

## 14 Hegel and analytic philosophy

*What I think, namely that something is true, is always quite distinct from the fact that I think it. . . . That "to be true" means to be thought in a certain way is, therefore, certainly false. Yet this assertion plays the most essential part in Kant's 'Copernican Revolution' of philosophy, and renders worthless the whole mass of modern literature, to which that revolution has given rise, and which is called Epistemology.*<sup>1</sup>

It is often thought that analytic philosophy arises, at least in part, from a reaction against Hegel, or against philosophy inspired by Hegel. To some extent this is correct. The philosophy of Bertrand Russell and G.E. Moore in the first decade or so of this century, which was enormously influential for subsequent analytic philosophy, was developed in conscious reaction to idealist views that owed much to Hegel.<sup>2</sup> This fact, however, does not settle the question of the influence of Hegel, either on Russell and Moore or on analytic philosophy more generally; all that it does is to give us a way of posing the question. And the question is a complex one. Besides the general difficulties involved in tracing the influence of a view as complex as Hegel's, there is also a particular problem arising from the relation between Kant and Hegel. The philosophical views against which Russell and Moore were reacting, and which they grouped under the rubric "Idealism," were both Hegelian and Kantian. The contrast between Kantianism and Hegelianism, moreover, cannot be pressed too far: Kantian themes survive in Hegel's work, although modified or transposed to some extent, and Kant himself

can be interpreted as being, to a greater or lesser extent, a precursor of Hegelian ideas.

We might summarise the contention of this essay by saying that while Russell and Moore are to some extent reacting against the specifically Hegelian elements in Idealism, it is the Kantian elements that are the most important to understanding their reaction against Idealism. To put the point another way: the aspects of post-Kantian Idealism that are most important to understanding the early work of Russell and Moore are already present in Kant, at least if Kant is himself interpreted as a precursor of Idealism. The issue of the interpretation of Kant that this formulation raises is crucial. Both Russell and Moore interpreted Kant unequivocally as an Idealist. In this they followed the post-Kantian Idealist tradition in which they were educated, so the reading of Kant is an important way in which the Hegelians influenced Russell and Moore, and influenced them positively, rather than by way of reaction. If we are correct in saying that the most-influential work of Russell and Moore is best understood as a reaction against Kant (or Kant as interpreted by Hegel), then we are faced with the relevance of this fact to later analytic philosophy. Here it is even clearer than in the case of Russell and Moore that our focus should be on Kantian ideas, or on ideas common to Kant and Hegel, rather than on specifically Hegelian ideas. We shall attempt to illustrate this point by putting forward a schematic interpretation of the development of analytic philosophy that emphasises its relationship to, and rejection of, some crucial Kantian ideas.

Two significant limitations of our discussion should be noted at the outset. First, we discuss only theoretical philosophy, not practical philosophy. The crucial figures in the early period of analytic philosophy – say, Frege, Russell, Moore, Wittgenstein (in his early work), and Carnap – are, with one exception, noted for their work in theoretical philosophy – logic, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and so on – rather than practical philosophy – ethics, political philosophy, and so on. The one exception is Moore, and it is arguable that his work in ethics involves conceiving of it as theoretical rather than practical (see note 33, below). This emphasis on the theoretical represents an important bias of analytic philosophy, at least until comparatively recently. In this respect there is a marked contrast between analytic philosophy and that of Kant (the

situation with regard to Hegel is more complex: he did not accept Kant's doctrine of the primacy of the practical, and aimed to reinstate the idea of *theoretical* knowledge of the unconditioned; he did, however, place great weight on the practical, and aimed to incorporate it into his philosophy rather than simply leave it aside). In what follows we shall in general simply confine ourselves to theoretical philosophy; we shall, however, make some remarks on the reasons for the contrast, in this respect, between analytic philosophy and Kantianism (and, with qualifications, Hegelianism).

The second limitation is that we more or less confine ourselves to discussing the influence of Kant and Hegel on analytic philosophy as that influence is transmitted via the work of Russell and Moore. That is to say, we do not consider whether other formative influences on analytic philosophy may also have transmitted the influence of Kant and of Hegel. In particular, we do not discuss the influence of Kant on Frege, and we largely ignore the influence of Kant on Carnap and other members of the Vienna Circle. The reasons for this are in part purely practical: even as limited, our task is large for a single essay. There is also, however, the fact that the Kant who influenced Frege and Carnap was much more distant from Hegel than was the Kant who influenced Russell and Moore. As Sluga points out, "Hegelian idealism had in fact completely collapsed in Germany" by the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Revivals of Kant later in the century emphasized the role of natural science in Kantianism. The more speculative elements of the view, which indicate its kinship with Hegelianism, were largely downplayed. In addition, it is also important that the Kantian elements in Frege's thought were largely ignored or unrecognized, at least in English-speaking countries, until the 1970s.<sup>4</sup>

Let us begin with a brief discussion of the main philosophical trends in Britain in the nineteenth century. Since these trends are the background to the early work of Russell and Moore, our discussion will enable us to bring the task of this essay into better focus. The initial reception of Kant, especially in literary circles, led to developments that to some extent parallel Hegel's thought.<sup>5</sup> These developments did not issue in sustained philosophical treatment. They did, however, provoke, by way of reaction, the resurgence of an empiricist view that based itself chiefly in psychology; the work of J.S. Mill, in

particular, was very influential. This psychologistic empiricism also provoked a reaction, which took the form of a re-discovery and adaptation of Kant and, especially, of Hegel. Beginning with the publication of Stirling's *The Secret of Hegel* in 1865,<sup>6</sup> Idealism gradually became the orthodox view among most active philosophers in Britain. William Wallace's *The Logic of Hegel*<sup>7</sup> was an important translation of a portion of Hegel's encyclopedia. Edward Caird, like Wallace a Scot at Oxford, wrote influential books on Kant and Hegel.<sup>8</sup> But the most systematic, and deservedly the most influential, of this first generation of British Idealists was T.H. Green. It is significant that one of Green's major works was a sustained attack on Empiricism, in particular on the works of Locke and Hume. F.H. Bradley, also at Oxford, articulated a metaphysical view that owes much to Idealism, even though it balks at many idealist conclusions. (We shall discuss the views of Green and Bradley later.) At Cambridge perhaps the most important figure was McTaggart, who worked out his own version of Idealism by means of critical commentaries on Hegel.<sup>9</sup>

Under the influence of McTaggart and others at Cambridge, Russell and Moore became idealists in their student days, more indebted to Hegel, as they interpreted him, than to any other dominant figure. This allegiance lasted until the late 1890s. Russell's first philosophical book, *An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry*,<sup>10</sup> clearly shows him to be an Idealist of a broadly Hegelian kind. He says, for example, that he has learned most in logic "from Mr. Bradley, and next to him, from Sigwart and Mr. Bosanquet" (*Foundations of Geometry*, Preface). What he means by logic here is something clearly derived from Kant's conception of transcendental logic, as laying down the necessary conditions of experience (see below, pp. 451–54). Thus his test of being *a priori*, which he describes as being "purely logical," is "Would experience be impossible if a certain axiom or postulate were denied?" (*Foundations of Geometry*, p. 3). Russell gives an Hegelian twist to this Kantian idea, saying: "All knowledge involves a recognition of diversity in relation, or, if we prefer, identity in difference" (*Foundations of Geometry*, p. 82). While the details of the book owe most to Kant, the overall conclusion is Hegelian: that there are unavoidable contradictions in the conception of space, and therefore also in Geometry, and that these contradictions can be overcome by transition to a more-comprehensive subject (see *Foun-*

*dations of Geometry*, pp. 188, 201). In general, the book bears out the account he later gave of his philosophical views in the 1890s:<sup>11</sup>

I was at this time a full-fledged Hegelian, and I aimed at constructing a complete dialectic of the sciences. . . . I accepted the Hegelian view that none of the sciences is quite true, since all depend upon some abstraction, and every abstraction leads, sooner or later, to contradiction. Wherever Kant and Hegel were in conflict, I sided with Hegel.

Moore's idealist period was shorter, and perhaps less deep, but there is no doubt that he too was for a while an adherent of Idealism. His first published philosophical work was "In What Sense, if Any, Do Past and Future Time Exist?"<sup>12</sup> In that essay he resoundingly claims that the past and the future, and indeed the present, do *not* exist in the full sense: "neither Past, Present, nor Future exists, if by existence we are to mean the ascription of full Reality, not merely existence as Appearance" (p. 240).

Beginning in 1898, both Russell and Moore rejected the Idealism which they previously accepted, and rapidly evolved a rival realist view, which we shall call Platonic Atomism. In this initial step it was Moore who led and Russell who followed.<sup>13</sup> Much of the force of the view, however, and its appeal, came from the fact that in Russell's hands it became interwoven with the new logic that he constructed, following Peano (and, later, Frege). In the period, say, 1900 to 1914, Russell began to articulate themes that were of enormous significance for the subsequent development of analytic philosophy: the use of mathematical logic as a tool or method in philosophy; the use of this tool to argue not only (as Frege had) for the reducibility of mathematics to logic, but also for the reducibility of empirical knowledge in general to knowledge of sense-data and abstract entities; a concern with propositions and meaning, and with analysis of propositions as an explicit philosophical method; and an increasingly conscious attention to symbols. Moore too began to develop views that later became influential, especially his conception of philosophical analysis and his appeal to commonsense, both by extension of, and by reaction to, the views that he held in the initial rejection of Idealism.

Platonic Atomism, the early philosophy of Russell and Moore, is not merely anti-Hegelian, but is quite generally opposed to all forms of Idealism, including, as Russell and Moore held, Kantianism. It is

in fact Kant, far more than Hegel, more even than contemporary British Idealists, whom both of them discuss and attack in their rejection of Idealism. (To give a crude measure, Kant has twenty entries in the index to Russell's *Principles of Mathematics*,<sup>14</sup> some of which are extended discussions of several pages; Hegel has five, three of which are passing references; Bradley has ten.) We shall focus on the thoroughgoing rejection, by Russell and Moore, of Kant's Copernican Revolution, and on the related ideas of necessary conditions of possible experience and of the transcendental. This emphasis on Kant, however, by no means eliminates Hegel from our consideration. In attacking Kant's Copernican Revolution, Russell and Moore took themselves – with good reason – also to be attacking a fundamental assumption not only of Kant but of Hegel and all the post-Kantian Idealists.<sup>15</sup> So their opposition to Hegelianism, as well as to Kant himself, is expressed in their rejection of Kant. It is also relevant that the interpretation of Kant that Russell and Moore assume is largely that of Hegel and his followers; even their criticisms of Kant can be seen as Hegelian criticisms pressed to an extreme degree. So, paradoxical as it may sound, part of Hegel's influence on Russell and Moore shows up precisely in their opposition to Kant, even though this opposition is extended to include Hegel himself. (The paradox here is only apparent. There is nothing inconsistent in the idea that reading a certain author may inspire one to adopt certain standards, which one then finds the author himself does not fully live up to. One might, for example, be inspired by the comparative rigor of Frege's presentation of logic to adopt standards of rigor that Frege himself does not meet.) We shall also see that some of the details of Platonic Atomism, the particular shape that the reaction to Kant's Copernican Revolution takes in Russell and Moore, are to be partly explained in terms of their reaction also against particular doctrines of Hegel. The overall picture, however, is distorted if we see those Hegelian doctrines as central to the rejection of Idealism.

In the remainder of this essay we shall proceed as follows. First, we shall explain salient features of Kant's Copernican Revolution, and the related ideas of the necessary conditions of knowledge and of the transcendental. Second, we shall examine the role that those ideas play in the sort of Hegelianism that Russell and Moore were reacting

to by discussing the philosophy of T.H. Green; this will also enable us to consider the Hegelian interpretation and criticism of Kant (here too we shall at least mention the views of F.H. Bradley, who had considerable direct influence on Russell and Moore). Third, we shall argue that Platonic Atomism can be seen in large measure as based on a rejection of those Kantian ideas. This rejection can itself be understood against the background of the Hegelian interpretation and criticism of those Kantian ideas. Finally, we shall attempt to show that it is a significant fact about analytic philosophy in general that it follows Russell and Moore in rejecting those ideas. Obviously we cannot carry out any of these tasks in detail; the last, in particular, would require nothing less than a complete interpretation of analytic philosophy, which could hardly be presented and defended in a single essay. Nevertheless, we can perhaps do enough to make plausible a certain picture of the relation of analytic philosophy to Kant and to Hegel.

Let us begin, then, with Kant's fundamental revolution in theoretical philosophy, what has come to be known as Kant's "Copernican Revolution." In the Preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*,<sup>16</sup> Kant describes the revolution as follows:

Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge. (B, xvi)

What is the basis for these ideas? How can we legitimately suppose that objects must "conform to our knowledge"? The answer is that we are to focus not on objects themselves, considered apart from our possible knowledge, but on "the *intuition* of objects," on objects considered "as object[s] of the senses" (B, xvii). This shift of focus to experience, or to objects insofar as they are experienceable, makes the crucial difference:

experience is itself a species of knowledge which involves understanding, and understanding has rules which I must presuppose as being in me prior to objects being given to me, and therefore as being *a priori*. They find expression in *a priori* concepts to which all objects of experience necessarily conform. (B, xvii–xviii)

Here we see the crucial idea that experience – and therefore anything of which we can have experience – has necessary conditions. In a similar vein Kant describes the crucial issue for the transcendental deduction of *a priori* concepts as being whether those concepts “must be recognised as *a priori* conditions of the possibility of experience” (A 94–B 126).

Kant’s “Copernican Revolution” – the shift of focus from objects as they are in themselves to the possibility of our experience of objects, and the introduction of the idea of the necessary conditions of the possibility of experience – is fundamental to his thought as a whole. Most obviously, perhaps, it gives rise to questions about what the conditions of possible experience are. Kant calls questions of this sort “transcendental,” by which he means that they “concern the *a priori* possibility of knowledge” (A 55–B 80; cf., for example, B 25). The fundamental question of theoretical philosophy, which the *Critique of Pure Reason* attempts to answer, now becomes: What are the conditions of the possibility of experience? The answer to this question will also show us to what extent we can have *a priori* knowledge of objects which is more than trivial or tautologous; knowledge of this sort, which Kant called synthetic *a priori* knowledge, is to be based on the conditions of the possibility of experience. An immediate consequence of this is that synthetic *a priori* principles are valid only of objects of possible experience. The attempt to use such principles to gain knowledge of what is beyond possible experience is illegitimate; hence traditional metaphysics, purporting to give us knowledge of the supersensible, is also illegitimate. Kant argues, further, that the assumption that synthetic *a priori* principles are valid of things as they are in themselves, independent of our possible knowledge, is not only unjustified but actually leads to contradictions. Such contradictions can be avoided only by the doctrine that the objects that we seek to know are not things in themselves.

The “Copernican Revolution,” and the consequences of it indicated above, are crucial for the distinction between the theoretical and the practical, as Kant draws it. The most obvious point concerns the limitation of our knowledge to objects of possible experience. This is a negative result, which denies the possibility of speculative metaphysical inquiry of the usual (and always dubious) kind. For Kant, however, it is precisely this limit on knowledge, on the theo-



retical, that leaves room for the practical. The belief in freedom, in the strict sense, the belief in God, and the belief in personal immortality are for Kant properly based on the practical demands of human life. If such matters were possible objects of theoretical knowledge, however, then it would be quite unjustified to hold those beliefs on that sort of basis. It is a paradox, perhaps, that Kant thus sees his exclusion of those matters from the realm of possible theoretical knowledge as rescuing them; rather than being the subject of endless and inconclusive metaphysical debate, they can be securely established on the basis of our practical needs. Another point, less clear but perhaps no less important, is Kant's emphasis on the importance of the *activity* of the mind in constituting the knowable world. This undermines the idea that what is due to us and our actions must be merely subjective, and that objectivity must be located in a realm of objects distinct from us. Thus it opens the way for the idea that there may be a viewpoint that is based in practice but is nonetheless objective.

While our account of Kant's views must remain very schematic, it is worth supplementing the above sketch with some points that will be particularly significant in what follows. To begin, Kant distinguishes two sources of human knowledge: sensibility, which is the source of intuitions, and understanding, which is the source of concepts. Kant sometimes writes as if sensibility presented us with *data*, with raw sensory experience, and understanding subsequently conceptualized it. But this view of the distinction, and the very idea of the distinction, has often been found problematic. First, we cannot be conscious of, cannot really experience, the "raw sensory experience" with which sensibility is alleged to present us; the alleged experience, as we shall see, does not conform to the conditions of the possibility of experience. And Kant himself seems to undermine the very idea of the distinction by saying, in a footnote, that intuition in fact presupposes the operations of the understanding (see B 160, note 17). Of the two faculties, Kant identifies sensibility with receptivity and understanding with spontaneity; both faculties are necessary for knowledge (A 50–51–B 74–75). Understanding is also identified as the faculty of judgment, as the source of concepts (A 68–69–B 93–94). (The only use for concepts is in judgment, so that the faculty of judgment is also the faculty of concepts; judgments do not simply exist but are the results of acts of the mind, of spontaneity.) One might suppose, from

this account, that facts about understanding might give rise to conditions on the possibility of judgment, and thus of discursive knowledge, but not to conditions on the possibility of experience. Such, however, is not Kant's view. He argues, by means we shall discuss shortly, that the sort of fundamental unity that is manifest in a judgment is required for any kind of experience. For there to be any kind of experience, on this account, there must be a unifying act, a *synthesis*; and this act is at bottom the same as that required for judgment: "The same function which gives unity to the various representations *in a judgment* also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations *in an intuition*" (A 79–B104–5). Because of this identification Kant holds – notoriously – that the various conditions for the possibility of experience can more or less be read off from the various possible forms of judgment, where these latter are adapted from standard accounts of judgment, which have their antecedents in Aristotle's logic.

The basis for Kant's arguments for the conclusions indicated above is that any experience that is possible for me must be an experience that I can become aware of myself as having: "It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all of my representations" (B 132). The fundamental *a priori* condition, to which all of our possible knowledge is subject, is that our knowledge is the knowledge of a self-conscious, persisting and unified subject:

There can be in us no cognitive states [*Erkenntnisse*], no connection of one [cognitive state] with another, without that unity of consciousness which precedes all data of intuitions, and by relation to which representation of objects is alone possible. This pure original unchangeable consciousness I shall name *transcendental apperception*. (A 107)

This unity of consciousness cannot be *given*; it is possible only as the result of an *act* of synthesis. All our experience is thus mediated by such acts and thus by whatever conditions make those acts possible. Hence those conditions are also the conditions for the possibility of experience, and conditions that must apply to objects insofar as they are possible objects of experience.

We now turn to a discussion of T.H. Green, perhaps the most prominent of the British neo-Hegelians. One aim here is to examine the sort of Idealism that would have been familiar to Russell and Moore. A second aim is to see how that form of Idealism makes

crucial use of the Kantian nexus of ideas sketched above, while also criticising Kant from a broadly Hegelian perspective. We should note that although Green is dubious about the dialectical method, he enthusiastically endorses what he takes to be Hegel's most important conclusions:<sup>18</sup>

That there is one spiritual self-conscious being, of which all that is real is the activity or expression; that we are related to this spiritual being, not merely as parts of the world which is its expression, but as partakers in some inchoate measure of the self-consciousness through which it at once constitutes and distinguishes itself from the world; that this participation is the source of morality and religion; this we take to be the vital truth which Hegel had to teach.

Green wrote in a context in which Empiricism was widely accepted, especially in the form of the views of J.S. Mill.<sup>19</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that his own views were worked out and presented in the course of a criticism of Empiricism.<sup>20</sup> This criticism was explicitly Kantian in character, relying absolutely on the nexus of Kantian ideas discussed above. Green begins his discussion of the empiricists by focusing on a central concept in their thought, that of an "idea" or "impression." In this central concept, however, he finds a crucial ambiguity: Is it to be taken as the mere physiological occurrence of sensation, or as the simplest kind of knowledge? (see *Works* I, p. 13). The use of a single concept to span both ideas assumes that the simplest sort of knowledge, at least, has no presuppositions beyond mere receptivity. In contrast to this view, Green insists that there is no knowledge that is directly and immediately *given*. Like Kant and Hegel, Green holds that all knowledge is mediated. Even sensation, or "feeling," which the empiricists had taken as paradigmatic of the "merely given," in fact presupposes more than mere receptivity. The focus of the argument for this conclusion is on *relations*; experience, Green claims, requires not merely feelings but also relations among feelings. Strictly speaking, indeed, Green's view is that without relations, feelings are not even possible objects of thought; without relations, "the sensations would be nothing" (*Works*, I, p. 175; see also *Works*, I, p. 36). Hence he claims that knowledge cannot arise merely from the occurrence of feeling, but presupposes at least relations among feelings. And since these relations, he insists, cannot themselves be feelings, they must be imposed by the self-conscious

mind to which the feelings are presented. This view, Green says, implies

that the single impression in its singleness is what it is through relation to another, which must therefore be present along with it; and that thus, though they may occur in a perpetual flux of succession . . . yet, just so far as they are qualified by likeness or unlikeness to each other, they must be taken out of that succession by something which is not itself in it, but is indivisibly present to every moment of it. This we may call soul, or mind, or what we will. (*Works*, I, p. 176)

Hence experience, even of the simplest sort, presupposes a unifying agency, a self-conscious subject of experience; and this presupposition makes the crucial difference. Thus he says of "feeling" that "we cannot know it except under those conditions of self-consciousness, the logical categories" (*Works*, I, p. 198).

A similar point of view is presented in what is perhaps Green's most systematic statement of his views, *Prolegomena to Ethics*.<sup>21</sup> The reliance on Kantian ideas is even more explicit: "We have to return once more to that analysis of the conditions of knowledge, which forms the basis of all Critical Philosophy whether called by the name of Kant or no" (p. 12). Green summarizes the first thirty pages of the book by saying: "So far we have been following Kant in enquiring what is necessary to constitute, what is implied in there being, a world of experience – an objective world, if by that is meant a world of ascertainable laws, as distinguished from an unknowable world of things-in-themselves"; and by saying that the answer, as well as the question, is Kantian: "We have followed him [Kant] also . . . in maintaining that a single active self-conscious principle . . . is necessary to constitute such a world" (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 45). Green explicitly identifies the "unifying principle" that he takes to be necessary for the possibility of experience with Kant's synthetic unity of apperception (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, pp. 39–40).

The nexus of ideas that I have grouped under the heading "Kant's Copernican Revolution" is thus fundamental to Green's philosophy. But Green also criticises Kant. He sees Kant's philosophy as containing tensions or contradictions that, when resolved, lead to a rather different view closer to that of Hegel; this view of Kant and his significance is itself Hegelian. Some, at least, of the contradictions

that Green found in Kant were also the focus of Hegel's criticism of Kant,<sup>22</sup> and, as we have seen, Green holds that the view to which he led is, at least in outline, Hegel's.

We can divide Green's criticisms of Kant into two broad categories. First, Green, like Hegel, criticizes two related Kantian dualisms: the distinction between the knowable world of appearance and the unknowable world of things as they are in themselves, and the distinction between intuitions and concepts, between the material that is given to the understanding and the form that is imposed by the understanding.<sup>23</sup> Green's argument against these dualisms is intricate, but the point that underlies it can be briefly encapsulated. If we take the Kantian view seriously, he holds, then it is inconsistent to claim that we have knowledge about – or even that we can think of – things that are not subject to the necessary conditions of knowledge.<sup>24</sup> But on the Kantian view, both things as they are in themselves and the raw material of experience would fall into this category. The idea that there are such things, on Green's view, is thus absurd. The rejection of a raw material of experience is important, for Green concludes from it that the only true given is conscious experience. The Kantian attempt to analyze experience into the given matter, on the one hand, and the imposed form, on the other, fails; while we can of course talk of the form and the matter of experience, our ability to do so itself depends upon experience – so that form and matter are each intelligible only as abstractions that presuppose experience. Each aspect of experience presupposes the other and the whole; experience is ultimate and unanalyzable.

The other general issue on which Green thinks it necessary to go beyond Kant can be approached by asking: *Whose* experience is unanalyzable? Or again: *Whose* mind is to be identified with the unifying principle that constitutes the world? Clearly, Green thinks, not the mind of any finite individual human being; there is no justification for my thinking that the world ceases to exist if I cease to be conscious. The only way to avoid such absurd subjectivism, according to Green, is to accept that there is an eternal self-conscious mind. It is in virtue of the unifying actions of this eternal mind that there is a world. The eternal mind cannot simply be separate from our finite minds, for it must explain the possibility of our knowledge and experience; it was the possibility of our experience that was the starting point for the argument. So, Green says, a finite conscious-

ness is the “vehicle” of the eternal consciousness, which realizes itself through finite minds. What we may think of as the history of consciousness is in reality the history of the process whereby “an animal organism, which has its history in time, gradually becomes the vehicle of an eternally complete consciousness” (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 81).

The above criticism of Kant could be phrased by saying that Kant’s view is too *subjective*, that Kant’s unmodified view seems to make the constituting of experience, and thus of the experienceable world, simply a matter of the subjective psychological acts of the individual mind. Understood in that way, Green’s criticism corresponds to Hegel’s most-frequent line of attack against the Kantian philosophy. Hegel often refers to Kant’s Transcendental Idealism as “subjective idealism”<sup>25</sup> and says that Kant “remained constricted and confined by his psychological point of view.”<sup>26</sup> This sort of criticism is of particular importance from our point of view because, as we shall see, it is also a fundamental criticism that Russell and Moore make against Kant.

Before we leave the subject of British Idealism, let us touch on the philosophy of F.H. Bradley, who is, next after Kant, the most-common explicit target of the anti-Idealist criticism of Russell and of Moore. We may think of Bradley as accepting much of the line of argument that we have attributed to Green, but as reacting skeptically to its conclusion. He accepts that without relations there would be no knowledge and no experience of the ordinary kind. He does not, however, accept that relations are ultimately real. On the contrary, he insists that ultimate reality is to be found rather in something like a mystical experience of the world as a unified whole, with a unity that is given rather than relational. Relations are to be understood as an abstraction from this reality, an abstraction that is necessary but that nonetheless fails to preserve the crucial unity or oneness of reality. He draws the conclusion that what passes for ordinary knowledge and experience is, because relational, not fully real. It is, however, a misunderstanding – which Russell certainly appears to commit – to think that this view arises from some special animus against relations, and that it might be defeated by showing that relations are in fact presupposed by our ordinary knowledge. Just as the view of Kant and Green is that *all* of our knowledge, and the knowable world, presupposes the synthesizing

activity of the mind (in some sense of mind) but is nevertheless real, so Bradley's view is that all our knowledge, and the knowable world, presupposes the synthesizing activity of the mind (in some sense of mind) and so is *not* ultimately real. Bradley's emphasis on relations must thus be understood within context of the general kind of argument that we have seen in Green.

We now turn Russell and Moore's opposition to Kant's Copernican Revolution. Our claim is that this opposition was fundamental to their early philosophy. Encouragement for this claim comes from the fact that such opposition is manifested, perhaps most explicitly, in the earliest anti-Idealist work of either Russell or Moore. This work is the second version of Moore's Research Fellowship Dissertation, entitled "The Metaphysical Basis of Ethics," written in 1898.<sup>27</sup> Discussing the idea of the necessary conditions or presuppositions of knowledge, Moore finds an ambiguity in both "knowledge" and "condition":<sup>28</sup>

By "knowledge" what is meant? If "truth", then it is difficult to see that there can be any other condition for a true proposition than some other true proposition. If empirical cognition, then does not empirical psychology investigate the conditions for the possibility of this? A similar ambiguity is involved in the word 'condition'.

Moore complains here of an ambiguity, but the form of the complaint perhaps conceals its basis. Kant's conditions of the possibility of knowledge or experience are neither straightforwardly empirical, in the sense of empirical psychology or physiology, nor are they logical, in the sense of the dependence of one truth upon another. If I am to know anything or have any experience, then no doubt there must be a certain level of hemoglobin in my bloodstream. So in one sense a certain level of hemoglobin in my bloodstream is a necessary condition of knowledge or experience, but clearly that sort of empirical condition is not the sort of thing that Kant means by a necessary condition of knowledge or experience. Similarly, a certain period of concentrated attention may be necessary if I am to know some complex fact. So in another sense a certain period of concentrated attention may be a necessary condition of my knowledge, but again this is clearly not what Kant means. The same point holds also of logical conditions: if I am to know that 2 plus 2 equals 4, then, since knowl-

edge requires truth, it is no doubt a necessary condition of my knowledge that it is false that 2 plus 2 does *not* equal 4. But, again, this cannot be what Kant means. His concern is not simply with the logical conditions of the truth which is known, but with something like the conditions of its knowability, that is, the conditions that must be satisfied if it is to be known by a self-conscious subject.<sup>29</sup> Moore's accusation of ambiguity is thus implicitly a refusal to accept the sort of idea of a necessary condition that Kant needs – a *transcendental* condition of knowledge or of experience. He simply insists that any “condition” is either empirical or logical.

If one denies that there is any sense to the idea of a *transcendental* condition, then Kant's conditions of possible experience are bound to seem empirical, and, in particular, psychological. Hence the *a priori* knowledge that Kant claims arises from such conditions will seem to be an absurd delusion, like thinking that a house is dark if you enter it still wearing sunglasses, or thinking that if you cannot help believing something, then it is true in virtue of that fact. Thus Russell, in his *Philosophy of Leibniz*,<sup>30</sup> speaks of “The view . . . constituting a large part of Kant's Copernican Revolution, that propositions may acquire truth by being believed” (p. 14), and repeatedly represents Kant as holding that the *a priori* is “subjective” (for instance, pp. 74, 163). In *The Principles of Mathematics* Russell similarly describes Kantianism as “the belief . . . that propositions which are believed solely because the mind is so made that we cannot but believe them may yet be true in virtue of our belief” (p. 450). Concerning the nature of space and Kant's view that it is necessary rather than mere fact, Russell is openly scornful:

the Kantian theory seems to lead to the curious result that whatever we cannot help believing must be false. . . . the explanation offered [for the necessity of space] is, that there is no space outside our minds; whence it is to be inferred that our unavoidable beliefs are all mistaken. Moreover we only push one stage further back the region of ‘mere fact’, for the constitution of our minds remains still such a mere fact. (p. 454)

We have already seen, in the passage taken as epigraph to this essay, a similar attitude on Moore's part: he claims that the “certainly false” assertion that “‘to be true’ *means* to be thought in a certain way” plays “a most essential part in Kant's “Copernican Revolution” ’ (see above).



It would be easy to dismiss this reading of Kant as arising from the reaction by Russell and Moore against Idealism – as if, in the first flush of their anti-idealist enthusiasm, they supported their position by a tendentious interpretation of an opponent. Indeed, the interpretation, and the criticism that it inevitably suggests, may seem to presuppose realism. Certainly it presupposes standards of objectivity by which Kant's synthetic *a priori* counts as subjective. It is worth emphasizing again, therefore, that the view of Kant as allowing us access only to the subjective is an interpretation also to be found in Hegel and his followers, and to be found in Russell before his rejection of Idealism.<sup>31</sup> In this interpretation of Kant, then, and in the associated line of criticism, we have a crucial line of *positive* influence of Hegel on Russell and Moore (and thus, or so we shall claim, on analytic philosophy more generally). Of course the reaction of the Hegelians to Kant as thus interpreted is diametrically opposed to the reaction of Russell and Moore. Very roughly, we may say that the former reacted by attempting to conceive of the mind in a more objective manner, so that the role of the mind in knowledge would not cast the objectivity of knowledge in doubt; the latter reacted, both to Kant and to the attempts of the Hegelians, by attempting to disengage the mind from knowledge entirely, so that its role in knowledge becomes purely passive. The Russell-Moore reaction to Kant is thus diametrically opposed to that of Hegel and other Absolute Idealists. We can, nevertheless, see the same sort of dissatisfaction underlying each reaction.

The fundamental anti-Kantianism of Russell and Moore can be articulated into a number of interrelated doctrines that played a fundamental role in Platonic Atomism. The first is perhaps the most directly related to the Kantian issues discussed: the idea that the objects at which our knowledge aims are wholly independent of the knowing subject. Without the idea of transcendental conditions of knowledge, which are constitutive of the object to be known, there is no justification for denying that we aim to know objects that are wholly and in every sense independent of us. Hence Russell, writing in the *Principles of Mathematics*, says: "all knowledge must be recognition, on the pain of being mere delusion, Arithmetic must be discovered in just the same sense in which Columbus discovered the West Indies, and we no more create the numbers than he created the Indians."<sup>32</sup> More or less as a corollary of the

sharp distinction between the object of knowledge and the knowing subject, Russell and Moore also make a sharp distinction between the mental act (of, for example, knowledge) and its object (the known object). They frequently invoke this act/object distinction, especially to argue that rival views arise only from its neglect. The influence of this conception of the objects of knowledge on later analytic philosophy can be seen not so much in the prevalent realism of much analytic philosophy as in the standards by which a view is judged to be realistic or not realistic (either in general or about a particular subject-matter).

Second, since Russell and Moore denied that there are necessary conditions or presuppositions to knowledge, they see the fundamental epistemic relation as presuppositionless. Knowledge, at least of the fundamental sort, is direct and unmediated. Both Russell and Moore take our knowledge of simply sensory qualities as the paradigm and the model of this kind of knowledge (the Idealists would have denied that even that sort of knowledge is in fact unmediated). Thus Russell, in the Preface to the *Principles of Mathematics* says:

The discussion of indefinables – which forms the chief part of philosophical logic – is the endeavour to see clearly, and to make others see clearly, the entities concerned, in order that the mind may have *that kind of acquaintance with them which it has with redness or with the taste of a pineapple*. (p. xv; my emphasis)

Similarly, Moore's famous comparison of "good" with "yellow" in *Principia Ethica*<sup>33</sup> is clearly meant to suggest not only that both are simple and undefinable qualities but also that our knowledge of both rests simply on direct perception.<sup>34</sup> This sort of direct and unmediated epistemic relation to objects plays a large role in Russell's philosophy after 1905, where it is standardly called "acquaintance"; its role before 1905 is less explicit, because Russell was far less concerned with knowledge than in the later period. But the idea of such a relation is of fundamental importance to Platonic Atomism from its inception – and clearly arises from a rejection of the Kantian view of our knowledge as mediated by the transcendental conditions of knowledge.<sup>35</sup>

It is worth pointing out that Platonic Atomism is not, in the usual sense, an empiricist view. It assumes a direct and unmediated epistemic relation to the objects of knowledge, but it does not con-

fine those objects to the spatio-temporal, or to possible objects of sensory experience. On the contrary, Moore insists that *good* and *truth* are among such objects,<sup>36</sup> and we have seen that Russell includes the indefinables of logic among such objects (also, and crucially, as we shall see, propositions). Although they conceive of our relation to such objects as *analogous* to sense-perception, it is only analogous. In one sense, then, Platonic Atomism is diametrically opposed to empiricism, for its ontology is immensely profligate with abstract objects. Russell and Moore themselves looked on this ontological issue as the crucial aspect of empiricism, a doctrine they regarded as definitely refuted.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, their picture of the mind and of its relation to objects is reminiscent of the most-naïve form of empiricism. Most striking is the insistence on the passivity of the mind: its function is merely to “perceive” what is out there. Speaking of inference – where one might ordinarily suppose the mind to be active – Russell says: “It is plain that where we validly infer one proposition from another, we do so in virtue of a relation which holds between the two propositions whether we perceive it or not: the mind, in fact, is as purely receptive in inference as common-sense supposes it to be in perception of sensible objects” (*Principles of Mathematics*, p. 32).

The influence of this view of knowledge, as paradigmatically pre-suppositionless, on later analytic philosophy, is, again, not in doctrine. There is no general dogmatic assumption that we *do* have direct and unmediated acquaintance with the objects of our (putative) knowledge. Even Russell and Moore were unable to sustain this assumption for very long; hence their view that we are in direct contact with, for example, ordinary physical objects was replaced by the view that we are in direct contact with sense-data, and that what we take to be knowledge of ordinary physical objects is to be explained, or explained away, in terms of our knowledge of abstract objects and sense-data.<sup>38</sup> But in the evolution of this new view, the concept of acquaintance, of direct and unmediated knowledge, plays the crucial role: sense-data are defined as suitable *relata* for such a relation (as an answer to the question If the fundamental epistemic relation is that of direct and unmediated knowledge of objects, what are the *objects* of knowledge like?). For many subsequent analytic philosophers, something like Russell’s notion of acquaintance is important as a paradigm of knowledge – the standard against which our

ordinary knowledge is to be measured, or the pattern that it is to be forced to fit.

A third point, which can also be seen as arising directly from the rejection of the Kantian idea of the necessary conditions of knowledge, is that among the independent objects with which we may be acquainted are *propositions*: objective entities, capable of truth or falsehood, which may be very roughly identified with the content or meaning of a declarative sentence. Very quickly the idea arose that a crucial part of philosophical activity consists in giving the *analysis* of propositions – of saying what their real form is, as opposed to their apparent form, what entities they are really about, as opposed to what they appear to be about, and explaining why they have the implications that they have.<sup>39</sup> In this idea of the analysis of propositions, a crucial role is played by an issue that we have only touched on in passing: the use of elementary mathematical logic as a philosophical tool. It was logic that made it possible to give a concise and apparently explanatory representation of the inferential powers of a sentence. By making this possible, and by holding up an ideal of clarity and rigor, the use of elementary mathematical logic may be as definitive of analytic philosophy as any other feature.

Our interest, however, is in the role played by the reaction against Idealism in the formation of Platonic Atomism, and of analytic philosophy more generally. Seen in this perspective, one obvious contrast to the doctrine that there are objective propositions is the Kantian view of judgment as the result of an act of the mind, a synthesis. Given the idea that synthesis can take place only in accordance with certain rules, this idea immediately yields the result that the world, or at least the world insofar as it can be the subject of our judgments, must obey those rules. If we identify a judgmental element in experience, we get the further consequence that our experience must obey those rules – that there are necessary conditions for the possibility of experience. Russell and Moore block this line of thought at the first step by insisting that the act/object distinction applies to the case of judgment. An act of judgment may be an act, but its object is a *proposition*, which is wholly independent of that act. Propositions, on this view, are not the result of synthesis or any other act of the mind, but are independent self-subsistent entities. We may be in direct and unmediated epistemic contact with them, but in no sense do we make them. Again, the commitment to this

view in its stongest form did not last long: Russell's so-called multiple relation theory of judgment, which he adopted sometime between 1906 and 1910,<sup>40</sup> is an abandonment of the idea that there are propositions or judgments – the objects of acts of belief – that are wholly independent of human minds. But, again, the abandoned view continues to have an influence, perhaps most obviously in the overwhelming concern of analytic philosophers with questions of meaning, of analysis, and of language. Underlying these concerns is a general assumption that each of our utterances and beliefs has a perfectly definite “content,” which may be abstracted from its content and “analyzed.”<sup>41</sup> This procedure is perhaps theoretically unclear; in practice it usually amounts to the very familiar activity of re-formulating a sentence using logical constants, together with the claim that this sentence is a more precise version of, or a better representation of the content of, the original. Under the pressure of the general underlying assumption mentioned above, something very like the Platonic Atomism conception of a proposition has been revived and has come to play a significant role for some analytic philosophers.

To this point we have articulated ways in which Platonic Atomism can be seen as a reaction to Kantian ideas. Many of the most-characteristic features of the view, its extreme realism and anti-psychologism, and its free acceptance of propositions and other abstract entities, for example, fall into this category. In these cases, the reaction against post-Kantian Idealism is equally, or more significantly, a reaction against the Kantian ideas that underlie it. In addition, there are other features of Platonic Atomism that should be understood more specifically in terms of the opposition to Hegelianism (that is, that do not have to do with overtly Kantian ideas). Of these, the most notable, and perhaps the only one of fundamental importance, is atomism. In the work of Russell and Moore from the period of Platonic Atomism there is an explicit assumption that each thing exists, and can be understood, in isolation from all other things; the insistence on the externality of relations – that a thing's relations to other things make no difference to it – is a symptom of this atomism. This atomism is an explicit reaction to the holism, or even monism, that is characteristic of post-Kantian Idealism, which is expressed in an extreme form in the work of Bradley. The atomism of Russell and Moore, however, also connects with their other doctrines

that we have examined. This is clearest in the case of the doctrine that knowledge, paradigmatically, is direct and unmediated, a simple relation of mind to object. If I can know an object completely by being in this relation to it (i.e. by being acquainted with it), then that piece of knowledge is independent of all others. If that is what knowledge is like, then one could know a single object completely while being ignorant of everything else. This sort of epistemological atomism makes ontological atomism almost inevitable, even if there is no logical implication between the two doctrines. Without ontological atomism, the epistemological atomist would be left without suitable objects of acquaintance. The view that knowledge is mediated, by contrast, leaves room for epistemological (and hence also ontological) holism, although without making it inevitable. Like the other doctrines of Platonic Atomism that we have articulated, its extreme atomism has been influential in later analytic philosophy; at the least it has functioned as the “natural” position, the position to be held unless there is positive reason to hold a different one. (Both for Platonic Atomism and for later analytic philosophy, atomism of propositions, or of meanings, has been particularly important.)

Our discussion of Platonic Atomism has alluded to subsequent analytic philosophy; now we must give more explicit consideration to this subject and to its relation to our guiding theme of the rejection of Kant’s Copernican Revolution. We are not, of course, setting out to argue that the rejection of Kant provides the explanation for the development of analytic philosophy, nor even that it is the most-important theme for an interpretation of that development (as I have already indicated, I suspect that the use of elementary mathematical logic may be at least as important, and other factors could also be cited). Our task is, rather, to offer something like an overview of analytic philosophy from the perspective afforded by Kant’s Copernican Revolution. The significance of that theme may then be gauged by seeing how useful that overview of analytic philosophy is.

To achieve this end, we shall articulate two themes and one sub-theme, which are related to the rejection of Kantianism. These are, first, the relation of philosophy to other sorts of knowledge, especially what is called “commonsense”; second, the nature of the *a priori* (the sub-theme being the nature of philosophy – a sub-theme because we shall touch on it only in the context of discussing the *a*

*priori*). In the case of the first, we shall simply state the theme and indicate where it is important; in the case of the second we shall quickly sketch its significance in various developments of analytic philosophy. (There are, of course, relations among our themes, which we shall indicate as we proceed.) It is important to note that much will be omitted, and not only details. We aim to discuss what has been most influential and what seems likely to be influential in the near future. Revivals of Kant, for example, have not greatly influenced the general course of analytic philosophy (if they had, our theme of the rejection of Kant would be inappropriate). Much of our emphasis will be on Logical Positivism and on what might be thought of as the American reaction (or reactions) to the failure of Logical Positivism. We do not discuss the later work of Wittgenstein at all, not because we take it to be unimportant nor because the work is too complex to treat in summary fashion. Rather, the relation of this body of work to the analytic tradition is too ambivalent for us to discuss it within the space available here. On the one hand, Wittgenstein's later work clearly is to be seen against the context of the tradition of analytic philosophy – including Wittgenstein's early work. On the other hand, to consider his later work as a further development within that tradition does scant justice to his thought.

Our first theme, stated briefly, is the relation of philosophy to other kinds of knowledge. In reading Kant, and even more in reading Hegel, one gets a sense of a conception of philosophy according to which that subject is able to place or limit other kinds of supposed knowledge. Philosophy is not answerable to other kinds of knowledge and does not compete with them. Rather, it is philosophy that lays down the sphere within which those other kinds of knowledge are valid. In Kant this point shows itself most clearly in the Antinomies. Kant argues that certain concepts that we use in everyday and scientific thought lead to contradictions if we take them to be unrestrictedly valid. The conclusion that Kant draws is that those concepts, although necessary for ordinary thought, are not universally valid: they apply only to phenomena, not to things in themselves. Such concepts are valid – indeed necessary – for our ordinary (empirical) thought, but not for philosophical thought. More generally, on Kant's view we must distinguish between empirical claims, which are made within the conditions of ordinary thought, and philosophical or transcendental claims, which are made about such condi-

tions or (absurdly, according to Kant) independent of them. Thus Kant, by his own account, is an empirical realist but a transcendental idealist (see, for instance, A369–70). A similar point can be made, on a rather different basis, about Hegel. From Hegel's perspective, it would be missing the point of his work to say that such-and-such a claim of his conflicts with such-and-such a well-established and widely believed claim of commonsense, or natural science. It is not that Hegel would simply say: so much the worse for commonsense (or science). Rather, his attitude would surely be that while the claims of commonsense or natural science may be valid and correct within their sphere, their sphere is limited. Philosophy is to show what the limits are; it will thus become clear that the appearance of conflict arises only because we take the claims of commonsense, say, as unlimited – as being philosophical claims.

The sort of attitude attributed above to Kant and to Hegel is no longer available after we have completely rejected Kantian ideas of the transcendental (as Russell and Moore do; we have seen them riding roughshod over the very distinctions indicated above). Thus, within analytic philosophy there is a recurrent tendency not merely to use and appeal to the ideas of commonsense or natural science (which perhaps philosophy must always do) but to take those ideas at their face value, without making a distinction in kind between them and the claims of philosophy. We are talking here, of course, about a very broad tendency. In particular, it makes all the difference whether a philosopher chiefly relies on the ideas and truisms of commonsense, or upon the results and procedures of natural science. We might think of this difference as marking a major difference between kinds of analytic philosophy. From our Kantian-Hegelian point of view, however, what the two have in common is precisely a failure to distinguish the claims of philosophy from all other sorts of claims.

A particularly dramatic manifestation of this tendency is to be seen in Moore's work, from after the period of Platonic Atomism. In "Four Forms of Scepticism,"<sup>42</sup> for example, Moore goes over a skeptical argument of Russell's. His example is that of knowing that there is a pencil in front of him. The Russellian claim that Moore does not know that there is a pencil in front of him rests, Moore says, on four assumptions. Without arguing against any of these assumptions, Moore simply says that it is more certain that



one or more of them is false than that he, Moore, does not in fact know that there is a pencil in front of him. Indeed, Moore says that he is inclined to agree with Russell about the truth of three of the assumptions, yet he says that even the truth of these three is less certain than that of his knowing that there is a pencil in front of him. In other words, Moore confronts the philosophical argument not by refutation or counter-argument, but simply by insisting that it denies something that is more certain than the correctness of any philosophical argument; the position of commonsense is allowed to outweigh the philosophical argument. While there are of course important differences, our Kantian-Hegelian perspective is distant enough to assimilate to this move of Moore's the rather different appeal to ordinary language that was characteristic of J.L. Austin and others, especially in Oxford during the decade and a half after World War II; and the appeal to "intuition" that is characteristic of much subsequent analytic philosophy (we shall return to this last point). In each of these cases, ordinary knowledge that appears to conflict with the results of philosophical argument is used to show that the alleged results are mistaken. Ordinary (non-philosophical) knowledge is accepted as being on a par with, and as outweighing, philosophical claims. In many cases, indeed, such knowledge – and particularly intuition – is taken to be the source of the premises from which philosophical argument must proceed.<sup>43</sup>

Our second focus, within analytic philosophy, is the theme of *a priori* knowledge and, closely related to this, the status of philosophy; here our discussion will be somewhat more extended. The issue of *a priori* knowledge is significant for our purposes both because it has played, directly and indirectly, a large part in analytic philosophy, and because it is directly related to our general theme of Kant's Copernican Revolution. The Copernican Revolution opens up the possibility of *a priori* knowledge that is neither simply trivial and tautologous, nor dubiously based on some alleged insight into necessities in the nature of things. Knowledge based on the conditions of the possibility of experience need be of neither of these kinds; it is, in Kant's words, synthetic *a priori*.<sup>44</sup> The issue of *a priori* knowledge is related to the issue of the nature of philosophy because of the general (although not universal) assumption that philosophy must be conceived as an *a priori* subject.

In Platonic Atomism, as one might expect, the issue of *a priori*

knowledge receives very little attention. In *Principles of Mathematics*, Russell claims that mathematics is synthetic *a priori*;<sup>45</sup> he takes the reduction of mathematics to logic to show not that mathematics is analytic but rather that logic is synthetic.<sup>46</sup> The concept of the synthetic *a priori* in Russell's hands, however, is purely negative. He claims that mathematics (and logic) is synthetic simply in order to deny that it follows from the Law of Identity, and because he is at best skeptical about the existence of any analytic propositions; he claims that it is *a priori* simply in order to deny that it is in any way based on sense-experience. But beyond these denials the concept of the synthetic *a priori* has no role to play in his thought; the concept is simply not discussed. He has, therefore, no explanation of how it is possible for a proposition to have that status, nor is it easy to see how such an explanation could be accommodated within Platonic Atomism. His view of knowledge, as we have seen, is that it all, in the end, rests on immediate perception. Empirical or *a posteriori* knowledge rests on sense-perception and is knowledge of temporal entities; non-empirical or *a priori* knowledge rests on non-sensuous perception of objects that are not in time or space, and of relations among such objects. The main task of philosophy, after the work of analysis is done, consists – oddly enough – in having such perceptions and in trying to get others to have them; Russell says that “the chief part of philosophical logic” is “the endeavour to see clearly, and to make others see clearly, the entities concerned.”<sup>47</sup> Yet no evidence is put forward for the existence of such non-sensuous perception; since each person supposedly has such perceptions, they are presumed to be self-evident and undeniable. Nor is an explanation offered of the possibility of such perception.

This view of *a priori* knowledge, and of philosophy, is clearly vulnerable. The appeal to self-evidence, to the supposedly evident fact of non-sensuous perception, must seem weak, given that many philosophers have denied any such source of knowledge. Further, the highly complex and unobvious character of the logic Russell was forced to devise to avoid the problems raised by the paradox that bears his name makes it implausible to claim that our knowledge of logic is based on direct and immediate perception.<sup>48</sup> More subtly, the idea of direct perception of an abstract realm does not explain what some have seen as the *necessity* of logic, mathematics (and perhaps philosophy).<sup>49</sup> To say that we perceive, in some non-sensuous fash-

ion, the entities of logic, and that the truths of logic are based on the configuration of those entities, does nothing to suggest that the entities *must* be configured in that way, so it does nothing to suggest that the truths of logic are necessary. Nor, indeed, does this approach give us any idea what might be the content of a claim that some truths are necessary.

Issues of the sort indicated above were among those that motivated Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.<sup>50</sup> He attacks Russell for his reliance on self-evidence (see 5.4731); he insists that any theory must be mistaken that makes it appear as if a proposition of logic has a content, that is, represents some fact (such as about Russell's atemporal entities) which might have been otherwise (see 6.111). Wittgenstein's early work is, I think, an exception to our general claim about the anti-Kantian nature of analytic philosophy. Although the book was enormously influential, those who were influenced by it ignored or rejected those elements that make it Kantian. Indeed, noting how those elements were rejected will throw the anti-Kantianism of other analytic philosophers into higher relief.

There is an obvious *prima facie* difficulty with the claim that the *Tractatus* is Kantian in its approach to *a priori* knowledge. We noted that a crucial result of Kant's Copernican Revolution was that it opened up the possibility of a *a priori* knowledge that is neither simply trivial and tautologous nor dubiously based on some alleged insight into necessities in the nature of things. But in the *Tractatus* the only sort of knowledge that is allowed as *a priori* is said to be tautologous; the propositions of logic are said to say nothing, to stand in no representational relation to reality, and, therefore, not to be genuine propositions at all (see 4.4–4.464). How, in view of this, can we think of the *Tractatus* as putting forward a Kantian view of *a priori* truth? Does not the book precisely deny the existence of *a priori* knowledge that is *synthetic*, or that makes contentful claims on the world? The answer to this question is that the notion of content, and thus of contentlessness, is, on the face of it, language-relative. A claim that in one language appears as trivial or lacking in content or may in another language appear as significant or even absurd.<sup>51</sup> Classical truth-functional logic, say, may be trivial, given a language of a certain sort; what is not trivial is that it is a language that is given, rather than, say, a language in which intuitionistic logic would appear as inevitable. The transcendental, or Kantian,

element in the *Tractatus*, then, is that it lays down the sort of language that we must use if there is to be any language or thought (representation of the world); it claims that given that sort of (inevitable) language, the truths of logic are indeed trivial. They are given with the language, so to speak, and the language is given because (so Wittgenstein claims) it is the only possible sort of language.

Seen from our perspective, then, the *Tractatus* may be thought of as laying down the necessary conditions for the possibility of language and thought. In particular, it claims that the possibility of language, of any system that can represent the world, requires that language have a certain structure – a structure by no means obvious on the surface of our language. The *a priori* truths of logic and arithmetic are then said to be true in virtue of this structure. Those truths therefore appear as special not in virtue of their subject-matter – because, for example, they are about atemporal objects which are non-sensuously perceived. What distinguishes them is rather that they *have* no subject-matter: they simply reflect the necessary structure of any possible language.<sup>52</sup>

When discussing Kant we mentioned that a claim about the necessary conditions of possible experience faces two closely connected dangers. One is that it may appear to undermine itself by transgressing those limits to thought that it lays down, so that if it is true it is nonsensical; in that case the claim that it is true becomes, at the least, problematic. The other is that it is far from clear what justifies, or could justify, the claim that such-and-such is indeed the correct account of the conditions of the possibility of experience. Even if the account of such conditions is intelligible to us, how can we, with any confidence, know it to be correct? The *Tractatus* too faces the analogue of these difficulties. In the case of the first, the book simply admits that it is indeed nonsensical by its own standards of sense; it ends with the paradoxical claim that the propositions of the book are to enable us to recognize them as nonsensical (*unsinnig*). But of course if they are indeed nonsensical, they are not propositions after all, and so how could they be used for that or any other end? There may be ways of mitigating this paradox, or even of using it to obtain a deeper understanding of the book, but for our purposes the most important fact is that those who were influenced by the *Tractatus* – in particular, the Vienna Circle – could not accept this aspect of the book, which they saw as mysticism.<sup>53</sup>

The second difficulty, about the problem of knowing that we have indeed got hold of the correct account of the conditions of the possibility of language or of knowledge, also played a significant role in the response of the Vienna Circle to the *Tractatus*. The fundamental issue here is whether there is, as Wittgenstein claimed in that book, a single *unique* set of conditions that make our knowledge possible (a unique framework, so to speak), and if so, how we know that our account of it is correct. Wittgenstein's framework included (what is now called) classical truth-functional and quantificational logic. Hence one important fact for the Vienna Circle was the existence of alternative logics – for example, intuitionistic logic. Perhaps more important was the fact that there are different scientific languages with no direct equivalences among them. The paradigm case was the contrast between the language of Newtonian physics and the language of Einsteinian physics. (The influence of this example is a sign of the significance that the findings of natural science had for the Vienna Circle.)

Although the Vienna Circle was greatly influenced both by Kant and by the *Tractatus*, they did not accept the crucial claim that a unique structure is common to all possible languages.<sup>54</sup> They thus gave up the Kantian or transcendental element in the *Tractatus*, that is, its claim to be talking about the necessary conditions of any possible language. Instead they drew from it the idea that any language has an implicit structure, and that for any language there will be truths that are true in virtue of the structure of that language. The result is a language-relative view of the *a priori*. If you choose to speak this language, you must accept these truths as *a priori*; if you choose to speak that language, you must accept those truths as *a priori*. But as for which language one should choose in the first place, they advocated tolerance: let us choose, for any given task, whichever language seems best for it, being sure only to say carefully which we are choosing.

Since complex discursive thought can be carried on only in language or some equivalent symbolic system, it follows from the above conception that at any given time there are some truths that are *a priori* relative to one's situation at that time. The Vienna Circle and other logical positivists followed Wittgenstein in claiming that the truths of logic and mathematics have a special status quite unlike that of the truths of natural science, or history, or every-

day life. They attempted to explain this assumed special status in terms of the above conception of the *a priori*. More to the point of our present concerns, they also attempted to use that conception to explain the nature of philosophy and its distinction from natural science. Philosophy was conceived of not as a discipline with its own subject-matter, like one of the natural sciences, but as concerned with the analysis of language – especially of the language in which the natural sciences are carried on. An example of the task of philosophy, on this view, would be to analyze a scientific dispute to say how far the dispute was a genuine factual issue and how far it arose from different choices of language. The “results” of philosophy would thus have the status of being analytic truths of some favored language, and thus *a priori*, in the language-relative sense indicated.

The views of the logical positivists have come under attack, most famously by W.V.O. Quine. We can separate two strands in Quine’s attack.<sup>55</sup> First, the claim that the category “language-relative *a priori*,” as I have described it, is not an epistemologically significant one. Since we may change our mind about a truth of this sort by changing our mind about which language to use, the epistemological significance of the category depends on there being some epistemological significance to the distinction between changing one’s mind about which are the truths of the given language, what the logical positivists called a factual question, and changing one’s mind about which language to use, what they called a pragmatic question. Quine argues, however, that the logical positivists’ distinction between the factual and the pragmatic is spurious. In actual language-use, there is simply no difference between what are alleged to be the two different kinds of change. Second, and perhaps more controversially, Quine claims that the idea of language as containing rules which give rise to *a priori* truths is not one that can be justified if we think realistically about actual languages and their use. A truth that might appear as *a priori* on one account of a language might not so appear on another account, and the two accounts may be equally good, if considered simply as accounts of the bare facts of the use of the language. Each of Quine’s lines of attacks can be seen as based on the insistence that we must take a naturalistic view of language.

From our point of view, we can represent the debate as follows. The logical positivists attempted to retain at least something of Wittgenstein’s explanation of the *a priori* without Wittgenstein’s metaphysi-

cal or transcendental view of language and its concomitant problems. Quine insists that the result is an unstable mixture: the language-relative *a priori* only appears as an explanatory notion because elements of a metaphysical view of language are retained; once we purge these and settle for a fully naturalistic view, even the language-relative *a priori* disappears. We said above that the language-relative *a priori* functioned for the logical positivists, among other things, as an explanation of the possibility of philosophy itself. A sign of this is Carnap's incredulity in the face of Quine's rejection of that conception. He insists that, in spite of what Quine says, he (Quine) must in fact be presupposing the conception; his (Carnap's) view seems to be that all philosophy presupposes it.<sup>56</sup>

Despite Carnap's incredulity, Quine is consistent and rigorous in his rejection of any conception of the *a priori* or of necessity.<sup>57</sup> And he accepts the conclusion that had made Carnap think his rejection could not be fully meant: he accepts that the truths of logic and mathematics, and of philosophy itself, are not *a priori* or necessary. In each case, to be sure, the relation of the truths to empirical evidence is remote – often so remote as to be almost undetectable. But the same could be said, Quine holds, of the most-abstract and general laws of physics. The differences here, on his view, are of degree and not of kind. Each sentence that we hold true ultimately gets its justification in terms of the whole body of such sentences. The primary evidential relation is that of this body or system as a whole to our experience as a whole. The relation of a particular sentence to the evidence that appears to justify it is secondary, in the sense that it may be overridden by the needs of the whole; it is never more than part of the story, and may sometimes be missing entirely.<sup>58</sup>

We saw that the relative *a priori* of the logical positivists could be seen as an attempt to have some of the results of Wittgenstein's Kantianism in the *Tractatus* without paying the metaphysical price that Wittgenstein paid: to preserve a conception of the *a priori* without having to defend the idea that all languages are in essence the same. Seen in these terms, Quine's philosophy represents a total and unequivocal break with Kantianism. Unlike Russell and Moore, however, it does not break with Kant by appealing to direct intuition and unmediated knowledge. Our knowledge is mediated, but not by any structures that can be separated out from that knowledge or

given a special status.<sup>59</sup> While Quine's view accepts that knowledge is mediated, there is no conception of a transcendental level on which this mediation takes place. There is simply our overall theory of the world, which is gradually modified from within over time. A philosophical view of this kind leaves no room for a special kind of knowledge of the conditions of possible experience. Nor, as we have seen, does it leave room for philosophy as a subject that is different in category from others.

Among the various developments since Quine's work, one is of particular interest. Partly in reaction to the austerity of Quine's philosophical vocabulary, some philosophers now make free use of some conceptions that Quine rejected – in particular, necessity and the *a priori*. These ideas are freely employed in the discussion of philosophical issues, which they in turn modify; the use of such ideas also gives rise to further questions and problems. In most authors, the resurgence of these ideas does *not* represent a revival of anything like a Kantian conception of the necessary conditions of experience. In fact those ideas seem to have two bases. One is a return to the conception of the relative *a priori*, that is, a reliance on certain conceptual structures, without any attempt to argue that those structures are themselves necessary or inevitable. (It seems clear that a conception of the *a priori* obtained in such a way cannot be more than relative, but this point is often less clearly acknowledged in recent authors than it is in Carnap). The other basis is particularly striking from our point of view. It is a claim to have direct insight into the necessity of certain truths. In its reliance on supposed direct insight, this view is reminiscent of Platonic Atomism; its assumption of *necessity* as the subject of such insight, however, is a distinguishing feature. These bases are not always clearly separated, perhaps in part because both result in great weight being put on what are called "intuitions." In the case of the first basis, the intuition is into the structure of our language; in the case of the second, into the nature of things, taken as independent of language. (This distinction is too simple: often a claim about "into the nature of things" is grounded on the supposed intuition that a certain statement is commonsensical, or what most people would ordinarily say.) It would be absurd to seize too readily on the word "intuition" and on the fact that it is the standard translation of Kant's *Anschauung*, and to say that we are dealing with a revival of the idea of intellec-



tual intuition. Nevertheless, the contrast with Kantianism is clear and, especially in the case of supposed insight into necessities in the nature of things, quite direct.

Our discussion of analytic philosophy has, of course, been both summary and highly selective. We have attempted to convey some idea of the way in which analytic philosophy appears when examined with Kant's Copernican Revolution in mind. We have suggested that analytic philosophy grapples with issues to which that nexus of Kantian ideas is directly relevant. Also, despite the diversity within analytic philosophy, it is in general opposed to those ideas. Our discussion of Platonic Atomism suggests that this anti-Kantianism can to some extent be traced back to the influence, on Russell and Moore, of Hegel's reading of Kant, and to their wholesale rejection of any form of Idealism.

## NOTES

- 1 G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1903), 132–33.
- 2 See below, pp. 459–66; see also Nicholas Griffin, *Russell's Idealist Apprenticeship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), and the present author's *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
- 3 Hans D. Sluga, "Frege as a Rationalist" in *Studies on Frege*, vol. I ed. M. Schirn (Froman-Holzborg: Stuttgart-Bad, Cannstatt, 1976); the passage quoted is on 28.
- 4 The work of Sluga has played a large role in bringing those elements to the fore. As well as the essay already cited, see his book *Gottlob Frege* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980). The lack of recognition of Kantian elements in Frege's thought is surely due, at least in part, to the fact that Frege never articulates in any systematic way the Kantian metaphysical and epistemological views that he seems to assume.
- 5 An important figure here is Coleridge. See Jean Pucelle, *L'Idealisme en Angleterre* (Neuchatel: Editions de la Baconniere, 1955).
- 6 James Hutchinson Stirling, *The Secret of Hegel* (London: Longmans, Roberts, and Green, 1865).
- 7 First published 1874; reissued with a foreword and minor revisions by J.N. Findlay as *Hegel's Logic: Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).
- 8 Edward Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, 2 vols. (Glas-

- gow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1877; 2nd ed. 1909); and *Hegel* (Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1883).
- 9 John M.E. McTaggart, *A Commentary on Hegel's Logic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910); and *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921). Besides McTaggart, the influence of James Ward should be mentioned; see Griffin, *Russell's Idealist Apprentice*, especially Chap. 2 and 3.
  - 10 Bertrand Russell, *An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897). For discussion of this work, see Griffin, *Russell's Idealist Apprenticeship*, and the present author's *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, Chap. 3.
  - 11 *My Philosophical Development* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), 42.
  - 12 *Mind*, n.s., v. 6 (1897), 235–40.
  - 13 See, for example, Russell's *My Philosophical Development*, p. 54: "Moore led the way, but I followed closely in his footsteps."
  - 14 Bertrand Russell, *Principles of Mathematics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1937; 1st ed. 1903); hereafter cited in the main body of the text.
  - 15 Here I rely upon an interpretation of Hegel as building on, rather than wholly rejecting, the Kantian Copernican Revolution. I cannot defend this interpretation in this essay. See, for instance, Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
  - 16 *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* (Riga: Hartknoch, 1781; 2nd ed. 1787). I have largely, but not wholly, taken my translations from Kemp Smith, *Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Macmillan, 1968; 1st ed. 1929). I follow the usual practice of citing the original page numbers of the first edition as A, those of the second as B.
  - 17 Here, perhaps even more than elsewhere, I compress very complex material with inevitable distortions. I ignore, for example, the difficult but significant distinction between a form of intuition and a formal intuition.  
 Note that Kant also suggests, in the Introduction to the *Critique*, that "the two stems of human knowledge," sensibility and understanding, "perhaps spring from a common, but to us unknown, root" (A 15–B 29). This suggestion, and the problematic nature of the distinction, was important to Kant's idealist successors.
  - 18 *The Works of T.H. Green*, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1894), III, 146.
  - 19 See Nettleship's "Memoir," *ibid.*, vol. III, esp. p. lxx: "The teaching of philosophy in Oxford at this time centered round certain works of Aristotle, to which portions of Plato has recently been added. Modern philosophy was scarcely recognised officially as part of the course, but the writings of J.S. Mill, especially his *Logic*, were largely read, and . . . were probably the most powerful element in the intellectual leaven of the place."

- 20 See especially his long introduction to Hume's *Treatise*, which contains a lengthy discussion of Locke and a briefer discussion of Berkeley, as well as an exhaustive consideration of Hume. This Introduction is reprinted as pp. 1–371 of vol. I of Green's *Works*.
- 21 T.H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A.C. Bradley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883). This book was left unfinished at Green's death and was completed, on the basis of Green's notes, by the editor. The parts that concern us were put in final form by Green.
- 22 For Hegel's criticism of Kant, see *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* vol. III, trans. E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simon (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), pt. 3, sec. 3; B (*Werkausgabe*, ed. Moldenhauer & Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), XX, 329–86; future references to Hegel in German are all to this edition); *G.W.F. Hegel's Logic, Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), sect. 42–60 (*Werkausgabe*, VIII, 112–47); *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), *passim*, e.g. pp. 46–47, 79–80, 396–97 (*Werkausgabe*, VI, 20, 254, 261).
- 23 Hegel frequently criticizes the Kantian thing in itself, an entity beyond all possible human knowledge. See, for examples, *Encyclopedia Logic*, sect. 44, 45 (*Werkausgabe*, VIII, 120–21); *Science of Logic*, pp. 489–90 (*Werkausgabe*, VI, 135–36). For Hegel's criticism of the Kantian distinction between intuition and the understanding, see *Science of Logic*, pp. 585–89 (*Werkausgabe*, VI, 488–493).
- 24 This representation of Green's view slides over what is, for Kant, a vital distinction. According to Kant, we cannot *know* of things as they are in themselves, but we can *think* of them. In Kant, however, this distinction presupposes that between intuition and understanding; Green, like Hegel and many other post-Kantian Idealists, did not accept this latter distinction.
- 25 *Science of Logic*, p. 491 (*Werkausgabe*, VI, 261); the same point is made in a number of other passages, such as *Encyclopedia Logic*, sect. 42 (addition) and 45 (addition) (*Werkausgabe*, VIII, 117–19 and 121–23), and throughout the discussion in *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Pt 3, sect. 3, B (*Werkausgabe*, XX, 322, 332, 333, 337, 351, 381).
- 26 *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, p. 431 (*Werkausgabe*, XX, 337).
- 27 Moore wrote two versions of "Metaphysical Basis of Ethics," the first in 1897 and the second in 1899, and submitted each in the competition for a "Prize Fellowship" at Trinity College, Cambridge (the second version was successful). The manuscripts are owned by the Cambridge University Library; I consulted them when they were on loan to Trinity College, Cambridge. I thank the Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge,

and the Syndics of Cambridge University Library. For discussion of this work, see Thomas Baldwin, *G.E. Moore* (London: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 1990), Chap. I, and the present author's *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, Chap. 4.

- 28 "The Metaphysical Basis of Ethics," 1897 version, Chap. 1. The only surviving copy of the dissertation is missing a number of pages at various points and is numbered in several inconsistent ways. If one numbers the surviving pages in sequence, beginning with the Preface and ignoring gaps, this passage occurs on p. 39.
- 29 This way of putting the matter presupposes Kant's distinction of formal from transcendental logic. Some of Kant's successors claimed the former cannot really exist as an independent subject, in which case the claim in the text is too simple. The crucial implication of Moore's use of the word "logical" here is in the idea that there need be no consciousness or experiencing subject involved; logical relations obtain between propositions, conceived of as independent and self-subsistent entities. Neither propositions nor the relations among them are to be thought of as in any way dependent upon thought, or experience, or anything mental. (Contrast this sense of "logical" with that used by Russell in the *Foundations of Geometry*; see p. 448, above.)
- 30 *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937; 1st ed. 1900).
- 31 See Russell, *Foundations of Geometry*, pp. 2–3, where he says that "to Kant *a priori* and *subjective* were almost interchangeable terms"; he also makes it clear that he takes the subjective to fall within the scope of empirical psychology.
- 32 Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 451. This quotation gives a good idea of the tone of Russell's extreme realism, but it hardly does justice to the doctrinal questions at issue. An Idealist may agree that numbers and islands and Indians all have the same ontological status, and that they are all discovered in any ordinary sense of that word. In fact, the doctrinal questions are surprisingly elusive and hard to formulate. Leaving aside the particular question of mathematics, a Kantian or Hegelian would agree that most of the objects of our knowledge are independent of us – in any ordinary sense of "independent of us." The real issue must be about the existence of a non-ordinary, or transcendental, sense of "independent of us." Russell and Moore do not explicitly confront this issue; they assume the ordinary sense of "independent of us" and take the only question to be whether objects have this property. This seems to leave the idealist view open to easy refutation.
- 33 Moore, *Principia Ethica*. The comparison between "good" and "yellow" also suggests the sense in which for Moore even ethics is a theoretical

matter – an issue of knowledge, not action. Ethics, for Moore, rests on the (non-sensuous) perception of the notion “good”; the relation of this perception to action is a further question.

- 34 Compare also Moore’s statement about truth in “The Nature of Judgment” (*Mind*, 1899): ‘If [the proposition that this paper exists] is true, it means only that the concepts, which are combined in specific relations in the concept of this paper, are also combined in a specific manner with the concept of existence. *That specific manner is something immediately known, like red*” (pp. 180–81; emphasis added). He also says “the nature of a true proposition is the ultimate *datum*” (in the same place).
- 35 In “The Nature of Judgment” (p. 183), Moore distinguishes his view from that of Kant precisely in this way, by saying that his theory “rejects the attempt to explain the “possibility of knowledge”, accepting the cognitive relation as an ultimate *datum* or presupposition.
- 36 See notes 33, 34, above.
- 37 They clearly thought that the Idealists, if they had done nothing else, had shown that empiricism is false. Thus Moore, in “The Refutation of Idealism” (*Mind*, n.s. v. xii, 1903; reprinted in *Philosophical Studies* [New York: The Humanities Press, 1951]): “I consider it to be the main service of the philosophic school, to which the modern Idealists belong, that they have insisted on distinguishing ‘sensation’ and ‘thought’ and on emphasising the importance of the latter. Against Sensationalism or Empiricism they have maintained the true view.” (*Philosophical Studies*, p. 7). Russell says quite bluntly: “empiricism is radically opposed to the philosophy advocated in the present work” (*Principles of Mathematics*, p. 493). This view of empiricism is no doubt a positive influence of Hegelianism on Platonic Atomism – although not in any very direct way on analytic philosophy as a whole.
- 38 I speak here of *ordinary* physical objects, because it was Russell’s view that sense-data are themselves physical objects – although not, of course, ordinary physical objects. See Russell, “The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics” (*Scientia*, 4 [1914]; reprinted in *Mysticism and Logic* [New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 1918], 145–79); see also Hylton, *Russell, Idealism, and The Emergence of Analytic Philosophy* Chap. 8, sect. 2.
- 39 Cf. Russell’s *Leibniz*: “That all sound philosophy should begin with an analysis of propositions, is a truth too evident, perhaps to demand a proof” (p. 8).
- 40 In the final section of a 1906 essay, “The Nature of Truth” (*Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s., v. VII), Russell discusses the multiple relation theory and declares himself uncertain of its correctness. The first two sections of this essay are reprinted in *Philosophical Essays* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966; 1st ed. 1910) under the title “The Monistic

- Theory of Truth and Falsehood." The final section is replaced by a separate essay, "On the Nature of Truth and Falsehood," in which Russell advocates multiple relation theory, without his previous doubts. Vol. I of Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910) also puts forward the multiple relation theory.
- 41 This assumption may perhaps be explained in part by the fact that Frege and Russell were mathematicians. The idea that each sentence has, or ideally should have, a perfectly precise and definite content that can, in principle, be made fully explicit seems very natural if one takes the sentences of mathematics as one's paradigm. See W.D. Hart, "Clarity," *The Analytic Tradition*, ed. David Bell and Neil Cooper (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990). It is also worth noting that the procedure of analysis, as described here, owes much to the logic of Frege and Russell, and to the idea that representing the content of a sentence in logical notation is not only clearer but also in some sense more accurate to the real nature of that content.
- 42 In G.E. Moore, *Philosophical Papers* (New York: Collier Books, 1962; 1st ed. 1959). W.D. Hart called to my attention the significance of Moore's procedure here.
- 43 Within analytic philosophy, as I have already indicated, it makes a decisive difference whether the primary source of "ordinary knowledge" is taken to be commonsense or science. G.E. Moore is of course an example of a philosopher for whom commonsense is primary. For others, such as Russell, Carnap, and, perhaps most notably, Quine, science plays this role. Quine, as we shall see, goes so far as to deny that philosophy is different in kind from any other sort of scientific knowledge; see note 58, below.
- 44 This is not, of course, to say that Kant's conception is without its difficulties; in particular, it must face the issue of how we can know the conditions of the possibility of experience – which may be either an epistemic question or a question about how it is possible even to think about such limits. These problems were important in the very earliest criticism of Kant, and thus in the development of post-Kantian Idealism (see F. C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987]); their analogue was, as we shall see, important also in the reaction to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.
- 45 "Kant never doubted for a moment that the propositions of logic are synthetic, whereas he rightly perceived that those of mathematics are synthetic. It has since appeared that logic is just as synthetic as all other kinds of truth" (*Principles of Mathematics*, p. 457). Russell makes a similar point nearly ten years later; see *Problems of Philosophy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), 79.

- 46 *Principles of Mathematics* does not discuss analyticity but refers us to *The Philosophy of Leibniz*. There Russell seems to deny that there are any analytic propositions; see pp. 16–17. Similarly Moore, in “Necessity” (*Mind*, n.s. 9, 1900) argues that allegedly analytic propositions are in fact synthetic (see p. 295). Hegel too argued against Kant’s view that some truths are analytic; see section 115 of *Hegel’s Logic*. Here, I suspect, there is clear Hegelian influence on Platonic Atomism – that Russell and Moore accepted the Hegelian criticism of Kant. Contrast the case of Frege, whose knowledge of Kant was not filtered through Hegelian critics, and who took the reduction of mathematics to logic to show that mathematics is analytic. I do not emphasize this Hegelian influence on Platonic Atomism, since it cannot be thought of as affecting analytic philosophy in general. The issue is further complicated by the fact that the synthetic status of mathematics is crucial for one aspect of Russell’s use of logicism to argue against Idealism; see the present author’s “Logic in Russell’s Logicism” in *The Analytic Tradition*, ed. David Bell and Neil Cooper (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).
- 47 *Principles of Mathematics*, Preface, p. xv; see p. 462, above, where the rest of the sentence is quoted.
- 48 Russell, indeed, realized that the theory of types could not be based on the self-evidence of the axioms. One response was to say that the axioms are justified because they allow for the derivation of the theorems, and *they* are self-evident, so that there is “inductive evidence” for the truth of the axioms; see *Principia Mathematica*, vol. I, p. 59. But this view is not one that he could easily assimilate, since other views of his seem to demand that the status of logic is special, and quite different from that of non-logical truths.
- 49 Russell and Moore themselves were not among those who put great weight on the idea of necessity. See, for instance, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 454; “The Nature of Judgment,” pp. 188–89.
- 50 Wittgenstein, *Logische-Philosophische Abhandlung*, trans. D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness under the title *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961, 1966). As is customary, I cite passages by numbered section.
- 51 See the present author’s “Analyticity and the Indeterminacy of Translation,” *Synthese*, 1982, for related discussion.
- 52 This is, of course, a drastically incomplete account even of the issue of the *a priori* in the *Tractatus*. It is worth noting that just as it is characteristic of Idealism to sublime the notion of the mind (not your mind or my mind but The Mind – compare, most obviously, T.H. Green; see pp. 455–58, above), so the *Tractatus* may be said to sublime the notion of language (not English or Latin or German but *The* (underlying) Lan-

guage, or at least the structure that all languages must share). Then, to continue the crude analogy, just as a Kantian or post-Kantian Idealist can think of *a priori* truths as true in virtue of the nature of the mind, so Wittgenstein thinks of his *a priori* truths as true in virtue of the nature of language.

- 53 Carnap speaks of "Wittgenstein's mystical attitude, and his philosophy of the 'ineffable,'" *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, ed. P.A. Schilpp (LaSalle, Ill: Open Court, 1963), "Autobiography," 28. Carnap is speaking of Neurath's critical attitude toward Wittgenstein, but it is clear that on these points he sympathises with Neurath.
- 54 There is evidence that in the early days of the Vienna Circle some, at least, of its members did subscribe to something more like Wittgenstein's view. See Carnap, *Logical Syntax of Language* (London: Kegan Paul Trench, 1937), esp. 322.
- 55 Here see "Analyticity and the Indeterminacy of Translation," note 51, above.
- 56 See Carnap's response to Quine's "Carnap and Logical Truth," *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, pp. 915–22.
- 57 Besides "Carnap and Logical Truth" and the well-known "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" (in Quine's *From a Logical Point of View* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953]), see also Quine's reply to Charles Parsons in *The Library of Living Philosophers, volume XVIII, The Philosophy of W.V.O. Quine*, ed. L.E. Hahn & P.A. Schilpp (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1986).
- 58 Quine's holism, and his rejection of any dualism of form and content, might remind one of Hegel. For Quine, as perhaps for Hegel, there can be no conception of the framework of knowledge that separates it from the substance of knowledge. In each case the result is a holistic attitude toward knowledge and a radical re-conception of the status of philosophy itself. The comparison cannot, of course, be pressed very far. Quine's emphasis on natural science, in particular, is a fundamental point of disanalogy.

A comparison between Quine and Hegel is also drawn by Richard Schuldenfrei, although on a rather different basis.. See his "Quine in Perspective," *Journal of Philosophy* LXIX (1972).

- 59 Quine's acceptance of the idea that knowledge is mediated is evident, I take it, in his insistence that we cannot avoid adherence to some theory of the world, even though there are alternatives to any such given theory. He holds that these facts do not prejudice the truth of what we say or the reality of what we talk about. Quine therefore denies that there is a fundamental contrast between the real and the theoretical; any such contrast would require a sense of "real" according to which the real is



independent of theory, but Quine denies that there is any such sense. Thus: "Everything to which we concede existence is a posit from the standpoint of the theory-building process, and simultaneously real from the standpoint of the theory that is being built. Nor let us look down on the standpoint of the theory as make-believe; for we can never do better than occupy the standpoint of some theory or other, the best we can muster at the time" (*Word and Object* Cambridge: Mass., M.I.T. Press, 1960], 22).

The issue of whether knowledge is mediated is, as our discussion of atomism suggested, related to the issue of holism versus atomism; thus it is not surprising that in Quine the insistence on the mediacy of knowledge goes with a holistic view of knowledge. The fact that those notions that one might think of as philosophical or framework notions – including the notion of experience itself – are supposed to be understood and justified in terms of ordinary, that is, for Quine scientific, knowledge suggests a sense in which his system closes on itself. This circularity is explicit in "Epistemology Naturalised," in *Ontological Relativity, and other essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969). Here too we see, in more concrete form, an illustration of the comparison between Quine and Hegel made in the previous note.

