

Preface

This book is a historical investigation of the leading philosophical movement in England in the twentieth century. In seven chapters, the intellectual development of the most prominent representatives of analytic philosophy—Moore, Russell and Wittgenstein in Cambridge, and Ryle, Austin, Strawson and Dummett in Oxford—is traced.

The book does not aim, however, at delivering a story. This means, above all, that generalisations and conclusions are reduced to a minimum—an approach adopted in an endeavour to avert the danger of subjectivism that interpreting the philosophers under scrutiny would impose. My hope is that by following this approach, my investigation will stimulate readers to make their own generalisations and conclusions on the basis of the objectively presented data.

Instead, my aim is to articulate a flawless, comprehensive description of the *philosophical texts* of the seven most significant analytic philosophers in England in the twentieth century. For this purpose, all their articles and books have been sifted through in order to pick out the most representative parts. For obvious reasons, only the chapters on Russell and Wittgenstein, and—to a lesser extent—the chapter on Moore, are more theoretical.

My first objective is to cover as many themes and problems discussed by these seven authors as possible. In this way I strive to follow the main tenet of analytic philosophy: flawless analysis. The second objective of the book is to achieve a synoptic effect—to reveal the true picture (*Gestalt*) of twentieth-century analytic philosophy in England. For this purpose, I have placed the philosophers examined (or, rather, their philosophical texts) side by side, concentrating on exactly those points in them in which the development of not only new concepts and theories, but also new techniques and methods, can be traced in a chain of inter-dependence.

Thus, my hope is that this investigation will provide a comprehensive review (*übersichtliche Darstellung*) of the history of analytic philosophy in twentieth-century England. And further, that it will be useful as a reference book both for analytic concepts—this is why I have prepared so extensive an Index of Concepts—and for further work on the arguments and theories that these philosophers discussed, or on their individual philosophies *per se*. In a more general perspective, the study can be seen as a cross between traditional books on the history of analytic philosophy in England (like those of Passmore, Urmson, Warnock, Hacker), and a kind of Dictionary of the Philosophical Works of the seven leading analytic philosophers in England in the twentieth century.

The book is a modified version of my Bielefeld Habilitationsschrift, and I should like to express my gratitude to the members of the Habilitationskommission for their work. I am indebted also to Patricia Skorge and Stephen Ryan for help in polishing my English in this book. Most of all, however, I thank my wife Michaela—for her constant encouragement and inspiration.

Bielefeld, 5 July 2002



<http://www.springer.com/978-1-4020-1432-1>

A Hundred Years of English Philosophy

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2003, IX, 306 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-4020-1432-1