MISSING LINKS: W. V. QUINE, THE MAKING OF 'TWO DOGMAS', AND THE ANALYTIC ROOTS OF POST-ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

This essay argues that post-analytic philosophy finds its origins not only in an invented tradition—that of 'analytic philosophy'—but also in an invented dilemma: namely, the response to the allegedly overweening dominance of 'positivism' in American philosophy. I begin by surveying the problems with the folk wisdom about positivism and analytic philosophy. This pervasive narrative locates the emergence of post-analytic philosophy after a period of hegemony for logical positivism and cognate philosophical subfields. Taking seriously evidence indicating a distinct overlap in the construction of the analytic and post-analytic traditions, I return to the founding moment of American analytic philosophy in the years immediately following World War II. What we see, I suggest, is not a reaction against a clearly defined and powerful logical positivist mainstream, but the careful, piecewise co-ordination of what would become characteristic 'analytic' modes of argument, problematics, and tool kits. Willard Van Orman Quine played a central role in this process, and for this reason I focus on the circumstances in which his field-defining 1951 article, 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' was written and received. I conclude with the claim that both analytic and post-analytic philosophers relied on a peculiar image of the failure of logical positivism, and of the opportunities that failure presented.

Missing Links: W. V. Quine, the Making of 'Two Dogmas', and the Analytic Roots of Post-Analytic Philosophy

> Positivism possesses as much claim to have become itself in America as deconstruction does.
>
> —Stanley Cavell[1]

Introduction

There is a story about rise and subsequent self-undoing of analytic philosophy in the United States that has become something akin to folk wisdom among philosophers and certain historians of philosophy.[2] Indeed, it is a narrative that is today central to how post-analytic philosophers conceive of the intellectual tradition in which they work, and thus also how such philosophers conceive of the intellectual challenges they face and the interventions they are in a position to make. To call a tradition a narrative construct is not necessarily to patronize it. Traditions *qua* narratives of the development of the field or discipline are crucial both to how practitioners go about their work, and how historians explain the rise and fall of particular concepts or ideas.[3] Likewise, to suggest that dilemmas may play a functional role within a given tradition should not be taken to imply that they are 'merely' invented problems or utilitarian proposals designed to secure maximum advantage to their advocates. It is part of the character of traditions and the dilemmas to which they give rise that they 'are not fixed entities people happen to discover' but 'contingent entities people produce by their own activities'.[4] Nevertheless, in the appreciation of any intellectual

[1] Cavell, *A Pitch of Philosophy: Autobiographical Exercises* (Cambridge, MA, 1994), 85.
[2] I do not claim that any single individual subscribes to the folk wisdom in its entirety; what follows is a composite picture assembled from a representative selection of texts.
[3] On practitioners' narratives and the salience of particular research problems, see J. Rouse, *Engaging Science: How to Understand its Practices Philosophically* (Ithaca, NY, 1996), 158-78.
[4] M. Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (Cambridge, 1999), 203.

tradition there may be moments when the 'naturalizing narratives' that bind them together threaten to overwhelm our grasp of their contingency and historicity. At such moments, an historical explication of the local, piecemeal construction of the tradition and its self-chosen dilemmas is in order.[5] Such is the case with post-analytic philosophy and its connections with the so-called 'analytic' tradition of philosophical inquiry. My purpose in this paper is to begin this task of historical critique.

The folk narrative I have in mind begins with the purported 'triumph' of the 'specialized research programs' of the 'logical positivists' during the 1930s and 1940s.[6] Of particular importance in this account is the role of a 'small' yet powerful 'faction' of émigré positivists: Rudolf Carnap, Hans Reichenbach, Carl Gustav Hempel, Herbert Feigl, Gustav Bergman, and Alfred Tarski.[7] Although 'numerically a small number', this cohort of logical positivists and their American acolytes 'became potent after World War II because of their ability and their cogently stated doctrines'.[8] Under the influence of the 'dominant'[9] analytical paradigms of the émigrés, 'most American philosophers became positivists'.[10] 'In the English-speaking world, from the 1920s through the 1950s, empiricism in the form

[5] For a argument in favour of this form of critique, presented under the rubric of 'radical historicism', see R. Adcock, M. Bevir, and S. C. Stimson, 'A History of Political Science: How? What? Why?', in: *Modern Political Science: Anglo-American Exchanges since 1880* (Princeton, NJ, 2007), 2-8.

[6] J. Rajchman, 'Philosophy in America', in: *Post-Analytic Philosophy*, ed. J. Rajchman and C. West (New York, 1985), ix, xi.

[7] B. Kuklick, *A History of Philosophy in America, 1720-2000* (Oxford, 2001), 233.

[8] B. Kuklick, 'Philosophy and Inclusion in the United States, 1929-2001', in: *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion since World War II*, ed. D. Hollinger (Baltimore, 2006), 164. See also M. G. Murphey, *C. I Lewis: The Last Great Pragmatist* (Albany, 2005), 219.

[9] J. Zammito, *A Nice Derangement of Epistemes: Post-Positivism in the Study of Science from Quine to Latour* (Chicago, 2004), 9.

[10] H. Putnam, 'A Half Century of Philosophy, Viewed From Within', in: *American Academic Culture in Transformation: Fifty Years, Four Disciplines*, ed. T. Bender and C. E. Schorske (Princeton, 1997), 193. Both Putnam and Zammito, it must be emphasized, treat this conventional narrative with suspicion.

of logical positivism defined much of the philosophical agenda'.[11] Homegrown American philosophical traditions, notably pragmatism, were 'crushed' between the 'hard-edged empiricism' of Carnap (who 'became the hero of the philosophy professors'), on one hand, and a theologically-tinged existentialism in the general intellectual culture, on the other.[12] In philosophy, then, and in 'the Anglo-American academic world, from the mid 1940s through the 1950s and beyond', positivism 'was virtually unopposed on any intellectually organized scale'.[13]

The next episode in the folk narrative of analytic philosophy in America traces the invidious consequences, for normative concerns, of the reigning logical positivist theory of knowledge. In his 1928 treatise *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* (*The Logical Construction of the World*), Carnap had attempted to show that all possible objects of knowledge, from the physical to the psychological and the cultural, could be constructed from uninterpreted, non-subjective 'elementary experiences' with the aid of the theory of relations or 'logistic'.[14] When Carnap published *Logische Syntax der Sprache* (*The Logical Syntax of Language*) in 1932, he had abandoned the 'constructional system' of the *Aufbau* for the project of *Wissenschaftslogik*, according to which theories were to be treated as logical calculi or formal languages, whose syntax was to be constructed by philosophers using the

[11] G. Gutting, *What Philosophers Know: Case Studies in Recent Analytic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2009), 12.
[12] R. Rorty, 'Pragmatism without Method', in: idem, *Philosophical Papers*, vol. 1: *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth* (Cambridge, 1991), 64. For a gloss on Rorty's picture of the role of logical positivism in the destruction of pragmatism, see J. T. Kloppenberg, 'Pragmatism: An Old Name for Some New Ways of Thinking?' in: *The Revival of Pragmatism: New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture*, ed. M. Dickstein (Durham, NC, 1998), 90.
[13] Cavell, *Pitch of Philosophy*, 83.
[14] Carnap, *The Logical Structure of the World and Pseudoproblems in Philosophy*, trans Rolf A. George (1967; Chicago, 2003), 7-8, 107-9.

established findings of the special sciences.[15] Works such as Carnap's, the story runs, defined genuine, cognitively significant knowledge in terms of two classes of propositions. As Hans Reichenbach succinctly summarized this position, '[k]nowlegde divides into synthetic and analytic statements; synthetic statements inform us about matters of fact, the analytic statements are empty'.[16] Following Wittgenstein, the logical positivists insisted that those propositions that pertained neither to verifiable states of affairs (synthetic statements) nor to analyzable, if tautologous, logical relations (analytic statements), were 'senseless', and of no cognitive significance. Such a view had to treat normative claims as 'strictly speaking *meaningless*'[17]; ethics and political theory, in other words, formed part of the collateral damage created by the positivistic criteria for knowledge.[18]

So it was that analytic philosophy drew the epistemological line at ethics and politics. In underscoring this commitment, some commentators discretely averted their eyes from these fields when describing the development of analytic philosophy.[19] Others noted the rescue operations in which morality and political conduct were brought into the analytic framework. According to this part of the story, the common sense moral philosophy of G. E. Moore gave way to the non-naturalistic, 'emotive theory' of Charles L. Stevenson.[20] Stevenson's tactic was to agree with the positivists that normative utterances had no cognitive meaning, but to show that such statements did not, in fact, assert anything: they

[15] Carnap, *The Logical Syntax of Language*, trans. Amethe Smeaton (London, 1937), 4-8.
[16] Reichenbach, *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy* (1951; Berkeley, 1968), 276.
[17] Kuklick, *History of Philosophy*, 234. Emphasis in original.
[18] See Reichenbach, *Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, 277; cf. A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic* (1936; London, 1990), 104-5.
[19] See, e.g., J. Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (1966; London, 1968), 9 for a *mea culpa* on this score.
[20] J. Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (London, 1956), 476-84.

expressed the emotions of their speakers in much the same way as a grunt or gasp, and were intended to engender similar sentiments in those to whom they were addressed.[21] While analytic philosophers 'by and large rejected emotivism', it retained an 'unrecognized philosophical power' among analytical moral philosophers in the pervasive view that moral reasons are 'in the end an expression of the preferences of an individual will'.[22] At this point, Oxonian ordinary language philosophy enters the narrative. The linguistic analysis practised by the likes of R. M. Hare and T. D. Weldon sought to clarify the semantic content of normative vocabularies while pointedly abstaining from positive normative theorizing.[23] Accounts of this sort led some to wonder whether 'there really is no such subject as political philosophy apart from the negative business of revealing conceptual errors and methodological misunderstandings'.[24] Through the 1950s, students of politics frequently voiced the concern that '[p]olitical philosophy is dead…killed by the logical positivists and their successors who have shown that many of the problems which exercised the great political thinkers of the past were spurious, resting on confusions of thought and the misuse of language'.[25]

[21] An early statement is Stevenson, 'The Emotive Theory of Ethical Terms', *Mind*, 46 (1937), 14-31. The mature form of the doctrine is found in C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven, 1943).
[22] A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (London, 1985), 20.
[23] R. M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (Oxford, 1952); T. D. Weldon, *The Vocabulary of Politics* (London, 1953).
[24] A. Quinton, 'Introduction', in: *Political Philosophy*, ed. A. Quinton (Oxford, 1967), 2.
[25] J. Plamenatz, 'The Use of Political Theory', (1960), reprinted in: *Political Philosophy*, 19. The famous declaration of the death of political philosophy is Peter Laslett, 'Introduction', in: *Politics, Philosophy, and Society*, 1st series, ed. P. Laslett (Oxford, 1956), viii. See also A. Cobban, 'The Decline of Political Theory', *Political Science Quarterly*, 68 (1953), 321-37; J. C. Rees, 'The Limitations of Political Theory', *Political Studies*, 2 (1954), 242-57.

In the denouement, analytic philosophy is undone from within. The distinctions on which the analytic project is said to have rested—fact/value, theory/observation, analytic/synthetic, necessary/contingent, language/world, scheme/content—were deconstructed by those who had taken up, or been associated with, the philosophical program of the logical positivists. The later Wittgenstein, W. V. Quine, Wilfrid Sellars, Donald Davidson, Hilary Putnam, and J. L. Austin prepared the way for various forms of 'post-analytic' or 'post-positivist' philosophy.[26] The appearance in 1970 of John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* 'revived the enterprises of political philosophy and normative ethics',[27] while Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) allowed for the overturning of the logical positivist vision of scientific theories.[28] Hermeneutics, meanwhile, challenged the primacy of analysis; in Charles Taylor, Clifford Geertz, Michel Foucault, and others, historians found 'a new litany of saints proclaiming variations on a revolutionary gospel of interpretation'.[29] Literature, historicist visions of science, and a new interest in moral theory triangulated the emergent domain of post-analytic philosophy.[30]

Rethinking the History of American Analytic Philosophy

The problem with this story of the development of analytic philosophy is that, from an historical point of view, it is largely false. Let us take each of the three major *topoi* of the folk wisdom in turn. Those who assert the 'dominance' of logical positivism in postwar

[26] R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Oxford 1980); H. Putnam, *Reason, Truth, and History* (Cambridge, 1981).
[27] Gutting, *What Philosophers Know*, 173.
[28] R. Rorty, 'Thomas Kuhn, Rocks, and the Laws of Physics', in: idem, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (London, 1999), 175-89; C. Geertz, 'The Legacy of Thomas Kuhn: The Right Text at the Right Time', in: idem, *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics* (Princeton, 2000), 160-66.
[29] Kloppenberg, 'Pragmatism', 91; Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, ch. 7.
[30] Rajchman, 'Philosophy', xiii.

American philosophy do no more than point to the placement of émigré philosophers in various institutions: Carnap at Chicago and then UCLA, Tarski at Berkeley, Feigl at Iowa and Minnesota, and so on. This scattering of a handful of émigré logical empiricists did not constitute a take-over of the philosophical establishment; most of the evidence, in fact, points to the marginality of these figures and the tradition they represented—a condition most poignantly embodied by the unhappy fate of Edgar Zilsel, but equally well illustrated by Carnap's sense of isolation at Chicago and his failure to produce a cohort of PhD students.[31] There is no detailed history of the department-by-department, journal-by-journal seizure of power by the logical positivists because there is no such history to write. Case studies of the impact of Viennese scientific philosophy on the American academy suggest that the reign of logical positivism is overstated.[32] The most comprehensive histories we have of the reception of logical positivism in the United States show how many of the philosophical and cultural commitments of the Vienna Circle were defanged, repressed, attacked, or otherwise ignored.[33] Moreover, those like Kuhn who inveighed against logical positivism often swiped at a straw man[34]; the notorious semantic doctrine of

[31] D. Raven, 'Edgar Zilsel in America', in: *Logical Empiricism in North America*, ed. G. L. Hardcastle and A. W. Richardson (Minneapolis, 2003), 129-48; Putnam, 'Half Century of Philosophy', 194; J. Isaac, 'The Curious Cultural Logic of Intellectual Migration: Rudolf Carnap and Leo Strauss', in: *The Legacy of Leo Strauss*, ed. T. Burns and J. Connolly (Exeter, forthcoming 2010).

[32] J. Platt and P. K. Hoch, 'The Vienna Circle in the United States and Empirical Research Methods in Sociology', in: *Forced Migration and Scientific Change: Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars After 1933*, ed. M. G. Ash and A. Söllner (New York, 1996), 224-45.

[33] G. Reisch, *How the Cold War Transformed Philosophy of Science: To the Icy Slopes of Logic* (Cambridge, 2005); A. W. Richardson, 'Logical Empiricism, American Pragmatism, and the Fate of Scientific Philosophy in North America', in: *Logical Empiricism*, 1-24; D. Howard, 'Two Left Turns Make a Right: On the Curious Political Career of North American Philosophy of Science at Midcentury', in: *Logical Empiricism*, 25-93; B. Kuklick, 'Modern Anglophone Philosophy: Between the Seminar Room and the Cold War', *Modern Intellectual History*, 3 (2006), 547-57.

[34] On this point, see A. Richardson, '"That Sort of Everyday Image of Logical Positivism": Thomas Kuhn and the Decline of Logical Empiricist Philosophy of Science', in: *The Cambridge Companion to Logical Empiricism*, ed. A. Richardson and T. Uebel (Cambridge, 2007), 346-69.

verificationism and the strict Wittgensteinian divisions between empirically defeasible, tautologous, and senseless propositions were more the preserve of the popularizing texts of Ayer and Reichenbach than of the complex epistemology of Carnap, Hempel, and the other émigrés.[35] Recent re-evaluations have revealed, especially in the case of Carnap and Kuhn, surprising but substantive continuities between the epistemological positions of the logical empiricists and their critics.[36] Finally, in the immediate postwar years, as we shall shortly see, the philosophical scene in the United States became more rather than less heterogeneous, a turn of events driven in part by the coming of mass higher education in the wake of the 'G. I. Bill of Rights' of 1944.[37]

Equally dubious is the claim that early analytic philosophy in America, under the purported sway of the logical positivists, repudiated normative issues in ethics and politics. Three objections can be raised against folk wisdom here. First, a voluminous literature testifies to the cultural, political, and ethical commitments of the émigré scientific philosophers.[38] For

[35] I am referring here to Reichenbach's *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy* (1951) and Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* (1936). For reassessments of logical empiricism, see M. Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism* (Cambridge, 1999); R. N. Geire and A. W. Richardson, ed., *Origins of Logical Empiricism* (Minneapolis, 1997); P. Parrini, W. C. Salmon, M. H. Salmon, ed., *Logical Empiricism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Pittsburgh, 2003); Richardson and Uebel, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Logical Empiricism*.

[36] G. A. Reisch, 'Did Kuhn Kill Logical Empiricism?' *Philosophy of Science*, 58 (1991), 264-77; J. Earman, 'Carnap, Kuhn, and the Philosophy of Scientific Methodology', in: *World Changes: Thomas Kuhn and the Nature of Science*, ed. P. Horwich (Cambridge, MA, 1993), 9-36; G. Irzik and T. Grünberg, 'Carnap and Kuhn: Arch Enemies or Close Allies?' *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 46 (1995), 285-307; P. Galison, 'Context and Constraints', in: *Scientific Practice: Theories and Stories of Doing Physics*, ed. J. Buchwald (Chicago, 1995), 29-32; P. Achinstein, 'Subjective Views of Kuhn', *Perspectives on Science*, 9 (2001), 423-32; M. Friedman, 'Kuhn and Logical Empiricism', in: *Thomas Kuhn*, ed. T. Nickles (Cambridge, 2003), 19-44.

[37] Kuklick, 'Philosophy and Inclusion', 161-4.

[38] See, e.g., Reisch, *How the Cold War Transformed Philosophy of Science*, ch. 2; Howard, 'Two Left Turns Make a Right'; P. Galison, 'Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism', *Critical Inquiry*, 16 (1990), 709-52; idem, 'Constructing Modernism: The Cultural Location of the *Aufbau*', in: *Origins of Logical Empiricism*, 17-44.

Carnap, Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn, and other members of the Vienna Circle, the fusion of empiricism and mathematical logic—these thinkers called themselves logical *empiricists*, not 'logical positivists'—provided a means of unifying the special sciences, including the social sciences.[39] For example, Neurath's socialism, Epicureanism, and empiricism were all connected to his desire to orchestrate a modernist political alliance of the sciences against social oppression and intellectual-theological traditionalism.[40] It is by no means obvious that all logical empiricists believed that normative concerns could or should be relegated to the status of emotive utterance or assigned to technical matters of semantic housekeeping.

A second objection is that the revival of normative concerns in the 1960s and 1970s represented not an overturning of the analytic project, but a moment *internal* to the establishment of the analytic tradition in the United States. There is no a priori warrant for supposing that any treatment of substantive political theory lies outside the scope of the analytic tradition and is not, in practice, an extension of it.[41] The fact that John Rawls, T. M. Scanlon, Stanley Cavell, Thomas Nagel, and other 'post-analytic'[42] political and moral philosophers were trained in the technical arts of analysis (Scanlon, indeed, was a gifted logician) and self-consciously associated themselves with that heritage must surely compel

[39] The oft-cited mission statement is H. Hahn, O. Neurath, and R. Carnap, *Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung: Der Wiener Kreis*, trans. P. Foulkes and M. Neurath as 'The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle', in: O. Neurath, *Empiricism and Sociology*, ed. M. Neurath and R. S. Cohen (Dordrecht, 1973), 299-318.

[40] For a flavour of Neurath's political and ethical philosophy of science, see Neurath, "Personal Life and Class Struggle" (1928), in *Empiricism and Sociology*, 284, 288. See also N. Cartwright et al., *Otto Neurath: Philosophy Between Science and Politics* (Cambridge, 1996).

[41] A point forcefully made in Hans-Johann Glock, *What is Analytic Philosophy?* (Cambridge, 2008), 57-60, 179-95.

[42] I cite here only those included in the collection *Post-Analytic Philosophy*, ed. Rajchman and West.

us to query the apparent mutual exclusivity of analytic philosophy in the spirit of the Vienna Circle and political theory.[43] In fact, the first major contributions to the Anglophone 'revival' of positive political philosophy—S. I. Benn and R. S. Peters' *Social Principles and the Democratic State* (1959) and Brian Barry's *Political Argument* (1965)—sought to bring the rigour of philosophical analysis to bear in political theory.[44] The tendency to think of what Rawls and his colleagues in political and moral philosophy were doing as 'post-analytic' trades on the already disputed notion that analytic philosophy was dominated by logical positivism, and that logical positivism was uniformly hostile toward normative issues. Finally, there is the observation, noted as early as 1961, but given forceful expression only a few years ago, that political theory in the 1950s was not 'dead' and was not killed, or even forcefully obstructed, by the (as we have seen, somewhat spurious) 'hegemony' of logical positivism.[45] On the contrary, political theory was practised and debated among political scientists and political philosophers throughout this period.[46]

[43] Scanlon, for example, displays some of his analytic training in the parallels he draws between moral philosophy and philosophy of mathematics in a volume celebrating the emergence of a 'post-analytic' philosophy. See Scanlon, 'Contractualism and Utilitarianism', in: *Post-Analytic Philosophy*, 216-17.

[44] Benn and Peters, *Social Principles and the Democratic State* (London, 1959); Barry, *Political Argument* (London, 1965); Quinton, 'Introduction', 3.

[45] Early skepticism about this view is voiced in P. H. Partridge, 'Politics, Philosophy, Ideology', in: *Political Philosophy*, 32-52.

[46] R. Adcock and M. Bevir, 'The Remaking of Political Theory', in: *Modern Political Science*, 209-33; Emily Hauptmann, 'A Local History of "The Political"', *Political Theory*, 32 (2004), 34-60; idem, 'From Opposition to Accommodation: How Rockefeller Foundation Grants Redefined Relations Between Political Theory and Social Science in the 1950s', *American Political Science Review*, 100 (2006). 643-49; idem, 'Defining "Theory" in Postwar Political Science', in: *The Politics of Method in the Human Sciences: Positivism and Its Epistemological Others*, ed. G. Steinmetz (Durham, NC, 2005), 207-32.

As for the apparent self-immolation of the analytic philosophical tradition and the subsequent emergence of new poles of attraction for a normatively-oriented 'post-analytic' philosophy, we have already suggested that several of the assumptions on which this argument relies are questionable. In particular, we face the aforementioned problem of deciding whether the political philosophy of a Rawls, Nagel, or Scanlon, or the moral philosophy of a Cavell, is a continuation or supersession of the analytic project. But even if we assume that this issue is a purely terminological matter, the regnant periodization, in which normative concerns revive when the analytic dichotomies collapse, is highly suspect. The most ardent defender of the folk wisdom would admit that the institutionalization of the analytic tradition as the 'mainstream' in American philosophy begins no earlier than the publication and reception of W. V. Quine's seminal paper 'Two Dogmas in Empiricism' in the early 1950s.[47] It is striking, then, that this opening move in the ascent of analytic philosophy involved the repudiation of Carnap's esoteric (for American philosophers) formalist program, which assumed, so Quine believed, a strict epistemological distinction between analytic and synthetic statements. More striking still than this apparent rejection of the tenets of logical empiricism as the inaugural gesture of analytic philosophy in America are the first stirrings, at exactly this moment, of the studies in political theory and ethics that would go on to form part of the 'post-analytic' philosophical enterprise. In his 1950 Princeton Ph.D. dissertation, submitted the year before the publication of 'Two Dogmas', John Rawls defended the possibility of rational ethical knowledge against, *inter*

[47] Quine, 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism', *Philosophical Review*, 60 (1951). 20-43. Hilary Putnam claims that it was around 1953 that the work of Quine and the Oxford ordinary language philosophers began to seize the attention of the rising generation of professional philosophers. Putnam, 'Half Century of Philosophy', 196-8.

alia, the 'positivist' theories of Ayer and Stevenson.[48] The following year, Stanley Cavell, together with Alexander Sesonske, placed moral philosophy in dialogue with both logical empiricism and pragmatism, and argued that consideration of emotivist and cognitive accounts of ethics were needed for further progress in the field.[49] My point is not that we find *A Theory of Justice* or *The Claim to Reason* fully formed in either of these works, but that at least these two careers in normative philosophy began by problematizing logical positivism, which is just how analytic philosophy began to gain traction during the same period.[50] Put another way, if post-analytic philosophy begins with the collapse of 'analytic' dichotomies like that of the analytic and the synthetic, what are we to make of the fact that analytic philosophy in America, as conventionally understood, opens with the deconstruction of the same sorts of distinctions?

If, as I have argued, the folk wisdom or metanarrative about analytic philosophy in America is dubious in nearly every respect, how should we begin to reconstruct the traditions and dilemmas of analytic and, *a fortiori*, post-analytic philosophy? My approach below is to show that analytic philosophy gained traction in the academy in part by conjuring and attempting to exorcise the spectre of 'logical positivism' and its various manifestations; a

[48] J. Rawls, 'A Study in the Grounds of Ethical Knowledge: Considered with Reference to Judgments on the Moral Worth of Character' (Princeton University Ph.D. thesis, 1950), 3-6.
[49] Cavell and Sesonske, 'Logical Empiricism and Pragmatism in Ethics', *Journal of Philosophy*, 48 (1951), 5-17. See also Cavell and Sesonske, 'Moral Theory, Ethical Judgments and Empiricism', *Mind* 61 (1952), 543-63.
[50] Cavell has repeatedly noted that his defense of the work of J. L. Austin from the philosophical attack of his then colleague Benson Mates, published as 'Must We Mean What We Say?', is 'the first essay I published that I still use'. Cavell, 'The Uncanniness of the Ordinary', in: idem, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism* (Chicago, 1988), 153. Rawls, meanwhile, augmented his thinking about moral and political judgment with elements of welfare economics and game theory. See S. P. Upham, ed., *Philosophers in Conversation: Interviews from the Harvard Review of Philosophy* (New York/London, 2002), 4-5.

good part of 'post-analytic' political theory has succeeded by doing the same thing, as it has since Rawls submitted his dissertation. Here was a 'dilemma' that the makes of the analytic and post-analytic traditions constructed for themselves. Unlike the proponents of post-analytic philosophy, however, and in addition to invoking and then problematizing the supposed core concepts of logical positivism, I show that the promoters of analytic philosophy in America also carried out two other, related projects: securing symbolic logic as a philosophical tool kit and source of philosophical insight, on the one hand; and finessing the theory of meaning and the a priori into the critique of analyticity, on the other. Deconstructing logical positivist epistemology with the precision tools of logic was one way in which the analytic tradition in America coalesced. Where the historiography, folk or otherwise, has got into trouble is in supposing that the rise and alleged decline of analytic philosophy turned on some *conceptual* insight or clinching philosophical *argument* produced in the face of an unavoidable and urgent philosophical challenge—the repudiation of verificationism, the dismantling of the scheme-content dichotomy, and so on. Surveying a collection of seminal books and papers in postwar analytic philosophy, Gary Gutting concludes that 'a careful reading of [these] exemplary texts does not reveal any decisive arguments for the conclusions they are said to have established'.[51] In what, then, does their seminal status consist? I argue that the war for analytic philosophy was won not on the terrain of conceptual insight but on the grounds listed above: the instauration of problematics, modes of argument, and philosophical toolkits.[52] This is another way of

[51] Gutting, *What Philosophers Know*, 3.
[52] See Ian Hunter, 'The History of Philosophy and the Persona of the Philosopher', *Modern Intellectual History*, 4 (2007), 571-600; idem, 'The History of Theory', *Critical Inquiry*, 33 (2006), 78-112; Gutting, *What Philosophers Know*, 4-7, 73-6.

underscoring Mark Bevir's observation that traditions (and dilemmas) are 'contingent entities people produce by their own activities'.

In what follows, I shall track the ways in which logic, the theory of meaning, and 'logical positivism' were made safe for the enterprise of analytic philosophy. As I argue in the concluding Coda, what we think of as post-analytic philosophy makes sense only when these particular kinds of argument and technique are in place; but this means analytic and post-analytic philosophy are more deeply intertwined that the folk wisdom allows. My focus is on those who helped to make analytic philosophy into the dominant tradition in American philosophy, in particular W. V. Quine. Both Quine's textbooks on logic and his critique of the analytic/synthetic distinction in 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' were central to the embedding of the characteristic problematics of the analytic tradition in academic philosophy in the United States. Other forms of embedding were, however, available, and it is important to bear in mind that the historical assessment of the tradition of analytic philosophy would look different if a figure such as Wilfrid Sellars or J. L. Austin were chosen as its exemplar. Quine's unquestionable importance in postwar Anglophone philosophy, however, provides sufficient motive for beginning focussing our investigation on his early work and career.

'This Voluntary Tithe': Postwar Pluralism and the Professionalization of Logic

I begin with the postwar philosophical scene and debates about the proper domain of the study of logic. Rather than witnessing a mass conversion to 'logical positivism' and/or analytic philosophy, the months and years following VJ day were marked in philosophy, as

in so many other intellectual arenas, by a mood of uncertainty. During the war, professional philosophers, often in concert with scholars from other disciplines, had convened a variety of conferences and committees to assess the place of philosophy in American democratic culture. Members of the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life, convened in 1940 under the leadership of the theologian Louis Finkelstein, recognized that the failure of democratic cultures to 'integrate science, philosophy and religion, in relation to traditional ethical values and the democratic way of life' had been 'catastrophic for civilization', and was a good part of the reason why totalitarianism had been able to take root in unstable Western polities. But they were firm in their belief that a new understanding between philosophers, scientists and theologians could be reached, one that would provide a foundation for 'the democratic way of living'.[53]

At the close of hostilities, however, the philosophers could scarcely agree among themselves. For some, the coming of atomic energy and the proliferation of new navigation technologies produced by military research during the war demanded a philosophical rethinking of such basic concepts as experience and cognition. Man's enhanced capacities for navigation and his technological mastery over the earth required a new 'philosophy for the atomic age'.[54] Grand speculations of this sort notwithstanding, the philosophical scene in postwar America was fragmented, with no single movement holding sway across the academy. According to Hilary Putnam, who during this period trained in philosophy at the

[53] V. W. Brooks, 'Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion in Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life', in *Science, Philosophy and Religion: A Symposium* (New York, 1941), 1, 2.
[54] D. S. Robinson, 'A Philosophy for the Atomic Age', *Philosophical Review*, 55 (1946), 377-403.

University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, and UCLA, a philosopher of the later 1940s, recounting the tradition in which he worked, 'would have regarded positivism as a matter of little consequence', and would have talked instead about 'the rise and fall of pragmatism' and 'the New Realists', as well as 'about Critical Realism…they would have [also] talked about absolute idealism, which was waning but still had some distinguished representatives'.[55] Each institution, to some degree, formed its own philosophical subculture: the oil-and-water of neo-Thomism and Meadian pragmatism at Chicago, naturalism at Columbia, the peculiar mixture of conceptual pragmatism and mathematical logic at Harvard, speculative metaphysics at Yale, neo-Thomism and existentialism at leading Catholic schools like Notre Dame, and so on.[56] Yet even in these cases no single program prevailed, and most other philosophy departments had no clear identity. Nothing so clear as a recognizable 'dilemma' concerning the positivist paradigm was visible.

It was in this context that American analytic philosophy moved toward crystallization. In the years after 1945, one of its leading exponents, Willard Van Orman Quine, then a junior professor at Harvard, attempted to mark out a domain for the kind of philosophical inquiry he thought central to his discipline. Quine had built his reputation as a logician with a series of influential books on mathematical logic that began with *A System of Logistic* in 1934 and ran through *Mathematical Logic* (1940) and *Elementary Logic* (1941).[57] As a philosopher, Quine's standing was less certain. To be sure, Quine had engaged in broad ranging philosophical discussions in the early 1940s with Carnap, Tarski, and Bertrand

[55] Putnam, 'Half Century', 195.
[56] Kuklick, 'Philosophy and Inclusion', 160-4.
[57] Quine, *A System of Logistic* (Cambridge, MA, 1934); idem, *Mathematical Logic* (New York, 1940); idem, *Elementary Logic* (Boston, 1941). See also Quine, *O Sentido da Nova Lógica* (São Paolo, 1944); idem *Methods of Logic* (New York, 1950).

Russell, all of whom were at Harvard during the autumn and winter of 1940-1941.[58] In the same period, Quine was a member of the Science of Science Discussion Group, which brought together Harvard faculty and refugee scholars who concerned with the unity of scientific method across the natural and social sciences.[59] But by the end of the decade Quine had yet to produce a philosophical treatise. He had published a series of important articles exploring the ontological commitments of language and the theory of meaning.[60] Yet these studies grew self-consciously out of his logical writings, and it was not at all clear that the study of symbolic logic, and its ontological and semantic implications, *counted* as professional, mainstream philosophy.

Before the war, Quine felt marginal enough at Harvard to write to his friend, the behavioural psychologist B. F. Skinner, to ask for advice on where he might find a new position.[61] Although he was granted tenure at Harvard in the summer of 1941, it was clear to Quine that his approach to philosophy was not well regarded by his colleagues. Matters were brought to a head early in 1947 when John Wild and Donald Carey Williams, neither of whom was sympathetic to logical empiricism, were promoted to full professorships, thereby seemingly ruling out Quine's own prospective promotion and giving the Harvard

[58] Quine, 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 21 (1991), 267; idem, 'Autobiography of W. V. Quine', in: *The Philosophy of Quine*, ed. L. E. Hahn and P. A. Schilpp (La Salle, 1986), 19.
[59] See G. Hardcastle, 'Debabelizing Science: The Harvard Science of Science Discussion Group, 1940-41', in: *Logical Empiricism in North America*, 170-96.
[60] Quine, 'Designation and Existence', *Journal of Philosophy*, 36 (1939), 701-9; idem, 'Notes on Existence and Necessity', *Journal of Philosophy*, 40 (1943), 113-27; idem, 'On What There Is', *Review of Metaphysics*, 2 (1948), reprinted in: *From a Logical Point of View: Nine Logico-Philosophical Essays*, 2nd rev. ed. (Cambridge MA, 1980), 1-19; idem, 'Identity, Ostension, and Hypostasis', *Journal of Philosophy* 47 (1950), reprinted in: *From a Logical Point of View*, 65-79.
[61] W. V. Quine to B. F. Skinner, May 17, 1939, HUG(FP) 60.10, Box 1, B. F. Skinner Papers, Harvard University Archives.

department a decidedly traditional, metaphysical orientation. In February he wrote to his friend Nelson Goodman at Penn that he was 'increasingly anxious to get a job elsewhere'. He described Harvard in general as 'philosophically sterile' and the philosophy department, with the exception of the soon-to-retire Clarence Irving Lewis, as a 'bad job'. 'Nothing would please me more', he wrote, 'than a professorship in a lively place with a serious thinker or two among my colleagues'.[62] Evidently, Goodman felt similar frustration toward his own department at the University of Pennsylvania, but, unlike Quine, he had an 'analytic' colleague in Morton White. Indeed, Goodman felt that he could push for a position for Quine at Penn that might tip the scales toward the programs of logical empiricism and philosophical analysis in his department. Quine responded gratefully to Goodman's efforts on his behalf, and was particularly excited by the prospect of 'having some philosophically congenial and mentally disciplined colleagues'.[63] As Quine was poised to jump ship, however, he 'hit the jackpot' by receiving an offer of a full professorship and substantial raise from Harvard.[64] Quine's entrenchment in Cambridge was a significant wedge that would eventually open the way for analytic philosophy to flourish across the United States in the 1950s.

The late 1940s were therefore crucial years for the development of analytic philosophy in the United States. But, as we have seen, they were also professionally uncertain, both for Quine personally, and for the prospects of the analytic program. One way in which this program crystallized was in the stabilization of the philosophical function of mathematical

[62] W. V. Quine to Nelson Goodman, 19 February 1947, HUG(FP) 64.10.2, Box 1, Nelson Goodman Papers, Harvard University Archives, Harvard University (hereafter NGPH).
[63] W. V. Quine to Nelson Goodman, 28 February 1947, HUG(FP) 64.10.2, Box 1, NGPH.
[64] W. V. Quine to Nelson Goodman, 26 March 1947, HUG(FP) 64.10.2, Box 1, NGPH.

logic. In the immediate postwar years, the nature and purpose of modern symbolic logic was by no means settled. Quine and his fellow logicians were compelled to face alternative possibilities for this branch of inquiry. This issue was brought home for Quine by an impassioned letter from Edward Haskell, one of Quine's oldest friends from his undergraduate days at Oberlin College. According to Haskell, the one remaining obstacle to the unification of the sciences was the lack of a logically rigorous general classification system, and it was on this issue that Haskell challenged Quine. In series of letters written over the Christmas of 1945, Haskell implored Quine to turn away from a narrow, 'Platonistic' conception of mathematical logic, which he believed was espoused by Carnap, toward a view which could allow for the application of logical principles to the social sciences, for the betterment of mankind in the postwar world. 'At this point in evolution', Haskell implored Quine,

> a first-rate logician could make a contribution as unprecedented as the situation is unique. . . . The fact that I write to you as I am doing, shows that I believe you to be capable of . . . becoming ever more useful and important. And more than that, I think that the future of science and therefore of society may well depend on your decision. . . . [T[he whole question of classification. . . . is the key link in the entire development of social science. And the fast advancement of social science is the prime problem posed by the atomic age. . . . It seems to me that at the moment this basic problem is the most in need of being grappled with, and that you are the best qualified grappler. To hell with elementary texts at a time like this![65] Give us a usable theory of classification!. . . . Even a clear statement of Mill[']s[…] ramblings by a qualified modern logician would be exceedingly useful. But a full, clear facing of the basic philosophical problem, the statement of the alternatives, the deliberate selection of one which conforms to the spirit of science, the presentation of a consistent and complete theory of classification based theorem[s] would clear the

[65] Quine had published *Elementary Logic* in 1941 and was continuing to work on the textbook *Methods of Logic*, published in 1950.

> whole road which we must rapidly traverse if we are to head off world catastrophy [sic]. How about it![66]

Haskell's exhortation, like his purported 'periodic table of human cultures',[67] was a composite of hyperbole, misunderstanding, and a quasi-religious faith in the capacity of science to transform society. But he had posed the challenge of social relevance that even logicians felt compelled to address in the postwar political climate. What was the proper place of symbolic logic in American intellectual life? Quine's response was measured, but emphatic. On the matter of his 'professional standards and objectives', which Haskell had called into question, Quine offered a striking account of the aims of logical analysis in philosophy:

> In company with mathematicians generally, I am interested in rigorousness of reasoning, sharpness of analysis. Unlike mathematicians generally, I have been interested also in expanding the region in which rigorous reasoning can take place. I have been interested in expanding that region in a certain direction, namely, in the direction of philosophical fundamentals.
>
> Philosophy, because of its traditional lack of rigor or well-defined method, has been a happy hunting ground for hasty, ambitious, impatient, wishful thinkers. The only way we can hope to clarify fundamental problems, on the other hand, is in eschewing those modes of thought and insisting on rigor, slow and tedious though this alternative be. This is more true in philosophy than in natural science, because the natural scientist—so long as he really stays a natural scientist—has empirical data to check his reasoning against. In this regard philosophy and mathematics are alike; the difference is merely that the battle for rigor within mathematics is won.[68]

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[66] Edward Haskell to W. V. Quine, 24-26 December 1945, *1991M-0068, Box 9, W. V. Quine Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University. Hereafter WVQPH.

[67] Haskell finally published his "periodic table of human cultures" in 1972, along with a statement of its what its applications might hold for political, economics, academic and religious issues. See Edward F. Haskell (ed.), *Full Circle: The Moral Force of Unified Science* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1972), 111-56, 169-213.

[68] W. V. Quine to Edward Haskell, 4 January 1946, *1991M-0068, Box 4, WVQPH.

Quine went on to describe the personal and professional consequences of such a commitment. Under the sardonic heading 'Apologia pro vita mea', Quine rejected Haskell's call to intervene positively *as a philosopher or logician* in the fate of mankind in the atomic age. Logic, he told him, simply was not concerned with classification or 'methodology of science'.

> Perhaps you say then that I should change fields; that my present field (call it what I may, it is staked out in my Introductions) is too remote from the atomic-bomb problems. This reminds me of an evening in Washington when Wundheiler, a Pole, tried to talk [Alfred] Tarski and me into becoming physicists and directing our 'clear thinking' upon what Wundheiler takes to be confusions in thermodynamics. He said 'don't you care about improving the world?' Perhaps with less reason than you, because it was before the atomic bomb; but my answer to him is still to the point: 'When I felt the Nazis were threatening everything that I value, particularly when I read of how they were massacring the Jews of Poland (this was for Wundheiler's benefit but altogether sincere), I abandoned theoretical studies of my choice in order to devote my full energies to the prosecution of the war.[69] This I continued to do for more than three years (winning a letter of commendation from my admiral). Having paid this voluntary tithe, I'm going back to the field where my chief interests and talents, if any, lie, with the idea that it too has its importance'.[70]

Quine's disavowal of any particular political or moral mission for logic, and thus for the kind of philosophy he wished to practice, was not uncommon among scientists and academic experts during the 1940s. The Weberian insistence that the technical arts of logic, mathematics, or the natural sciences simply had no answers to give to the question 'What shall we do and how shall we live' was also invoked by scientists conscripted into

[69] Quine joined the Navy in 1942 as a full lieutenant; his work involved the translation and analysis of German submarine communications. See Quine, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), 181-4.
[70] Quine to Haskell, 4 January 1946, WVQPH.

war work by the American government[71]; invocations of the value-neutrality of the scientist was one way in which figures such as J. Robert Oppenheimer could reconcile the imperatives of their professional calling with the organized violence they were helping to plan and execute.[72] Waging war for the sake of civilizational values was one thing—to which one might 'pay' the 'voluntary tithe' of direct service in military or civilian agencies—the goals of professional science, philosophy, and logic, another.

Arguments of this sort, along with the rapid production of elementary and advanced textbooks, helped Quine and those who shared his views to resist external, ideological claims upon the new logic. But in the postwar years there were also claims *internal* to the field of symbolic logic that those who wished to treat the discipline as a narrowly technical art were compelled to resist. In 1946, the President of the Association for Symbolic Logic, the Berkeley-based Polish logician Alfred Tarski, lent his qualified support to a set of proposals intended to widen the scope of the Association and its house organ, the *Journal of Symbolic Logic*. Under the proposals, the Association was to be renamed The Logic Association and the *JSL* rebaptised the *Journal of Logic*; corresponding to these cosmetic changes would be a more liberal submissions policy according to which papers touching on or employing the tools of symbolic logic, or dealing with 'logic' in a general, scientific manner, would be admitted along with more strictly formal exercises in mathematical logic—the *JSL*'s staple.[73] Explaining his position to the editor of the *JSL*—the

[71] M. Weber, 'Science as a Vocation' in: idem, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (London, 1970), 143.
[72] C. Thorpe, *Oppenheimer: The Tragic Intellect* (Chicago, 2006), esp. 4-5.
[73] The substance of the proposals are summarized in C. A. Baylis et al, 'To Council Members of the Association for Symbolic Logic', no date, carton 5, Alfred Tarski Papers, Manuscripts Division, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley. Hereafter ATPB.

distinguished Princeton logician Alonzo Church—Tarski defended the reforms on the grounds that 'it would be to our great advantage to get rid of the stamp of sectarianism which the present names of the Association and the Journal seem to impress on us; it may prove very important for us to gain, in the opinion of the scientific world, the right to speak in the name of the whole of scientific logic and not only in the name of a special logical school'. Tarski was thus explicit that the reforms were intended to help the proponents of symbolic logic to claim the term 'logic' for their discipline. The liberalization of the submission policy was intended to facilitate the policing of contributions to 'scientific logic'. 'I realize that the change of name of the Journal may lead to the offering of an embarrassing number of papers in the "so-called logic"', Tarski wrote Church, 'but I think it would be better from the point of view of the development of logic as we understand it if such article were rejected not for any formal reasons but because in our opinion they do not stand up to scientific standards'.[74]

Despite Tarski's backing, support for the reforms very quickly evaporated. The principal concerns of opponents within the ASL, aside from administrative matters of handling a vastly increased number of submissions, turned on mathematical or symbolic logic's legitimacy outside of the specialized confines of logistic. Church confessed to doubt regarding 'whether the name ['logic'] may not have become so well established for other things that it is futile for us to try to change the usage'.[75] Cornell's Max Black expressed to Church favourable views about a more liberal editorial policy, but worried that the 'international reputation' and 'good will' acquired by the *JSL* since its inception in 1936

[74] Tarski to Church, 7 October 1946, carton 5, ATPB.
[75] Church to Alfred Tarski, 25 October 1946, carton 5, ATPB.

would be 'dispersed if the title were changed; and I think it would be some time before the Journal had [sic] re-established its standing under the new policy'.[76] S. C. Kleene was more strident in communicating his reservations to Tarski: he was 'afraid the change might amount to sacrificing too much of the specific character and reputation which we have built up; also that the name "Logic" is so broad as to convey little'. Kleene drafted a counter-motion for Tarski's consideration, which suggested that 'less drastic measures be tried out first'.[77] Finally, a group of senior members of the ASL—C. A. Baylis, A. A. Bennet, Black, Church, C. J. Ducasse, and C. I. Lewis—circulated a memorandum to the membership laying out a series of objections to the proposed reforms. Uniting these criticisms was a view similar to the one Quine voiced to Haskell: symbolic logic should best be considered as a specialized but scientifically fruitful enterprise, with no peremptory claims on the more general, if for logicians also vague and 'unscientific', discourse of 'logic'. 'Though we should perhaps like the term 'logic' to designate exclusively the type of scientific study exemplified by the articles reviewed in the Journal of Symbolic Logic', the memorandum read, 'the fact is that the term as currently used designates a much broader field than this. This field…seems to include "pragmatic logic," "idealistic logic," the psychology of logic, the history of logic…and many other things more or less remotely related to the field the Association and the Journal have this far limited themselves to'.[78] Reform was stillborn; the ASL and the *JSL* kept their names.

'I Wouldn't Know What the Hell I'd Be Testing For': Meaning as an Analytic Problem

[76] Black to Church, 30 October 1946, carton 5, ATPB.
[77] Kleene to Alfred Tarski, 6 November 1946, carton 5, ATPB.
[78] Baylis et al, 'To Council Members', ATPB.

Thus circumscribed as a technical adjunct to mathematics and philosophy—and denied more general philosophical, scientific, and ideological valences—symbolic logic emerged in the late 1940s as one of the primary vehicles for analytic philosophical investigation. Quine played a central role in this peculiar institutionalization of logic, both in his introductions and textbooks of the 1940s and 1950s—he claimed late in life that 'the pedagogical motive has dominated my work in logic'[79]—and in his earliest philosophical publications. The title of his first collection of philosophical essays, *From a Logical Point of View* (1953), was apt: as Quine noted in the Preface, the two principal concerns of the essays, accounts of linguistic meaning and ontological commitment, were 'pursued through the book with the aid, increasingly, of technical devices of logic'.[80] Aspects of mathematical logic would work their way into 'Two Dogmas', as we shall see below. Before we address Quine's seminal paper, however, we need to understand how another dimension of American analytic philosophy was put in place during the decade after World War II.

One of the most important philosophical problematics of the 1940s, as it had been in the 1930s, was the epistemological status of a priori knowledge. On this topic, the interests of émigré scientific philosophers and native pragmatists overlapped. Rudolf Carnap and, most influentially, Harvard's C. I. Lewis continued to explore the problem in terms of the role of meaning in the constitution of the a priori. Both drew the conclusion that it was meanings alone that determined a priori truth. This emphasis on the constitutive role of meaning in

[79] W. V. Quine, 'Reply to Hao Wang', in: *Philosophy of W. V. Quine*, 644-5. For further comments on Quine's pedagogical approach to logic in the early stages of his career, see J. Isaac, 'W. V. Quine and the Origins of Analytic Philosophy in the United States,' *Modern Intellectual History*, 2 (2005), 228.
[80] Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, xi.

knowledge was particularly important because the truths of pure mathematics, e.g. '7 + 5 = 12', as well as pleonastic statements in ordinary language such as 'All bachelors are unmarried men' were said to be analytic—true by virtue of the sameness of meaning of subject ('bachelor') and predicate ('unmarried men'). But defenders of an epistemological distinction between analytic and synthetic statements could nonetheless disagree with one another. Whereas Carnap claimed that meanings could be thought of as a matter of syntactical convention, Lewis rejected conventionalism and argued that, because 'things other than verbal expressions can have meanings', meanings 'must come before the linguistic expression of them'.[81]

But just what kind of a thing 'meaning' was remained to be satisfactorily explained. Lewis had offered a detailed characterization of meaning in his postwar treatise *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (1946), but his definitions, like so many others, begged further questions. Lewis isolated four 'modes of meaning', of which the most important relied on the notion of a 'criterion in mind' which would determine a 'cognitively guided reaction' to the use of some term or set of terms, such that their meaning was thereby revealed.[82] Lewis argued that propositions were analytic if the criterion in mind of the subject *included* the criterion in mind of the predicate. Yet this account of meaning relied on untestable posits such as 'criteria in mind' and 'experiments in imagination'. Without public, empirical criteria, the meaning of 'meaning' remained obscure. If meaning had yet to be satisfactorily specified, related explanations of the distinction between analytic and

[81] C. I. Lewis, "The Modes of Meaning," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 4, (1943), 236. See also Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (La Salle, 1946), 71-2.
[82] Lewis, *Analysis*, 72.

synthetic truths, necessary truths, and synonymy were also thrown into doubt. These were the problems that began to occupy postwar American philosophers.

As Lewis' centrality to these debates indicates, however, such concerns were neither forged by 'analytic philosophers', nor the sole preserve of the emergent subfield of 'analytic philosophy'. Already in 1943, in an essay for the flagship British philosophical journal *Mind*, John R. Reid attempted to show that the much-vaunted necessity of analytic statements was a 'rationalistic myth'. If synthetic statements regarding the laws of nature were contingent upon empirical data, he argued, then so too were the syntactical rules of language, for any statement specifying the analyticity of a certain proposition would have to be considered a *synthetic* statement, on pain of making unintelligible the 'analytic' proposition thereby legislated. Yet Reid maintained that 'more or less clearly intended contrasts between analytic and synthetic statements' remained 'important relative to a certain stage of inquiry'.[83] Unease with the analytic/synthetic distinction continued to mount after the war, as philosophers began to discover more and more problems with the notion of analyticity as it had been defined by Kant down through Frege, Carnap, and Lewis.[84] Interest was such that some attention was given to the historical basis of the distinction, which, in the eyes of its historian, had 'dominated modern philosophy from Descartes to the present time'.[85] Despite growing doubts, however, most discussion of the subject was confined to noting the problem and trying to find some basis to preserve the

[83] J. R. Reid, 'Analytic Statements in Semiosis', *Mind*, 52 (1943), 314-30.
[84] A. Pap, 'Are All Necessary Propositions Analytic?' *Philosophical Review*, 58 (1949), 299-320; F. Waismann, 'Analytic-Synthetic I', *Analysis*, 10 (1949), 25-41; idem, 'Analytic-Synthetic II', *Analysis*, 11 (1950), 25-38; B. Mates, 'Synonymity', *University of California Publications in Philosophy* 25 (1950), reprinted in: *Semantics and the Philosophy of Language*, ed. L. Linsky (Urbana, 1952), 111-36.
[85] F. H. Heinemann, 'Truths of Reason and Truths of Fact', *Philosophical Review*, 57 (1948), 479.

distinction. The only exception to this reformist tendency was a bungled *casus belli* issued by John Wild and J. L. Coblitz in 1948.[86]

It was around this time that a group of young philosophers committed to logical analysis began to shape this problem about meaning and analyticity into the foundation of a philosophical movement. Quine was the *de facto* leader. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, he had harboured doubts about the analytic/synthetic distinction and the theory of meaning on which it rested. Up to the late 1940s, he had been content to mute his disquiet for the sake of presenting a united front on logical empiricism to the American academy.[87] But he continued to press Carnap on the matter in private, in concert with Alfred Tarski, when Carnap was a visiting professor at Harvard for the academic year 1939-1940. During his time in the Navy, Quine found time to continue his attempts to dissuade Carnap from using the analytic/synthetic dichotomy in the latter's *Introduction to Semantics*. It seems not to have occurred to Quine during this time that his critique of analyticity represented a positive contribution to philosophy.

The turning point came when two of Quine's closest philosophical allies, Nelson Goodman and Morton White, joined him in his assault on analyticity. In the summer of 1947 Quine engaged in a triangular correspondence with White and Goodman in which they worked out their mutual dissatisfactions with meaning and analyticity. Their discussions would form the background to Quine's eventual public statement of his views on the analytic/synthetic

[86] Wild and Coblitz, 'On the Distinction Between Analytic and Synthetic Truths', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 8 (1948), 651-67; 'Discussion: Remarks on the Distinction Between Analytic and Synthetic', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 9 (1949), 720-40.
[87] On Quine's proselytising on Carnap's behalf, see Isaac, 'W. V. Quine', 226-30.

distinction.[88] The immediate stimulation for the three-way correspondence was a short manuscript of White's on C. H. Langford's paradox of analysis.[89] Two years earlier, in fact, White had first raised the problem with Quine of whether 'logical analysis' was, as Langford had claimed, 'trivial' insofar as it offered explications of propositions that were synonymous with the proposition being explained.[90] The question of whether conditions for determining synonymy could be found was therefore intimately related to the much broader problem of the legitimacy of analysis itself. If philosophical analysis merely produced explanations whose terms were synonymous with the proposition being explained, then it could offer no substantive contributions to knowledge but only clarifications or explications of what was already known. This was Carnap's position. But if no satisfactory sense could be made of synonymy, then the explanations offered by analysis would be heterogeneous to the propositions they explained, and thus they would add a new component to the body of scientific knowledge. In response to White's letter of 1945, Quine was hesitant. He granted the fact that in an analysis the *analysandum* and *analysans* were often 'logically synonymous' but asserted that a 'narrower relation of synonymity' was needed to claim that the *analysans* was trivial. Thus in indirect discourse, the *analysandum* 'Fermat affirmed his last theorem' was logically synonymous with the *analysans* 'Fermat affirmed that 1 = 0', but the latter was but a 'poor approximation[ ]' of the informative content of the former. Quine suggested to White that Carnap might be able

[88] See Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge, 1960), 67-8, fn. 7; Quine, 'Autobiography', 19; Quine, 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', 267-8.
[89] Eventually published as M. White, 'On the Church-Frege Solution of the Paradox of Analysis' (1948), reprinted in: M. White, *From a Philosophical Point of View: Selected Studies* (Princeton, 2005), 112-13.
[90] Morton G. White to W. V. Quine, 4 May 1945, *1991M-0068, Box 9, WVQPH.

to supply the narrower definition of synonymity, but conceded that he had not yet 'come to grips with the problem'.[91]

When the topic arose again two years later in response to White's 1947 paper, Quine was surer of his position on the paradox of analysis. The spectre of triviality vanished, he told White, when one distinguished between '*Intensional synonymy*', based on what Lewis called 'sameness of intension' or analyticity, and '*Structural synonymy*', which was a narrower form of intensional synonymy involving the strict identity of terms. Quine's contention was that analyses could be trivial only if the *analysans* and the *analysandum* were structurally synonymous, but that, in the forms of analysis which concerned White and his interlocutors, there could be no question of structural synonymy and hence no danger of triviality. Quine acknowledged, however, that his argument rested upon a notion of intensional synonymy that, although it did not require affirmation on Quine's part, notably lacked any sort of 'behavioristic criterion'. But, 'this frankly and visibly defective basis of discussion offers far more hope of clarity and progress, far less danger of medieval futility, than does the appeal to attributes, propositions and meanings'.[92]

Both White and Goodman responded to Quine's proposal by raising doubts about a 'solution' to the paradox that relied upon a notion (intensional synonymy) that was still '*awaiting* behavioristic criteria'.[93] Goodman suspected that Quine simply could not shake off the intensionalism of his teachers, Lewis and Carnap, and urged Quine to recognize that

[91] W. V. Quine to Morton White, 7 May 1945, *1991M-0068, Box 9, WVQPH.
[92] W. V Quine to Morton White, 3 June 1947, 'Appendix: Nelson Goodman, W. V. Quine, and Morton White: A Triangular Correspondence in 1947', in: White, *A Philosopher's Story*, 338-40.
[93] M. White to W. V. Quine and N. Goodman, 5 June 1947, in: White, *A Philosopher's Story* (University Park, PN, 1999), 340-2.

any notion of synonymy was meaningless. Even if one could 'test whether "huska" in Calubrian applies to the same things as "mrowch" in Calubrian or "cat" in English', he argued, 'I would not know how to test whether the three terms are synonymous because I don't know what the question means—I wouldn't know what the hell I'd be testing for'.[94] Quine was forced to clarify his position, having been portrayed, likely to his considerable chagrin, as a defender of intensional notions such as synonymy. He assured White and Goodman in a letter of June 30 that his only purpose in invoking intensional synonymy was to isolate the problems of analysis so that they could 'take the form of a single problem: behavioristic definition of intensional synonymy. I don't say that this problem can be solved, what I say is that this is the way that the problems under consideration should be conceived, if at all'.[95] Quine was somewhat radicalized by Goodman's challenge, and agreed that 'synonymy is in a sense meaningless'.

What we see in these triangular discussions, I think, is not the recognition of a pressing problem but, rather, a contingent groping toward the acknowledgment that notions of meaning and analyticity could be framed as a dilemma to which an emergent cohort of technically-minded philosophers knew the answer. We are witnessing the invention of a dilemma. White and Goodman went public with their misgivings before Quine. Both men read papers attacking the analytic/synthetic dichotomy at the Fullerton Club of Bryn Mawr College on May 14 1949, a full eighteen months before Quine presented a version of 'Two

[94] N. Goodman to M. White and W. V. Quine, 8 June 1947, in: White, *A Philosopher's Story*, 342-4.
[95] W. V. Quine to M. White and N. Goodman, 30 June 1947, in: White, *A Philosopher's Story*, 344-6.

Dogmas' to the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association in Toronto.[96] They also published before Quine. Goodman's 'On Likeness of Meaning' emerged first in the October 1949 issue of *Analysis*; White's 'The Analytic and the Synthetic: an Untenable Dualism' found its way into print in 1950 in a collection of essays celebrating the philosophy of John Dewey. 'Two Dogmas' was therefore not entirely a bolt from the blue: the critique of analyticity developed by Quine's circle was being actively disseminated as early as the spring of 1949. Indeed, both White and Goodman, later to be joined by Quine himself in the journal version of' 'Two Dogmas', flagged up the importance of their triangular discussions.

Goodman's paper, more technical and focussed than White's, drew upon a distinction between the primary and secondary extensions of predicates to argue that, even if the notion of 'synonymy' could be defined in its most satisfactory sense as 'sharing the same extension', no two predicates could share exactly the same extension. By contrast, White sought actively to cultivate a revolutionary aura around the trio's shared critique. Invoking Dewey's lifelong quest to slay a host of philosophical dualisms—'body-mind, theory-practice, percept-concept, value-science, learning-doing, sensation-thought, external-internal'—White framed his deconstruction of the analytic/synthetic distinction as '[a]nother revolt against dualism'. The analytic/synthetic dualism had 'come to dominate so much of contemporary philosophy', but now a 'revolution' was underway. 'On such a matter', White wrote conspiratorially, 'I hesitate to name too many names, but I venture to say . . . that some of my fellow revolutionaries are Professor W. V. Quine of Harvard and

[96] N. Goodman, 'On Likeness of Meaning', *Analysis*, 10 (1949): 1, fn. 1; M. White, 'The Analytic and the Synthetic: an Untenable Dualism', *John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom*, ed. S. Hook (New York, 1950), 316, fn. 1; Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, 169.

Professor Nelson Goodman of the University of Pennsylvania'.[97] What was merely implicit in Goodman's lapidary note was explicit in White's excitable rhetoric: Quine, Goodman, and White were intent on leading a self-defined revolution in philosophy.

As had become clear in the triangular correspondence, the group's case against analyticity rested on the lack of a criterion for synonymy. This became the line of attack for both White and Goodman in their respective essays, with each concluding that if there were such a relation as 'sameness of meaning' between words, it would have to be a matter of degree and not, as the dichotomy between analytic and synthetic truths implied, an absolute relation. Neither the line of attack—the criterion problem—nor the conclusion—abandonment of the absolute distinction, and necessary toleration of ambiguity, degrees of applicability, etc.—had been obvious points of reference in the postwar debates about meaning and the a priori. But each of these moves, especially in Quine's work, would become guiding themes of the new analytic philosophy. The demand for, positing, and critique of perspicuous *criteria* for troublesome philosophical concepts, along with the view that they should be framed in the terms of mathematical logic or intersubjectively testable phenomena (behaviour, in Quine and Goodman's case) became characteristic motifs of American analytic philosophy in the 1950s; so too did the notion of tolerance or acknowledgement of epistemological and ontological grey zones that appeared when logical or behavioural criteria had been met. Both themes came together in Quine's published contribution to the analyticity debates: 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism'.

'Two Dogmas of Empiricism': Picking an Argument

[97] White, 'The Analytic and the Synthetic', 316-17, 330.

When Quine received the offer in 1950 to speak on analyticity to the American Philosophical Association, he was aware that he was being given a platform upon which to make his mark as a genuine philosopher, and as an ambassador of a school with pretensions to disciplinary dominance.[98] The rubrics 'analytic philosophy' and 'philosophical analysis' were just beginning to be used in a self-conscious manner by the rising generation of American philosophers.[99] In a footnote attached to the title of the 'Two Dogmas', Quine was quick to substantiate the rumours of the largely unpublished revolution that formed the backdrop to his present essay. Much of the article, he told readers, was 'devoted to a critique of analyticity which I have been urging orally and in correspondence for years past'. By emphasizing his long-established dissatisfaction with analyticity, Quine was implicitly claiming leadership of the movement with which he had been identified by White and Goodman in their contributions. He also drew the circle of discussion much wider than either of his allies by acknowledging his debt to 'Carnap, [Alonzo] Church, Goodman, Tarski, and White'. Quine's invocation of figures such as Carnap, Tarski, and Church should be read not merely as an academic courtesy but as an attempt to buttress the importance of his claims by ostentatiously highlighting their origins in debate with the leading figures of the contemporary logic and empiricism. Finally, Quine acknowledged the advance publicity provided by his friends by recommending White's 'excellent essay "The Analytic and the Synthetic",' which said 'much of what needed to be said on the topic'.[100]

[98] Quine, "Two Dogmas in Retrospect," 268.
[99] See A. Pap, *Elements of Analytic Philosophy* (New York, 1949); H. Feigl and W. Sellars, *Readings in Philosophical Analysis* (New York, 1949).
[100] "Two Dogmas," 20 fn. 1.

Having thus established the pedigree of his intervention, and its links to previous statements, Quine proceeded to lay out in a brief introduction the two dogmas he was seeking to overturn, and the consequences for empiricism of their abandonment.[101] The first dogma was 'a belief in some fundamental cleavage between truths which are *analytic*, or grounded in meanings independently of matters of fact, and truth[s] which are *synthetic*, or grounded in fact'. The second dogma, which Quine would claim was intimately linked to the first, was '*reductionism:* the belief that each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience'.[102] Once Quine had demonstrated the lack of justification for either, there would follow for empiricism 'a blurring of the supposed boundary between speculative metaphysics and natural science', along with 'a shift toward pragmatism'.[103]

Quine's case against analyticity rested on the argument that all attempts to prove that a given class of propositions in a language should be considered analytic (e.g. 'All bachelors are unmarried') *presupposed* a satisfactory understanding of analyticity. Advocates of the analytic/synthetic distinction such as C. I. Lewis and Carnap, Quine claimed, called on concepts such as 'synonymy' and 'necessary truth' to explain analyticity, without acknowledging that these concepts themselves only made sense when analyticity was

[101] What follows is an avowedly brief exegesis of 'Two Dogmas'. Summarizing the argument and pointing out the shortcomings of this paper has become, as we shall see below, one of the principal ways in which analytic philosophy in the United States has constructed a canon and inculcated particular modes of philosophical argument; hence no summary can be treated as uninvolved in discipline-building and the policing of professional practice. Nonetheless, readers looking for more detailed readings may wish to consult S. Soames, *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century*, vol. 1: *The Dawn of Analysis* (Princeton, 2003), 351-68, 378-89; R. Creath, 'Quine on the Intelligibility and Relevance of Analyticity', in: *The Cambridge Companion to Quine*, ed. R. F. Gibson, Jr. (Cambridge, 2004), 47-58.
[102] Quine, 'Two Dogmas', 20.
[103] Ibid.

assumed to be well understood. One of the most striking aspects of Quine's intervention was his demonstration of the range of criteria, from cognitive models to artificial languages, which had been employed to explain the notion of analytic truth. Each criterion, Quine claimed, in fact relied on the *assumption* of analyticity.

When Quine turned to the second dogma of empiricism—the belief that every meaningful statement was reducible to immediate experience—he had the sheer tenacity of the belief in the analytic/synthetic distinction in mind. For the verification theory of meaning, which specified that 'the meaning of a statement is the method of empirically confirming or infirming it',[104] was the last refuge of synonymy, and therefore of analyticity. For one might claim that two statements were synonymous if they were 'alike in point of method of empirical confirmation or information'.[105] If synonymy could be established, then the analyticity of statements such as 'All bachelors are unmarried' could be straightforwardly demonstrated. Quine's rebuttal of this strategy centred on the practical impossibility of isolating single statements of a body of scientific knowledge which could be confirmed or infirmed entirely on their own. His example of the unrealizable nature of such a task was drawn from Carnap's attempt to provide the outline of just such a reduction in the *Aufbau*. The task—which by Carnap's own admission had only been very crudely sketched in the *Aufbau*—was to find a way of translating the rest of scientific discourse regarding qualities in points of space-time into a basic sense-datum language. The problem, according to

[104] Ibid., 35.
[105] Ibid.

Quine, was that Carnap provided no guidelines as to how such a translation or reduction into a sense-datum language could actually proceed.[106]

Quine was quite explicit that he was offering these criticisms from the perspective of a strict empiricism. 'I continue to think of the conceptual scheme of science', he wrote, 'as a tool, ultimately, for predicting future experience in the light of past experience'. Empirical verification remained the touchstone of science, but scientific knowledge could be verified only as a whole and not statement-by-statement. Given that the totality of knowledge was so underdetermined by experience, however, there were plenty of options among the entities one might choose to believe in. The objects of physical science, which Quine, in accord with the best science of his day, believed to be the building blocks of the world, were therefore to be identified as 'irreducible posits comparable, epistemologically, to the gods of Homer'.[107] We posited as an entity anything that helped us predict experience and render our conceptual scheme as simple as possible; Quine believed the posits of science to be superior to those of Greek mythology, but the only criterion of superiority was that of success in predicting future experience.

From a historical point of view, two aspects of Quine's argument in 'Two Dogmas' stand out. The first is Quine's repeated encounters with Carnap, which were staged at a time when Carnap was by no means at the centre of discussion among American philosophers. 'Two Dogmas' is often straightforwardly read as a rejection of Carnap's logical constructions of scientific language; but Carnap's texts were still not very well known in

[106] Ibid., 37-8.
[107] Ibid., 41

1951, and some of his most important works, notably the *Aufbau*, remained untranslated. Quine's essays, and 'Two Dogmas' in particular, helped to *establish* Carnap's writings as monuments with which every ambitious young analytic philosopher would have to engage. Moreover, it was equally important that Quine was introducing construction theory and *Wissenschaftslogik* as programs that were undermined by his demonstration of the untenability of the analytic/synthetic distinction. Analytic philosophy, in its postwar, American guise, cut its teeth on the deconstruction of strict logical positivism, be it in the form of verificationist semantics, or of strict ontologies that excluded mathematical entities. This, at any rate, was true of Quine, Goodman, White, and Wilfrid Sellars; second-generation analytic philosophers such as Donald Davidson, Hilary Putnam, and Richard Rorty pushed these critiques further still. To be sure, a large part of the impetus for such critiques came from the sophistication and systematic character of Carnap's philosophy, which helped to mark it out from other projects in the postwar philosophical profession. But the fact remains that the encounter with Carnap was a staged rather than a 'natural' event.

The second striking feature of Quine's argument in 'Two Dogmas' is that his criticisms of logical empiricism presupposed and drew on a grasp of elements of symbolic logic, notably the propositional calculus, the construction of truth tables, and quantification theory (also known as first-order logic). Logical truth, interchangeability *salva veritate*, semantical rules, modality, the difference between meaning and reference—each of these concepts in 'Two Dogmas' relied on the findings and distinctions of modern symbolic logic and set theory. Likewise, Quine's account of ontological commitment in essays from the same

period identified ontological commitment with the values of the variables of quantification as described in first order logic.[108] Hence, in 'Two Dogmas' symbolic logic was confirmed as part of the analytic philosopher's tool kit.

None of this is meant to suggest that Quine's essay met with universal agreement. Rather, it was the very disputes precipitated by 'Two Dogmas' that stabilized analytic philosophy in the United States during the 1950s, for they were debates about criteria for analyticity, and about the proper extent of epistemological holism and ontological commitment. The reception of 'Two Dogmas' itself may be separated into two stages. In the years immediately following its publication it was debated with great intensity. Then, from the early 1960s onward, it began to be anthologized in textbooks, thereby becoming part of the fabric of general training in philosophy. The initial reaction to Quine's intervention in the philosophical journals was remarkable: debate regarding the merits of Quine's analysis, along with those of Goodman and White, raged across the pages of the *Journal of Philosophy*, the *Philosophical Review*, *Philosophical Studies*, the *Journal of Symbolic Logic*, and *Philosophy of Science*. British journals such as *Mind*, *Analysis*, and the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* likewise devoted many of their pages to discussions of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy. Positions ranged from those seeking to extend or modify the Quine-White-Goodman critique,[109] to professions of a middle-way between

[108] See, most famously, Quine, 'On What There Is', in: *From a Logical Point of View*, 12.
[109] M. Perkins and I. Singer, 'Analyticity', *Journal of Philosophy*, 48 (1951), 485-97; C. G. Hempel, Review of Morton White, 'The Analytic and the Synthetic: An Untenable Dualism', *Journal of Symbolic Logic*, 16 (1951), 210-11; T. M. Clark, 'Reflections on Likeness of Meaning', *Philosophical Studies*, 3 (1952), 9-13; J. W. Sweigart, Jr., 'On Sameness of Meaning', *Philosophical Studies*, 9 (1958), 38-42.

'gradualists' and 'genericists',[110] to those who believed Quine to be mistaken in his drastic argument in favour of holism and pragmatism.[111] Generally negative assessments predominated, yet the mere fact that it was acknowledged that Quine had staked out some vital issues for philosophy seems to have swung many of the American journals toward adopting the problems of the analytic tradition as the central problems of the discipline. Quine, Goodman, and White, moreover, continued to stoke the debates in books and articles—Quine doing so most famously in *From a Logical Point of View*, in which he reproduced, with some amendments, 'Two Dogmas', and carried further his attack on the theory of meaning.[112] The passing over of 'Two Dogmas' into its 'textbook' phase is best

[110] These are terms coined by the moderate A. Gewirth, 'The Distinction Between Analytic and Synthetic Truths', *Journal of Philosophy*, (1953), 397. See also W. H. Walsh, 'Analytic/Synthetic', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 54 (1953-1954), 77-96; M. Weitz, 'Analytic Statements', *Mind* 63 (1954), 487-94; I. Scheffler, 'On Synonymy and Indirect Discourse', *Philosophy of Science*, 22 (1955), 39-44.

[111] C. D. Rollins, 'The Philosophical Denial of the Sameness of Meaning', *Analysis*, 11 (1950), 38-45; B. Mates, 'Analytic Sentences', *Philosophical Review*, 60 (1951), 525-34; R. M. Martin, 'On Analytic', *Philosophical Studies*, 3 (1952), 42-7; A. S. Kaufman, 'The Analytic and the Synthetic: A Tenable Dualism', *Philosophical Review*, 62 (1953), 421-6; D. Schwayder, 'Some Remarks on "Synonymity" and the Language of Semanticists', *Philosophical Studies*, 5 (1954), 1-5; R. Taylor, "Disputes About Synonymy," *Philosophical Review*, 63 (1954), 517-29; G. Bergmann, 'Professor Quine on Analyticity', *Mind*, 64 (1955), 254-8; H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson, 'In Defense of a Dogma', *Philosophical Review*, 65 (1956), 141-56; L. Shih-Chao, 'On the Analytic and the Synthetic', *Philosophical Review*, 65 (1956), 218-28; D. Rynin, 'The Dogma of Logical Pragmatism', *Mind*, 65 (1956), 379-91; R. J. Richman, 'On a "Proof" of Non-Synonymy', *Philosophical Studies*, 8 (1957), 7-8; J. F. Bennett, 'Analytic-Synthetic', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 59 (1958-1959), 163-88. Carnap himself responded in Quine's criticisms in two important articles: R. Carnap, 'Meaning Postulates', *Philosophical Studies*, 3 (1952), 65-73; idem, 'Meaning and Synonymy in Natural Languages', *Philosophical Studies*, 6 (1955): 33-47. The references provided in the preceding footnotes should not be considered exhaustive; I have merely selected those that bear most directly on the analytic-synthetic debates.

[112] Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*. See especially chapter III 'The Problem of Meaning in Linguistics'. N. Goodman, "On Some Differences About Meaning," *Analysis*, 13 (1953), 90-6; M. White, *Toward Reunion in Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), esp. chapters VIII and IX.

marked by Hilary Putnam's extended survey of the problem in 1962.[113] Thereafter, 'Two Dogmas' was canonized in anthology after anthology.[114]

Coda: Morton White and Constitution of Analytic Philosophy

These reflections on the crystallization of analytic philosophy in the United States provide no more than the beginnings of a full accounting of the creation of an analytic mainstream. A more detailed picture would need to include, among other topics, institutional accounts of changes in the faculty, graduate training programs, and course offerings of American philosophy departments during the 1950s and 1960s, as well as archival investigations into the leadership of the American Philosophical Association during the same period. Close readings of the texts and careers of the likes of Sellars, Davidson, Goodman, and others will be equally valuable.[115] But, on the basis of the findings of the foregoing investigations, we can draw some provisional conclusions about the instauration of the analytic tradition in America, and its relationship with post-analytic political and moral theory.

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[113] Putnam, 'The Analytic and the Synthetic', (1962), reprinted in: idem, *Philosophical Papers*, vol. 2: *Mind, Language, and Reality* (Cambridge, 1975), 33-69.

[114] According the a bibliography supplied by Quine for *The Philosophy of W. V. Quine*, between 1962 and 1983, 'Two Dogmas' was reprinted in whole or in part for various collections no less than twenty times. During the same period, it was also translated into seven different languages, excluding translations of *From a Logical Point of View*. W. V. Quine, 'A Bibliography of the Publications of W. V. Quine', *The Philosophy of W. V. Quine*, 674. Among the important collections in which 'Two Dogmas' was reprinted were H. D. Aiken and W. Barrett, ed., *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1962); R. Rorty, ed., *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method* (Chicago, 1967); H. Feigl, W. Sellars, and K. Lehrer, ed., *New Readings in Philosophical Analysis* (New York, 1972).

[115] Some of this work has already been carried out in Neil Gross's compelling sociological dissection of Richard Rorty's early career. See Gross, *Richard Rorty: The Making of an American Philosopher* (Chicago, 2008).

My first conclusion is the most obvious: the emergence of a self-conscious analytic mainstream in American philosophy, with its own canon, problematics, and modes of argument can be dated no earlier than the early-to-mid-1950s. We can therefore attribute some credence to Hilary Putnam's claim that analytic philosophy did not become dominant in the United States until around 1953 or so. This would be just the time when disputes over 'Two Dogmas' were claiming space in the journals. Indeed, Quine's critique, Putnam recalls, was a 'hot topic of discussion among the graduate students' in philosophy at Princeton. Crucially, 'Two Dogmas' 'made issues in the philosophy of language central for young thinkers in the field' at a time when ordinary language analysis, inspired by Wittgenstein and pioneered at Oxford by luminaries such as Gilbert Ryle and J. L. Austin, was beginning to make a mark on American philosophy.[116] Putnam's 'on the ground' experience was itself function of the growing dominance of Quine's Harvard and its links with Oxford.[117] The postwar boom in education saw the proliferation of new departments of philosophy across the country, and increasing appointments in philosophy at elite institutions. Many of the new members of faculty were drawn from Harvard's pool of leading PhDs. Putnam, himself a Harvard Masters graduate, noted that when he came to Princeton as a young professor in 1953, the three other new appointments made that year were all graduate students from Harvard.[118] Berkeley's postwar department became, in the words of Bruce Kuklick, 'a clone of Harvard', with figures such as Stanley Cavell and Thompson Clark being sent out West after schooling in Emerson Hall.[119] Not all members of these departments were paid-up Quineans, of course, but they were shaped by Harvard's

[116] Putnam, 'Half Century of Philosophy', 196-8.
[117] Kuklick, *History of Philosophy*, 243-7.
[118] Putnam, 'Half Century of Philosophy', 196.
[119] Kuklick, 'Philosophy and Inclusion', 160.

strength in logic and philosophical analysis. Moreover, after 1948, Quine and White began teaching the thought of the Oxford analysts J. L. Austin, Gilbert Ryle, and Peter Strawson; White set up a program allowing Harvard graduate students to spend a year in Oxford learning conceptual analysis, while a series of visiting professorships and lectureships facilitated the ongoing interaction of Oxford dons and Harvard philosophers. Quine himself spent the academic year of 1953-1954 as George Eastman Visiting Professor in Oxford, and Austin came to Harvard as William James Lecturer in 1954-1955.[120]

If it is indeed obvious that the 1950s were the moment when the analytic movement went 'mainstream' in American philosophy, then a second conclusion follows. Analytic philosophy in the United States cannot, in an institutional, pedagogic, or thematic sense, have been dominated 'logical positivism' and the dilemmas it 'naturally' engendered. This much is clear from the fragmented and uncertain postwar scene, and the subsequent forging of the analytic movement in the steps outlined above. To this trivial if underappreciated observation, we can add that, not only was analytic philosophy in America not formed under the aegis of 'logical positivism', it became institutionalized as research program precisely by *repudiating* what leading figures such as Quine took to be the central tenets of logical empiricism. The Americanized, 'logical positivist' Carnap came into being as a philosophical Other or stalking horse, the critique of whom allowed analytic philosophers to frame their own projects in a compelling manner. No wonder that Carnap and his defenders felt that Quine had simply changed the subject in his criticisms of Carnap's philosophy.[121] The very idea of logical positivist hegemony at the outset of the analytic

[120] Quine, *Time of My Life*, 235-52.
[121] See, especially, Richardson, 'Fate of Scientific Philosophy', 7-10; Creath, 'Quine', 49-50.

tradition in the United States is, in large part, the shadow cast by the field-constituting rhetoric of leading analytic philosophers during the instauration of the 1950s. Historians wrongly take philosophers at their word when they subscribe to the notion of positivist dominance at mid-century: when they took aim at logical positivism, the philosophers were *creating* a problematic in which logical positivism was a necessary antagonist, not reporting on the actual institutional and professional power of Carnap and his fellow scientific philosophers.

Where, then, does this leave our understanding of the discursive and institutional space in which post-analytic philosophy emerged? There can be little doubt that many of the texts we think of as representing the shift toward post-analytic normative theorizing, from *Must We Mean What We Say?* to *A Theory of Justice*, were conceivable only in relation to, and in the wake of, an analytic movement that had discarded a host of dualisms, from the analytic-synthetic to mind/body, scheme/content, and so on. It is also true that founding figures such as Quine devoted their efforts to epistemology, metaphysics, and logic, and largely disdained ethics, political philosophy, and aesthetics.[122] Hence the turn to normative concerns can reasonably be said to represent a 'post-analytic' moment. But the distinction between the two terms is, I would suggest, a matter of degree and heuristic convenience, not of historiographical necessity. Analytic and post-analytic philosophy belong to the

[122] As Quine put it in an interview conducted late in his career, he could 'recognize the importance at least of that and—the history of philosophy—and ethics. I'm not so clear on the question of the importance of aesthetics. I like nice things but I don't know about the philosophy of nice things.' Harvard University Society of Fellows, 'Conversations: 2. Willard Van Oram [sic] Quine', 1998. HUC 1800.14, Videotapes of Interviews, Society of Fellows, Harvard University Archives. In practice, he felt that ethics could not constitute a philosophically respectable subject matter. See Quine, 'On the Nature of Moral Values', in: idem, *Theories and Things* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 55-66; idem, 'Reply to Morton White', in: *Philosophy of Quine*, 663-5.

same philosophical culture. Here we can point to an array of connections, continuities, and interdependencies in addition to those noted at the outset concerning Rawls and Cavell. The Austin who helped to cement the Harvard-Oxford axis around which the analytic movement in America coalesced was also the Austin who, as a visiting professor at Harvard (and then at Berkeley) turned a young Stanley Cavell onto the problems of the ordinary, of voice, and of skepticism[123]; the Goodman who attempted to out-Carnap Carnap in *The Structure of Appearance* (1951) followed his early philosophical principles into the field of art and aesthetics[124]; Wilfrid Sellars' critique of empiricism drew on a Hegelian picture of the normativity of language and mind, and would be taken up by Rorty, Robert Brandom, and John McDowell[125]; Donald Davidson's anti-empiricism and deflationary view of truth grew out of a combination of decision theory, metamathematics, and Quinean epistemology.[126] My point here is simply that much of what we call 'analytic' and 'post-analytic philosophy' has a shared history—not just because they both have their roots in the American philosophical establishment, but because they grew out of the same moment of institutional crystallization, in which logical positivism was simultaneously invoked and repudiated.

I close with a final measure of post-analytic philosophy's connection to the moment of analytic philosophy. Among the examples of the emergence of normative concerns within

[123] Cavell, *Pitch of Philosophy*, 55-6; idem, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy*, new ed. (New York, 1999), xv.
[124] Goodman, *The Structure of Appearance* (Cambridge, MA, 1951); idem, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Hassocks, 1978).
[125] See P. Redding, *Analytic Philosophy and the Return of Hegelian Thought* (Cambridge, 2007), esp. ch. 1 and 2.
[126] See, e.g., E. Lepore, 'An Interview with Donald Davidson', in D. Davidson, *Problems of Rationality* (Oxford, 2004), 231-65.

the horizon of analytic philosophy, none is *prima facie* more powerful than Morton White's 1956 treatise *Toward Reunion in Philosophy*. The pedigree is obvious. White, as we have seen, played a key role in the analyticity debates that helped to stabilize the analytic program in American philosophy. *Reunion* was dedicated to Goodman and Quine, and featured centrally the critique of the analytic/synthetic distinction in epistemology.[127] At the same time, *Reunion* sought to connect the critique of analyticity with reassessments of fundamental concepts in metaphysics and ethics. White's attachment to, and influence on, philosophical streams of thought that would become important in 'post-analytic' philosophy was clear. His first book had been a study of the sources of Dewey's pragmatism, and his next work examined the 'revolt against formalism' in American thought during the progressive era.[128] To this ecumenical interest in philosophy and history, White added both an expert interest in philosophical analysis and modern logic—of which his contribution to the analyticity debates was but one part—and a growing interest in ethics and the ordinary language philosophy emanating from Austin and Ryle's Oxford.[129] Readers of the manuscript of *Reunion* included White's student Stanley Cavell and Austin.[130] Yet, apt though White's text would seem to be as another instance of the shared heritage of analytic and post-analytic philosophy, what is most striking is the more or less total oblivion to which is has been consigned by philosophers and historians alike. The dedicatees, Quine and Goodman, seem never to have seriously engaged with *Reunion*; Cavell, for whom autobiographical reflection on his path to philosophy is a vocation, says

[127] White, *Reunion*, 137-47.
[128] White, *The Origins of Dewey's Instrumentalism* (New York, 1943); idem, *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism* (New York, 1952).
[129] See, e.g., M. White, ed., *The Age of Analysis: Twentieth-Century Philosophers* (1955; New York, 1983).
[130] White, *Reunion*, xi.

nothing in his major works about the ambitious book he read in manuscript; historians of pragmatism tend to ignore or minimize White's contribution to the tradition[131]; and even White himself, in later works, has backed away from the synthetic ambitions of his 1956 opus.[132] This silence tells us something important.

The problem with *Reunion*, besides whatever philosophical shortcomings it may be said to have, lies, I think, in its attempt to supersede or circumvent an assemblage of problematics and modes of argument that were, in different ways, constitutive features or conditions of analytic and post-analytic philosophy alike. In *Reunion*, White certainly derived insights from symbolic logic, explored problems of providing criteria for concepts in the theory of meaning, counselled pragmatism and tolerance of pluralism in epistemology, and engaged with the writings of the 'logical positivists'. But his quarry was larger than that pursued by Quine and Goodman. The difficulties he and his co-conspirators had found with analyticity were for White part of a wider reorientation in twentieth-century philosophy in the fields of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. White considered the move towards stipulation, convention, and pragmatic postulation in recent epistemology and metaphysics (think of Quine's gods of Homer) as a normative turn across philosophy toward ethical questions about what one *ought* to posit or believe. This, White argued, would bring the 'analytic platonism' of Russell and Moore and the logical positivism of Carnap into dialogue with

[131] White is absent, for example, from James T. Kloppenberg's important survey of the decline and revival of the pragmatist tradition. See Kloppenberg, 'Pragmatism'. Kuklick gives *Reunion* a brief mention in *History of Philosophy*, 257, but only to note that it 'did not effect the desired reunion'.

[132] See the chastened remarks about White's relationship to analytic philosophy in White, *From a Philosophical Point of View*, 1.

the pragmatist theories of value and truth put forth by Peirce, James, and Dewey.[133] All of these traditions now shared similar problems, which were now coming to light in the work of Quine, the Oxonians, and, of course, White himself. 'Having concentrated in great measure on removing the obstacles in their way' White concluded, 'I hope that the master describers, the master builders, and the master moralists in philosophy will be able to work with fewer hindrances and with greater understanding of each other'.[134]

Who could refuse such a congenial invitation, especially when it came from a bridge-building Harvard professor? It was ignored, I want to suggest, because it made a normative, post-analytic philosophy into something more than an internal movement within and against analytic philosophy. White's historian's eye for the big picture made him less susceptible to the partisan and partial renditions of philosophical tradition and practice than his analytic and post-analytic peers. Hence *Reunion* was an invitation to ethics and normative theory that members of the 1950s philosophical academy felt disinclined to accept. The submersion of White's book may be viewed as a sign of how wedded analytic and post-analytic philosophers were to each other, and to the story they wished to tell about the state of play in philosophy.

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[133] White, *Reunion*, 4-19, 279-81.
[134] Ibid., 299.