

## SOME REFERENCES TO LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS AND MEANING IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF EARLY BUDDHISM

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Linguistic philosophy is one of the major contemporary philosophical trends that attempt to bring about a logical analysis of concepts for clarification and dissolution of perennial problems of philosophy. Philosophers such as Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein, Ryle and many others accepted this idea in the twentieth century. As mentioned by Anthony Quinton, the critical and analytical attitude is the major philosophical trend,<sup>1</sup> which appeared as from the beginning of this century. Those philosophers who accepted this new tradition wanted to be away from most complicated philosophical problems, which have been discussed and of which no final resolution had been found in the long history of philosophy. In other words, philosophers at the very beginning of this century were thinking about a new kind of methodology to find solutions to traditional philosophical problems, which deal primarily with metaphysics. The 'Linguistic Analysis' could be recognised as the new methodology they used in this purpose. Considering language as the means of expressing human thinking, philosophers attempted to examine the nature of language, its logical basis and its meaning rather than the issues they have discussed in philosophy. This attitude appeared in Moore's philosophy at the very beginning of the twentieth century. All philosophical problems arise according to Moore, with the failure to understand questions that philosophers raised at different intervals. In *Principia Ethica*, Moore notes:

It appears to me that in Ethics, as in all other philosophical studies, the difficulties and disagreements, of which its history is full, are mainly due to a very simple cause: namely to the attempt to answer questions, without first discovering precisely *what* question it is which you desire to answer. ... if philosophers would *try* to discover what question they were asking, before they set about to answer it: for the work of analysis and distinction is often very difficult: we may often fail to make the necessary discovery, even though we make a definite attempt to do so. But I am inclined to think that in many cases a resolute attempt would be sufficient to ensure success; so that, if only this attempt

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1. Anthony Quinton, 'Contemporary British Philosophy' in O'Connor, D.J. (ed.): *A Critical History of Western Philosophy*, Free Press, New York 1964, pp. 530-56.