

ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY—a trend in contemporary philosophy with its own distinct methodology and content. It began in Great Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century (G. E. Moore, B. Russell) in opposition to speculative idealistic philosophy. Several variations of analytic philosophy developed primarily in countries where English is the primary language (esp. in the United States and Australia). The precursors of the trend include G. Frege and, in part, F. Brentano.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY. In its first phase, analytic philosophy was a form of opposition to neo-Hegelian metaphysics, which was cultivated in England by F. H. Bradley, J. M. McTaggart, and others. Both Moore and Russell disagreed with the idealism and the method of this form of metaphysics. Moore thought that up to that time philosophers had not put sufficient weight on precision in the formulation of theses or on the exact definition of the meaning of the terms they used. This negligence led them to make absurd statements at odds with common sense. Although the detailed analysis of concepts is not the ultimate end of philosophy, it should be an introductory step in any well-ordered philosophy. According to Russell, when philosophers considered a proposition, they too often took its grammatical form to be the same as its logical form. In order to show explicitly the logical form, we must translate the proposition from ordinary language into a proposition expressed in the categories of contemporary formal logic. This theory of description is an example of this kind of analysis. This theory provided a way to avoid certain paradoxes associated with references to non-existent objects.

This method of analysis ultimately led Russell to think that artificial formal languages are closer to reality than is ordinary language. This idea marked the beginning of a form of analytic philosophy called the philosophy of ideal language. It included the logical atomism of B. Russell and L. Wittgenstein, and neopositivism which was started by the Vienna Circle (M. Schlick, R. Carnap, O. Neurath). According to logical positivism, the structure of reality is adequately reflected by the language of contemporary logic (or more precisely, logic in the form in which it appears in B. Russell's *Principia Mathematica*). The world is composed of atomic facts which are ontologically independent of one another; in an ideal logical language, atomic propositions which are independent of each other in content would correspond to these facts. Composite facts are the models for composite propositions, which are built from simple atomic propositions with the help of truth functors.

L. Wittgenstein's logical atomism as presented in his work *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1921) was connected with a metaphilosophy in which true propositions are formulated only in the natural sciences. Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences but an activity aimed at the clarification of thought. Moreover, the source of questions and theses in philosophy up to that time was a misunderstanding of the logic of our language. The members of the Vienna Circle referred to this metaphilosophy (or at least to a certain interpretation of it). They accepted the verification theory of meaning (the meaning of a proposition is the method whereby it is empirically verified), and they held that traditional philosophy is simply a collection of meaningless propositions. Philosophy has nothing to say about reality (all knowledge about the world is contained in the natural sciences). The basic task of philosophy is the logical analysis of scientific language or the logical structure of scientific theories. The Vienna Circle, together with a group of thinkers concentrated around H. Reichenbach in Berlin, started neopositivism (also referred to as logical positivism or logical empiricism). It was popularized in England by J. Ayer and later took root in the United States.

Although logical positivism was an integral part of analytic philosophy, it took shape independently of its British stem. This was the case with the Polish school of analytic philosophy started by F. Brentano's student, K. Twardowski. His program of philosophy was similar to Moore's: philosophy's first task was to present problems and the terms used in precise terms. Most of the representatives of this school (including K. Ajdukiewicz, S. Leśniewski, J. Łukasiewicz, and A. Tarski) were inclined to think that the tools of formal logic were best suited for the purpose of increasing precision. This idea brought the Polish school of analytic philosophy close to the philosophy of ideal language in many respects. The Polish analytic philosophers differed from the neopositivists because they had a more moderate approach to the problems and solutions of traditional philosophy: they treated these problems with reserve, but they did not regard them merely as a collection of meaningless statements.

After 1930, when Wittgenstein was without doubt the most important analytic philosopher, his thought underwent a great change. While he remained faithful to the idea that the problems and philosophical theses up to that time arose from a misunderstanding of the logic of our language, he didn't think that this logic was identical to formal logic. The real language we use is a collection of various language games governed by their own rules and their own logic. Any attempt to enclose this variety in one logical system would necessarily introduce essential distortions. The task of the analytic philosopher is not to reform language, but to describe particular language games. The purpose was not so much to construct a systematic theory of language as to show that the traditional problems in philosophy resulted from an ignorance of the specific character of these language games. Philosophical analysis is primarily therapeutic since it is not concerned with solving philosophical problems but with removing them ("the philosopher is occupied with a problem as a physician is occupied with an illness"). Some of Wittgenstein's disciples (including J. Wisdom in England and M. Lazerowitz in the USA) emphasized and developed the therapeutic dimension of philosophy.

Because of his positive views on language, Wittgenstein came to be regarded as a representative of the philosophy of ordinary language. This group also included a group of Oxford philosophers (J. L. Austin, G. Ryle, and in part H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson). They were joined in the idea that ordinary language has its own coherent logic, and this logic cannot be fully comprehended by any formal system. Both in removing illusory philosophical problems and in solving real problems we abide by this logic and we should not despise the distinctions suggested by ordinary (customary) language. We should be on the guard against far-reaching generalizations and we should avoid simplistic and dichotomous classifications. The philosophy of ordinary language was developed mainly in Great Britain, but its influence began to decline after 1960.

In the United States, W. V. Quine became the main figure in analytic philosophy after the Second World War. On the one hand, Quine criticized the dogmatic presuppositions of logical positivism (the dichotomous classification of sentences as analytic and synthetic, and the idea that all scientific propositions could be reduced to propositions of perception). On the other hand, Quine carried forward many ideas of the movement (e.g., there is no first philosophy independent of the sciences; there is a continuum between philosophy and science in the sense that philosophy is located at the theoretical and conceptual outer boundary of science, analyzes the key terms of science, and establishes the ontological binding authority of scientific theories).

At the end of the 1960s some philosophers began to try constructing a systematic theory of meaning for natural languages, and on the basis of such a theory to formulate specific metaphysical statements. This means that the more powerful theses of the analytic philosophers who had gone before, that the analysis of language enables us to avoid or resolve traditional philosophical problems, was replaced by the weaker thesis, that the philosophy of language is the central philosophical discipline and that its conclusions have an essential influence on the shape of philosophy as a whole. D. Davidson and M. Dummett developed theories of meaning along these lines. The central idea in Davidson's conception is that the meaning of a proposition is equivalent to the conditions of its truth, namely the conditions whose occurrence makes the proposition true. An analysis of the truth conditions requires that in the case of many propositions we must recognize events as a category just as central as that of substances or properties. Dummett and those who continued his work (e.g., C. Wright) are firmly opposed to describing the meaning of propositions in this way, since in many cases we cannot recognize whether the truth conditions have occurred, which would lead to the conclusion that we do not know the meaning of many of the propositions we frequently use. The meaning of a proposition is rather the conditions for its verification, its rational justification, or more generally, its assertability. This position, however, may have rather unexpected antirealist (or even idealistic) consequences concerning the existence and character of the reality that is independent of us.

In the 1970s following the work of S. A. Kripke and H. Putnam, analytic philosophers formulated a new theory of designation (reference) which based designation on the causal connection between the users of a language and the objects designated, and which postulated the existence of the essences of things or natural kinds. This was one of the factors which contributed to a renewed interest in the question of metaphysical necessity and the ontology of possible worlds.

Starting in the 1980s, the philosophy of language began to lose its central position to the philosophy of thought. This was influenced by internal aspects of analytic philosophy (the idea that we cannot understand how language functions or how it is related to reality without understanding the nature of the mind and its connections with the world), and by external factors (the rapid development of the sciences with respect to the brain and cognitive processes). Although there are more than a dozen competing theories of the mind, the major philosophers who work in this field (including D. C. Dennet, J. A. Fodor, and J. R. Searle) adhere to naturalism or physicalism in one form or another.

If we look in very general terms at the history of analytic philosophy in the twentieth century and leave to the side many of its secondary and uncharacteristic branches, we may say that after its initial period there were three basic trends within it: the linguistic, ontological, and naturalistic trend.

THE METHODS OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY are a system of operations generally recognized as rational: the collection of the data of experience, the theoretical description of the elements of linguistic competence, linguistic interpretation, the interpretation of the findings of the particular sciences, reasoning, and thought experiments. In analytic methods the use of controversial sources of knowledge is avoided (e.g., intellectual intuition), and a greater emphasis is placed on argumentation and discourse than on inspection or intuition. It is generally accepted that these methods provide temporary results that may be invalidated by further analyses.

The classical conceptual analysis has a definitional character: for a given concept of system of concepts, equivalent concepts with a clearer and simpler content are given. Classical conceptual analysis often is reductive since it tries to reduce the concepts being analyzed to simple and elementary concepts; most often its results are formulated in necessary categories that satisfy the conditions for applying a certain concept. Analysis of this kind must contend with many difficulties (known as the paradoxes of analysis).

Constructive analysis is an attempt to grasp the meaning of a concept and its connections with other concepts by establishing their correspondence with a system of logic or by constructing a new formal system (e.g., modal logic for the concepts of necessity and possibility). The method for establishing this ordering and for establishing the principle of selection among competing logical systems gives rise here to the most difficulties.

Descriptive analysis consists in a detailed description of the way linguistic expressions are used. In order to be philosophically relevant, it must go beyond merely presenting instances of the use of language and must acquire a normative dimension (it must provide grounds for stating which use of language is correct and why). In this method the quest for necessary and sufficient conditions is abandoned, and the demand that some concepts should be reduced to other concepts is replaced by the weaker requirement to show the connections between concepts (connective analysis).

Transcendental analysis is a search for the epistemological and metaphysical conditions for the application or occurrence of a fundamental concept, distinction, or fact. It is a distant echo of Kant's transcendental philosophy. It is often applied in discussion with various forms of skepticism. Its scope and conclusive power is a topic of discussion.

Imaginative analysis takes the form of imagining or presenting to ourselves how we would apply our concepts, categories, and distinctions in situations other than those we know from the real world. It seems to be an attractive method for establishing stable and non-contingent connections and for finding different counter-examples for existing conclusions. The use of imaginative analysis to establish metaphysical theses requires us to presuppose that it is valid to make inferences from what is conceivable (or inconceivable) to what is metaphysically possible (or impossible).

ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY. It is hard to establish how analytic philosophy is related to other schools because of its diversity and the changes it has undergone during its history. As a result, if we try to find one adequate definition of analytic philosophy as a whole, the definition will be too general and will not help us in locating it as a branch of contemporary philosophy (as an example we may mention Davidson's definition: "analytic philosophy is neither a method, nor a doctrine, it is a tradition and an attitude").

It is more helpful to consider that which stands in opposition to what is called "analytic philosophy". At the beginning, the opposition was ideal speculative philosophy, later it was systematic and metaphysical philosophy, and most recently it has been continental philosophy (which includes the traditions of phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutic philosophy, philosophy of dialogue, and postmodernism). This is an indication of how the concept of analytic philosophy has changed.

Although the last opposition suggests that analytic philosophy stands in opposition to phenomenology, there is a very complex set of relations between the two. Both to some degree have a common source in the philosophy of F. Brentano, and there are many similarities between descriptive analyses in phenomenology and analytic philosophy. It is significant that analytic philosophers today commonly reject the dogma of their predecessors that language comes first before thought in explanation, but on the other hand, for many naturalistic analytic philosophers phenomenology is only a systematic expression of a pre-scientific “popular” way of seeing the world. There is a firm opposition between analytic philosophy and some other currents of continental philosophy, i.e., existentialism, hermeneutics, the philosophy of dialogue, and postmodernism (together with deconstructionism). Analytic philosophy gladly refers to certain currents of American pragmatism (Quine, and later Putnam, one of the opponents of the naturalistic trend in analytic philosophy). There have also been attempts to connect pragmatic ideas with postmodernism, as well as critiques of analytic philosophy from the postmodernist point of view (R. Rorty).

Some modern metaphysical trends such as process philosophy are opposed to analytic philosophy. Within neo-Thomistic metaphysics there are various attitudes toward analytic philosophy, ranging from explicit opposition in the case of logical positivism to attempts at employing the logical methods of analytic philosophy and bringing precision to metaphysics (in Polish philosophy, J. Salamucha, J. M. Bochński, S. Kamiński). Neo-thomism and analytic philosophy, however, are only peripherally connected. On the one hand, many analytic philosophers do not know enough about scholastic philosophy, and they rarely refer to scholastic philosophical terminology, and on the other hand neo-Thomists are not well-versed in the discussions of analytic philosophers.

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