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Analytical philosophy: views and examples

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Avrum Stroll, *Twentieth-Century Analytic Philosophy*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2000, 270pp.

(ed.) Andrew Pyle, *Key Philosophers in Conversation: The* Cogito *Interviews*, Routledge, London and New York, 1999, 256 pp.

Since these books are not, in my judgment, sufficiently aimed at a main intended readership, let me seek to ensure that this review article does not fail in that respect. It is intended primarily for all those readers of *Learningguild Letter* who are not well acquainted with twentieth-century English-language philosophy of the kind broadly called analytical.

After indicating my own orientation in philosophy, I explore a contrast between two ways of presenting the subject-matter of analytical philosophy (Stroll's and one found in the later work of Hare), and relate that contrast to Wittgenstein's treatment of Moore's use of 'know'; then I describe and appraise the two books under review; and finally I offer as examples of the best in analytical philosophy a paper by Ryle and a chapter from Hare.

My own main exemplars in philosophy are Plato, Kant, and, in nineteenth-century Britain, J.S.Mill and T.H.Green. I have also been much influenced by twentieth-century analytical philosophy, especially that of four Oxford professors: Gilbert Ryle, J.L.Austin, R.M.Hare and Sir Peter Strawson. I was tutored by Hare while "reading Greats" – taking the course in philosophy and ancient history – in the late fifties, and enjoyed his hospitality and support in subsequent years;* and much of my work in logic has been in the tradition exemplified by Strawson's *Introduction to Logical Theory*.

It deserves emphasis that some of the enquiries of the four I have called my main exemplars have considerable affinity with what I most value in the four Oxford philosophers. To take just two examples, the procedure of Plato in the *Euthyphro* is not far from that of an Oxford-style philosopher who might ask "What exactly do you mean

* He died in January 2002.

(or: what are you committed to) when, speaking seriously, you call something righteous?" nor is Kant's in the *Groundwork* from that of such a philosopher asking the same question in relation to the use of the expression 'morally obligatory'. In a footnote to the programmatic part of his paper "A Plea for Excuses", Austin notes how much of the approach he recommends and enjoys was "seen and claimed by Socrates, when he first betook himself to the way of Words".

1

Avrum Stroll (born in 1921) is a philosopher from the U.S. who worked for many years at the University of California at San Diego. He admits that what he calls analytic philosophy is "not so much a specific doctrine as a loose concatenation of approaches to problems" (p.5), and recognizes that, as I have noted, "There is a much longer tradition of analysis whose lineage can be traced to the ancient Greeks" (*ibid.*) Stroll mostly accepts a view he attributes to Hans Sluga, that in talking of twentieth-century analytical philosophy we are dealing with "overlapping circles of family resemblances", without any one characteristic feature (p.7). However, he modifies that view by saying that

> most commentators would concur with Moore that, however much the work of particular practitioners differs, it is directed toward articulating the meaning of certain concepts, such as "knowledge," "belief," "truth," and "justification."
>
> (p.7f)

There are fundamental errors in that wording, as we are helped to see if we contrast Hare's in these remarks from the last two paragraphs of his article "moral terms" in Volume II of the second edition (2001) of *Encyclopedia of Ethics*, edited by Lawrence and Charlotte Becker:

> … the word 'moral' is used in so many different ways. … even for the central uses [of moral words] there is no unambiguous sense for 'moral'. … Probably the best way to handle this question [i.e., of what it is for something to be in the *moral* category] is to define accurately several different senses of 'moral,' and to make clear which of them one is using.

Instead of 'no unambiguous sense', let us say more clearly 'no one sense which all users would have to agree to be their own'. As his third remark shows that Hare would stress, one can make clear one's own use of the word, at least on a particular occasion. Hare avoids three errors made by Stroll: talking of concepts and then giving examples by presenting certain words as though one were talking about words; supposing that concepts are the bearers of meaning, rather than words; and appearing to suggest that for any one such "concept" there is likely to be just one "meaning" to be articulated. Earlier in his work Hare used the expression 'the moral concepts', but not here at a later stage, when experience had taught him how variously the adjective is used (especially by philosophers), even though, in this article as always, he gives reasons for preferring his own use.

Let us recognize how important are these differences between Stroll and Hare, and what lessons we may draw from them. We should be extremely cautious about the word 'concept', so often lightly employed by students and by those who ought to know better. We should acknowledge, as Austin did, that though you and I may use the same word, it may be that "your conceptual system is different from mine" (*Philosophical Papers*, 2nd ed., p.184). Just as "*unum nomen, unum nominatum*" ("one name, [so] one thing named") is a fallacy, so is "one word, one concept". Though it often makes sense to speak of concepts, as of propositions, shared by speakers of different languages (the concept of rain, the proposition that it is raining), it is sometimes misleading to do so, e.g., to speak of "the Greek concept of virtue" when we ought to be attending to how the word '*aretē*' was used (and objecting to the translation 'virtue'). Finally, as that example suggests, we need to accept that the best kind of analytical work is in an important sense empirical, dependent on experience: that is, it **explores** the use(s) given to a particular word or expression, widely or by a particular writer or speaker (oneself or another), and only then asks whether a given use is or is not open to objection and how the meaning(s) may best be analysed. Not much work in analytical philosophy has been explicitly of that type. To write, for example, about "Christian belief" I have to attend to the ways in which 'belief' and 'believe' have actually been used by (preferably representative) Christian authors, considering both 'believe that' and 'believe in', and not omitting the background of the Greek '*pisteuo*' and '*pistis*' and the Latin '*credo*' and '*fides*', etc.

Stroll, we find (pp.111f, 133f, 139-141), thinks highly of Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*, in which the latter is concerned with Moore's talk of knowing "with certainty"; and he has written a book called *Moore and Wittgenstein on Certainty* (1994). But Wittgenstein never sets himself the task of methodically examining how Moore actually uses the crucial verb 'know'. Had he done so, he might have done justice to the fact that Moore is particularly fond of what I call the hammer-blow use of 'know', and sometimes italicizes the word accordingly (see, within the two papers Wittgenstein had in mind, Moore's *Philosophical Papers*, pp. 32-4, 37f, 41, 43f, 146, 148). There, as when he uses the locution '*know*, with certainty, to be true', he has in mind a situation where one can say "How absurd it would be to suggest that I did not know it, but only believed it, and that perhaps it was not the case!" (p.146: 'it' is used loosely there, as, on the basis of p.197f, Moore would have agreed; better to say 'that I did not know the proposition to be true, but only believed it to be, and that perhaps it was not'). This use of 'know' is different from the one that would probably be intended in a question that might be put to me in relation to Avrum Stroll, 'What do you know about him?' I might include in my answer, without emphasis on the word 'know', that I know that he was born in 1921, has taught for many years at San Diego, and is the author of several books. If the questioner were then to say, to my surprise, "Come on, do you really **know** that he was born in 1921, just on the basis of entries in a couple of books?" I would admit that in the hammer-blow sense I do not, but only believe (confidently and legitimately) that 1921 was the year; but I would add that I thought that the questioner had been asking me about the range of my acquaintance with facts about Avrum Stroll, not about whether that acquaintance was, in my case, free from the possibility of doubt.

Both these uses of 'know' are familiar in English, but Wittgenstein writes as though only the second is legitimate, the one signifying acquaintance with what one might well not have been acquainted with. It may be that in German '*ich weiß*' is used in that sense much more frequently than in the hammer-blow way which can certainly pertain to 'I know'. Wittgenstein shows no sign of grasping that Moore would not have been satisfied at all with his suggestion, admired by Stroll (pp.112, 140), at *On Certainty* 116:

> Instead of "I know …", couldn't Moore have said: "It stands fast for me that …"? And further: "It stands fast for me and many others …."

Moore would have agreed that it does "stand fast …", but also wanted to say *more* than that: the propositions he took as examples, and enormous numbers of other propositions which he regarded as "features in 'the Common Sense view of the world'", were, he said, "quite certainly true" (p.45), i.e., such that he could say of each of them, as (virtually) we all can, "I *know* [it], with certainty, to be true" (p.33). (There is now an exception to be made: it is not true of all men that they have never been "far from the surface of the earth" (p.33).) Any philosopher, whether called analytical or not, should take great pains to **understand** any word-use and any related view he or she is rebutting; Wittgenstein in *On Certainty* did not.

Not only on p.7f does Stroll talk of concepts as having meanings, but on pp. 5 and 94; on p.26 he says "the concept of 'meaning' is ambiguous", when he should be talking about the word; on p.54, writing of concepts, he puts 'theory', 'probability', etc., into inverted commas as though those words were concepts; and on p.129, after using the locution '*all* the concepts philosophers have traditionally found puzzling', he writes "knowledge, truth, certainty, name, object, and so forth", thereby confusing reference to concepts with reference to states, qualities and so on. All this could have been avoided had he asked "How am I best to refer to and talk about concepts?" and "What do I mean when I carefully use the expression 'the concept of X' or 'the concept of an X' or 'the concept [concepts?] expressed by such-and-such a word'?" If we put 'of' after 'concept', it should not be a constitutive 'of', as in 'the city of Melbourne', but like the 'of' in 'my understanding of this word/this problem'. I invite the reader to notice that Hare does not use the word 'concept' in the remarks I have quoted, and that Austin, in "Are There *A Priori* Concepts?", treats the word 'concept', like 'universal', with extreme caution. Faced with Bertrand Russell's remark, quoted by Stroll on p.6, that "The most important part [of philosophy] consists in criticizing and clarifying notions which are apt to be regarded as fundamental and accepted uncritically", one could well imagine Austin and the later Hare replying "Let's talk rather about **words**, and sets of words, especially those that give rise to questions and confusions, and the uses (often various) given to them." That, in my view, is the best approach for the analytical philosopher; and every good philosopher has sometimes been analytical in that mode, whatever else he or she may valuably have endeavoured to do.

It is surprising that Stroll uses the adjective ‘analytic’ in his title rather than ‘analytical’. The former word is more commonly used of statements such as the familiar ‘All bachelors are unmarried’, whose negation would be incompatible with our use of the words concerned. His survey begins with Russell, and successive chapters from the third to the seventh present the early Wittgenstein and logical positivism, Moore (with particular reference to “Defence of Common Sense”), the later Wittgenstein, Ryle and Austin, and Quine. The eighth chapter discusses proper nouns and nouns for natural kinds, with reference to Ruth Barcan Marcus, Saul Kripke and Hilary Putnam, and with much more of Stroll’s own views than in the previous chapters. Chapter Nine, the last, called “Today and Tomorrow”, briefly reviews analytical philosophy (arguing that Wittgenstein alone of those discussed is likely to be regarded in future generations as a very great philosopher), considers recent approaches to philosophy of mind and to perception, and ends with a recognition of the immense diversity of philosophy as now practised, especially in the United States, and of the widespread movement away from analysis related to the traditional concerns of philosophy to the applied or practical, for example to questions related to gender, race or medicine.

Of such a book it is reasonable to ask “Whom is it meant to assist?” and “Which kind of person is it likely especially to assist?” It is too difficult for the beginner, and contains too little critical discussion for the advanced undergraduate or postgraduate or experienced philosopher. The last-mentioned is likely to be familiar with, or to be able to find quite easily elsewhere, much that the book presents. However, he may find in it some valuable presentations of some of the main lines of philosophers with whom he is unfamiliar, as I have done in the case of Chapter Eight. The beginner would better, I think, turn to such sources as I shall mention in Section 4 to learn of analytical philosophy at its best.

The fact that sections with the title ‘Criticisms of …’ are mostly so short suggests that Stroll has bitten off more than he can chew. In this respect, for Russell and the early Wittgenstein, J.O.Urmson’s *Philosophical Analysis* (1956) is to be preferred. Stroll’s account of Ryle is rather heavily dependent on the latter’s excellent autobiographical essay in the set of essays, *Ryle*, edited by O.P.Wood and George Pitcher (1970), and sticks, for his philosophical work, to *The Concept of Mind*. On Austin, Stroll has the advantage of some personal acquaintance (p.163f), writes informatively about Austin’s mode of conducting a seminar at Berkeley in 1958, and draws upon G.J.Warnock’s excellent obituary notice in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* for 1963. There is, however, no mention of an even better presentation of Austin’s personal style, manner of work and impact: the set of the first three contributions to the (oddly) little-known *Essays on J.L.Austin*, by Sir Isaiah Berlin and others. Berlin describes the Austin of the pre-war years, George Pitcher his close acquaintance with him in Harvard in 1955, when Pitcher was a graduate student there, and soon after for a year in Oxford, and Warnock the Saturday morning discussions which Austin led. The following extracts from Warnock (p.43f and p.44f) convey much of the nature and power both of Austin’s analytical counter to much that passed as

philosophy and of intellectual enquiry in general at its probing and creative best. The second extract reminds me of Plato's famous description at *Seventh Letter* 344b of the best kind of philosophical discussion.

> I think he disliked above all the perpetual disorder of philosophy, the perennial disagreement and wrangling, the nearly total failure to achieve any solid and permanent advance; and he thought that work in the subject was depressingly underorganized, unbusinesslike, unsystematic ….
>
> … Austin was absolutely first-hand. He was not a purveyor or explainer, however competent or critical or learned, of philosophy; he was a maker of it, an actual origin. One had the feeling – not always, but often – that those meetings, which were so unmistakably his own, were not occasions on which philosophy was talked about, or taught, or learned – they were occasions on which it was *done*, at which that actually *happened*, there and then, in which the life of the subject consists, and which ensures that the critics and explainers have something to explain.

There is an excellent part of Austin's early work that shows his writing at its best. I liked to refer students to it when lecturing on Plato's *Meno* at Melbourne in the early seventies, because I expected that if the subject of group tutorials was the explication of the meanings of words, tutors would talk admiringly of Wittgenstein on family resemblance and games (*Philosophical Investigations* 66f). Part III of Austin's paper "The Meaning of a Word", delivered in 1940 and included in *Philosophical Papers*, begins by asking for "far more *detailed* attention" than had been customary to the question "why do we call different things by the same name?" Wittgenstein is not mentioned, and the *Investigations* were not to be published until 1953. Austin's answer is **sevenfold**: each of the seven types of explanation fits particular uses of particular words, and the third deals with the "very common case" in which there are resemblances between A and B, B and C, C and D, but not between A and D. The influence of Aristotle on this Part III is evident, but so is Austin's liveliness, incisiveness, originality, wide range of attention to words, and awareness of philosophers' tendency to oversimplify (on which see p.252 of "Performative Utterances").

Stroll's chapter on Quine gives a useful overview of some of his work, but not of his confessedly Procrustean treatment of ordinary language (see his famous review of Strawson's *Introduction to Logical Theory*, in *Mind*, October 1953, p.444). There is no mention of the unresolved debate on whether ordinary-language connectives such as 'If/(then)' are very badly represented by the truth-functional ones into which Quine was happy to turn them. (See, below, my discussion of Ryle's paper.) Strawson's book made a big contribution to that debate, and is an excellent introduction to analytical philosophy for a student of high ability who has begun to study logic. It would also give him or her a valuable armoury against the more Procrustean teachers of that subject. For insight into two very different approaches to it and to philosophy's dealing with ordinary language, a student would find it more fruitful to make his or her own study of Strawson's book and of some of Quine's *Methods of Logic* than to turn to Stroll, who at p.9f gives an unconvincing reason for not including an explanation of the basics of symbolic logic.

3

I turn now to the book *Key Philosophers in Conversation*, kindly lent to me by one of our members, Max Stephens. The journal *Cogito* sprang from the Philosophy Department of the University of Bristol, England, and has been noted for its interviews. This book brings together twenty of them, conducted between 1987 and 1996. The editor, Andrew Pyle, says that "Anyone reading this volume will get a fair impression of the range of activities that go on in philosophy departments in the English-speaking world, and of the men and women engaging in those activities" (p.viii). I should rather say "Anyone who already has some acquaintance with recent analytical philosophy", and "of the range of interests in philosophy departments", and "of some of the most proficient men and women …". There is very little about how philosophy is or should be taught, a subject too seldom discussed.

The collection is likely to be of most interest and value, not to people "without a formal training in philosophy" (p.vii), but to philosophers and those students who already know something about the work of the people they can read about here. A set of interviews that was really and successfully aimed at the quite inexperienced would, I think, have to be centred upon the question "What examples (subject-matter and methods) would you give of good ways into philosophy?" rather than, as in this very interesting book, "What have you been working on and how did you come to be doing so?" Had John Stuart Mill been asked the first question, he might well have replied with reference to "the Socratic dialectics", describing their nature and effects as he does in the paragraph, three-quarters of the way through *Liberty* Chapter Two, beginning "But instead of seeking contrivances". That paragraph goes far to explain why, when I established a new first-year course at Cape Town in the mid-seventies, the first and last of its quarters were devoted to Plato's *Meno* and Mill's *Liberty*. In the second and third we used Salmon's *Logic* and Hempel's *Philosophy of Natural Science*: it was a principle of mine to require of first-year as of fourth-year students both 'EK' (ethics and kindred subjects) and 'ELS' (epistemology, logic and philosophy of science), and thus to seek to avoid a common cause of narrowness among philosophers and their students.

The question arises whether something more detailed than at least the early interviews in this book is needed. That must have come to be the view of Pyle himself, because, whereas the first eight interviews take up only 84 pages, the last twelve, from 1992 to 1996, the period in which Pyle was editor, occupy 172. Though the interview with Strawson in 1989 is very good, there is a fuller one in Bryan Magee's *Modern British Philosophy* (Secker and Warburg, London 1971) which includes a valuable description by Strawson of his enterprise in *Introduction to Logical Theory*.

Especially good are the interviews in Pyle's book with Mary Warnock (now Baroness Warnock) and with Martha Nussbaum. Warnock mentions Austin as having been the main influence on her decision to stick with philosophy, and says on p.10:

> What we have carried on from [the 1950s] is the notion that you can't do philosophy at all unless you concern yourself with the

> relation between the language you are using and the things you are talking about.

Explaining on p.11 why she is "very much against" the teaching of philosophy as a set subject in schools, she combines three points concerning fruitful study (and so teaching) of it anywhere, and then adds an excellent rider:

> The study of philosophy ought to be based on the history of the subject, it shouldn't be taken very fast, and it's awfully difficult. What I do believe in greatly is putting a powerful philosophical element into every course, whether it be science or literature or history; but you don't have to call it philosophy.

She also has good things to say about the value of an education in philosophy for the chairmanship of committees and in general for public life (p.15f).

If we put together these remarks of Baroness Warnock, we can say that she sees philosophy as needing **to include but not be confined to** the analysis of words commonly used at present in English-speaking societies. It was a weakness of "Oxbridge" analytical philosophy in the twentieth century that it was in practice largely so confined; and this book of interviews shows philosophy to be still analytical but breaking out of the confinement.

The interview with Martha Nussbaum should delight those who value the Greek philosophers and a wide study of classical literature; but there is also a splendid insistence on challenging the view of those who think that the ends we set ourselves are beyond reasonable evaluation (p.243f), and on the need to extend the readiness of both women and men to recognize and remedy the injustice whereby women are deemed to need or deserve fewer resources and opportunities than men (p.255f).

Plato's *Phaedo* not only depicts Socrates facing death, but may also stir us to think and talk philosophically about death, whether or not we accept anything like the Platonic dualism. (Anthony Flew's article "Immortality" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Paul Edwards, begins from the *Phaedo*.) Three of the philosophers in Pyle's book talk thought-provokingly about death: Richard Sorabji (p.118f), Bernard Williams (p.148) and Derek Parfit (p.194f).

At the beginning of his interview Hilary Putnam draws on Myles Burnyeat of Cambridge, who said that philosophy needs both vision and arguments, and later adds (p.52):

> Philosophy is not only concerned with changing our views, but also with changing our sensibility, our ability to perceive and react to nuances.

I agree; but the same can be said of the study of any valuable subject provided that it is searching and sensitive. How insensitive to possible or actual objections, or to other

ways of proceeding, philosophers can sometimes be! Michael Dummett, in the first interview, noticed in some of them, keen on their own projects, which might even be cooperative ones, "a kind of loss of genuine philosophical curiosity" (p.6). Dogmatism, whether scientistic or postmodernist, is the enemy of philosophy, whose practitioners need always to be ready to question and to welcome others' questioning of their own assumptions.

4

Finally, I offer two examples of the best in analytical philosophy.

In 1950 Ryle's paper "'If', 'So', and 'Because'" was published in Max Black's collection *Philosophical Analysis*; Ryle included it in his *Collected Papers*, Vol. II. In sending it to Black, he presumably thought it was a good example of the kind of analysis he liked to practise, and it certainly is. In particular, from a close examination of the relations between our uses of the three conjunctions, he draws a conclusion whose importance for logic is still, half a century later, not widely realized.

He shows first, with a simple set of illustrations, how intimately related the three are. 'Today is Monday, so tomorrow is Tuesday' is not a statement, but an argument; both the hypothetical statement 'If today is Monday, (then) tomorrow is Tuesday' and the explanatory one 'Tomorrow is Tuesday, because today is Monday' are dependent on our understanding of **inference**, which is typically expressed with the aid of the 'so' or 'therefore' we use in arguments. Later (p.244f in *Collected Papers II*) he rightly says that, within the hypothetical statement, 'today is Monday' and 'tomorrow is Tuesday' are not themselves statements, and that to "flag them [as statements]" tempts people "to assume the truth of such falsities as these" – and his list includes "hypothetical statements assert connections between statements" and "they are truth functions of atomic statements". (A truth-functional statement is one whose truth or falsity is determinable solely by reference to the truth or falsity of the propositions it combines: an example is 'We have a cat and we don't have a dog'.)

Cook Wilson is the only philosopher named in this paper, which would probably have had much greater influence had Ryle named Quine's *Elementary Logic* (1st ed., 1941) as a place in which were contained or implied the falsities I have just taken from his list. In sec. 9 Quine rightly says that 'Jones needs quinine because he has malaria' is not truth-functional; but in sec. 7 he declares the view that he inveterately maintained, that "The statement connective 'if … then' is … dispensable in favor of conjunction and denial". On that view, 'If Jones has malaria, (then) he needs quinine' is analysed as meaning no more than the truth-functional 'It is not the case both that Jones has malaria and that he doesn't need quinine'. (Compare Quine's *Methods of Logic*, Ch.3.)

Ryle could point out that, if you knew Jones did not have malaria, you could impatiently say that of course the truth-functional statement just given was true, adding 'He does not have malaria!', without being committed to agreeing with the hypothetical

statement '**If** Jones has malaria, then he needs quinine'. Ryle would agree that the latter is what I call a statement of **hypothetical inferability**: it asserts that in the hypothetical case in which Jones has malaria, it is inferable, on that basis and at least in the given context, that he needs quinine. Ryle would have us take seriously its similarity to Quine's 'because'-statement and to the argument 'Jones has malaria, so he needs quinine'. It is deeply erroneous to assert, in the face of such similarity, that hypothetical statements can be handled truth-functionally without serious loss. The loss is evident in the fact that we are offered by Quinean logicians such resultant "paradoxes" (let us rather call them absurdities, discreditable to logic) as the claim that this argument-form is valid because its truth-functional counterpart is: 'For any four propositions that *p*, that *q*, that *r* and that *s*, if we can affirm that if *p* then *q* and that if *r* then *s*, it follows that either if *p* then *s* or if *r* then *q*.'

Ryle's paper beautifully illustrates how linguistic analysis can illuminate our reasoning and guard us against Procrustean misrepresentations of it. Ryle did, however, go wrong on p.245 in supposing that the logicians' letters are properly used to represent *statements*, and hence in saying that "the logicians' code style … '*if p, then q*' is deceptive". The letters are best regarded, in all their uses consistent with that one, as representing what I call DSLs, disambiguated statementile locutions, where 'statementile' means 'capable of being used as a statement'. The set of words 'today is Monday' is statementile but such sets, as Ryle points out, are certainly not always used as statements.

Hare's ninth chapter in his first book, *The Language of Morals* (1952), is called "'Good' in moral contexts". Those not familiar with the distinction between description and evaluation would do well to read Part Two of the book (Chapters 5-9) as a whole. Hare shows that, as in non-moral contexts ('good fire-extinguisher', 'good bath'), the adjective with its evaluative force or meaning is applied on the basis of certain criteria, and thereby acquires a descriptive meaning; but in moral contexts, as he says on p.147,

> … the evaluative meaning might get lost, or at least wear thin. It is of the essence of a standard to be stable; but the perpetual danger is that stability may harden to over-rigidity and ossification. It is possible to lay too much stress on the descriptive force and too little on the evaluative; standards only remain current when those who make judgements in accordance with them are quite sure that, whatever else they may be doing, they are evaluating (i.e. really seeking to guide conduct).

Noting that when Hare speaks generally of guiding conduct, or of moral language as prescriptive, he is even more concerned with guiding **one's own** conduct than with guiding another's, I want to stress the moral seriousness of that passage, of the chapter, and of Hare's *oeuvre*. The reader of the chapter will discover that Hare also has a great fertility of illustration, here ranging from St Francis to behaviour patterns of British army officers in India, and a refreshing clarity and energy of style. All who teach philosophy would benefit from studying his style, and also from reading the

paper, published in *Ratio* (February 1960), in which he explained to German audiences in 1957 how philosophy was practised and taught at that time in Oxford. I should want to add a balancing emphasis on the faithful (but not uncritical) exposition of the work of the best philosophers, in a way that assists students to guide their own lives and not only to add to their knowledge and sharpen their intellects.

By using Hare's distinction between the evaluative and the descriptive elements in uses of conduct-guiding words, I was able to illuminate uses of '*eudaimōn*' and related words, especially in Plato's *Gorgias*. There, though Socrates, Polus and Callicles agree in the evaluative meaning they give to '*eudaimōn*', which is similar to 'happy' in an evaluative use of the word ('Happy is the man who …') that is now almost obsolete, they diverge sharply in their criteria and so in the descriptive meanings they give to the word. (This study was a main part of my doctoral thesis at Melbourne, 1969, entitled "Ends, Motives and Principles: a study in Plato's moral philosophy with special reference to the *Gorgias*".) In lecturing on Plato's *Meno*, which I have translated, I treated the key word '*aretē*' ('[human] excellence'] similarly. Following both Plato and Hare, I have sought to bring out the force of the questions (evaluative, deliberative and personal) "What kind of person are we really to regard as worthy of an ultimate congratulation?" and "What are we to say that human excellence ultimately consists in?"

Thus I do not have to choose between the four philosophers I have called my main exemplars and linguistic analysis as it has been practised by the four Oxford philosophers to whom, as I have shown, I am deeply indebted. I find it fascinating and revealing to extend one's analysing into languages other than one's own, though one must of course guard against mistakes arising from limited acquaintance. Sometimes people talk of linguistic philosophy as "mere semantics" or "preoccupation with words"; and I do not deny that my main exemplars have had a range and profundity not attained by the analysts. Plato had one reply to criticism of close attention to language and to everyday analogies when he ironically congratulated Callicles, who had dismissed his "little meagre questions and refutations", on having been initiated into the Great Mysteries before the prerequisite little ones (*Gorgias* 497bc). The most effective reply is to invite the objector to study such examples of excellence in analytical philosophy as the two I have just adduced. Am I content to describe myself as an analytical philosopher? No: but certainly as a philosopher who regards close and critical attention to language as an indispensable characteristic of philosophy.

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