# THE IMPLICATIONS OF LINGUISTIC

## ANALYSIS FOR PHILOSOPHICAL

### THEOLOGY

By

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# PREFACE

Whether friends or foes, most contemporary philosophers are becoming more and more aware of the 'significance' of the modern analytic movement in philosophy. Therefore, attempts at clarifying this movement, and efforts directed towards realizing more vividly what it really involves, assume great value and importance. The present thesis may be generally described as a very modest attempt in that direction. It is divided into two complementary parts, with more emphasis on the second. The first part consists in a very preliminary attempt at sketching the main features of the 'linguistic' movement; the chief purpose of which is to provide some kind of background as to the general philosophic position to which belong the main contributors to the 'theological' literature we shall be analyzing in part two. It certainly is not a definitive history of the movement, nor an evaluative analysis of its general claims and achievements. Part one merely provides the 'setting', and one can very well do without it; because, for the present purpose of this thesis, we are not concerned, only, with what philosophers 'say' philosophy should be. We are more concerned in finding how they have, as a matter of fact, gone

about 'doing' philosophy.  One of the modest aims of
the writer, I repeat, is that this thesis may help us
'see' a little clearer what linguistic analysis consists
in, through the study of the literature of this movement
in the field of philosophical theology in the last
twenty years or so.

I wish to express my gratitude to Professor
James K. Mishalani for the valuable advice which he
rendered me.  My thanks also go to Professor Roland
Puccetti for his help and encouragement in choosing
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Beirut,
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# PART I

## THE "SCHOOL" OF LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS: BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT.

### CHAPTER ONE

### THE BACKGROUND OF THE LINGUISTIC MOVEMENT

I ought to make it clear at the very beginning that when I use the expression "linguistic analysis', I am primarily referring to the later views of Ludwig Wittgenstein, and to those contemporary philosophers who were considerably influenced by Wittgenstein's conception of, and approach to, philosophy and philosophical problems. I must emphasize, however, that no rigid and neat formulation of linguistic analysis ought to be expected, for the simple reason that such a formulation would be quite arbitrary if not impossible. For one thing the movement is still growing and developing; it has not, yet, been historicized. It is, moreover, an _activity_ rather than a formalized procedure. Thus, it should not be imagined that Wittgenstein, or anybody else for that matter, wrote a 'prescription' as to how we should do philosophy, and the linguistic analysts set out to follow this prescription! The linguistic analysts, to use one of their expressions, constitute a "family", rather than a "class", of instances. They were motivated by a variety of interests; and their 'findings' are not always identical.

Viewed from the standpoint of the cummulative philosophical tradition, linguistic analysis is, to say the least, quite 'unorthodox'. The history of its development can, therefore, be traced back to a 'reaction' against a certain prevailing view, or set of prevailing views. And while the name of Wittgenstein, quite justifiably, dominates the scene, he is by no means the only important contributor to the rise and development of linguistic analysis. G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell are two of the very first pioneers in this field. They, each in his own way, reacted very strongly against Absolute Idealism which was the prevailing philosophic mode in England in the 1890ies and which they themselves had earlier embraced. However, neither Moore, and certainly not Russell, can be safely labled as a 'linguistic analyst' in the modern Wittgensteinian sense. We shall therefore be only concerned with those aspects of their philosophies which have led, either positively or negatively, to the rise and development of the present "school" of linguistic analysis.

Logical positivism will not be dealt with in any detail. Partly because very few, if any at all, strict Logical Positivists still do exist; and primarily since it dismisses the whole issue with which this thesis is

concerned: The problem of the possible meaning and significance of theological statements simply does not arise, for these statements are too easily declared to be nonsensical and meaningless utterances.

## A. G.E. Moore: Defender of 'Common Sense' and Pioneer in 'Analysis'

The indebtedness of linguistic analysis to the philosophy of G.E. Moore can hardly, I think, be overestimated. It was in the writings and practice of Moore that our very key-terms, 'language' and 'analysis', were first to assume predominant importance. He was struck by the strange things that the Idealists of his day, and metaphysicians in general, asserted, and thought it necessary to find out what was exactly meant by these assertions. One of his primary tasks was, therefore, to examine the 'language' of philosophers. His conclusion was that these assertions cannot be true for the very simple reason that they ran contrary to what common sense conceives to be true. The difficulty is not, Moore thinks, in 'establishing' the truth of common sense truisms, but in finding proper analyses of their

meanings.[1] He was thus led to consider the nature and significance of 'analysis'. Moore's influence can, therefore, be traced in terms of: (a) his practice, i.e., the way he dealt with specific problems in philosophy, and (b) his theory, i.e., his conception of analysis, the main function of the philosopher being to provide proper analyses.

## 1. Moore's Practice.

The greatest virtue of Moore is that he had the courage of appearing naive. He set out to defend common-sense[2] when common-sense very badly needed defense. The Idealists, represented chiefly by F.H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet, had set out to 'establish' ultimate truths (which would finally merge into the one Truth - the Absolute), and to make general claims as to the nature of the Universe and Reality. They had, on the one hand, a strong yearning towards system-construction, inclusiveness, all-embracing harmonies, and unifying principles; and they had, on the other hand, a 'grudge' against plurality, separateness,

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(1) See Moore's 'Defense of Common-Sense' in Contemporary British Philosophy, Ed. by J.H. Muirhead, 2nd Ser., London, 1953, Bradford & Dickens, p.216.

(2) Ibid., pp.192-223.

conjunction and even relatedness. They, consequently, spent great efforts trying to 'prove' that most, if not all, of what we ordinarily take for granted and consider as real, was nothing but mere 'appearances', for the only Reality was the Absolute of whom, due to our finitude, we can have no more than a 'glimpse'.

Moore, for good or for bad, seems to have been devoid of such motives. Rhetoric and paradox did not appeal to him in the least; and he constantly demanded, whenever presented with 'prophetic' utterances pertaining to things such as the unreality of time and the non-existence of material objects etc., that we should state clearly and distinctly, in plain English, the exact meaning of what we are asserting. It was consideration of such 'strange' assertions, more than anything else, that led Moore to develop his 'canon' of common-sense, and to stress the importance of ordinary language. He recounts how, when in the course of a conversation with McTaggart the latter expressed his view that Time was unreal, "this (i.e., McTaggart's assertion) must have seemed to me (as it still does) a perfectly monstrous proposition, and I did my best to argue against it." Then he goes on to say, "I do not think that the world or the sciences would ever have suggested to me any

philosophical problems.  What has suggested philosophical problems to me is things which other philosophers have said about the world or the sciences."[1] Most of Moore's early writings consist in taking one or more of those "monstrous propositions", and then trying to 'translate' them into plain language by making them less abstract and more specific, and then pointing out that what these propositions assert cannot be true since they contradict plain facts and undeniable truisms.  This was precisely what he did in his 'Defence of Common-Sense' and in a number of other typical articles.[2]

In the 'Defence of Common-Sense' he starts by enumerating a number of familiar and accepted facts or 'truisms' which, he says: "Iknow, with certainty, to be true."  And, most importantly, the sense in which such propositions he knows to be true is not a peculiar, sophisticated, or special sense:  These propositions are true in the ORDINARY sense of the term. "Some philosophers

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(1) The Philosophy of G.E.Moore, Ed. P.A.Schilpp, North Western Univ., U.S.A., 1942, p.14.

(2) See: "The Refutation of Idealism", First published in Mind, Vol.XII,1903, Reprinted in: Philosophical Studies, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1948, pp.1-30.

See also: "External and Internal Relations', Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1919-20; Reprinted in Philosophical Studies, pp.276-309.

seem to have thought it legitimate to use the word 'true' in such a sense, that a proposition which is partially false may nevertheless also be true... I wish, therefore, to make it quite plain that I am not using 'true' in any such sense. I am using it in a sense (and I think this is the ordinary sense) that if a proposition is partially false, it follows that it is <u>not</u> true, though , of course, it may be <u>partially</u> true."[1] Moore simply would'nt tolerate, regardless of what our motives may be, denying, in any sense, what we always know to be true. What is not certain, Moore urges, is not the 'truth' of propositions asserted by statements such as 'my body exists' or 'time is real', but the proper 'analyses' of such propositions.[2] What, according to Moore, the proper analysis of a proposition consists in, is a question we shall consider later.

'The Refutation of Idealism' is another example of how Moore tries to argue against a philosophical position, by first choosing a claim which is central to the position in question, then stating its meaning in a literal and precise language, and finally pointing out

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(1) <u>Contemporary British Phil.</u>,OP.Cit., p.197
(2) Ibid., pp.198,216.

that this claim runs contrary to the 'common-sense view
of the world'. A central assertion that Idealism makes
is that the universe is spiritual. But while "chairs
and tables and mountains seem to be very different from
us, (yet), when the whole universe is declared to be
spiritual, it is certainly meant to assert that they are
far more like us than we think."[1] Moore does not claim
to have, thus, proven that the world is not spiritual,
but that the Idealist's 'arguments' by no means succeed
in supporting their conclusion.

The general position of Moore which I have been
trying to describe may lend itself to certain misinter-
pretations. I would like, therefore, before proceeding
to consider Moore's notion of analysis, to make two
qualifications:

First; Moore was primarily defending ordinary
beliefs not usage.[2] He certainly stresses the importance
of ordinary language, but does not make ordinary usage the

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(1) Ibid., p.1

(2) See John Passmore, A Hundred Years of
Philosophy, N.Y., 1957, p. 207.

infallible standard of correctness and meaningfulness.[1]
Moore would 'allow', in principle at least, an addition to,
or alteration of, ordinary language provided it is shown
that a certain usage is inadequate and that the newly
stipulated term or expression serves our purposes better.
Usually, however, Moore is not 'easily' convinced of the
inappropriateness or inadequacy of ordinary usage, and
is quite particular in demanding to be told clearly and
distinctly the exact meaning of the new term. A thorough
investigation of ordinary language and its various usages
would, on Moore's view, considerably reduce the number of
our technical and highly abstract terms. The fact
remains, however, that Moore's greatest emphasis was
primarily on the truth and authenticity of ordinary
beliefs rather than that of ordinary language.[2]

Second; Although Moore believes that a major
source of philosophical problems is the fact that
philosophers, quite often, set out to find 'answers'

(1) For such an interpretation of Moore's position
see Malcolm's article: 'Moore and Ordinary
Language' in The Philosophy of G.E. Moore,
Op.Cit., pp.343-368.

(2) See Warnock, English Philosophy Since 1900,
Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, pp.21-23;
and G.A. Paul's article "G.E. Moore: Analysis,
Common Usage and Common Sense", in The
Revolution in Philosophy, (a collection of
articles), London, 1957, pp.56-69.

before, first, being reasonably clear as to what the 'question' is about;[1] and although he accuses metaphysicians of making very ambitious claims on the basis of little evidence; yet, he never goes to the extreme of declaring metaphysical assertions as nonsensical and utterly meaningless. It was, again, the _truth_ of what metaphysicians were asserting that interested Moore most. Far from holding that metaphysical assertions were meaningless, Moore assumed, in most of his writings, that these assertions had 'some' meaning, though confused and deceptive. He spent considerable effort trying to pin down the different elements that were involved in particular metaphysical assertions: trying to make what is implicit in them more explicit. According to Moore, therefore, a metaphysical statement, does not assert 'nothing' (i.e., is not meaningless or nonsensical) but rather asserts too many things while still retaining the deceptive appearance of being simple. When, for example, we begin to argue about the question whether Idealism is true or not, "I think", Moore says, "we are apt to forget what a vast number of arguments this interesting question must involve: We are apt to assume, that if one or two

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(1) See the opening paragraph of Moore's _Principia Ethica_.

points be made on either side, the whole case is won."[1]

## 2. Moore's Conception of 'Analysis'.

But is the philosopher's function only to 'correct' others, to disentangle their confused utterances? The philosopher, according to Moore, has another task which is equally important. This is the task of Analysis. And it is by virtue of the specific method of analysis that a philosopher chooses to employ, that he differs from others. This does not mean, however, that 'analysis' is completely identifiable with philosophy. The fact that Moore made significant contributions to the 'analytic tradition' in philosophy does not, by itself, quite justify the claim that he identifies philosophy with analysis.[2] Be it as it may, one can safely, I think, generalize and say that Moore, in his practice and theory, suggests that two of the important tasks that a philosopher may have are: first, that of defending the truth of ordinary beliefs; and second, that of trying to find the proper analyses of such beliefs. In one sense the 'task of analysis' is complimentary to the 'task of correction', in another it

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(1) Philosophical Studies, Op.Cit., p.2, My Italics.
(2) See, Passmore, Op.Cit., p.214...

is contrary to it: Complimentary, in the sense that
analysis is supposed, in principle at least, to make
what is implicit in our ordinary beliefs more explicit;
Contrary to it, since, in the process of analysis, we
have to employ methods and concepts that are not as
akin in their nature to our common-sense beliefs as they
are to what we are supposed to be defending common sense
against.

I hope that it has become clear by now that
Moore's aim was to defend what the "common sense view
of the world" accepts as true and certain against the
more or less abstract and sophisticated views that some
philosophers have held.  This, it has been said, "is a
laudible aim but it has been persued by a method of
analysis which can produce paradoxes just as sophistica-
ted as those of the Idealists."[1] We now turn to consider
Moore's conception of analysis.

I have found it very helpful to use Alan White's
method and terminology in exposing Moore's conception - or

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(1) See E.F. Carrit's review of The Philosophical
Predicament, by Winston H.F. Barnes, in
"Philosophy", 1951, pp. 361 f.

better conceptions - of analysis.[1] White believes that
Moore developed three, more or less distinct, conceptions
of analysis. These are: (a) analysis as inspection, (b)
analysis as division, and (c) analysis as distinction.
In the case of the third method, though Moore practiced
it considerably, yet he does not seem to have considered
it as a method of analysis.

The later Wittgenstein considered analysis as
inspection a fundamental misconception, and consequently,
as a source of misconception. Analysis as division bears
in very important respects upon Logical Atomism, and has,
therefore, an important negative influence upon the
development of the views of the later Wittgenstein.
Finally analysis as distinction is very much affiliated
with what the later Wittgenstein conceived the proper way
of doing philosophy to consist in.

(a) Analysis as Inspection.

A fundamental presupposition of this notion is
that a term names or stands for some kind of a fixed

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(1) See Alan White, G.E.Moore, A Critical
Exposition, Oxford, 1958. Special reference
is made to Chapter Five, entitled 'Analysis',
pp. 66-83.

entity or concept;[1] and that that concept is already
familiar to us though perhaps to a limited extent and in
a sort of vague or implicit manner. What is to be analyzed
is, therefore, already there before us; and all we have
to do is to <u>inspect</u> it, to <u>concentrate attention</u> upon it,
to <u>look into</u> it, etc.... In speaking of his analysis of
truth and falsehood in terms of the relation of corres-
pondence, Moore writes "That there is such a relation,
seems to me clear and all that is new about my defini-
tions is that they CONCENTRATE ATTENTION upon just <u>that</u>
relation, and make <u>it</u> the essential point in the defini-
tions of truth and falsehood.... The essential point is
to CONCENTRATE ATTENTION upon the relation <u>itself</u>: to
HOLD IT BEFORE YOUR MIND, in the sense in which when I
name the colour 'vermilion', you can hold before your
mind the colour that I mean. If you are not acquainted
with this relation in the same sort of way as you are
acquainted with the colour vermilion, no amount of words
will serve to explain what it is...."[2]

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(1) For Moore's conception of meaning see,
White, Op.Cit., Ch. IV, pp.39-65.

(2) G.E. Moore, <u>Some Main Problems of Philosophy</u>,
London, 1958, p. 279 (Capitalized italics
are mine, underlined italics are Moore's).
See also: Moore's <u>Ethics</u>, 1952, p.100

To understand what is involved in the relation of corres-
pondence between a true proposition and the fact it
expresses, we have 'to concentrate attention upon this
relation' to 'hold it before our mind'. And analysis, in
this sense, would consist in giving an account of what we
'saw' or 'discovered' as a result of our inspection. An
analysis of x, for example, would be the result of trying
to answer the question 'What do we think of when we think
of x'[1] Or again, "...But what sort of an entity is it?
(i.e., 'My present seeing of this sense-datum' which Moore
chooses to call an 'entity') That is a question which it
seems too extraordinarily difficult to answer, mainly
because it is so difficult to DISCOVER exactly WHAT IT IS
THAT I AM KNOWING WHEN I KNOW THAT I AM SEEING THIS. But
I will do my best to say what sort of an entity I think
it is, and why I think so."[2] In Wittgenstein's view, as
we shall see, this involves an artificial shortcut and a
serious oversimplification. Because for one thing the
meaning of a term, he believed, is not some one fixed
item - be it an entity or a concept - and that therefore

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(1) Proceedings of The Aristotelian Society,
    VII, p.204.
(2) Proceedings of The Aristotelian Society,
    VXXI, pp. 134. (Italics are mine)

this whole business of concentrating upon, and inspecting,
<u>its</u> meaning is futile; and for another thing Wittgenstein
did not believe in 'the digging' for the full meaning of
a word as if it lay hidden somewhere waiting to be
discovered.

### (b) <u>Analysis as Division</u>.

Analysis as division is simply the notion that
understanding something consists in breaking it into its
constituent parts. Historically, this is characteristic
of the British Empiricists, especially Locke and Hume.
The former spoke of 'complex ideas' as reducible to
'simple ideas'; the latter attempted, more systematically,
to propound a theory of meaning whereby every expression,
which expresses a 'matter of fact', is reducible to
sense 'impressions' which are the ultimate data of
experience. An important consequence of this position
is that nothing can be analysed unless it is a complex
whole, for how could it, otherwise, be broken into its
constituent parts? Thus we find that certain concepts
which possess an inherent 'simplicity' acquire a sense

of ultimacy in Moore's philosophy.[1]

This conception is applied and discussed through-
out Moore's writings. "A thing becomes intelligible," he
tells us, "when it is analysed into its constituent
concepts."[2] Elsewhere we find that Moore's examination
of what is called aesthetic enjoyments consists in an
attempt to answer the question "what are the main elements
included in such an appreciation" (i.e., the appreciation
of a beautiful object.)[3]  Moore did not only 'apply'
the method of division very often in his writings, he,
moreover, considers it as THE method of analysis.  For it
is, mostly, the method of division that Moore has in mind
whenever he tries to talk about HIS method of analysis.
The clearest, and latest, expression of his conception
of analysis is found in his 'Reply to My Critics' which
appeared in the Schilpp Volume in 1942, specifically his
reply to C.H. Langford's article "Moore's Notion of
Analysis".[4]

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(1) Examples of such notions are: in Ethics, the
    notion of 'good' as a simple unanalysable
    concept, and in epistimology, the notion of
    'correspondence' as the relation existing
    between a 'fact' and the proposition which
    asserts it - a notion which we can comprehend
    but cannot analyse.

(2) Mind, V.II,p.182.
(3) Principia Ethica, p.189.
(4) The Philosophy of G.E.Moore, Op.Cit.,Langford's
    Article:pp.319-42, Moore's reply:pp.660-67.

Analysis, in this sense, may be considered as a form of definition; only, Moore would insist that it is concepts that we are dealing with, not words and verbal expressions merely: The analyst is not a lexicographer. The concept which is to be analysed, or 'defined', is called the analysandum; the concept or group of concepts in terms of which it is to be analysed are called the analysans. For an analysis to be a "correct" analysis, the expression of the analysans must be synonymous with the expression of the analysandum. It is in this sense that to supply an analysis for a concept is synonymous with defining it. And it is precisely this fact which gives rise to the so called 'problem' or 'paradox' of analysis. For if the analysans adds nothing which is not already contained in the analysandum, we cannot claim that the 'analysis' has achieved its purposes, viz. the acquisition of 'new' knowledge about the original concept, or rendering that concept more understandable and less obscure. On the other hand if the analysans adds something which is not already contained in the analysandum, then the expression of the analysans and the expression of the analysandum cease to be synonymous. As Langford neatly puts it "if the verbal expression representing the analysandum has the same meaning as the verbal expression

representing the analysans, the analysis states a bare
identity and is trivial; but if the two verbal expressions
do not have the same meaning, the analysis is incorrect."[1]
Moore is quite aware of this 'problem'; and, as is his
habit, does not refrain from admitting his inability to
explain clearly and satisfactorily how analysis achieves
its explanatory purpose.[2] Yet the whole endeavour is
not as hopeless as it may first seem to be. The fact is
that in a proper analysis one feels that the analysandum
has been rendered more explicit, that some of its relations
and qualities have been laid bare and brought to the
foreground. This can be seen from the fact that, for
example, the statement "a brother is a male sibling" is
not completely identical with the statement "a brother is
a brother". This is so partly because we are not
defining a word or a verbal expression, but a concept.
You might be able to give a verbal definition of a word
or expression without any reference whatsoever to the
concept involved. You might be told, for example, that,

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(1) Ibid., p. 323.

(2) Moore says on page 665 "I own I am not at all
    clear as to what the solution of the puzzle
    is." And again on page 666 "... and therefore
    I cannot give any clear solution to the
    puzzle". Ibid.

in a language which you are ignorant of, the word 'x'
means the same as the word 'y', and you may remember
that 'x' means the same as 'y' without knowing what 'x'
or 'y' mean.[1] The purpose of analysis is not to
provide a verbal definition:  In analysis we are
primarily dealing with concepts.  In the statement
" a brother is a male sibling" the <u>analysans</u> "male
sibling" consists of the <u>conjunction</u> of two <u>concepts</u>:
Male and Sibling, that are, as such, the constituents
of the concept, Brother, which is the <u>analysandum</u>.  The
concepts are the same, though the verbal expressions
used are different.  All of this seems to have some
significance for Moore; and he puts two more conditions
which a correct analysis ought to fulfil.  (a) "Both
<u>analysandum</u> and <u>analysans</u>, must be <u>concepts</u>, and, if the
analysis is a <u>correct</u> one, must, in some sense, be the
same concepts"; and, (b) "that the <u>expression</u> used for
the <u>analysandum</u> must not only be <u>different</u> from that used
for the <u>analysans</u>, but that they must differ in this way,
namely, that the expression used for the <u>analysans</u> must
<u>explicitly mention</u> concepts which are not explicitly
mentioned by the expression used for the <u>analysandum</u>." [2]

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(1) <u>Ibid.</u>, See p.662.
(2) <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 666.

Inspite of this tentative 'way out', Moore continues to
feel uneasy about the whole thing. And he admits that
this is not a very satisfactory solution of the problem
of analysis. Here once again Moore's influence lies in
what he 'did not say' in as much as it lies in what he
did say. An atmosphere of dissatisfaction was left
around the whole 'programme of analysis'. There grew
a tendency amongst 'analytic philosophers' to look not
for the synonyms of a term, but rather for its functions,
its various uses. This tendency found its clearest
expression in the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein
and his 'followers'.

The source of Moore's difficulties is, ultimately,
his theory of meaning. For if a term 'stands for' an
entity, be it an 'object' or a 'concept', and if analysis
of its meaning is thought to consist in finding its
synonyms, then very 'strange' conclusions are apt to
follow. Such a 'programme' involves a complete neglect
of dissimilarities which are quite often as important
as the similarities if not more. It might work very
neatly when applied to notions such as that of being a
brother, but what happens when we try to apply it to a

notion such as 'good'? In the case of 'x is good' we
cannot find a better term, a synonym, which would describe
'x' better than 'good'. For the 'entity' which the term
'good' stands for cannot be reduced to other simpler
entities. Moore then declares 'good' to be something
ultimate - an unanalyzable notion. But is it not an
oversimplification to say, simply, that good is un-
analyzable? And is'nt the 'meaning' of 'good' better
described and understood through exhibiting the different
ways the term 'good' is used, tracing how it occurs in
different contexts, and finding the various roles it
plays and functions it fulfils? It is not, usually, by
'defining' a term that we get to know its 'meaning', but
rather by finding out the way it is used. Realization
of this 'fact' is, perhaps, Wittgenstein's greatest
contribution to contemporary analytic philosophy.

How much in terms of 'ethical knowledge' one
gets by comparing goodness with yellowness? They
certainly do 'share' a certain quality viz. that of
being 'unanalyzable' in the Moorian sense: if you have
not seen yellow, I cannot possibly make you understand
what 'yellow' means. But the disimilarities between
yellowness and goodness are much more striking and

ethically significant than the similarities. This
difference is quite manifest in the 'uses' of
'yellow' and 'good'; and though both notions may
be 'ultimate' they are still susceptible to analysis
in the Wittgensteinian sense since they have various
uses that could be described and discussed.[1]

Before turning to Moore's notion of analysis
as distinction I would like to point out another
important feature of the conception of analysis as
division. This position seems to have a certain
'view' or 'conception' of the world and reality which
is very similar to the one the Logical Atomists came
to have. So much so that one may say that Logical
Atomism consists in an attempt to carry the 'analysis-
as-division-programme' on a larger scale and in a
more thoroughgoing manner. This view or conception
of reality is sometimes referred to as the 'metaphysic
of simple elements'[2] which consists in the belief
that there exists certain 'elements' or 'units or
'facts' - as Russell & Wittgenstein later chose to

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(1) See Warnock, Op.Cit., pp.27-8.
(2) Philosophy, 1951, Op.Cit., p.361

call them — out of which everything else is composed and
to which everything may, in theory at least, be reduced.
Moore did not follow, systematically at least, such a
'reductionist' procedure in a manner comparable to
that of the Atomists; yet, both positions seem to be
quite affiliated. For what is the purpose of analysis?
And once we start analysing where should we ultimately
stop, if we ever do? It naturally follows that the
process of analysis, i.e., the process of dividing
the complex into simpler and simpler parts, can end
only when we reach the 'unanalysables' — the simple
elements simpler than which there are none. A 'sense-
datum' — whatever that means — seems to be one such
simple element of which Moore conceives. In the analysis
of propositions such as "this is a hand", "That is the
sun", "This is a dog", etc., one of two things of
which Moore is "quite certain" is that "there is
always some _sense-datum_ about which the proposition in
question is a proposition — some sense-datum which is
_a_ subject (and, in a certain sense, the PRINCIPAL or
ULTIMATE subject) of the proposition in question."[1]

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(1) _Contemporary British Philosophy_, Op.Cit.,
     p.217 (capitalized italics are mine).

Not only do these 'simple elements' exist, but there is also a certain one-to-one 'correspondence' between them and our terms. "It is then, I think, quite obvious that for every different belief, there is one fact and one fact only, which would be, if the belief were true, and would not be, if it were false."[1]

(c) Analysis as Distinction.

However we interpret Moore's 'conception' of analysis, he certainly had no dreams of a 'logical Utopia'. And this is an essential difference between him on the one hand, and ambitious logicians, who were metaphysicians in their own way, such as Russell and the early Wittgenstein, on the other hand. That is why it is of the utmost importance to distinguish between Moore's 'conception' of analysis and his actual practice. And it is no strange coincidence to find that in as much as Moore's 'conception' of analysis is affiliated with Logical Atomism, his actual practice, on the whole, is affiliated with the views of the later Wittgenstein which are, among other things, an outright rejection and repudiation of Logical Atomism.

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(1) Some Main Problems of Philosophy, Op.Cit.,p.268.

The 'method' which is least talked about, but
most practiced, by Moore, is what might be called
'Analysis as Distinction'. Actually Moore never refers
to such a "method". And justifiably so. For it is of
the essence of such an 'activity' or 'practice' to be
characterized by an "absence of method". The under-
lying assumption being that every situation has its own
uniqueness, its own details and peculiarities which
should not be forced to fit into a method or system.
The best that we can do - and that is to do a lot - is
to try to understand the nature of every particular
case, as it arises, by drawing distinctions, dis-
criminating confusions and arriving at more and more
clarity. And what is most important is that it is our
approach, our 'method', which has to be modified and
so adapted as to fit every particular case, and not the
other way round. This "absence of method" which is in
Hampshire's view "what is new and genuinely original
in contemporary philosophy" involves "an implied
acknowledgement that every advance towards great
clarity about any feature of language or argument must
always be partial, provisional and never final."[1]

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(1) S. Hampshire, Changing Methods in Philosophy,
    Philosophy, 1951, p.144.

It is therefore quite arbitrary and distorting to speak as if Moore had a method called the "Method of Analysis as Distinction" which he defined and set about applying. It is simply a matter of approach, of "providing new interests"[1] of pointing out simple, but significant, aspects that have been neglected by the 'system-constructors', of relating one thing to other things in terms of both differences and similarities. This, as we have seen, is typical of Moore's writings especially when it comes to discussing the views of others. A point which Moore stresses most is that we must be sure to understand what a philosopher 'means' by his terms before proceeding to criticize or to praise him. We should try not to mix between what we mean by the terms he uses or what we think he ought to mean by them, with what he, as a matter of fact, understands them to mean. In his contribution to the symposium: "Are the Characteristics of Things Universal or Particular" which was based on a view which Stout had formerly expressed, Moore says: "I understand that what we are wanted to do is to discuss the view which he (viz. Stout) expresses by those words. We are not to

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(1) Warnock, Op.Cit., p.11.

give to the words the sense or senses which <u>we</u> may think they ought to bear, and then to discuss whether the view or views they would <u>then</u> express is true or false. What we have to do is to try to discover what Prof. Stout means by them, and then merely to discuss whether the view which <u>he</u> uses them to express is true or false, even though we may think that the view in question is one which cannot be properly expressed by them at all."[1]

We must also be equally sure to make the 'meanings' of our own terms quite clear especially if we intend to use them in a manner different from that used by our opponent. Moore, himself, is quite particular about that. If it is an Idealist, for example, he is discussing, he tries first to state as clearly as possible and to the best of his knowledge what the philosopher meant by his terms, and then he proceeds to compare this specific usage or usag<u>es</u>, (as it often turns out that a philosopher means different things by the same term in different places) with other usages of the term, and to point out contradictions, obscurities, and incompatibilities in the position he is considering. This is precisely what he starts by emphasizing at the

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(1) P.A.S. Supple.III, p.95.

beginning of his article "Is Goodness a Quality"[1]
which arose as a discussion of H.W.B. Joseph's claim
that goodness is not a quality.  "I want merely to
discuss whether WHAT MR. JOSEPH MEANS by this sentence
(viz. that "goodness is not a quality) is so."[2]
After trying to 'figure out', with patience, sincerity,
and as much precision as is possible, what Joseph means
by 'goodness', Moore then says "this proposition (viz.
that "goodness is not a quality"), if only we could
discover how he is using the word 'quality', would, I
think, be definitive enough to be discussed."  Our next
question should, therefore, be: "How, then, is he using
the term 'quality'?"[3]

Moore's article on Identity[4] is one amongst
many examples illustrative of his 'discriminative
tendency'.  "The object of this paper", he says, is
"...to supply as much of this help (viz. that of remind-
ing the philosopher of the points wherein the "truths"
with which he is dealing differ) as I am able, by
DISCRIMINATING THE POINTS OF DIFFERENCES between truths

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(1) P.A.S. Supple. XI, pp.116-131.
(2) Ibid.p.116 (italics are mine).
(3) Ibid.p.125.
(4) P.A.S. V.I, pp.103-127.

which we express and must continue to express by the use of the word identity." And indeed there is much "help" needed there because "the greatest errors may be incurred by arguing that what is true of a thing to which such a word (viz. 'identity') applies IN ONE SENSE is also true of that to which it applies in another."[1] Here, again, we find Moore 'anticipating' an important development in contemporary analytic philosophy. For he did not always conceive of analysis as a process of equating an analyzandum with an analyzans, i.e., of finding a correct logical definition of a concept. This, as has been mentioned, is especially true of Moore when it comes to his 'practice' rather than to his 'theory'. For example, we find him, when dealing with the notion of necessity, abandoning the strictly logical conception of definition in favour of a more or less "linguistic" conception. "A correct definition of necessity", Moore says, "will be attained, if we enumerate all those DIFFERENT predicates which the word is commonly used to signify: for THE ONLY TEST THAT A WORD IS CORRECTLY DEFINED IS COMMON USAGE."[2] How anticipitory this is of the later

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(1) Ibid., p.105 (my italics)
(2) 'Necessity', Mind,V. IX, p. 289 (my italics)

Wittgenstein! In another context Moore says that "the question as to the definition of these words (viz. words such as 'real' 'exist' 'is' 'is a fact' 'is true'..) is not logically relevant to the much more important question as to which of the sentences in which they occur are true and which are false"; for ".....no discussion of the meaning of a word is merely about the meaning of a word. It always involves some discussion as to THE WAY IN WHICH THE THINGS OR NOTIONS, FOR WHICH THE WORD MAY STAND, ARE DISTINGUISHED FROM OR RELATED TO ONE ANOTHER."[1] The 'moral' of all of this, one may conclude by saying, is that efforts should not be directed towards 'system-constructing', but rather towards detailed analyses: the drawing of distinctions, the achievement of better understanding of the details and peculiarities of every particular instance, without attempting to subject that instance to a general rule that has arisen - appropriately perhaps - elsewhere, in another context.

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(1) Some Main Problems of Philosophy, Op.Cit., p. 206. (capitalized italics are mine.)

B. LOGICAL ATOMISM:

RUSSEL AND THE EARLY WITTGENSTEIN.

LOGIC, EMPIRICISM, AND METAPHYSIC.

Our relatively 'detailed' consideration of
Moore has not been, I hope, pointless. For most of the
important points relevant to linguistic analysis were
at least 'raised', directly or indirectly, by Moore.
We have seen how notions which were destined to play
an important role in later philosophical developments,
such as the 'anti-metaphysical trend', the 'reductive
programme of analysis' and the importance of 'distinc-
tion-drawing' in philosophical considerations, were all,
with certain qualifications, present in Moore's writings.
We have also seen how our key-terms 'language' and
'analysis' pervade the whole of Moore's philosophy. It
is natural, therefore, that the remaining part of this
chapter shall be, more or less, an elaboration of these
points; and that it can be either compared or contrasted
with what Moore has to say.

However, the fact that our concern happens to
be in linguistic analysis - and consequently with the
terms 'language' and 'analysis' - does not, mean that
other aspects, which we are neglecting, of the thinking

of some of the philosophers we are considering, are,
necessarily, unimportant. This is especially true of
Russell. For his undeniable influence upon linguistic
analysis has been mainly negative: his significance
lies in the possibilities he opened, the 'ambitious'
plans he set to construct - the unrealizability of
which turned out to be an important factor in the
development of linguistic analysis; and, for another
thing, he has been so productive and his interests
have been so diverse that any consideration of Russell's
influence, in a particular field of study, has to leave
out 'a lot'. For our present purpose, we shall deal
with Russell only in connection with logical atomism.
And our interest in logical atomism lies in the fact
that this 'school of thought' constitutes an important
link in the 'development' of the notions of 'language'
and 'analysis'. The name 'Logical Atomism' was first
coined by Bertrand Russell, one of the important
propagators of the school. It was founded by a former
student of his, Ludwig Wittgenstein, who became a major
exponent of this school and wrote its 'Bible', the
Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. Unless otherwise
specified, the doctrines that shall be discussed in
connection with Logical Atomism, are, on the whole,

shared by both Russell and Wittgenstein of the _Tractatus_.

Logical atomism is, again, a sort of reaction against Absolute Idealism. We have, here, an emphasis on the plural character of reality, to such an extent that it can be safely said that logical atomists developed a peculiar metaphysics of their own, the metaphysics of plurality or of simple elements, as against the Monistic metaphysics of Absolute Idealism. Each metaphysics had its own bearing upon, and implications for, the notion of analysis. The Idealists had banished analysis from their system of internally related Reality, and rejected it on the ground that it involves a distortion, a falsification, of the nature of Reality.[1] For the Atomists, on the other hand, Analysis becomes the primary concern of the philosopher since it is the means of dissecting the complex nature of reality. To understand how, and by virtue of what, can analysis help us understand the nature of reality, it is essential, first, to try to understand how the atomists conceived of reality.

To do this it is essential to stress a very

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(1) Warnock, Op.Cit., pp.31-32.

significant fact: The two major exponents of logical atomism, viz. Russell and Wittgenstein, came to philosophy through the study of mathematics and logic. This is especially true of Russell the author, together with Whitehead, of Principia Mathematica; one of the founders, together with Frege, of modern symbolic logic; an important popularizer of science and an admirer of the scientific method and spirit. We consequently find that reality in the philosophy of logical atomism is given a nature which is characteristically mathematical. And that the description and explanation of reality become something very similar to the formulation of an axiomatic system in mathematics or in logic. As Urmson puts it "the shortest account of logical atomism that can be given is that the world has the structure of Russell's mathematical logic."[1] That the world does have such a structure, the atomists did not try to prove. This was one of their basic assumptions, an assumption that the later Wittgenstein came to conceive of as an obsession.

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(1) J.O. Urmson, Philosophical Analysis, Oxford, 1958, p.6.

In addition to the formal character which
mathematical logic gave to logical atomism, it contained
another important element which was empirical in nature.
This empirical element is quite reminiscent of the
British empiricists of the seventeenth century.  For
a statement to be significant and meaningful there must
exist some kind of correlation between it and experience.
Locke spoke of complex 'ideas' as being reducible to
'simple ideas', Hume preferred to speak of 'impressions',
the atomists were more careful about their terminology
and spoke of 'facts'.  Reality is an aggregation of a
multiplicity of independent and simple 'facts'.  Their
independence and simplicity suggested to Russell the
label 'atomic'.

Such is reality!  But what about language?  Here
the psychologism of the British Empiricists gives way
to the logicism of the atomists, which is more
reminiscent of the pythagorean adoration of number
and the Cartesian obsession with formulae.  And when
it came to the meaning of terms and the nature of
language in general, the atomists were not taken by
considerations such as habit and association, but were
as demanding and exacting, in terms of precision, clarity

and exactness, as a logician can be. If reality is
atomistic, they proclaimed, so must language be. For
language, and here is another important atomistic
assumption, 'reflects the structure of reality'. And
since reality, or the totality of what is real, has a
certain defined and fixed nature and structure, so must
its 'expression' or 'reflection' be. Evidently,
therefore, not all the existent natural and formal
languages can be 'true'. There is one and only one
logically perfect language. And the formulation of
such a language should be the philosopher's primary
task. The atomists did not present a fully developed
perfect language, though, of course, its main features
could be found in Principia Mathematica and the newly
developed mathematical logic.

An important characteristic of a logically
perfect language is that it is truth-functional. There
are only two kinds of statements: (a) simple statements –
or 'atomic propositions', as they chose to call them –
which 'express', 'mirror', or 'reflect' a corresponding
simple fact, viz. an 'atomic proposition'; and (b)
complex statements – or 'molecular propositions' –
which 'express', 'mirror', or 'reflect' a corresponding

conjunction of atomic facts.[1] Now the truth or falsity
of a molecular proposition is a function of the truth or
falsity of the atomic propositions out of which it is
constituted. And evidently the ultimate criterion of
truth or falsity is the success or failure of atomic
propositions to correspond to atomic facts. "Any signi-
ficant statement is therefore either the affirmation or
rejection of some atomic fact; or it affirms or rejects
a conjunction or disjunction of such atomic facts."[2]
It follows, therefore, that in a logically perfect
language any statement or formula expressible in it
can be reduced, at least in principle, to few simple,
ultimate forms which are the final determinants of its
truth or falsity. "The truth-value of the complex is
entirely determined by the truth-value of its components.[3]"

We have seen in connection with Moore's concep-
tion of analysis as division, how the 'programme of

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(1) The atomists did not, on the whole, speak of
    'molecular facts' resulting from the combina-
    tion of atomic facts. Though the conjunction
    of two or more atomic propositions made a
    molecular proposition.

(2) Urmson, Op.Cit., pp.15-16.

(3) Philosophy In The Mid-Century, Ed.Klibansky R.,
    Vol.II, Antony Quinton, p.162. See also Urmson,
    Op.Cit.pp.128..., Warnock, Op.Cit.,pp.34-38.

analysis' tended to point towards conclusions quite
similar to the claims of the atomists about the nature
of reality. Moore, however, for lack of metaphysical
ambition - be it logistic or absolutistic - has been
more cautious and careful when it came to committing
oneself to such general claims as to the nature of
reality and the world. While the less-reserved atomists,
who were quite anxious to support their metaphysical
position, fell upon analysis and considered it as
something illustrative of their position, since it was
through the process of analysis that we were supposed
to arrive at the ultimate structure of reality. For,
what else could the 'final residue in analysis' be, if
they were'nt the atoms - the only ultimate constituents
of reality? Analysis, thus, became the motto of
philosophical activity, and the 'philosopher' and the
'analyst' were completely identified.

Keeping the metaphysics of logical atomism in
mind, it becomes relatively easy to understand their
conception of analysis. However, it is a bit arbitrary
to try to say which, for the atomist, presupposes which:
their metaphysics or their conception of analysis.
Actually the presupposition is mutual and the roles are

complimentary. Thus, given an atomistic metaphysic, 'reductive' analysis is apt to follow. And while, as we have already mentioned, analysis for Absolute Idealism 'falsifies' Reality, it becomes for atomism the only way to a clear and full understanding of reality. And reality cannot be fully understood unless its 'translation' into an Ideal Language has been achieved. Such a 'translation' or 'reduction' of reality into the neat forms of logic and mathematics is to be accomplished by analysis. However, before constructing the edifice of the perfect language, the atomists, as all well-intentioned constructors, had first to 'clear the grounds'. They found that "ordinary, natural languages embody and encourage the confusions of ordinary thought; only deliberately constructed and instituted languages can avoid them."[1] The confusions of ordinary speech and concepts ought to be transformed into, and replaced by, the clarity of a logical notation. Thus the interest of the philosopher - the 'analyst', I should say - should be in language for the purpose of both detecting and

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(1) Klibansky Ed., Op.Cit., Article by Rulon Wells, p.139.

solving philosophical problems. The confusion is not
in reality, though admittedly reality is quite complex;
it is rather to be traced to 'misrepresentations' of
reality: to languages which fail to reflect, or faintly
and vaguely reflect, its true structure. "Philosophical
problems are in a way linguistic problems. There would
be no need for philosophy if language were not in-
adequate."[1]

The aim of analysis is, then, to eliminate
confusion. This is to be achieved by bringing back
ordinary expressions nearer to the 'facts' which they are
supposed to express and 'mirror': by rendering compound
conceptual and logical 'constructions' less complex and
abstract, and eventually replace them with objects with
which we can have direct acquaintance. This kind of
analysis is sometimes called 'reductive' or 'new-level'
analysis, since it is not satisfied with "merely improv-
ing the form of statement without change of level", but
rather "seeks to get down to the basic facts."[2] For it
is these facts and only these facts which are the
ultimate source of meaning and significance.

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(1) Urmson, Op.Cit., p.50.
(2) Ibid., p.39.

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(1) Urmson, Op.Cit., p.50.
(2) Ibid., p.39.

This, in summary, is the main 'argument' of logical atomism. Its best and most authentic formulation is found in Wittgenstein's Tractatus. In this book two important 'implications' of logical atomism are expressed. I would like to conclude my exposition of the school by pointing them out. These 'implications' seem to follow from one basic 'fact' which logical atomism accepts and stresses. This is the notion of 'correspondence' between language and facts. And it therefore follows that "the meaning of a statement is the possible fact it depicts."[1] This was seized upon by the logical positivists and got elaborated into their famous verifiability principle of meaning. A natural - so it seemed! - consequence of such a criterion of meaning was that statements which were not 'scientific' or 'factual' in nature, especially those of religion and traditional metaphysics, were proclaimed to be meaningless, since they do not "depict possible facts". The second implication arises when the question of the status of the language of the logical atomists is raised. Interestingly enough

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(1) Klibansky Ed. Op.Cit., article by
Quinton, pp. 156-57.

Wittgenstein himself was the first to raise that question. For how one would classify the statements contained in the _Tractatus_ and other similar philosophical writings? The atomist is, allegedly, trying to describe the relation between language and the world. But can this relation be 'depicted'? Is it an atomic fact, or a truth-function of atomic facts? Evidently not, for the only actual and depictable constituents of reality are the atomic facts, and the _relation_ between language and these facts is not, itself, an atomic fact nor a truth function of atomic facts. It is a mere conceptual construction which, when analysed, leaves no 'final residue', while the criterion of acceptability and meaningfulness for conceptual or logical constructions is that they should be decomposible into simple atomic facts. The statements of the theory of logical atomism does not fulfil their criterion of meaningfulness and should, therefore, be condemned as meaningless! Wittgenstein did not try to evade the issue and courageously drew the conclusion. He declared philosophy to be an activity not a theory.[1] "This thisis, laid quite early like a sort of time-bomb in the

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(1) _Ibid._, p. 157.

basement of Logical Atomism."[1] With this 'tragic-tone'
our discussion of logical atomism ends.  It took an
extreme position and acquired a suicidal nature. Never-
theless it left its mark on the history of linguistic
analysis and its development.  For whether the specific
views of logical atomism were adopted or not, the
atomists succeeded in establishing the concepts of
language and analysis as central for philosophical
theory and method.  The attention of philosophers was
drawn more and more towards considerations that were of
a linguistic and analytic nature.  And when Wittgenstein
abandoned his former views his abandonment was in terms
of a _new_ conception of language and consequently of
analysis.  The problem was still 'linguistic' in nature
and the 'cure' still 'analytic', in one sense or the
other.  Our main concern in chapter two of this part
shall, therefore, be with Wittgenstein's later concep-
tion of language and analysis.

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(1) Warnock, Op.Cit., p.41.

CHAPTER TWO

## LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS:

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE LATER WITTGENSTEIN.

To talk of 'the philosophy of the later Wittgen-
stein' involves a certain degree of arbitrariness.
Because this 'philosophy' was not expressed systematically,
but developed, through a period of about twenty years, in
discussions and lectures that were led or given by
Wittgenstein. The influence was therefore oral, direct,
and characterized by the dominating personal presence of
Wittgenstein. A fact which may partly explain why he
has received somewhat varied 'interpretations', and why
the typical and consistent Wittgensteinian is such a rare
species; while those whose views are 'affiliated to',
or were 'influenced by' Wittgenstein are so numerous as
to justify labelling them members of the 'School' of
Linguistic Analysis. Consequently, it is much beyond the
scope of this chapter to try to trace the development of
Wittgenstein's views since 1929, and the exact manner in
which prominent, now so called 'linguistic analysts', were
influenced by these views. Instead, what I shall try to
do is consider the Philosophical Investigations which

was first published in 1953, after Wittgenstein's death,
as the best expression of his views and, therefore, as
central with respect to the position of the philosophy
of linguistic analysis. Even my consideration of this
book has to be partial and selective. And by no means
do I claim to have done justice to the multiplicity of
important and interesting points which Wittgenstein
raises in his Investigations. This does not only, and
naturally, apply to the points which I failed to consider
but also to the points which I did consider.

Our main interest will be in Wittgenstein's
conception of language and other related notions. In
presenting these notions I shall try to include as many
quotations from the Investigations as space permits, in
an effort to supplement the sketchiness of the exposition,
and as a result of my belief that no paraphrase of
Wittgenstein's writings succeeds in retaining the force
and character of the original.

### 1. Wittgenstein's Conception of the Nature of Language and Related Notions.

It is through the understanding of a certain
'analogy' that Wittgenstein approaches the question of

language and its nature. This analogy is his famous 'language-game' analogy. For he thought that the construction of artificial languages - that are developed in certain specific contexts to answer specific needs - may, on analysis, help us see how language actually functions. He chose to call these artificial languages, 'language-games', which should not be considered as "preparatory studies for a future regularization of language - as it were first approximations, ignoring friction and air resistance. The language games are rather set up as objects of comparison which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not of similarities, but also of dissimilarities."[1]

Let us try then to understand what Wittgenstein meant by a 'language-game'. His interest was, as I have already pointed out, certainly not in games as such; for it is clear that he was drawing some kind of analogy between the group of activities that we commonly refer

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(1) Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Tr. G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford, 1953, p.50e, Sec.130. From now on I shall only indicate the number of the section from which I am quoting or to which I am referring.

to as 'games', on the one hand, and language, on the other
hand.  We cannot, however, start by 'defining' a language-
game; for the simple reason that the things or phenomena
which we call 'language-games', "have no one thing in
common which makes us use the same word for all." (Sec.65)
This, however, does not mean that we cannot talk about
language-games, for a strict definition is neither
necessary nor desirable in most cases.  That is why we
find Wittgenstein introducing the notion of a 'language-
game' undefined at the very beginning of his book, and
then after securing a certain degree of familiarity with
the notion through its application,[1]he stops to consider
its meaning.  He says (Sec.65) "here we come up against
the great question that lies behind all these considera-
tions -  For someone might object against me: 'You take
the easy way out!  You talk about all sorts of language-
games, but have no where said what the essence of a

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(1) See pp. 2e-30e, especially sections 2, 23,
    24, & 48, where (in sec.2) the example of
    the language used by the builder and his
    assistant is one instance of a language-
    game "for which the description given by
    Augustine is right", i.e., a system of
    communication where every word is a label
    for a corresponding object.  In section 23
    the 'multiplicity' of language-games is
    illustrated.

language-game, and hence of language, is:  What is
common to all these activities and what makes them
. into language or parts of language'..."  To this
Wittgenstein replies by saying that his objective is
precisely to show that language (i.e., the group of
activities which we call 'language') does not have a
defining characteristic, an essence, or one pervaiding
quality.  Language is "a form of life" (19 & 241).  It
is not something "unique" (110):  it does not have the
formal unity one imagines; it consists of "families of
structures more or less related" (108).  It was to
illustrate this point that Wittgenstein drew the
analogy between games and language.  For, he tells us,
if we consider the proceedings which we call "games',
such as: board-games, card-games, ball-games, olympic-
games, and so on..., we find that they do not have any
ONE thing common to them ALL.  "Don't say:", Wittgenstein
warns us, "there MUST be something common, or they would
not be called 'games' - but LOOK AND SEE whether there
is anything common to all..."  He then concludes, after
examining a number of the proceedings we usually call
'games', that what he SEES is "a complicated network of
similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes
overall similarities, sometimes similarities of
detail." (66).

Here the notion of family-resemblances assumes greatest importance. For these similarities, existing among games and analogously among language-games, can best be characterized by the expression: 'family resemblances' (67). Brothers do not usually look like twins, and sons are not mere reproductions of their parents; and yet, we usually do have various resemblances such as: build, features, colour of eyes and hair, temperament, etc., etc., existing among members of the same family. These resemblances "overlap and criss-cross" in the same way as resemblances between games "overlap and criss-cross". This should not mean, however, that Wittgenstein disregards all constancy and similarity. For, as he tells us, "if things were quite different from what they actually are - if there were for instance no characteristic expression of pain, of fear, of joy; or if rule became exception and exception rule; or if both became phenomena of equal frequency - this would make our normal language-games lose their point." (142)[1] We conclude, therefore,

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(1) Wittgenstein also points out elsewhere (206, 207) that "the common behaviour of mankind is the system of reference by means of which we interpret an unknown language," and if the people who talk this unknown language exhibit no "regular connexion between the sounds they make and their actions", then there would'nt be "enough regularity to call these sounds 'language"."

that there does exist similarities and resemblances, but
they are not all-prevailing similarities: they appear
here but disappear there, they are shared by some but
not by all, they do not 'overlap' but 'criss-cross'.
Fortunately, we have enough criss-crossing as to provide
the basis of a reasonable classification - a classifica-
tion not into logical classes, but into the more down-to-
earth-notion of families.  Take the experience of being
guided, an example which Wittgenstein gives (172), where
we have 'similar situations' but cannot find something
'common to ALL' the experiences:

   " - You are playing, with your eyes bandaged,
and someone leads you by the hand, sometimes left,
sometimes right, you have constantly to be ready for
the tug of his hand, and must also take care not to
stumble when he gives an unexpected tug.

   Or:    " - Someone leads you by the hand where you are
unwilling to go, by force.

   Or:    " - You are guided by a partner in a dance;
you make yourself as receptive as possible, in order
to guess his intention and obey the slightest pressure.

   Or:    " - Someone takes you for a walk; you are having

a conversation; you go where he goes.

Or: " - You walk along a field-track, simply follow-
ing it."

Another equally important factor, closely
related to the notion of 'family resemblances', which
the conception of language as consisting of a multipli-
city of language games emphasizes and which they Ideal
conception of language disregards, is the factor of
"marginal indeterminacy". The notion of family
resemblances was introduced for the task of replacing
common essences as the basis of classification.
Marginal indeterminacy, helps completing the task.
According to the logician, and metaphysician, the
basis for the classification and categorization of
things are the common essences which things share or
fail to share. According to Wittgenstein, language,
and reality for that matter, is something more
intricate, interfused, and living than the logician
would want us to believe. The logician, by 'defining'
or 'giving' a common essence avoids, or rather ignores,
marginal indeterminacy - that factor which is at the
basis of the intricacy and interfusion of things.
Even more! Marginal indeterminacy is not only ignored

by the logician, but is also condemned as 'vague',
'imprecise' and 'inaccurate'. Everything is pressed
into his logical forms and formulae; the result is
suffocation of language. The logician <u>requires</u> every-
thing to fit smoothly into his designed scheme. "We
want to say that there can't be any vagueness in logic.
The idea now absorbs us, that the ideal <u>must</u> be found
in reality"(101). Our grounds are rendered too smooth
to be able to walk on; and thus our language, our
ordinary forms of expression, are crippled in the hands
of the logician.

True; every language-game is played according
to its own rules, but it does not, and ought not, have
a set of exhaustive, unchangeable, closed-textured rules,
the way a formal system has. For Wittgenstein a game
is still a game though "there might be some vagueness
in the rules" (100).[1] As a matter of fact there is'nt
such a game that for every possible move there is a

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(1) Perhaps John Wisdom had this in mind when he
said: "If I were asked to answer, in one
sentence, the question 'What was Wittgenstein's
biggest contribution to philosophy?' I should
answer: "His asking of the question 'Can one
play chess without the queen?'" Mind, 1952,
p.259.

rule governing it. "We must be on our guard against thinking that there is some <u>totality</u> of conditions corresponding to the nature of each case" (183). Can we, for example, tell precisely when are the conditions of 'fitting', 'being able to', or 'understanding' fulfilled and when they cease to be fulfilled? (see Sec. 182). And is there always a sharp distinction between what is essential and what is not essential? A definition is not always an adequate answer to these questions. For, the employment of many of our words and expressions, that is to say the games which we play with them, "are much more complicated than might appear at first sight.... and are more involved... than we are tempted to think" (182).

Wittgenstein thus conceives of language as a complex and changing thing - a "form of life". Language is not something that is given once and for all; something dead and fixed. Words acquire meaning, through their use in the language. It is "the role that the word plays in a particular language-game that gives it its meaning" (49, 50...). And a word may, and does, play more than one role in more than one language-game. That is why language is rendered artificial by the

attempt to impose rigid logical forms upon its uses and
functions. Our language had served different purposes
in the past, and continues to do so. There are
language-games that were played in the past but may not
be played again in the future. On the other hand we
may, and do, play games that were never played in the
past. Thus, on the whole, and in the process of
language-building, old games are retained while new
ones are added. Our language, tells us Wittgenstein,
"can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets
and squares, of old and new houses with additions from
various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of
new boroughs with straight regular streets and uniform
houses" (18).

2. <u>Some Important Implications of Wittgenstein's
Conception of Language</u>.

   (a) "Philosophical Problems", the result of
      the misinterpretation of the varid forms
      of language.

With this picture of the nature of language in
mind one can easily see how 'philosophical problems'
arise. Their source is a misunderstanding of the nature

and function of our language. As Wittgenstein artfully
puts it "Philosophical problems arise when language goes
on a holiday" (38). They arise when we forget that
words have different functions, and that the employment
of the same word in different language-games is a
different employment in each case. Hence, we should be
aware not to be claiming more than what the nature of
the case permits us; so that if a description is correct
of a certain circumscribed region, it may only be partly
correct of another region. It is thus that we are led to
confusion by "certain analogies between the forms of
expression in different regions of language" (89); for
"the uniform appearance of words confuses us ... we
are not aware of their diverse functions..." (11).
Moreover, it is not always the case that we have a
'circumscribed' region, unless we make it so. It is
precisely such attempts at demarcating every case, at
giving every word a fixed and final meaning, at subject-
ing everything to the rules of logic and evaluating them
by the criteria of clarity, exactness, distinctness,
and consistency; in short, it is the logician's
passion to construct an 'Ideal Language' and to consider
it as the proper language, that have led to confusion
and misunderstanding. We should be mathematically

minded only when we are doing mathematics or something
directly related to it; and ought not expect everything
to be expressible in terms of mathematical formulae.
The obsession with the notion of an Ideal Language tends
to overemphasize similarities; and, consequently, a word
or expression is not allowed to play more than one game,
while actually, it usually plays a variety of games.
When "I describe my state of mind", and when "I describe
my room", I am playing two quite different language-
games with the word 'describe' (290);  and in each case
I know perfectly well what I am doing - "We do not need
a logician to tell us what a correct sentence looks
like" (81).

I ought to mention, at this stage, that we must
not be led to think that according to Wittgenstein it
is only the logician who sins against language and the
use of terms.  For what Wittgenstein actually does is to
proceed "to generalize what was, in the first place, a
diagnosis of his own philosophical difficulties, and
thus to offer - perhaps with too little qualification -
a general account of the character and sources of

philosophical problems."[1]  Thus philosophers in general
'share the guilt', for they have misconceived their
'proper function, and set out to find something which
was not there, or that was <u>thought</u> to be 'hidden' because
it was familiar and "always before one's eyes" (129).
Philosophers in general have failed to realize fully the
complex nature of language, the varied and multiple forms
that it embraces.  They have conceptualized it, over-
simplified it, and failed to go beyond the "surface
grammar" which it presents.  A picture that a certain
form of our language presents "holds us captive" (115);
we might get obsessed by "a false appearance" produced
by a "simile that has been absorbed into the forms of
our language" (112) and proclaim to the world, as the
Wittgenstein of the <u>Tractatus</u> did, that, for example,
"the general form of proposition is: this is how things
are."  Or else a philosopher may take words such as
"knowledge", "being", "I", "proposition", "name" - and
try to grasp their "<u>essence</u>" without ever bothering
whether "the word is ever used in this way in the
language-game which is its original home" (116).

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(1) Klibansky Ed. <u>Op.Cit.</u>, Article by Warnock,
    p. 204.

(b) Philosophy as "therapeutic" and factually
uninformative. Analysis not of the
meaning of a term but of its uses.

Such a description of the nature of language and
philosophy involves two important conceptions: first that
philosophy should be therapeutic, and secondly that it
is factually uninformative. Consequently, the function
of the philosopher - in the Wittgensteinian sense - is
not to supply information, "but to arrange what we have
always known." Philosophical problems can never be
solved through the attainment of new empirical data,
but rather through "looking into the workings of our
language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize
those workings: in despite of an urge to misunderstand
them .... philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment
of our intelligence by means of language" (109). This
gives Wittgenstein his "revolutionary" - "heretic", his
opponents would rather say - character. For all non-
Wittgensteinian philosophers, irrespective of their
differences, have assumed that they were dealing with
"genuine" problems, and were asking "legitimate" questions.
So much so that curiousity, puzzlement, and the insistent
quest for certainty, have been conceived to be of the

essence of philosophy. Wittgenstein, on the contrary,
conceived of this puzzlement as a sign of sickness and
not of health. The philosopher has now to be "cured",
he has to be shown not the answers to his questions, but
rather that his questions should not have been posed in
the first place. In other words philosophic problems
are not to be 'solved' but 'dissolved'. No philosopher
before Wittgenstein, that I know of, had conceived of
his function as merely "curative" or "therapeutic" -
though, of course, most of them had set out to 'correct'
others. However, this 'revolutionary' or 'heretic'
conception of philosophy and of the function of the
philosopher should not, I think, be left without adding
one qualification; namely that it should not be imagined
that Wittgenstein thought of philosophers as a bunch of
idiots who were so feeble-minded and naive as to be
easily deceived and fall victims to all sorts of mis-
conceptions, misunderstandings, and misinterpretations of
language and the 'reality' it is thought to express or
portray. Such a view may, perhaps, be suggested by the
emphatic and final tone which characterize some of
Wittgenstein's "verdicts". As when, for example, he
declares, with the finality with which Hume commits
metaphysics to the flames, "that what we are destroying

is nothing but houses of cards (compare Hume: '...contains nothing but sophistry and illusion') and we are clearing up the ground on which they stand" (118). But although language is proclaimed to be not guilty and "perfectly all right", yet it <u>indirectly</u> shares some of the responsibility. The philosopher gets lost not because he is blind, but rather because he comes across many paths.[1] For "language is a labyrinth of paths. You approach from <u>one</u> side and know your way about; you approach the same place from another side and no longer know your way about" (203). By no means, however, does this mean that language is deficient and has to be idealized or simplified. Language, on the whole, is as it ought to be: a form of life - growing, complex, and varied. This is precisely why "the problems arising through a misinterpretation of our forms of language have the character of depth. They are deep disquietudes, their roots are as deep as the forms of our language and their significance is as great as the importance of our language" (111). This reinforces the position that to

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(1)"A Philosophical Problem", Wittgenstein says, has the form: 'I don't know my way about'" (123).

dismiss theological statements as utterly meaningless, because they fail to satisfy a preconceived criterion of meaning, involves a great degree of arbitrariness. Even more, the interest of the 'functional analyst,[1] (i.e., the philosopher whose main concern is directed towards discovering how language functions or "looking into its workings", as opposed to the 'verificational analyst') in "philosophically puzzling" assertions is now aroused. Thus we find Wisdom, for instance, in his article entitled "Philosophical Perplexity", saying that "it is an important part of the treatment of a puzzle to develop it to the full." And though metaphysical theories are quite often false as Moore was able to show with "horrible ingenuity" yet, adds Wisdom, "there is good in them, poor things." He, moreover, declares his intention of going still further than Wittgenstein and representing "philosophically puzzling statements" not as merely "symptoms of linguistic confusion" but also as "symptoms of linguistic penetration."[2] The very concluding remark which Wisdom throws at the end of this

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(1) See, Fredrick Ferre, Language Logic and God, N.Y., 1961, pp. 1 - 66.

(2) John Wisdom, Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis, Oxford, 1957, p.41.

article and which, as he apologetically admits, smacks of 'smartness' reads: "philosophers should be continually trying to say what cannot be said."[1] It is no strange coincidence that the article "Gods" which, as we shall see, played an important and decisive role in initiating discussion of 'theological' issues by 'analytic' philosophers, was written by none other than Wisdom.

Before proceeding to point out some of the possible limitations of linguistic analysis it may perhaps be helpful to re-emphasize, by way of summary, the main 'developments' which the notion of analysis underwent as a result of Wittgenstein's views as to the nature of language and philosophy. One's first general impression on the matter may be that the 'Russellian' Wittgenstein, the Wittgenstein of the Tractatus and of reductionism, has become more 'Moorian': more keen on making distinctions and distinguishing usages. This, however, is only partly true and has to be qualified. For Wittgenstein, though agreeing with the Moorian conception of analysis as distinction, he, nevertheless, rejected other important views which Moore held, as

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(1) Ibid., p. 50.

thoroughly as he rejected his former reductionism and formalism. Chief amongst which is the name-theory of meaning which Moore held in one form or the other. Analysis consequently is no more analysis of <u>the</u> meaning of a word or expression, but of its meanings, its <u>uses</u>. And the motto, now, becomes: "Don't look for the meaning of a word, look for its uses." With the rejection of the view that for every word there corresponds an 'object', a 'concept', an 'Entity' (call it what ever you like) with which it is correlated, there goes the rejection of the view that 'understanding' or 'comprehending' is a sort of inner or hidden process of mental correlation. This latter point, though quite interesting and of grave consequences, involves us, however, in a long story into the details of which we cannot, here, go[1]. For our present purpose we are interested in the 'fact' or claim that to understand the meaning of a word is "a style of behaviour, a disposition to use and respond to it."[2] And hence the

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(1) This thesis is discussed and developed, quite thoroughly, in Ryle's book: <u>The Concept of Mind</u>.

(2) <u>Philosophy In the Mid-Century</u>, <u>Op.Cit.</u>, Quinton, pp. 157-58.

aim of analysis can no more be the arrival at a 'real definition' in the platonic-Aristotelian (and Moorian, one may add) sense;  for analysis is not of propositions or concepts that are either true or false and whose truth or falsity is determined by the presence or absence of a certain quality or characteristic. Analysis is, rather, of terms whose meanings are a function of their uses or families of uses which in turn express decisions or linguistic-recommendations.[1] We therefore should not hope for a 'final analysis' which succeeds in discovering, or better uncovering, the structure of reality; or which would end by having the word happily finding its mate, its correlative concept. The curtains are never down, and the scene is rarely the same. There is no one method of dealing with all situations. We continuously have to be adapting and readapting ourselves to different contexts as they arise. What a philosopher, to be helpful, can at most do is to 'exhibit' the various uses of terms, to 'chart their logic' - in the functional and not in the formal sense -, to bring them back to their original homes, their linguistic contexts, the

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(1) See Pap, Semantics and Necessary Truth, pp. 270-71.

language-games in which they arose and through which
they gained significance.

### 3. Some Possible Limitations of Linguistic Analysis.

I shall not attempt an 'evaluation' of the
linguistic movement. Such an attempt would be pre-
mature; since, for one thing, it presupposes an
acquaintance with the linguistic movement more thorough
than the above presentation provides, and, for another,
the movement itself is still 'on the go'. Many of its
implications are still latent, and it is not quite obvious
where it may lead. The following comments are simply
designed to help us realize what one may expect of
linguistic analysis. A criticism of linguistic analysts
would not have the nature of falsifying or refuting their
'claims'; for the simple reason that they don't claim
much. Though, of course, it is possible and sometimes
legitimate, to reproach somebody for claiming too little.
In this sense, one can point out as a 'limitation' of
the linguistic movement, especially if considered as a
suggested theory of meaning, its failure to provide what
other theories of meaning claim to have provided. Only

for the linguistic analysts this 'failure' does not indicate lack of ambition, but lack of presumption. If the charge is that of being faithful to what the nature of the case is, or seems to be, then they plead guilty to the charge.

In his book, The Modern Predicament, J.H. Paton felt it necessary to dispose of what he called "the linguistic Veto", before he went on to give his account of natural theology. He justifiably felt that a philosopher could no longer go on doing philosophy (in the tranditional sense) against the more or less predominant mode of thinking. One might say, to quote from Max Black, that "the weather ... is congenial to empiricists, naturalists, agnostics; the well acclamatized have admired the two Principias and the Tractatus and have read a hundred pages of Hume for one of Kant. Here rehtoric is viewed with suspicion, and enthusiasm barely tolerated."[1] No wonder that in such an atmosphere Paton feels ill at ease. He, therefore, struggles to remove the 'veto' or the 'ban' which analysis, supposedly,

(1) Max Black, Ed., Philosophical Analysis, Cornell University Press, 1950, p.13.

places on 'speculative philosophy'. This 'ban', however,
turns out to be the verifiability theory of meaning. We
are not, here particularly concerned with Paton's attempt
to clear the ground for natural theology. I have mentioned
this only because it is symptomic of a common tendency
to deal with all modern analytic trends as if they belong
to one and the same category - Black's analogy is carried
too far, and too much talk about the 'weather' in philo-
sophy leads people to confuse the various forms that
contemporary non-traditional philosophy has taken.

Oddly enough, the objection against linguistic
analysis is not that it places 'vetos'; on the contrary,
what, to my mind, linguistic analysis tends to do is to
make it pointless to veto anything. John Wisdom reports
that when on a certain occasion he spoke to Wittgenstein
of an unsuccessful philosophical discussion, Wittgenstein
said to him, "Perhaps you made the mistake of denying what
he said."[1] This immediately raises the question of
whether the notion of a language-game is so loose and
unrestricted as to lead to the impossibility of

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(1) John Wisdom, "Ludwig Wittgenstein", Mind,
1952, p. 258.

contradiction. Is one completely justified in playing
any language-game as long as one makes it clear what
specific language-game he is playing? Can we always
solve disputes by saying to the disputants: "Now come,
don't you see that you are playing different language-
games?" And can one always evade an issue by saying:
"but surely, I was playing a different, or a new,
language-game"?

According to linguistic analysis the meaning of
a term is not a fixed item. But what is it? "It has
to be understood in a specific context", the answer comes.
And if we ask whether we can have sufficient grounds
for determining its meaning; "the authority is always
relative," we are told, "and we can't hope for more than
approximation." To repeat, linguistic analysis arose
as the rejection of a theory of meaning; it, however,
provided no ready-made, well formulated, substitute.
And the linguistic analysts found no reason why they
should; for, according to them, we should'nt try to
construct a fool's paradise; and if we do, they would
find no point in arguing with us. The linguistic
analysts are writing "for those who are very ready to

accept down-to-earth conclusions if they can."[1] Their
arguments are directed to those who share their approach.
They are not claiming to have described "Reality". One
has to 'see' their point in its proper context, for
nothing - or at least very few things - hold in all
contexts. We have to learn, it seems to live in the
realm of continuous approximation and possibility.
For the linguistic analyst, that ought to do.

"It ought to do." But actually does it? That
depends upon the degree of approximation and possibility
with which the linguistic analysts leave us; for, surely,
we must also be left with some reasonable degree of
certainty. In other words the notion of a language-
game has to be philosophically dependable. But we find
that this notion may be used, and has been used, in
philosophical arguments in a very loose sense. For,
in the first place, it is not always easy (and sometimes
it is practically impossible) to agree as to the
different language-games in which a word or an expression
is employed: one can never be sure whether he has given

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(1) John Holloway's review of Essays on Logic
    and Language, in Mind, 1953, p.104.

the right description of the actual use or uses of a
term.  And, in the second place, it would follow from
the view that language-games are the only legitimate
meaning-giving contexts, that the formulation of
meaning-rules is either arbitrary or impossible.
Analysis of the possible and even of the actual uses
of a term can never be exhaustive.  We have, therefore,
to be selective in our choice; and the only standards
that one may refer to are the rules of each language-
game, since every game is played according to its own
rules which are to be discovered within the language-
game in question.

But what can one discover in a language-game?
Philosophical inquiry, we have seen, is factually
uninformative; therefore, what the analysis of a
language-game and its rules may result in, would at
most be the discovery of how people, in this specific
case, have decided to use their terms.  And since this
decision is a matter of convention, therefore "whatever
we 'get out' of our rules for using language has been
implicitly 'put into' our rules when we initially
'decided' to use them."[1]  Consider the following

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(1) Ferre, Op.Cit., p.9.

from Wittgenstein:

"Essence is expressed by grammar. (371)

"The only correlate in language to an
intrinsic necessity is an arbitrary rule.
It is the only thing which one can milk
out of this intrinsic necessity into a
proposition. (372)

"Grammar tells what kind of object anything
is. (theology as grammar.)" (373).

How much, then, is playing one language-game rather
than another a matter of choice? What happens to
the distinction between 'correct' and 'incorrect' use
of words?[1] The value of, practically, every assertion,
we are told, is to be estimated in its particular
language-game. Thus, we have no right to generalize.
But this procedure, if carried to its extreme, becomes
futile, if not absurd. The philosopher, then, has to
to be denied the very little that Wittgenstein allowed

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(1) A nominal definition, or a decision as to
the use of words "cannot significantly be
said to be true or false." See Pap,
Semantics and Necessary Truth, Op.Cit.,p.271

him; for one can no more even "assemble reminders" and "suggest analogies", since such reminders and analogies involve 'stepping out of context', and cannot dispense with an element of generality. An extreme Wittgenstein- ianism would ultimately lead us, once more, to face the unhappy choice between either absolutism or extreme contextualism.

However, the alternatives are rarely as sharp as that. What actually has happened is that this extreme form of Wittgensteinianism, especially when it came to the consideration of specific issues, got diluted and somewhat modified. The linguistic approach got less negative and less dramatic; we have seen how, in the case of Wisdom for example, it was believed that metaphysical puzzlement may turn out to be quite enlightening, and how "paradoxical philosophical theses, may call attention to what is commonly overlooked, and sometimes may even bring about far-reaching transforma- tion in currently accepted modes of thought."[1] More- over, in addition to 'assembling reminders', linguistic analysts have also 'presented arguments'. Such arguments,

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(1) Warnock, in Klibansky, Op.Cit., p.207.

however, are usually based on an empirical study of the
use of words. And their investigations, though still
of the nature of an activity rather than a formalized
procedure, have become more systematic. The name
"linguistic analysis" may perhaps symbolize the main
features of this 'development' from the early forms of
Wittgensteinianism. The dominant character of what
they regard to be their subject-matter, is still
'linguistic'. "They recommend that philosophers should
attend to the use of language rather than the character
of the world as a whole or the nature of thought and
knowledge."[1] Their investigations are,therefore,
empirical in nature. But the linguistic analyst is
not a natural historian: his observations are not
chaotic and rhapsodic, for he seeks to discover and
describe the 'logic' of terms. However, this 'logic' -
the discovery of which now becomes the aim of analysis -
is not formal, or reductionist, logic. Though not
rigid and final, there are certain specifiable "rules
of use of the expressions we employ," i.e., they exhibit
a 'logic' of their own. These rules, moreover, have to
be formulated "with a more complex and sensitive apparatus

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(1) Antony Quinton, Klibansky, Op.Cit.p.146.

than anything the formalists are prepared to admit."[1]

The philosophy of linguistic analysis seem to be entering a, more or less, constructive phase. And if some analysts still speak of 'games', this usage should not be associated with playfulness. The game-analogy must not suggest that philosophic activity is something less serious than it ought to be. Thus, 'philosophers of language' who have adopted this more positive approach, believe that the application of their techniques of analysis may be very useful in clearing conceptual difficulties existing in various fields of human knowledge. "Interested in prevention as well as in cure, they are prepared to undertake more or less comprehensive mappings of the use of words and they do not confine themselves to the relief of immediate conceptual pressures."[2] To illustrate this widening of interests among philosophers of language Quinton mentions some of their main pioneering contributions to fields such as Politics, History, Art, and Religion. I shall quote him in full.

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(1) Ibid., p. 179.
(2) Ibid., p. 179.

"...Weldon, with a formalist enthusiasm but
an ordinary language method, has made a
vigorous attack on traditional political
philosophy (218). The attempt of political
philosophers to discover a Priori 'founda-
tions' for policies and institutions is
mistaken since the foundations they offer
are too vague and indeterminate to have
any concrete consequences. Fruitful
political arguments must concern itself
with detailed issues. Crantson (184) has
investigated the concept of freedom and
its different national manifestations,
Hart (219) the doctrine of natural rights,
and Wollheim (220) and Berlin (221) the
idea of equality. Hart has also insisted
on the importance of the analysis of
language for jurisprudence (222) and in
collaboration with Honore (223) has
provided an admirable example of its
application there. Gardiner (224) has
applied Ryle's philosophy of Mind to the
problem of historical explanation, particu-
larly in an extended criticism of Colling-
wood's idealist philosophy of history.
Walsh (225) has also criticized Collingwood
but in a more sympathetic way. Flew (226)
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investigation of psychical research, with
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attention to the intelligibility of its
conjectures.  Three collections of articles
provide examples of the method in application:
to aesthetics - Elton (227), to politics -
Laslett (228), and to theology - Flew and

MacIntyre (229). Flew has brought together
three useful general collections of essays by
philosophers of language (230, 231, 232).
Since there are as yet no general treatments
of the philosophy of language of an intro-
ductory sort, these collections are the best
available method of approach to the major
treatises." (1)

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(1) Ibid., pp. 194-5. Quinton's article is
followed by a Bibliography. The numbers
provide full reference to the above
mentioned publications as they are listed
there.

PART II


ANALYSIS: A DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF

THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE.


Our concern, in this thesis, centers around the
movement in contemporary philosophy called 'linguistic
analysis'. 'Movements' in the history of philosophy
usually have a background, a development, and, above
all, certain implications. Adopting them or not should
'make a difference' when it comes to the consideration
of issues that are of vital importance to men. Other-
wise philosophy becomes merely an intellectual exercise;
thrilling perhaps, but of no genuine significance. It
would then, simply provide us with more alternatives
besides, for example, that of playing a game of chess.
In Part One a formal sketch of the important features
of the philosophy of linguistic analysis was attempted.
But if we are to arrive at a better understanding of
this movement we have to watch its principles at work.
Fortunately the analysts have, recently, started showing
greater interest in subjects other than logic and theory
of meaning. And we are thus, gradually, becoming in a

better position to understand and hence to evaluate the 'claims' of this movement. I have chosen to consider some aspects of the excursion of the 'analysts' into the 'realm' of theology. The data are not abundant and the field is still virgin; but we do have amongst the analysts some pioneers who have tried to widen the scope of their pre-occupations and apply their methods to the problems of theology.

If considered as an attempt at systematic presentation and discussion of a theological issue or set of issues, this thesis, I am sure, is a complete failure. I am not, however, writing an essay or developing a theme in theology. For if I were, I, then, would have to deal with my subject matter in a certain order if I am eager to cultivate the virtue of systematicity with which most of the well-known theologians pride themselves. We are not here concerned with one particular issue in philosophical theology. And what, I hope, prevents the remaining part of this thesis from being a mere collection of important problems in theology that are disorderly raised but never fully discussed let alone settled, is the fact that our interest lies primarily in tracing the implications, for philosophical theology, of the general

philosophical position which I attempted to present in
Part One. It is this interest in the approach of some
contemporary philosophers to theological issues which
provides whatever element of unity this thesis may have.
I have, however, sought to guard myself against the
tendency of trying to "fit" the facts into any kind of
preconceived notion as to what an analyst "should" do,
thereby sacrificing factuality for unity. Our search
for similarities, Wittgenstein has taught us, should
not make us blind to the differences. But since in any
process of inductive reasoning one cannot do without a
certain degree of generalization, I feel justified in
describing the remaining part of this thesis as an
attempt to arrive at an 'inductive definition' of
linguistic analysis. To use the term 'definition' is,
perhaps, to claim too much; for my 'conclusions' are
little more than tentative. It is just that formal
expositions or 'definitions' of linguistic analysis
are, I believe, not enough to make us realize to the
full what is involved in this movement. The complimentary
task of providing 'functional' or 'inductive' definitions
is, I think, indispensible if we are to arrive at better
understanding of linguistic analysis. This is a task
that has to be performed; irrespective of whether or not

I succeed in contributing anything of significance to
it.

CHAPTER ONE

## ANALYSIS: A CHALLENGE TO THEOLOGY

### A. ANALYSIS AND THEOLOGY.

#### 1. Our concern is in "Philosophical" Theology.

Theology is usually a later 'development' in the
history of religions and religious belief.  At the early
stages people are so busy practicing and preaching the
"truth" that has been conveyed unto them that they rarely
can afford, or care, to 'rationalize' their beliefs.
This is true of the 'ordinary believer' at all stages,
for instead of philosophizing about his beliefs, he is
content to practice them.  It is not very easy, however,
to decide when we are entitled to call someone a theolo-
gian.  If we regard any attempt to 'think over' and
'consider' one's religious beliefs as a defining
characteristic of theology, our definition would be
so broad as to include more people as instances of the
term 'theologian' than we are usually willing to include.
Actually, we would then have very few religious people
who are not theologians.  So it all depends upon how
'technical' we want to be.  And the term 'theology' is

certainly a technical term inspite of the fact that it
has various connotations. Theologians constitute a class
of thinkers who are quite limited in number, who have
developed a 'language' of their own, and who are concerned
with a specific kind of problems which have a common
origin and nature. Theologies have at least one property
in common: they involve 'thought about God'. Secondly,
they almost all, employ some kind of 'methodology'.
Their attempts at understanding God and what God's
nature involves, are systematic and organized. If we
approach God through the study of his creation and hope
by the employment of our reason to arrive at a better
understanding of his nature; we are, then, involved in
'natural' theology. If, on the other hand, we approach
God through His revelation, or if we lean heavily on
authority; our theology becomes, thereby, 'revealed' or
'dogmatic'. These, by no means, exhaust all the varieties
of theological thinking. We cannot afford, here, to go
into the details of any of these theologies. We have
to assume, I am afraid, that we, more or less, understand
the general characteristics that are signified by the
use of the phrase "a theological problem". It has to
be emphasized, however, that our reference is primarily
to problems in philosophical theology, as distinguished

from 'other' kinds of problems in theology.  And

"philosophical theology traditionally concerns itself

with the grounds in reason and experience for religious

belief."[1] It is this sort of theology that attracts

the attention of contemporary analysts.  They are

especially concerned with evaluating the claims of

theologians who share a certain 'faith' in the power

of reason and in its legitimacy in handling religious

issues.  Philosophical theology is a theology "which

purports to establish its assertions on grounds of

'reason', that is on grounds which can be understood

and assessed by any intelligent and mature person.  If

we can define 'religion' for the present purpose as the

belief in the existence of God together with the pattern

of behaviour which follows from that belief, theology

will be the methodical statement and discussion of the

belief element in religion, and philosophical theology

will be the attempt to isolate and treat critically that

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(1) This is how Prof. Roland Puccetti uses the
    term, in his description of the course on
    "Problems In Contemporary Philosophical
    Theology" which he is presently giving.

element which all possible theologies have in common."[1]

It is sometimes sarcastically and depriciatingly remarked that what is thought to be most essential and genuine about linguistic analysis has always been a truism for many of the most important figures in the history of philosophy who simply did not think it necessary to make such a fuss about it. While, from the other side, some linguistic analysts try to show that many of the most important figures in the history of philosophy were, at heart, essentially linguistic analysts. We cannot now settle the issue. For the least that that would require is an examination of the philosophies and philosophical methods of such leading figures. Of course, one may remark in passing, that the 'truth' of a position is <u>logically</u> quite independent of the fact that somebody did or did not hold such a position. Be it as it may; I by no means contend that the following analyses of theological concepts are completely novel and

(1) From H.A. Hodges article, 'What Is To Become of Philosophical Theology', in <u>Contemporary British Philosophy</u>, Third Series, Ed. H.D. Lewis, London, 1956, p.212. According to R.W. Hepburn the theologian becomes philosopher "in so far as he attempts at all a logical scrutiny of the concepts he constantly uses." See <u>Christianity and Paradox</u>, London, 1958, p.2.

unprecedented in the history of philosophy and theology.
They are 'ancient' problems and have a very long ancestry.
Here again the charge of insignificance and disguised
reiteration may be directed against the analysts.  They
do nothing more, it may be asserted, than strike familiar
notes with some changes in phrasing.  But I think that
there is in the analytic approach to theology enough
'novelty' in terms of providing a new 'setting' for old
preoccupations, and in terms of a common emphasis upon
clarity and familiarity of expression, to justify an
examination -- limited as it is -- of their views with
respect to problems that have been traditionally discussed
and rediscussed quite exhaustingly but not, perhaps, as
exhaustively.  The reader may fail to see anything 'new'
in this approach; in that case I would have lost whatever
little and modest claim to originality I have made.

## 2. The Analytic Concern In Theology: Motives and Significance.

The 'motives' behind the analysts' concern in
theology are varied.  At the outset the interests were
negative: fascinated with their new techniques, some
analysts found in theology an ideal field where their
effectiveness could be displayed.  There seemed to be

much in theology to be "committed to the flames" and
even more "houses of cards" to be destroyed.  This is
typical of what may be called the 'neo-verificationists'
and some extreme Wittgensteinians.  The very little
'meaningful' language that the formers left to the
theologians, was thought of, by the latters, to embody
a fundamental misuse.  However, there gradually arose
more positive interest in theology.  And some analysts
got to believe that the language of theology has a
unique -- and sometimes important -- function.[1] This
belief is generally due to the realization of the
essential 'neutrality' of analysis as descriptive and
exhibitive; added to it a certain 'desire' on the part
of some believers who, while convinced analysts, hope
to retain their religious faith.[2]  In Chapter One we
shall be mainly concerned with the former 'negative'
approach, in Chapter Two with the latter.

It is also important to note, in this connection,
that the 'analytic techniques' have not only aroused the
interests of the analysts in theology; they have also

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(1) See Ferre, Op.Cit., p.105.

(2) See H. D.Lewis, "Contemporary Empiricism and
the Philosophy of Religion", in Philosophy,
1957, pp. 193

acted as a challenge to the theologians themselves and
have thus contributed to some sort of 'revival' in
theological discourse in the form of more vigorous
discussion, elaboration, and representation of the
nature of religion in general and of religious belief
in particular, on the part of both analysts and theo-
logians per se. And here again, in the case of
'theologians', the reaction has been twofold. Some of
them came to realize the unhappy and serious limitations
which the 'new logic' places on their traditional
activities, and tried, in general, to 'do something
about it'. While another group of theologians 'welcomed'
this 'new logic'.[1] The fact that the application of
this logic on theology results in all sorts of paradoxes
and contradictions proves, for them, not the inadequacy
of their faith but rather its 'authenticity' -- one
does not have to present the content of his faith in
logically acceptable arguments. However, the story, as
we shall try to show, is not as simple as that. For
what is at stake is not only the truthfulness or
authenticity of religious beliefs; what is at stake is

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[1] See R.W. Hepburn, Christianity and Paradox,
London, 1958, pp. 4 - 9.

its very meaning. And simply to fall upon 'revealed' truth will not do. Indeed the 'immunity' thus achieved is a costly one, for "the insights gained by recent philosophy so far from diminishing the need for rational inquiry within theology, have vastly increased that need. They have increased it by showing that one critical question about any kind of religious language is not whether its claims can be established by this or that argument, but whether they have been given a coherent meaning, a consistent use."[1] It, therefore, seems inevitable for the theologian to pass through the dark "night of the intellect" if he intends to speak meaningfully at all.

3. Wisdom's Article 'Gods', A Historical Classic. The Parable of the Gardener -- Flew's Version and the "Attack" upon Theology.

John Wisdom was one of the first analysts who got interested in the discussion of theological issues. His famous article "Gods"[2] has exercised great influence

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(1) Ibid., p. 6.

(2) This article first appeared in the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1944; It was reprinted in Wisdom's Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1953, pp. 149-168.

in initiating and directing philosophical consideration
of problems in theology. It is rich in suggestions; and
while 'analytic' in approach, yet it does not, I think,
suffer from positivistic one-sidedness. Wisdom's chief
contribution in this article is, I believe his analysis
of the role of 'argument' in religious belief; a point
which will be considered with some detail in the next
chapter. This, however, is by no means Wisdom's only
contribution to the field of philosophical theology; and
we shall find ourselves referring to him more than once.
For the present we shall take Wisdom's famous 'parable
of the gardener' and consider the way it was seized upon
by what may be called the 'neo-verificationists' in
theology who, through their own version of the parable,
launched a severe attack on theology. Let us, first,
listen to the tale as told by Wisdom.

> "Two people return to their long neglected
> garden and find among the weeds a few of the
> old plants surprisingly vigorous. One says
> to the other 'it must be that a gardener has
> been coming and doing something about these
> plants.' Upon inquiry they find that no
> neighbour has ever seen anyone at work in their
> garden. The first man says to the other 'He
> must have worked while people slept'. The other
> says 'No, someone would have heard him and

besides, anybody who cared about the plants
would have kept down these weeds.' The first
man says 'Look at the way they are arranged.
There is purpose and a feeling for beauty here.
I believe that someone comes, someone invisible
to mortal eyes. I believe that the more care-
fully we look the more we shall find confirma-
tion of this.' They examine the garden ever so
carefully and sometimes they come on new things
suggesting that a gardener comes and sometimes
they come on new things suggesting the contrary
and even that a malicious person has been at
work. Besides examining the garden carefully
they also study what happens to gardens left
without attention. Each learns all the other
learns about this and about the garden.
Consequently, when after all, this, one says
'I still believe a gardener comes' while the
other says 'I don't' their different words reflect
no difference as to what they have found in the
garden, no difference as to what they would
find in the garden if they looked further and
no difference about how fast untended gardens
fall into disorder. At this stage, in the
context, the gardener hypothesis has ceased to
be experimental, the difference between one who
accepts and one who rejects it is now not a
matter of one expecting something the other
does not expect."[1]

There are, as we shall try to see, many 'morals' to be

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(1) Ibid., pp.154-55

drawn from this parable and from the whole context
within which it appears.  Antony Flew was only fascinated
with the 'suggestion' that theological assertions are
unfalsifiable; and he concluded that they actually are
no assertions at all.  This became the basis for the
'challenge' with which 'analysis' supposedly confronts
theology.  Our main concern in this chapter is with the
nature and implications of this 'challenge'.  Before
turning to that it would be, again, helpful to hear
Flew's version of Wisdom's parable.

"Once upon a time two explorers came upon a
clearing in the jungle.  In the clearing were
growing many flowers and many weeds.  One
explorer says, 'Some gardener must tend this
plot.'  The other disagrees, 'There is no
gardener.'  So they pitch their tents and set
a watch.  No gardener is ever seen. 'But
perhaps he is an invisible gardener.'  So they
set up a barbed-wire fence.  They electrify it.
They patrol with bloodhounds...But no shrieks
ever suggested that some intruder has received
a shock.  No movements of the wire ever betray
an invisible climber.  The bloodhounds never
give cry.  Yet still the Believer is not
convinced. 'But there is a gardener, invisible,
intangible, insensible to electric shocks, a
gardener who comes secretly to look after the
garden which he loves.'  At last the Sceptic

despairs, 'But what remains of your original assertion? <u>Just how does what you call an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener</u> or even from no gardener at all?'" (1)

I have quoted Wisdom and Flew in full because their 'stories' provide the setting for much of what is to come. The analogy of all this talk about gardens and gardeners to religion is evident. In both cases a certain 'hypothesis' is presented to account for some 'observed' facts. Both Wisdom and Flew agree that theistic asser-tions turn out <u>not</u> to be hypotheses in the scientific sense. But while for Flew this automatically disqualifies them and renders religious talk meaningless; for Wisdom, though religious assertions fail to function as scientific hypotheses, yet this does not make meaningful religious talk impossible. However, 'disqualifications' such as that of Flew's are not 'rash' disqualifications: they are not mere dismissals of the whole issue, for they are -- and actually turned out to be -- of great significance for theological discourse. Their position, therefore,

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(1) Antony Flew, 'Theology and Falsification', in <u>New Essays in Philosophical Theology</u>, Eds. Flew and MacIntyre, London, 1955, p. 96. (my italics).

demands more detailed consideration.

## B. THE PARADOX OF FAITH.

### 1. The Significance of The Neo-Verificationists: The Gap between God and Experience.

I have chosen to refer to the above mentioned position as 'neo-verificationism' in theology. 'Neo', because while their demand for falsification (or verification) is much related to Ayer's verifiability theory of meaning, yet neo-verificationists are not thoroughgoing positivists. For they do realize the oversimplifications and limitations involved in the latters' theory of meaning. They are, consequently, more tolerant and open than the 'classical' positivists have usually been. They would hesitate more before classifying assertions as nonsensical, and would first give their opponent the chance to present his case. But the important fact remains that their primary concern is still in meaning, and that therefore the question of meaning has a logical priority over that of justification. As the 'Logician' in A.N. Prior's imaginary dialogue says, "the real intellectual difficulty for the believer or would-be believer is not the problem of proof but the problem

of meaning."[1] Therefore the value of the neo-verifica-
tionists lies in the fact that while giving the chance to
the opponent to present his case, they were as insistent
as ever on clarity and 'meaningfulness'. They have thus
helped to intensify the 'difficulties' of the theologian
instead of simply dismissing them offhand. The early
positivists did'nt care to listen to what the theologian
may want to say. Theology was a brand of metaphysical
nonsense; and that ended it. The theologian, consequently,
did'nt feel 'obliged' to retort, for nobody would listen.
The neo-verificationists, on the other hand, were very
eager and intent on listening; though, perhaps, they
were not very sympathetic listeners. Instead of holding
argument with the theologian to be <u>pointless</u>, they <u>made a</u>
<u>point</u> of arguing with him. The theologian has to state
the content of his faith, and to state it in such a
manner that one may hope to understand it.

This turned out to be not too easy a demand for
the theologian to meet. It gradually became a challenge.
And "the value of this modified verification-challenge

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(1) A.N. Prior's Dialogue 'Can Religion Be
    Discussed?' in <u>New Essays In Philosophical</u>
    <u>Theology</u>, Op.Cit., p.3.

is precisely this, that it forces a theologian to expose
the very nerve of his position, to become clear with
himself (and to express to other people) on what his
theology stands or falls."[1] And we can never hope to
understand on what this theology stands, the neo-
verificationist insists, unless we are told what may
possibly cause it to fall. He who asserts that there
is a gardener who secretly comes and takes care of the
garden, must also be willing to specify what may possibly
occur that would convince him to give up his hypothesis.
If he fails to do that, then his assertion is as good
as nothing. A typical question to ask the theist would
be "How much should innocent children suffer, How many
wars, famines and epidemics should there be, How many
cities should be destroyed by earthquakes or burnt with
volcanos, before you stop calling your God 'good'?"
This, of course, is the 'ancient' problem of evil; but
the fact that it is ancient does not make it less
significant. On the contrary, it now becomes much more
difficult to 'explain it away'. For the neo-verifica-
tionist cannot be easily tricked. He would not allow

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(1) Hepburn, Op.Cit., p.12.

the theist   to go on qualifying his assertions in the
face of facts that cannot be theistically accounted for.
Sooner or later nothing would be left of theistic
assertions -- they will be "killed by inches, the death
by a thousand qualification."[1] An assertion that is
qualifiable in the face of all facts does not exclude
any fact, and hence is meaningless.  The trouble with
religious words, as Raphael Demos puts it, is that they
are too hospitable; while "a word is better known by the
company it does not keep; the 'no trespassing sign' must
stand on the lawn."[2] The price one has to pay for saving
religious language from falsification is indeed very
costly -- it is vacuity.

Suggested ways out of the problem emphasized the
'otherness' and 'transcendance' of God; and the gap
between Him and experience grew larger still.  Words
when taken out of the context of human experience, are
emptied of meaning; but we have to employ 'words' to
talk about infinite God, and yet hope that finite man

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(1) Flew, in New Essays in Philosophical
    Theology, Op.Cit., p.97.

(2) Article by R. Demos, "The Meaningfulness
    of Religious Language", in Philosophy and
    Phenomenological Research, V.18, 1957, p.100.

would understand them. As Alasdair MacIntyre puts it, "the theist both denies that anything adequate can be said about God and yet says a great deal."[1] This is an old theological problem which the neo-verificationist, empirically founded attack helped to intensify. Talk about God involves the ascription of empirical, human, and factual qualities to a transcendent, eternal and supernatural Being. Man, it seems, is thoroughly anthropomorphic; so it is either that God has to be 'humanized', or else objective reference to Him is rendered impossible. Hence the historical importance of the subjective element in religion, from Tertullian up to Barth. The attempts to impose human conceptions for the understanding of God's nature are 'fallacious', it is claimed. There can be no objective connection, for the Barthian, between man and God. Religious talk and concepts will never make sense through subjecting them to the rules of grammar and logic, their meaningfulness is the result of a certain "illumination" conferred by God through a "miracle" or "gift" of His. "Of course we can only talk nonsense when we try to talk about God," says the Barthian Protestant in A.N. Prior's dialogue,

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(1) Metaphysical Beliefs, Ed. A.C. MacIntyre, London, 1957, p.187.

"-- Our language is the language of sinful men, and is utterly unfitted for such use. _Of course_ the laws of thought and the laws of grammar, forbid to confess our faith -- we try to speak of God and it is impossible even to begin."[1] Barth is certainly not the first theologian, who not only recognizes and accepts the element of paradox, incomprehensibility, and inexpressibility in religion, but also welcomes it. A similar, but much more 'dramatized', position was taken by a theologian of the second century by the name of Tertullian.[2] He would have been very 'grateful' for any one who succeeded in 'falsifying' him, since the paradoxical and incompatible nature of religious assertions were the '_reasons_' for Tertullian's belief in them. Marcion, a contemporary of Tertullian, had to reject the incarnation because he thought that it involved a _logical_ contradiction; for he could not understand how God and His attributes could be eternal and unchangeable if we, at the same time, believed that He became incarnate in human flesh. So Marcion, out of

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(1) New Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit., p.9.

(2) In all what follows in connection with Tertullian I have relied on Bernard William's article "Tertullian's Paradox" in New Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit., pp. 187-211.

respect for meaningfulness and comprehensibility, chose
to reject the incarnation. This outraged Tertullian,
whose reaction, though may perhaps represent an extreme,
is yet typical of many 'theologians' who had to face
questions of the meaningfulness and comprehensibility
of religious language -- paradox was not only accepted
but was also welcomed. To the charge of incompatibility
involved in describing God as eternal and unchangeable
and yet asserting the He, at a certain time in a certain
place, descended into earth and became man, Tertullian
answers by saying that we should not attempt to subject
God to human concepts and notions, for it is fallacious
to argue "from the nature of temporal objects to the
nature of the eternal and infinite."[1] to the charge that
it is 'unworthy' of God, being what He is, to be born
and become man, Tertullian impatiently and violently
retorts,answering Marcion "..Which is more unworthy of
God, more shameful, to be born or to die?.. Answer me
this, you butcher of the truth. Was not God really
crucified? And as he was really crucified, did not he
really die? And as he really died, did not he really
rise from the dea?... Is our whole faith false?...

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(1) Ibid., Williams, p.189.

Spare what is the one hope of the whole world. Why
do you destroy an indignity that is necessary to our
faith? What is unworthy of God will do for me... the
Son of God was born; because it is shameful, I am not
ashamed. And the Son of God died; just because it is
absurd, it is to be believed. And he was buried and
and rose again; it is certain, because it is impossible."[1]
What can the neo-verificationist, or anybody for that
matter, say in the face of this? You simply cannot
'argue' with a Tertullian.

Nevertheless, an important moral can be learnt
from Tertullian: religion is essentially subjective,
and hence involves an undeniable element of incompre-
hensibility. This fact has been accepted, in varying
degrees, by many and considered to be the primary
justification of 'faith'. Religion, it is said, cannot
be 'proved', cannot be 'demonstrated', cannot be
'objectified'; but this does not mean that it is
impossible; for we can still have -- faith. Failing

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(1) Ibid., Tertullian, pp. 189-190 (italics
are mine).

the neo-verificationist test does not rob religion of its
authenticity and value.[1] However, for the neo-verifi-
cationist, reliance on faith will not do when the question
is a question of meaning.  For how can one be said to
'have faith' in x when he, in the first  place, does not
'understand' x?  "Faith might be a way of believing
something, as opposed to believing it on evidence; but
how could it be a way of stepping from what is understood
to what is not understood?"[2]  In religion, to repeat,
the element of incomprehensibility is irremovable.  That
is why the believer is willing to step into the unknown
by a 'leap' of faith.  While the neo-verificationist
will not take a single step unless he knows, partly at
least, where into he is stepping.  When the alternatives
are a meaningful as opposed to a meaningless hypothesis,
there can simply be no "choice".  As Prior's 'Logician',

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(1) Rudolf Otto, for example, believes that "the
really important elements in religion are the
aspects of faith which cannot be conceptualized";
and that "what is essential about religion is
its non-rational side, the part that cannot
be...put into words." See on Otto:
Thomas McPherson's article, "Religion as the
Inexpressible" in New Essays In Philosophical
Theology, Op.Cit.,pp.134-5; and Ferre, Op.Cit.
p. 36

(2) Williams, New Essays In Philosophical
Theology, Op.Cit., p.209.

in addressing the Barthian Protestant, says "...the
believing hypothesis is meaningless, and so isn't a
hypothesis at all.  The chances are not fifty-fifty
but a hundred to nothing against belief.  The 'choice'
you imagine you have is illusory -- unbelief is
inevitable."[1] Human reason may be, and actually is,
limited.  But this does not make the incomprehensible
and obscure appropriate bases for belief, especially
when the belief in question defines an outlook or a
way of life.

A recent attempt at showing that "unbelief is
inevitable" if God is to be comprehensible by human
reason, is made by Professor Roland Puccetti[2] and was
"inspired", as he himself says, "by a remark of
Wittgenstein's in the Tractatus."  This remark, as
quoted by Professor Puccetti, states that "one cannot
set a limit to thought," for in order to do so "we

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(1) Ibid., p.8.

(2) Professor Puccetti presented this argument
in a short article entitled "Is Omni-
science Possible,"  This article is
forthcoming in the Australasian Journal
of Philosophy.

should have to be able to think both sides of this limit, i.e., we should have to be able to think what is unthinkable."[1] Professor Puccetti's argument, as I understood it, may be restated in the following manner: No matter how many 'facts' one knows, it is always logically possible that an unknown fact 'f' may still exist. Let us call the proposition asserted by this statement 'P'. Now, if 'P' is true then no one can assert that "there are no facts unknown to me," for the possibility of there being such a fact, 'f', can never be excluded. But this is exactly what an omniscient being should be able to do, namely, to assert that "there are no facts unknown to me." It, therefore, follows that omniscience is impossible, and hence that God, if He is what the theist describes Him to be, does not exist. Of course the argument, though valid, cannot be _true_ unless 'P' is accepted. And 'P' cannot be proven false unless one is enabled, as Wittgenstein puts it, "to think the unthinkable". Actually this argument and the whole approach which it typifies _assume_ that nothing can be said to exist, and even more to be

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(1) Wittgenstein, _Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus_, Author's Preface, p.2.

'understood', unless it can be assessed, in principle
at least, by human reason and thinking. The theist may,
if he chooses, fall upon the incomprehensible and
inexpressible; he may take 'leaps', and feel proud and
satisfied in having 'committed' himself. As to the
neo-verificationist, he would not be bothered any more
if all the theist claims to be asserting is that there
is a God who is unthinkable. But of course, most
theists claim much more.

The problem, moreover, is not only one of
incomprehensibility derived from the unavoidable
imposition of human concepts upon anything if it is to
become an item of human knowledge and understanding; it
is also one of incompatibility. For though one may
hope, by analogy or whatever other means the theologician
may suggest, to 'understand' what is it for a certain
attribute of God's to be infinite; still, it seems much
more difficult, if not impossible, to understand what
is meant by the concept of God when all, or even some,
of his attributes are taken together. It seems that
we either have to modify some of our ordinary conceptions,
or to modify our conception of God. In the case of the
phenomenon of evil, for example, we have either to

consider it as a mere fiction, an unreality, or else
to think of God as a good being who 'tries his best'
or as an all-powerful being who is not always good.
Usually the 'saving explanations' of the theists are
directed towards a 'modification' of the notion of
evil, rather than directly limiting God's power or
goodness. One such typical attempt is to say that we
can have no sense of 'good' if evil does not exist. In
other words, the relation between 'good' and 'evil' is
a relation of counterparts, like, for example, that
between great and small. J.L. Mackie in an able article
entitled "Evil and Omnipotence"[1] argues that if this
is the case, viz. that if the existence of evil is
necessitated as the counterpart of good, then we don't
worship, necessarily, a 'good' God but a 'better' one.[2]
And, moreover, the claims that **God** <u>had</u> to provide <u>some</u>
evil so that greater goals and virtues could be
cultivated, entails, first, that there is at least one
thing which a supposedly 'omnipotent' being <u>had</u> to do,
and, secondly it overlooks the fact that we could have
managed with much less evil -- it is not only "higher"

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(1) Mind, Vol. 64, 1955, pp.200-212.
(2) <u>Ibid</u>., p.204.

virtues that we have, we have as much if not more,
"higher" evils. And if it is claimed that had it not
been for the existence of evil, man could not have
possibly been 'free'; then the same argument, Mackei
believes, holds against such a claim. For here again
we are supposing freedom to be one of the 'higher'
goods which justify the existence of 'lesser' evils;
and leaving aside the question of how much 'higher'
evils still remain to be accounted for, it can still
be asked "Could God not have made men such that they
always freely choose the good?" if not, then surely
He is not Omnipotent, for there is no "logical
impossibility in (man's) freely choosing the good."[1]
The failure of all suggested solutions for the problem
of evil shows, for Mackei, that the theist "must now
be prepared to believe, not merely what cannot be
proved, but what can be disproved from other beliefs

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(1) Ibid., p.209. (Mackie's claim, it must be
admitted, is very controversial. This is
so because the term 'freedom' and the
phrase 'to act freely' are very loose and
cannot be dealt with out of specific contexts.
In dealing with the same question Antony
Flew tries to undermine the theistic free-
will-justification of evil, by arguing that
there is no contradiction between man's
conduct being caused and his beeing free.
This is a point that shall be taken later.
See p. 206 fl.

that he also holds."[1] To go back to our parable of the gardener, the trouble with theism, Flew there concludes, is that "we **have** given God attributes which rule out all possible saving explanations."[2]

2. The Negative 'Achievements' of The Neo-Verificationists:

(a) Religious Notions No More Considered as Explanatory Hypotheses.

(b) The Importance of The 'Referential Element' In Belief.

These, in brief, are some features of the 'analytic challenge' to theology.  It is essentially a demand for meaningfulness and clarification; and its shortcomings, according to its critics, lie in its narrow and limited understanding of meaningfulness and significance.  Before, however, considering the 'counter-attack' and the manner in which some theists, especially those who are themselves

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(1) Ibid., p.200. A similar position was developed and elaborated by J.N.Findlay to constitute a 'disproof' of God's existence. See p. 138.

(2) New Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit., p. 107.

'analysts', tried to meet this challenge, it is first
advisable to try to emphasize, by way of summary, the
main implications that are explicit or implicit in this
attack.  On the whole, the neo-verificationists are, I
think, justified in at least claiming some 'negative
achievements'; for in many cases, they helped theistic
theologians in coming to realize what religion is not.

For one thing, religion and religious assertions
were no more thought of to function as explanatory
hypotheses.  This was particularly emphasized, and
accepted, by those 'analysts' who came to the defence
of religion, or who at least still believed that religion
performed a more or less important function of its own.
The neo-verificationist attack would indeed be very
effective if the believer regarded his assertions to be
verifiable or falsifiable.  But the fact, they point out,
is that the believer does not, or at least should not
do so.  The neo-verificationist falsely assumes that
theology is an experimental issue.  He had therefore
all the time been firing against an imaginary target.
It is only when faith becomes something provisional that
it enters within the range of the neo-verificationist's
techniques.  And faith, to be faith, is never provisional.

No believer ever addresses his God in the following manner: "Oh God, if you exist, save my soul, if I have any."[1] It would be absurd if he does. Believers do not go around testing their beliefs, finding evidence for and against them, and then either confirming or rejecting them. While this is exactly what neo-verificationism requires them to do. This demand, the defenders of religion go on to say, is unfair and unjustified. It betrays a misunderstanding of what is essential in religion. The question, here, inevitably arises: 'if this is not what religious belief is, then what is it?'

The hypothetical experimental character has been denied to save faith from becoming something provisional and to guard religion against degenerating into a sort of Pseudo-Science. But most theologians would'nt feel happier about it if they find themselves gradually led, by this 'rescuing-manoeuvre', into some sort of extreme subjectivism -- a Tertullianism or an obscure mysticism. This may explain, as we shall try to see, why we have so many 'variations' with respect to the many suggested

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(1)  J.J.C.Smart, New Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit., p.41.

'solutions' of the problem of faith, or the many
'definitions' of religious belief.  What is common
to all of these 'ways out', is that they are aware of
two unhappy extreme-alternatives: that of giving
religious assertions the status of factual, scientific,
objectivity, or of personal, mystical subjectivity.
Having rejected the first alternative, the theologian
must now guard against falling into the second.  In
other words, there is a certain minimum of objective
content and reference without which religious belief
cannot stand.  Neo-verificationism, I believe, has been
very effective in bringing such a realization.  We may
not 'believe' in God the same way we 'believe' in the
laws of thermo-dynamics; but there can be no belief of
any kind if it has no objective foundation.  This is
especially true in the case of religious belief, for,
as A.C. Ewing rightly puts it, "if there is thought to
be no objective justification for belief in God all
worship of God becomes idolatry."[1] Not only that; but
also most of the important religious activities such as
praying, preaching, arguing, converting, etc..., would
be rendered impossible, or at least arbitrary.  Thus

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(1) A.C. Ewing, Philosophy, 1957, p. 208.

though religion is not scientifically verifiable, yet
anybody who is eager to retain his religious beliefs and
have them preserve a certain status of authenticity and
respectability, has to find 'other' means of justifying
them. And any suggested 'justification' of religious
belief -- or, for that matter, of any 'position' or
'stand' or 'system' or 'pattern' -- has to have some
kind of 'data' or 'facts', from which to draw. Providing
such data as a source for recruiting religious belief
with the necessary elements of objectivity while yet
escaping the falsifiability test is, for the neo-
verificationist, as hopeful an attempt as trying to eat
the cake and have it. Presently, we have to postpone
judgement until we get somewhat acquainted with some
of the suggested 'ways out' of the problem, which I
shall attempt to outline in the next chapter. Our
concern in this chapter has been mainly with the
'problematic' nature of religious belief which the neo-
verificationists tried, dramatically perhaps, to
symptomize. Since recent contributors to the literature
of philosophical theology have, on the whole, either
built upon or reacted against neo-verificationism in
theology, it would be wise to conclude this chapter by
pointing out a certain limitation which is thought to

characterize this position.

### 3. The 'Critique' of Neo-Verificationism.

The most general and most effective criticism
of verificationists is that they have a very narrow
conception of meaning. They are accused of 'defining'
the meaningful and then arbitrarily excluding all
instances that cannot be subsumed under this definition.
The result is the elimination of all forms of language
that are non-empirical in nature. Life becomes one-
dimensional and loses many of its significant forms,
chief amongst which is religion. We cannot, simply by
assumption, rule out important human activities because
the only kind of 'facts' we are willing to acknowledge
are empirical 'facts'. If meaningfulness is a matter of
what we are willing to "assume", then one assumption is
as good as another and verificationism stands in need of
'justification' in as much as any other position does;
even more, for we ordinarily have a wider conception of
meaning. The verificationist veto, therefore, does not
reach the theologian unless he claims scientific validity
to his assertions. And the theologian, by the very
nature of the case, does not, ordinarily, have such a
claim, since this would defeat his own purposes. No

theist is willing to worship a God whose qualities can be
exhaustively accounted for by experimental and scientific
tests -- God, to be worthy of our adoration, has to be
extra-empirical by nature, for otherwise our religion
would degenerate into some primitive form of idolatry or
animism.  The demand that our God-concepts be empirically
tested and measured betrays a serious misunderstanding
of what religion fundamentally involves.  After all, we
must not forget that there are different forms, or
manifestations, of Truth; and that, consequently, there
are different kinds of discourse that function differently
and seek, each in the manner which best suits it, to
discover its own 'kind' of truth.  As H.A. Hodges puts
it, "the question whether religious utterances have any
meaning at all, and if so what kind of meaning they have,
is therefore reducible to the question, whether religious
discourse can be regarded as fulfilling a real purpose
in real life, and in particular whether it can be
regarded as leading to the discovery of some kind of
truth."[1]

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(1) H.A. Hodges, "What is to become of Theology",
    in Contemporary British Philosophy, 3rd
    Series, p.218.

Thus the 'fact' that religion <u>does</u> serve a function, that it has been a major concern of man all through his known history, that it has developed its own peculiar vocabulary and norms, etc.., becomes of greatest significance since it provides a huge source of 'meaningfulness' to face, and silence, all arbitrary attempts at classifying religion and religious discourse as meaningless. It is not astonishing, therefore, to find that the linguistic analysts, as we shall see, placed great emphasis upon this point; for did'nt they revolt against all attempts at reducing language with all its varied forms into one artificial language that may properly function in a certain circumscribed region but certainly fails in expressing the many and different "forms of life" that seek to find expression in human language? Actually one can reverse the verificationist argument and consider established usage as a criterion of meaning which is more ultimate than verifiability, and then say, as Demos does, that since "religious discourse <u>is</u> meaningful...THEREFORE the principle of verification is not a necessary condition for meaningfulness."[1]

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[1] Demos, <u>Philosophy</u>, <u>Op.Cit</u>.pp.101-2.(Capitalized italics are mine.) This position was developed by Norman Malcom to constitute an 'argument' purporting to establish God's existence. See p. 148.

However, to be fair to the neo-verificationists
one should mention that they were aware of their 'assump-
tions'. And this awareness, as I tried to explain
earlier, is what entitles them to the 'neo' prefix.
The neo-verificationist admits that his 'arguments'
make sense only for those who work on the same 'assump-
tions', and he accordingly addresses himself to those
who share his 'outlook'or 'position'. And, moreover,
the 'assumptions'that such a position involves do not
solely center around the principle of verifiability, but
are also 'diluted' with Wittgensteinianism and other
affiliated 'modern' views in analysis. The classifica-
tion into "neo-verificationist" and "linguistic analyst"
is perhaps arbitrary. Its only justification in our
case is that it has been used to distinguish two some-
what distinct modern approaches to theology: one is
more demanding and uncompromizing, it emphasizes the
problematic nature of religion; the other is more open
and tolerant which, while sometimes quite sceptical and
pessimistic with regard to religious issues, tends on
the whole to give the theologian some credit. This
characterization, I must emphasize, does not necessarily
pertain to their general philosophic position, but

specifically to their approach to _theological_ problems.
And even in the latter case it is not always easy to
draw the line.

# CHAPTER TWO

## ANALYSIS: A DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE.

### 1. The General Attitude of the Linguistic Analysts Towards Theological Issues: The Descriptive, Empirical, Exhibitive Approach.

Let us try, at the beginning of this chapter, to trace the main developments and changes that the analytic approach to theology underwent. The 'critique' of verificationism with which the last chapter was concluded is especially relevant here. The shift, we said, may be characterized as a shift from 'neo-verificationism' into 'linguistic analysis'. Here again, the linguistic analyst's primary concern is still in meaning more than in anything else; but his approach to the question is different from the neo-verificationist's. In this respect, the distinguishing characteristic of the former is that he does not -- at least he should not -- bring with him a ready-made definition of meaning. Both positions are 'empirical' in nature and temperament. But the range of 'facts' which he is willing to classify as 'empirical' is much

wider and diversified in the case of the linguistic
analyst, for he shows a genuine interest in, and respect
to, a great variety of facts to which the neo-
verificationist gives no attention.  This change is
particularly relevant to theology: now, we are in the
open; gone is the time "of brashness and idol-smashing...",
it has been "well spent, but it is past," and instead,
the 'task' of analysis becomes now that of "examining
as sympathetically and as critically as possible just
how religious utterances are used to mean whatever they
may mean."[1]That they are used to mean something is
an evident fact; how they are used to mean it, and what
it is that they are used to mean are facts that can be
discovered.  This is the new linguistic conception of
how philosophical theology should be.  It is important
to note its main features.

From the very outset, what acquires great sig-
nificance from the point of view of linguistic analysis,
is the fact that theological, and to a much wider extent
religious, language has its own established usages.
People pray, worship and preach; they have learnt or

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(1) C.B. Martin, Religious Belief, Cornell
     University Press, 1959, p.7.

have been taught - through the use of language and certain creedal formulations - the things they believe in, and they themselves try, likewise, to communicate this 'truth' to their children and fellowmen. And in this whole process, one is usually referred to certain texts as authoritative and to certain 'events' as especially significant. This, in general, is what the linguistic analyst refers to as the 'religious context' where the religious language-game is originally played. And it is with this language, with all the processes and activities that are associated with it, that he is genuinely concerned.

At the basis of the linguistic analyst's concern with the 'religious context' lie two important 'assumptions'. In the first place, a sentence, it is believed, "has no meaning in any system of discourse to which it makes no contribution;"[1] therefore, the meaning of religious statements should be sought only in the religious context. In the second place, the linguistic analyst could hardly be convinced that what so many people have believed in for such a long time is actually

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(1) H.A. Hodges, Contemporary British Philosophy, Op.Cit., p.218.

'meaningless'. The worst that can happen is that he may discover, underlying religious belief and talk, deep deceptions and misconceptions. In that case he is called upon to assume his therapeutic function; which, all the more, _increases_ the need for a "sympathetic and critical understanding" of what goes on in religion. Thus, however it may turn out, an investigation and a 'definition' of the religious context has to be made.

However, it is not always easy to find, and still more to agree upon, the 'established usage' of a term. This is more so in the case of religion; and thus the reference to the 'religious context' is not always precise and uncontroversial. Who, therefore, determines what the '_proper_' religious context is? The scriptures and, in the case of Christianity, the life and sayings of Christ? -- but who is to 'rightly' interpret these? The Church? -- but the authority of the church can always be, and has been, questioned. The theologian? -- what 'kind' of theologians are we to trust most? The 'ordinary believer'? -- I beg your pardon, this is a 'myth' that does not exist; and granted that it does, the very moment the 'ordinary believer' starts to formulate his beliefs and to explain them, he ceases to be 'ordinary'. Religious experience? -- Pray, what does that mean?

I am not trying to say that the task is utterly hopeless;
it is, to say the least, very difficult and involved.
The linguistic analyst is quite aware of this fact and,
consequently, tries to take into consideration as many
of the elements that are involved in religious beliefs
and activities as possible.

The linguistic analyst does not undertake analysis
of theological issues in the hope of discovering 'profound
truths' or establishing a 'world view'. His greatest
ambition is to understand, and render understandable,
what actually goes on in religion. This absence of pre-
conceptions and metaphysical motives makes the analyst
especially qualified in assuming the descriptive task
in theology. And this task has to be undertaken if one
hopes to arrive at an objective and reasoned view of
religion. We cannot tell whether or not we 'ought to
believe' unless we are first reasonably clear as to what
the belief in question involves. In other words, the
task of description precedes that of prescription. And
the less prejudiced and negligent we are in our descrip-
tion, the greater chance we have of not erring in our
conclusions and decisions. Of course the ideally
unbiased observer does not exist, but still objectivity
and impartiality remain a virtue; a virtue which the

linguistic analysts tried their best to cultivate.

The linguistic approach to theology is, therefore, essentially neutral. It is not, necessarily, an attempt to refute, but to understand.[1] And to understand what' is involved in a certain discourse one should, according to the linguistic analyst, try to discover how the important terms and key-concepts are usually used in the discourse in question. In the case of theology one has to "chart the logical grammar" of religious language, show how words and concepts there function, draw analogies and contrasts between uses of the same terms in different contexts, trace their origins and developments with emphasis upon their occurence in the 'first-order-statements' in the religious context itself as distinguished from their occurence in the 'second-order-statements' of theology. It is only after such an exhibitive process, after a thorough investigation of the uses and functions of religious notions, that the linguistic analyst stops to conclude and pronounce his judgement. And the differences and dissimilarities amongst the various

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(1) Basil Mitchell, Ed., Faith and Logic: Oxford Essays in Philosophical Theology, London, 1957, p.5.

conclusions reached, comes as an additional proof of the
essential neutrality of the method itself.[1]

The analysis of religious language and belief has
'inspired' some analysts to formulate arguments purport-
ing, in the one case, to establish God's existence, in the
other, His non-existence; some found that religious
language and consequently religious belief are justifiable
because they serve important and unique functions of their
own, and still in the case of others religious belief was
disqualified on the ground that it was found to be hope-
lessly confused. In the case of the last 'category' we
notice that the charge which the linguistic analyst levels
at theology is not meaninglessness, but rather confusion
and conceptual disorder. This is a more serious and
threatening charge since it cannot be easily avoided on
the ground that the critic has failed 'to see' the point
of the believer; for those linguistic analysts who failed
to find any justification for religious belief are usually,
as admitted by their own opponents and critics, "sceptics
with an uncommonly sound understanding of what religion

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(1) In the conclusion, there will be more morals
to be drawn from this phenomenon as to the
nature of the philosophy of linguistic analysis.

is like."[1] Thus, even in the cases where a reasonable agreement has been reached as to what is meant by the 'religious context', the inferences that are made and the conclusions that are drawn are in very many cases not the same. Let us try to see how some of the analysts appealed to the religious context, and what were the results of such appeals.

2. The Significance of the 'Religious Context'.

(a) The Question of God's Existence Has No Meaning Outside The Religious Context; J.J.C. Smart.

Many of the points raised in connection with the linguistic approach to theology, may be seen in J.J.C. Smart's contributions to the literature of what may be called 'linguistic theology'. In one of his articles, "Metaphysics, Logic and Theology",[2] the argument proceeds in the form of a dialogue (a method which seems to be gaining in fashion amongst some linguistic theolo-

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(1) Lewis, Philosophy, 1957, Op.Cit., p.203.
(2) New Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit., pp.12-27.

gians) between 'White' and 'Black'. 'White' represents the linguistic analyst; while 'Black' apparently represents what may be called the 'enlightened theologian'. The latter seems to be convinced of the soundness of linguistic analysis as a general philosophical position; he has "read and admired many of the writings of Wittgenstein and Ryle and other people of that sort", and agrees that the appropriate function of philosophy should consist in "the logical investigation of the concepts"[1] that are central to many of the important subjects that are dealt with in "academic circles"; but what troubles him, being a teacher in a theological college, is whether, and how, linguistic analysis may be taught to his students. He, therefore has to be shown the value, if any, of linguistic analysis for theology. And this is precisely what 'White' patiently proceeds to do. After assuring him of the essential neutrality of the analytic techniques, he brings in some of the important features of linguistic analysis with which we dealt in Part One of this thesis; he makes a point of distinguishing the 'logic' of terms and concepts in

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(1) Ibid., p.12

the linguistic, functional sense of the term 'logic',
from the traditional, formal sense of the term: "any
conceptual investigation", he explains, "such as the
discovery of what Ryle calls 'category distinctions',
is what I am here calling logic."[1] And then, with
this broad sense of 'logic' in mind, 'White' goes on
to differentiate between 'metaphysical questions' and
'logical questions'. What, in brief, distinguishes the
one from the other is that in the case of the former
type of question, the question itself is not clear,
we do not even know "how to set about answering it",
and while it is very "puzzling", yet it has the
"_appearance_ of being factual".[2] While in the case of
the latter type of questions, we have "techniques for
answering them, and though we may not in fact be able
to answer them we know roughly what sort of answer would
be required." The relevance of this to theology may be
shown, Smart's 'White' points out, if we note that there
are certain metaphysical questions in theology which, on
analysis, either get dissolved (i.e., they turn out not
to be questions at all) or else become logical questions.

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(1) _Ibid_., p. 14
(2) _Ibid_., p. 15 (italics are mine).

Thus, the question 'Is the will free?', asked in the abstract, is a metaphysical question. It is, moreover, a question that often arises in the discussion of the theological problem of evil. Now, this problem reduces itself in the hands of the analysts into a question of the form: "Is there a contradiction in saying that God could have made us so that we always freely choose right?"[1] Posed in such a manner, the question, according to Smart, becomes logical. Our answers may differ and we may go on disagreeing; but we have achieved one thing at least -- the question itself is no more conceptually confused. In this manner 'White' claims to have shown 'Black' the relevance of linguistic analysis to theology. In the concluding sentence he addresses 'Black' by saying: "You will be brought up sooner or later against some question of logic: some question of the sort that earlier on you felt inclined to say could not be of much importance for your students."[2]

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(1) Smart refers to the contributions of Mackie and Flew in the analysis of the attempt to use 'freedom' as a justification for the existence of evil. We have already referred to Crombie in the preceeding Chapter. Flew will be referred to later.

(2) Ibid., p. 27.

There are indeed quite a number of questions in
theology where the services of the analyst are needed.
Smart himself tries to be of some help in discussing
an aged problem of theology, namely, the question of
God's existence and the status of the 'arguments'
purporting to establish His existence.[1] Before pro-
ceeding to consider the answers to the question: 'Does
God exist?' we must first be sure, Smart insists, as
to whether the question is a 'proper' one. In fact,
the accusation that the concept of God itself is a
confused and nonsensical concept, is much more threaten-
ing to the theologians than the accusation that they
have failed to provide valid arguments to establish
His existence. Actually very few theologians do believe
that such arguments can be produced. What then, one may
ask, is the point of discussing them at all? Smart
replies that through the investigation of these arguments
"we get a deeper insight into the logical nature of
certain concepts, in particular .... the concepts of
deity and existence."[2] We shall not consider how

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(1) J.J.C.Smart, "The Existence of God", in
    New Essays In Philosophical Theology,
    Op.Cit., pp.28-46.
(2) Ibid., p. 29.

Smart dealt with each of the traditional arguments for God's existence. He presented the arguments very clearly, and then quite effectively renewed the attack upon them. It can be noted how the analytic approach and techniques have greatly sharpened this attack. But what is of particular interest to us at present are the "insights" as to the "logical nature" of the concept of God and his existence, that we gain as a result of Smart's analysis.

The important moral which Smart draws from his analysis of the arguments for the existence of God is that the question of God's existence has no meaning outside the religious context. True, Smart has rejected the traditional arguments and has shown that there is no way of showing that God's existence is a <u>logical</u> necessity, but this certainly is no novelty in the history of philosophy and theology. What is more significant, is that Smart, inspite of this, still believes that God may be said to exist 'necessarily' in another important sense of 'necessity'. After all, <u>logical</u> necessity is not the <u>only</u> kind of necessity; and the linguistic analyst feels proud to have learnt this lesson. We no where find in the Bible, or in the sacred writings of other religions, attempts to <u>logically prove</u> God's existence. In religion the existence of God is

never the conclusion of an argument, on the contrary,
it is the major premise out of which everything else in
religion is supposed to follow. Therefore, the attempt
to provide logical demonstrations of God's existence
betrays, according to Smart and to many other linguistic
analysts as we shall later see, a fundamental misunder-
standing of what religion, and the religious context,
essentially involve. "I draw your attention", says
Smart, "to the language of religion itself, where we
talk of conversion, not of proof." Thus, as remarked
earlier, if it cannot be shown that God's existence is
a logical necessity, it still can be, and it certainly
is, a religious necessity; for if God's existence be
denied then this would clearly "upset the structure of
our religious attitudes in the most violent way." There
might, logically, very well not be a God; but if there
is to be a religion, a God there must be. In this
sense God's existence is a religious necessity. The
notion of God and his existence only arises in, and is
solely defined in terms of, the religious context; and
hence, "the question 'does God Exist?' has no clear
meaning for the unconverted. But for the converted the
question no longer arises." It is, therefore, futile to
try to justify religion in terms of a priori arguments

or metaphysical constructions; such an attempt is an
"absurdity born of ignorance of the logic of our
language."  Smart reminds us of what was said about
Boyle who, in the eighteenth century, undertook such
an attempt in a series of lectures: "no one", the
remark goes, "doubted that God existed until the Boyle
lectures started to prove it."[1]

I am not familiar with the Boyle's lectures;
and the remark may very well be true in that specific
case. It also may be in line with Smart's general
position, in the sense that it ridicules attempts at
founding religion upon 'argument' and not upon
'conversion'.  But to banish argument altogether from
religion is, I think, an exaggeration.[2] This, in a
sense, is true even in the case of 'ambitious' arguments
purporting to prove God's existence; for, as Smart
himself admits, arguments such as the Argument from
Design do have a great appeal for those who have a
religious framework or outlook, since these arguments,

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(1) Ibid., p.41.
(2) There will be more to be said about the role
    argument in religious belief.  See p. 171.fl.

though not valid, can still be "a potent instrument in heightening religious emotions." However, the majority are not immune to these arguments, since only very few are trained in logic. It also goes without saying that not all the logically skilled acquire this immunity. There still remain in man his _felt_ needs and desires, and it is to these that religion appeals most. This comment may be besides the point, for in all probability Smart would consider it as quite compatible with, and even of support to his position. What he was denying was the _logical_ validity of the arguments for the existence of God; they may very well be, and they actually are, very effective in other respects. However, one may, mistakenly, get the impression or suggestion that these arguments are of no validity at all, and that, moreover, argument in general plays an insignificant role in religion. The remark was added only in case Smart's position suggests, or is thought to suggest, such a view.

However, a more important question to consider, regarding Smart's position, is whether his analysis actually does justice to the 'religious context'. This, we shall repeatedly find, is a main difficulty involved in all appeals to such a context; for whoever may have a

certain conception of what the 'religious context
actually involves would tend to disagree, in part at
least, with conclusions drawn on the basis of a some-
what different conception. Nevertheless, the analysts
have contributed something quite substantial in this
respect, especially in view of the extreme elusiveness
and complexity of the factors that are constitutive of
religion. More agreement, in general outline at least,
as to what is involved in religion is being reached.
But still, as long as there are differences, it can
always be asked whether a position 'does justice' to
the religious context.[1] H.D. Lewis, for example, thinks
that Smart's position does not. "Is it in any case",
he asks, "quite as obvious as Smart assumes that
religious speech and literature do not sometimes affirm
the sheer existence of God as a matter for wonder and
praise?"[2] And, more importantly, it is impossible,
according to Lewis, to believe, as Smart does, "that

(1) Yet, as Wisdom foresaw, not all difficulties
would get resolved even if such an agreement
be reached. We may 'agree as to the facts'
and still make different inferences. See p.171 fl.

(2) D.H. Lewis, Contemporary Empiricism and the
Philosophy of Language, Philosophy, 1957,
p.196.

the question 'Does God exist?' is not a proper question
without necessarily also holding that religion and
theology are nonsensical."[1] Smart believes that this
is possible because he holds, as we have seen, that
"religion can stand on its own feet", for it does not
need the services of the metaphysician and logician to
validate the principles on which it stands. But Lewis
is not very proud of the way Smart wants religion "to
stand on its own feet". Indeed, it would be very
humiliating to religion if the belief that God exists is
not a "logically respectable one". Belief in God's
existence must be affirmable irrespective of how its
denial would reflect on our religious attitudes. If
this be not the case, namely if God's existence cannot
be affirmed no matter how the believer or nonbeliever
feels about it, then it cannot be said that God has an
independent existence, and religion and theology would
certainly crumble down for they would have no "feet"
at all to stand upon.

Moreover, it is not true, Lewis holds, that the
question 'does God exist' is an improper or meaningless
question. The question may not arise for the believer,

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(1) Smart, Op.Cit., p.41.

but this is because the believer feels absolutely certain
that God does exist, and "not because it is senseless to
affirm it." And if it makes no sense for the unconverted,
this does not mean that the question itself is meaning-
less; it simply means that the unconverted fails to
apprehend its meaning. The whole thing, I believe, boils
down to the question of determining which has logical
priority over the other, the meaningfulness of the question
of God's existence or non-existence, or the fact or state
of being converted. According to Lewis, conversion is
impossible unless the question of existence is, in the
first place, a meaningful question; while Smart believes
that the question of God's existence is meaningless
unless one is, in the first place, converted. It is a
question of who 'confers' meaning, and how does it get
conferred. And, I believe, unless this question is first
settled, the issue cannot be decided. Obviously settling
it is quite a complicated undertaking. It would, however,
be helpful to remember that meaning, for the linguistic
analyst, is something man-made and conventional. No
term has a meaning in itself and out of all contexts;
for language is essentially social and public. Lewis,
ultimately, is questioning the linguistic 'theory' of
meaning, (if the use of the word 'theory' may here be

allowed). According to him, it appears, 'meaning' is an intrinsic quality inherent in things; it is an item that may exist independently of man, or of the users of language.[1] And thus, the question of God's existence, if meaningful at all, should retain this meaningfulness regardless of how one 'feels' about it.

Lewis, it is evident by now, represents the position of philosophers and theologians who would want to claim for their religious beliefs the status of 'logical respectability'. What he, implicitly or explicitly, is trying emphatically to reject is the belief that God is man's creation, that He has arisen and evolved in human contexts and thus has no meaning when abstracted out of all such contexts. Belief in God is not the same as belief in, say, Democracy. Democracy does not exist, and has no meaning, when isolated from all political and social conditions that pertain to man. God should not be thought of in this

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(1) I am not familiar with Lewis's general philosophical position, if he has any. He may, for all I know, hold different views. My 'interpretation' is based on very few and short remarks that he made in connection with Smart's position.

manner, for His existence is not, and should not be,
contingent upon anything. Whether there be such a God
or not is another question, but this is the God of
religion, and it is to such a God that the pious pray.
In this sense, Lewis's position does more justice to the
'religious context'. However, it can still be asked that
if this is what is actually meant by God, can there
possibly be such a God? J.N. Findlay believes that
there cannot, and he also believes that he can 'prove'
it. It would be interesting to see how he attempts to
do that.

### (b) The Appeal to the Religious Context to Disprove God's Non-Existence; J.N. Findlay.

Smart, in rejecting the arguments for the existence
of God, never claims to have proven His non-existence.
J.N. Findlay does not only believe that such arguments
are invalid; he also believes that their conclusion is
not true. In other words he believes that the truth of
its contrary can be established. His argument proceeds
in the following manner. Findlay, first, makes it clear
that it is the God of theism with which he is dealing.
It is, therefore, very important to find out how the

term 'God' is used by the theist in the religious context. If this is carefully and successfully done, then our conclusions, if well argued, should be binding upon the theist, for he cannot, now, evade the issue simply by saying that "it is besides the point, since this is not the God I believe in and worship." What are, then, the defining characteristics of the God of theism? In other words, what are the characteristics in the absence of any of which God would cease, for the theist, to be God? As Findlay puts it, what are the attributes that the "adequate object of religious attitudes" should possess? We demand, answers Findlay, that this object "should have an unsurpassable supremacy along all avenues, that it should tower infinitely above all other objects."[1] Moreover, no theist would worship a God that "merely happens to exist, nor one on which all other objects merely happen to depend." If we want to avoid running into some form of idolatry or animism, we should not think of God as having 'come' to existence and, more importantly, though eternal and infinite, as having possibly (in any sense of the word) not existed. In

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(1) J.N. Findlay, 'Can God's Existence be disproved?', in New Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit., p.51.

other words, God's non-existence "must be wholly un-
thinkable in any circumstances. There must, in short,
be no conceivable alternative to an existence properly
termed 'divine': God must be wholly inescapable....
whether for thought or reality."[1] No 'God' who falls
short of these qualifications, or is limited in any sense,
may be worthy of our adoration, for he "would not deserve
the utter self-abandonment peculiar to the religious
fram of mind."[2] Having described how the term 'God'
functions, or ought to function, in the proper religious
context, Findlay takes his important step towards show-
ing that the existence of such a God, if it is to be
necessary, is impossible -- it does'nt even make sense,
for to talk of 'necessity' makes sense only in a conven-
tional, axiomatic system. Outside the context of such a
system we are entitled to talk only of probability. We
do not mould or createactuality merely by deciding to
use our terms in a certain manner. Therefore, there is
an essential incompatibility involved in combining the
terms 'necessary' and 'existence'. Each of these concepts
has arisen in a different context of its own, and to try

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(1) Ibid., p.52.

(2) Ibid., p. 53.

to force one upon the other is a fundamental misuse of language; for, clearly, our 'decisions' do not have to be binding upon reality. Such 'facts' have become, on the basis of recent developments in logic and scientific method, mere truisms. Hence, the "modern mind" and the "modern view" and the "modern approaches" (these are expressions which Findlay alternately uses) would deny the possibility of the existence of God, for if He were to exist, He would have to assume the status of 'necessary existence'. It may do only if the theist would be satisfied to believe in a God who is not related to the 'empirical circumstances' of the world and existence. But the 'quandary' is that "the religious frame of mind... seems invincibly determined to eat its cake and have it. It desires the Divine Existence both to have the inescapable character which can, on modern views, only be found where truth reflects an arbitrary convention, and also the character of 'making a real difference' which is only possible where truth does'nt have this merely linguistic basis. We may accordingly deny that modern approaches allow us to remain agnostically poised in regard to God: they force us to come down on the atheistic side."[1]

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(1) Ibid., pp. 54-55.

If it turns out that Findlay actually succeeded
in 'proving' God's non-existence, he would have then
brought about a very daring and consequential under-
taking.  It is, therefore, important to find how much,
and in what sense, did Findlay succeed in his 'proofs'
or 'disproofs'.  And to be able to do that we must be
aware of the main elements that are, explicitly or
implicitly, involved in his approach to the question.
It should, first, be admitted that Findlay, though an
atheist, shows a thorough and deep understanding of what
theism properly involves.  His characterization of the
religious attitude is "one of the most fair, most
understanding accounts of how the religious mind works."[1]
But he is at the same time 'guilty' of condemning
religious talk on the ground that it fails to satisfy
some criterion of meaning which he has in mind.  Findlay's
verificational background is, here, evident.  In the
previous chapter we have seen how Mackie was led, on
quite similar grounds, to almost the same conclusion:
"the theist", he says, "must now be prepared to believe
not merely what cannot be proved, but what can be dis-

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[1] Raphael Demos, Philosophy and Phenomeno-
logical Research, V.18, p.96.

<u>proved</u> from other beliefs that he holds."[1]

It is natural, therefore, to find that the same general attack which was levelled against the position of neo-verificationism, is now being levelled against Findlay's argument. Findlay, it is objected, has 'decided' to use his terms in a certain manner and he arbitrarily expects everybody to take the same decision. Actually, his argument is the ontological argument in reverse;[2] it is, as G.E. Hughes calls it, an "Ontological Disproof"; since Findlay intends to argue "from the analysis of a concept to non-existence, just as the 'Ontological Proof' is an argument from the analysis of a concept to existence."[3] Findlay, as we have seen, first describes the use of the term 'God' in religious discourse, attributes 'necessary existence to it', and then chooses, or decides, to use the term

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(1) Mackie, 'Evil and Omnipotence', <u>Op.Cit.</u>,
    p. 200.

(2) See Hick, God as Necessary Being, <u>The
    Journal of Philosophy</u>, vol.57, 1960,
    pp. 725-734.

(3) G.E. Hughes' reply to Findlay, in <u>New Essays
    In Philosophical Theology</u>, <u>Op.Cit.</u>, p.64.

'necessary' in such a manner that it would follow -- by
definition, by a pure analysis of concepts -- that God
cannot have 'necessary' existence, and consequently,
cannot, in the proper theistic sense, exist at all. It
becomes apparent then that in as much as the ontological
arguments, or other arguments purporting to prove God's
existence, have an appeal only to the already religious,
Findlay's argument, as he himself admits, holds only for
those who believe in the truthfulness of his premises.[1]
If one, therefore, chooses, to give the term 'necessary'
a 'different' meaning from the one Findlay has in mind,
then he can easily evade the latter's argument. And why
should 'necessity' belong only to analytic statements?
The theist, can after all, have his own sense of necessity,
and Findlay is in no position to legislate the use of the
terms for everybody.

However, Findlay's objections would certainly
hold if the theist uses the term 'necessary' in the same
sense in which the mathematician or logician does. In

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(1) In his reply to his critics Findlay says:
"...I merely wished to indicate for what
classes of person I hoped that my argument
would hold water, instead of claiming
(absurdly) that it would hold for all persons,
whatever they may assume, and however they
might choose to use their terms." Ibid.,p.72.

that case it would'nt be, on the part of the critic, a
matter of arbitrary <u>imposition</u>, upon religious talk, of
a preconceived criterion of meaning; in as much as it
would be a matter of illegitimate and unjustified
'borrowing', on the part of the theist.  Smart, after
all, had a point when he denied God's existence the
status of 'logical' necessity and held that we should be
content in ascribing to Him only 'religious' necessity --
'borrowing' is no compliment to religion, and is of no
help if we want religion "to stand on its own feet."
Thus Lewis's objection to Smart seems, after Findlay's
attack, to have lost much of its force.  Smart may have,
perhaps, been mistaken in his description of the religious
context; and it may be true, as Lewis insists and
Findlay emphasizes, that there are in this context
undeniable claims for 'logical respectability'.  In that
case, the 'religious context' has to be modified in
Smart's direction; for 'logical respectability', it now
seems, is very costly -- it is a luxury that religious
belief can hardly afford.

Findlay's argument, and other similar approaches
to theology, were very effective in banishing 'logical
necessity' from theological talk.  Interpretations of
the religious attitude and the religious context started

emphasizing, more and more, the 'authenticity' of
religious belief: religion explains and justifies
itself, it need not, and ought not, resort to concepts
not its own.[1] It becomes evident that to avoid
Findlay's conclusion one has to deny the 'fact' --
which is central to Findlay's argument -- that God is
a necessary being in the logical sense of 'necessary'.
This is precisely what John Hick does.  Findlay's
interpretation of the religious attitude, he believes,
is an improper one.  "The demand that 'God exists' should
be a necessary truth is, like the demand that a circle
should be square, not a proper demand at all, but a
misuse of language."[2] Hick then goes on to show that
his interpretation of the attitude of religious worship
is the true one.  The believer's view as to the nature
of logical necessity, if he has one, is part of his
logical system;  it is a topic which is "purely academic
and of no religious significance."  We no where find such
views displayed in religious literature, especially in the

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(1) This attitude found one of its best expressions
    in MacIntyre's essay 'The Logical Status of
    Religious Belief', in Metaphysical Beliefs,
    London, 1957, pp.167-211. We shall have more
    to say about MacIntyre.

(2) Op.Cit., Journal of Philosophy, p. 728.

case of "the biblical writers." Even the traditional theologians, Hick believes, did not have in mind 'logical necessity' when they used the phrase 'necessary being', what they, rather, had in mind was an 'eternal being'. Findlay argued that 'logical necessity' is involved in the conception of an 'eternal being', for the latter cannot be said to have 'happened' to exist, i.e., he must necessarily exist. Hick replies that the choice is <u>not</u> between a being that necessarily exist or an one that 'happens' to exist, precisely because 'necessary existence' is an absurd concept.

However it may be, it is obvious, I think, that defending the 'ordinary believer' against the charges of Findlay is a comparatively much easier task than that of defending the theologian. Actually, if the claims of some theologians are put aside for the moment, a very effective counter-attack can be levelled against Findlay, based on the very simple fact that people, ordinarily, do worship, and that what they worship is thought to be, by them at least, an "adequate object of religious attitudes". As we have seen, this is an important premise of Findlay's, but "whereas Findlay concludes that the notion of an adequate object of religious attitudes is an absurdity", Hick now concludes "that

that of which the idea is an absurdity cannot be an
adequate object of religious attitudes; it would on the
contrary be an unqualifiedly inadequate object of worship."
This observation expresses the main idea which Norman
Malcolm, quite ingeniously, had turned into a 'proof' of
God's existence.

### (c) The Appeal to the Religious Context to Prove God's Existence; N. Malcolm.

We have seen how, in the case of Findlay, a neo-
verificationist approach appeals to the religious context
to disprove God's existence. This, again, shows that
neo-verificationism is not theologically neutral; in fact,
it is thoroughly committed to an atheistic position. As
Findlay puts it,if you share 'modern' views, you cannot
possibly believe in God. But actually, what he has in
mind is just one species of 'modern'; namely, that which
is still faithful to the analytic-synthetic dichotomy and
recognizes no other modes or possible combinations of
meaning. Norman Malcolm represents another species of
'modern', the neo-Wittgensteinian, one may say, whose
position in theology provides an interesting contrast with
Findlay's. Malcolm now claims that he can, on 'modern'

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'modern', the neo-Wittgensteinian, one may say, whose
position in theology provides an interesting contrast with
Findlay's.  Malcolm now claims that he can, on 'modern'

views, prove God's existence, and turn Findlay's argument upsidedown. And, what is more, Malcolm's **ally** against his own brethren is none other than St. Anslem, the medieval theologian. What makes this attempt, for our own purpose, more significant is that Malcolm resorts, at many stages of his argument, to the views of Wittgenstein. He may have gone to an extreme; but sometimes magnifying or even caricaturing a position, may turn out to be quite helpful in realizing what that position entails and thus discovering its main assets and defects.[1]

Malcolm[2], like Findlay, makes an important

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(1) Malcolm seems to have the talent of pushing a position to its extreme. He does something similar in the case of Moore's notion of ordinary language. He portrays Moore in 'Moore and Ordinary Language' in Schilpp, Op.Cit., pp. 343-368, as considering conformity to ordinary language to be the criterion for acceptability and truthfulness. Though it is generally agreed that Moore never intended to argue in this sharp and definitive manner, yet Malcolm's interpretation of Moore helped raising and discussing important questions in relation with the ordinary-language-approach. Such as: 'how much can one resort, and argue from, ordinary language?' Or 'can ordinary language be considered a legitimate criterion of meaning?'

(2) Anslem's Ontological Arguments, The Philosophical Review, V.LXIX, 1960, pp.41-62.

'assumption' (though they would, both, rather call it an essential 'fact' characteristic of the religious attitude or context). It can simply be stated as follows:

"God's existence is either:

(a) necessary,

or      :

(b) impossible."

Now this statement, whether an assumption or a fact, is the major <u>premise</u> of both arguments. Findlay rejected (a) and thus established (b). It is also evident that we can eliminate (b) by <u>showing that (a) is true</u>, or we can assert (a) by <u>denying (b)</u>. Malcolm, in trying to prove God's existence, uses both arguments: in the first argument, where he tries to show that (a) is true, he resorts to Anslem; in the second, where he tries to deny (b), he resorts to Wittgenstein.[1] The issues, however, is quite complicated; and it should not be suggested that the arguments are neat and simple. Malcolm is aware of the many assumptions that are involved in his attempt, and he tries his best to

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[1] Malcolm does not distinguish between these two 'arguments', but presents the whole article as a development and validation of a newly discovered 'second version' of Anslem's Ontological Argument.

justify them; otherwise, his argument, though <u>valid</u>, can easily be reversed.[1]

Malcolm we said, tries, first, to prove that God necessarily exists on 'ontological' basis. In other words, he attempts to show that God's <u>necessary</u> existence is contained in the concept of Him. It is important to emphasize the adjective 'necessary' in 'necessary existence'. For while, Malcolm holds, Anslem failed to prove the existence of a most perfect being on the ground that existence is a perfection, yet, in another version of his argument, he can be said to have proven the <u>necessary</u> existence of God, since <u>necessary</u> existence <u>is</u> a perfection. Kant was right in rejecting the belief that existence is a perfection, but it can still be held, argues Malcolm, that "the logical impossibility of non-existence is a perfection."[2] And God, being 'that

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(1) Smart is very suspicious of arguments claiming to settle an important and controversial issue "by means of a short snappy argument." "Any argument", he says, "can be reversed." Thus if:

$\frac{p}{q}$ is valid, then both $\frac{\bar{r}}{q}$ and $\frac{\bar{r}}{p}$ must be

$r$                 $\bar{p}$      $\bar{q}$

equally valid. <u>Op.Cit.</u>,pp.29-31

(2) Malcolm, <u>Op.Cit.</u>, p.46.

greater than which cannot be conceived', ought to posses
this perfection.  He, in other words, necessarily exists.

It is evident that what is most crucial for the
above argument is whether it could be shown that
'necessary existence' is a property of God.  Malcolm
tries to accomplish this by using the notion of dependence.
"There is a definite connection in common language
between the notions of dependence and inferiority, and
independence and superiority."[1] If two sets of dishes
are similar in all respects except that the dishes of
one set are fragile while the others are not, then
certainly all housewives would prefer the latter and
not the former .  The fragile dishes should be carefully
handled, there existence is dependent on such handling;
they, therefore, are less perfect.  Being dependent is
being limited; consequently, absolute perfection is the
absence of all limitations.  This is no invention of
the theologian; for don't we ordinarily think of a car
that runs without fuel as superior to cars that cannot
do so? it is less limited, therefore it is better; it
is less dependent, therefore it is more perfect.  Now,

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(1) Ibid., p.47.

on the same grounds we can say that a being that depends
for its existence on other, external, factors, is inferior
to a being that does not.  And hence, a being that simply
exists, is inferior to another that necessarily exists.
For whatever does not necessarily exist may be dependent
on other factors for its existence, and hence it is quite
conceivable that it does not exist.  In this case
existence, because dependent, is not a perfection.  While
necessary existence, because it establishes God's
independence, is a perfection.

Necessary existence, according to Malcolm, is
not only a property of God in the same sense as unbreaka-
bility is a property of dishes, it is also a property of
God "in the same sense that necessary omnipotence and
necessary omniscience are His properties.[1]  In other
words, the very concept of God requires that he should
necessarily exist.  One is here, again, reminded of
Kant's objection that while three-sidedness is contained
in the conception of a triangle, its existence is not.
We are only entitled to say that if a triangle were to
exist, it would then, be a three-sided plane figure.

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(1) Ibid., p.50.

Similarly we are entitled to say that if God were to
exist and to be worthy of our worship and adoration, He
should not have happened to exist, but His existence
should be necessary. Malcolm answers that one cannot
employ the conditional in a statement involving necessity.
That is, necessary existence is such that it is out of
question to pose the conditional any more. For once
that necessary existence is a property of God, it becomes
self-contradictory to deny His existence. It would be
like saying: "God necessarily exists but it is possible
that He does not exist."[1] Kant's whole point is that
existence is not a property in the same manner as three-
sidedness, or omnipotence are. But, what makes all the
difference according to Malcolm, is that what he is
considering is 'necessary existence' and not mere
existence that may be accidental. The former type of
existence differs from the latter in that it has the
status of propertihood. And the force of Malcolm's
argument depends on whether or not there actually is
such a difference.

Malcolm, it appears, failed to prove that

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(1) Ibid., p.58.

necessary existence is quality, and that, therefore,

God exists since necessary existence is contained in the

very concept of Him. As pointed by Raziel Abelson[1],

Malcolm seems to depend on two analogies in his attempt

to prove that necessary existence is a quality. The

first analogy is with mathematics and logic, the second

with empirical properties. Actually, the first type of

analogy is not very clear: Malcolm fails to show,

precisely, how such an analogy supports his claims. He

seems to be suggesting that the notion of necessary

existence is employed by mathematicians and logicians,

and that, likewise, it would be legitimate to employ it

in theology. It is not clear whether Malcolm draws such

an analogy, but in case he does, it would be a false one.

The most that it would prove is that one can construct

a theological system -- analogous to the axiomatic

systems of mathematics -- such that it includes the

notion of necessary existence as one of its assumptions,

or even implications. But certainly this is not what

Malcolm wants to prove. Moreover, the employment of the

notion of existence as something necessary in logic can

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(1) In a discussion of Malcolm's attempt
    entitled "Not Necessarily", in the Philoso-
    phical Review, January 1961,pp. 67-84.

be easily questioned. One can point out, as Abelson does, a well known 'fact' in logic, namely, that the existential quantifier (∃) can be totally eliminated from logic with the only loss of some notational convenience. Thus the statement 'there exists something, an x, such that x is an F' or '(∃x) Fx', can be replaced by 'it is false that for all x, x is not an F' or '-(x)-Fx.' And, in the first place, the symbol "∃" functions only "as an operator, or modifier, of a sentential function, but not as a predicate constant with a sentence ... One never writes simply '(∃a), but rather '( ∃x) Fx' where 'F' stands for a property, but not ' ∃' "[1]

The second analogy that Malcolm draws is with empirical properties. The analogy here is more clear, and his claims are quite explicit, though, again, they are unjustified. Malcolm overlooks an important 'fact', of which neo-verificationism makes us quite aware, namely, that there exists an unbridgeable gap between God and experience. There seems to be something essentially wrong with analogies from experience to God, especially when the 'experience' in question is still held to be empirical in nature. Because empirical qualities — and, for that matter, all other qualities that are humanly conceivable - have to undergo a basic qualitative change.

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(1) Ibid., p.70.

before they may be predicated of God.  It would thus be
absurd to try to shed light on the nature of God, from
observations as to the nature of dishes and engines.
Nothing regarding the latters can be true absolutely and
permanently. The 'goodness' or 'badness' of empirical
qualities is basically relative.  Thus, as Abelson
remarks, "independence and perpetual mobility, are only
relatively desirable properties."  They may be good for
the low-budget housewife, but not for the manufacturer;
for the motorist, but not for the gasoline industry.
Surely we cannot say "that God is a perfect being for
the poor but not for the rich, an object of veneration
for the consumer but not for the business man."[1]

Moreover, since empirical qualities are one of
the analogates, the neo-verificational demand is quite
relevant.  The neo-verificationist would understand what
it is for dishes to be unbreakable, since he knows what
to expect, and not to expect, from such dishes; otherwise
he cannot hope to know what is meant by saying that some
dishes are unbreakable. Empirical statements should
enable us to make certain predictions.  Thus if we drop
a dish and it shatters into pieces we say that this dish

(1) Ibid., p.75.

is breakable, and that therefore its existence is dependent on careful handling. But what should possibly happen that may prove or disprove the independence of God's existence from everything which is external to Him? As long as Malcolm fails to provide an answer to this question his analogy remains incomplete, and even useless.

In his 'second argument', Malcolm tries to prove the existence of God by showing that He is not impossible. But it has, first, to be shown that God's existence can only be either necessary or impossible. In other words, that He cannot have 'happened' to exist. And here Malcolm is in complete agreement with Findlay: the only alternative to atheism is the belief in an absolutely necessary and perfect God. As Malcolm himself admits, Findlay's characterization of the religious attitude has "a striking agreement" with what he himself says about this attitude in expounding Anselm's proof.[1] Yet Malcolm, while claiming to hold 'modern views' does not see why Findlay's conclusion should follow; such views would rather lead us to hold its opposite. For, indeed what a modern view requires us to do is "to look at the use of words and not to manufacture a priori theses

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(1) Malcolm, Op.Cit., p.54.

about it."[1] And Malcolm immediately goes on to cite
what is said in the Ninetieth Psalm, where the necessary
existence of God is taken for granted.  Thus, in the
Jewish-Christian language-game, God is conceived of as a
necessary being.  And "here we must say with Wittgenstein,
'this language-game is played.'"[2]

Malcolm's first argument depends upon proving
that necessary existence is a quality, his second argument
now depends upon showing that the concept of God is not
self-contradictory, i.e., that it is not impossible.  And
this, as we have seen, is shown by the mere fact that the
concept is meaningfully employed in a certain language-
game.  To demand further demonstration or proof, is not,
Malcolm believes, a "legitimate demand".  Why? because
as Wittgenstein has shown in his Investigations, "nothing
is intrinsically simple, but whatever has the status of
a simple, an indefinable, in one system of concepts, may
have the status of a complex thing, a definable thing, in
another system of concepts."[3] The concept of seeing a
material thing, Malcolm assures us, is not self-

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(1) Ibid., p.55.
(2) Ibid., p. 56.
(3) Ibid., p.59. (This is Malcolm's paraphraze
    of Wittgenstein.)

contradictory, but there is no way of 'showing' that it is not. The same is true in the case of the concept of God; "both concepts have a place in the thinking and lives of human beings."[1] And this is the most that one should demand. Therefore, we cannot hope, Malcolm believes, to arrive at a real understanding of a religious concept, especially if it be that of an infinite and necessary being, unless we first understand "the phenomena of human life that give rise to it."[2] What, in philosophy, gives the concept of God a problematic nature, is that philosophers, quite often, do not give enough considera- tion to such "phenomena of human life" that are at the basis of the belief in God. Whether people 'should' believe or not is another question; but it is important to know that they do believe, and to know why they believe. "It may be absurd for people to fall in love, but they do it." And, in very many respects, it is important that they do it. In view of such an approach to the question of God's existence and his nature, "it is not surprising," Malcolm concludes, "that many philosophers believe that the idea of a necessary

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(1) _Ibid._, p.60.
(2) _Ibid._, p. 61.

being is an absurd construction."[1]

Did Malcolm, in his second argument, succeed in 'proving' God's existence? Is it true that since the religious language-game is played, then the existence of God is not impossible, and since God's existence is either necessary or impossible, therefore, He necessarily exists? This argument *seems* to be valid, but its soundness can be seriously questioned. For one thing, he employs the notion of a language-game in a very loose manner. He argues from one 'kind of necessity' to another. There is an interplay and confusion of 'religious necessity' ('necessary' for an attitude, a way of life) with 'theological necessity' ('necessary' for a systematic and reasoned account of religious concepts) with 'logical necessity' ('necessary' in the sense that it tautologically follows from a certain definition or set of definitions, and hence that its denial results in self-contradiction). Actually Malcolm is more guilty in this respect, since he himself accuses Findlay of overlooking the various meaningful employments that the word 'exist' may have.[2] Nevertheless he allows himself, as we have seen, to employ two analogies designed to prove that

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(1) *Ibid.*, p.61.
(2) *Ibid.*, p.53.

necessary existence is a property, one from mathematics and the other from empirical properties; which analogies, irrespective of the status of each when taken separately, are, when taken together, quite incompatible.[1]

Moreover, one of Malcolm's basic premises is wrongly phrased. It is not that "God's existence is either necessary or impossible", but rather than "if God exists then his existence has to be necessary." Kant was quite aware that the pious of his town were not worshipping a God that 'happened' to exist, who had accidentally came into being and may suddenly perish. But the most that this could mean was that the God in which they believed was a necessary and infinite God. It did not, necessarily, mean that he actually existed. We are thus led to Anselm, and to Malcolm's defense of Anselm; which shows that there actually is one 'argument' with two different approaches; and that the whole thing may be described as an attempt to preserve a medieval construction by replacing the old metaphysical buttresses with new linguistic ones. We have seen Malcolm retorting to this Kantian objection by saying that when it is a

(1) See Abelson, Op.Cit., p.75.

question of God's <u>necessary</u> existence, then it is out of
question to pose the conditional. What Malcolm means, or
rather what he should mean, is that 'it is out of question
to pose the conditional' <u>only</u> for the believer if he is
to be a true believer. This is what studying the language-
game of religious belief teaches us. We are, moreover,
led to realize that God's existence is either an item of
faith, or a postulate in a theological system. Malcolm's
argument serves as a corrective of the tendency to over-
look, or dismiss, the religious way of life and all the
human phenomena that go with it, where God's necessary
existence is an item of faith. Thus, it may even serve
as a defense of the "meaningfulness" of religious
language. But it would be presumptuous to claim for it
the status of a logical demonstration. And to employ the
notion of a language-game in such a demonstration, shows
that either Malcolm has not learnt his lesson well, or
that there is something essentially wrong with the
concept of a language-game.

It should be mentioned in conclusion, that
Malcolm, in common with Smart and Findlay, shows an
awareness of how much can 'demonstration' achieve in
religion. This, one may say, is one of the analysts'

virtues. Smart, in claiming to have undermined the logical foundations of the arguments for God's existence, does not pretend to have shown faith to be unjustified and religion impossible; nor that these arguments are ineffective in other respects. Findlay, in claiming to have disproved God's existence, admits that he does not expect his 'proofs' to "hold water" for those who do not share his position. Malcolm, in claiming to have 'revived' Anselm's ontological argument and validated it, realizes that it has an appeal only to those who "have some inclination to partake in the religious form of life," and that "it would be unreasonable to require that recognition of Anselm's demonstration as valid must produce a conversion."[1]

### 3. The Nature of Religious Belief.

#### (a) The Resort to 'Religious Experience'.

Many came to realize, on the basis of the above and other similar attempts, that religious beliefs are neither scientific theories, nor parts of a deductive or axiomatic system. Thus it is not fair to impose

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(1) Ibid., p.62.

preconceived criteria of meaning upon religious beliefs. They should not, therefore, be disqualified for failing to be empirically verifiable or logically demonstrable. This is what religion is <u>not</u>, but we still have to be told what religion <u>is</u>. Criteria of meaning should not be forced upon religious talk, but this does not justify the absence of any criterion, nor the employment of a set of confused and inconsistent criteria. Religion, in other words, must be able to provide 'adequate' criteria of its own. Discovery of such criteria, if there be any, becomes the main objective of many linguistic analysts. And exhibitive analysis of religious talk and discourse have led to a variety of conclusions as to the nature of religious belief.

C.B. Martin, for one, found that the 'logic' (in the functional sense) of theological discourse is muddled and confused. He may still have, as he was accused by many, some definite criteria of meaning in mind, but his 'exhibitive attack' on religious talk adds a new dimension to the neo-verificationist's. For, his disqualification is an 'internal' one. It is not that theological discourse fails to exhibit the 'logic' which Martin would have 'liked' to find exhibited,

it is rather that this discourse exhibits no 'logic' at all; or, even worse, that religious terms and concepts each exhibit a 'logic' which whenever it is not itself obscure and confused is found to be incompatible with the logic of other religious terms.  It will not do, therefore, to accuse Martin, as Raphael Demos does, of 'Provincialism'; that is, of insisting that "the code of manners in one country should define what good manners are in another country."  For, if asked what defines the code of manners in the 'other' country; what are, in other words, "the criteria for authenticating religious sentences"?  Demos would answer that these criteria "are not codified, they are not even formulable."[1]  But the whole point is that Martin is very sceptical about belief in "the unformulable."  For him, something is unformulable because it is obscure; and, as he makes it clear in the opening pages of his book, he is not willing to believe in obscurities, nor to argue with those who do so.[2]

In the face of such demands many believers resort to what they call 'religious experience'.  These

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(1) Demos, Philosophy, V.18, p.103.
(2) C.B. Martin, Religious Belief, Cornell University Press, 1959, P.vi.

experiences while incommunicable, are yet self-verifying.
They seem to serve the double function of supplying the
theologian with some sort of 'data', while escaping the
verificational veto.  Religion, thus, has its own founda-
tions; it also has very 'rich' sources of information;
for God not only and simply exists -- he is also
'encountered'.  But accounts of such encounters, if
possible at all, have always been vague, imprecise, and
confused.  Religious experiences range from extreme forms
of mysticism, where one cannot possibly understand their
significance unless he himself succeeds in sharing them,
to 'objective' forms that may, perhaps, be examined.  The
former mystical type of experience cannot be analyzed;
it can only be had.  The latter type of experience, while
it has to be had to start with, can yet, within certain
limits, be analyzed.  H.D. Lewis, for example, is
convinced that "the way forward in religious thought
must be found in a fresh examination of the nature of
religious experience."[1]  This is to be accomplished,
he suggests, by showing the peculiarities which are
distinctive of religious experience, and relating them
to other types of human experience, for it will not

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(1) Lewis, _Philosophy_, 1957, p.204.

always do to fall upon "the factor of irreducible mystery
in religion." Lewis, however, does very little in terms
of such a "fresh examination of the nature of religious
experience", more than presenting some general and
undeveloped 'suggestions'. He seems to attach great
significance to "our sense of contingency" which would
provide part of the answer to the problem of "how the
idea of a transcendent reality can be meaningful."[1] But,
as he himself admits, there is nothing 'fresh' about
this attempt. It takes much more than mere suggestions
to add anything new of significance -- in substance and
approach -- to the notion of contingency and its
relevance to the idea of a transcendent being.

The notion of religious experience has a long
history. Various uses, at different times and in
different places, have been made of this notion.[2] This ,
in additionl to its essential elusiveness, makes a
comprehensive account of it extremely difficult. However,
the general objection against views as to the nature of
religious belief that are founded on encounters with

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(1) Ibid., pp. 204-5.
(2) The views of Buber and Heim are recent
    instances representative of such a
    position.

God or religious experiences, has been that these views are extremely subjective and can 'prove' nothing; or, which is the same thing, that they can 'prove' too many things. There seem to be no way of telling whether an experience in question is actually a 'genuine' encounter with God or not. And to describe religious experiences as 'self-verifying' fails to provide any guarantee that they may not still be deceptive and illusory.[1]

One way of trying to face this difficulty is by comparing the sort of 'knowledge' of God that we arrive at through 'incommunicable', religious, I - thou encounters with the sort of knowledge of yellow that we arrive at by seeing or 'encountering' the colour yellow. Martin tries to show that this analogy is not fair, and that, consequently, it fails to establish the authenticity of religious experience.[2] For there is a whole "society of tests and check-up procedures" which is available in the case of 'knowing yellow' but absent in the case of

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(1) See Ferre's analysis of the 'logic of encounter'. Ferre, op.cit.,pp, 94-104.

(2) See his article,'A religious Way of Knowing', in New Essays In Philocophical Theology, Op.Cit., pp.94-104.

'knowing God'. Though a blind man does not, by defini-
tion, have the colour sensations which a man of normal
eyesight has, yet "he is well aware of the fact that,
unlike himself, the man of normal eyesight does not have
to wait to hear the rush of the bull in order to be
warned."[1] Thus there is a number of ways by which the
blind man may learn, or may be helped to learn, what are
some of the differences existing between him and men of
normal vision; while in the case of the knowledge of God
there seems to be no way of indicating "how we are to
know when someone has the direct experience of God."
But if the only thing that the analogy asserts is that
you have no 'knowledge of God' unless you have a
'religious experience' of God, in the same sense in which
you can have no 'knowledge of yellow' unless you have
'colour sensation' of yellow, then the most that can
follow from the analogy would be to re-affirm Martin's
conclusion that "in order to know what religious
experience is one must have a religious experience."[2]
What, moreover, would follow from this is that people
have now to be classified as either 'God-seeing' or
incurably 'God-blind'. And that, consequently, communi-

(1) Ibid., p.83.
(2) Ibid., p.82.

cation between believers and non-believers becomes not
only pointless but impossible. If one is to be a
believer, one simply has to be born with a 'vision' for
God.

## (b) The Role of Analogy In Religious Belief.

The desire to avoid such a conclusion is, perhaps,
the motive for Lews's 'call' for a re-examination,
representation, and "better understanding" of religious
experience. It has to be shown that religion is not
purely subjective and a matter only of feelings. That
there is, in other words, a sense in which one can 'argue'
in religion. To show that this is the case becomes the
task of the theologian. A task which, quite interestingly,
was undertaken by a number of linguistic analysts who
still thought that religion has something 'genuine' about
it. They may not have added to the content of religion
anything new in substance, and they rarely make such a
claim. But their approach to the question of the nature
of religious belief and experience has an undeniable
element of "freshness" about it. What is central to the
various attempts to 'justify' religious belief, is the
notion of analogy. 'Justification' here is not equivalent
to 'logical demonstration'; it rather consists of

relating, in terms of differences and similarities,
what goes on in religion with various other human
activities. After all, what in the absence of absolute
criteria, would justify religion more than drawing such
relations and analogies and showing that it plays a
distinctive role of its own?

This approach is shown at its best in Wisdom's
article "Gods", where analogies, parables, examples, and
illustrations all contribute to the development of his
arguments. He is convinced that it is improper to dis-
miss religion, as Martin and others do, as a species of
confused, subjective feelings. The issue cannot be thus
settled, for the question is by no means as simple as that.
It is not that "theists are superstitious or that atheists
are blind."[1] There are many significant facts to be
observed and subtle distinctions to be drawn. There are
ways of showing why certain attitudes should or should'nt
be had. Attitudes such as that of the judge towards the
accused, the contemplator towards a work of art, the lover
towards his beloved, and the believer towards his God.
Wisdom's chief merit consists in showing that there is a

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(1) John Wisdom, Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis,
    Op.Cit., p.150.

sense in which it can be said that we can, and do, argue
in religion. And that the role which argument plays in
religion is quite analogous to the role it plays in other
domains where the element of belief is involved.

Essential to Wisdom's position is the belief that
an issue, to be significant, does not necessarily have
to be 'factual' in the strict scientific sense.  "Things
are revealed to us not only by the scientists with
microscopes, but also by the poets, the prophets, and
painters.  What is so is'nt merely a matter of 'the
facts'".  In courts of law it is very often the case
that we have "agreement as to the facts" but nevertheless
it is still argued "whether defendant did or did not
'exercise reasonable care', was or was not 'negligent'."[1]
In the case of the parable of the gardener, both disputants
may equally know all the 'facts' about the garden, no
one, in other words, has observed anything which the
other has not, and yet they may still draw different
conclusions and see different '_patterns_' among the facts
and thus one of them would assert that a gardener does
exist, the other that he does not -- "the line between

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(1) _Ibid_., p.154.

using a name because of <u>how we feel</u> and because of <u>what</u>
<u>we have noticed</u> isn't sharp."[1]

Realization of the non-factual character of
religious language, is one of Wisdom's major contribu-
tions to theological discourse. Theists, thereafter,
have to be more careful not to regard their assertions as
experimental hypotheses explanatory of the universe. For,
as we have seen, "an explanatory hypothesis, such as the
existence of God, may start by being experimental and
gradually become different."[2] We remember how this
important moral that can be drawn from Wisdom's parable
of the gardener, became the basis of Flew's neo-
verificationist attack upon religious discourse. However,
we must not stop here but should go further, for there
are other important things, besides this, that the parable
teaches us. It illustrates what Wisdom has stated earlier,
namely, that "it is possible to have before one's eyes
all the items of a pattern and still to miss the pattern."[3]
Not all issues, therefore, are experimental; and if

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(1) <u>Ibid.</u>, p.154. Italics are mine.
(2) <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 154.
(3) <u>Ibid.</u>, p.153.

theological issues are not, we must not dismiss them, but should instead inquire what they are.  Again, in the case of the parable, analysis of the attitudes of the two disputants _only_ in terms of what they _observe_ in the garden cannot be exhaustive of any of the attitudes as a whole, for if it could, then ultimately both should be found to be identical. "... with the difference in what they say about the garden goes a difference in how they feel towards the garden, in spite of the fact that neither expects anything of it which the other does not expect."[1]

Thus, realization of the non-factual character of religious beliefs, does not mean that there cannot possibly be any questions of 'right' or 'wrong' about them.  This is not true only of pure and applied mathematics and logic, where it can be shown by means of "vertical arguments" that one party is right, the other wrong; it is also true of theistic issues, but in a quite different manner.  The argument employed in settling the latter kind of disputes instead of being "vertical" is "horizontal": "it is not a _chain_ of demonstrative reasoning.  It is a presenting and

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(1) _Ibid._, p.155.

representing of those features of the case which
severally co-operate in favour of the conclusion." This
is analogous to what happens in courts of law, where non
of the arguments may succeed, by itself, to establish a
conclusion; it is rather " a matter of the cumulative
effect of severally inconclusive premises."[1] These all
contribute to the formation of an attitude which is at
the basis of the whole thing: "with the judges' choice
of a name for the facts goes an attitude ..."

When the theist asserts that there is a God he
is not, according to Wisdom, trying to supply us with
new information in as much as he is trying to 'direct
our attention' to facts with which we may be already
familiar. This, indeed, is not a peculiarity of religious
language only. The language of the artist and the art
critic is a case in point. And there is no reason what-
soever, except mere arbitrariness and 'provincialism',
to take the language of scientific discourse as the
model for the evaluation of religious language, and reject
all other languages such as that of aesthetic discourse.
The question of whether God exists or not has little in
common with scientific disputes, but is "more like a

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(1) Ibid., p.157.

difference as to whether there is beauty in a thing."[1]
Therefore, the manner in which we go about showing that
a work of art has or has not beauty, is quite similar
to the manner in which we go about showing that the
universe is or is not ruled by a supreme designer or
governer. Both languages, in other words, exhibit the
same logic. And this logic is such that it allows for
a change of attitude or perspective. In fact, this is being
constantly done in art. "To settle a dispute as to
whether a piece of music is good or better than another
we listen again, with a picture we look again."[2] People,
thus, try to modify or even to alter the appreciation of
a work of art; they try to do this by redescribing and
representing it in such a manner as to emphasize, throw
new light upon, and reveal significant features and
patterns. In this sense one can say that the procedure
does involve "a discovery of new facts;" only, one should
be careful to remember that the 'throwing of light upon'
and the 'revealing of' certain features of, say, a
painting, is not meant in the literal sense. It isn't
that these features had been physically obscured and were
rendered less so, and it isn't that somebody was made to

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(1) Ibid., p.159.
(2) Ibid., pp. 158-59.

see, in the literal sense, what he, in the first place, had not seen. As in the case of the dispute over the gardener, each saw what the other did, and the issue was not settled. However, we must now be careful not to rashly accuse the atheist of "blindness", or the theist of "seeing what isn't there." The issue is not as simple as that; it is much more involved and complex.

The theism which Wisdom describes is a 'diluted' theism. For, his analysis succeeds in showing that religious discourse exhibits a certain logic which is similar to other kinds of discourse, but it does not succeed in showing that religious beliefs actually do have an objective reference. In the case of no analogy of his does Wisdom make such a claim; but it is important, nevertheless, to see how, if at all, do these analogies succeed in supporting the traditional claims of some theologians to have 'proven' the existence of God. The analogy between aesthetic and religious experience is sometimes considered to support such claims. According to Martin, this analogy is as effective, in this respect, as the colour-analogy was shown to be: it holds only in so far as it proves the subjectivity of religious experience. It does not, however, guarantee the existence

of an objective reference which is supposed to be the object or source of religious experiece, analogous to the 'object' which is supposed to be the source of aesthetic experience or contemplation. Having certain feelings does not, in itself, justify the inference that these feelings refer to something objectively existent, it simply shows that these feelings were, or are being, had. They may be, in other words, purely psychological and subjective in nature, as Martin suspects that, in the case of religion, they actually are. True, we do have in art different interpretations and attitudes, but these are interpretations of, and attitudes towards, an art-object which have some sort of objective existence that provides the necessary referential element. In the case of religion, however, the God-hypothesis does not correspond - in the analogy- to the art-object, but to the interpretation of this object. And thus what supplies the referential element for religious belief is not God but the 'universe' or 'life' or some segment of them. To believe in God, now, means that one believes the world to be arranged in a certain fashion. But if this is all that there is to theism, and if the theists are content in claiming that much only, then the gap between theists and atheists

would have been considerably narrowed.

Wisdom's approach is essentially descriptive, and in this sense it is typically linguistic. What matters most for him is that people do have 'religious attitudes', though these attitudes may not have an objective reference. He is not concerned with settling the question of whether a supernatural, transcendant being does or does not exist; he is, rather, interested in finding out why some attitudes are formed as if He exists, while others as if He does not. That this question is quite involved and susceptible of no single and definitive answer, is a point which Wisdom's article as a whole brings out. The fact that in religion our feelings, emotions, expectations and "picture-preferences" are all involved, or that religious beliefs (and other forms of 'belief') have dimensions that are fundamentally psychological in nature, does not explain them away but rather calls for more careful, patient, open, and thorough explanations of them. We thus realize that the dismissal of some kind of belief as unjustified or unjustifiable, is not easy at all, and most often turns to be quite arbitrary. "Even in science or on the stock exchange or in ordinary life we sometimes hesitate to condemn a belief or a hunch merely because those who believe it cannot offer the sort of reasons we had hoped

for."[1] In explaining what a certain belief involves
we do not only use the techniques of showing connections
and disconnections we very often discover 'hidden
connections' that may result in a basic transformation
of our original attitude. "Thinking to remove the
spell exercised upon his patient by the old stories of
the Greeks, the psycho-analyst may himself fall under
that spell and find in them what his patient has found
out and, incidentally, what made the Greeks tell those
tales."[2] A careful and sympathetic study of religious
beliefs and attitudes would give us deep insights into
the nature of man: his needs and desires. With some
ingenuity one can level very severe 'attacks' against
religious beliefs; only, Wisdom would caution us as he
did in the case of Moore's attack against metaphysical
beliefs, "there is good in them, poor things."

(c) The Ethical Significance of Religious
    Belief.

We have seen how, in the case of Wisdom's analysis
of the nature of religious belief, we were, again, led

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(1) Ibid., p.163.
(2) Ibid., p.163.

to face the problem of its objective reference.  As
long as the object of religious attitudes is claimed
to be a transcendent, eternal being, all analogies fail
to provide the necessary justification.  A possible
'way out' it seems, would be to give up or, at least,
dilute such claims.  The general nature of this type
of approach to the question of the nature of religious
belief, would be in line with Wisdom's analysis where
the greatest emphasis is upon attitudes and not upon
facts.  However, Wisdom may be said to have provided
a 'justification' of religious belief only in the sense
where 'to justify' belief in something is taken to mean
'to find the sources and motives'for the belief in
question.  In this sense Wisdom's interest in the
question of religious belief may be described as
'psycho-analytic'.  But if to justify belief in some-
thing consists in showing its 'value', then one has to
show what is the specific function of religious belief
in virtue of which it acquires value and worth.  The
ethical function of religious belief has, quite often,
been found to provide its main justification.  One
of the latest and clearest attempts in this direction

can be found expressed in Braithwaite's position.[1]

In dealing with the ethical component of
religious belief one has to be careful and specific.
The relation between religion and morality is very
ancient and intricate: one cannot hope to give it its
due in a short exposition. On the whole, one can say
that Plato has been shown to be too optimistic. For it
takes more than mere instruction and knowledge to make
a virtuous man. Man seems to be distrustful of him-
self; and the failure of the many eager attempts to
construct a secular ethics, bears out this point. Thus,
it has been very often held that without religious
belief moral life is impossible. While Kant did not

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(1) R.B. Braithwaite, An Empiricist's View of The
Nature of Religious Belief, Cambrdige Univer-
sity Press, 1957. This book was not available
to me at the time of writing this thesis.
The various short accounts of, and references
to, this position which I have relied upon
do not seem to conflict and may thus provide
a fair expression of the general character
of this position, which suffices for the
present purpose of this thesis. Moreover,
what we are presently interested in is the
position itself even though it may turn out
to be different from Braithwaite's.
See: Ferre, Op.Cit., pp.124 fl...; A.C.
Ewing, Op.Cit., pp. 206 fl.; Martin, Op.Cit.
pp.9 fl.; MacIntyre, Op.Cit., pp.184 fl.

accept God's existence as established on metaphysical grounds, yet he reintroduced Him as an indispensible 'moral postulate'. "If God does not exist", Dostoevsky asserts, then indeed "everything would be permitted." For many existentialists, Sartre for example, God's non-existence has been found to be quite "embarrasing". There is, in other words, a very general tendency to believe that morality, to be secure or even possible, has to be sponsored by none other than God.

Braithwaite's position, however, has a 'new' setting of its own which makes it of specific relevance to our present purpose. He attempts to be an 'empiricist' and to remain 'religious' at the same time. This is impossible unless the verificationist attack can be successfully met. And to meet this attack, Braithwaite realizes that the emphasis, thereafter, should not be placed upon the objective reference of religious belief (the pursuit of which has been fruitless) but rather on its ethical content and moral value. Now if an assertion can be shown to serve a proper function, it should not be denied meaningfulness. And the fact that religious assertions, according to Braithwaite, serve an important ethical function establishes their claim

for meaningfulness. Moreover, the normative character
of ethical assertions exempts them from the test of
verifiability or falsifiability, without rendering
them meaningless. For while a rule cannot, itself, be
true or false, yet it can be obeyed or disobeyed. This
fact seems to save ethical, and consequently religious
assertions, from being purely emotive, for they do have
important and traceable empirical implications, in
virtue of the fact that they express "subscription to
a policy of action." Being a Christian, for example,
indicates "an intention to act in certain ways under
certain circumstances."[1] Religion thus plays an
important role in supporting, strengthening and rein-
forcing the moral sense in man. The believer is committed,
or rather commits himself, to adopt the moral attitudes
and values which are embodied in his religion.

But are religious assertions simply another
species of moral assertions? And if not, then what is
it that gives them their distinctive religious character?
The answer is: stories, parables, and even myths. In
the case of religion "the moral intention and policy is
associated with a group of stories which give the policy

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(1) Ferre, Op.Cit., pp. 124-5

imaginative backing."[1] The ethical content of religion
is not presented in the form of codes and rules, but
through stories and parables: the barrenness of formalism
is overcome with the power of symbols and the vividness
of images. The Bible rather than being a systematic
treaties, can better be described as a 'great poem'.[2]
A poem is evaluated not in terms of truth or falsity,
but in terms of other qualities such as its suggestive-
ness and its power to communicate the poet's 'vision'
with vividness and force. "Here the ifs and buts of the
textual critics, the inhospitable verification tests of
the philosopher have become remote, scarcely audible
protests."[3] For it would not matter in the least if
these stories or parables turn not to be 'true', i.e.,
not to have actually happened. The important thing is
the example they provide, the moral they suggest, and
the attitude they reinforce. Thus to be a Christian you
have to 'bear in mind' the Christian stories, you do not
have, however, to believe in their truth.

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(1) MacIntyre, The Logical Status of Religious
    Belief, Op.Cit., p.184.
(2) For a detailed discussion of this point see
    Hepburn's essay 'Poetry and Religious Belief'
    in Metaphysical Beliefs, Op.Cit., pp.89-166.
(3) Ibid., p.95.

The limitations of such a position are quite obvious. In the first place its 'orthodoxy' can be seriously questioned: the believer would normally object to such an account of the nature of religious belief. This objection would lose its effectiveness and congency only if holders of such a position are willing to give up all claims of presenting a true description of what religion actually is, or is thought to be. This is most evident in the case of Christianity where a basic distinction should be drawn between two kinds of 'Christian stories': stories told by Christ, and stories told about Christ. The latter type of stories are far more important than the former when it comes to the question of determining what Christianity essentially is. Christianity, in other words, is a religion which is more about Christ than it is by Christ. Now, while the 'parable-theory' of religion may be applicable in the case of stories which Christ tells -such as the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, etc....-, it cannot be true of the 'stories' which are told about Christ -such as the virgin birth, the crucifixion, and the ressurrection- for, otherwise, very little indeed would remain of Christianity. Can we call somebody a 'Christian' if he does not believe that Christ was actually crucified? Is

it enough to make a 'Christian' of him if he 'realizes'
what it sympolically means for the Son of God to die on
the cross out of compassion for sinful man, irrespective
of whether the Son of God was actually crucified or not?
If we answer these questions, as Braithwaite must, in
the affirmative, then we must admit that we are present-
ing a stipulative definition of 'being religious' or
'being Christian', and not a reportive one.  Christ is
not,ordinarily, thought of as a mere symbol or relation;
and if to believe in Christ means only to believe in
him as a metaphor, then many people who are normally
called atheists may now be labelled 'Christians'.  As
MacIntyre points out, one can, like Dostoevsky's Shatov
in the Devils, "accept everything that Braithwaite
includes in religion; but -- he does not believe in
God."[1] And it goes without saying that one is free to
stipulate a definition if he so desires, as long as he
makes it clear as to how he intends to use his term
or terms, and as long as he does not identify, or
confuse, the new signification with the older ones.

However, if all what Braithwaite does is to
stipulate a new definition of the notion of religious
belief -a fact which he does not seem to be aware of-

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(1) MacIntyre, Op.Cit., p.184-5,

then the 'adequacy' of this definition may also be questioned. For, once the ethical components of religious assertions are extracted from religious language and dissociated from all the characteristic claims of theism, they not only cease to be 'religious', they also become an inferior kind of ethics. One of the basic problems facing moral philosophy is to find objective foundations for its principles, and to avoid becoming purely emotivistic in nature. And the moral significance of religion consists precisely in the fact that it provides moral laws and attitudes with some sort of stable and authoritative (absolute, I should say) foundations to guard against, and supplement, the relativism which is typical of human values. Religion, as interpreted by Braithwaite, can no more be of any service in this respect, since it, itself, suffers from the same deficiency and lacks the same sort of objective justification. If all that religion provides ethics with is the 'imaginative backing' of its parables and myths, then any gifted novelist or poet may as well do the job.

The force and appeal of Braithwaite's position, and all similar positions, can be found to be ultimately in their pragmatic value. It does not matter in the least

if the stories, parables, and myths that are told in religion turn out to be fictitious and illusory, as long as they are internally coherent, morally effective, and therapeutically helpful. Religion, in other words, becomes a psychology which is pragmatically motivated. A classical way of objecting to this view would be to say: "one should not believe in something because it is helpful, but only because it is true." And, anyway, it is very doubtful whether anything which is not true may turn out, in the long run, to be helpful. Unless, of course, we define - as some pragmatists and psychologists do - the 'true' in terms of the 'helpful'. Such an instrumentalist theory of truth has its own grevious limitations. For our own purposes it suffices to note that any approach to understand the nature of religious belief in a predominantly pragmatic and instrumental manner has to redefine religion in the process of 'understanding' it.

(d) The Authenticity of Religious Belief.

It would be appropriate in concluding this discussion to consider MacIntyre's position,[1] since he

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(1) This is expressed in his essay, 'The Logical Status of Religious Belief', in Metaphysical Beliefs, Op.Cit., pp. 165-211.

seems to be aware of most of the difficulties which, as
we have seen, beset the various attempts to find a
'justification' for religious belief. MacIntyre insists
that any attempt to present a justification of religious
belief should be preceded by a description of "how
religious language is in fact used." The 'findings' of
MacIntyre's 'descriptive' approach to religion are many:
the basic religious notions are not employed as explanatory
hypotheses, and they are also not logically demonstrable;
they are not in need of metaphysical foundations, and are
immune to positivistic attacks; they should not be delt
with in isolation but within the religious context as a
whole.

To expect religious statements to function as
explanatory hypotheses would be to force upon them a
'logic' not their own. The very nature of religion
precludes such a possibility: religious beliefs cannot
be hypothetical, and faith cannot be provisional. The
proper attitudes of worship, prayer, and deep commitment
exclude any element of provisionality, for they cannot,
by their very nature, be tentative. This fact seems to
be regarded as a basic'truism'in most contemporary
analytic literature on theology. We find, for example,
that both Findlay and Malcolm agree on this point though

they draw different 'morals'. MacIntyre has more reasons
to re-emphasize this point. Religious statements, he
believes, should not be treated as explanatory hypotheses
not only because they are not conclusively verifiable,
but because if they were, then again faith becomes
impossible. If all instances of impiety were "answered
by thunder-bolts from heaven," then indeed we would all
become 'believers.'[1] But then we cannot receive any
'credit' for that, because we are 'believers' who cannot
help not believing. Faith, in other words, becomes
meaningless, and religion loses the very important
element of free commitment. In Christianity, for example,
a point which Christ emphasizes most is that he who choses
to follow him, should do so freely. But if we could
produce crucial experiments in religion, or "logically
cogent arguments", then "we should produce the kind of
attitude that leaves no room for decision; where proof
is in place, decision is not."[2]

The attempt to provide religion with metaphysical
foundations betrays, according to MacIntyre, a fundamental
misconception of what religion essentially is. For

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(1) Ibid., p.197.
(2) Ibid., p.197.

"to accept religious belief is a matter not of argument but of conversion. Conversion, because there is no logical transition which will take one from unbelief to belief."[1] The metaphysician in trying to translate the vocabulary of religion into non-religious terms, exposes it to all sorts of attacks; because, in doing so, he questions the ultimacy of the criteria according to which religion is to be accepted. And a criterion ceases to be ultimate if it stands in need of justification beyond itself. "Every religion therefore is defined by reference to what it accepts as an authoritative criterion in religious matters. The acceptance or rejection of a religion is the acceptance or rejection of an authority."[2] Nietzche, though vehemently anti-religious, had a better idea of what he was rejecting than "those who have condemned religious belief for illegitimate speculative conclusions."[3] He realized that a religious attitude involves acceptance of, obedience to, and humility before, authority. And if one is not willing to take such an attitude, then there is no way of justifying religion for him -- "belief cannot argue with non-belief. : it can preach to it ...

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(1) Ibid., p.209.
(2) Ibid., p.199.
(3) Ibid., p.204.

it can only recount the content of its faith and offer the acceptance of its authority."[1]

Once we give up all metaphysical attempts to justify religious belief or to "replace conversion by argument", all positivistic attacks on religion would lose their point and force. For the positivist, in attacking religion, assumes that it is "another nonsensical form of metaphysics," and mistakenly identifies metaphysical argument with religious commitment. But actually, the positivist, in showing, as Hume does, the failure of religion "if judged by non-religious standards of rationality," renders religion a great service, for "in so doing he leaves open the possibility of exhibiting religion in its own terms." And religion cannot be justified in terms other than its own. There can be no 'external' justification of religious belief. This fact accounts for the shortcomings of all attempts, such as that of Braithwaite's, to deal with a religious use in isolation from the religious context as a whole. And once the 'stories' are incorporated within this context, they are no more just any kind of stories -- they are authoritative stories. The 'parable-theory' of

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(1) Ibid., p.211.

religion, as we have seen, suited Braithwaite because it released him from the responsibility of providing an objective reference to religious beliefs. According to MacIntyre, this is an artificial problem, and all attempts at evading it are pointless. For one "either speaks from within religious language, as it were: in which case 'God exists' would be a pointless expression; or one speaks from outside: in which case 'God exists' has no determinate meaning."[1]

As we shall try to see in the concluding chapter, the main difficulty with religion and with accounts of its nature such as that of MacIntyre's, arises precisely when religion is taken "as a whole"; for then it would appear that MacIntyre's alternatives are, for one thing, not exhaustive, and for another, quite incompatible. For the present, I would like to make two brief comments in connection with MacIntyre. In the first place, though very few, if any, religious people were converted by 'argument', yet, they do regard, consciously or unconsciously, religious assertions as 'explanatory' in very many important senses. For they do argue about them, and try to 'demonstrate' their truth. What is in the

91) _Ibid_., p.203.

Bible is true not merely because it is authoritative
but also because it is, itself, true;  it corresponds
to what is, as a matter of fact.  Being an analyst,
MacIntyre is perhaps too aware of the consequences of
attempts to rationalize religion, and hence he chooses
to banish reason from religion altogether.  However, the
majority of believers do not share MacIntyre's conviction:
they refuse to think of their activities and beliefs as
an "exercise in the arbitrary", to use an expression
from Ferre's.  Belief, for them, is not a matter purely
of 'decision', or of arbitrary choice.  Actually for
very many religious people, religion is so 'true' that
they simply cannot understand why some people don't 'see'
this truth and believe it.

MacIntyre tries to establish the authenticity
of religious belief and to avoid being accused of
arbitrariness.  He seeks to do this by drawing an analogy
between religion and science.  And MacIntyre is not the
only philosopher to resort to such a procedure, for
there are many recent thinkers who have tried in various
manners to establish for religion an authentic existence
of its own analogous to that of science.  Hare, for
example, believes that "whatever we are willing to

recognize as a 'fact' is relative to an ultimate category;[1] and that, in this respect religious statements are on the same footing with other kinds of statements including those of science. According to Demos, "science, too, at a certain level, makes statements which are not empirically testable, I refer to the principle of explanation ... 'Every event is an instance of some law' is on the same footing as 'God does nothing wrong.' Thus the principle of explanation is unfalsifiable."[2] For MacIntyre, as we have seen, the only way to justify a religious statement is to put it in the religious context as a whole. "Religion is justified only by referring it to a religious acceptance of authority. And this means, if you like, that religion as a whole lacks any justification." But this, MacIntyre adds, "in no way reflects on the logical standing of religious belief. Of science and morals it can also be said that one can justify particular theories or prescriptions, but one cannot justify science as a whole in non-scientific, or morals as a whole in non-moral, terms."[3]

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(1) See Ferre, Op.Cit., pp.130-31.
(2) Demos, P.P.R. , V.18, p.104.
(3) MacIntyre, Op.Cit., p.202.

"One cannot justify science in non-scientific terms." This is no compliment to religion. The fact that every field of knowledge has its own ultimate criteria does not, necessarily, place them "on the same footing". If science presupposes the principle of explanation and religion the existence of an authentic authority, it does not follow that they enjoy the same degree of justifiability. It is one thing to say that scientific theories are never absolutely true, that they are always liable to change and improvement and even abandonment, and quite another to say, or imply, that no progress or development may take place in science. And it seems to me that the analogy between the principle of explanation and the perfect goodness of God tends to 'suggest' - if not to entail - such an implication. True, we cannot logically establish the truth of 'every event is an instance of some law' - as Hume long ago pointed out - because the failure of a law to explain the phenomenon, or phenomena, in question, has always resulted in the falsification or modification of that specific law, but never in the falsification of the principle of explanation itself. If, in other words, 'S1' states that 'for every event there is a cause' and 'S2' that 'P is the cause of q', then to refute 'S1'

we have to find <u>not</u> that the cause of q is other than
p, but rather that p has no cause at all, which is
ruled out by definition.  Now, the possibility of an
evil doing being attributed to God is ruled out also
by definition: for God it is said, is perfectly good.
Still, it is a significant observation, I think, to
note that the defenders of the perfect goodness of God
have been faced with the necessity of justifying their
belief in the face of numerous events and facts that
go contrary to it, or at least have an 'appearance' of
doing so.  They have always managed, one way or the
other, to re-explain or explain away such hostile facts.
I believe that this is not true, <u>to the same extent</u>,
in the case of the principles of science.  True, no
amount of scientifice progress would ever provide
sufficient grounds for a proof or disproof of the
principle of explanation; but still the fact that it
does work, and that scientific knowledge is constantly
increasing, adds to its 'credit'.  While it seems to
me no similar success has been achieved in the field
of theology.  Copernicus succeeded in providing a 'better'
explanation of the observed phenomena about the planets
and their motions, than any then existing theory; in
this lies the value and justification of his theory.

But no body, to my knowledge, has ever been able to
justify <u>successfully</u> the suffering of innocent children,
though the attempts to justify such suffering have been
at least as numerous and laborious, if not much more,
as the attempts to explain the motions of the planets.
Thus if innocent suffering has made one become an atheist,
it is very doubtful whether any amount of theological
talk may cause him to alter his position. But it is much
easier to make a believer in the geocentric theory shift
to the heleocentric one. Historically, the necessity
has always been for religion to adjust itself to
scientific discoveries, and not the other way round.[1]
I realize that I may be accused of being unfair to the
nature of religious discourse and explanation. I
certainly do not expect religious beliefs to yield to
explanation in the same manner as empirical facts do.

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(1) Except in a sense which is quite undignifying
for religion, i.e., in the cases where scien-
tists were afraid to advance their views lest
that would bring the wrath of religious autho-
rities upon them. Of course, it may be said
that such 'dark spots' in the history of
religion are quite alien to its 'true spirit';
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in at least one respect, namely, that there
have been, despite all what MacIntyre says,
'some' believers who did regard their beliefs
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But no body, to my knowledge, has ever been able to justify successfully the suffering of innocent children, though the attempts to justify such suffering have been at least as numerous and laborious, if not much more, as the attempts to explain the motions of the planets. Thus if innocent suffering has made one become an atheist, it is very doubtful whether any amount of theological talk may cause him to alter his position. But it is much easier to make a believer in the geocentric theory shift to the heleocentric one. Historically, the necessity has always been for religion to adjust itself to scientific discoveries, and not the other way round.[1] I realize that I may be accused of being unfair to the nature of religious discourse and explanation. I certainly do not expect religious beliefs to yield to explanation in the same manner as empirical facts do.

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The fault, however, is not mine, since I did'nt draw
the analogy between religion and science.  My whole
point is that those who did draw the analogy are guilty
of such a false expectation.

# CONCLUSION

We have been concerned in this thesis with two
issues that are quite controversial in nature, namely
the value and legitimacy of the methods of linguistic
analysis, and the adequacy of religious language and
beliefs. The 'analytic issue' is, historically, so
recent that it would be premature to pronounce any
judgements or conclusions as to its nature, the 'theo-
logical issue' is so aged and ancient an issue that one
cannot help being sceptical about the possibility of
'concluding' it. This is especially true when the
approach to the problems of theology is also aged and
ancient. The justification of what we have been doing
in this thesis is the hope that it may turn out to be,
as attempts of joining the old with the new usually are,
at least somewhat 'interesting' if not also fruitful.
I certainly do not hope, or claim to be able to 'settle'
any of the issues pertaining either to the methods of
linguistic analysis or to the nature of philosophical
theology. The following comments may be described as
'inductive generalization' on both topics.

We can, first, observe that our analysis of the
linguistic approach to theological questions confirms,
on the whole, the general impression which our formal
exposition of the movement provided.  We realize that
'representatives' of this movement do not form a 'school'
in the strict sense of the word, or follow a definite
procedure -- linguistic analysis continues to be an
activity more than anything else.  We had great difficulty
classifying the various contributors to the literature of
'analytic theology', for the influences were not
definite nor the sources easily detectable.   However,
what we were concerned with most, was not how they might
be classified, but what they were actually doing.


(i)


We can also observe that the linguistic analysts,
in their consideration of theological problems, manifested
both the virtues and limitations of their method.  As
analysts they have truly understood their function to
be clarifatory and descriptive. And philosophical
theology, to say the least, needs clarification very
badly.  In this respect their efforts are quite justi-
fiable and fruitful.  For whatever one's stand with
respect to theological questions may turn out to be, if
provided with an adequate description he would then be

in a better position to commit himself either way.  It
always does good to know more precisely what one is
accepting or refusing.

One shouldn't, however, be disturbed by the fact
that the analysts didn't draw the same conclusion.
Indeed, it would be surprising if they did; and one would
start suspecting that things have been made uniform.
There is no way of predicting or foreseeing the nature
of the findings that a linguistic investigation may
render.  Each analysis brings its own sort of details.
These details may be confusing, but they are essential,
and are of the very nature of the case.  We have to learn
to have respect for, and to take pleasure in, the
particular; for it is only by discovering the subtleties
of the details that we may hope to find, and appreciate,
some sort of pattern.  Thus, though none of these
linguistic analyses of religious belief is, when taken
alone, thorough and comprehensive, yet, when taken
together, they provide a fairly adequate picture of the
religious scene.

Moreover, the various types of positions and
conclusions to which the analytic approach to theology
led, are a further proof of the essential  neutrality

of the method as such.  This at once is its main virtue
and defect.  It is a virtue in the sense that an approach,
being neutral, should dispense with all sorts of a priori
notions and preconceptions.  A philosophical investigation
should not strive to make the real, but to discover it.
Criteria, rules, and standards tend to 'define' the
subject-matter of inquiry, in the process of 'explaining'
it.  They are, by their very nature, a voting 'in favour'
of one thing but not the other.  A neutral approach,
therefore, has to be characterized by an absence of rules
and norms.  'Being neutral' tends to involve 'being too
hospitable'.  It is in this sense that the main virtue
of the linguistic approach is liable to become its main
defect.  We had a chance to comment on this point in the
concluding section of Part One.  We, there, saw how the
notion of a language-game may be used in such a manner
which would render it either too loose or too arbitrary:
loose enough as to result in the impossibility of
contradiction, or, which is the same thing, to justify
contradictory conclusions; and arbitrary to the extent
of legislating the meaning of a term on the basis of
few instances of its use.  Our analysis of the literature
of linguistic theology bears out this point.

The manner in which Malcolm, for example, claims

to have provided a 'proof' for God's existence, and Flew
to have 'settled' the question of the freedom of the will
on linguistic grounds, indicates how the notion of a
language-game may lend itself to misuse. The former
employs the 'ordinary-language argument', the latter the
'paradigm-case argument'. Both arguments may be regarded
as offshoots of Wittgenstein's game-language analogy;
for all they need is to be able to say "this language-
game is played." This, automatically, becomes their
major premise. We have seen how, for Malcolm, the fact
that God is thought of, by the pious, as necessarily
existing shows that He is not impossible, which leaves
us with only one alternative, namely, that He, being
what He is, must exist.

Flew's analysis of the free-will-justification
of evil[1] provides a perfect example on how the analyst,
instead of making us aware of the complexity of the case,
may tend to over-simplify it. He expects us to believe
that the fact that 'this language-game is played' settles
the issue. The decisive step, according to Flew, is to
show that one can always freely choose the right thing.

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(1) Divine Omnipotence & Human Freedom, New
    Essays In Philosophical Theology, Op.Cit.,
    pp.144-169.

Or that, in other words, an action can both be 'free'
and 'determined'. If this could be established, then
surely God can no more be excused for creating evil on
the ground that man cannot, otherwise, choose between
right and wrong, and that, therefore, he cannot be a
free moral being. And this, Flew points out, <u>can</u> be
established by the very fact that we can produce para-
digm-cases where an act, though causally determined, is
yet said to have been freely chosen. That things are
caused does not preclude the possibility of acting
freely.[1] According to Flew's conception of Freedom,
we are entitled, in the absence of external pressure and
the presence of more than one alternative, to call an
act 'free', When Murdo chooses to marry Mairi and not
Jane or Alice, there being "no question of the parties
'having to get married', and no social or parental
pressure on either of them," we are provided with a
paradigm case of what is it to act freely. "Happily",
this case "is scarcely rare."[2]

But it is one thing to say that there is <u>a</u> sense
in which one may be said to be both free and determined,

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(1) <u>Ibid</u>., p.151.
(2) <u>Ibid</u>., p.149.

and quite another to legislate this use as <u>the</u> only use
of the term 'free'. Certainly there are many acts which
we do in ordinary life which may be rightly and legiti-
mately described as 'free', in the sense that nobody
'forced' us to do them, and that, moreover, we were
provided with two or more alternatives. One is 'free'
to take the elevator or use the stairs, to carry his
umbrella or to leave it, to have a coke or a beer, etc..
We constantly use the term 'free' in these, and similar,
contexts and know fairly well what it means. But Flew
should be aware of the fact that it is always possible,
even in such paradigm cases, to add another characteristic
as defining of the meaning of a term in such a manner as
to render it inapplicable in contexts where it originally
was. There <u>are</u> contexts where one hesitates to call an
action 'free' as long as it has been 'caused' by external
or internal causes. (And, any way, is drawing the distinc-
tion between a cause or 'pressure' in terms of 'external'
or 'internal' as easy as Flew seems to assume?) . There
are many examples on the use of the term 'free' that
one may, here, also give. And there is no reason what
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One such classical example would be the following:
An official accepts a sum of money from another person
and allows him to break the rules in return. No body
'forced' him to accept the bribe (no threats or guns);
and he certainly was provided with at least one other
alternative, namely, that of refusing to break the laws
with the enforcement of which he has been trusted.
According to Flew his action satisfies all the require-
ments of 'being free'. Now suppose this man is brought
to trial and that we discover, in the course of investiga-
tion, that he had a large family to support, and that
one of his children had fallen sick and his life was
seriously threatened if he were not provided with the
necessary medical care, and that, moreover, the father
had in vain tried to secure the necessary amount of money
through legal means ..., if we discover all of this,
would we still call the man's act a 'free' act? Of course
Flew can 'decide' to call it 'free'; but this wouldn't
help the judge very much. As for the defence attorney,
he has his own definition of a 'free act'. He would try
to prove that the defendant 'had no other choice', 'could
not help it', 'was driven to do it', and that, therefore,
he should not be held morally and legally responsible.
This is surely an acceptable sense of what it is to

'act freely'. And the most that Flew succeeds in proving
is that "in one sense of freedom, our freedom is consis-
tent with our action being caused or determined."[1] But
when the theologian appeals to the 'freedom of the will'
to justify the existence of evil, it is other cases that
he has in mind, namely, cases where man morally makes
himself. If the concept of Divine Justice is to have
any meaning, man should be master of, and hence respon-
sible for, his own destiny -- not the colour of 'mairi's
eyes, or even one's own glands.

I am not trying to suggest that the theistic
justification of evil is feasible, or that evil, with
all its abundancy, can be accounted for as the unavoidable
price of freedom and moral responsibility. I am not
trying to start polemics and raise controversial issues
in what is supposed to be a concluding chapter. I am
simply trying to point out how, in some cases, an analyst
may defeat his own purposes. When an issue is complica-
ted - as the free-will-issue certainly is - the analyst
is called for to point out its complications and guard
us against possibilities of confusion, rather than over-
simplifying it. Linguistic analysis was not a reaction

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(1) Lewis, Op.Cit.,p.201. See also Ferre,Op.Cit.,
pp.116-120.

against a specific criterion of meaning _in favour of another_
criterion. It was a call for a no-criterion in meaning.

## (ii)

What can we, on the basis of the foregoing
analyses, generalize as to the nature of theological
discourse itself? We have seen that the major pre-
occupation of the analyst has been to arrive at a
better understanding of the issues involved in theo-
logical discourse. But actually what has happened, on
the whole, is that religion has been redefined in the
process of being described. For though we have achieved
little in terms of proofs or disproofs, yet 'theology'
is not left as it traditionally had been. Theologians,
hereafter, have to become much less ambitious and give
up many of their claims, or else they have to assume the
burden of finding new justifications capable of standing
in the face of the 'new logic'. Gone are the old days
when philosophical theology "had only to unfold its
argument to command the assent of all honest and
intelligent people ... today ... when theology unfolds
its argument it is at once challenged to show what
right it has to talk in that way at all."[1]

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(1) H.A. Hodges, Contemporary British Philosophy,
Op.Cit., p.231.

It may be said that the analyst - especially the neo-verificationist - is attacking a man of straw. Theologians, nowadays, do not have the same old ambitions,[1] for they realize their limitations and do not depend on the analyst to tell them what their proper function should be. But still, if we give up the old claims, what does remain of philosophical theology? In the absence of logical respectability and all formulable criteria of significance, what is left for religious language to express except a mere subjective feeling, a desire to believe that life and man 'matter', and a desperate urge for assurance? The theologian insists on playing a game whose rules are not only undefined, but are also indefinable; he chooses to refer to facts only when they support his position, and twists or modifies facts to the contrary. There is in the language of theology an intermingling and confusion of language-games, which provide it with a 'manifold logic' and render it extremely

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(1) This is an exaggeration. For there still are 'traditional' theologians; and most of the rest have merely changed their tone, assumed an appearance of modesty but have essentially stuck to the same old claims as strongly as ever. They have all the vices of their predecessors, but lack their honesty and courage.

loose and twistable. The elusive nature of the language
of the theologian while exposing him to attacks which
may be directed at him from different angles, acts at
the same time as a safety-valve which provides him with
escaping outlets in crucial moments when he is being
'cornered'. "Like the bridge player who, when his ace
of hearts is trumped by a jack of spades, cites the
rule of poker that any ace beats a jack."[1]

Religious language is related, quite intimately
sometimes, to various other forms of language, but is
never _identical_ with any. It functions as a great poem
or myth, as a moral and social regulative principle, it
answers human needs for neatness and harmony, for safety
and salvation, for significance and value. Modern man,
it is said, suffers from being dissected by the various
specialized sciences each claiming to provide an explana-
tion of his nature in its own terms. Religion, it is
hoped, may restore to man his unity and identity by
blending all these various elements and approaches into
a comprehensive whole. But we have to be careful lest
this 'blending' turns out to be 'confusion'. For in
religion there is a constant change of the frame of

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(1) Abelson, _Op.Cit._, p.78.

reference.  Concepts that have arisen meaningfully in one context, are employed in quite different contexts. This, to some extent, may perhaps be legitimate, as long as these terms or concepts still obey some kind of rules.  What happens is that in this process of shifting of meanings and interplay of language-games, we lose trace of the original meanings of the terms without being able to provide ourselves with substitute meanings.  And if one is eager to retain his faith he usually is not willing to give up too easily.  In all probability he ends up with some sort of 'interpretation' of the language of religion.  How different and varied these 'interpretations' have historically been, is a point that need hardly be made.

Ordinarily one can hope to understand the meaning of a language in one of two ways: either by reducing it into another form or forms of language that are more familiar, or by finding the distinctive features and functions in terms of which it may be understood and appreciated.  The analysts in their descriptive approach to the language of religion, though hoping to find its distinctive features - if it has any - have almost always ended up in reducing it into one other form, or a combination of other forms, of language.

We can find this clearly in MacIntyre's attempt
to present a coherent view of religion as a whole.  But
while each of his points is cogent and well taken when
considered in isolation; yet they all fail to make a
coherent whole.  Thus if religion is regarded as a
hypothesis, then faith becomes something provisional,
which is contrary to the proper nature of religious
attitudes.  If, however, it is regarded not as a hypo-
thesis, i.e., as something established and demonstrable,
then faith would lose its point since it can no more be
the result of free choice and commitment.  The belief
that God exists becomes something very similar to the
belief that the earth is round or that the square root
of nine is three.  In short if faith is not demonstrable,
i.e., if it is a hypothesis, then it is impossible, if,
however, it is demonstrable it negates itself.[1]

Moreover, if religion is taken as a whole it is
found to involve too many incompatible elements, and if
each of these elements is taken in isolation then it
loses what seemed to be its distinctive 'religious' force

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[1] See Basil Mitchell, The Justification of
Religious Belief, in The Philosophical
Quarterly, Vol.II, 1961, pp.213-226.

and is found to be one species or another of poetry, or
metaphysics, or morality, or crude science, or fiction,
or history, or psychology, or even - as in the case of
Islam - as providing civil laws and rules and constitutions
regulating social, political, economic, and legal aspects.
All of these typical human activities can better be
carried out, if we are willing to do so, without the
services of religion.

Actually the attempt to argue in terms of "mutually
exclusive alternatives" is of no service to religion.
On the contrary it is very effective in exposing its
defects and shortcomings. For the fact that we cannot
justify everything we believe in, does not render the
demand for, and the attempt at, justification improper.
We should give up the habit of constantly thinking in terms
of proofs or disproofs. Thus, though verificationism
forces us to give up ambitious theological claims, yet
it does not render the 'phenomenon' of religion less
significant. Linguistic analyses illustrate how sympto-
matic of human nature religion may be shown to be.
Religion may be thought of as a great human epic or drama.
The independent insights which it embodies will continue
to be significant items for the psychologist, sociolo-

gist and anthropologist. Who know, perhaps we may discover
that man, after all, is essentially a worshipping animal.
In this respect Wisdom is quite aware of how significant
'Gods' may be.

The feeling that he is being psychoanalyzed may
make the theist feel ill at ease. He would not, con-
sequently, welcome Wisdom's approach to the subject of
religious belief. From the 'analytic' point of view, this
approach, I think, remains to be the best possible of
approaches. There is an intentional blurring of sharp
distinctions, of neat arguments, and absolute proclama-
tions; we must learn in each case how much to expect,
for if we are too demanding in our expectations we may
end up with accusing our opponents of being either 'blind'
or 'superstitious'; which is rarely the case.

What does linguistic analysis teach us? A very
simple fact: things are rarely 'this or that', they are,
most often, 'more or less'.

For many theists, that the logic of religious
statements is confused, inadequate, and improper, is not
something which they only admit, it is something which they
expect. We cannot hope, they believe, to have an
adequate expression of Divine Nature in human language.

Usually it is such theologians who accuse the analysts of attacking a man of straw. Their 'logic' is not that of demonstration and evidence; it is a logic of 'leaps'. Man is finite and limited and can hope to communicate with the infinite and absolute only by taking a 'leap of faith'.

As for the analyst, the fact that we cannot hope to have complete certitude does not justify taking leaps. The theist according to him does exactly what a finite being should not do: he claims to be in possession of a religion where the whole indubitable truth is embodied. It is certainly justifiable, and even unavoidable, to act on partial evidence. But it is essential to realize that it is on partial evidence that one is acting, and not to assume an atmosphere of infallibility. Indeed it is a virtue for man to be aware of his limitations, for he can in no other way hope to surpass them. True, man will always remain finite and limited, but this fact should not be something to lament, but rather must act as an effective initiative for action.

There is 'mystry' in the unknown. In this sense, we have always been, and probably shall continue to be, engulfed with the mysterious. This is what gives human knowledge its value and worth: the feeling of culmination,

of fulfilment, of subduing the mysterious, is at the
essence of all human achievements.  In religion every-
thing seems to be final and finished, and once the 'leap
of faith' is taken man's role becomes insignificant; for
now he is in the presence of the Truth.

Nietzsche is certainly a great dramatizer, and
the analyst is the last person to take him literally.
But, curiously enough, they meet in this one respect:
nothing seems to deserve man's complete and unconditioned
trust and obedience.  Nietzsche did not want to acknowledge
his limitations; the analysts were too aware of them.
Man, they insist, must be willing to reconsider his
assumptions and beliefs whenever the need arises.

The analyst wouldn't object to taking 'leaps',
if you choose.  He is most aware of their inevitability.
We are constantly betting on the unknown.  For we cannot
afford, in this short life of ours, to suspend our
decisions and actions until we are provided with full
evidence.  However, when an analyst 'takes a leap', he
does not expect to find himself in the presence of the
Absolute or God.

The analyst has presented the problem of religious

belief and provided 'descriptive aids' for its solution.
Actually, he does not have much more to say.  And if
these analyses prove to be of no aid to the theologian,
this only indicates that religion, as it stands, is
hopelessly incomprehensible.  The theist who still
insists, after all descriptive attempts of religion
have been made, that it is not only this or that, but
that there is 'something more' to it, then he must be
willing and able to supply this 'something more'.

There is the unknown, the mysterious; and there
probably always will be.  Of this, both theists and
atheists are aware.  The former insists that it should
be included in our beliefs; the latter is not willing
to include, as defining of his beliefs and attitudes,
something he knows not what.  To do so, for him, would
be absurd.

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