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Chapter 2

‘Postanalytic’ Philosophy: Overcoming the Divide?

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1. Introduction

The notion of the ‘postanalytic’ has been appealed to as evidence of the increasing irrelevance of the ‘analytic-continental’ divide in contemporary philosophy. Such a claim presupposes that there are sufficient thematic and methodological continuities in the work of putatively postanalytic thinkers to endow the notion with a determinate meaning, and that this work has made a significant contribution to the bridging of the ‘analytic-continental’ divide. The purpose of this chapter is to assess these claims through an examination of the extent to which the work of four philosophers who could plausibly be regarded as postanalytic – Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell – may be characterized as representative of a movement which has promoted increased dialogue between the analytic and continental traditions. It will be argued that there are indeed continuities between the relevant thinkers suggestive of a broad notion of the postanalytic, but that it would be an exaggeration to speak of a unified philosophical movement embodying a rapprochement.

The term ‘postanalytic’ has been used to characterize the work of thinkers who, having started out in the mainstream analytic tradition, came to place in question some of its central presuppositions. Postanalytic philosophy in this overarching sense is often associated with the work of Richard Rorty, a central figure in the collection of essays devoted to the topic edited by John Rajchman and Cornel West. Other prominent figures sometimes regarded as postanalytic, in large part due to Rorty’s influence, include Brandom, Davidson, McDowell, Putnam and Wittgenstein. From this perspective, postanalytic philosophy is a ‘deconstructive’ approach defined by what it stands in reaction to, namely a particular characterization of the goals of analytic thought.

Rorty has tended to identify the overarching aspiration of analytic philosophy in particular with a ‘transcendental project’ to provide certain epistemological foundations for science and human practice in general, an aspiration he vehemently rejects in favour of a pragmatic concern with ‘solidarity’ or ‘consensus’. According to Rorty, a postanalytic philosopher works on the assumption that philosophy...
does not have a privileged cognitive role over and against other forms of human knowledge and artistic expression. Of particular concern in this regard to Rorty, and many of the other philosophers in Rajchman and West’s collection, is what they regard as the pernicious scheme-content dualism that is concomitant with the epistemological quest for foundations.

Scheme-content dualism is, for Rorty, what allows knowledge to be understood as consisting in a ‘fit’ between the mind’s representations of the world, and the world as it exists in and of itself. According to Rajchman, it is a rejection of this representationalist paradigm, one that has held philosophy ‘captive’ since Kant, which unites the postanalytic philosophers. While this account of the postanalytic in terms of a pragmatic anti-Kantianism is arguably overly restrictive (it sits uncomfortably, for example, with the case of McDowell), a similar but more inclusive working characterization can be found in Putnam’s sketch of the history of twentieth-century analytical philosophy in his 1985 essay ‘After Empiricism.’ According to Putnam, the failed attempts of Frege, Russell, Carnap and the early Wittgenstein to give an account of the structure of reality through logico-linguistic analysis led to an increased self-consciousness regarding the difficulties associated with giving an account of the way words hook onto the world. This led in turn to a placing in question of ‘the entire enterprise’ of dividing mundane reality into the Furniture of the World and our projections. While such a critical approach may be prosecuted through anti-Kantian pragmatism of the Rortyian variety, it is also compatible with the use of a Kantian framework with therapeutic intent of the kind found in the work of McDowell. In this context, the postanalytic refers to a broad movement of thought which has placed in question some of the guiding presuppositions of analytic philosophy in its ambitious, classical phase of logico-linguistic analysis; in particular representationalism and the ‘third dogma of empiricism’ embodied in scheme-content and subjective-objective dualisms.

There are, however, competing assessments of the status of the postanalytic as a coherent philosophical movement. While Rajchman and West see a deep thematic continuity uniting the postanalytic thinkers in their collection, and regard the combined attack of such thinkers against the analytical tradition as paving the way for a new sort of philosophy, Pascal Engel, by contrast, thinks this assessment is premature:

[Rorty’s] appropriation of Quinean, Davidsonian, Sellarsian, Goodmanian and Putnamian themes should raise our suspicions, although he is certainly right in believing that these philosophers have undermined a lot of themes in classical analytic philosophy. But there is no reason to think that the various criticisms of their peers that these philosophers have produced transport us into a new scene in which analytic doctrines and styles are abandoned.

While accepting the thematic continuity of the postanalytic thinkers, and their legitimate criticisms of central aspects of analytical philosophy, Engel denies...
that this is indicative of the creation of a new philosophical movement embodying a wholesale rejection of analytic themes, doctrine and style. This assessment is consonant with the fact that an analysis of citation patterns for Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell suggests that, despite their alleged polemical attitude towards the analytical tradition, they remain among the most frequently cited philosophers in major analytic journals during the twentieth-century (see Figure 2.1).  

These contrasting positions suggest a weaker and a stronger characterization of postanalytic philosophy. According to the weaker characterization, the postanalytic refers to the work of philosophers who have criticized aspects of mainstream analytical philosophy. According to the stronger characterization, the postanalytic represents a radical form of critique that culminates in the dismissal of the analytic tradition as a failed project and hence suggests the need for the creation of a new sort of philosophy. The weaker characterization, it could be argued, is in danger of rendering the notion of the postanalytic anodyne, in that it suggests a form of criticism that is indistinguishable from the general process of questioning and argument that is constitutive of philosophical debate itself. From this perspective, it is difficult to see what would differentiate the postanalytic thinkers in question, insofar as analytic philosophers put forward theses that are then subjected to subsequent criticism by other analytic philosophers, whose intent is to attack the thesis in question, and even some of the presuppositions upon which it is built, but not the coherence and relevance of the discipline itself. Implicit in the stronger characterization, however, is the implausible claim that the postanalytic represents a completely new sort of philosophy entailing a wholesale rejection of broad analytic preoccupations, method and style.

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The first section of this chapter argues for a notion of the postanalytic intermediate between the weaker and stronger characterizations in the context of a brief overview of Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell’s criticisms of some central assumptions of classical analytical philosophy. Despite significant thematic unity around the need to overcome a dualistic conception of the relationship between the ‘given’ and ‘that which is added by the mind’, these philosophers have very different views on the consequences of this critique for analytical philosophy as a discipline, to an extent that could be thought to call into question the viability of the postanalytic label itself. In order to differentiate the weaker characterization of the postanalytic from the general process of critique that takes place within the analytic tradition, it will be necessary to point to the radical nature of the questioning of conceptual presuppositions suggested by the work of postanalytic thinkers; a radical questioning which implies a rejection not only of scheme-content and subjective-objective dualisms but also some of the accompanying methodological and stylistic assumptions of analytical philosophy in its classical phase.

The second section of the chapter considers the relationship between postanalytic philosophy and continental thought. The figures here examined – Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell – have all been identified as potential ‘crossover’ figures: thinkers who have, self-consciously or otherwise, contributed to ‘bridging the divide’ between the analytical and continental traditions. A quantitative analysis of citation patterns of these thinkers in continental journals suggests that they are indeed engaged with the continental tradition. It will be argued, however, that such engagement is insufficient to establish these thinkers as crossover figures in a strong sense. The fact that analytic and continental scholars both engage with the work of Davidson or Wittgenstein, for example, is inconclusive until it is demonstrated that this secondary work is based on shared thematic concerns and methodological assumptions and that there are significant intersecting bodies of literature which go beyond the mere mention of the relevant figures. A preliminary analysis of cross-citation patterns in the commentarial bibliography of each thinker’s central works suggests that there is little engagement of this nature occurring, despite the fact that each thinker is cited regularly in both traditions. This suggests the need for a cautious assessment of the extent to which the four thinkers in question have contributed towards a genuine rapprochement.

2. The Postanalytic

In his What is Analytic Philosophy? Hans-Johann Glock argues persuasively against attempts to provide a one-sentence characterization of analytic philosophy that would definitively capture its essence. This is not because the notion of analytic philosophy lacks a determinate meaning altogether, but rather because it represents a broad and divergent tradition held together by family resemblances.
rather than a specific doctrine. An examination of the work of Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell suggests the need for a similarly nuanced account of the notion of the postanalytic. As is argued below, the postanalytics share a critical attitude towards some of the major conceptual presuppositions of the classical mainstream analytic tradition, including a narrowly ‘representationalist’ account of the way words hook onto the world and scheme-content dualism. Concomitant with this radical questioning, the work of all four thinkers raises broad concerns about the analytical project as a whole, and its predominant style and method, in a way that differentiates their thought from the mainstream analytic tradition, despite the fact that they diverge not only in their own stylistic and methodological assumptions, but also in their accounts of the significance and consequences of these concerns for contemporary philosophy.

In his *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein criticizes what he takes to be St. Augustine’s naïve conception of language, according to which individual words name objects and sentences are combinations of such names. It is in reaction to this view of language, attributable to his own picture theory of meaning as outlined in the *Tractatus*, that much of Wittgenstein’s later work is directed. Here Wittgenstein suggests that, in order to understand meaning, we must primarily look to the way a word is used, rather than towards the object that a word represents. This use-based account of language characterizes particular applications of a word in terms of ‘family resemblances’ determined by observation of our linguistic practices. Wittgenstein’s use-based account of meaning, consistent with Rorty’s reading of the notion of the postanalytic, thus rejects a ‘representationalist’ theory of language in favour of a broadly pragmatic and instrumental view. In linking meaning to use, Wittgenstein also rejects some of the methodological and stylistic assumptions of his earlier work, which are suggestive of the possibility of an independent objective stance on our linguistic practices. Although some interpreters have taken his position to culminate in a form of epistemological subjectivism, in parts of *On Certainty* it is clear that Wittgenstein thinks of the world as ‘the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false’. As a precondition for intelligible discourse and thus for knowledge itself, the world should not, on this view, be understood on the basis of a dichotomy between the subjective and objective.

Like Wittgenstein, Davidson attempts to free philosophy from the view that language is the via media through which the mind comes to represent the world. In his influential paper ‘On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme’, Davidson suggests that such a position implies that there is a sharp division between the raw data provided by sensory experience, and a conceptual scheme, seen as either representative or identical with thought, which provides structure to empirical content. Davidson argues that this dualism is incoherent, and holds that, in renouncing the dualism of content and scheme, we ‘do not give up the world’ but instead ‘reestablish unmediated touch with the familiar objects whose antics make our sentences and opinions true or false’. Against

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**Williams, James (Editor); Mares, Ed (Editor); Chase, James (Editor). Postanalytic and Metacontinental: Crossing Philosophical Divides. London, GBR: Continuum International Publishing, 2010. p 11.**


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this background, Davidson seeks to develop a systematic and constructive philosophical project, which is to explain how knowledge of the world is possible, via an account of what it is in virtue of which linguistic meaning consists. For Davidson, knowledge is essentially intersubjective, arising not from uninterpreted sense data, but from communicative practices that occur between individuals, and the shared experiences that make acts of interpretation possible. In this sense, it is possible to connect Davidson’s work with a broadly pragmatic outlook that replaces representationalism with an holistic and instrumentalist view of knowledge.

Both Davidson and Wittgenstein could be labelled postanalytic thinkers insofar as their rejection of the dichotomy between the subjective and the objective places in question, at least implicitly, the very cogency of the classical analytic project. The two stand apart, however, in their broad conception of the purpose of philosophical activity. Wittgenstein’s critique of representationalism is connected with a view of philosophy according to which it may not interfere with the actual use of language, nor provide a foundation for it, but only ‘put everything before us’ in such a way that there is nothing left to explain. The philosopher on this view is a kind of therapist who does not answer questions constructively, but rather seeks to uncover the conceptual presuppositions that make such questions intelligible in the first place. Davidson, by contrast has an explicitly constructive project, namely that of explaining how we may have knowledge of our own minds, knowledge of the minds of others, and knowledge of a shared world. For Davidson, it is ‘up to philosophy to talk about the relations between the three kinds of knowledge, how they differ, and how they interdepend’. In this context, his project is neither quietistic nor does it seek to overcome philosophy as conventionally understood by its analytic practitioners.

In Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, Rorty draws the work of both Wittgenstein and Davidson together in a narrative that describes how philosophy has been held captive by the metaphor of the mind as a mirror that reflects reality. Rorty supports Wittgenstein’s denial that meaning consists in representation, and follows Davidson’s rejection of a dualism between content and scheme. For Rorty, adherence to this duality is problematic insofar as it demands that the ‘given’ exert a normative constraint upon the ‘space of reasons’. This is untenable from Rorty’s perspective because the world may provide only a causal (and not normative) influence upon the mind. Rorty’s claim that it was the task of the traditional philosopher to explain how accurate representation of the world is possible suggests, however, without a dualism of content and scheme, the entire legitimacy of epistemology (and, as a consequence, of philosophy) is undermined. Philosophy’s certification as a foundational discipline, one both ‘distinct from and sitting in judgment upon both religion and science’, is thus rejected by Rorty, who proposes a redefinition of philosophy as ‘social and cultural criticism’, the philosopher acting as a sort of ‘Socratic intermediary between various discourses’, who approaches cultural and social criticism with
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a hermeneutic spirit, rather than seeking to ‘get behind’ our chosen vocabularies to establish the veridicality of our claims to knowledge. While he connects Wittgenstein with his own therapeutic pragmatism, by claiming that both think of language as a tool, rather than a mirror that represents reality, Rorty’s position is accompanied by a fin de siècle rhetoric and explicitly political focus which differentiates him from the other thinkers here under examination.

McDowell approaches the problematic dualism between subjectivity and objectivity by providing an account of how the modern scientific revolution has concealed both our ‘openness’ to the world and ‘second nature’ as rational animals. Rejecting the assumption that we should understand our perceptual experience in terms of modern natural-scientific ‘laws of nature’ or causality, McDowell argues that the perceptual experience of the world by normal nature humans is always already informed by conceptual content. McDowell’s account differs from that of the other postanalytic figures considered in this chapter insofar as he would seem to provide a minimal endorsement of a representationalist framework. Though McDowell defends Kant’s view that empirical knowledge results from an intermingling of receptivity and spontaneity, however, his account marks a departure from Kant insofar as our conceptual capacities are not exercised upon receptivity, but instead drawn on in receptivity itself, as a precondition for the possibility of perceptual experience. Thus, McDowell’s analysis of the mind’s active employment of concepts in perceptual experience allows him to argue against external world scepticism, developing a reading of Kant which overcomes the oscillation between ‘the myth of the given’ on the one hand and the ‘frictionless spinning in the void’ of coherenceism on the other.

McDowell’s work has affinities with Wittgenstein and Rorty, insofar as it seeks to overcome the oscillation between coherenceism and the myth of the given, and holds that this requires a non-coercive deconstruction of the philosophical anxieties that gave birth to this dualism. According to McDowell’s naturalized Platonism, the structure of the space of reasons has a kind of autonomy in the sense that it is ‘not derivative from, or reflective of, truths about human beings that are capturable independently of having that structure in view’, even though it is ‘not constituted in splendid isolation from anything merely human’. McDowell’s work also, like that of Wittgenstein and Rorty, attempts to demonstrate that ‘the supposed obligations of traditional philosophy are illusory’. McDowell writes:

“If we could achieve a firm hold on a naturalism of second nature, a hold that could not be shaken by any temptation to lapse back into ordinary philosophical worries about how to place minds in the world, that would not be to have produced a bit of constructive philosophy of the sort Rorty aims to supersede. In Wittgenstein’s poignant phrase, it would be to have achieved ‘the discovery that gives philosophy peace’.”

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*Williams, James (Editor); Mares, Ed (Editor); Chase, James (Editor), Postanalytic and Metacontinental: Crossing Philosophical Divides*, London, GBR: Continuum International Publishing, 2010, p. 13.

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Although McDowell here provides explicit endorsement of both Wittgenstein's quietism and Rorty's desire to expose the constructivist conceptual presuppositions that gave rise to the fundamental problematic of modern epistemology, his advocacy of a form of transcendental empiricism and incorporation of the Aristotelian notion of second nature differentiates his thought from that of the other postanalytic philosophers under consideration.

This brief assessment of the status of Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell as postanalytic thinkers suggests that there is indeed a broad critical or 'deconstructive' project uniting their work that is deeper and more radical than the standard process of debate and critique that has taken place within the mainstream analytic tradition. In placing in question some of the guiding presuppositions of the analytical tradition, the work of these thinkers engages not only with a broader set of concerns than most analytic thought, but also suggests the inadequacy of some of that tradition's standard methodological and stylistic resources. Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell nonetheless differ between themselves not only in terms of method and style, but also in their view of the consequences and significance of the necessary 'deconstruction' of contemporary philosophy. These divergences can be seen more clearly through a consideration of the status of these thinkers as 'crossover' figures in relation to the continental tradition.

3. Postanalytic philosophy and continental thought

In order to assess whether the work of allegedly postanalytic thinkers such as Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell has genuinely contributed towards an overcoming of the divide between analytical and continental philosophy, it is necessary to consider their status as 'crossover' figures. One plausible strong indicator that the four philosophers under examination have contributed towards such a rapprochement would be evidence that their work has led to sustained and informed scholarly debate on shared philosophical concerns across both sides of the divide. This indicator of cross-traditional engagement needs to be distinguished from two related, but weaker indicators: (i) that the work of the postanalytic thinkers in question is ecumenical in the sense that it draws influence from both traditions, and (ii) that the work of the postanalytic thinkers is discussed in depth by both analytic and continental scholars. The following account, which draws on detailed analysis of journal citation patterns, suggests that an unequivocally positive assessment of the status of Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell as crossover figures would be premature.

Let us take Davidson as a first example. Davidson's account of knowledge as intersubjective, as something that can only be understood once a dualism of scheme and content has been abandoned, depends, in part, upon his theory of radical interpretation, along with his view that our best understanding of truth is captured via the notion of translation. It is these broad themes – which underlie...

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the sense in which Davidson may be thought of as a postanalytic philosopher — that have inspired continental scholars to relate his thought to Heidegger, Gadamer and Derrida.\(^1\) Furthermore, articles which focus primarily upon one or more aspects of Davidson’s thought did indeed begin to appear in continental journals from 1987 onwards (see Figure 2.2). This suggests that Davidson is a crossover figure insofar as his work appeals to both analytic and continental scholars (see Figure 2.3). It is, however, less straightforward to determine whether Davidson is a crossover figure in terms of providing a focal point for debate between contemporary analytic and continental scholars.

![Chart showing article distributions by decade](chart.png)

**Figure 2.2** Davidson’s reception (Journal articles published on Davidson by decade, 1965 to 2008)

![Chart showing article distributions by type](chart2.png)

**Figure 2.3** Davidson’s reception (Journal articles published on Davidson, 1965 to 2008)

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Williams, James (Editor); Mares, Ed (Editor); Chase, James (Editor). Postanalytic and Metacontinental: Crossing Philosophical Divides. London, GBR: Continuum International Publishing, 2010. p. 15.

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A preliminary cross-citation check yields no evidence that analytic philosophers are engaging with scholarly work on Davidson by continental philosophers, and vice-versa. Additionally, while Davidson’s articles cited in analytic journals concern his more technical and constructive projects within analytic philosophy of action, mind and language, those cited in crossover journals tend to deal with his deconstructive critique of scheme-content dualism, and the account of truth and interpretation upon which it depends. This suggests that Davidson’s work has provided only limited impetus for debate between analytic and continental scholars over shared philosophical themes or the nature of his work in general.

The status of McDowell as a crossover figure is on the face of it more compelling. McDowell’s early work within analytical philosophy was known only to a small group of professional philosophers working within the Anglo-American tradition. The publication of Mind and World, however, introduced McDowell’s thought to a broader philosophical public, leading to increased citation of his work by both analytical and continental scholars (see Figures 2.4 and 2.5). McDowell’s work has inspired interest from continental interpreters over the problematic character of naturalism and the status of ‘second nature’.

**Figure 2.4**  McDowell’s reception (journal articles published on McDowell before *Mind and World*, 1980 to 1993)

**Figure 2.5**  McDowell’s reception (journal articles and book Chapters published on McDowell after *Mind and World*, 1994 to 2008)
status of transcendental arguments, and on the proper interpretation of Kant and Hegel. Conversely, these aspects of the work of McDowell have alienated some of the more parochial adherents of analytic philosophy. Crispin Wright, for instance, is critical of the "therapeutic" tone of Mind and World, one which he regards as characterized by "stylistic extravagance" and "rhetorical metaphysics." Moreover, even though there is evidence that McDowell's work is discussed by both philosophical traditions, a preliminary cross-citation check once again yields little proof of substantial cross-traditional engagement. This again suggests that while both analytical and continental interpreters deal with McDowell's thought, in many cases they approach his work from sufficiently different perspectives to render his status as a crossover figure somewhat ambiguous.

Rorty's work, like that of McDowell, has yielded a large number of articles published in both analytic and continental journals (see Figure 2.6). Some of these articles demonstrate that Rorty could legitimately be regarded as a crossover figure, insofar as they highlight affinities between analytic and continental thought on the basis of a pragmatic view of knowledge as resting upon "consensus" rather than representation. Continental scholars have also engaged with Rorty's suggestion that philosophy be replaced with social and cultural critique, and with his readings of continental philosophers like Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida. While Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature is still heavily cited within analytic journals, however, much of this work is concerned with criticizing Rorty's alleged epistemological relativism and anachronistic or inaccurate understanding of figures in the history of philosophy. This suggests that Rorty has served less as a focus for genuine cross-traditional engagement on philosophical issues, than as a common focal point for critical assessments of his interpretative approach and supposed relativism.

Wittgenstein presents a more convincing case of an allegedly postanalytic philosopher who has contributed to a genuine rapprochement. As would be expected, Wittgenstein is heavily cited in both analytic and continental traditions (see Figures 2.7 and 2.8), and there is evidence that his work deals with
Figure 2.7 Wittgenstein’s reception (Journal articles published on Wittgenstein, 1951 to 2008)

Figure 2.8 Reception of early and late Wittgenstein (TLP and PI citations in 4 leading journals of analytic philosophy, 1926 to 2007 and 5 leading journals defined as ‘crossover’ or continental, 1954 to 2007) *

* Journals listed in note 57.

philosophical concerns common to the two traditions. Furthermore, a preliminary cross-citation check suggests a small amount of genuine cross-traditional engagement, centring in particular upon the so-called therapeutic reading of Wittgenstein championed by Cora Diamond and James Conant. This interpretation sees Wittgenstein rejecting the notion of an external standpoint on language as entirely nonsensical, while asserting that abandonment of this ideal will not leave philosophy defenceless against the Cartesian sceptic. Genuine engagement between analytic and continental thinkers has been inspired by this unorthodox reading, including investigations of the relationship between Wittgenstein and thinkers like Kant, Levinas and the Frankfurt School, and an analysis of the way in which this therapeutic interpretation relates to more traditional interpretations of Wittgenstein within analytic thought. **

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This brief analysis has demonstrated that there are legitimate grounds for thinking that Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell are crossovers figures insofar as they draw on diverse influences and have attracted significant scholarly attention from both the analytic and continental traditions. In their rejection of some of the major conceptual presuppositions of the mainstream analytic tradition, the figures examined have not only attracted the interest of continental thinkers, but have also provided some common ground for cross-traditional reflection on shared themes and concerns. It would nonetheless be premature to assert on this basis that there is sufficient evidence to prove that Wittgenstein, Davidson, Rorty and McDowell are crossovers figures in the strong sense of providing a focal point from which sustained and informed scholarly debate between the analytic and continental traditions has taken place.

Notes

1. Ray Monk, for example, describes postanalytic philosophy as ‘a conceiving of philosophy that seeks to retain the virtues of the analytic tradition—rigor, clarity, intellectual honesty—while seeking to broaden the scope of the issues and texts customarily dealt with by analytic philosophers, and, in particular, to overcome the dissonant gulf between analytic philosophers and the Continental tradition’. Quoted in Deane-Peter Baker and Patrick Maxwell, eds, *Explorations in Contemporary Continental Philosophy of Religion* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), 8.


3. The term ‘postanalytic’ is not established in the philosophical lexicon. A literature review reveals only 32 sources between 1975 and 2007 making use of it, and many of these discuss the viability of the category.


5. The expression here has a paradigmatically Kantian sense, referring to the alleged analytic attempt to put philosophy ‘on the secure path of a science’ by ‘putting outer space inside inner space (the space of the constituting activity of the transcendental ego) and then claiming Cartesian certainty about the inner for the laws of what had previously been thought to be outer.’ See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008), 137.


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Ibid.


A search for total citations of each postanalytic figure was conducted via JSTOR between the date of each thinker’s first publication and 2008. The following journals were searched: American Philosophical Quarterly, Analysis, Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Mind, Nous, Philosophical Issues, Philosophical Perspectives, The Philosophical Quarterly, The Philosophical Review, Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition, Philosophy, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society and the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volumes.

For example, Rorty’s claim that ‘abandoning the scheme-content distinctions and accepting pragmatism does, in a sense, mean abandoning philosophy’. See Richard Rorty, ‘Transcendental Arguments, Self-Reference, and Pragmatism’, in Transcendental Arguments and Science, ed. Peter Bieri, Rolf-Peter Horstmann and Lorenz Krüger (Dordrecht: R. Reidel, 1979), 78. Putnam writes in the same context that ‘the enterprises of providing a foundation for Being and Knowledge—a successful description of the Furniture of the World or a successful description of the Canons of Justification—are enterprises that have disastrously failed.’ See Hilary Putnam, Realism with a Human Face (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 19. On the other hand, Rorty appears occasionally to contradict this stronger characterization, as when he says that ‘I think that analytic philosophy can keep its highly professional methods, the insistence on detail and mechanics, and just drop its transcendental project.’ See Richard Rorty and Eduardo Mendieta, Take Care of Freedom and Truth Will Take Care of Itself: Interviews with Richard Rorty (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 23.


Ibid., §43.

It is in this sense that Putnam describes Wittgenstein as a postanalytic thinker. See Kajchman and West, Post-Analytic Philosophy, 29.


Ibid., 20.


Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, §126.

See Donald Davidson, ‘The Third Man’, Critical Inquiry 19, No. 4 (1993): 607–608: ‘Nothing has surprised me more than to discover myself anthologised in books with titles such as Post-Analytic Philosophy or After Philosophy... Is there something smaller, or at least finer, in my view that I have failed to recognise, something that portends the dissolution not only of the sort of philosophy I do but of philosophy itself?’ He suggests the answer to this question (and the related question why he is associated with figures like Heidegger and Derrida) may turn on his ‘rejection of subjectivist theories of epistemology and meaning; and [his] conviction that thought itself is essentially social.’ Ibid.

Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, 12.


Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, 131.

Rorty and Mendicuts, Take Care of Freedom and Truth Will Take Care of Itself, 24.

Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, 317.

Ibid., 9.


Ibid., 67.

See Michael Friedman, ‘Exercising the Philosophical Tradition’, in Reading McDowell: On Mind and World, ed. Nicholas Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), 28–29. ‘McDowell’s work is intended, therefore, to contribute towards a transcendence or overcoming of the philosophical tradition – an exercise of the dualistic oppositions that have given rise to the traditional “problems of philosophy.”’

McDowell, Mind and World, 92.

Ibid., 147.

Ibid., 86. Also see 93, where McDowell states that his work is aimed at a Wittgensteinian quietism.

McDowell, however, dismisses Rorty’s attempted deconstruction as ‘half-baked’ insofar as it rests upon a problematic dualism of reason and nature. Ibid., 155.


This analysis made use of the wide range of both analytic and continental journals accessible in the Philosopher’s Index to assess the analytic and continental engagement with the work of each postanalytic figure. The study targeted peer-reviewed journal articles where each figure’s work predominated, using as a search criterion mention of a figure’s name in either the title or abstract. This method aimed to eliminate incidental citations and utilises the searchable fields in the Philosopher’s Index, but obviously does not capture articles in which a figure’s work is discussed in detail but his or her name is not mentioned in the title or abstract. The results of this preliminary analysis can be seen in Figures 2.1–2.7. Each relevant article has been categorized as either analytic, crossover or continental, determined in accordance with the stated publishing policy of the journal.
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of publication. Overall, such articles were drawn from 55 analytic journals (e.g., *Analysis, Erkenntnis, Mind, Nous, The Philosophical Review and Ratio*), 65 'crossover' journals (e.g., *European Journal of Philosophy, Southern Journal of Philosophy and International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, along with selected interdisciplinary publications like *Philosophy and Literature and Critical Inquiry*), and 26 continental journals (e.g., *Continental Philosophy Review, Philosophy Today, Philosophy and Social Criticism, Research in Phenomenology and The Revista de Metafisica*). The relevant date range for each figure begins from publication of the first article with a dominant or predominant focus on that figure.


This cross-referenced a small sample of recent articles published on Davidson's thought against a compiled list of articles, books and book chapters previously published on Davidson in both analytic and continental traditions, in order to assess how far each sampled article engaged with previously published work on Davidson in each tradition. The intention was to find out whether Davidson has inspired genuinely cross-traditional debate, as measured by citation between contemporary analytic and continental work on Davidson (and not just by citation within each group of Davidson himself). The preliminary search showed no cross-citation of this kind at all. A similar analysis was conducted for each postanalytic thinker, with a similar trend evidenced in the case of both Rorty and McDowell. In each case, the sample set included peer-reviewed journal articles in which the work of the thinker in question was of predominant focus. Articles sampled were published, for the most part, in 2007, though where there were more analytic articles in a given year than 'crossover'/continental articles, articles published in 2008 or between 2000 and 2006 have been added to ensure the number of analytic and 'crossover'/continental articles sampled remained roughly even. Given the small sample set under consideration (approximately 10 articles for each postanalytic figure), these results are necessarily preliminary.

The three most popular Davidsonian articles appearing in *Mind, Nous, the Journal of Philosophy, and the Philosophical Review* address these issues: 'Mental Events' (1970), 'Truth and Meaning' (1967), and 'Actions, Reasons and Causes' (1983), cited 89, 71 and 90 times, respectively. Baseline of 1, 946 articles (1967 to 2008).


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A search of Philosophers Index reveals that 20 of 28 refereed articles engaging in detail with the work of McDowell up until the publication of Mind and World were published in analytic journals or collections.

Subsequent to Mind and World, McDowell became a much-discussed figure in ‘crossover’ and German journals. A handful of articles in continental journals more narrowly defined, such as Philosophy Today, appeared subsequent to 2000, six years after the publication of Mind and World. Special journal editions devoted to the discussion of Mind and World appear in European Journal of Philosophy 14, No. 2 (2008); Teorema 25, No. 1 (2008), and Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie 48, No. 6 (2008).


Crispin Wright, ‘Human Nature?’, in Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and the Human Condition, ed. Nicholas Smith (London: Routledge, 2000), 157–158. Wright implies that McDowell should be banished from the analytical tradition on the basis of Mind and World. ‘If analytical philosophy demands self-consciousness about unexplained or only partially explained terms of art, formality and explicitness in the setting out of argument, and the clearest possible sign-posting and formulation of assumptions, targets, and goals, etc., then this is not work of analytical philosophy.’ Nonetheless, Wright himself engages with McDowell’s work with a critical rather than dismissive stance, and Mind and World continues to provoke debate in analytic philosophy of mind and language.

Examples include Herman J. Saatkamp, that is, Rorty and Pragmatism: The Philosopher Responds to His Critics (Vanderbilt University Press, 1995), and Josef Niznik and John T. Sanders, eds, Debating the State of Philosophy: Habermas, Rorty and Kwiekowski (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1990). Both include contributions from leading analytic and continental philosophers that engage with relativism.


Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature is cited 175 times in these 15 analytic journals. Baseline of 10,188 journal articles (1979 to 2008).

In his annotated bibliography of secondary literature on Rorty, Rumana notes that, of over twelve hundred noted citations, only a small percentage are friendly to Rorty. Richard Rumana, Richard Rorty: An Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Literature (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), n. Furthermore, a preliminary cross-citation check yields no evidence of substantive cross-traditional engagement (see note 14).

Citation patterns also cast doubt on the view that while the early Wittgenstein is an analytic philosopher, analytic scholars ceased to be interested in his later work at the same time as he became more popular in the continental tradition.
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(see, for example, Anat Biletski, ‘Bridging the Analytic-Continental Divide’, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 9, No. 3 (2001): 293-294. (Evidence against this view is provided in Figure 2.8, from which it can be seen that the *Philosophical Investigations* is cited almost two-thirds as often as the *Tractatus* in both analytic and continental or 'crossover' journals. Analytic journals searched include *Mind, Noûs, the Journal of Philosophy* and the *Philosophical Review*. 'Crossover' and continental journals searched include the *European Journal of Philosophy, Inquiry, Southern Journal of Philosophy, Continental Philosophy Review* and *The Review of Metaphysics*.


The cross-citation check cross-referenced a small sample set of articles published on Wittgenstein’s work in 2007 against previously published work on Wittgenstein in both analytic and continental traditions. Three of four articles published in continental journals in 2007 drew significantly on interpretations of Wittgenstein frequently published in major journals of analytic philosophy, including P. M. S. Hacker, Cora Diamond and James Conant. Hacker is perhaps most well-known, but Diamond has 10 published articles in the 15 analytic journals listed in note 11, and 51 articles cite her work between 1980 and 2004 (baseline of 10,564 articles). Conant has two published articles in the same set, and 33 articles cite his work between 1988 and 2004 (baseline of 6,874 articles). Of particular interest are: Paul Livingston, ‘Wittgenstein, Kant and the Critique of Totality’, *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 33, No. 6 (2007): 691-715; and Søren Overgaard, ‘The Ethical Residue of Language in Levinas and Early Wittgenstein’, *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 33, No. 2 (2007): 223-249. Though both are published in paradigmatically continental journals, they draw substantially on analytic interpretations of Wittgenstein, and discuss the relationship between Wittgenstein and the analytic tradition.

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Part One

Reason and Argument