

The Ups and Downs of Analytic Philosophy

- Its Methods, Intuitions, and Traditions

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I.

The approach to philosophy commonly termed *analytic* (*fēn xī zhé xúe*) has been the dominant form of Western philosophy for quite some time now. By the year 2011, we may celebrate at least its centennial anniversary.¹ On the other hand, its roots may be traced all the way back to the ancient Greeks, especially Aristotle. The analytic line of thinking is typically attributed with such characteristics as striving for an increase in knowledge, clearness of ideas, rigorousness in style, and the cogency of arguments. Its methods rely not only on using logic, argument structures (*lùn zhèng jié gòu*), definitions (*dìng yì*) and formal schematics (*xíng shì huà*), but also importantly on experiments (*shí yàn*) and observations (*guān chá*) – at least in the sense of thought experiments and observations on the outcomes of reasoning processes. Analytic philosophy takes the role model to be a scientist rather than an artist or a literary intellectual, and the subject matter to be nature, language or the mind, rather than culture, literature or society. It looks away from literary philosophy and turns its eyes on plain language, meshed with technical terms that are expected to be well defined. Professionals whose areas of specialisation concern philosophy of mind and language, philosophy of science, logic and mathematics, as well as much of what takes place in metaphysics and epistemology, can hardly be said to be doing anything much else besides philosophy with an analytic bent.

But how well has analytic philosophy reached its goals? Has it accomplished what it was set out to do by those who proposed some revolutionary ideas in the late 19th and early 20th century? If you look at the simple statistics from universities almost anywhere in the world, the analytic approach is not and is unlikely to ever be as popular as the continental counterpart. Most students, even in those analytic strongholds that you will find, say, in North European departments prefer to follow the continental (*dà lù zhé xúe*) rather than the analytic path – if for nothing else than just

¹ One might entertain the notion that analytic philosophy was forged when Wittgenstein arrived at Cambridge to study philosophy.

to avoid the vicious logic courses. The trend has been like this for quite a long time, despite the fact that in terms of tenures or departmental curricula, these places may to an outside observer appear to be thoroughly analytic. Popularity of course has nothing to do with the success of the discipline: imagine, for example, a medical student being permitted to graduate without having passed basic genetics or a law school graduate having learned nothing about statistical analysis or argumentation theory.

An important strand in the genealogy of the analytic movement goes back to a group of renegade philosophers in early 20th century Vienna. They never intended their ideas to become mainstream. What became the establishment started off as a scientific avant-garde movement. Influenced by the *phenomenalism* of August Comte (*xiàn xiàng zhǔ yì*) and the *positivism* of Ernst Mach (*shí zhèng zhǔ yì*), the Vienna Circle *logical positivists* (*lúo jì shí zhèng zhǔ yì zhě*), or more accurately speaking the logical empiricists² (*lúo jì jīng yàn zhū yì zhě*), such as Moritz Schlick, Hans Hahn, Otto Neurath and Rudolf Carnap, believed that all scientifically meaningful claims can be stated in an ideal language of mathematics and thought, and that all sciences may be unified given such superior observational language. Curiously enough, these roots were not that different from those that influenced Edmund Husserl's early thoughts. *Phenomenology* (*xiàn xiàng xué*), which subsequently was routinely but quite misleadingly associated with the origins of such philosophical schools that actually stand in significant opposition to the methods of analytic philosophy, shared back then a much wider common ground with early analytic philosophy than is still commonly admitted.³

² The term 'logical empiricism' was suggested for the first time by the Finnish philosopher Eino Kaila in 1926, who took part in the Vienna Circle meetings beginning in 1929 until 1934. According to G. H. von Wright's introduction to Kaila's book, Kaila observed that logical empiricism differs from positivism in the crucial sense that the latter "confuses the fact that every proposition about reality must *imply* some experiential consequences with the requirement that the proposition should be about objects given in direct experience" (Kaila 1979). I have not been able to confirm whether Kaila met Hong Qian in one of the meetings in Vienna. All the same, both Hong and Kaila represent an interesting pair of independent thinkers departing from logical positivism and endorsing the historical continuity of logical empiricism instead (Jiang 2010).

³ The collection *Future Pasts* (Floyd & Shieh 2001) stands out as a balanced treatment of the richness of these developments. Hintikka (2001) points out Mach's influence on Husserl, and we might add that Peirce's pragmatism, which he once tagged a version of "prope-positivism", was significantly grounded on phenomenological (in Peirce's term "phaneroscopic") analysis (Pietarinen 2006). Peirce's pragmatism is more accurately speaking a version of "prope-logical empiricism". In his comments on Mach, Peirce explicitly rejected what Kaila in his observation concerning the difference between logical empiricism and positivism took to betray the positivist fallacy (to claim further that "the proposition should be about objects given in direct experience", quotation in footnote 2). Peirce (1893) even contributed to the first English translation of Mach's *The Science of Mechanics* (see *Contributions to the Nation*, 1893).

Another, related line of origins goes back to early linguistic philosophy, which was taken up, among others, by G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell at Cambridge.⁴ Underlying much of this movement/development was a reaction to the prevailing Oxbridge idealism. Russell, having just broken off with Charles Peirce and Victoria Welby, had rediscovered Gottlob Frege and began promoting the philosopher, who hardly anybody knew at that time. Frege had had his disputes with Edmund Husserl over *psychologism* in logic (*xīn lǐ zhǔ yì*) and seemed like an ideal person to be lifted up from obscurity. Again, the origins of this line of development of analytic thought coincide with what was to become the phenomenological stream and which was doubly misidentified both as a representative of continental philosophy and as a continuation of classical philosophical themes by people like Heidegger and others misled by him.

Then enter Wittgenstein, who in his youth also had an encounter with Frege, but who soon realised that Frege has nothing to offer him, and so came to Cambridge to study under Russell in the autumn of 1911. According to some, this event marks the year analytic philosophy kicked off. But it all depends what we take that philosophy to be. Analytic philosophy is not described by a body of propositions nor is it in any sense a school of thought. Dummett, who clearly overstates the influence Frege exerted on Wittgenstein's formation, has suggested that "the only route to the analysis of thought goes through the analysis of language" (Dummett 1993, p. 128). Accepting this doctrinal axiom would among other things mean that we could encode *intentions* (*yì tú*) into the structures of language. Notwithstanding the queer attempts of structuralists and neo-structuralists, no one has been able to show how to accomplish that. Wittgenstein's role as an early analytic philosopher, let alone its instigator, is nevertheless ambiguous, and both analytic and continental camps have appropriated him to justify their causes. Although the so-called therapeutic and nonsense readings of Wittgenstein have become relatively popular of late, those interpretations are likely to be forgotten over time – simply because Wittgenstein never himself accepted such readings.

One lesson to be drawn from this historical sketch is that the terms 'analytic' and 'continental' are misnomers: the Vienna Circle, Frege, Husserl and Wittgenstein all came from continental Europe, and today, analytic philosophy seems to be the dominant force on the continent, too, including France and much of Southern Europe. If you look at where many of the 20th-century celebrity thinkers, such as Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, Jean-François Lyotard or Bruno Latour actually worked, you do not find them spending their days as philosophy professors at

⁴ I say 'among others', since by these times one can find a readily extant network of studies and influences on the role of linguistics in philosophy, including the emerging field of semantics, Welby's signification, semiotic, semiology, semasiology, and many others (Pietarinen 2009).

philosophy departments, but in the general humanities, in the schools and study programmes of psychology, anthropology, critical theory, aesthetics, literature, and culture, gender and arts studies. These fields are as close to philosophy as chemistry, biology or economics are. (One seems to be well entitled to ask why philosophers of chemistry, for example, have not become such celebrities.) The fact remains that those people representing what is best termed modern European/French thought are not interested in *philosophical questions* or *philosophical problems*.

If, moreover, you look at the key chair holders in philosophy in France, you must look at the Collège de France, which was established in 1515, and you are in for a surprise. What you will find is that in the 21st century, these chairs have all not only been actively working in the analytical tradition but also have equally actively been engaged in rebutting the philosophical relevance of these aforementioned intellectual impostors.⁵

Alternatively, if you look at the situation in the United States, Richard Rorty, the most vocal mouthpiece for the post-analytic turn, spent his lifetime working in a department of comparative literature. Rorty was single-handedly responsible for the closure of several philosophy departments in the US following his proclamations on the 'end of philosophy'. Rorty may have had his reasons and educational background to try to undertake such assaults, but the general phenomenon – decision-makers in science politics picking up their advice not from professional philosophers – but from the generic class of philosophical intellectuals appearing in everyday media is nothing new or unusual, not even in countries in which the predominant form of academic philosophy is overwhelmingly analytic. This concerns philosophy not only in the humanities but also in the social sciences and economics. Again, by way of analogy, imagine what it would be like if the vital government decisions in, say, medical or legal affairs were to be based on the consultations of people who come from outside the key institutions and faculties of medicine, law or economics, say from private surgeries, attorney's offices or corporate think-tanks.

But the main blame for this situation is not to be placed so much on emancipated non-professionals as it is on those tenured faculty professors working precisely in their pet fields of analytic territory. I do not mean that they have failed to make analysis marketable to general audiences and hence the lack of appreciation – science is never supposed to be like that – but that many of their basic ideas have in fact been met with fundamental obstacles. Yet the cure is not to escape from the logical hell to the post-analytic heaven but to seriously reconsider the nature of methodologies employed across the field. For instance, the feedback philosophers of science could elicit from

⁵ For the record, the Chairs are Ian Hacking, Anne Fagot-Largeault and Jacques Bouveresse. 'Intellectual impostors' is a marvellous term coined by Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont (Sokal & Bricmont 1997). See also Sokal's fascinating recent book (Sokal 2008).

the actual practices of scientists has a lot to teach here: surely analytic philosophers' methodologies need to communicate with, and ideally talk back to, the best scientific practices of the best scientists.

Moreover, whatever good idea that has occasionally transpired has been trampled on by the philosophical community's endless commentaries on what someone has said on some set of ideas. They have not succeeded in identifying the original ideas, or better, in creating entirely new ones. Philosophy in this regard has seen a tendency to become increasingly *exegetic* (*jǐe jīng de*). The measure of a 'new contribution to knowledge' has transmogrified into 'lucid discourses between fellow philosophers'.⁶ The worst case might have been what Rorty preached, that philosophy is nothing more than a form of intellectual discourse. Take a test: nearly any recent volume of the *Mind* tends to contain an article of the general form "Professor A on Professor B on Professor C's P". The old quip according to which the difference between analytic and continental philosophy is that the former is interested in problems and the latter in proper names has lost its edge. Much of contemporary analytic philosophy is eager to define itself in relation to what Quine, Kripke, Putnam or Searle have said on some set of philosophical issues. One can here take a nostalgic look back at Wittgenstein, who preferred to read Sherlock Holmes stories rather than articles in the *Mind*, which he feared would just bewitch his intelligence. One might muse that if such was the case then, what magnitude of intellectual demonization would he take that journal's impact to have in our present age and time.

The term analytic is an equal misnomer in the following two senses: first, there was never a clear definition of, or even a broad consensus on, what analyticity means. An up-to-date handbook entry by Jan Woleński in Springer's *Handbook of Epistemology* lists over 80 proposed accounts of 'analysis' and 'analyticity' (Woleński 2004). Likewise, Hans-Johan Glock's *What is Analytic Philosophy?* (2009) does not purport to define what the analytic in philosophy is, but rests content with telling the story of the multiplicity of factors that are typically taken to constitute it. This view has been endorsed by Michael Beaney and many other recent historiographers of analytic philosophy (Beaney 2009).

Second, the state of mainstream Western philosophy is a far cry from the early analytic philosophers' notion of analysis. Originally, it was *conceptual* and *logical* analysis attuned to linguistic concerns and the search for meaning, allied with anxiety over the *reductions to foundations*. These interpretive tasks of analysis were later on superseded by 'quasi-analysis' that did not seek anything foundational by methods of decomposition but by seeking the relationships between concepts that can be used to define or construct the things which we want to understand better. This explicative,

⁶ It is somewhat ironic that, while Sokal (2008) rightfully ridicules those excessively using the term 'lucid' ("get ready to laugh..."), over-exegetic analytic philosophers do not escape his mockery.

reconstructive, or some might even say hermeneutical, task is obviously no longer an analytic one. In Carnap's terms it is *rational reconstruction* (*lǐ xìng chóng gòu*), and he explained it as "the task of making more exact a vague or not quite exact concept used in everyday life or in earlier stage of scientific or logical development, or rather replacing it by a newly constructed, more exact concept" (Carnap 1947, p. 8). The current-day practice in analytic philosophy that focuses on various *acts of construction*, with its roots in Carnap's rational reconstruction, is targeted to find alternative expressions, statements, or paraphrases which need not be exactly synonymous to the *analysandum* but which are nevertheless exact, simple and fruitful for some purpose, and which are intended to serve these purposes equally well, or sufficiently equally well, as the original expressions do.

II.

There need not be anything particularly wrong with the method of rational reconstruction as such, unless it be founded, as it so often nowadays is, on one more method of actually attempting to carry out such reconstructive tasks, a method so suspicious in nature that it has come under attack by some contemporary analytic philosophers. That method is the overworked reliance on *intuitions* (*zhí jué*). Indeed, the buzzword of intuitions is commonly resorted to as the chief reason why philosophers believe they are able to ascertain themselves how good the match between the *analysandum* and the *analysans* is, or how well cognitive or intellectual purposes are served by rationally reconstructed meanings. Those who practice this line of thought might have been oversensitive to the paradox of analysis and therefore sought for a soothing certainty in the presumed human faculty of intuition. But what is this thing called philosopher's intuition? Is it trustworthy? Does it conform to scientific methodology? Can reasoning be based on it? Does it lead to new knowledge?

There is a host of *metaphilosophical* themes which emerge from these questions, but one line of criticism of intuitions which has not surfaced much in the commentaries comes from what is loosely classified as *externalist theories of meaning* (*wài zài zhū yì yì yì lǐ lùn*). Broadly, the core thesis states that if there is such a thing as an intuition at all it can only be about our *conceptions of* something, not about the *things themselves*. We may call this a broadly neo-Kantian notion of intuition. According to externalism, however, and even more so according to pragmatic theories of meaning, which investigate various kinds of usages and practices associated with expressions and observations on the effects of these actions, meaning is not in the concepts or in the conceptualisation of things. No, meaning is irreducibly connected with the extra-linguistic, extra-conceptual and extra-mental reality in which utterance-environment pairs take place. But then, passive and effete intuitions can never reach that reality. Intuitions will never be intuitions of what something means. At best, they can say something about our *conceptions of* what truth, reference, love or justice is. Yes, they

can do that by *distinguishing good applications* of these concepts from *bad applications*. But no, they cannot reach the fine differences in the meaning of these entities, which would consist of finding out the fine differences in *practices* by which the concepts are applied. The utmost differences in meaning are not to be found no matter how carefully one looks into and contemplates the differences in the conceptualisations of things.

The increasingly frequent appeals to intuitions as the prime mover of analysis should strike us as a suspicious phenomenon. It is reminiscent of Cartesian introspective epistemology that, surprisingly enough, still dominates many of the minds in Western philosophy. The worrisome result is not so much the disagreement resulting from the inevitable property of intuitions differing from person to person, nor that of the conformist majority idea to gain support for one's semantic theory over another, such as the shopworn disputes over internalism vs. externalism or descriptivism vs. causal-historical theory of names sadly demonstrate. And the bad thing is not that intuitions are fallible and subject to revision, either. The rub is where, in trusting their intuitions, philosophers turn a blind eye to the precious essence of any scientific methodology: that trustworthy conduct of inquiry follows the way of experiments and general observations on the outcomes of these experiments for one to be able to *even begin formulating hypotheses* about some phenomena. Discovery in philosophy is not brought about by what I happen to think about something, or what my inner states tell me is the case. Even a stronger case can be made that it is not solely I, a singular individual, rooted in my environment, my habits, institutions, communities and traditions, who is doing the deep thinking. Hard philosophical work does not concern my reflections, opinions or feelings about something. If there is anything like intuition, it would be more appropriate to take it to be more of an external kind than is ordinarily admitted. It would concern our inferential capacities for making general observations and hitting on positive discoveries by way of identifying general regularities of experimental phenomena.

The main use of intuitions has frequently revolved around the *testing* of cases and hypotheses. It is surprising that there has been much less appeal to intuitions when the *contexts of discovery* are at issue. True, analytic philosophers have predominantly been concerned with the applications of concepts rather than the meaning of the entities in question. But as soon as the discovery of some genuinely new phenomenon takes place, intuitions are liable to fall to pieces. So why talk about intuitions in such cases at all when in fact it is the *contexts of justification* that are at issue? Why not take what philosophers, erroneously, categorise as their private intuitions to be more of the kind of *general observations concerning various applications of theoretical terms to some phenomena*, with the purpose of explaining the phenomena by developing law-like statements from these applications? If this is the role intuitions play in philosophy,

philosophers' appeals to them are not, in the end, that different from what happens in everyday scientific work or laboratory practice.

As regards the context of discovery, therefore, appeals to intuitions could equally well be substituted for something more familiar. In place of intuitions, an analytic philosopher could do well to replace his or her talk of intuitions with an analysis of the general *presuppositions* (yù shè) his or her propositions have. That is, we are well advised to ask: what are the underlying presuppositions that he or she is basing the claims on? Without an account of the background presuppositions that make the generation of new discoveries and knowledge possible (or else prohibit them from happening), we might as well outlaw any unsupported or unexplicated usages of intuitions from the philosophers' toolboxes and submitted papers altogether.

Banning intuitions does not imply banning anything supported by background theories or relevant criteria: take *abductive forms of reasoning* (sù yīn tuī lǐ) as those and only those forms of reasoning that Charles Peirce took to be capable of introducing new ideas. Abductive reasoning was Peirce's positive suggestion following his early attacks on Cartesian intuitions as a trustworthy method of belief formation and revision. New ideas, although largely new, are at the same time partly determined by earlier ideas and thus linked with the entire tradition of knowing. But this modicum of conservatism does not imply the foundationalism of first ideas or first intuitions. The determination need not be causal. To do so would betray a Cartesian distrust in the power of human reasoning to generate new ideas. Here we can identify another reason for the status quo of analytic philosophy: its over-reliance in seeking explanations by *causal* (yuán yīn de) forms of effects and determination. There is nothing circular in justifying meanings of concepts as the sum of their effects by abductive forms of reasoning, themselves justified in terms of the effects the reasoning has upon the progress of inquiry – not unless we were required to justify abduction with an even more basic form of reasoning – but no one has dared to suggest that!

III.

It is not uncommon to hear the comment that analytic philosophy tends to be a narrow form of philosophising. Those that make such statements typically mean it as disapproval, implying a variety of introverted philosophising in which the ideal audience would consist of other equally-minded analytic philosophers, and that a lack of appreciation hence follows. In reality, though, the term 'narrow' can be understood in a number of ways. Certainly analytic philosophy is not all-embracing and nor is cognitive psychology or zoophysiology. In one important sense, being a professional, no matter what one's discipline is, means expertise and to be an expert is achievable only on one or at most a few scientific and scholarly issues. Specialisation, and qualities such as contribution to scientific knowledge, mastery of methods, and transmissibility

of skills in higher education, guarantee the academic standards of the profession. The level of standards is typically measured by successful publications in high-ranking philosophy journals. Being narrow in one's field does not, therefore, mean so much the narrowness of the subject matter as the selective approach to one's methods that he or she needs to be the master of in tackling difficult philosophical problems. Too many cooks, too many methods, and the result will be unsatisfactory. The entire Western philosophical saga began in Socrates's proposal to break 'big' questions down into a series of 'small' questions which may then be sensibly addressed by the methods of dialogue, questioning, experiment and reason. Plato, in his opposition to the Sophists, was the first professional to seriously entertain this positive sense of narrowness.

The other, one might say negative, sense of narrowness takes place when a scholar sticks to the adopted standpoints with little inclination to give them up. Narrow-mindedness flies in the face of the fundamental principle of science, namely that what counts as a valid hypothesis or proposition, let alone a fully-fledged scientific theory, is something that at least in principle could be otherwise.

If a high degree of specialisation is a virtue liable to lead to scientific progress then the latter kind of narrowness is a vice. It lies at the other end of the continuum and is occupied by a Cartesian type of intuition-based scepticism. Unfortunately though, it has been a relatively common vice among analytic philosophers who do entertain degrees of tenacity and fixture, and by saying that I do not mean that those with the continental bent have been any less so. How many times have you heard Quine acknowledging that 'I was wrong in claiming that the classical, elementary first-order logic is the one true logic for all there is to the theory of meaning'? However, just to take an example, the inscrutability of reference crucially depends on the *permutation principle* (*zhì huàn yuán lǐ*) according to which elements in the domain of discourse can be freely permuted in all relevant cases of the application of the concept. The principle is categorical: it does not permit a single non-denoting name to occur in the signature of one's formal language. It permits nothing in the interpretation of its non-logical vocabulary deviating from the assumptions of traditional predicate logic. The same principle is assumed to hold true in Donald Davidson's theory of *radical interpretation* (*qǐ dǎn jiě shì*) (Davidson 1973), which likewise appeals to the permutation principle and therefore goes through only if the very basic repertoire of first-order logic is assumed to rest at its core.

Again, Davidson, just as much as Quine, has assumed a priority of one kind of logical language over another, and has backed up his reliance on the priority claim on alleged intuitions about what the right elementary logic is (and possibly relying on others' intuitions, too, such as Alonso Church's). However, the assumption that there is one Mr. Right logic no longer plays any real role in philosophy and philosophy of logic. We

are living in times of *methodological pluralism* (*fāng fǎ lùn de dōo yuán lùn*), where any priority claim is likely to be overturned in the course of future research.⁷

IV.

Let me in conclusion say a little more on the relationship of analytic philosophy to the philosophical tradition as well as to the future. (I restrict myself to the Western tradition.) The early Vienna Circle started off as a group of radicals. Having matured and blended with the rich mixtures of academic cultures in their various immigrant geographies, post-war analytic philosophy, in its continuation of the standards of reasoning and the application of logical and formal methods that in their juvenile form were once characteristic of logical empiricism, have put it markedly in line with the entire Western philosophical tradition. That tradition has lasted about two and a half millennia. Of the more recent philosophers, nearly all (take, for instance Saul Kripke, David Lewis, Jaakko Hintikka or Hilary Putnam) can be said to continue this venerable tradition rather than to stand in any flamboyant opposition to it. The same was not the case with the so-called modern European thinkers variously defining their positions in relation to the German idealism of Hegel, Marx or Nietzsche, such as Heidegger, Adorno, Althusser, Gadamer, Foucault, Vattimo or Derrida. Many of these continental thinkers claimed to have ‘overcome’ or ‘deconstructed’ the Western metaphysical tradition they attributed to the ancient Greeks, without ever admitting how ill-conceived their enterprise was. Now *that* was an attempt at a breach of tradition – and a good analogue is not that of a ‘paradigm shift’, say, the theory of relativity or quantum physics taking over Newtonian physics. A better analogy is to let superstition and word magic rule over science, reason and argument. Luckily, however, with the recent revival of a range of metaphysical topics and their injection into core analytic philosophy that breach has by and large been shown to have been rooted on outmoded dogmas, false assumptions and too shallow a reading of the composite intellectual history.⁸

The Finnish-Swedish philosopher George Henrik von Wright wrote in his 1994 essay “Logic and Philosophy in the Twentieth Century”⁹ that unlike the 20th century, the 21st century is not going to be remembered as the century of rigorous, analytically oriented philosophy with its penchant for logic, argument and information. He predicted that philosophy would become ever more fragmented, and that an increasing number of

⁷ Lest I be misunderstood, pluralism has nothing to do with the ‘anything goes’ types of argument that used to be abundant in philosophy of science. They presuppose universalism about meaning and imply semantic holism and relativism. Methodological pluralism is a metalogical principle compatible with scientific realism. It is interesting to notice the affinity of Mach’s positivism to Feyerabend’s relativism (see Yuann 2010) –yet another, albeit anachronistic, reason for acute-minded scholars like Peirce, Kaila or Hong to have quickly distanced themselves from Mach’s formulations.

⁸ To wit, asking the Heideggerian question of what the being of being is, is not only something you will find in Aristotle’s discussion on ‘being *qua* being’, you will also find Aristotle suggesting an answer to it.

⁹ von Wright’s article has been translated into Chinese by Professor Chen Bo (2000).

interest groups would emerge that lose the cohesion and communication between them. He believed analytic philosophy to be in grave danger of becoming just one of these schools.

Is this a reasonable prediction twenty years later?¹⁰ It seems to me that the reason for the ongoing compartmentalisation and isolation of analytic philosophy from its neighbouring arenas, especially the general humanities, is not to be traced so much to the fact that some humanist and literary scholars, as well as public intellectuals who have been interested in existential issues in philosophy, have been eager to replace philosophy's foundational role in academia with something else, such as anthropology, general linguistics, text/discourse analysis, history of philosophy or psychoanalysis. Some scholars, who many might casually think of as some of the most ardent defenders of analytic method in philosophy, such as Quine, have in fact tacitly endorsed such a reformist cause in their arguments for the inscrutability of reference. In implying *semantic holism* and *conceptual relativism* (gài niàn xiāng duì zhǔ yì) Quine was exercising the sociology of rather than the philosophy of knowledge and science. His overloaded emphasis on the naturalisation of the discipline has equally been detrimental to the analytic community. Analytic philosophers can do much better in convincing others why and how their ideas are pivotal to the progress of science as well as to the wider community of scholars and to the development of harmonious societies.

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¹⁰ I discuss von Wright's prediction in Pietarinen (2011).

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