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# AT THE BEGINNING OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY. BERTRAND RUSSELL'S PROPOSITIONAL REALISM

*Abstract*

One of the fundamental tenets of contemporary epistemology and analytic philosophy is that ontological and epistemological questions are strictly tied to logical questions. This paper intends to explain why Russell's early philosophy – and in particular his shift from Hegelianism to Realism between 1898-1905 – has been central to the beginning of the analytic tradition and to the elaboration of such fundamental tenet.

According to Russell, logic and ontology are strictly connected and the elimination of many wrong logical theories – like those endorsed by his idealist former master H. D. Bradley – would eventually lead to substantial philosophical progress. The logical analysis of «external relations» and the connected problem of individual reference are taken to be fundamental starting points for the development both of Russell's «analytic realism» and of his contribution to the genesis of analytic tradition. They also cast light on the relevance of Russell's mathematical research, which was central not only to specific philosophical points, but in general for the overall elaboration of his philosophical model.

The paper presents Russell's early theory of a proposition as a complex of entities and explains its role for the development of his anti-idealistic philosophy and for the origins of analytic philosophy. In particular three of its achievements are individuated: (a) it leads to hold that there is a correspondence between logic, ontology and epistemology; (b) it shapes the analytic character of philosophical research as opposed to the synthetic view held by idealists; (c) it makes the distinction between grammatical and logical forms philosophically relevant.