

Phenomenology and the Development of Analytic Philosophy

Amie L. Thomasson
The University of Miami

By now some of the commonalities among interests and doctrines between early analytic philosophy and phenomenology are becoming better known, as are the historical links between such philosophers as Russell and Meinong, Frege and Husserl.¹ Yet even where these commonalities are recognized, the standard story would have it that the heyday of easy communication, overlap, and influence ended by around 1920, with the two schools going their separate ways, leaving an ever-widening gulf between them after Brentano's death in 1917, Meinong's in 1920, Russell's turning against Meinong by 1918, and Husserl's turn to transcendental idealism somewhat earlier.²

In this paper, however, I will draw out a longer-lasting connection between phenomenology and analytic philosophy. By 'phenomenology', I should make immediately clear, I mean not merely the official school and methods of phenomenology developed by Husserl in the *Ideas* and thereafter but the broader tradition of phenomenology that began as Brentano's descriptive psychology and developed in Husserl's early work in the *Logical Investigations*, as well as his later work and that of the next generation, including Heidegger. The connection I will draw out is not primarily in terms of the issues of interest (such as the status of meanings or of statements about the non-existent that linked the first waves of phenomenology and analytic philosophy) but in terms of methodology. Indeed, I will argue that phenomenology played a key part in shaping analytic philosophy's self-conscious conception of its own proper role and methods (including the method of linguistic and conceptual analysis that gave analytic philosophy its name) and in the latter focus on ordinary linguistic practices that helped to create ordinary language philosophy.

The longer-lasting link on which I will focus comes from what many would regard as an unlikely quarter. Gilbert Ryle, regarded by many as a behaviorist, might superficially seem the least likely of the analytic luminaries to take an interest in phenomenology, and—perhaps as a result—the connection between Ryle and the phenomenological tradition from Brentano through Heidegger is often overlooked or trivialized.

It is overlooked, for example, in Stroll's (2000) *Twentieth-Century Analytical Philosophy*, which, in a chapter devoted to Ryle and Austin, mentions nothing of Ryle's phenomenological interests. It is trivialized in Dummett's (1993) *Origins of Analytical Philosophy*, which mentions in the preface that "the young" Ryle "began his career" with an interest in phenomenology, only to quickly remark that it is "a great pity" that "as far as I can see, little that he learned from them survived into his later work" (1993, ix-x). Dermot Moran in his history of phenomenology even blames Ryle, among others, for preventing Heidegger's thought from gaining influence, when in fact he was its original expositor for the English-speaking world (and certainly not an entirely negative expositor) (2000, 246).³

Yet historical evidence of Ryle's serious and substantial interest in this tradition is abundant; indeed his masterfully concise fifteen-page autobiography devotes a generous two full pages to recounting his studies of Husserl and the phenomenologists. (By comparison, the Vienna Circle and Wittgenstein each merit less than a page.) His first publication ever is a review of (Husserl's student) Roman Ingarden's *Essenziale Fragen* (1927); his second is a review of Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1929). Early in his career as a don at Oxford, as Ryle reports, he "offered an unwanted course of lectures, entitled 'Logical Objectivism: Bolzano, Brentano, Husserl and Meinong'" adding, "These characters were soon known in Oxford as 'Ryle's three Austrian railway-stations and one Chinese game of chance'" (Ryle 1970, 8). In 1929 he traveled to Freiburg where he "spent an hour discussing phenomenology" with the aging Husserl⁴ and stayed on to study with Heidegger.⁵ In 1932 he (with others) held a symposium of the Aristotelian society on phenomenology. Finally, lest Ryle's interest in phenomenology be (as usual) written off as a youthful indiscretion, it is worth noting that over the course of his lifetime he published at least six essays (spanning most of his career—from 1927 to 1962) focused entirely on the phenomenological tradition and providing it a largely sympathetic exposition to introduce it to the English-speaking world. In the volume of collected papers dedicated to his critical essays on other thinkers (1971a), four of the twenty essays included are on phenomenology, a number exceeded only by essays on the ancients and far more than on any other twentieth century thinker or movement (by comparison, there are two essays on Wittgenstein, one on Carnap, and one on Moore). In his topical essays, too, such figures as Brentano, Meinong, and Husserl are frequently discussed (e.g., in "Are there Propositions" and "The Theory of Meanings" [1971b, 12-38; 350-372]), and even when not explicitly mentioned, as I will endeavor to show below, their ideas are very directly evident (e.g., in "Categories" and "Knowing How and Knowing That" [1971b, 170-84, 212-25]).

But although that provides ample evidence of some connection, a superficial history of events only deepens the mystery for the historian of ideas. Why would Ryle, supposed behaviorist author of *The Concept of Mind* (1949), have any truck with phenomenology whatsoever? What influence can possibly be traced between the phenomenological tradition and Ryle's work? The history of events merely provides a series of pegs to hang the history of ideas on, and it is the latter that is of real interest. So, the time has come to turn to that history of ideas, examining what it was about phenomenology that interested and influenced Ryle and how that influence in turn made its way into shaping the methods of analytic philosophy generally, as well as those of its later branch, ordinary language philosophy.

1. Ryle's Search for a Method

The central problem around which Ryle's philosophical work focuses is the problem of what constitutes the proper role for and method of philosophy, or as he puts it "What constitutes a philosophical problem; and what is the way to solve it?" (1970, 12). In this, of course, Ryle was not alone—the attempt to discern the legitimate role of philosophy in the face of modern experimental science directed the development of such major twentieth century schools as positivism, analytic philosophy, and (as I shall discuss shortly) phenomenology. Indeed Ryle reports addressing this question as a major preoccupation for him and his contemporaries throughout the 1920s and '30s, "We philosophers were in for a near-lifetime of enquiry into our own title to be enquirers" (1970, 10).

It was an obsession that was to persist throughout Ryle's career and to provide the driving force for his two major books. When invited to contribute a book-length volume to the series "Hutchinson's *Philosophical Library*," Ryle at first knew only that he wanted to demonstrate and apply to some major philosophical problem the 'analytical' method he had worked out as a permissible way of doing philosophy. "After a long spell of enlightened methodological talk, what was needed now was an example of the method really working, in breadth and depth and where it was really needed" (1970, 12). After considering writing on the free will problem, he ultimately of course settled on the concept of mind as an appropriate case study, driven mainly by the meta-philosophical purpose of exhibiting the new method. His other major book, *Dilemmas* (1954), written five years later as the Tarnier lectures, was "fairly explicitly dedicated to the consolidation and diversification of what had been the meta-theme of the *Concept of Mind*"—that is, with what constitutes a philosophical problem and how one should go about solving such problems (1970, 12). Many of his historical and topical essays, similarly, focus on the history of this

problem and its solution: the historical ones (such as "The Theory of Meaning") focus on the search for a role for philosophy after Mill, topical ones such as "Systematically Misleading Expressions," "Ordinary Language," and "Categories" focus on explicitly describing and defending the methods appropriate for philosophy (Ryle 1971b).

Ryle's interest in the nature and methods of philosophy are often characterized as interests that quickly took him away from an early infatuation with the phenomenologists—J. O. Urmson's entry on Ryle in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* suggests that "Probably the best approach to Ryle's philosophical work is through his views on the nature and method of philosophy which have developed in a consistent way after the end of a short and early flirtation with phenomenology" (1967, 269). Similarly, the *Oxford Companion to Philosophy* entry notes that Ryle's "first efforts, in the 1920's, to 'break the mould' led him into the study of continental phenomenology, but by about 1930 he came to be preoccupied chiefly with the question of what philosophy itself is" (Honderich 1995, 786), while *Who's Who in the Twentieth Century* reports, "Ryle initially showed some interest in modern German philosophy, but in his paper 'Systematically misleading expressions' (1931) he announced his conversion to the new linguistic philosophy. He further developed his views in his most original early paper, 'Categories' (1937)" (Briggs et al. 1999, 503).

I will argue, however, that far from marking the point where Ryle's interests turned away from phenomenology, his interest in the proper role and methods of philosophy were precisely what drew him to phenomenology. Moreover, it was in figures of the phenomenological tradition, from Brentano through Heidegger, that Ryle was to find the basis for his own views on the nature and proper methods of philosophy, as well as some of his substantive views on mind. In fact, his 'most original early paper' on methodology, "Categories," is quite a direct development of ideas that Ryle himself acknowledges were first put forward in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. Of course this is not to deny the importance of figures such as Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein, who were also major influences on Ryle and his ways of explicitly answering the question of what the proper role and method of philosophy are. But those parts of the story are relatively familiar and unsurprising (and in some cases may themselves, in turn, be partly traceable to, for example, Moore's and Russell's interests in Husserl, Brentano, and Meinong). By bringing to light the equally strong roots in the work of Brentano, Husserl, Ingarden, and Heidegger, however, we can gain a broader sense not only of the history of the development of the defining methods of analytic philosophy but also of crucial commonalities between the two traditions.

2. Brentano's Legacy and a Role for Philosophy

As Ryle himself tells the historical story, the eighteenth and nineteenth century answer given to the question of philosophy's role, given the development of the experimental natural sciences, was that philosophy was simply that branch of natural science dealing with "internal, mental phenomena" as opposed to that dealing with "external, physical phenomena" (1971b, 366)—that is, philosophy was considered to be more or less a study of psychology, and as a result, the traditional fields of mathematics, logic, and metaphysics were characterized as merely providing studies of empirical psychological laws.

But in the latter decades of the nineteenth century Franz Brentano, himself more directly influenced by Mill and the other British empiricists than by the post-Kantian German tradition, distinguished two ways of studying the mental, ultimately providing a means of differentiating philosophical study of the mental from empirical psychology. What Brentano calls "genetic psychology" or "physiological psychology" is the empirical study of mental phenomena, based in experimentation and statistical methods, from which we can search for laws and causes. By contrast, what he calls "descriptive psychology," "pure psychology," "descriptive phenomenology," or "psychognosy" is concerned not with a search for laws of cause and effect, nor (as the name might suggest) with describing particular psychological episodes but rather with analyzing the fundamental types of mental phenomena in order to determine their general characteristics.⁶ In several series of lectures over the two decades following the publication (in 1874) of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, Brentano repeatedly explains the difference between the two, for example:

Psychognosy ... teaches nothing about the causes that give rise to human consciousness and which are responsible for the fact that a specific phenomenon does occur now, or does not occur now or disappears. Its aim is nothing other than to provide us with a general conception of the entire realm of human consciousness. It does this by listing fully the basic components out of which everything internally perceived by humans is composed, and by enumerating the ways in which these components can be connected. Psychognosy will therefore, even in its highest state of perfection, never mention a physico-chemical process in any of its doctrines. (1995b, 4)

One job of descriptive psychology is thus classifying mental acts into their primary types. As Ryle puts it in his exposition of Brentano, the task is asking, "What is it to be a case of remembering, judging, inferring, wishing, choosing, regretting, etc.?" (1971a, 167). A related role of descriptive psychology is

the elucidation of the "logical relations" among types of mental acts, including laws of dependence among act-types (e.g., that judgments depend on presentations) and of possibilities or impossibilities of combinations of acts of different types. At least in some cases this may be done simply by analyzing the various concepts of the act-types involved: "The psychognost must intuitively grasp the general laws wherever the necessity or impossibility of unifying certain elements becomes clear through the concepts themselves" (1995b, 75). In drawing the distinction between descriptive and genetic psychology, Brentano is generally credited with being the first to distinguish (what was to become) phenomenology from (what was to become) psychology proper. In Ryle's words:

[Brentano] and his pupils were always perfectly clear that the analysis of the root types of mental functioning is one thing and the experimental or statistical search for the natural laws governing the occurrence of mental acts and states is quite another. And I think that they were right. (1971a, 168)

Brentano also takes pains to clarify the relationship between the disciplines he distinguishes. "Psychognosy is prior in the natural order" (1995b, 8) to genetic psychology, for studying the causes of, for example, perception, memory, etc. presupposes understanding what in general it takes for an event to be one of seeing, remembering, etc. (cf. Ryle 1971a, 179).

[A] genetic psychologist without psychognostic knowledge is like a physiologist without anatomical knowledge. Even so, one often finds researchers who dare to approach genetic psychological investigations in a pitiful ignorance of psychognosy, which, in turn, has the effect that all their efforts are in vain. There are people who conduct investigations into the causes of the phenomena of memory without knowing even the principal characteristic peculiarities of these phenomena. (Brentano 1995b, 10)

A somewhat different attempt to distinguish the researches of philosophy from those of (empirical) psychology came about through the various attacks on psychologism made by such figures as Husserl and Frege,⁷ urging that at least those branches of philosophy involving the study of mathematics, meanings, and logic are not studies of *mental* phenomena at all but rather of Platonic objects—numbers, meanings, propositions—distinct from the mental states about them (Ryle 1971a, 179; 1971b, 369). On this conception, even the philosophical (phenomenological) study of the mental itself is not concerned with empirical psychological occurrences but rather with the ideal essences or types of mental states and events. Thus

phenomenology is not (as those who dismiss it often assume) an introspectionist recording of what our own particular mental states feel like but rather, in its conception as well as its practice by Husserl and his students, it is an analysis of the very idea of types of mental state such as perceiving a three-dimensional object, experiencing one event as later than another, grasping someone as another person, and so on. As Husserl writes in the *Logical Investigations*:

phenomenology ... has, as its exclusive concern, experiences intuitively seizable and analysable in the pure generality of their essence, not experiences empirically perceived and treated as real facts, as experiences of human or animal experients in the phenomenal world that we posit as an empirical fact. This phenomenology must bring to pure expression, must *describe* in terms of their essential concepts and their governing formulae of essence, the essences which directly make themselves known in intuition, and the connections which have their roots purely in such essences. Each such statement of essence is an *a priori* statement in the highest sense of the word. (1970, 249; cf. Ryle 1971b, 203).

Based on this, Husserl offers a somewhat altered view of how the descriptive psychological or phenomenological study of the mental is distinct from and, in a sense, prior to the investigations of genetic psychology.⁸ First, it is distinct in being an *a priori* analysis of concepts rather than being based in observation and inductive generalization (an idea that resurfaces in Husserl's later method of phenomenological reduction, which rules out of court any empirical/factual question); second, it is prior since it analyzes the meanings of the concepts used to pose psychological questions or report their answers. As Husserl writes:

Pure phenomenology ... is, on the one hand, an ancillary to *psychology* conceived as an *empirical science*. Proceeding in purely intuitive fashion, it analyses and describes in their essential generality ... the experiences of presentation, judgment and knowledge, experiences which, treated as classes of real events in the natural context of zoological reality, receive a scientific probing at the hands of empirical psychology. (1970, 249; cf. Ryle 1971a, 169)

Approaching the mind by analyzing the very concepts of certain types of mental states or events is precisely and self-consciously the approach Ryle adopts in *The Concept of Mind* and continues to pursue in his studies of thinking later in his career. As Ryle later writes in his essay "Phenomenology versus *The Concept of Mind*":

Though it is entitled *The Concept of Mind*, it is actually an examination of multifarious specific mental concepts, such as those of *knowing, learning, discovering, imagining, pretending, hoping, wanting, feeling depressed, feeling a pain, resolving, doing voluntarily, doing deliberately, perceiving, remembering* and so on. The book could be described as a sustained essay in phenomenology, if you are at home with that label. (1971a, 188)

The independence of such a study from the empirical studies of psychology or neuroscience is emphasized by Ryle as much as by Husserl and Brentano and in similar terms. Just as he describes Husserlian phenomenology as "not a 'matter of fact' science" (1971b, 203), he writes of his own *Concept of Mind*: "The book does not profess to be a contribution to any science, not even to psychology. If any factual assertions are made in it, they are there through the author's confusion of mind" (1971a, 188).

But it was not just this approach to the *mind* that interested and influenced Ryle, for Ryle took Husserl's answer to the implicit question "What distinguishes philosophical from scientific study of the mind?" to be "true and generalizable" to form an answer to his broader question of what the role of philosophy is and how it differs from and relates to the work of the empirical sciences. The general form of answer is this: The method of philosophy is a priori, not based on experimentation and inductive generalization, and it is analytical or critical—that is, it is based in inquiring into the meaning of various propositions:

Not only psychology, but all sciences and all sorts of search for knowledge or probable opinion aim at establishing particular or general propositions. But whether in any particular case such a proposition is true or false, the analysis of what it means, or of what would be the case if it were true, is different from and in principle prior to the discovery of what proves it or makes it probable. (1971a, 169)

It is this conception of philosophy as conceptual analysis that served as the general form of an answer to the questions that drove Ryle since the beginning of his career: What proper role can philosophy fulfill, and how is it related to and different from that of the natural sciences? The answer Ryle gives, borrowed from Brentano and Husserl and then generalized is: The proper role of philosophy is the analysis of concepts used in the sciences and elsewhere. As he writes in his autobiography "The conviction that the Viennese dichotomy 'Either Science or Nonsense' had too few 'ors' in it led some of us, including myself, to harbour and to work on a derivative suspicion ... 'Conceptual analysis' seems to denote a permissible, even

meritorious exercise..." (1970, 10–11). Ryle's answer remained as one of the enduring views of the proper role for philosophy and was to influence generations of later philosophers united in the dedication to "analytical" philosophy. Thus the very idea of what philosophy is that helped form analytic philosophy as a school and gave it its name derived from attempts by early phenomenologists to distinguish philosophy from empirical psychology.

But even after arriving at this general answer as to what the proper role of philosophy is, several questions remain. As Ryle reports, having begun with the idea that the proper role of philosophy lies in examining the meanings of expressions, his former tutor H. J. Paton immediately challenged him with the question "Ah, Ryle, how *exactly* do you distinguish between philosophy and lexicography?" (1970, 6). Thus a first question that arises is, what exactly is meant by "conceptual analysis"—what is one doing when one philosophically analyzes concepts, and how does it differ from the inquiries of lexicography? Another question that arises is exactly how to undertake such analyses—what is the proper method for doing philosophy? Ryle's ultimate ways of answering both questions are based directly in developing and applying ideas that are laid out first by Husserl in the *Logical Investigations*.

3. Husserl and the Method of Conceptual Analysis

Ryle eventually would explain what he means by "conceptual analysis" in terms of uncovering the "logical grammar" of expressions of various types. While Wittgenstein famously discusses the idea of rules of logical grammar in the *Tractatus* (1921), as Ryle notes at least twice (1971b, 363; 1970, 8), the idea was discussed in depth much earlier by Husserl⁹ in *Logical Investigations* (1901; second edition 1913).¹⁰ In the Fourth Investigation, Husserl invokes the "old idea of a universal, or even of an *a priori grammar*," that will uncover a priori laws that determine the "possible forms of meaning" (1970, 493), in opposition to the psychological conception of logic as merely describing certain empirical regularities of thought.

As Husserl describes them, so-called logico-grammatical laws determine what sorts of expression may be meaningfully combined. To use the example on which Husserl focuses, expressions may have either *independent* meanings or *dependent* meanings. The first are 'categorematic' expressions, which have meaning on their own; the second are 'syncategorematic' expressions (such as "equals," "is," "and," "if"), themselves meaningless, which acquire meaning only when combined with other expressions in certain prescribed ways. Logico-grammatical laws govern the ways in which syncategorematic expressions must be combined with others (and with which others) in order

to form a meaningful whole, "To each case of non-independent meaning, a law of essence applies ... a law regulating the meaning's need of completion by further meanings, and so pointing to the forms and kinds of context into which it must be fitted" (Husserl 1970, 510). These laws, as Husserl is keen to emphasize, are not mere descriptions of patterns in the usage of language, nor are they peculiar to this or that natural language (English, Greek, Chinese) but rather are a priori requirements which "must be more or less revealed in every developed language, both in its grammar of forms and in the related class of grammatical incompatibilities" (Husserl 1970, 518; see also 501). Moreover, Husserl notes (as Ryle would later) that differences in the logical rules governing different expressions correspond to different meaning-categories of those expressions themselves (1970, 511).

The question still remains, by what method are such "logico-grammatical" laws and the corresponding arrays of categories to be uncovered? Husserl's answer is that the logico-grammatical laws are revealed by the nonsense or absurdity that results from their violation.¹¹ In fact, as Husserl writes, the laws of meaning "serve merely to separate the realms of sense and nonsense" (1970, 522). Distinguishing "nonsense" (*Unsinn*) from "absurdity" (*Widersinn*), Husserl describes nonsense as what results from combining expressions in ways that violate logico-grammatical laws, as in "a man and is" or "a round or." In such cases, expressions from what we might call the wrong syntactic categories are combined together, resulting in an expression that is simply meaningless or lacking in sense.¹²

Categories of meanings, in turn, are discoverable by means of identifying which expressions can and cannot be mutually substituted without encountering nonsense or absurdity. Each category of meaning is made up of that group of terms that can be substituted for one another without turning (grammatical) sense into nonsense. So, for example, in "the cat is on the mat," other one-place prepositions ("under," "above," "next to") may be substituted for "on" without nonsense resulting, and other singular terms can be substituted for "the cat" ("the dog," "the refrigerator"), without resulting in a meaningless sentence, whereas substitutions of prepositions for nouns and vice versa result in nonsense (e.g., "under is on the mat"). Husserl was "the first modern philosopher" to formulate this method of determining sameness of category in terms of "congruous replacement," and difference in category in terms of the nonsense that results from mutual substitution (Simons 1995, 120).

In the Fourth Investigation, Husserl's focus is on categories of meanings and the associated *logico-grammatical* laws. But of even greater importance in the *Logical Investigations* are the formal-ontological categories of objects (rather than meanings) and the associated "ontological-analytic" (rather than logico-

grammatical) laws. Thus toward the end of the discussion of categories of meanings in the Fourth Investigation, Husserl reminds us of the distinction: Logico-grammatical laws "with their objective validity reposing on pure categories of meaning, are distinct from ontological-analytic laws, which rest on formal-ontological categories (such as object, property, plurality etc.)" (1970, 523). Similarly, in laying out the "tasks of pure logic" in the Prolegomena to the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl writes, "In close connection with the concepts so far mentioned, i.e. the categories of meaning, and married to them by ideal laws, are other correlative concepts such as Object, State of Affairs, Unity, Plurality, Number, Relation, Connection, etc. These are the pure, the formal *objective categories*" (1970, 237). So, just as there are (logico-grammatical) laws that govern which expressions may be meaningfully combined with one another, there are also a priori (ontological-analytic) laws governing how concepts such as Object, Quality, Relation, Plurality, Whole, Part, and so on may be combined. But although Husserl seems to be more interested in the categories and laws of formal ontology than those of grammar, he does not (to my knowledge) apply the method of nonsense-detection as a way to distinguish *these* categories and detect *these* laws. (*That*, as we will see, was left to Ryle.)

The above ideas from the *Logical Investigations* are a crucial original source both of Ryle's general idea that philosophical analyses of meaning are based not in finding dictionary definitions but rather in uncovering the "logical grammar" of expressions and of his more famous technique of using nonsense as a clue to category differences.¹³ In answering Paton's question of how conceptual analysis was to be distinguished from lexicography, Ryle attempts to distinguish the specifically *philosophical* task in analyzing the meanings of expressions from associated linguistic tasks by saying the former task is not providing paraphrases or synonyms of expressions but rather mapping their "logical geography," uncovering their proper "logical categories." And indeed Ryle's work on other philosophical problems is explicitly conceived in these terms. For example, he describes the main task of *The Concept of Mind* as "to rectify the logical geography of the knowledge [of the mind] we already possess" (1949, 7), where:

To determine the logical geography of concepts is to reveal the logic of the propositions in which they are welded, that is to say, to show with what other propositions they are consistent and inconsistent, what propositions follow from them and from what propositions they follow ... The key arguments employed in this book are therefore intended to show why certain sorts of operations with the concepts of mental powers and processes are breaches of logical rules. (1949, 8)

Ryle takes the resulting analyses of categories to comprise the entire subject matter of philosophy, writing "not only is it the case that category-propositions (namely assertions that terms belong to certain categories or types) are always philosopher's propositions, but, I believe, the converse is also true" (1971b, 170).

Similarly, Ryle finds the route for a method by means of which such categories and their logical geography may be determined in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*: Nonsense is the touchstone for discerning category differences. He writes that Husserl "interested me by taking very seriously the opposition between Sense and Nonsense" (1970, 8), and he claims that "the philosopher's proprietary question is not 'What does this or that expression mean?', but 'Why does this or that expression make nonsense? and what sort of nonsense does it make?'" (1970, 6–7).

But while Husserl's examples of nonsense were grammatical violations such as "a man and is" revealing different grammatical categories, Ryle's novelty lies in applying Husserl's idea of nonsense as a means of distinguishing categories to the case of (what Husserl would call) formal-ontological categories rather than merely grammatical categories. Husserl, as mentioned above, claims that if the substitution of one expression for another results in grammatical nonsense (as in the substitution of "under" for "the cat" in "the cat is on the mat"), those expressions belong to different meaning categories. Similarly, Ryle's famous 'category mistakes' are cases in which substituting one expression for another results in grammatically permissible sentences that are nonetheless what one might call "ontologically" absurd, revealing that those expressions purport to name entities in different ontological categories. For example, in any sentence such as "the ball is red," we may substitute "the ball" for any other object-term without absurdity, but if we substitute a process or event term ("the race," "the firing") we have absurdity. Absurdities of this kind serve as a guide to differences of ontological category, as he writes in "Categories":

To ask the question To what type or category does so-and-so belong? is to ask In what sorts of true and false propositions and in what positions in them can so-and-so enter? Or, to put it semantically, it is to ask In what sorts of non-absurd sentences and in what positions in them can the expression 'so and so' enter? And, conversely, What sorts of sentences would be rendered absurd by the substitution for one of their sentence-factors of the expression 'so and so'? (1971b, 180)¹⁴

All of the famous examples of category mistakes at the outset of *The Concept of Mind* are based in mistakes among categories of this sort. The absurdities of such statements as, "She came home

in a flood of tears and a sedan-chair" and "he bought a left-hand glove and a right-hand glove and a pair of gloves" (1949, 22) are created, for example, by substituting an event concept (crying) where an object-concept should go or by substituting a whole-concept (the pair of gloves) in a list of concepts of parts of that whole.

Ryle not only develops the technique of using absurdity as a guide to category differences but attempts to use it to diagnose many central philosophical problems. Thus, for example, he diagnoses what he calls the "Cartesian myth" about mind as the product of just this kind of category-mistake, "It is one big mistake and a mistake of a special kind. It is, namely, a category-mistake. It represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category (or range of types or categories), when they actually belong to another" (1949, 16). For, example, it mistakenly represents mental concepts such as believing, knowing, aspiring, or detesting as acts or processes (and then concludes they must be covert, unobservable acts or processes) when they are actually dispositional concepts (1971a, 189; 1949, 33). This mistake is, again, to be revealed by the fact that substitutions of these terms for genuine action terms result in absurdity.

Having correctly listed *calculating*, *pondering*, and *recalling* to mind as mental acts or processes, we go on to list *believing*, *knowing*, *aspiring*, and *detesting* also as acts or processes. If this listing were correct, then, given the statement that Socrates was occupied at a certain time in calculating or recalling something to mind, we could replace the participle 'calculating' or 'recalling to mind' by the participle 'knowing' or 'detesting'. But it is immediately apparent that these substitutions cannot be significantly made. (1971a, 189)

Thus despite the obvious difference in substance between Ryle's and Husserl's eventual treatments of mind (particularly notable in their different attitudes towards Cartesianism and the idea of 'inner phenomena'), the very project Ryle is engaged in and the method Ryle uses to arrive at his conclusions derive directly from Husserl. The idea of the philosophical study of mind as involved in discerning the logical relations among different types of mental state comes directly from Brentano's and Husserl's development of phenomenology, as distinct from empirical psychology. The method used in the study, too—using the nonsense of category mistakes as a clue to differences of formal-ontological categories—derives directly from Husserl's idea of grammatical nonsense as symptomatic of differences in grammatical category. And, while Husserl laid out the method programmatically (providing what Ryle calls his "pots and pans" of method), Ryle demonstrated how to make philosophical

“pudding” with it (1971a, 223) by applying this method of analysis to a range of long-standing philosophical problems such as the mind/body problem (1949), the free will problem, and the problem of the relation between the scientific and ‘ordinary’ worlds (1954). In turn, Ryle’s method of identifying ‘category mistakes’ and his paradigmatic applications of it to other problems have endured as influential models of analytic philosophy.

4. Theoretic Reconstructions of Conceptual Analysis

It should be noted, however, that while Ryle endorses and appropriates Husserl’s philosophical project and method, he disagrees sharply with the philosophical *interpretation* that Husserl (among others) gave of what he was doing in applying this method.¹⁵ Husserl, emphasizing the opposition to psychologism (like Frege, Russell, and Moore), was always careful to point out “[t]he distinction between the psychological mode of treatment, whose terms function as class-terms for mental states, and the objective or ideal mode of treatment where the same terms stand for ideal genera and species” (1970, 184). In drawing out this distinction, Husserl thus describes the task of (for example) logic as not a matter of observing actual (real) psychological events and the natural laws for their occurrence but rather as a study of ideal essences of concepts and the ideal laws governing their relations (1970, 185):

We are concerned with *insight into the essence* of the concepts involved, looking methodologically to the fixation of unambiguous, sharply distinct verbal meanings. We can achieve such an end only by *intuitive representation* of the essence in adequate Ideation, or, in the case of complicated concepts, through knowledge of the essentiality of the elementary concepts present in them, and of the concepts of their forms of combination. (1970, 238)

In his historical papers, Ryle notes that this move to conceive of specifically philosophical studies as studies of a “third realm” of ideal objects is an entirely common reaction to the challenge of finding a role for philosophy in the age of empirical science. According to the resulting views:

Mental acts and states are the subject matter of psychology. Physical objects and events are the subject matter of the physical and biological sciences. It is left to philosophy to be the science of this third domain, which consists largely, though not entirely, of thought-objects or Meanings. (Ryle 1971b, 369)

Thus the subject matter of philosophy itself comes to be conceived as regarding a “special field of facts, facts of impressively Platonized kinds” (Ryle 1971b, 370).

But although he sympathizes with such anti-psychologist efforts and appropriates the relevant practices of conceptual analysis, Ryle—like Brentano¹⁶—takes it to be a systematic mistake to conceive of the procedure of conceptual analysis as involving a description of relations among Platonized meanings or concepts:

Husserl talked of intuiting Essences somewhat as Moore talked of inspecting concepts, and as Russell talked of acquaintanceship with universals, but of course it was by their intellectual wrestlings, not by any intellectual intuitions, that they tackled their actual conceptual difficulties. (1971a, 180)

(To be fair, one should note that Husserl explicitly says in several places (e.g., 1970, 782-4) that grasping concepts must be done by examining (at least imaginatively) individual instances of their application, not by inspecting our own ideas, nor by direct inspection of Platonic forms.)

In any case, however, Ryle thinks that Husserl, Russell, Moore, and others, were misled in their theorizing about their own practices of analyzing meanings to thinking that there must be some realm of ideal objects that these discoveries were about.¹⁷ In Ryle’s view, this assumption is another category mistake: Such discoveries are discoveries not about any kinds of objects (Platonic or otherwise). Instead, following Wittgenstein, he takes them to be discoveries about the proper *roles* of various expressions and the contributions they make to complete sentences:

Concepts are not things that are there crystallized in a splendid isolation; they are discriminable features, but not detachable atoms, of what is integrally said or integrally thought ... To examine them is to examine the live force of things that we actually say. It is to examine them not in retirement, but doing their cooperative work. (1971a, 185)

As a result, Ryle self-consciously engages in conceptual analysis not as a matter of discerning eternal relations among Platonic essences, but of uncovering the ‘logical grammar’ of expressions as they are actually used. Ryle credits Wittgenstein with devising this way to conceive of conceptual analysis without encumbering it with an unnecessary and inappropriate ontology of Platonized meanings (1971b, 364).

5. Ryle, Heidegger, and Ordinary Language

Just as Ryle thinks that paying attention to the practices of conceptual analysis will show that these require no commit-

ment to a problematic Platonist ontology of meanings, enabling us to avoid the philosophical problems of Platonism, so in general Ryle takes the return to study actual practices in use of expressions as a way to circumvent many philosophical problems. Thus, for example, in *The Concept of Mind*, he insists that although we have come (through misguided philosophical theorizing) to think of our talk of the mind as talk about hidden events of a special kind, our actual practices in saying people are intelligent, have understood, etc., properly understood, involve no such commitments. In each case, a careful study of the actual practices shows that they do not require the philosophically problematic entities (Platonistic essences, Cartesian souls, etc.) supposed to be necessary for their justification.

Such a return to ordinary practice as a way of dissolving traditional philosophical problems typifies the ordinary language approach to philosophy popularized in the 1940s through the 1960s, and Ryle is aptly credited as one of the main founders of this method, while Wittgenstein is normally seen as its original source. But while Ryle's diagnosis and solution to the problem of meanings are clearly inspired by Wittgenstein, his appreciation of the method of returning to study practices as a way of avoiding suspicious philosophical abstractions, and his famous application of this method to the problem of talk about the mind, again seem to come substantially from his own earlier interest in the phenomenological tradition, this time in the work of Heidegger.¹⁸

G. E. L. Owen notes that although in 1949 the junior Oxford philosophers "had pirated copies of the *Blue and Brown Books* in our hands," they "did not think Ryle's methods much indebted to Wittgenstein" (1977, 269). Michael Murray (1973) also provides historical evidence that Ryle was unlikely to be familiar with the material from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* before writing *The Concept of Mind*, much less before the earlier "Knowing How and Knowing That" (1946), whereas he was obviously thoroughly acquainted with *Being and Time* by the time his lengthy discussion piece on it appeared in 1929.¹⁹ Moreover, as mentioned earlier, Ryle studied with Heidegger at a formative stage in his (Ryle's) career and greatly admired Heidegger as a philosopher (though he did not agree with all of his conclusions), introducing him to English-speaking readers as a philosopher who:

shows himself to be a thinker of real importance by the immense subtlety and searchingness of his examination of consciousness, by the boldness and originality of his methods and conclusions, and by the unflagging energy with which he tries to think behind the stock categories of orthodox philosophy and psychology. (1971a, 213)

These historical circumstances alone give some reason to trace Ryle's development and applications of the methods typifying ordinary language philosophy at least in part back to his early interest in Heidegger, rather than characterizing them as borrowings from Wittgenstein. But the best evidence for the Heideggerian influence on Ryle comes from the striking parallels (somewhat masked by their divergent literary styles) both in approach and results between some of Ryle's most famous work such as *The Concept of Mind* and "Knowing How and Knowing That" and Heidegger's *Being and Time*.

Both Ryle and Heidegger attempt to uncover the implicit commitments and interconnections within ordinary experience (Heidegger) or language (Ryle) in order to circumvent misleading theoretical reconstructions and the misguided metaphysics that tend to accompany them. This shows itself superficially in the interest of both philosophers in ordinary terms. In his review of *Being and Time*, Ryle expresses interest in Heidegger's introduction of what he (Ryle) calls "many-barreled compounds of everyday 'nursery' words and phrases" as a way of avoiding the misdirected implications of technical philosophical terminology and getting more directly at primitive meanings and their interrelations (1971a, 206). Although Ryle there expresses reservations about this shift, he himself later (in "Ordinary Language") makes much the same point, insisting that "the appeal from philosophical jargon to the expressions which we have all had to learn to use properly ... is often one well worth making" (1971b, 316).

For both philosophers, a central problem with the jargon designed for and enshrined in philosophical theories is its propensity to bring along inappropriate theoretical categories, and the prime example for both involves talk about the mind. Thus both men reject not only Cartesian ontologies that divide the world into physical and mental substances, causes, and effects but also shun (and mock) the very vocabulary that goes along with them of "inner" and "outer" spheres, taking this to be the source of philosophical puzzles. Thus, for example, Heidegger diagnoses the problem of how subjects can acquire knowledge of "external" objects as based in supposing that the terms 'inner' and 'outer' refer to two distinct kinds of substance. Speaking sarcastically of the traditional Cartesian view, he writes:

Now inasmuch as knowing belongs to these entities ["human-Things"] and is not some external characteristic, it must be 'inside'. Now the more unequivocally one maintains that knowing is proximally and really 'inside' and indeed has by no means the same kind of Being as entities which are both physical and psychical, the less one presupposes when one believes that one is making headway in the question of the essence of knowledge and

in the clarification of the relationship between subject and Object. For only then can the problem arise of how this knowing subject comes out of its inner 'sphere' into one which is 'other and external', of how knowing can have any object at all, and of how one must think of the object itself so that eventually the subject knows it without needing to venture a leap into another sphere ... Of course we are sometimes assured that we are certainly not to think of the subject's 'inside' and its 'inner sphere' as a sort of 'box' or 'cabinet'. But when one asks for the positive signification of this 'inside' of immanence ... then silence reigns. (1962, 87)

Similarly, Ryle diagnoses the problem of mental causation as based in the same mistaken ontology hypostatized out of talk of 'inner' and 'outer' processes:

It is customary to express this bifurcation of [a man's] two lives and of his two worlds by saying that the things and events which belong to the physical world, including his own body, are external, while the workings of his own mind are internal ... [But] even when 'inner' and 'outer' are construed as metaphors, the problem how a person's mind and body influence one another is notoriously charged with theoretical difficulties ... the actual transactions between the episodes of the private history and those of the public history remain mysterious, since by definition they can belong to neither series. (1949, 12)

In that spirit, when Magee asks Ryle in interview whether he denies that "we have a great deal going on inside us," Ryle curtly responds "What I want to do is throw a brick at you for saying 'inside'" (Magee 1971, 107). Similarly, both Heidegger and Ryle diagnose the problem of other minds as based in the faulty model of knowledge of other people as inferring hidden mental contents rather than simply grasping what others are doing (Ryle 1949, 60-1; Heidegger 1962, 155).

Not only do Ryle and Heidegger share a diagnosis of many of the traditional problems of mind, they also share the view that such problems may be avoided by studying ordinary practices (including those involved in using ordinary terms) as a way to avoid the missteps of past abstractive theorizing and instead make explicit the truths that have been embodied in our workable practices all along. Thus, for example, Ryle attempts to show that our ordinary use of terms such as "intelligent" only purports to express dispositions to behave in certain ways; the temptation to suppose that they must refer to covert substances or causes is blamed on the influence of the Cartesian myth (1949, 32). Similarly, Heidegger shuns the Cartesian ontology of subject and object and hopes that a return to paying attention to engaged human activities in the everyday world will avoid the

Cartesian problems. As Ryle says of Heidegger's analyses in *Being and Time*, "He is simply telling us explicitly what we must have known 'in our bones' all the time" (1971a, 210), just as Ryle says of his own *The Concept of Mind* that "The philosophical arguments which constitute this book are intended not to increase what we know about minds, but to rectify the logical geography of the knowledge which we already possess" (1949, 7).²⁰

The precedence of practice over theory is also utilized heavily by both Heidegger and Ryle in addressing the problem of knowledge; here again there are striking parallels between their views. Ryle (in "Knowing How and Knowing That" [1971a, 212-25]), like Heidegger in *Being and Time* (Division I, Chapter 2, §13), argues that the traditional problems of knowledge are based in focusing solely on the abstracted case of theoretic propositional knowledge, that practical know-how is distinct from and prior to theoretic knowledge, and that theoretic propositional knowledge only arises in virtue of breakdowns or deficiencies of know-how.²¹ Both hope that acknowledging the primacy of know-how will help us avoid certain traditional problems in epistemology.

Such recurrent parallels in doctrine as well as approach between Heidegger and Ryle suggest that Ryle's later characteristic and influential ordinary language-style work owes much to Heidegger. In fact, Heidegger's influence on Ryle thus seems to appear exactly where Husserl's leaves off. Whereas Husserl showed a way to distinguish philosophical work both from empirical scientific work and from mere lexicography, Heidegger showed a way to undertake such philosophical work without falling astray into what Ryle, Wittgenstein, and many of those who would follow the ordinary language tradition would regard as misguided metaphysics. Via Ryle, work from the phenomenological tradition seems to have played a largely unacknowledged role in developing the methods and paradigm applications of ordinary language-style diagnosis and treatment of philosophical problems.

6. Ryle's Legacy

As I said earlier, Ryle's main focus throughout his career was inquiring into the proper role and methods of philosophy. His efforts on this score were well rewarded. For although initial uses of the relevant methods (in the analytic tradition) may be traced to such figures as Russell and Wittgenstein, it was Ryle who took up the task of explicitly formulating, refining, demonstrating the usefulness of, and popularizing the methods for what came to be called 'analytic philosophy', and later for what came to be called 'ordinary language philosophy'. Indeed, more than any explicit doctrine he advocated, his work on an explicit understanding, defense and promotion of philosophical

methodology seems to be Ryle's most lasting contribution. As the editors of Ryle's *Festschrift* note, "Few philosophers have been unaffected by his views and almost all have at some time made use of his extensive additions to the battery of philosophical tools" (Wood and Pitcher 1970, frontispiece).²²

Ryle's conception of the role of philosophy and the proper methods for practicing it has had enormous influence, not only through the power of his arguments for these methods and exemplary applications of them but also in virtue of his personal influence. *Who's Who* reports that Ryle "exercised an enormous influence on the organization and development of Oxford philosophy," serving as Waynflete Professor of Metaphysics from 1945-1968, while Bryan Magee introduces Ryle to the BBC audience as someone who "for years ... had the reputation of being the chief king-maker when it came to academic appointments in philosophy, not just at Oxford but in universities all over the country" (Magee 1971, 100). In fact, his personal influence was not limited to Britain, for he took it as a personal mission to break down parochial boundaries, increase philosophical contact, and promote his view of philosophy in the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and other parts of the world (Urmson 1967). In addition to this direct influence, there is the indirect influence he exerted on the sort of philosophy valued and published, as editor of *Mind* from 1948-1971 and as one of the founders of *Analysis*, giving the latter journal name of "the thing, or one of the things, that non-metaphysical philosophers were permitted carefully to do" (Ryle 1970, 12).

In part via this connection through Ryle, the phenomenological tradition, from Brentano through Heidegger, had a much longer-lasting impact on the very idea of analytic philosophy and its proper role, on the development of some of its most characteristic methods and the later application of those methods to ordinary language, than has been generally acknowledged. While I have drawn this connection out mainly through examining Ryle's work and philosophical development, this is just one major crossroad, for looking backwards it should be remembered that some of the other major influences on Ryle (such as Russell and Moore) themselves in turn had a serious interest in the early Husserl and Meinong²³; looking forward, it should be noted that Ryle's approach to philosophy and his substantial conclusions were to influence generations of students and younger philosophers, virtually defining 'Oxford philosophy' and its legacy, the "linguistic philosophy" that was to dominate much of twentieth century philosophical work. Even where some of Ryle's doctrines are criticized, his conception of what philosophy is, and his lessons in philosophical methodology exercised an enormous influence on the emerging practice and self-conception of analytic philosophy. If what I

have said above is correct, phenomenology provided an unseen compass that, in Ryle's hands, helped direct the development of analytic philosophy.²⁴

Postscript

In his comments, Johannes Brandl suggests that I have presented a one-sided picture of Ryle's position, omitting Ryle's criticisms of phenomenology as involving "a crucial mistake ... which had disastrous consequences for this branch of philosophy" (144). His comments do much to bring out the other side of the story of Ryle's relation to phenomenology, for which I am grateful. They also raise the larger question of what role the history of philosophy should play in marking distinctions among philosophical schools. I will briefly comment on both of those topics here.

Indeed, as I occasionally mention and Brandl discusses at greater length, Ryle does criticize several of Husserl's and Heidegger's conclusions. Most notable among the doctrines criticized by Ryle are the following:

1. Husserl's characterization of a priori inquiry as based in intuitions of (ideal) essences or types (an issue I do discuss in the paper) (Ryle 1971a, 170-1, 180-1; 1971b, 369-72).
2. Husserl's transcendental idealism, and (what follows from it) his epistemological foundationalism, with phenomenology viewed as the 'master science' (Ryle 1971a, 172-4).
3. Heidegger's approach to understanding humanity through analyzing its own self-understanding, and the general approach to understanding the *world* through understanding *meanings* (Ryle 1971a, 211-12). (Ryle takes this to be the result of unconsciously accepting something like Husserl's transcendental idealism.)

Although I allude to differences in *doctrine* between Ryle and Husserl, Ryle and Heidegger, and spend some time discussing point (1), I omit discussion of the latter two criticisms above since my main focus is on consistency in *methodology* across the schools, not similarities or differences of doctrine. I take this to be an appropriate focus for two reasons: First, since (as philosophers even *within* a school seldom agree on conclusions) method seems to be *a* or *the* crucial factor in distinguishing schools; second, since Ryle himself takes methodology to be the defining feature of phenomenology, which can be separated from the conclusions he rejects. Indeed Ryle's explicit goal in his essay "Phenomenology" is "to distinguish what Phenomenology is from certain special questions about certain special claims that are made for it" (1971a, 167).

Briefly, then, let us consider each point of doctrinal disagreement. First, as Ryle tries to show in his essay "Propositions"

(1971b, 12–38) (and as I mention above), the method of pursuing a priori inquiry based in conceptual analysis is perfectly appropriate and acceptable and can be preserved regardless of whether one takes that inquiry to involve intuitions of Platonic essences or not. So this apparent disagreement on a point of ontology does not lead to any deep divergences in method or approach.

Second, Ryle does criticize Husserl's turn to transcendental idealism (Ryle 1971a, 174) and the resulting claims of the logical priority of phenomenology to all other philosophical or scientific enquiries. But he takes pains to argue that this view of Husserl's is not inherent to phenomenology but rather results from the intrusion of false theories into what should have been a pure project of the analysis of types of mental functioning: "Phenomenology seems to have turned in Husserl's hands into an egocentric metaphysic. But this seems to be the result of one or two false theories which need never, and should never, have trespassed into the analysis of types of mental functioning" (1971a, 174). In particular, he takes Husserl's turn to transcendental idealism to be the result of accepting the doctrine that every act has an [intentional] object and of accepting the Cartesian belief in the certainty of introspection. Together, Ryle thinks, these lead Husserl to the phenomenological reduction, in which the only objects to study are these intentional correlates of consciousness. But Ryle considers these to be "false theories" the acceptance of which is based in *lapsés* in the appropriate phenomenological method, not theories that are in any way intrinsic to or essentially connected with phenomenology. Thus he concludes his essay "Phenomenology" by emphasizing: "The fact that Husserl concludes that the world consists of nothing but bi-polar mental experiences, and consequently that phenomenology is 'first philosophy' is the result of his acceptance of one or two theories which are not true and are not arrived at by genuine phenomenological analysis" (1971a, 178).

Similarly, Ryle takes Heidegger's mistake to be the result *not* of phenomenology or of Heidegger's particular approach to it, but rather of the intrusion into his philosophy of certain "presuppositions which Heidegger has unconsciously inherited," namely, that things may be grasped through grasping the meanings via which we intend/constitute them, adding that nonetheless "I have nothing but admiration for his special undertaking and for such of his achievements in it as I can follow, namely the phenomenological analysis of the root workings of the human soul" (1971a, 213).

Like Ryle, I believe that the three conclusions above, which Ryle rejects, can be separated from the basic method and approach of phenomenology. Indeed they have been so distinguished by various followers in the phenomenological tradition,

many of whom rejected some or all of these conclusions while still uncontroversially remaining phenomenologists, for example, Brentano rejects (1), while Roman Ingarden, Adolf Reinach, and Alfred Schutz (along with most members of the Göttingen and Munich groups of phenomenologists) explicitly reject (2) transcendental idealism and its consequences. So I do not take Ryle's rejection of these doctrines to indicate in any way that he rejected phenomenology as an enterprise or to undermine the claim that he was strongly influenced by the approach to and methods for philosophy developed by Brentano, Husserl, and Heidegger.

Brandl's concern to locate a crucial doctrinal distinction between analytic philosophy and phenomenology (by urging that phenomenology but not analytic philosophy, is essentially wedded to epistemological foundationalism) seems to be motivated by the idea that there must be some basic disagreement that marks them as rivals or "separate and incompatible movements" (149). But I do not take it as a basic requirement that whatever story we give of the history of twentieth century philosophy should find some crucial difference that justifies the familiar distinction between analytic and continental philosophy. Of course, we have to explain why philosophers have so commonly *believed* there is a distinction, but that may involve at least in part a sociological explanation (perhaps including the increasing inability of English and American philosophers to read German language philosophy and mockery by their leading figures eliminating the incentive to learn, separations of the academic systems, and differences in style and doctrinal differences that emerged following Heidegger, etc.)—not a *justification* in the sense of showing why they really are so radically different as to warrant that belief.

There are enormous doctrinal differences *within* each 'school' (phenomenology and analytic philosophy). Within each 'school', there are central figures on both sides of the debates concerning the nature and status of propositions and essences, realism versus various idealisms or antirealisms, epistemological foundationalism and the role of experience as an epistemic foundation, and the extent to which the world may be understood or known through investigation of human experience, thought, or language. As a result, it is generally assumed that the distinguishing features of analytic philosophy are not based in adherence to any doctrines but rather in a certain method or approach to philosophy. What I have tried to show is that at least one central road marking that approach is a road that itself came out of the phenomenological tradition. Indeed as far as method and approach are concerned, Ryle and those like him have far more in common with the phenomenologists than with other, naturalistically inclined, members of their own "analytical" tradition.

Notes

¹ For a detailed account of the influence of such figures as Brentano and Meinong on Russell and Moore, see Simons 1992, 149–55. The Husserl-Frege connection is drawn out in detail in Mohanty 1982 and Dummett 1994.

² Thus, e.g., after carefully elucidating the early connections between Austrian and British philosophy at the century's beginning, Peter Simons writes "after the first war it is inappropriate to speak of an Anglo-Austrian axis in analytic philosophy" (1992, 156).

³ It must be said that Ryle himself at times encourages this trivialization by belittling his own prior interest in phenomenology and becoming more dismissive of phenomenology in his later writings on the subject such as his 1946 review of Marvin Farber's *The Foundations of Phenomenology* (in 1971a, 215–24). But this is easily enough accounted for in terms of Ryle's general off-hand manner, as well as his desire to distance himself from some later doctrines associated with the phenomenological tradition that he regarded as noxious outgrowths of a basically good approach to philosophy. For further discussion of that, see the appendix to this paper.

⁴ Moran 2000, 87.

⁵ Simons 1992, 155.

⁶ See discussion of the distinction in Oskar Kraus's introduction to Brentano's *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995a, 369–70).

⁷ Brentano, too, occasionally attacks psychologism directly, though without using a Platonist ontology as a bulwark against it. See, e.g., Brentano 1969, 80.

⁸ Husserl alters Brentano's view by emphasizing the a priori nature of the study and its basis in conceptual analysis. Brentano, by contrast, while highlighting the general nature of descriptive psychology's claims, denies that descriptive psychology (psychognosy) may be done a priori, since it must start with the description of experiences themselves (1995b, 167).

⁹ Ryle also notes their use of the same idea in 1971a (186).

¹⁰ It also seems likely that Ryle found the idea in Husserl before he encountered it in Wittgenstein, whom he reports having first met after the latter's return to Cambridge in 1929, a good deal after Ryle had written his review of Ingarden and shortly after his review of *Being and Time* was published. Ryle's autobiographical discussion (which is roughly chronological) similarly mentions study of Husserl substantially before meeting or reading Wittgenstein is mentioned.

¹¹ Ryle's review of Ingarden's *Essentielle Fragen* focuses on the same theme as it appears in Ingarden's work; as Ryle writes, "He [Ingarden] also examines in what the propriety or rightness of a question consists and shows how questions, as well as statements, can be equivocal, inexact, and even nonsensical. He can then go on to consider what are the logical implications of this possibility of questions being valid" (1927, 366).

¹² Husserl distinguishes nonsense (*Unsinn*) from absurdity (*Widersinn*), calling "absurd" those meaningful combinations of expressions to which, however, it is a priori that no object can correspond; these are not without sense but *contrary to sense*. Within absurdity, Husserl distinguishes between material (synthetic) absurdity and formal (analytic) absurdity. Formal absurdities involve

contradictions just in virtue of their violation of certain purely formal logical rules, e.g., of noncontradiction, of modus ponens, etc. Thus "a not-square square" is a formally absurd expression. In the case of materially absurd expressions, the impossibility of any corresponding object is not based in a formal relation but rather in the content of the particular concepts employed, thus "a round square" is a materially absurd expression. Russell's interest in the formal absurdities of logical paradoxes and their use as clues to type-distinctions is arguably another development out of this idea; Russell carefully studied the *Logical Investigations* and was supposed to review it for *Mind*. Although that review never appeared, Russell refers to the *Logical Investigations* as a "monumental work" in his survey "Philosophy in the Twentieth Century" and wrote to Husserl in 1920 mentioning that he had the latter's *Logical Investigations* with him in Brixton prison during his imprisonment for pacifist activities. Ryle presents Russell's interest in paradox, etc., as a development of Husserl's idea. After noting in his autobiography that Husserl "interested me by taking very seriously the opposition between Sense and Nonsense," Ryle laments, "he failed to make very much of it" — that is, he did not hit upon and study the paradox-generators that drove Russell's theorizing (1970, 8), implying that Russell was to make more of the idea of the significance of nonsense than Husserl himself had.

¹³ Other, perhaps more obvious, sources include Wittgenstein's use of the idea of logical grammar in the *Tractatus* and Russell's discovery of the nonsense that results from type-violations. See Ryle 1971a, 252–3. On the former, Ryle notes that although Wittgenstein developed the idea that there are principles of logical grammar the violation of which results in nonsense, he (unlike Husserl) came to the "frustrating conclusion" (with which Ryle disagrees) that nothing significant can be said about these principles (1971a, 253). For comparison of Wittgenstein's and Husserl's views of logical grammar and what can and cannot be significantly said regarding it, see David Woodruff Smith "Intentionality and Picturing: Early Husserl vis-à-vis Early Wittgenstein" (this volume). On the latter, see also note 12 above and Ryle 1971a, 252.

¹⁴ Ryle does not follow Husserl's terminological distinction between "nonsense" (as lacking sense) and "absurdity" (as reserved for contradictory statements) and takes the trouble to defend his use of "absurd" as a way of distinguishing it from typographical and grammatical nonsense, and as having useful associations with jokes and ridiculousness, since "so many jokes are in fact type-pranks" (1971b, 180).

¹⁵ He is careful to note, however, that in his opinion that "special theory" is no essential part of phenomenology considered as the analysis of mental concepts, and the wider idea of phenomenology may remain intact without it (1971a, 171). Cf. appendix to this paper.

¹⁶ Brentano, in his 1917 essay "On Ens Rationis," obliquely criticizes Husserl and Meinong for the reification of universals, "They imagined they were enriching science by their many weighty discoveries. *Gegenstandstheorie* or, as they called it, *Phenomenology*, was proclaimed to be a special science entirely independent of psychology. They revived the error of Plato and the ultra-realists like William of Champeaux with certain modifications, by ascribing a being to universals as universals" (1995a, 367–8).

¹⁷ There is some evidence that Husserl's own view of abstracta may not have been, or need not have been, as Platonistic as is generally assumed. At least toward the end of his career, he allows for the existence of "bound idealities" such as cultural entities like civil constitutions that "belong to the real world" by being tied to particular historical spatiotemporal realities in a way the "free idealities" of logicomathematical systems are not (1973, 267). This could provide the basis for a non-Platonist, though still realist, treatment of various kinds of abstracta. At any rate, Ryle certainly adheres to the traditional Platonist interpretation of Husserl.

¹⁸ Murray 1973 also lays out further details of commonalities in doctrine between Ryle and Heidegger.

¹⁹ Other evidence that Wittgenstein's direct influence on Ryle may have been less than commonly supposed comes from Ryle's autobiography, where he notes that he made a conscious effort to avoid participating in what he considered the unhealthy idolatry of Wittgenstein (1970, 11). Similarly, as Murray reports, "When Merleau-Ponty asked Ryle whether he adhered to Wittgenstein's program, he replied, 'I certainly hope not!'" (1973, 104n10). The timing and the common source in phenomenology of the ideas of logical grammar, the significance of nonsense, and the emphasis on ordinary language and practice as a means of dissolving metaphysical problems suggest that Ryle's and Wittgenstein's developments may have been to a large extent parallel rather than a matter of direct influence of the latter on the former.

²⁰ For a more detailed comparison of the methods of phenomenology and ordinary language philosophy, see Ernst Tugendhat's essay "Description as the method of philosophy" (in Mays and Brown 1969, 256-66).

²¹ Ryle, however, is to be credited with providing arguments for the logical priority of know-how, lacking in Heidegger's more anthropological account.

²² Similarly, a BBC interview with Bryan Magee towards the end of Ryle's life proclaims him as the man who (at the end of his 1931 "Systematically Misleading Expressions") made "The first clear public statement of the view of philosophy that has come to be known as Linguistic Philosophy or Linguistic Analysis," declaring it "the sole and whole function of philosophy" (Magee 1971, 100).

²³ Russell's and Moore's interest in Husserl also clearly outlasted the first world war; see note 12 regarding Russell. Husserl also gave a series of invited lectures at the University of London in 1922 on phenomenological method and phenomenology, one of which was chaired by Moore.

²⁴ Many thanks to Johannes Brandl, Allan Casebier, Paul Livingston, David Woodruff Smith, Alan Thomas, and members of the audience at the Spindel Conference for helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper.

References

- Brentano, Franz. 1969. *The origin of our knowledge of right and wrong*. Translated by Roderick M. Chisholm and Elizabeth H. Schneewind. London: Routledge.
 Brentano, Franz. 1995a. *Psychology from an empirical standpoint*.

- Translated by Antos C. Rancurello, D. B. Terrell, and Linda L. McAlister. London: Routledge.
 Brentano, Franz. 1995b. *Descriptive psychology*. Translated and edited by Benito Müller. London: Routledge.
 Briggs, Asa, Alan Isaacs, and Elizabeth Martin, eds. 1999. *Who's who in the twentieth century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 Caton, Charles E., ed. 1963. *Philosophy and ordinary language*. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press.
 Dummett, Michael. 1993. *The origins of analytical philosophy*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
 Durfee, Harold A., ed. 1976. *Analytic philosophy and phenomenology*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
 Heidegger, Martin. 1962. *Being and time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
 Honderich, Ted, ed. 1995. *Oxford companion to philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 Husserl, Edmund. 1962. *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology*. New York: Collier.
 ———. 1970. *Logical Investigations*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. Translated by J. N. Findlay. London: Routledge.
 ———. 1972. *Experience and judgement*. Translated by James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.
 Magee, Bryan. 1971. *Modern British philosophy*. New York: St. Martin's.
 Mays, Wolfe, and S. C. Brown, eds. 1969. *Linguistic analysis and phenomenology*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press.
 Mohanty, J. N. 1982. *Husserl and Frege*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.
 Moran, Dermot. 2000. *Introduction to phenomenology*. London: Routledge.
 Murray, Michael. 1973. Heidegger and Ryle: Two versions of phenomenology. *Review of Metaphysics* 27, no. 1:88-111.
 Owen, G. E. L. 1977. Gilbert Ryle. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 77:265-70.
 Ryle, Gilbert. 1927. Review of *Essentiale Fragen: Ein Beitrag zum Problem des Wesens*, by Roman Ingarden. *Mind* 36, no. 143:366-70.
 ———. 1949. *The concept of mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 ———. 1954. *Dilemmas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 ———. 1970. Autobiographical. In Wood and Pitcher 1970.
 ———. 1971a. *Collected papers volume 1: Critical essays*. New York: Barnes and Noble.
 ———. 1971b. *Collected papers volume 2: Collected essays*. New York: Barnes and Noble.
 Simons, Peter. 1992. *Philosophy and logic in Central Europe from Bolzano to Tarski*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer.
 ———. 1995. Meaning and Language. In *The Cambridge companion to Husserl*, edited by Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Stroll, Avrum. 2000. *Twentieth-century analytic philosophy*. New York: Columbia University Press.
 Urmson, J. O. 1967. Ryle, Gilbert. In *The encyclopedia of philosophy, Volume 7*, edited by Paul Edwards. New York: Macmillan

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. 1922. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by C. K. Ogden (from the 1922 edition; first published in 1921). London: Routledge.
Wood, Oscar P., and George Pitcher, eds. 1970. *Ryle*. New York: Doubleday and Co.

The Southern Journal of Philosophy (2002) Vol. XL

Gilbert Ryle: A Mediator between Analytic Philosophy and Phenomenology

Johannes L. Brandl
University of Salzburg

Philosophical movements are complex historical entities, whose origins are usually connected with one or more founding figures and whose developments are a mixture of gradual consolidation, theoretical expansion, and systematic modification. Positively seen, they are frameworks for philosophical research that provide a background of useful methods, principles, and goals. From a negative point of view, they are philosophical ideologies that preclude a healthy pluralism of ideas and refuse to acknowledge views incompatible with their own doctrines.

What determines whether philosophical movements become ideologies or whether they remain frameworks open for new ideas? This is a complex issue in the sociology of science, but I think it is primarily a question of communication between different camps. Movements will not degenerate into ideologies as long as philosophers look beyond the boundaries of their own tradition, thereby keeping the lines open for importing and exporting new ideas. That may all sound very nice; in fact, however, this involves mediations that are not so easily accomplished. Those who try to facilitate communication between different camps will find themselves in a difficult situation: how can they remove obstacles of mutual understanding if these obstacles arise from the very assumptions that define the different schools? As long as these assumptions remain in place, any mediatory effort may seem hopeless; once they are removed, however, what had appeared to be different movements or schools may turn out to be just variants of a single framework that once again faces the danger of becoming an ideology.

In her illuminating paper, Amie Thomasson reminds us that one of the first analytic philosophers who struggled with this dilemma was Gilbert Ryle.¹ Following the example of Russell, Ryle developed a critical interest in Brentano, Meinong, and Husserl, thereby shaping one of the models of how analytic philosophy might be done. Ryle had several reasons for turning to Phenomenology: apart from his quest for a proper philosophical method, it was his interest in logical objectivism that put him on this track along with his concern for issues in philosophy of mind and—finally—his ability to read Brentano,