

Uwe Meixner · Albert Newen (eds.)

# Logical Analysis and History of Philosophy

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## Philosophiegeschichte und logische Analyse

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draws that Christian faith in a creator is reasonable is true, I believe. But not because of the reasons Gingerich offers.

Prof. Yiftach J. H. Fehige, University of Toronto

Mark Textor (Ed.): *The Austrian Contribution to Analytic Philosophy*. (London Studies in the History of Philosophy). London, New York: Routledge 2006. ISBN-13: 978-0415404051; £ 60.00, \$ 100.00 (hardback); 336 pages

A growing interest in the origins and developments of the tradition of thoughts of so-called “Analytic Philosophy” (which dominated philosophy in the Northern hemisphere during the last decades) is to be acknowledged for the period since the end of the Second World War. Defining distinctive characteristics of this philosophical tradition presents a problem *per se* which can not be dealt with in these review pages. Furthermore, it is questionable whether it is possible (and if it makes sense at all) to give an exact definition of categories such as “Analytic” or “Continental Philosophy”. In this respect we read in the introduction of “The Austrian Contribution to Analytic Philosophy” (quoted here as ACAP): “‘Well, what is Analytic Philosophy? [...] Do you have a good definition up your sleeve?’ No, but I don’t need one. Analytic Philosophy is a tradition held together by the use of a distinctive family of concepts, acceptance of specific assumptions, problems and methods for their solution” (ACAP 1). In consequence, the best approach to the history of Analytic Philosophy consists in dealing with (the history of) its peculiar family of concepts, with its specific assumptions as well as with its problems and methods for solutions. Notoriously enough, this thematic context has been developed by authors such as Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, George E. Moore, Ludwig Wittgenstein and others since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By far the largest part of the studies regarding the history of the theoretical framework investigates the role of these thinkers as founders of the tradition of “Analytic Philosophy”.

A second genealogical line for Analytic Philosophy must indeed be mentioned, though its authentic exploration started only within the last decades. According to this additional lineage, several characteristic aspects of Analytic Philosophy should be traced back to so-called “Austrian Philosophy”. Here two major problems arise. Firstly, a gap exists between this general statement and its justification: In other words, if Austrian Philosophy should be considered as a (possibly major) source of inspiration for the Analytic tradition, then we must ask: *Which* are the concepts, the assumptions or the problems that Analytic Philosophy inherited from Austrian Philosophy? In this respect, historians of philosophy have acknowledged “connections” as for instance the following ones: The dispute between Alexius Meinong and Bertrand Russell about non-existing objects, the discussion between Edmund Husserl and Gottlob Frege about psychologism and semantics, the relations of the *Lviv* (Polish: *Lwów*; German: *Lemberg*) School of Logic with the Brentano School (particularly through Husserl, Meinong, Kazimierz Twardowski) are better-known cases. However, in order to support the strong thesis of a (quasi-) affiliation between Analytic and Austrian Philosophy, the contacts mentioned remain too episodic if not sporadic. We will see that one robust aim of ACAP is to corroborate the existence of such an additional lineage by reconstructing further important binding ties which have been underestimated, if not completely overseen, in the literature.

In addition we face a (second major) problem of meaning: What does “Austrian Philosophy” denote? This term, obviously, is as problematic as “Analytic Philosophy”: “Analytic” seems to refer to a mere philosophical attribute, whereas “Austrian” as such, notoriously, is a geographic and a political characterization. Thus, at first glance we could understand “Austrian Philosophy” as denoting a kind of philosophy which is typical for Austria in

such a way that a philosopher, who belongs to the Austrian philosophical tradition, is an Austrian philosopher (i.e. a philosopher born in Austria). However and firstly, the political confines of Austria at the beginning of the twentieth century are not the same as in 2008. Secondly, not all philosophers born in Austria belong to the Austrian philosophical tradition (cf. “Wittgenstein is a philosopher *from* Austria, but not an *Austrian* philosopher” ACAP footnote 1, 15). Thirdly, many “Austrian” philosophers were not Austrian: For instance, even if Franz Brentano spent much of his life in Austria, he was born in Marienberg near Boppard (Rhineland-Palatinate) in 1838. In conclusion, determining a particular philosophical tradition as “Austrian” must not be misunderstood as a localization of this tradition (in a geographical sense) or as a somewhat nationalistic depiction of it. In order to overcome this difficulty, the volume provides another valuable decision: Within its pages the reader does not find any positive definition of Austrian Philosophy (the following passage in Peter Simons’ paper is, eloquently, “jumping over”: “[...] [I] shall [...] [not] justify my selection of this or that philosopher as ‘Austrian’, but simply press on.” ACAP 159). Of course, some general characteristics shared by “Austrian” philosophers must be seen, for instance: The anti-transcendentalism, which does not coincide with anti-Kantianism *tout court* (cf., e.g., ACAP 261), the scientific and empirical orientation of philosophical reflection, the attention for language, a specific interest for the foundations of logic and, also, for metaphysics. With these examples we, however, collected nothing else than family resemblances which are not at all pervasive. They assume obviously quite different forms of “Austrian” philosophers, we respectively they “extracted” from an immense multitude. In accord with its general framework, the volume, then, aspires to illustrate the thematic neighbourhood of the two philosophical traditions at issue here, concentrating on Austrian philosophers in the very first place, and on their argumentations rather than developing a scholastic dispute about defining characters of Austrian Philosophy. Thus, on the one side, the very first score of the book consists in showing that Analytic Philosophy discusses, explores and shares several philosophical problems with Austrian Philosophy (it is to be noted that this goal is reached by the contributors to the book even though the solutions and answers given by the Analytic-Austrian philosophers are as divergent as they are). On the other side, connected with this first purpose, we can also emphasize a second, and maybe more important aim of the volume: It does not contain an exclusive collection of historical papers concerning this or that particular relation between Analytic and Austrian Philosophy. The book attempts to show that the investigation of Austrian philosophers is fruitful *even now* within Analytic Philosophy. In this sense, the title of the book should be read in its literal meaning: Thus, we can say that the volume contains contributions of Austrian Philosophy (say “Austrian Philosophers”) to Analytic Philosophy *today*.

Here are, then, the book’s valuable achievements in compressed style: Firstly, Austrian Philosophy in its thematic and disciplinary richness is far from being thoroughly researched as one may infer from the secondary literature. Therefore, this exploration of new philosophical territory is highly welcome. Secondly, we believe that the fecundity of “Austrian Philosophy” is not yet exhausted: Its typical mixture of psychological, logical and ontological considerations offers sources of inspiration that (can) play a constructive role in contemporary philosophical debate.

The volume presents ten essays. In consistent line with the aforementioned general aims of the book, all these contributions investigate a single subject which is dealt with under two perspectives: On the one hand we find a historical account, i.e. the reconstruction of various arguments of Austrian philosophers. On the other hand the reader shall recognize a systematic perspective at work in the book: It coincides either with a systematic evaluation of the arguments under discussion or it embraces a comparison with selected views of analytic philosophers. Even if such categorizations always exhibit problematic aspects,

we may summarize the contents of all papers under five headings: Philosophy of mind, ontology, philosophy of language, political philosophy and aesthetics. “Brentano’s Concept of Intentional Inexistence” by Tim Crane, “Reid and Brentano on Consciousness” by Keith Hossack as well as “Meinong on Memory” by Fabrice Teroni and “Certainty, Soil and Sediment” by Kevin Mulligan are contributions within philosophy of mind. The contributors’ investigations concern Brentano’s intentionality thesis and its correct interpretation within the context of a “methodological phenomenism” (in contradistinction to mere phenomenism; i.e. “methodological phenomenism” as a position according to which “there is something beyond the phenomena, although we can never know it. Nonetheless, this knowledge can never come through science; so as far science is concerned, phenomenism might as well be true”, cf. ACAP 27f). One also finds a comparison of Reid and Brentano regarding the theory of consciousness and an evaluation following with regard to modern theories of *qualia* which ends in a defence of Reid’s teaching. Furthermore, the exposition of a neglected topic in the literature, i.e. the exposition of the nature of memory and of its epistemological relevance in (and for) Meinong, comes into discussion. Finally, an erudite reconstruction and critical examination of theories concerning primitive certainties (what John Searle would call “the background”) of several authors like Ortega y Gasset, Wittgenstein, Husserl, Leyendecker and Scheler is presented by Kevin Mulligan.

“Particularised Attributes: an Austrian Tale” by Benjamin Schnieder and Peter Simons’ essay “Austrian philosophers on truth” can be placed into a cross-section between semantics and ontology. As the title of the first paper indicates, it is concerned with (and also is a defence of) what the author calls “particularised attributes”, i.e. those entities known within ontology, and especially within Austrian Philosophy, which are referred to by terms like “(individual) accidents, modes, particularised qualities (or: properties), instances or cases of properties, (individual) moments, or tropes” (ACAP 130). Peter Simons precisely reconstructs and compares several theories of truth beginning with Bolzano, continuing with Brentano and his school (Marty, Meinong, Husserl, Twardowski) and finally exploiting exponents of the *Wiener Kreis* (Wittgenstein, Schlick, Neurath, Carnap and Popper). In accordance with our previous statements, the paper shows that “the common concern for truth is an abiding one among Austrian Philosophers, while their varying responses provide an illustrative cross section of their rich variety” (ACAP 180).

“Analyticity and Logical Truth: from Bolzano to Quine” by Wolfgang Künne and “The Great Divide within Austrian philosophy: the Synthetic a priori” by Edgar Morscher, two contributions to philosophy of language, analyze the, as is known, tricky notions of analytic and synthetic. In both papers Bolzano’s position and his critique of Kant builds the point of departure: They compare Bolzano with the relevant views of Frege, Carnap and Quine. A particularly attentive reading is requested in these cases, since these articles reconstruct the argumentation lines of several philosophers quite deeply along the entire development of the debate.

At the end of the volume one finds two further essays which, again, are proof of the richness of topics within Austrian Philosophy. “Bolzano’s Political Philosophy” by Rolf George and Paul Rusnock is a well documented exposition of Bolzano’s views on social philosophy, politics and ethics and their embedding within the social and political reality of his time. “Austrian Aesthetics” by Maria E. Reicher describes the (“hardly known, particularly not in the Anglo-Saxon world”, as the author writes, cf. ACAP 293) aesthetics lore of Bolzano, Meinong, Witasek and von Ehrenfels: She highlights their relevance for the (ontological, semantic and even psychological) foundation of the discipline. To come to an end with this review we mention the (very first pages, which contain) an “Introduction” written by Mark Textor (who also is the editor of the volume); his “Introduction” (cf. ACAP 1–19) is a well-done overture to the book and presents minute abstracts of all papers.

We come to the following conclusion: The book plays its role as an instructive reader very well for all those who are interested in the history of Analytic as well as Austrian Philosophy. Those readers who are involved mainly in specific or basic problems of Analytic Philosophy will also read or “use” the handbook. Rich bibliographies placed at the end of each paper present valuable overviews for the curious reader, they paint an accurate picture of the *status quo* in the fields under concern.

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Sydney Shoemaker: *Physical Realization*. Oxford University Press: Clarendon Press 2007. ISBN: 978-0-19-921439-6; £ 18.99 (hardback); x + 151 pages

In this compact book Shoemaker gives the relation of physical realization extensive treatment, elaborating upon the previous work he has done on this issue. According to the author, if physicalism is true, then the relation of physical realization must play a key role in philosophy, notably in metaphysics and philosophy of mind. Physicalists claim that all facts about the world are constituted by facts about the physical features of the world. Such a claim invites a variety of conundrums, however, many of which are central to contemporary analytic philosophy. For example, mental properties appear to be different in kind to physical properties, yet if physicalism is true this appearance must be somehow deceptive. The tension produced by such conundrums can allegedly be diffused, by the physicalist, with the help of the relation of physical realization.

Following the introduction to the book, the author spends a chapter introducing the relation of ‘property realization’, followed by a chapter concerning the relation of ‘microrealization’, the latter being the more fundamental kind of realization. The remainder of the book shows how the physicalist, armed with these relations, can begin resolving some of the most pressing conundrums facing physicalism. Amongst the problems discussed are these: how can mental properties be causally efficacious in their own right if they are realized by physical properties? If physicalism is true, how can a person have properties that are distinct from those of their body? How do microphysical entities give rise to macro-objects and the macro-properties that they have? How do objects persist; do they endure or perdure? Is physicalism compatible with the claim that there are emergent properties? Can the physicalist provide an adequate account of the phenomenal character of sensory states?

In order to accept what the author calls the ‘subset account’ (pg 12) of property realization, we are asked to presuppose that properties are individuated by their causal profiles. These individuating profiles include forward-looking causal features, which are the causal powers bestowed by a property, and also backward-looking causal features, which involve the possible causes of a property’s instantiation. The author’s own view of properties is that a certain property will have the same causal profile in any possible world in which it exists. But his account of physical realization is compatible with the weaker thesis that ‘a property is individuated by a causal profile in the sense that it and it alone has that profile in the actual world and worlds nomologically like it’ (pg 142). Some philosophers, who believe that properties have a quidditistic essence, may be reluctant to accept even this weaker thesis. But even these philosophers will be impressed by the amount of work that the author’s account of realization can do. And since theories in metaphysics often stand and fall by how much they explain and how many problems they can potentially solve, there is much about the account that is attractive.

The initial, approximate definition of property realization shows what an important role a property’s causal profile must play, and also why the account is described as the ‘subset’