Chapter-III

Types of Metaphysics

Several things have come out in course of the discussion of the nature of metaphysics by our contemporary writers of the analytical school. In the first place, as they owe allegiance to Wittgenstein's doctrine in the philosophical investigation and are in general agreement with Prof. Ryle's contentions in his 'concept of mind', their review of the nature of metaphysics could not be as open and free as one would have liked it to be. In the second place, although they all agree that there is no one thing that is a metaphysical statement, no one thing that is a metaphysical argument, so no one and uniform thing that can be called metaphysics, and no passable dictionary definition of the word metaphysics, yet these did not stand in the way of their commitment to some "general remarks" on the nature of metaphysics. In justification of this their apparently self-contradictory stand, they argue that metaphysical way of thinking is characteristically different from all normal and legitimate modes of thinking and that this gives to the various forms of metaphysics with certain family resemblances. The points of resemblances are as follows:

(1) Every metaphysics is a variant of quandary response. The quandaries are of the metaphysician's own making. Sometimes this quandary arises from the metaphysician's analysis of the perceptual situation and the logical possibility of misperception or mis-recognition standing in the way of his arriving at a true view of the nature of things. Sometimes this quandary is created when the metaphysician ontologises the concepts of highest generality present in our ordinary discourse or stipulates about some ideal
conditions of their applicability or use, quite outside the normal conditions of their use. Pointedly, the reviewers cite key concepts as reality, truth, knowledge, existence, possible, impossible and so on. Sometimes, they argue, this quandary results from an attempted conversion of a methodological or operational concepts, a law or a mode of explanation into an existential fact. This happens when a metaphysician seeks to translate a methodological artefact of science into a metaphysical category. Sometimes, again, a theoretical concept such as historical process becomes too much fascinating for the metaphysician urging him to model our conceptual apparatus as a self-unfolding process engendering belief in a world order which is deterministic and teleological. Lastly, sometimes a quandary is created by the metaphysician when he misinterprets the logical rules of our moral language and as a result of that labours under the impression that our moral activities and moral concepts to be meaningful require a transcendent objective order imbued with the highest moral value.

(2) As a consequence of this quandary response of some kind metaphysics, according to them, gives rise to a general, not departmental, revision of our conceptual framework. It reorders or reorganises the set of ideas with which we think about the world, assimilating to one another something we customarily distinguish and distinguishing something which we normally assimilate, promoting some ideas to some key position, down grading or dismissing others. It thus becomes a kind of conceptual revision, a redrawing the map of thought on a new plan.

(3) It thus becomes characteristics of metaphysics that it cannot limit itself within the bounds of possible experience, within the normal conditions of use of significant language, and so transgresses such limits. It moves from the condition to the unconditioned and extends the categories or concepts
belonging to a system and meaningful within it, outside the limit of such system or applies them to the system itself. It extrapolates to the top of the scale some concepts or ideas beyond the limits of human conditions, makes an unrestricted use of all and everything and insofar as it passes beyond the limits of significant knowledge and meaningful discourse, it remains unverifiable and untestable.

(4) What is most characteristics of metaphysics, according to these reviewers, is its ontological commitment. Although operating on concept merely and reforming and revising them in a new way it claims not only formal necessity but also existential or objective reality for its conception. The gap between the conceptual premise or premises and the existential conclusions remains inexplicable according to some of the reviewers. This then becomes an arbitrary ontological commitment, the result of a blind prejudice. There are others such as Hampshire and B.A.O. Williams who do not regard this commitment as irrational as their colleagues take it to be, although somewhat far-fetched. The real metaphysical argument, according to Williams, can be found not in the process whereby further consequences are drawn out of the basic concepts as primary notions of the metaphysicians but in the way those primary concepts or basic notions are themselves established. So, according to this interpretation, the existential conclusion which the metaphysician does not regard either as formal or as merely contingent but as necessary and at the same time factual is a consequence of the metaphysician's first principle or primary notion which he labours hard to prove both as necessary and factual. But this, of course, does not absolve the metaphysician of a certain amount of waywardness in the way but works out his basic premise.
(5) By its claim to give a final and so ultimate explanation, metaphysics seeks to subvert the realm of existence manifest our conventional belief by new order of existence which is transcendent and unverifiable and thus, it calls for a radical revision in our customary beliefs. It thus becomes, as Ryle jokingly calls it, an Olympian philosophy in pointed contrast with the ordinary language philosophy which is Alexandrine and so down to the earth and is not interested, like the Olympian model, in any comprehensive, total, final or ultimate views.

(6) This, its claim to ultimacy, to a total or final view of thing, links it up frequently with theology and a teleological explanation. It is only when the metaphysician instead of working under some ethico-religious bias allows himself to be influenced by the discoveries of the physical and the biological sciences that he remains anti-theistic but all the same an extremist of the Olympian model giving a materialistic or a naturalistic explanation of all things. In heaven and on earth.

(7) But these reviewers do not share the extremist view put forth by the therapeutic school of linguistic analysis that a metaphysical statement is a sort of illuminating falsehood, a pointed paradox, or that the metaphysician's argument is a kind of rationalisation emanating from some sort of a mental cramp, a psycho-neurotic stress and tension. The metaphysician's argument, they find, is quite cogent although they feel that the metaphysician's predicament is mostly due to a defective analysis of the logic of our language and that the proper corrective for it should be to abide by the prescription of the later Wittgenstein in the Philosophical Investigation. This would give, according to them, a new kind of philosophy, a metaphysics without ontology in supersession of the traditional metaphysics.
That the above review of the nature of metaphysics by philosophers who are themselves non-metaphysicians gives an external and outside view of metaphysics we have already remarked. We may now consider if the principal historical instances of metaphysics all exhibit the patterns of thought and procedure which have been brought to light by these analysts. Historically speaking, metaphysics seems to have considered quite divergent types of questions and as a result of that there has been a wide difference in its method and procedure. As far as the western philosophy is concerned metaphysics, initially, was synonymous with philosophy. Its method was speculative and it aspires to give a universal explanation of all things by reference to primal cause or causes. As there was no departmental investigation at that stage the exigency to distinguish it from other discipline such as science did not arise. In Socrates and Plato philosophical analysis followed a conversational method and the task of philosophy was not so much to get at increased knowledge by means of external observation and scrutiny of natural events as to progressively explore the truths supposed to be hidden in the depth of human consciousness. Philosophy became introspective or retrospective at this stage and not so much extrospective. An account of its association with the conversational method which was a method of self-correction and self-criticism philosophy or metaphysics came to be known and distinguished as dialectics. In Aristotle for the first time it became necessary to distinguish the type of enquiry that was metaphysical and enquiries into some special fields of natural science and the name 'first philosophy' was given to it in contrast with the 'second philosophies'. The name 'metaphysics came to be used as the name of this 'first philosophy'. Although no attempt was made to define the method of this first philosophy in a clear-cut way, the mode of procedure in the investigation of this first
philosophy fell apart from the method and procedure followed in the special branches of knowledge which was concerned with the less general and so departmental truths. Thought or speculative reason was supposed to be the appropriate organ of this kind of knowledge as distinguished from observation and experiment which became the method of investigation in the natural sciences.

But Aristotle did not view thought and experience in radical opposition with each other as his predecessors did when they regarded the one as giving knowledge of reality while the other giving knowledge of mere appearance. The first philosophy of Aristotle, therefore, did not supersede or reject his second philosophy nor did it force any revision in the other. So Aristotle's metaphysics was not an instance of conceptual revision. Nor did it involve any extralogical ontological commitment. As no additional reason was required for accepting the less general laws or forms discovered by experimental method as grounded in the nature of things and therefore objective, so no additional reason was called for to accept the more general laws and forms treated in metaphysics as equally real and objective. Aristotle was a thoroughgoing realist.

The organic relation between form and matter did not warrant an absolute demarcation between the particular and universal or between the less general and the more general. So the description of metaphysics as a form of conceptual revision with an adventitious ontological commitment does not seem to fit into the texture of the metaphysics of Aristotle. Aristotle did not regard his conceptual categories as more subjective functions of the mind involved in the interpretation of the world of objects. They are as well objective characteristics of things themselves which come to light when
instead of sensuously perceiving the outer forms of things we conceive by means of reflective thought the thing as they are more generically that is in their more pervasive essences or forms. Sense and understanding perception and conception are coordinate sources of knowledge in Aristotle, they are not complementary to each other as in Kant. In this metaphysics, conceived as first philosophy, there is of course a passage or transition from the less general open to scientific observation to the more general which is not so open but as Aristotle, unlike our modern analysts, did not accept limitation of legitimate knowledge within the bounds of sense-experience or scientific knowledge alone, he could not be supposed to have transgressed that limitation. Even the notion of God as the prime mover cannot be looked upon as mere extrapolation as the conception is organically connected with Aristotle's analysis of reality in term of form and matter, potentiality and actuality.

This description of metaphysics as 'first philosophy' can also be found in some rationalists of modern period, such as, Descartes. But their selective preference for the synthetic deductive method of mathematics as also the bias against sense-knowledge elevates their metaphysics to the privileged position of some kind of supervisory or regulative knowledge having the final say in everything. The result has been that their first philosophy recasts and remodels their second philosophies and legislates about their basic principles and methods of procedure. Besides, sense-experience is discredited and is not regarded as a source of knowledge proper. The modern antithesis between sense and understanding as organs of knowledge opens up. As a result of this development the rationalistic metaphysics of the modern period becomes a first philosophy in a new and altered meaning. This rationalistic metaphysics is an instance of deductive
metaphysics although it does not limit itself to formal deduction, is not purely analytic and although, as Prof. Williams has pointed out, the basic concepts or propositions of this metaphysics are not simply assumed as postulates or primitive notions but are laboriously worked out by characteristically metaphysical arguments.

The peculiarly Aristotelian conception of metaphysics as first philosophy in the sense of more complete knowledge which accommodates without revising departmental knowledge, may, to an extent, be found in Herbert Spencer's conception of philosophy as 'unified science'. But there seems to be an important difference since the unified science of this conception is more or less an improvised synthetic construction out of the special sciences and not a coordinate or separate branch of knowledge developed under the impact of a new method. That is self-sufficient. The metaphysics worked out by Prof. Samuel Alexander in his space-time and deity as also the metaphysical system of Prof. A.N. Whitehead may be regarded as a modern analogue of the Aristotelian first philosophy. Prof. Alexander, for instance, makes a wider use of the terms 'experience' and 'empirical' to include what is ordinarily taken to be conceptual and so non-empirical. The expressions non-empirical and apriori also come to acquire a new and renovated meaning since they are taken to stand for the pervasive feature of things and not as any apriori subjective mode of conceiving them. Alexander defines metaphysics as the empirical or the experiential study of the non-empirical or the apriori which, according to him, stand for the most pervasive feature of things while science deals with features that are less pervasive and segmental. A metaphysics of this conception may be regarded as a first philosophy in the sense Aristotle wanted to take it, that is, as a more general science as different from the unified science of Herbert Spencer.
is extremely doubtful if the contemporary analytic description of metaphysics as a mere conceptual revision with an arbitrary ontological commitment has any relevance for this kind of metaphysics.

Historically speaking, metaphysical thought has expressed itself in distinguishable forms and types rendering a general and cursory description as also an off hand criticism in appropriate, if not, ill-advised also. If metaphysics as first philosophy is one significant type the deductive metaphysics of the modern rationalists is another. The Hegelian metaphysics with its dialectical development of concepts sometimes, caricatured as a ballet dance of bloodless categories also seems to exhibit a feature common to the so-called deductive metaphysics. But the bloodless categories of Hegel may not be as anaemic as Russel thinks them to be, nor are the neutral particulars of logical atomism less ephemeral in spite of Russell's claim to the contrary. The logical necessity involves in the dialectical movement seem to infuse a good deal of life-blood into them and the rational becomes the real and the real becomes the rational when the Kantian distinction between thought and reality is obliterated or ignored. The rationalistic metaphysics which is not a purely formal system in so far as its basic or primary concepts are not simply assumed but are themselves rigidly reasoned out should not be regarded as purely deductive systems, although the name 'deductive metaphysics' is very often used as the name of that kind of metaphysics. As Prof. Williams has very conveniently shown, metaphysical arguments are neither deductive nor inductive but are of a very special kind which cannot be brought under a general name. If this is accepted there is strictly speaking no historical instance of a deductive metaphysics. It can also be seen that the conclusions or the theorems which have been deduced in this kind of metaphysics have always been regarded
as truths of facts and not as formal propositions. In them, existential conclusions have been deduced from existential premises although these premises have been all worked out by conceptual arguments and not by induction. From all these, it seems that this kind of metaphysics should be called constructive metaphysics although they involve deduction at some points and should not be called 'deductive metaphysics'. The Hegelian and the neo-Hegelian metaphysics with or without dialectical method can also be called constructive metaphysics, that is, a metaphysics involving apriori analysis or construction. What is characteristic of this constructive metaphysics is that it, like metaphysics in the sense of 'first physiology' of Aristotle, claims to be all comprehensive. But in so far as this constructive metaphysics is not only comprehensive but is also organic or systematic whole. The other name for this kind of metaphysics may be 'systematic metaphysics' because it gives close and compact system of thought.

Can we regard the constructive or systematic metaphysics of the above description as an instance of conceptual revision with ontological commitment. No doubt these metaphysicians deal with concepts and operate on conceptual level. But the concepts, they handle, do not come to them so readily, nor do they revise or reorder any system of concepts already inexistence as operational symbol to be manipulated in some new direction. Not that the concepts they deal with, analyse and interpret are all newly coined or engineered by them. Most of the concepts existed in some way in the structure of language that was prevalent. But the significant point to note is these metaphysicians did not start with any revision of language, not with the kind of revision that logical positivists like Carnap, logical atomists like Russell and earlier Wittgenstein seem to have done. They did not start with language at all, they seem to have located and fixed
upon some concepts in course of a very arduous process of reflection and critical thinking. Thus, for instance, although the concept of 'substance' and 'attribute' were there in Aristotle's list of predicaments and also in ordinary speech, Desecrates does not seem to simply pick them up as they were. He does not even start with them. He starts with the concept of the indubitable, the undeniable. He comes to discover his first principle 'cogito-ergo-sum' - the undeniable nature of the ego and the fact of its absolute existence in so far as it is the presupposition of all thinking, even of denial. He does not also seem to begin with any prior ontological commitment. Consider also Hegel's first concept, the absolutely minimum that can be posited by thought such as being. This concept of being is not the simple linguistic equivalent of the verb 'to be' as it is used in our ordinary speech. This concept is also the result of highly sophisticated metaphysical thinking, the result of philosophic reflection of a very incisive kind. That pure or simple being or being as such is equivalent to nothing and that this negation of being called nothing implies and involves a certain kind of being and that a logical understanding of these concepts makes it imperative to look for a synthesis is certainly a new discovery and not a simple conceptual revision. Consider in this light the description of metaphysics as a conceptual revision with an arbitrary ontological commitment seems to be quite too general a statement.

There seems to be another type of metaphysics which goes one step beyond the constructive or systematic metaphysics of the above description in so far as its relation to all other kinds of knowledge including science is concerned. It claims to be an exclusive kind of knowledge, an absolute knowledge. A distinction is made between Reality and Appearance, between what things are in themselves and what they appear to be. This leads to
another distinction that between a higher and absolute knowledge and lower kind of knowledge which is phenomenal or relative knowledge. Metaphysical thinking involving such distinctions has assumed various forms and have moved in various, sometimes radically opposite, directions. Even then we can use the expression 'Transcendental metaphysics' as a common name for this kind of metaphysics which claims to be absolute knowledge and makes an exclusive claim. Unlike the constructive of systematic metaphysics it does not allow rehabilitation of other kinds of knowledge even after thorough going revision and reformation, nor does it lay any claim to be the foundation of all the sciences with a prescription as to the proper methodology of sciences. Its attitude towards science is one of absolute indifference if not one of absolute distrust and aversion. Knowledge of reality it claims as its special privilege - an absolute monopoly. We find this kind of metaphysics in Plato in his doctrine of pure forms. There are according to Plato only two branches of knowledge proper, such as, mathematics and dialectic or philosophy. All else is mere make-believe or opinion, as it gives knowledge of sensible appearance only. This transcendental metaphysics is rationalistic. There was another type of transcendental metaphysics which was dogmatic in so far as it accepted some theological dogma for some of its basic notions although combining with them certain strains of thought which were Platonic or Aristotelian. This kind of dogmatic metaphysics claiming to give transcendental knowledge was prevalent when philosophy became a handmade of theology during the middle ages. This metaphysics was based partly on revelation and partly on ratiocination and its aim and object had been rationalisation of dogma. It was transcendental in so far as its fundamental concepts were sought defended by an appeal to scriptural authority, in so far as it claimed to give a view of truth not accessible to any
secular means. Besides, the transcendental metaphysics of the Platonic and the medieval dogmatic type we have transcendental metaphysics of other radically different kind. Bradley's metaphysics developed on intellectualistic line in so far as Bradley makes a clear distinction of reality and appearance and takes metaphysics to stand for reality - experience. An appearance, according to Bradley, is vitiated by inner self-contradiction and what is so vitiated cannot as such be reality or a part thereof. But unlike the advaita Vedanta, Bradley does not negate or reject all that turn out to be appearances but accommodates them in the texture of reality of his conception after they undergo a process of transmutation and transformation. Even then, since appearances have no place in reality, metaphysics as knowledge of reality has to be regarded as beyond thought and logical categories. In spite of the inadequacy of logical thought or intellect to deliver up the non-relational immediacy which is reality-experience according to Bradley, his transcendental metaphysics remains intellectualistic since it is logical reason which in spite of its own insufficiency is to become the pointer to what reality is to be. In Henry Bergson we have a transcendental metaphysics which is openly anti-intellectualistic. Bergson discredits intellect and upholds intuition in his metaphysics. He makes a radical distinction between the domain of metaphysics and that of science. Science, according to him, deals with intellectual abstractions and gives a distorted view of things. Therefore, to get at reality we must follow a radically different method and get over all divisions, stratification and artificial cross sections which intellect in fulfilment of practical exigency artfully introduces in ever-moving and ever-growing flow which is reality as becoming. In the philosophical movement called phenomenology which claims to be some sort of descriptive psychology and even in Existentialism which claims to
be not a metaphysics or a philosophy at all we have other varieties of transcendental metaphysics in so far as they make exclusive claim to philosophical relevance and recommend a radical revision of our method or standpoint to get at the truth that really matters. It may be that the different samples cited above do not clearly fit into the selfsame logical type of pattern, but it cannot be denied that there is a kind of metaphysics which is distinguishable from the foregoing two types in its radical opposition to science and common sense and also in its exclusive claim to true knowledge beyond the reach of our accredited or conventional methods of knowledge.

We may now consider if the analysts characterisation of metaphysics is adequate in respect of this kind of transcendental metaphysics. This metaphysics no doubt subverts in some way the conventional order and seeks to transport us into an absolutely new and so unexpected realm of being but it is doubtful if it achieves this by more conceptual revision. Then there are forms of the transcendental metaphysics which rejects the conceptual and perceptual alike and broader on the mystical. As for method this transcendental metaphysics has exhibited no uniformity, it has been logical, a logical and also non-logical. Its ontological commitment, if any, has not been exercised by simple elevation of some key concepts of current usage. It has not also worked towards framing a new conceptual scheme but has rather doubted or disputed the relevance of any conceptual scheme what so ever.

There seems to be another that is a fourth type of metaphysics which in the absence of a better name can be called ' the metaphysics of limiting concepts' - concepts which form the boundaries of significant knowledge and meaningful discourse but are not themselves capable of further articulation in term of knowledge and discussion. This is a metaphysics
involving ontological presuppositions but without any claim to significant knowledge about the specific nature of these presuppositions except that such concepts have to be necessarily admitted. Critics have very often regarded this kind of metaphysics self contradictory. Kant, for example, speaks of a thing in itself as a necessary presupposition of the object as appearance of phenomenon but at the same time disclaims any knowledge of it and asks us to regard it as unknown and unknowable. He regards the nonmental self in the same way. The transcendental subject and the transcendental object thus turn out to be limiting concepts in the Kantian first critique, these are to be necessarily thought or logically presupposed in the account of significant knowledge but cannot be made into a context of that knowledge. The Wittgensteinian logical space, the world as a totality of facts and not of things, the elementary proposition which cannot be illustrated, the nothing of the self or I, the concept of value and similar other strains of thought in the Tractatus have also to be looked upon as limiting concepts and as falling within some kind of metaphysics which cannot be formulated but cannot also be thrown out. This illustrates then a peculiar predicament, a statement regarding certain necessary conditions of knowledge proper as also of meaningful discourse involving a statement about certain necessary presupposition which transcends the limits of significant knowledge and significant statement. Here then we are condemned to say about that which cannot be said, condemned to necessarily think about things which cannot be known, and without thus saying about the unsayable and thinking about the unknowable we cannot legislate about the nature of scientific knowledge and the nature of significant language. Here then we have metaphysics which is the presupposition of all knowledge but which by reason of that very nature cannot lay any claim to knowledge. So this
type of presuppositions metaphysics, a metaphysics of limiting concepts
seems to be a distinguishable type, a metaphysics without any claim what
so ever. This results from our attempt to deny metaphysics by an
improvised construction or stipulation about necessary conditions of
knowledge and hung on as a residual transcendental metaphysics which
cannot be escaped. It is clear that the characterisation of metaphysics by
the contemporary analysts does not have any relevance for this metaphysics
which hung on without any explicit claim.

Then again how to regard the kind of enquiry which is concerned with
methodology of some kind like the Kantian critique of Pure Reason or
Wittgenstein's Tractatus? Evidently a statement about a methodology is not
a statement of fact but only a statement about what is assumed to be the
logical or the constitutive conditions of our knowledge of facts. It is thus
an enquiry of the second or third order. This is clearly distinguishable from
what we have designated as presuppositional metaphysics of limiting
concepts. Firstly, what it stipulates about the certain principles or necessary
factors or constitutive conditions and these are not claimed to be existential
entities like the thing in itself, the subject in itself or the world as a totality
of facts. Secondly, the possibility of knowing these necessary ingredients
or constitutive factors of knowledge is not denied although this knowledge
in so far as it is no knowledge of facts cannot be articulated by means of
significant proposition. Kant, for example, cannot suggest that his critique
of knowledge is not a form of knowledge. The same remark applies to
Wittgenstein although Wittgenstein does not concern himself with the
problem of knowledge but only stipulates about the logical conditions of
significant language. It will be absurd to hold that an epistemological, a
logical theory or scientific methodology are no illustrations of knowledge,
although this knowledge may be different from what is called the knowledge of the first order. So the question arises how to name or characterise this kind of knowledge which is embedded in the methodology of knowledge, in the methodology of science as also in the logical theories of meaning and truth? Faced with a situation like this, Prof. Paton named the Kantian first critique as a 'metaphysics of experience'. Not that this kind of enquiry can as easily be dispensed with as the critics of metaphysics dispensed with the transcendental metaphysics. When we talk about philosophy of science, philosophy of history, philosophy of this or that branch of knowledge we really talk about this kind of metaphysics which is metaphysics as methodology. It will be self-stultifying even far a work like Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigation to refudiate or disown. This kind of metaphysics and yet to become a philosophical investigation. The so called logic of language be it of ideal language or of ordinary language also falls within the scope of this kind of reflective discipline. It may be that this kind of enquiry has not been generally described as metaphysics since it does not necessarily involve any ontological commitment but all the same because it is not descriptive knowledge, no knowledge of facts, not a natural science, it has to be taken as a 'meta' something and so why not as a metaphysics?

An enquiry which is not about the nature of the world, empirical or transcendental but which stipulates about what could be a condition of knowledge proper, a legitimate criterion of meaning or truth and the logical conditions of significant discourse has to be accommodated as a metaphysical enquiry of some kind. The three Kantian critiques, Wittgenstein's Tractatus and Investigation, Hegel's logic of the Dialectical Method, the Methodological aspects of modern rationalism and empiricism and even the positivists theory of sense and meaning on the basis of which
they claim to have eliminated metaphysics all of these fall within the range of this metaphysics as methodology. What is peculiar to this metaphysics, is that although it does not make any ontological claim on behalf of its principles and categories, all the same, it makes an absolute claim to truth on behalf of itself and its findings. Such an absolute claim in respect of anything is, as Prof. Hampshire has clearly pointed out the most basical characteristic of metaphysics. Does not Kant uphold the view that judgements of science are all synthetic apriori and cannot be otherwise? Does not Wittgenstein make similar absolute claim in respect of his discovery of the logic of language? Does not any treatise on philosophy which reviews and criticises traditional philosophers and even such treating which would advocate logical validity of alternative and even incompatible metaphysical doctrines make the same absolute claim to truth and relevance of its own behalf. Thus there can be another form of metaphysics such as a philosophy involving methodology and this has to be admitted as a form of knowledge although it may not have any ontological commitment. This is distinguishable from the previously mentioned type called presuppositional metaphysics or metaphysics of limiting concepts. The necessary conditions of knowledge and the logical conditions of significant language enter into the very constitution of knowledge and language and are not, therefore, sense presuppositions. Kant does not disclaim knowledge of them although it is not clear if this knowledge about the conditions of synthetic apriori judgement can itself be expressed in the form of synthetic apriori judgement. Faced with the difficulty of the very same kind Wittgenstein advised us to treat his tractatus, which as Russell has also observed says a good deal in respect of 'what cannot be said', as an important or illuminating nonsense as its sole purpose is elucidatory and not 'informative' in the technical
meaning of the expression Wittgenstein enjoins that it should be considered as a kind of ladder where with one can climb to the roof but which has not more use after goal is reached, or as the scaffolding which one erects when one constructs a building and which has not further use after the building is constructed. But it seems this ladder philosophy or scaffolding cannot be thrown away so easily as Wittgenstein thought that it can be. It has to be rehabilitated in some way as it is not the building or the roof but this ladder or scaffolding which gives us the very logical frame of the so-called 'logical philosophy' and is foundational in respect of it. This then becomes the type describable as 'foundational metaphysics' or 'metaphysics as methodology'.

But this is not all. Although many of our contemporary analysts with their spade designed in the smith of the later Wittgenstein of the philosophical investigation have attempted to laboriously dig up the language of our ordinary use to pull out every root, big and small, of the metaphysical tree to do away with metaphysics altogether, they seem to have discovered a type of new metaphysics in the soil itself\(^4\). The so-called descriptive metaphysics of Prof. P.F Strawson is an instance on the point. While some of his colleagues felt assured that 'their emphasise on careful analysis on detailed description, on the peculiarities of particular language-game' we automatically preclude the possibility of any metaphysics with its inherent generality and while these antimetaphysical philosophers generally accepted the limit of language to be the limit of everything on earth and in heaven, Strawson seems to have discovered a region beyond every form of language and underlying all thinking, the least defined as also the most sophisticated thinking of the human race. The peculiar feature of this view seems to be that language or linguistic behaviour is not the final point of reference in
philosophy, that they themselves presuppose a certain conceptual structure, "a massive central core of human thinking which has no history" which is taken for granted and not expressed in the answer men give to questions about the manner of using expression. This then gives a new kind of metaphysics. Descriptive metaphysics, says Strawson, is to lay bare the general conceptual structure which lies hidden below the actual use of words without correction or revision. This metaphysics is not to be revisionary but only descriptive as it leaves everything as it is. Whether this descriptive metaphysics of Prof. Strawson's claim is truly descriptive or is also a form of revisionary metaphysics is another question. What is most significant and alluring is that this new stipulation points out a region underlying our ordinary linguistic behaviour and even our conventional thinking where something more primitive and basical, "some sort of a massive central core of human thinking which has no history" and no geographical or racial barrier seem to rest. This gives the lie direct to the claim that by turning the soil and digging deeper in our linguistic fabric by the Wittgensteinian spade metaphysics can be removed root and branch. That which language or linguistic behaviours presuppose and cannot fully articulate, no linguistic analysis can remove without removing itself at the same time. This then is a new brand of metaphysics which develops out of the digging up of, or thorough overhauling of, language. Can it be that this descriptive metaphysics is also an instance of conceptual revision and also has an ontological commitment? Those who uphold metaphysics of this type may not endorse such type of characterisation.
References


