one is to understand the state of philosophy today. This introduction, brief and incomplete as it must be, is intended to give the reader some grasp of the main directions of philosophic thought in England and America since 1900. The interested reader will find fuller accounts of the history of analysis in any of the several books cited in the bibliography.

It is not uncommon to characterize our time as the "Age of Analysis" in philosophy. This is not to say that analytic philosophy began with the early writings of Bertrand Russell or the beginnings of this century. On the contrary, few great philosophers from Plato to the present day have failed to employ analytic tools as a philosophic technique at least some of the time in their writings. It is only in the present century, however, that analytic techniques have come to dominate the thinking of a majority of English-speaking philosophers and are considered by them to be the most fruitful approach to philosophical questions.

This is not to say, however, that all contemporary philosophers agree about the value of analysis for resolving philosophical problems. It is primarily in England (and the Commonwealth), America, and Scandinavia that analysis is dominant. It has few adherents in France, Germany, Russia, or the Far East, although interest in it has grown rapidly even there in recent years. Neo-

Thomism, Existentialism, Marxism, and a host of other isms are the predominant philosophies in many parts of the world; even among English-speaking philosophers there are many who espouse an approach to philosophizing quite different from the analytic approaches.

Indeed, it is misleading to speak of "analytic philosophy" as if it were homogeneous and monolithic. There is no single philosophy of analysis. There is no analytic "party line," no heresies, no pontifical authorities. The word "analysis" is used here as a way of grouping together a number of heterogeneous philosophers who share certain interests and procedures. It is this common core of agreement which must be isolated before we proceed.

We must first try to clarify what analysis is in general; this is not an easy thing to do. The word "analysis" when used in philosophy bears obvious affinities to the word's use in a science such as chemistry. To analyze, we may say roughly, is to take apart in order to gain a better understanding of what is being analyzed. The chemist is concerned with the analysis of complex physical substances into their constituent parts. The philosopher, on the other hand, is interested in analyzing linguistic or conceptual units. He is concerned, in general, with coming to understand the structure of language by a careful study of its elements and their interrelations.

We will use the word "analysis" (or "analytic philosophy"), then, to refer to any philosophy which places its greatest emphasis upon the study of language and its complexities. We will contrast the *analytic* with the *speculative* philosopher, who, if he studies language at all, does so only in order to facilitate the achievement of his main goal: speculation about the metaphysical foundations of the universe. Of course, there are philosophers who have been both analytic and speculative in their writings, but this fact does not destroy the value of the broad distinction.

Philosophical analysis is essentially the study of language, but it must not be confused with other important studies of language. Linguists, philologists, grammarians, lexicographers, etc., are also involved in a study of language. Their interest, however, is primarily in empirical investigation. They are interested in discovering facts about how our language is used; what meanings words have; how languages begin, change, and die, etc. These are *scientific* questions about language which can only be answered through use of the scientific method. The analytic philosopher studies language not in order to formulate scientific hypotheses about it, but rather because he believes that such a study is an invaluable tool to help him achieve his primary goal of settling philosophical questions.

Although all analytic philosophers would agree that the study of language is of the greatest importance, there is no general agreement about *which* language can most fruitfully be studied by the philosopher. Indeed, it is just at this point that a fundamental cleavage has occurred between the various philosophers who practice analysis. Some of them have concluded that philosophical analysis ought to consist primarily in the construction of new, artificial language systems (sometimes called *calculi*, because of their affinity to mathematical systems). The rules of these artificially constructed languages are intended to be clearer, more complete, and more precise than the rules that

govern our use of language in ordinary discourse. Just as science had to create its own technical vocabulary and introduce concepts (e.g., force, mass, atom) that are more precise than those supplied by common sense, so also, these philosophers argue, philosophy must develop its own vocabulary and set of concepts in order to resolve its problems.

Other analysts have disagreed with this argument. They contend that such artificial languages are of little help in resolving philosophical problems. It is their view that philosophical problems can best be approached by a careful analysis of the ordinary, natural language we all use to communicate with each other. For this reason, these philosophers are sometimes (but not accurately) referred to as "ordinary language" philosophers. A more accurate way of distinguishing these two main "schools" of analysis is to refer to the proponents of artificial language analysis as Logical Positivists and the philosophers interested in analyzing ordinary language as Linguistic Analysts. There are many analysts who do not fit neatly into either of these categories, but the majority of analytic philosophers can, without too much injustice, be put in one category or another. The important differences between Logical Positivism and Linguistic Analysis will perhaps become clearer if we now discuss the historical development of analysis.

Most contemporary Anglo-American philosophers are quick to acknowledge a permanent debt to the two early pioneers of contemporary analysis: Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore. Although there were several outstanding philosophers in the nineteenth century whose writings foreshadowed analysis as we know it, it was Russell and Moore primarily, around the turn of the century, who challenged decisively the predominant philosophical views of the period and took the first giant steps toward a new conception of philosophy.

When Russell and Moore were fellow students at Cambridge University in the 1890s, the predominant philosophic tradition in England (and America) was Neo-Hegelianism. With few exceptions, the men they studied under were in the tradition of G. F. Hegel (1770–1831), espousing a form of Idealism derived from Hegel's famous philosophical system. Neo-Hegelian Idealism is speculative metaphysics in the grand style. It attempted to present a complete world-view which would describe the nature of Reality, insofar as it can be known by man, and the ultimate relation of Man and his Values to that Reality. Idealism, as it flourished in the late nineteenth century, was the culmination of the centuries of metaphysical thought which began so long ago with the speculations of Thales (sixth century B.C.).

The most brilliant and famous of the British Idealists of that time was F. H. Bradley (1846–1924), whom both Moore and Russell studied as students and by whom they were initially much influenced. Their early commitment to Idealism did not last long, however, for they soon became disillusioned with the Neo-Hegelian approach to philosophical questions and began to raise questions about the basic tenets of idealistic thought which ultimately led them to reject it completely.

This is not to say, however, that Moore and Russell were in complete agreement about what was wrong with Idealism or how best to expose the error

contained in it. On the contrary, their differing interests soon led them in diverging directions, although they remained united always in their rejection of Neo-Hegelianism.

Moore expressed his dissatisfaction with Idealism in a series of brilliant papers which attacked that view from a uniquely original standpoint. Idealism, of course, had had many critics prior to Russell and Moore, but no one before Moore had concentrated his critical attack with such intensity upon the *meanings* of the metaphysical propositions advanced by the Idealists. Moore refused even to consider the truth or falsity of those propositions until he had first satisfied himself that he understood exactly what they asserted. "In all . . . philosophical studies," he wrote, "the difficulties and disagreements, of which its history is full, are mainly due to a very simple cause: namely to the attempt to answer questions, without first discovering precisely what question it is which you desire to answer." In the course of his painstaking examination of the possible meanings of philosophical questions and the solutions which the Idealists advanced for them, Moore came repeatedly to the conclusion that when the philosopher's abstract thesis was clearly understood, it could be seen to be patently mistaken.

Two of Moore's most valuable tools in his attack upon Idealism were his acceptance of Common Sense and his repeated appeal to the ordinary meanings of words. It is instructive to see how Moore attacked one of the most basic of the Idealist's principles: the doctrine of the Internality of Relations. For many reasons, too complex to present in detail here, the major Idealists had held that all relations are internal, i.e., that a thing is what it is in part because of its relations and that if its relations change, it becomes a different thing. For example, owning a dog as I do, I would be a different person if I gave the dog away, for one of my relations would have been altered. No relation, in other words, is a mere "accidental" or external relation of an individual: The way a person relates to all other things in the world determines necessarily who he is.

Moore rejected this doctrine, and one of his famous arguments against it illustrates the kind of original approach he introduced into philosophy. After painstakingly attempting to discover exactly how the Idealist is using his words when he says "All relations are internal," Moore concludes that this must be false because it "flies in the face of Common Sense." It is often a matter of fact that a certain person owns a dog, but Common Sense would not admit that that person becomes a different person merely because he gives the dog away. Common Sense (and ordinary speech) allows that although I may in fact be related to certain things in certain ways, I *might not have been* so related, and yet the "I" in each case has the same reference. Moore concludes, on the basis of his appeal to Common Sense, that some relations are internal, some are external, and that the Idealist principle is quite mistaken.

Needless to say, metaphysicians, whose primary interest was in propounding sweeping theses about the Nature of Reality, found Moore's approach trivial and irritating. Moore's insistence upon detailed analysis of the meanings of words as they occur in philosophical sentences, his refusal to speculate before clarity was gained, his repeated adherence to Common Sense and the way language is commonly used—these philosophical techniques were viewed sympathetically by few metaphysicians, although their importance was not lost upon

certain other philosophers, who came to respect Moore's distinctive approach to philosophical questions even when they disagreed with his conclusions. By helping to turn philosophers' attention to the meanings of the questions they were asking and by discouraging speculation prior to clarification, Moore exerted an influence upon the history of analytic thought which is unparalleled.

Moore's writings were influential in other ways also. His early writings in ethics, for example, introduced into that subject a thesis which had far-reaching influence on later moral philosophers. Nor did Moore restrict himself to attacking Idealism. Although many of his early papers have not been published until recently, it is clear that he had always been interested in a range of philosophical questions, always bringing to them the skillful tools of analysis which he was in the process of forging.

Russell rejected Idealism for somewhat different reasons. This was partly due to interests which he had that were not shared by Moore. Russell's earliest writings were in the areas of logic and foundations of mathematics. Together with A. N. Whitehead (1861-1947) he published in 1910 the first volume of a monumental treatise on logic and mathematics, entitled *Principia Mathematica*. In addition to the great logical and mathematical advance which it represented, the *Principia* was also of the greatest interest to philosophers, since by developing the power and scope of logic considerably, it seemed to provide for philosophers a new, highly precise instrument for attacking philosophical problems. Russell himself wrote that "... logic is what is fundamental in philosophy, and ... schools should be characterized rather by their logic than by their metaphysics." Russell, both before and after the publication of the *Principia*, attempted to bring to bear the results of his logical studies upon the traditional problems of metaphysics.

One major difference between Moore and Russell and their respective approaches to philosophy can be brought out by citing Russell's reasons for rejecting the doctrine of the Internality of Relations. Although Russell's reasons for rejecting the doctrine so crucial to the Idealists are complex and involved, they nevertheless are characteristic of the early Russell's approach to philosophical problems. One of Russell's main arguments is that the doctrine must be false because of its consequences for mathematics. If all relations are internal, he says, then the Idealists are right in saying that ultimately Reality is One and there is only One Truth. But this entails, Russell argues, that the propositions of mathematics are not even partial truths, which is an unacceptable consequent. The doctrine of the Internality of Relations is false, Russell concludes, and the metaphysical views that are deduced from it are fundamentally mistaken. The Idealist error is at bottom a *logical* error; they failed to see that not all meaningful propositions are of the subject-predicate form; that is, an adequate logic (such as the logical system developed in the *Principia*) must include an independent logic of relations as well as a logic of predication. The metaphysical question of the nature of relations, in other words, was settled by Russell primarily in terms of mathematical and logical considerations.

Russell's interest in mathematics and the need to secure its foundations was equaled by his respect for the procedures of science. He seems to have come to the opinion early that philosophical problems could be successfully solved only

when philosophy became more like science in method. By using the symbolic techniques he had done so much to perfect, he hoped to introduce into philosophy some of the precision and the success of the natural sciences. The results of his attempt to make philosophy more scientific in method are to be found in a series of influential books which he wrote during the first decades of this century.

Russell and Moore succeeded in time in bringing to an end the dominance of Idealism in British philosophy. Younger philosophers were influenced by their distinctive approach, and many of them found Idealism quite indefensible against the repeated attacks of Moore and Russell. In time their writings became known in America, and in part because of their affinity with the writings of the American Pragmatists C. S. Peirce (1839–1914) and William James (1842–1910), found a sympathetic audience.

Despite their mutual rejection of Idealism, neither Russell nor Moore seriously doubted the possibility of eventually solving at least some metaphysical problems. They continued to believe that metaphysical truth of a sort is not only possible, but each believed himself to have arrived at some. Their main dissatisfaction concerned the ways used in the past by philosophers to resolve metaphysical questions. Analysis, whether by means of the techniques of symbolic logic or by an appeal to ordinary language, was for them primarily a tool to be used to sharpen and clarify philosophical problems so that they could be more readily solved. Probably neither of them realized that their writings were to prepare the ground for the next, more extreme phase of the revolution.

It was Russell's brilliant student, Ludwig Wittgenstein, who, building upon the work of Russell and to a lesser extent Moore, was the first analyst to argue the more extreme thesis that metaphysical questions are from their very nature unanswerable. The real difficulty, Wittgenstein argued in his cryptic but extremely influential *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921), with metaphysical problems is not that philosophers have up to now failed to find adequate ways of solving them, but rather that they are *not questions at all*, since they fail to fulfill the minimal conditions of meaningfulness. All meaningful discourse, he attempted to show, is empirical in nature. Metaphysics is not empirical, so it is not meaningful, and the philosopher's search for metaphysical truth must forever prove abortive. The necessity of the propositions of mathematics and logic follows from the fact that they are tautologous, making no reference to the world. Since the sentences of metaphysicians (Russell and Moore included) are neither propositions of empirical science nor tautologies of logic or mathematics, they are nonsensical.

Philosophy, Wittgenstein said, is primarily the activity of clarifying language; it is not a source of truth about the universe the way science is. The philosopher's only proper task is to show the person who is puzzled by a metaphysical question that it is meaningless and unanswerable. It is clear that Wittgenstein at that time considered philosophy as it has been traditionally practiced since its origin a vain undertaking. The famous last sentence of the *Tractatus*, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent," expresses elegantly the essential doctrine of Wittgenstein's early view.

The impact of the *Tractatus* on the philosophical world was to be enormous. Although few philosophers have claimed to understand completely what

Wittgenstein was attempting to say, the book within a few years had wide circulation and was the subject of considerable discussion. It was clear that, despite his affinities with Russell, Wittgenstein had gone far beyond both Russell and Moore in the position he adopted in the *Tractatus*. Neither Russell nor Moore could endorse what Wittgenstein wrote without inconsistency.

Other philosophers, however, could and did accept the spirit, if not the letter, of the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein's work found its most sympathetic audience initially, not in America or England, but on the Continent. In Vienna, beginning around 1923, a group of mathematicians and philosophers, having in common a deep disillusionment with the state of continental philosophy at that time and sharing respect for the achievements of science, had banded together for regular meetings and the communication of ideas. The founder and guiding spirit of this group was the philosopher Moritz Schlick (1882–1936). In addition to having some familiarity with the thought of Wittgenstein, Schlick had himself been developing independently ideas similar to some of those expressed by Wittgenstein. In time the group came to be known as the Vienna Circle. In 1929 they formally organized into a society.

It must not be assumed, however, that Logical Positivism was exclusively an outgrowth of Wittgenstein and Schlick. On the contrary, the original Logical Positivists counted among their sources of inspiration a variety of historical figures: David Hume, Auguste Comte, Ernst Mach, Gottlob Frege, and others. Indeed, the relationship between the Vienna Circle and Wittgenstein is not altogether clear even today, although the facts suggest that the *Tractatus* functioned primarily as a catalyst which served to crystallize ideas already present within the Circle. It is clear, however, that the original members of the Vienna Circle endorsed only some of Wittgenstein's ideas, totally rejecting other aspects of his *Tractatus* view.

Logical Positivism has probably gained wider public recognition than any other part of the analytic movement. Unfortunately, much of this recognition has taken the form of gross misconceptions about what the Logical Positivist's position actually was. Some people, especially critics of the movement, have tended to identify all analysis with Logical Positivism. This is, of course, a serious mistake. From its inception, Logical Positivism has been criticized repeatedly by many prominent analytic philosophers.

Like all significant philosophic movements, Logical Positivism was too diverse and complex a phenomenon to lend itself readily to brief, accurate summary. The reader who is interested in a detailed history of the movement is referred to the appropriate works cited in the Bibliography. Two central theses of the group, however, must be mentioned here to show the role Positivism played in the history of analysis.

It was a central tenet of Positivism that all metaphysical sentences without exception are meaningless. The Positivists agreed with Wittgenstein (although for different reasons) that metaphysical questions, the attempted answers to which make up the bulk of the history of philosophy, are pseudo-questions and unanswerable. One of the major figures of Positivism, Rudolf Carnap, defined metaphysical propositions as those "which claim to represent knowledge about something which is over or beyond all experience." What cannot be experienced,

even in principle, the Positivists held, cannot be known nor even spoken about in meaningful language. Secondly, most of the members of the Vienna Circle tended to identify philosophy with analysis, especially the analysis of the language of science.

Schlick and Carnap were probably the two most famous members of the Circle. Carnap, from roughly 1928 on, published a series of books and articles on logic and the foundations of science which exerted great influence, especially in America. His *Logical Syntax of Language* (1934) was one of the first and most complete attempts to carry out in detail certain important parts of the Positivist's program. Many of the problems which were to occupy the attention of Positivists for decades were first articulated by Carnap.

There were, however, other members of the Circle who contributed substantially to the progress of Positivism. Some of the more famous names were H. Feigl, F. Waismann, K. Gödel, O. Neurath, H. Hahn, and P. Frank. In addition, the formal organization of the Circle allowed it to establish contact with like-minded philosophers elsewhere, e.g., the so-called "Berlin School," including H. Reichenbach, C. Hempel, K. Grelling, and R. von Mises, and the very productive school of Polish logicians.

In England the most famous Logical Positivist was A. J. Ayer. His youthful *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936) stated his conception of Positivism with uncompromising clarity and zeal. The book soon became a storm center of controversy. Ayer himself repudiated or modified many of the views which he expressed in that book within a short time. Yet, there is no doubt that it was extremely influential in bringing Positivism to the attention of philosophers and educated laymen alike.

Ayer placed great emphasis upon what he called "The Principle of Verification." According to this principle (which appears in other formulations in other Positivist writers) a sentence cannot be deemed literally meaningful unless it satisfies certain specified conditions. Metaphysical sentences, Ayer hoped, because they failed to meet those conditions, could thus be shown to be meaningless. Philosophy, he argued at that time, is nothing but the analysis of language and the exposure of metaphysical nonsense for what it is. In many ways, Ayer's statement of the Positivist program was the clearest available, although its clarity rendered it especially vulnerable to the attacks of the critics of Positivism.

The Vienna Circle had a relatively short lifespan. The rise of Fascism in Germany and Austria brought an end to free thought and discussion. Even before the outbreak of World War II most of the important members of the Circle had left Vienna. Many of them emigrated to the United States where they soon came to occupy positions in universities across the country. The end of the Circle as a formal movement was hastened by the death of its moving spirit, Moritz Schlick, who was tragically shot to death by one of his students in 1936. By the beginning of the war, the Vienna Circle, as an organized movement, had all but ceased to exist.

The influence of Positivism, however, did not come to an end with the demise of the Circle. The ideas articulated by the original Positivists became topics of discussion throughout the world. By insisting that all metaphysics is nonsense, Positivism posed a serious threat to established religion, since most

religion includes theology, and theology was considered a kind of metaphysics. Defenders of the Faith arose in many places to do battle with the Devil of Positivism. This confrontation of traditional theological thought with anti-metaphysical Positivism led eventually to many lively, fruitful debates, which clarified the kind of attack Positivism was directing against theology. Unfortunately, disputes between the Positivist and the defender of religion often ended other times in fruitless, emotion-laden bickering.

Other philosophers, who were not committed to the defense of religious dogma, also felt the sting of the Positivist attack. By attempting to identify all philosophy with the analysis of language, Positivism left no room for traditional metaphysical investigation in philosophy. Philosophers who felt that the practice of metaphysics was important had first to show the error in the Positivistic program.

Original Positivism, however, was not destroyed either by its many critics or by the end of the Vienna Circle. The fact that few philosophers today would identify themselves with the tenets of the Circle is primarily due to a realization on the part of the Positivists themselves that some of their basic views, as originally stated, were unsound. The Verifiability Criterion of Meaning, for example, on which many early Positivists put such emphasis, was eventually abandoned or modified beyond recognition by its early defenders. Without relinquishing their antimetaphysical attitude, many Positivists began to seek more defensible ways of demonstrating the impossibility of metaphysics. Certain philosophers, for example, Gustav Bergmann, turned their attention to the attempt to construct "Ideal" languages, with the hope that by so doing they could clarify metaphysical questions to the point where they either could be seen to be meaningless or could be answered by making use of the more precise language. "Neo-Positivism" is the name often given to that group of philosophers who share many affinities with Original Positivism, but who in most cases have moved quite a distance from the pioneer position.

In the United States, where Positivism almost from its inception had found many sympathetic listeners, the original doctrines of the Circle have often been combined with the tradition of American Pragmatism. Since Pragmatism and Positivism have always shared many features, it is not surprising that some philosophers have been able to write in both traditions simultaneously. W. V. O. Quine is an excellent example of an original thinker who shows in his writings the influence of both Positivism and Pragmatism upon his thought.

Logical Positivism is one major direction that analytic thought has taken. There is, however, another main stream of analysis which developed more slowly than Positivism, but which has become at least as important. It is usually referred to as "Linguistic Analysis." It can be considered a "movement" only in the broadest sense of that word. Unlike Positivism, Linguistic Analysis has never had any formal organization comparable to the Vienna Circle. The name "Linguistic Analysis" perhaps is best used as a general name used to refer to a number of diverse philosophers all of whom share certain common interests in philosophy. (There is no sharp border line, incidentally, between Neo-Positivism and Linguistic Analysis; there are philosophers who write in both traditions simultaneously.)

The most important figure in the early development of Linguistic Analysis was Ludwig Wittgenstein. Within a few years after completing the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein began to repudiate many of the basic views he had expressed in that book. Not since Plato has a philosopher been so harsh a critic of his earlier opinions. From roughly 1930 until his death, Wittgenstein expounded a new approach to philosophizing which has had the widest of influences. The distinction between his early and his later views is often made by referring to the "Early Wittgenstein" and the "Later Wittgenstein."

Although Wittgenstein did not publish any of his new ideas until after his death, he did dictate some lectures to his students which were circulated in typescript and eventually published as *The Blue and Brown Books*. It was not until 1953 that his *magnum opus*, *Philosophical Investigations*, was published. By then, as he himself wrote, many of his new ideas ". . . variously understood, more or less mangled . . ." were topics of discussion in many places.

There is no agreement among scholars concerning the full meaning of Wittgenstein's later writings. Like the *Tractatus*, the *Philosophical Investigations* is written in an original, but often difficult, style which does not lend itself readily to exegesis. A brief summary of his later views, however, is required here in order to give a fair account of the history of analysis. The reader should, however, keep in mind that the brief account that follows is only one of the several possible interpretations of what Wittgenstein was saying.

Wittgenstein had never accepted the basic tenets of Positivism. In the *Tractatus* he had spoken of the need for a logically perfect language, and many Positivists had interpreted him to be referring to the kind of symbolic calculi they were attempting to construct to expedite their analysis of scientific language. Whether or not Wittgenstein had such calculi in mind when he wrote the *Tractatus* is less important than the fact that in his later writings he clearly rejects the construction of artificial symbolic calculi as important for the resolution of philosophical problems. Influenced probably by Moore, he concentrated his attention primarily upon the analysis of the forms of ordinary discourse. His later writings abound with brilliant, subtle descriptions of language as it is ordinarily used.

Moore was interested in analyzing ordinary language in order to clarify metaphysical theses to facilitate their evaluation. Moore never seems to have doubted that at least most metaphysical questions have answers. Wittgenstein, on the contrary, came to believe that metaphysical perplexity arises out of a deep-seated failure to understand the complex functioning of our language. This failure to understand the way our language works gives rise to a kind of "linguistic anxiety" which expresses itself in the temptation to try to ask and answer metaphysical questions. Such questions are not real questions, Wittgenstein believed; they cannot be answered. What must be done is to find the source of the "anxiety" by a careful imaginative description of how our language actually operates. Philosophical problems will not be solved; they will be *dissolved*.

Thus, in his later writings, Wittgenstein still maintained the cardinal conclusion of the *Tractatus*: Metaphysical problems are not real problems and cannot be solved. His whole approach toward showing this, however, changed radically. The task of the philosopher is still to clarify language and remove confusion, but he must do it not merely by demonstrating to the metaphysician

that his question is meaningless, but also by describing those features of language which gave rise to the temptation to pose the metaphysical question in the first place.

Brief and incomplete as this sketch of Wittgenstein's later views is, it perhaps serves to show how his later work stimulated a way of approaching philosophical problems quite different from that practiced by the Positivists. Although Wittgenstein never said that the description of ordinary language is the *only* valuable way of resolving philosophical problems, it was clear that he placed great importance on it. Linguistic Analysts all share with Wittgenstein a respect for ordinary language analysis and its fruitfulness for philosophy. Wittgenstein also believed that, in time, philosophical questions would completely disappear if his new procedures were properly applied. There is no residue of "philosophical truth" which would remain after all philosophical problems have been "dissolved."

Although Wittgenstein was the dominant figure in the development of Linguistic Analysis, he was not at that time the only philosopher thinking along such lines. The fact of the matter seems to be that many of the ideas he expounded were in the air at that time, so it is not surprising that other philosophers were developing independently views quite similar in many respects to the ones Wittgenstein was presenting to his students.

The two most important philosophers who helped to spread respect for Linguistic Analysis from its inception were Gilbert Ryle and John Wisdom. Although their respective approaches to philosophical problems were different in many respects, they shared a common interest in the analysis, as each of them understood the word, of ordinary forms of speech.

Ryle's major work, *The Concept of Mind*, attempts to show that the mental-physical dichotomy, which has dominated much metaphysical speculation since Descartes, is the result of a basic confusion about our use of mentalistic terms. This book and the various articles which Ryle wrote exploring other problems in similar ways have been enormously influential in spreading interest in the methods of Linguistic Analysis.

John Wisdom, on the other hand, was a student of Wittgenstein's. But, in a series of articles and books over the past thirty years, he has brought to Linguistic Analysis an original and exciting new kind of philosophical procedure. Unwilling to reject metaphysics as *merely* nonsense, he attempts to understand why the metaphysician feels compelled to talk in his linguistically odd ways. By putting stress upon the imperfect similarities between various kinds of statements in our language, he hopes to discover what is and is not valuable in the various attempts to solve metaphysical questions.

Despite Wittgenstein's great influence upon the present generation of philosophers, it is interesting that few of them have been willing to commit themselves completely to his later views. In part this may be due to a lack of general agreement on what those views are. More important, however, is the reluctance on the part of many analysts to accept the seemingly nihilistic import of Wittgenstein's remarks about the future of philosophy. Wittgenstein seems to say that there is no proper role for the philosopher beyond the dissolution of linguistic confusion. Many philosophers cannot accept this conclusion as the inevitable result of analysis.

One of the most discussed of the younger analysts, P. F. Strawson, has argued that there is no real antithesis between linguistic analysis and a certain kind of metaphysics. He distinguishes two kinds of metaphysics: that which only attempts to describe the conceptual boundaries of our language (*descriptive* metaphysics) and that which attempts to revise them (*revisionary* metaphysics). In his book *Individuals*, which he subtitled "An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics," Strawson attempts to show, among other things, that certain general conclusions about the world can be gained from an analysis of how we speak. Presumably, this is the very thing that Wittgenstein was saying could not be done.

One other major figure of analysis must be mentioned to complete this general survey. John Austin, like Wittgenstein, published little during his lifetime but exerted great influence on his students. Austin shared with other analysts the conviction that the study of language is of the greatest value in dealing with philosophical questions. Like Wittgenstein and Wisdom, he also believed that a great deal of what philosophers have written is not so much false as it is misleading and confused. However, Austin's procedure for dispelling this confusion is unique. Especially in his later writings, Austin concentrated his attention upon the rich complex of grammatical distinctions to be found in the English language. He displayed an amazing talent for articulating the subtle shifts of meaning which result from the most minute grammatical changes. He was clearly of the opinion that the study of grammar is philosophically important, and he attempted to demonstrate this in his later works.

Austin, however, made few general pronouncements about the import or implications of his grammatical investigations. He does at times speak of the need for "a science of language," implying that such a science will supersede a great deal of what is now done by analytic philosophers. It seems to have been Austin's belief that the time is not yet ripe for speculation in philosophy. We must first become as clear as possible about how our language operates before we attempt to settle philosophical problems or even speculate on whether any of them can be solved. Thus, in spite of his general similarity to Wittgenstein, Austin never endorsed Wittgenstein's speculations about the ultimate fate of philosophy.

Sixty years is a relatively short time as man's history goes. Yet, the changes in philosophical interests and procedures within that period have been enormous. One has only to compare the works of Russell with the later writings of Wittgenstein or Austin to see the extent of the revolution which has occurred in philosophy. It is doubtful that this revolution has come to an end. Only future historians of philosophy will be in a position to judge the ultimate merit of the direction which philosophy has taken in our times. One thing can be said now, however: Philosophers can never again, except at their peril, ignore the importance of language when attempting to resolve philosophical problems. This is a minimal, but lasting, accomplishment of analysis. Whether future philosophical investigation of language will in the end lead to the dissolution of all philosophical puzzles, as Wittgenstein seems to have believed, or whether it will issue in a new, linguistically oriented metaphysics, as Strawson suggests, is in many ways the most important question confronting philosophy today.