

MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY

Analytic Philosophy and the Return of Hegelian Thought

Paul Redding

CAMBRIDGE

This page intentionally left blank

ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE RETURN OF HEGELIAN THOUGHT

This book examines the possibilities for the rehabilitation of Hegelian thought within current analytic philosophy. From its inception, the analytic tradition has in general accepted Bertrand Russell's hostile dismissal of the idealists, based on the claim that their metaphysical views were irretrievably corrupted by the faulty logic that informed them. But these assumptions are challenged by the work of such analytic philosophers as John McDowell and Robert Brandom, who while contributing to core areas of the analytic movement, nevertheless have found in Hegel sophisticated ideas that are able to address problems which still haunt the analytic tradition after a hundred years. Paul Redding traces the consequences of the displacement of the logic presupposed by Kant and Hegel by modern post-Fregean logic, and examines the developments within twentieth-century analytic philosophy which have made possible an analytic re-engagement with a previously dismissed philosophical tradition.

PAUL REDDING is Professor, School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, University of Sydney. He is author of *The Logic of Affect* (1999) and *Hegel's Hermeneutics* (1996).

MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY

General Editor

ROBERT B. PIPPIN, University of Chicago

Advisory Board

GARY GUTTING, University of Notre Dame

ROLF-PETER HORSTMANN, Humboldt University, Berlin

MARK SACKS, University of Essex

Some recent titles

Daniel W. Conway: *Nietzsche's Dangerous Game*

John P. McCormick: *Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism*

Frederick A. Olafson: *Heidegger and the Ground of Ethics*

Günter Zöller: *Fichte's Transcendental Philosophy*

Warren Breckman: *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory*

William Blattner: *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*

Charles Griswold: *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment*

Gary Gutting: *Pragmatic Liberalism and the Critique of Modernity*

Allen Wood: *Kant's Ethical Thought*

Karl Ameriks: *Kant and the Fate of Autonomy*

Alfredo Ferrarin: *Hegel and Aristotle*

Cristina Lafont: *Heidegger, Language, and World-Disclosure*

Nicholas Wolterstorff: *Thomas Reid and the Story of Epistemology*

Daniel Dahlstrom: *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*

Michelle Grier: *Kant's Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion*

Henry Allison: *Kant's Theory of Taste*

Allen Speight: *Hegel, Literature, and the Problem of Agency*

J. M. Bernstein: *Adorno*

Will Dudley: *Hegel, Nietzsche, and Philosophy*

Taylor Carman: *Heidegger's Analytic*

Douglas Moggach: *The Philosophy and Politics of Bruno Bauer*

Rüdiger Bubner: *The Innovations of Idealism*

Jon Stewart: *Kierkegaard's Relations to Hegel Reconsidered*

Michael Quante: *Hegel's Concept of Action*

Wolfgang Detel: *Foucault and Classical Antiquity*
Robert M. Wallace: *Hegel's Philosophy of Reality, Freedom, and God*
Johanna Oksala: *Foucault on Freedom*
Béatrice Longuenesse: *Kant on the Human Standpoint*
Wayne Martin: *Theories of Judgment*
Heinrich Meier: *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*
Otfried Hoeffe: *Kant's Cosmopolitan Theory of the Law and Peace*
Béatrice Longuenesse: *Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*
Rachel Zuckert: *Kant on Beauty and Biology*
Andrew Bowie: *Music, Philosophy and Modernity*

ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE RETURN OF HEGELIAN THOUGHT

PAUL REDDING

University of Sydney



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521872720

© Paul Redding 2007

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provision of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published in print format 2007

ISBN-13 978-0-511-36399-3 eBook (Adobe Reader)

ISBN-10 0-511-36399-0 eBook (Adobe Reader)

ISBN-13 978-0-521-87272-0 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-87272-3 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of urls for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page ix</i>
Introduction: analytic philosophy and the fall and rise of the Kant–Hegel tradition	1
1 McDowell, Sellars and the myth of the perceptually given	21
2 Brandom, Sellars and the myth of the logical given	56
3 Individuation and determinate negation in Kant and Hegel	85
4 The Kantian route to Hegel’s inferentialism	115
5 Aristotelian <i>Phronesis</i> and the perceptual discernment of value	145
6 Kant, Hegel and the dynamics of evaluative reason	175
7 Hegel and contradiction	200
8 Hegel, analytic philosophy and the question of metaphysics	220
<i>Bibliography</i>	237
<i>Index</i>	245

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks must go first to Robert Brandom and John McDowell and, coming from the other direction, Robert Pippin and Terry Pinkard, who have all demonstrated in their own ways the classically Hegelian truth that there is unity to be found between philosophies usually taken to be antithetical. For the example, and for the help, feedback and encouragement provided by each in their different ways, I am extremely grateful. Earlier in my career, the late Bill Bonney had introduced me to the contemporaneity of Kant, and György Markus, to the timelessness of Hegel. I am particularly grateful to have had teachers such as these.

The Sydney region has attractions beyond those of sun and surf – for one, it has a lively and diverse philosophical community. I have benefited from conversations with too many to thank individually, but would have to mention Rick Benitez, David Braddon-Mitchell, Bruin Christensen, Jean-Philippe Deranty, Moira Gatens, Stephen Gaukroger, John Grumley, Duncan Ivison, Jane Johnson, Simon Lumsden, David Macarthur, Justine McGill, Melissa McMahon, Paul Patton, Huw Price, Philip Quadrio, Robert Sinnerbrink, Nick (Nicholas H) Smith and Nick (Nicholas J.J.) Smith. Among those from further afield, I would like to thank Jim Kreines, Graham Priest, Marcelo Stamm, Bob Stern, Bob Wallace, Ken Westphal, Robert Williams and Günter Zöller. At different phases of the project I greatly benefited from the assistance of Kim Frost, Rachel Goodman, Melissa McMahon and Nandi Theunissen. Late in

the project I received excellent feedback from Francesco Berto, who clearly has been down many of the paths I have wandered into here. Wherever I have *failed* to take advantage of the good advice offered by all above, I have only myself to thank.

Two readers for Cambridge University Press (I can thank by name Robert Hanna, who outed himself as one of these) provided invaluable feedback on an earlier (larger, messier) incarnation, as did Robert Pippin, this time in his role of series editor. I also wish to thank Hilary Gaskin for her help with bringing the project to fruition, and Sara Barnes. Large parts of this project were undertaken with the assistance of a Discovery Grant from the Australian Research Council, for which I am most grateful.

Vicki Varvaressos, my life-partner, has been the sustaining source of spiritual support and love that for me is the absolute condition for doing anything whatever.

INTRODUCTION: ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE FALL AND RISE OF THE KANT-HEGEL TRADITION

Should it come as a surprise when a technical work in the philosophy of language by a prominent analytic philosopher is described as ‘an attempt to usher analytic philosophy from its Kantian to its Hegelian stage’, as has Robert Brandom’s *Making It Explicit*?¹ It can if one has in mind a certain picture of the relation of analytic philosophy to ‘German idealism’. This particular picture has been called analytic philosophy’s ‘creation myth’, and it was effectively established by Bertrand Russell in his various accounts of the birth of the ‘new philosophy’ around the turn of the twentieth century.²

It was towards the end of 1898 that Moore and I rebelled against both Kant and Hegel. Moore led the way, but I followed closely in his footsteps. I think that the first published account of the new philosophy was

¹ As does Richard Rorty in his ‘Introduction’ to Wilfrid Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, with introduction by Richard Rorty and study guide by Robert Brandom (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 8–9.

² The phrase is from Steve Gerrard, ‘Desire and Desirability: Bradley, Russell, and Moore Versus Mill’ in W. W. Tait (ed.), *Early Analytic Philosophy: Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein* (Chicago: Open Court, 1997): ‘The core of the myth (which has its origins in Russell’s memories) is that with philosophical argument aided by the new logic, Russell and Moore slew the dragon of British Idealism . . . An additional aspect is that the war was mainly fought over two related doctrines of British Idealism . . . The first doctrine is an extreme form of holism: abstraction is always falsification. Truth can be fully predicated of the absolute alone, not of any of its constituents . . . The second Idealist doctrine is that external relations are not real’, p. 40.

Moore's article in *Mind* on 'The Nature of Judgement'. Although neither he nor I would now adhere to all the doctrines in this article, I, and I think he, would still agree with its negative part – i.e. with the doctrine that fact is in general independent of experience.³

Russell's accounts of his first eight years at Cambridge culminating in his rebellion against idealism convey a familiar picture of the precocious young man coming to find his distinctive voice. Philosophically, he found himself in an environment dominated by 'Kantians' or 'Hegelians',⁴ and disappointment with the teaching of the mathematics to which he had been initially drawn led him to plunge 'with whole-hearted delight into the fantastic world of philosophy'. Initially he 'went over completely to a semi-Kantian, semi-Hegelian metaphysic',⁵ and for the next four years became increasingly Hegelian in outlook, embarking on a series of Hegelian works on mathematics and physics. When the break with idealism came in 1898 however, his outlook was very different. It was experienced as a break with the 'dry logical doctrines' into which he had been 'indoctrinated', and as a 'great liberation, as if I had escaped from a hot-house on to a wind-swept headland'.⁶

This was a time, of course, when revolution was in the air, and Russell uses this term to describe the change in his approach to philosophy in 1898, this revolution contrasting with the 'evolution' of his views from that time on. From his descriptions of the change of outlook, however, it would seem more appropriate to talk of a reversal or perhaps inversion with regard to his relation to Hegelianism. As he tells it, it was his work on Leibniz that had led him to the topic of *relations* and there he discovered a thesis at the heart not only of Leibniz's metaphysics but also of the 'systems of Spinoza, Hegel and Bradley'.⁷ This thesis he termed the 'axiom of internal relations'. Its content was that '[e]very relation is grounded in the natures of the related terms',⁸ and it was ultimately based on Leibniz's assumption that 'every proposition attributes a

³ Bertrand Russell, *My Philosophical Development* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1959), p. 42. A similar account is given in 'My Mental Development' in P. Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1946).

⁴ Sidgwick, 'the last survivor of the Benthamites', was the exception. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

predicate to a subject and (what seemed to him almost the same thing) that every fact consists of a substance having a property'.⁹

This idea that it was the adherence to the subject–predicate structure of the Aristotelian categorical judgement, and the syllogistic term logic based on it, that was at the heart of the idealists' metaphysical errors became the commonplace of Russell's various accounts. Thus, for example, in 1914, Russell writes:

Mr Bradley has worked out a theory according to which, in all judgement, we are ascribing a predicate to Reality as a whole; and this theory is derived from Hegel. Now the traditional logic holds that every proposition ascribes a predicate to a subject, and from this it easily follows that there can be only one subject, the Absolute, for if there were two, the proposition that there were two would not ascribe a predicate to either. Thus Hegel's doctrine, that philosophical propositions must be of the form, "the Absolute is such-and-such" depends upon the traditional belief in the universality of the subject–predicate form. This belief, being traditional, scarcely self-conscious, and not supposed to be important, operates underground, and is assumed in arguments which, like the refutation of relations, appear at first such as to establish its truth. This is the most important respect in which Hegel uncritically assumes the traditional logic.¹⁰

This criticism of the logic presupposed by Bradley and Hegel of course highlighted the general philosophical significance of the *new* system of logic, the first order predicate calculus with 'quantification theory' ultimately based on a propositional rather than, as with Aristotle, a term logic. This new logic derived from the work of Gottlob Frege, and Russell was one of its earliest advocates and developers.

An intellectual revolution could, presumably, proceed by abandoning the old and developing some new approach to the problems under consideration – in this case, problems concerning the foundations of mathematics. But Russell's characteristic reaction to idealism, as he tells it, seems to have been not so much to *deny* its central axiom and replace it with a new one, but to assert its contrary – to replace the axiom of *internal relations* with that of *external relations*. 'Having become convinced that the Hegelian arguments against this and that were invalid' he notes, 'I reacted to the opposite extreme and began to believe in the reality of

⁹ Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁰ Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1914), p. 48.

whatever could not be *disproved*'.¹¹ Thus in opposition to the *monism* which he believed necessarily flowed from the axiom of internal relations he opposed an *atomistic, pluralistic* view. As Ray Monk points out, Russell was fond of referring to the monistic idealism derived by his teachers from Kant and Hegel, as the 'bowl of jelly' view of the world to which he came to oppose his own 'bucket of shot' view.¹²

Russell's policy of 'believ[ing] everything the Hegelians disbelieved'¹³ gave him his curiously pluralistic ontology of this early period: 'I imagined all the numbers sitting in a row in a Platonic heaven . . . I thought that points of space and instants of time were actually existing entities, and that matter might very well be composed of actual elements such as physics found convenient. I believed in a world of universals, consisting mostly of what is meant by verbs and prepositions'.¹⁴ In this Platonic realism Russell was clearly influenced by Moore who also had started out as an idealist influenced by Bradley but had swung around to a realism critical of Bradley in his 'Prize Fellowship' dissertation for Trinity College.¹⁵ Moore's criticism was directed mostly to what he took to be Kant and Bradley's denial of the 'independence' of facts from knowledge or consciousness, and in its place construed judgement as the mind's direct grasp of mind-independent concepts, regarded as the constituents of the propositions constituting the world. Thus, although Moore was later known as an advocate of common sense, as Thomas Baldwin notes, 'it would be a great mistake to regard Moore's early philosophy as a reaction of common sense empiricism against the excesses of idealism; in its commitment to timeless being Moore's early philosophy is anti-empiricist'.¹⁶ Moore's extreme Platonism perplexed members of the idealist establishment such as Bosanquet, who had examined Moore's thesis in 1898, complaining that *this* way of correcting

¹¹ Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, p. 10.

¹² Ray Monk, 'Was Russell an Analytic Philosopher?' in Hans-Johann Glock (ed.), *The Rise of Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 42. The passage of Russell's account of Hegel's jelly-like universe that Monk discusses is from Bertrand Russell, *Portraits from Memory* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 21. In Chapter 8 I argue against the implied idea that Hegel views the world as a single substance.

¹³ Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, p. 48.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 48–9.

¹⁵ Peter Hylton, *Russell, Idealism and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 118–24.

¹⁶ Thomas Baldwin, *G. E. Moore* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 40. Moreover, according to Baldwin, Moore not only misunderstood the nature of both Kant's and Bradley's ethical theories, but his *own* ethical theory, which is, Baldwin thinks, 'best reconstructed (I do not say interpreted) as an incomplete Kantian theory'. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

the alleged subjectivism of Kant surely amounted to throwing the baby out with the bathwater.¹⁷

The choice of *Platonism* rather than empiricism as an alternative to his teachers' idealism has to be seen in the context of Moore's deep antagonism to forms of ethical naturalism, in particular that of J.S. Mill. Perhaps the most well-known doctrine from the major work of Moore's career – the hugely influential *Principia Ethica* of 1903 – was its critique of 'the naturalistic fallacy', and far from being an anti-idealist critique, the critique of naturalism in ethics had effectively been a staple of the idealist tradition. In the latter third of the nineteenth century it had been idealism which had claimed the anti-psychologistic high ground, Kant's comments on Locke's 'physiological' approach to the mind in the *Critique of Pure Reason* effectively having established the model for this kind of critique of reducing normative to natural facts.¹⁸ In the last third of the nineteenth century, Hermann Lotze, whom John Passmore has referred to as the most pillaged philosopher of that century,¹⁹ had revived the Kantian critique of this reduction of ethical normativity with a vengeance.²⁰

In effect, Moore's criticism of Kant and Bradley in *Principia* was essentially that they had not gone *far enough* in their critique of psychologism. Bradley had differentiated between ideas as particular psychological states and the universal non-psychological contents or meanings of those states, but had stopped short of logical realism and thought of logic as 'incomplete' and in need of psychology.²¹ In this, Bradley just

¹⁷ Bosanquet's comments are quoted in Hylton, *Russell, Idealism and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, pp. 120–1.

¹⁸ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A86–7/B119.

¹⁹ John Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1966), p. 49. On the relevance of Lotze to Frege in particular, see Gottfried Gabriel, 'Frege, Lotze, and the Continental roots of Early Analytic Philosophy', in Erich Reck (ed.), *From Frege to Wittgenstein: Perspectives on Early Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

²⁰ Thomas Hurka (in 'Moore in the Middle', *Ethics* 113 (2003), 599–630) points out that contemporary reviews of *Principia* did not think its central anti-naturalist claim particularly original. Hurka agrees with the gist of these claims, placing Moore in the middle of a tradition stretching from predecessors such as Sidgwick, Rashdall, Brentano and McTaggart, to successors including Prichard, Broad, Ross, Ewing, and, in the continent of Europe, Meinong and Nicolai Hartmann.

²¹ 'Truth necessarily (if I am right) implies an aspect of psychical existence. In order to be, truth itself must happen and occur, and must exist as what we call a mental event. Hence, to completely realize itself as truth, truth would have to include this essential aspect of its own being. And yet from this aspect logic, if it means to exist, is compelled to abstract'. F.H. Bradley, *The Principles of Logic*, second edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1922),

seems to repeat Kant's rejection of any notion of 'intellectual intuition' as a form of cognition of which finite human beings were capable. For Kant, the only *immediate* representations of which we humans were capable were ones based on our sensory, causal interaction with the world, and these could only be given epistemic status by being made the contents of non-conceptual forms of representation ('intuitions') to which further general representations ('concepts') could be applied. To see ourselves as capable of knowing things in themselves, unmediated by our sensory affections, was to attribute to ourselves the god-like powers of an infinite, non-embodied mind, the powers of 'intellectual intuition'. But the step beyond Kant and Bradley to something like intellectual intuition was precisely the step that Moore and, following him, Russell, seemed prepared to take.²² The project of rendering ethics autonomous was one shared by Moore on the one hand, and the idealists on the other; the belief that this could only be done by a Platonic realist ontology was what separated them.²³

The other major factor at play in the years around the turn of the century in the development of the new philosophy was, of course, Russell's rapid assimilation of the radical changes in logic and mathematics that had been developing in continental Europe for two decades. In *My Philosophical Development*, Russell describes the significance of learning, from Peano at the *International Congress of Philosophy* in Paris in 1900, of two technical innovations. The first was that universal affirmative judgements, such as 'All Greeks are mortal', should *not* be thought of on the model of a singular judgement such as 'Socrates is mortal', but should be analyzed as conditionals, as in 'for all things, if something is a Greek, then that thing is mortal'. The second was that a class consisting of one member cannot be equated *with* that member itself. These ideas gave him crucial tools for developing a logic of relations needed for his work on mathematics and with which he could oppose the 'axiom of internal relations'. Using these tools he quickly drafted much of *The Principles of Mathematics* which came out in the same year as Moore's *Principia Ethica*, making 1903 the official birth date of analytic philosophy. But just as the story of Moore's relation to Bradley

p. 612, quoted in Gerrard, 'Desire and Desirability', p. 67. This dependency also went the other way. Psychology was also incomplete, and stood in need of logic.

²² Hylton, *Russell, Idealism and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, ch. 4.

²³ As is made clear by Christian Piller: 'What distinguishes Moore from Sidgwick and Kant is that Moore tries to secure the autonomy of ethics ontologically: its most fundamental object, the property of being good, is unique'. Christian Piller, 'The new realism in ethics', in Thomas Baldwin (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Philosophy, 1870-1945*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 279.

was more complicated than it appears at first sight, so was that concerning Russell's. While in 1959 he tells of first learning of the treatment of universally quantified judgements as conditionals from *Peano*, he also tells of his having read and assimilated Bradley's *The Principles of Logic* in the early 1890s, the significance of which lies in the fact that there Bradley had himself treated universally affirmative judgements as conditionals.²⁴ Moreover, Russell had already acknowledged this in a footnote in his groundbreaking essay of 1905, 'On Denoting'.²⁵ As will be seen below (Chapter 3), Bradley's understanding of universal affirmations as having the structure of *conditionals* is hardly surprising as it is implicit in Kant's own transcendental logic.²⁶

Recent work on the origins of analytic philosophy has started to replace the myth with historical truth, but, as earlier idealists such as Schelling and Hegel had suggested, and as social scientists like Durkheim were coming to learn from empirical studies at the time of analytic philosophy's birth, myths are more than sets of mistaken beliefs about the world, they are cultural products which play constitutive roles in the formation and maintenance of group identities, exemplifying and reflecting back to their members the shared fundamental norms and values binding them as a group. To the extent that philosophers were starting to form a relatively coherent professionalized group, it would be unrealistic to think that they were free of such influences. Richard Watson has argued that Russell's 'shadow Hegel', a literary creation with little resemblance to the actual historical philosopher, had played a crucial role in the development of analytic philosophy: 'Russell's Hegel made some obvious errors that the developing philosophy of the day could correct. The shadow Hegel is the rock that logical atomism could

²⁴ Russell refers to Bradley's, *Principles of Logic*, (first edition) Bk. 1, ch. II. There Bradley says that in the judgement 'Animals are mortal': 'We mean 'Whatever is an animal will die', but that is the same as *If* anything is an animal *then* it is mortal. The assertion really is about mere hypothesis; it is not about fact'. Ibid., p. 47. Earlier Bradley notes that his account is derived by a correction of J. F. Herbart's more psychologistic way of taking all judgements as hypotheticals. Ibid., p. 43.

²⁵ Bertrand Russell, *Logic and Knowledge: Essays 1901–1950* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 43.

²⁶ Not only that, the gist of Russell's other great lesson from Peano, that a class with one member cannot be identified with that member was also implicit in Kant's transcendental logic, appearing there as the difference between the notions of 'singularity' (*Einzelheit*) and 'particularity' (*Besonderheit*), a difference deriving from Aristotle that had been lost in the nominalistic English tradition, but not in the German tradition. This issue is explored below in Chapter 3.

take as a jumping-off place . . . The shadow Hegel's system authenticates the philosophy that casts off from and corrects it'.²⁷

Philosophers may be just as prone to mythologize their collective existence as members of any other social group, but it should also be said that one of the values to which philosophy attempts to give expression in its myths is that of being consistently *critical* of such myths. In any case, we are fortunate now to have available a body of historical work about the tradition of philosophical analysis to counter the standard Russellian account. In contrast to the Russellian creation myth with its simple opposition between analytic philosophy and Kant-derived idealism, the actual picture presented in such works is much more complex. Many of the different strands that have been woven into analytic philosophy throughout its history can be characterized just as much in terms of their affinity to Kantian and Hegelian idealism, *rightly understood*, as they can be in terms of the radical opposition foregrounded in Russell. Russell's caricaturing of idealism, however, was so successful at a rhetorical level that generations of analytic philosophers, largely unconcerned with its history, have uncritically accepted the gist of Russell's account. Such an attitude is in turn expressed in the general easy dismissal of the idealist period of philosophy that goes beyond justifiable complaints about the density and unclarity of the prose in which it was often expressed, a density and unclarity that perhaps reached its apotheosis in the writings of Hegel. If a thinker is regarded as having something important to say, of course, then the project of trying to make that something clearer will generally be regarded as worthwhile. For the most part, however, the attitude within analytic philosophy for much of its history has been to regard such effort as largely a *waste* of effort. Given the fundamental and obvious philosophical errors *known* to lie at the heart of the idealist tradition – that is, those errors learnt about from Russell – what *could* be possibly learned from them? Thus, to a remarkable extent, post-Kantian idealism has been written out of the range of viable approaches to philosophy.

Kant's influence within the analytic tradition has, of course, endured to a much greater extent than has Hegel's – Kant's idealism generally being regarded as marking the outer limit of that which is assimilable from the Germans. Most obviously, Kantianism has remained a viable position within analytic *practical* philosophy, largely because of the fact that Moore's version of rational intuitionism never really succeeded in

²⁷ Richard A. Watson, 'Shadow History in Philosophy', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 31 (1993), 95–109, 99.

displacing the two rival nineteenth-century traditions of Kantian ‘deontology’, as it came to be known, and the type of ‘consequentialism’ that could be traced back through utilitarianism to Hume. But it could also be argued that Kantianism, understood in a particular way, was never far from the core theoretical issues of mainstream analytic thought, despite Russell’s efforts. This was largely due to the impact of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, in which Wittgenstein introduced a version of Frege’s ‘context principle’ into philosophical semantics: ‘Only the proposition has sense; only in the nexus of a proposition has a name meaning’.²⁸ This Frege–Wittgenstein context principle was clearly in tension with the atomistic approach of the early Russell, but many have argued that it was also in tension with Russell’s approach *after* he had absorbed and introduced *Tractarian* elements into his own work. Thus it has been argued that this principle marked a deep distinction separating the approaches of Frege and Wittgenstein on the one hand and those of Russell and Moore on the other, the former pair’s approach to metaphysics being more ‘judgement based’ and, because of that, ‘Kantian’, the latter pair’s, more ontological or ‘object based’.²⁹

A similar complexity concerning the relation of analytic philosophy to the nineteenth-century idealist tradition has been suggested by Michael Friedman. Friedman has reconstructed the neo-Kantian background presupposed in the approach of the logical positivists,³⁰ again marking their work off sharply from the Platonic realism of early Russell and Moore. According to Friedman, the main philosophical impetus of the logical positivists came from late nineteenth-century work on the foundations of geometry, which brought into question Kant’s analysis of geometric truth in the first *Critique*, and on the basis of this the positivists rejected Kant’s key concept of the ‘synthetic *a priori*’. What the positivists essentially did was to redefine the nature of the Kantian *a priori*, by axiomatizing it, and relativizing and historicizing it, to fit the contemporary sciences. Now some equivalent non-empirical structure, such as

²⁸ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. C. K. Ogden (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922), § 3.3. Frege had introduced this idea in *The Foundations of Arithmetic* as the second of three fundamental principles: ‘The meaning of a word must be asked for in the context of a proposition, not in isolation’. Michael Beaney (ed.), *The Frege Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 90 (see also, p. 108).

²⁹ The characterization of the difference is from Hylton, *Russell, Idealism and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, p. 223.

³⁰ Michael Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). See also Alan W. Richardson, *Carnap’s Construction of the World: The Aufbau and the Emergence of Logical Empiricism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Reichenbach's 'non-empirical axioms of coordination' or Carnap's logical syntax of scientific language, would come to replace Kant's synthetic *a priori*.³¹ But on Friedman's account, the positivists were Kantians in an even deeper way, in that while Russell and Moore were essentially *ontologists*, who read Kant and his successors likewise *as* ontologists, the positivists resembled Kant as he was understood by the late nineteenth-century *neo*-Kantians, who took their ontology from the best science of their day, and forewent the claim to any further philosophically-based ontology. The Newtonian science of Kant's day had been superseded, and so in shaping their account of the *a priori* to their contemporary science, the positivists were doing essentially what Kant *would have* done had he lived at the start of the twentieth century, and had he, like the neo-Kantians, seen beyond the troublesome dichotomy of appearances and 'things-in-themselves'. And by directing their attention to the non-empirically given framework conditions of scientific inquiry, the positivists were drawn into the distinctively holistic structures of language use. For them it was a proposed language of the physical sciences, but substitute the patterns of language use of *everyday life*, and much the same could be said of the later Wittgenstein and post-Second World War Oxford philosophy. Again, in contrast to the approach of Russell and Moore, there was a preservation of the Kantian impulse against what he had termed dogmatic metaphysics, and with it a turn to a reflection upon the forms in which we represent reality to ourselves.

But some of these movements might be described as equally Hegelian in spirit. Kant himself had lacked a sense of the historicity of the models of knowledge taken as authoritative, and just as he thought Aristotle had definitively established the basic forms of right inference, and Euclid the basic structures of geometric knowledge, so too he thought that Newton had definitively established the science of the phenomenal world. Looking back from the twentieth century, however, we see enough historical change in the objects of the sciences to incline

³¹ Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, pp. 7–8. For his part, Richardson (*Carnap's Construction of the World*, chs 4 & 5) describes the Positivists as retrieving a distinctly *methodological* dimension of the Kantian synthetic *a priori* by separating it from the further *epistemological* (as in its claims for the necessity of Euclidean geometry, for example) and *representation theoretic* (in its distinction between the formal properties of intuitive and conceptual representations) dimensions that it had in Kant's Transcendental Idealism. In their respective accounts, both stress the mediating role played here by contemporary neo-Kantians, such as Ernst Cassirer and Bruno Bauch, and point to the divergences between the Positivists, on the one hand, and the traditional empiricists, with whom they have been usually associated, on the other.

us to agree with Hegel rather than Kant on this matter. And this plasticity of epistemic structures is in turn linked to the fact that a definite ‘linguistic turn’ separates the respective approaches of Kant and Hegel, once more making Hegel the thinker on the side of the moderns. As Hegel had written in the ‘Preface to the Second Edition’ of the *Science of Logic*:

The forms of thought are, in the first instance, displayed and stored in human *language*. Nowadays we cannot be too often reminded that it is *thinking* which distinguishes man from the beasts. Into all that becomes something inward for men, an image or conception as such, into all that he makes his own, language has penetrated, and everything that he has transformed into language and expresses in it contains a category – concealed, mixed with other forms or clearly determined as such, so much is logic his natural element, indeed his own peculiar *nature*.³²

If ‘conceptual holism’ is one of the distinctive marks of Hegel, then Wittgenstein’s later refinement of Frege’s context principle is here significant: while in the *Tractatus* the relevant context for the consideration of the meaning of words was the proposition, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, it had become the language games and social practices within which words were used.³³

Among the various figures of the generally post-positivistic period of analytic philosophers after the Second World War, perhaps the one whose work promised some type of reconciliation with the idealist tradition from which Russell and Moore had broken was the American philosopher Wilfrid Sellars. In the course of his influential lectures delivered at the University of London in 1956, published as ‘Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind’,³⁴ Sellars broached the issue of the broadly Hegelian features of his work. Qua *metaphysician* Sellars was not an Hegelian but had combined elements from Kant with a form of scientific realism

³² G. W. F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 31 (5.20). Note that for Hegel’s works other than those in which the numbered paragraphs used in the translations cited and the German original coincide, numbers in brackets following the English pagination refer to the corresponding volume and page numbers of the edition *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1969).

³³ See, for example, W. W. Tait, ‘Wittgenstein and the “skeptical Paradoxes”’. *Journal of Philosophy* 83 (1986), 475–88.

³⁴ First published in *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, vol. 1: *The Foundations of Science and the Concepts of Psychology and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Herbert Feigl and Michael Scriven, reprinted in Wilfrid Sellars, *Science Perception and Reality* (Atascadero: Ridgeview, 1991), and then as *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*.

against which Hegel would have recoiled. Nevertheless, he planted the seed that was later to grow into a fruit-bearing Hegelian tree, and in 1994 were published two books which came to be regarded as among the major works in analytic philosophy from that decade – John McDowell's *Mind and World* and Robert Brandom's *Making It Explicit*. The remarkable feature shared by these works, in which Sellars's philosophy was divested of the realist elements of its metaphysical core, was the acknowledgement given in each to the continuing relevance of the philosophy of Hegel. While Hegel had typically been seen as exemplifying the worst from the pre-analytic tradition, not only did McDowell and Brandom claim to find a place for him within the contemporary philosophical debate, but each portrayed him as providing *the* solution to a central theoretical impasse afflicting late twentieth-century philosophy – a view essentially unthinkable from the perspective of early twentieth-century analytic philosophy.³⁵

For both McDowell and Brandom, the analytic path to Hegel is *via* the innovations of Kant. Kant's views concerning the active contribution of the mind in giving conceptual shape to the world as known could become domesticated within analytic developments as with the positivists' *a priori*, for example, but this was so only because Kant had harnessed this idealism to a more sober empiricism. German post-Kantians such as Hegel, however, seemed to have renounced Kant's efforts to tether the mind to the empirical world and unleashed the monster of 'absolute idealism'. And yet both McDowell and Brandom argue that modern philosophy must follow Hegel's move beyond Kant in just this way. It is from Hegel and not Kant, at least not Kant as he had been understood for the most part within analytic philosophy, that we can learn how to reconstruct a coherent philosophical enterprise in the wake of Wilfrid Sellars's definitive exposure in the mid-twentieth century of modern philosophy's central myth, a myth whose pristine expression is to be found in Russell, the 'myth of the given'.

While such a change in attitude to Hegel will be for many philosophers trained in the analytic tradition perplexing, to say the least, it is far from unprecedented as McDowell's and Brandom's retrieval of Hegel have converged with the equally positive reinterpretations of Hegel within the realm of late twentieth-century English-language Hegel scholarship itself. A revival of interest in Hegel in the 1970s had been both signalled

³⁵ This is not to say that either book is *about* Hegel. There are, in fact, only a handful of references to Hegel in each of these books.

and amplified by the appearance of Charles Taylor's *Hegel*, but while Taylor's reading of Hegel allowed the reassimilation of much of his rich social and political thought, the book was still premised on the impossibility of taking seriously Hegel's 'central ontological thesis'.³⁶ A decade and a half later, however, the assumption that Hegel *had* a 'central ontological thesis' was being seriously contested by interpretations of Hegel that challenged the traditional thesis that Hegel had anything like the metaphysical thesis ascribed to him by Russell and others.

Perhaps the most systematic and influential of these new approaches has been that presented by Robert Pippin, most comprehensively in his 1989 book *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfaction of Self-Consciousness*.³⁷ Here Pippin, drawing on the work of a generation of post-Second World War German Hegel scholars, presented Hegel as a post-Kantian philosopher unencumbered with any bizarre 'spirit monism' of the type found by Taylor. Pippin's Hegel is a thinker who *further*s Kant's critique of traditional metaphysics and who 'extends and deepens Kantian antiempiricist, antinaturalist, antirationalist strategies'.³⁸ On this reading, Kant's criticism of traditional metaphysics was seen by Hegel as compromised by his residual adherence to a 'subjectivistic' metaphysics, and Hegel had seen his project as that of 'completing' Kant.³⁹

Pippin's post-Kantian reading of Hegel ran parallel to other attempts to retrieve the Hegelian project, including the 'nonmetaphysical' approach of Klaus Hartmann in which Hegel's *logic* was interpreted as a 'category theory' without metaphysical commitment.⁴⁰ As one of a number of American Hegelians who had been influenced by Hartmann's account, Terry Pinkard soon swung over to a more 'post-Kantian' orientation, and, influenced by Pippin, came to see Hegel as having set himself the task of solving a paradox within Kant's approach to the authority of the moral law. Kant had thought of pure reason alone as capable of determining the will: as Pippin has put it, 'speaking from the practical or first-person point of view, the very possibility of my awareness of the dictates of a purely conceived practical reason establishes *from that perspective* that I cannot deny that I am subject to such a law and thereby establishes

³⁶ Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 538.

³⁷ Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfaction of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁰ Klaus Hartmann, 'Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View', in Alasdair MacIntyre (ed.), *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays* (New York: Anchor Books, 1972).

that I can act accordingly'.⁴¹ But Kant's way of putting this seemed to create an unbridgeable gap between this 'first-person' *practical perspective* and the 'third person' *theoretical perspective* within which one can regard oneself as *nothing other than* a component within a causally efficient natural realm. In Pinkard's terms, it required an agent 'to split himself in two – in effect, for 'me' to issue a law to myself that 'I' could then use as a reason to apply the law to myself'.⁴² But although formulated in the language of *practical* philosophy, this 'Kantian paradox' concerns the authority or normativity of reason *per se*, the unity of which Hegel had insisted upon along with other post-Kantians like Fichte and Schelling. Regarded in this way, what the post-Kantians were struggling with was an issue that re-emerged in mid-twentieth-century analytic philosophy in terms of the question of what it was to 'follow a rule' – the question of how to reconcile our claims to rational normativity with the naturalistic view of ourselves that rational inquiry itself had produced. Moreover, akin to the path taken by philosophers like Wittgenstein and Sellars, 'Hegel's resolution of the Kantian paradox was to see it in social terms. Since the agent cannot secure any bindingness for the principle simply on his own, he requires the *recognition* of another agent of it as binding on both of them'.⁴³

Drawing on the work of Sellars, Pinkard, in his 1994 book *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason*, interpreted Hegel as developing a normative theory of the rational agency of individuals occupying positions within a shared and rule-governed 'social space':

Within a "social space" individuals assert various things to each other and give what they take to be reasons for these assertions, and people impute certain reasons to them on the basis of the shared social norms that structure their "social space" – that is, on the basis of what they take the person to be committed to in light of what he does and their shared norms. All the various activities of reason-giving ... are themselves forms of social practice in which we in turn mutually evaluate each other's actions, in which we each assume certain types of epistemic

⁴¹ Robert Pippin, 'Hegel's Practical Philosophy: The Realization of Freedom', in Karl Ameriks (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 185.

⁴² Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 227. Moral self-legislation 'seems to require a 'lawless' agent to give laws to himself on the basis of laws that from one point of view seem to be prior to the legislation and from another point of view seem to be derivative from the legislation itself'. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

and ethical responsibilities, and in which we impute certain moral and epistemic responsibilities to others in light of their behavior. In the various social practices involving reason-giving, we also have principles of *criticism* for evaluating the reasons we give. Reason-giving, that is, is itself a social practice that goes on within a determinate form of “social space” that “licenses” some kinds of inferences and fails to “license” others.⁴⁴

Pinkard’s book appeared in the same year as the books of McDowell and Brandom, which similarly made connections between Sellars’s account of the normative ‘space of reasons’ and Hegel’s idealism, but from the Sellarsian end, effectively instituting a hitherto unthinkable research programme integrating Hegel into the context of a philosophical movement which had effectively been formed on the basis of a radical opposition to Hegel.

This book examines, on the basis of a broadly post-Kantian interpretation of Hegel,⁴⁵ the possibilities for the type of Sellarsian rehabilitation of an Hegelian position within current analytic philosophy along the lines that McDowell and Brandom envisage. The background question orienting the inquiry concerns the consequences of the shift from the Aristotelian logical structures still enframing the thought of Kant and Hegel to the post-Fregean structures generally accepted by analytic philosophers. One can read the work of McDowell and Brandom as responses to Russell’s dismissal of the thought of the idealists as anachronistic. Of the two, it is Brandom who is most ambitious and systematic in his recovery of idealism. In short, Brandom assimilates Hegel to the Frege–Wittgenstein tradition in logic by creating a common terrain on which these two seemingly very different types of philosophy can meet – a terrain that Brandom calls an inferentialist theory of semantic content. For Brandom, Hegel’s revolutionary philosophy can be prised free of those Aristotelian features for which it had been condemned a century ago by the developer and promoter of the logical new-wave. In contrast, while we only get glimpses of McDowell’s Hegel in his writings, what comes across from the general tone of McDowell’s work is a philosophy with distinctly Aristotelian features. But after a

⁴⁴ Terry Pinkard, *Hegel’s Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 7–8.

⁴⁵ In general terms, I take the substance of my own earlier account of Hegel as presented in *Hegel’s Hermeneutics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996) as broadly within the Pippin-Pinkard camp. Here, in Chapters 7 and 8, I re-raise the question of the senses in which Hegel may and may not be thought of as doing ‘metaphysics’.