

TRADITIONAL VS. ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY*

An influential series of lectures on analytic philosophy was published in 1976 by the West German philosopher Ernst Tugendhat.¹ These lectures have now appeared in a clear and workmanlike English translation² and this has provoked our marshalling of the following reactions. We have concentrated on Tugendhat's treatment of Husserl, and particularly on issues connected with the notion of dependence or *Abhängigkeit* central to Husserl's philosophy. These issues are, as we have argued at length elsewhere,³ of significant independent interest. They are of interest in the present context not only because Tugendhat's work is one of the few contributions to contemporary analytic philosophy in which they are confronted explicitly, but also because what he has to say about Husserl and dependence illustrates well both the positive and the negative thrust of his argument.

Tugendhat makes large and somewhat outdated-sounding claims for what he calls the 'universal science of formal semantics', — for example that it can absorb or supersede all traditional philosophical disciplines, including ontology.⁴ Our remarks may be conceived as a challenge to Tugendhat and to other like-minded analytic philosophers to provide more detailed justifications of such grand claims. We should argue that — outside certain restricted fields, above all the philosophy of mathematics and logic — the apologists of analytic philosophy have been able to provide little more than hints as to how these claims might be justified, and then only in relation to certain privileged problems. We shall seek to demonstrate in what follows that the extrapolation from these to the general case has been overhasty, to say the least.

*Review/Discussion of Ernst Tugendhat: *Traditional and Analytic Philosophy. Lectures on the Philosophy of Language*, translated by P.A. Gorner, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982, XII + 438 pp.

1. *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die sprachanalytische Philosophie*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 1976, 535pp.

2. *Traditional and Analytic Philosophy. Lectures on the Philosophy of Language*.

3. B. Smith, ed., *Parts and Moments. Studies in Logic and Formal Ontology*, Munich: Philosophia 1982.

4. See Part I of his work, especially Lecture 3. On the outdatedness of Tugendhat's claims see e.g. the remarks on the complementarity of analytic and non-analytic approaches to philosophy in John Searle's new book, *Intentionality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983.

Tugendhat is the author of penetrating books on Aristotle and on the concept of truth in Husserl and Heidegger, and the present work deservedly drew attention to itself on its first appearance, not least because in it we find a philosopher steeped in traditional philosophy giving an account of the results of his confrontation with the thought of Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Searle, Strawson, *et frères*. The book is graced with a dedication 'to the memory of Martin Heidegger', and the preface begins:

In so-called analytical or language-analytical philosophy there is little reflection on its own foundations, and today less than before. For the most part the problems treated are inherited problems which are not questioned. Partly this is due to a lack of historical consciousness (p.9/ix).⁵

When, however, we turn to the main body of the text we are in fact offered little that might help us to regain, on behalf of analytic philosophy, this missing historical consciousness. We are presented, rather, with a sustained and thorough four-hundred page inquiry into what it is to understand the assertion of a singular sentence and a defence of the thesis that this question is *a* if not *the* central question in philosophy. Now it must be said that Tugendhat succeeds, in a masterly way, in revealing how this and related issues have structured debate within the analytic tradition, but the pre-history of analytic philosophy is all but ignored.

Tugendhat carries out his project by arguing for the inadequacy of various traditional 'object-centred' philosophical positions. All of the latter have failed, he claims, to appreciate the sense in which the sentence is uniquely crucial to the concerns of philosophy. He therefore sets himself the task of establishing the case for the new sentence-centred philosophy. In particular, he provides us with a detailed account of the mechanisms of identification (and of what he calls 'specification') in language, building on ideas already familiar from the writings of Strawson and others.⁶ The work is divided into two parts. Part I, by way of an introduction, is a "confrontation of analytical philosophy with traditional conceptions of philosophy". It deals in a preliminary way with the relation between formal semantics, ontology and phenomenology (or, more generally, what Tugendhat calls 'philosophy of consciousness'). The much longer Part II, entitled: "A first step: analysis of the predicative sentence", begins with a detailed criticism of Husserl, who has provided what Tugendhat takes to be the most sophisticated theory of meaning within the object-centred tradition.

5. References in this form are to the pages of the German and English editions of Tugendhat's book, in that order.

6. See especially Lectures 21, 23 and 27. Tugendhat's arguments as to the way various traditional philosophies of consciousness neglected (a) the central position of propositional (propositionally articulated) consciousness and (b) the relation of consciousness to speech — cf. Lecture 5 — have been further developed by him in a more recent work (*Selbstbewußtsein und Selbstbestimmung*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979).

What is interesting about Tugendhat's treatment here (cf. especially Lecture 9) is that he concentrates not on the more familiar 'noema' theory of meaning put forward by Husserl in the first volume of the *Ideen*, but on the earlier and in our view more powerful theory of the *Logische Untersuchungen*. The *Ideen* theory is at least in some respects analogous to Frege's theory of meaning as *Sinn* or *Gegebenheitsweise*. The earlier theory sees meaning not as abstract *Sinn* but as a particular sort of species or kind of language-using act: meanings are, if you like, the *universals* instantiated by language-using acts as *individuals*. This theory is both elegant and economical. It is committed only to individuals (including individual mental events and states, and individual events of language-use), and to kinds or species of individuals. The work in the theory is done not, as in the *Ideen*, by means of appeals to supernumary abstract entities whose status is unclear, but by appealing to the complexity of the individual states, events and objects which are involved in actual occurrences of uses of signs. This approach brings with it, of course, a number of technical problems of its own. Thus Husserl does not make clear precisely what principle of division amongst language-using acts is reflected in that hierarchy of species which, according to this theory, are picked out as linguistic meanings. But Tugendhat is not interested in these technical problems. He is concerned, rather, with the idea that Husserl's theory of meaning betrays just that obsession with the presence to a subject of an object which is in his eyes the central and permanent temptation of pre-analytic philosophy. It is not our purpose here to supply the details of Husserl's views as to the relations between acts, meanings and objects in the world. We shall confine ourselves to one or two remarks designed to rectify what we believe are important and symptomatic simplifications in Tugendhat's presentation of these views. First, however, we have one more general caveat. Husserl's theory of the interrelations of mental acts and objects, at least as this is developed in the 1st edition of the *Logical Investigations*, is a theory which dispenses with any cognising subject — in a way which is entirely reminiscent of the *Tractatus*. It is, therefore, somewhat confusing to have this theory brought out to serve as a representative of the bad old subject-object metaphysics which Tugendhat so rightly disparages.

What, then, of Tugendhat's more detailed charges? It is, he argues, a characteristic of the 'object-centred approach to philosophy' that it reads too much into the naming-relation, at the expense of those features of language which are associated with the sentence. For Husserl, however, the relation of *Nennen* is not especially privileged at all. It is merely one special case of the relation of *sich auf etwas Beziehen* — and the latter is conceived precisely as the relation which holds between the proper and improper parts of a sentence (or rather, of a sentence-using act) and the corresponding proper and improper parts of the *Sachverhalt* which would make this

sentence true. *Nennen* is the relation which holds only between those sentence-parts which are names and their corresponding objects.

Tugendhat fails to do justice not only to Husserl's views about names and nameables, but also to his account of sentences and *Sachverhalte*. He effectively identifies the latter with what, in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, would be referred to as abstract propositions. More precisely, he claims (p. 157/118) that for Husserl a state of affairs is just the objectified meaning of the corresponding sentence; it is the meaning of a sentence somehow *turned into an object*. Now this is a mistake, if it is a mistake, of which both Meinong and Russell — and more recently Chisholm — can justifiably be accused. But there is little if any evidence that it is a mistake which Husserl made (cf. Tugendhat's treatment, on pp. 157ff/117ff., of §34 of the 1st Logical Investigation). Tugendhat wants to foist onto Husserl the thesis that the state of affairs is an objectified meaning, i.e. that it is both a meaning and an object, because this will strengthen his case that, except for brief periods of clarity, Husserl failed to appreciate the crucial differences between sentences and names. But the thesis that Husserlian *Sachverhalte* are *meanings* breaks down in the face of the fact that *Sachverhalte* quite clearly have certain properties possessed by no meanings: they have pieceable and perceptible parts. And the thesis that Husserlian *Sachverhalte* are *objects* breaks down because it ignores the fact that Husserl has at his disposal the resources of a subtle syntactic theory of modifications or transformations. These resources enable him to distinguish a hierarchy of levels or forms of discourse about the structures in the world and thereby precisely to avoid any identification of *Sachverhalte* as objects. Thus according to Husserl our simple or unmodified, non-philosophical talk about objects is transformed in a systematic way when we talk about *Sachverhalte*. Hence it is not as if the world is made up of objects and *Sachverhalte* somehow alongside each other. Nor, *a fortiori*, are *Sachverhalte* simply another kind of object: if they were, then clearly no modification of our ordinary forms of speech would be necessary in order to refer to them.

The more interesting feature of Tugendhat's work, from our present point of view, however, is the central place he awards in his methodology to the notion of *dependence* and *independence*. It will be useful at this stage to list some of the more important examples of dependence-relations which play a role in his account:

- the mutual dependence between the identification of spatio-temporal objects and the identification of spatio-temporal positions (Lecture 25),
- the mutual dependence of predicates and singular terms (p.229/178⁷),

7. Here the two sorts of expression are described as '*wesensmäßig sich ergänzend*'. The Husserlian connotations of this phrase as signifying mutual dependence will have been evident to Tugendhat from his reading of the 3rd Logical Investigation.

- the mutual dependence between different deictic expressions, in particular between uses of the demonstrative pronouns 'this' and 'that' (p.433f/343f),

- the one-sided dependence of non-localising descriptions and proper names on localising expressions (Lectures 24 and 27, cf. especially p.473/373)

- the complex dependence relations between (i) assertoric affirmation (assertoric force), (ii) propositional content, and (iii) the operation of negation (e.g. p.70/49).

As Tugendhat himself puts it in regard to this latter example, 'the question: what is it to understand an assertoric sentence? aims at [just these] three structural moments and their inner connection'. (*Loc. cit.* Note, in passing, the Husserlian connotations of the term '*Moment*'.)

The above examples will reveal to what extent the notion of dependence has played a subterranean role in much of analytic philosophy (and here perhaps the most familiar example is provided by Strawson's account in "On Referring" of the one-sided dependence relation between a statement and its circumstance of utterance). What is important from our point of view is that, because Tugendhat has been exposed to more of traditional philosophy than have his Anglo-Saxon interlocutors, and because, as his terminological apparatus reveals, he has caught something of the spirit of Husserl's formal treatment of dependence in the 3rd Logical Investigation, his use of the notion of dependence is systematic, where its use by analytic philosophers is normally peripheral and always unreflective.

Husserl treats dependence *ontologically*, as a relation between entities: one entity is dependent upon another, in the simplest possible case, when that entity cannot, as a matter of necessity, exist unless the second entity exists — and then the dependence in question may be one-sided, or n-sided, transitive or intransitive, mediate or immediate. This concept of dependence is a *formal* concept, that is to say, a concept which applies in principle to all entities (to all *matters*), whatever their qualitative determinations, whether they are linguistic or non-linguistic, mental or physical, animal, vegetable or mineral. (The question whether a concept is *formal* is, from this point of view, at least *prima facie* different from the question whether a concept is logical — a point to which we shall have occasion to return below.)

Now all of the examples of dependence-relations mentioned above concern real events of a certain quite specific type: they all concern speech-events, acts of language-use, and their features and interrelations. And the motivations underlying the predominance of such examples in Tugendhat's text are clear: Tugendhat has claimed that analytic philosophy of language can absorb other types or branches of philosophy. The question therefore arises whether it is possible to supply a linguistic or 'formal semantic'

treatment of the notion of dependence which is distinct from that given by Husserl, with all its suspicious ontological overtones. But now, Tugendhat's strategy is at least in one respect confused. For he seems to believe that if all ontological talk about dependence can be cashed out in terms of dependence amongst features of language or of language-use, then the ontological notion of dependence which he finds so objectionable will have been thereby eliminated, without (much) further ado. What he fails to notice clearly, is that dependence amongst linguistic features is still, at least in many of the cases that he treats, a form of ontological dependence; it is still a form of dependence between entities of certain specific kinds. Thus only if he can go further, only if he can demonstrate that there is a way to lay to rest by linguistic analysis the very idea that there is such a thing as an ontological relation of dependence between linguistic entities, shall we have reason to accept his exorbitant claims for the 'universal science of formal semantics'. And as we shall see, the evidence that it is possible to take this second step is entirely absent from his work.

The simplest case of a dependence relation is that between an individualised property — for example a specific individual redness, what Aristotle called an 'individual accident' — and the substance in which it inheres. Tugendhat's account of this example, which — if it could only be generalised — would serve as a model for a reduction of the appropriate kind, reads as follows:

We cannot establish, e.g., whether redness is in the castle or combined with the castle in the way that we can establish that the drawer is in the table or is combined with it. Redness...is not a real object, but an attribute and this cannot be attached in a real way to the castle or occur in it as a real, separable⁸ part. (p.171/129)

How then do we establish whether the attribute redness is in the castle? There is, Tugendhat argues, only one positive criterion: *Redness is in the castle* is the case if and only if *the castle is red*.

In other words, if we are asked which relation we mean when we speak of the relation between the attribute and the object we can only reply: that relation which obtains when the corresponding predicate applies to the object (p.171/129f).

What a sentence such as 'Redness is in the castle' ...means can only be explained by recourse to the sentence 'The castle is red' and not the other way round. (p.171f/130)

So far so good. Tugendhat is here simply restating the position of Moore in his classical debate with Stout on this issue.⁹ But can Tugendhat extend an

8. For 'trennbar' (separable) — another technical term of the Husserlian formal ontology of dependence relations — the translation has 'separate'.

9. Cf. the discussion by Wolfgang Künne in his paper "Criteria of Abstractness. The Ontologies of Husserl, Frege and Strawson against the Background of Classical Metaphysics" in *Parts and Moments, op.cit.*, 401-437. In defence of Stout see our papers "Framework for Formal Ontology", *Topoi*, 3, 1983, and "Truth-Makers" (with P.M. Simons), *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 44, 1984.

approach of this kind to other cases of dependence? In particular, can he extend it to those complex cases where dependence relations hold within and between linguistic acts and actions themselves? To do this he would have to supply normal or straightforward sentential forms, involving no technical-sounding terms, which could stand in place of those forms occurring in ontological accounts of the given relations (for example, in accounts of the dependence relations between uses of 'this' and 'that', or of the constituent interdependent moments of those complex speech-events which are assertions). And it will have to be the case that — as in the 'redness in the castle' example — the straightforward sentential forms are reasonably describable as more primitive, both from the explanatory and from the semantic point of view, than the original ontological forms. But Tugendhat has not even provided hints as to which sentential forms might serve this purpose.

Thus, building on arguments of Strawson, Tugendhat provides a detailed account of the dependence — in this case the interdependence — between expressions which identify temporal and spatial positions on the one hand, and expressions which identify material objects and events on the other (Lecture 26,II). A philosopher such as Husserl would argue that the interdependence amongst *expressions* of certain sorts obtains in virtue of more deep-seated interdependences amongst the entities involved in verifications of the corresponding sentences. Husserl is thinking most importantly here of the interdependence between spatio-temporal positions and extents within the perceptual field and instances of the species *sensible quality*. As Tugendhat well knows, it was investigations of the latter relations of ontological interdependence which gave rise to Husserl's purely formal account of dependence relations in the *Logical Investigations*.¹⁰ Now would Tugendhat want to claim that belief in such ontological relations is simply the product of one or other obsession of traditional, object-centred philosophy? If not, would he want to claim that the interdependence of linguistic identifyings of spatio-temporal positions and linguistic identifyings of objects and events is *independent* of the correlations of spatio-temporal positions and sensible qualities — that the two sorts of interdependence have nothing at all to do with each other? These are, surely, questions which must be addressed if Tugendhat's claims are to have any sort of credence.

Essentially the same point can be made in connection with Tugendhat's treatment of the concept of *rule*. It is an impressive part of the systematic features of his book that he distinguishes and argues for a great variety of rules and of relations between them — including dependence relations. (The latter are in this context sometimes referred to as relations of 'presupposi-

10. Cf. our paper "Pieces of a theory" in *Parts and Moments, op.cit.*, pp. 15-109.

tion' and, in cases of mutual dependence, of 'essential complementarity'; see e.g. p.487/384).¹¹

Whenever a sentence is asserted, according to Tugendhat, various rules are followed: for example verification rules, identification rules and rules for the application of a predicate. But unfortunately Tugendhat continually avoids dealing in a more than metaphorical fashion with the ontological problem of the nature of the relations between the *events* which are the followings of the respective rules. Thus he gives no account of what is meant by 'presupposition' in a passage like the following:

...following [the identification-rule] constitutes the presupposition for the application of the verification-rule of the predicate (in that a verification-situation is thereby picked out). (pp.487f/384f).

It has perhaps escaped his notice that the 'presupposition' here is a relation not between sentences, or sentence-types, or propositions — which we could readily understand — but between *events*, between certain entities in the world. And it would not help to argue that we have here not two events but one single complex consisting of other sub-events picked out by different linguistic forms. For even this analysis would involve accepting some sort of ontology of composition amongst events, and this too would transcend the boundaries of 'universal formal semantics'.

And our point can be made also in connection with Tugendhat's use of the concept of *verification*. According to Tugendhat, there are certain expressions, for example perceptual predicates, whose applicability can only be verified by following identification-rules for singular terms (Lecture 27,II). The verifications of the former are, that is to say, in some sense dependent on verifications of the latter. Now it seems clear that any verification of a sentence in which a predicate of a certain type appears is an event. And so it follows that Tugendhat is once more committed to the view that events of certain sorts cannot occur unless events of other sorts occur. But again, he gives not even a hint as to how this fifth column of ontology within his theory can be eliminated by means of the resources available within 'analytic philosophy of language'.

In summary we can say that Tugendhat's blithe assumption that all form is semantic form masks from him the fact that uses of signs and rule-followings are all entities of a special sort (they are all events). They therefore present us with special *ontological* problems, problems which, even

11. Where we have referred to dependence Tugendhat distinguishes between *Abhängigkeit*, or dependence proper, and *Verweisung*, or the relation between two entities which consists in one entity referring us to another (pp.473ff/373ff). *Verweisung*, like dependence (and unlike reference as this is normally conceived), may be either one-sided or mutual. Thus uses of 'this', Tugendhat argues, refer us essentially to uses of 'that': we can only use one where we *know* that the other can be used, and knowledge of this sort belongs to the meaning of demonstrative expressions (p.433f/343).

though they all relate directly or indirectly to linguistic material, are not — or not obviously — identical with or reducible to problems in linguistic philosophy. But now our charge may be generalised, for example to the work of Austin and Searle. For surely the latter have shown clearly that assertings and promisings, questionings and orderings are events which of necessity involve other events which are uses of signs? Yet Austin and Searle, too — ever faithful to their analytic heritage — fail to do justice to the ways in which, for example, sign-using events, physical actions, and mental events and states — judgments, entertainings, states of conviction and belief — enter into relations with one another to constitute those kinds of complex wholes which are social actions of promising or questioning.¹²

As the reader will by now perhaps have begun to suspect, our own view is that the theory of constituency and dependence relations developed by Husserl can be utilised to provide a unified account of such complex wholes, and here we can point to the study of the structure of the action of promising in the masterly treatise on the *The A Priori Foundations of Civil Law* by Husserl's pupil Adolf Reinach.¹³ Reinach's approach shows that it is possible to describe the relations between the parts of complex events such as assertions or promisings, or weddings, or trials — but only at the cost of renouncing the view that the structural connections involved have some canonic *semantic* form. For what would be the canonic form of the sentence or sentences that would capture (describe) the connections between:

- the utterance by the promiser of the words 'I promise...',
- the uptake or grasp of these words by the promisee,
- the promiser's intention,
- the promiser's belief,
- the structure of the propositional content involved,
- the ensuing states of claim and obligation?

Or between:

- the utterance of a sentence token,
- its assertoric force,
- its being understood (a crucial feature of Tugendhat's semantics),
- the structure of the propositional content involved,
- the exemplifications of all of the various associated rules of the sort distinguished by Tugendhat?

12. One might have harboured hopes that Searle, in his *Intentionality*, might have gone further towards making explicit the ontological notions which underlie his accounts of intentional acts and of speech actions. Unfortunately however he prefers still to talk airily of 'conditions of satisfaction' — i.e. to appeal to notions which are in the end derived from semantics — and to cast off the residue of ontological problems as a task for the physicist.

13. "Die apriorischen Grundlagen des bürgerlichen Rechts", *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, 1, 1913, 685-847, Eng. trans. forthcoming. Cf. also *Parts and Moments*, *op. cit.*, pp.297-307.

Will the analytic philosopher be able to say more than that these are somehow related together?

We mentioned above that the notion of the *formal* is not identical with the notion of the formal *logical*. The relation of dependence, like the relations of part and whole and other core ontological relations, are expressed by formal concepts which fall outside the province of logic, at least as this is normally understood. It is therefore surprising that someone who has shown himself to be as familiar with the details of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* as has the present author should not attempt anywhere to expound the nature of the formal concept of dependence he invokes, or to tackle the questions of its relation to that set out by Husserl. But his failure is a function of a deeper failure. There is hardly any place at all in Tugendhat's account for formal concepts, and certainly no clear understanding of what the formal *logical* is.¹⁴ This is a remarkable omission, since from its very inception analytic philosophy has been concerned with issues relating to the status of logic and semantics as formal disciplines. This has been true even of those in current analytic philosophy concerned radically to restrict the importance or role of logical structure in language. Now it is at the very least arguable that the relations of dependence and independence Tugendhat makes use of cannot be adequately captured by recourse to the machinery available in formal logic and semantics. And perhaps Tugendhat's failure to commit himself in detail about even these formal disciplines is a reflection of some dark awareness of this fact. Indeed, in his emphasis on formal semantics, and in his simultaneous failure to develop an account of what makes it formal, Tugendhat turns out to resemble Martin Heidegger: Heidegger, too, was happy to emphasise the importance of something called 'ontological analytic' without ever saying what the 'analytic' means.

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14. Tugendhat's confusion on this point can be seen, for example, in the fact that on pp. 19/8, 22/11 he places logic and mathematics outside philosophy; or in the fact that he repeatedly identifies '*das Sprachliche*' and '*das Logische*' (e.g. on pp. 92/65, 203/155, 351/278).