

Peter Strawson's Descriptive Metaphysics and its Cosmological Implications

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The focus of this article is the examination of potential applications of linguistic philosophy, particularly the philosophy of natural language, to elucidate certain aspects of cosmology. Using the foundational principles of Strawson's descriptive metaphysics as a guide, the article suggests plausible strategies for employing the tools of linguistic philosophers in analyzing key concepts within, for example, Chinese cosmology. The vast majority of researchers of Chinese cosmology used one of the two most common approaches – historical or philosophical. The historical approach involved the analysis of the cosmological concept of crises through the prism of the history of the development of socio-cultural and political factors, as well as through the analysis of the historical development of the main ideas and texts. The philosophical approach considered the cosmological concept as a “philosophical school”, tending to consider cosmology in the context of comparison with the Western tradition of philosophy and science. Both approaches have significant limitations. Strawson is not a classic representative of linguistic philosophy, because his approach to using the methodology of the school of everyday language is original and allows returning metaphysics to the field of view of analytical philosophy. His metaphysical essay on the model of the relationship between language and the world does not raise questions about the criteria of existence. This is important because Chinese cosmology is closely related to cultural factors and rituals. It is the analysis of cosmology as a complete system that should become the main task of the researcher. The methodology of the school of everyday language in Strawson's interpretation is seen as

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promising for providing an original interpretation and clarification of some main points of non-European cosmology. The goal is to assess whether the methodology of Ordinary Language Philosophy remains relevant for advancing cosmological and metaphysical accounts.

Keywords: ordinary language philosophy, philosophy of cosmology, linguistic philosophy, descriptive metaphysics, cosmology and culture, Chinese cosmology.

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Introduction

In his article “Philosophers and Popular Cosmology” (1993), English philosopher and University of Liverpool professor S. Clark highlights a notable shift in the 1990s. “This was the decade in which we detected further traces of the Big Bang, and a variety of scientists expressed their views on God, the universe and everything” (Burt, 1963: 115). However, S. Clark expresses concern over the diminishing attention given to philosophers in public debates during this period. He contends that cosmological concepts such as necessity, contingency, causality, time, ethics, and religion, which were once within the purview of philosophers, seemed to be taken up by scientists. Even renowned figures like Stephen Hawking, in his book “A Brief History of Time” (1988) used physics to delve into the understanding of the mind of God, while Paul Davies offered his theory of Mind.

“In modern philosophy, the questions about the essence of being have acquired a previously uncharacteristic specificity. What is “a thing insofar as it is in being?” “What is a thing in its being?” “What is the being of a thing?” Evidently, metaphysics is presented in these questions as a subject of ontology, as “onto-logy insofar as the operations of questioning and answering (-logy) all bear ultimately on things (onto-)” (Bazaluk, 2022: 7). This raises the question: Can philosophy still play a significant role in the realms of metaphysics and cosmology?

S. Clark further explores this theme, recalling a time when philosophers like Leibniz actively contributed to the scientific revolution, and Aristotle single-handedly established entire disciplines. Although some contemporary philosophers still contribute beyond academia, their reputations are not primarily built on these contributions. A crucial turning point occurred with Anglo-American philosophy, particularly in the context of Ordinary Language Philosophy. This article aims to conduct a historical review of foundational ideas in metaphysics, particularly those put forth by analytic philosopher P. Strawson in his book “Individuals” (1959).

Peter Frederick Strawson (1919–2006) emerges as a key figure in Anglo-American philosophy during the mid-20th century, focusing on logic, philosophy of language, metaphysics, epistemology, and the history of philosophy. Positioned alongside influential philosophers of language such as J. L. Austin, A. J. Ayer, R. Carnap, D. Davidson, P. Grice, B. Russell, and G. Ryle, Strawson made lasting contributions.

Here it is necessary to make some clarifications. J. Searle distinguishes between the Philosophy of Language and linguistic philosophy or linguistic analysis. Searle, known for his contributions to the philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and social philosophy, asserts in an interview with Professor B. Magee (1977) that linguistic philosophy or linguistic analysis are techniques or methods for solving philosophical problems. In contrast, the Philosophy of Language is not a technique but a subject matter. Linguistic philosophers believe that philosophical problems can be resolved by examining the “ordinary use” of words, particularly

words like know, believe, and suppose. The Philosophy of Language, as a subject matter within philosophy, addresses fundamental questions about how language reflects reality, the nature of meaning, and concepts like truth and logical necessity.

Descriptive metaphysics

Strawson's objective was to point the foundational concepts inherent in our everyday thought processes. These encompassed crucial notions like *body*, *person*, *space* and *time*, and *causation*. His aim was: firstly, to demonstrate that skeptical challenges to our utilization of these concepts were baseless and unjustified; and secondly, to establish that our right to employ these concepts didn't hinge on reducing them to a supposedly more naturalistic foundation, such as the empiricists interpretation of experience or the concepts intrinsic to fundamental science. According to Strawson, the true mission of metaphysics is to articulate these indispensable ideas and elucidate their interconnectedness. His contributions played a significant role in steering Oxford philosophy away from the anti-metaphysical stance of A.J. Ayer and J.L. Austin, guiding it toward a renewed exploration of many traditional philosophical questions. Even today, Strawson's work remains influential and continues to capture scholarly attention (Snowdon, 2009).

In the Introduction to *Individuals. An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* Strawson point out: "Metaphysics has been often revisionary, and less often descriptive. Descriptive metaphysics is content to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world, revisionary metaphysics is concerned to produce a better structure" (Strawson, 1990: 9). The outcomes of revisionary metaphysics possess enduring interest, not solely as pivotal moments in the historical development of thought. Their articulation and the intensity of their focused perspectives make the best of them both inherently admirable and philosophically useful in the long run. However, this latter merit can be attributed to them only because another kind of metaphysics exists, requiring no justification beyond the pursuit of inquiry in general. Revisionary metaphysics serves the purpose of descriptive metaphysics.

The concept of descriptive metaphysics may be met with skepticism, particularly concerning how it distinguishes itself from philosophical, logical, or conceptual analysis. The distinction lies not in the intention but in the scope and generality of the inquiry. Descriptive metaphysics seeks to uncover the most general features of our conceptual structure, allowing it to question more assumptions than a narrower conceptual investigation.

This difference in scope also leads to a variance in methodology. While a close examination of the actual use of words remains crucial in philosophy, it has its limitations. The discriminations and connections established through this method are often not broad or far-reaching enough to satisfy the comprehensive metaphysical need for understanding. When exploring how we use specific expressions, our answers, while insightful at a certain level, tend to assume rather than expose the general structural elements that the metaphysician aims to unveil. The structure doesn't readily present itself on the surface of language; it remains submerged. Therefore, the metaphysician must forsake their reliable guide when it falls short of taking them as far as they desire to go.

It is plausible that no metaphysician, in both intent and impact, has ever been entirely committed to one category or the other. Yet, broad distinctions can be made – Descartes, Leibniz, and Berkeley tend towards the revisionary, while Aristotle and Kant align more with the descriptive (Strawson, 1990: 11).

Another challenge to the concept of descriptive metaphysics may arise from a different perspective. It could be argued that metaphysics serves primarily as a tool for instigating

conceptual change, facilitating or documenting new directions or styles of thought. Undoubtedly, concepts undergo transformations, not only at the specialized periphery but also, albeit predominantly, impacting ordinary thinking. Metaphysics has indeed been significantly engaged in such changes, employing the suggested approaches. However, it would be a grave mistake to perceive metaphysics exclusively through this historical lens.

Metaphysics possesses a substantial central core of human thinking devoid of historical evolution, at least as recorded in histories of thought. Within this core lie categories and concepts that, in their most fundamental essence, remain unchanged. Notably, these are not the specialized domains of the most refined thinking but the commonplaces of the least sophisticated cognition. Yet, they constitute the indispensable foundation of the conceptual framework for even the most sophisticated individuals. Descriptive metaphysics, therefore, primarily concerns itself with these fundamental concepts, their interconnections, and the structure they collectively form.

As it is impossible to investigate the problems of human cognition and the need for solutions to humanity's problems without considering human culture, art, and morality (Medzhidova, 2022: 25). It is also impossible to investigate the problems of cosmology without considering the mining of space, time, matter. Cosmologies can be defined as organized systems of concepts and relationships that portray the universe or cosmos as a structured entity. These frameworks articulate the nature of the cosmos in terms of space, time, matter, and motion, populated by entities such as gods, humans, animals, spirits, demons, and similar beings. Chinese cosmology has been characterized as "correlative". Chinese cosmology is a well-defined and orderly system that includes various aspects of the domains of reality in the universe. Such categories of the human world as the body, behavior, morality, socio-political system, historical changes are correlated with the categories of the cosmos. In particular, the categories of space and time, celestial bodies, changes of seasons and weather phenomena are meant. In this context, it is considered promising to investigate the unity of aspects of the domains of reality in the context of Strawson's "Descriptive metaphysics".

Peter Strawson's "Individuals"

To understand Strawson's approach to his mission, the reader should pay close attention not only to his concise introduction but also to significant comments in the concluding chapter. The overarching goal is to expose and explain "conceptual scheme". "We think of the world as containing particular things some of which are independent of ourselves; we think of the world's history as made up of particular episodes in which we may or may not have a part; and we think of these particular things and events as included in the topics of our common discourse, as things about which we can talk to each other. These are remarks about the way we think of the world, about our conceptual scheme" (Strawson, 1990: 15).

American philosopher E.A. Burt (1892-1989) in *Descriptive Metaphysics* (1963) focus on this account: "Strawson is concerned with the status and role of 'individuals' – in the first half of the book their status and role in cosmology, and in the second half their status and role in informative statements. Other metaphysical entities inevitably come into the picture but only because reference to them is needed in an explanatory analysis of his chosen theme" (Burt, 1963: 27).

Specific entities, such as historical events, material objects, people, and shadows, are discussed, while qualities, properties, numbers, and species are not categorized as specific entities. Identification of specific entities commonly occurs through proper names, definite descriptions, and demonstrative pronouns. Strawson emphasizes that the ability to identify particulars of a given type is a necessary condition for including that type in our ontology.

Certain particulars are systematically identified through their relation to other types of particulars, establishing an ontological hierarchy based on priority and posteriority. “The main aim of Part I of the book is to find if there are, in terms of the criterion of dependent or independent identification, any kind or kinds of particulars which are basic among the kinds of particulars that we recognize in our conceptual system” (Urmson, 1961: 258-259).

Regarding the detailed progression of his thoughts, a succinct summary will suffice. In the early chapters, Strawson’s guiding question is: What are the basic or primary individuals (i.e. particulars) in our conceptual system? (Burt, 1963: 27). His response posits material bodies and persons in a unique position, revealing their relationships based on their place in a unified spatiotemporal order. His argumentative strategy is notable; he provides compelling evidence supporting his stance, considering influential philosophical alternatives in each case, such as the notion that private sense data constitute basic particulars instead of material bodies, or that minds (or centers of consciousness) do so instead of persons.

In establishing these conclusions, Strawson employs a form of *reductio ad absurdum* against contrary propositions. He invites readers to imagine the most plausible conceptual system lacking certain features of material bodies or persons and questions its ability to meet the necessary criteria. For instance, he envisions a world of sounds related in time but not space, demonstrating its failure in meeting the need to reidentify the same sound in a publicly verifiable manner.

In the later chapters, the focus shifts to the role of these basic particulars in informative discourse, particularly addressing the persistent philosophical doctrine that while a universal can function as either subject or predicate, a particular can only function as a subject. Strawson grapples with this question, presenting an answer framed in the notion of “completeness”. He argues that the subject of an informative statement is complete in a sense not applicable to the predicate. Basic particulars serve as paradigm cases illustrating this completeness, and from this foundation, the concept extends naturally to include other cases, including universals functioning as subjects.

Strawson introduces a speculative theory of “feature-concepts” in Chapter 6, aiming to support his notion of completeness. He believes this theory reveals the “ultimate or atomic facts” presupposed by both particulars and universals in our ordinary discourse. Despite his attempt to clarify the metaphysical role of these feature-concepts, it remains unclear. Chapter 7 seeks to reinforce the conclusions of the latter part of the book, employing a similar approach as seen in the first half. Strawson explores the possibility of devising a language that operates without reference to particulars. His answer, utilizing his theory of feature-concepts, suggests theoretical feasibility but emphasizes the impracticality and complexity of such a language. Ultimately, he contends that our ordinary language, confidently referencing the existence of particulars, provides a simpler and more practical medium for meeting our needs. In his argument, Strawson asserts that any alternative to our current method would require the terms used as subjects to possess the same kind of completeness present in the particulars of our existing conceptual system, thereby confirming the soundness of his general solution and theory of completeness.

Ontological priority

Strawson employs prerequisites for (re)identification to establish relations of “ontological priority” among different types of particulars. “Ontological priority is defined in terms of our capacity to pick out and talk about things; Strawson suggests that identifiability of at least some individuals of a given kind is necessary for the inclusion of that kind in our ontology,

and thus connects identifiability with ontological commitment, and identifiability-dependence with priority of ontological commitment” (Haack, 1979: 362). His focus is not on traditional ontological dependencies, but rather on connections and dependencies within various aspects of our conceptual framework. The ontological priority of type X over type Y doesn’t imply that X constitutes or explains Y in the traditional sense. Instead, objects of type X are ontologically prior to objects of type Y if and only if the identification and reidentification of X are presupposed by the identification and reidentification of Y, but not vice versa. This involves “non-symmetrical relations” of “identifiability dependence” (Glock, 2012: 399).

According to Strawson, two types of particulars qualify as ontologically basic in this sense and merit the Aristotelian label of a (primary) substance: material bodies and persons. H. Glock criticized Strawson’s concept of a material body: “Strawson’s concept of a material body is “very weak”. Any relatively permanent occupant of a space qualifies if it is accessible to observation, at least of the visual kind” (Glock, 2012: 400). This encompasses not only mountains but also holograms, despite the latter lacking tactile properties typically associated with material bodies. Why are material bodies, in this sense, considered basic? Strawson’s succinct answer is that only they possess the features necessary to sustain the unitary and persistent spatiotemporal framework required for reidentification: three-dimensionality, relative permanence, and observability.

In Strawson’s approach various types of particulars are “identifiability-dependent” on material bodies or persons. In a more detailed exploration, theoretical constructs can only be reidentified through their connection to macroscopic phenomena. On the other hand, mental events and sense data rely on the persons possessing them. Some argue that we can directly observe a patient’s pain in their face. But the pain is not localized only in the face but in other zones and is visible through some kind of facial expressions.

Strawson’s rationale for prioritizing bodies is the direct identification made possible by placing them in a comprehensive spatiotemporal framework established through other bodies. Davidson argues that events/processes can similarly be identified through the causal nexus. If speaker can locate bodies in vicinity around itself, all other bodies should be accessible through existing spatiotemporal relations. Events have a different nature. The speaker does not have the opportunity to arrange all events in a complete causal order. Strawson notes that only the spatiotemporal framework that forms material bodies is “humanly constructible”.

Descriptive metaphysics stands in opposition to traditional metaphysics, whose aim is to uncover the hidden essence of reality beneath its apparent manifestations. In Descriptive Metaphysics, Strawson’s objective is not merely to delineate the structure of reality but to elucidate the human conceptual framework – how people “think about the world” or the tangible structure of our understanding of the world. Unlike the perspectives of naturalism and Quine’s advancements, Strawson asserts that philosophy should not engage in a competition with science to provide descriptions of causality and reality. Instead, the role of philosophy lies in describing the foundations of our conceptual framework.

Ordinary language philosophy and reality

This transition from focusing on reality to our thoughts or discourse about reality reflects the linguistic turn in analytic philosophy. Various thinkers, including Wittgenstein (both in his early and late stages of development), most logical positivists, and Oxford conceptual analysts, share the common belief that philosophical problems don’t primarily stem from factual unknowns or errors in understanding the world. Instead, they arise from the confusion and paradoxes inherent in how we articulate or conceive of the world.

The philosophy of ordinary language and the philosophy of ideal language are pivotal branches of linguistic philosophy. While the former aimed to address philosophical questions by elucidating existing language through analysis or description, the latter sought to sidestep these questions by reforming ordinary language. In the works of Carnap and Quine, logical analysis progressed into logical explanation. This involved substituting philosophically problematic statements or constructions with alternatives that effectively serve the cognitive purposes of the original, all the while avoiding pitfalls like ambiguity and undesirable ontological commitments. For instance, this might entail replacing discussions about numbers with discussions about sets of sets.

Strawson advocated for the descriptive approach, asserting that philosophical problems originate from the actual linguistic system. Advocates of ideal language philosophy suggested introducing a new system, and according to Strawson, the outcome of this move is to essentially set aside existing problems, provided the connection between ordinary and ideal systems is not clearly defined and understood. Once proficiency is attained in analyzing ordinary language, the need for ideal language diminishes. This is because philosophical problems arise not from issues inherent in ordinary language but from its distortion within philosophical theories.

Strawson's argument doesn't serve as a defense of descriptive metaphysics against the traditional perspective advocating for metaphysics to explore the essence of reality. The British philosopher opposes Wittgenstein's therapeutic approach to philosophy, where the philosopher's main role is that of a diagnostician and therapist, specifically addressing errors stemming from a misinterpretation of language. Strawson emphasizes the primary objective of delineating a conceptual framework that positively enhances our self-understanding.

How can metaphysics engage with the nature of reality? Strawson frequently draws on Kant's legacy in his writings, as the theoretical groundwork for both the linguistic turn and, more specifically, descriptive metaphysics. Kant's philosophy highlights the inherent complexity of the traditional conception of metaphysics or ontology. Unlike empirical science, metaphysics asserts itself as a form of a priori knowledge, meaning knowledge not contingent on our experiences.

In contrast to formal logic and conceptual analysis, descriptive metaphysics purports to depict or elucidate reality, thus laying claim to synthetic a priori knowledge. Kant's central inquiry revolves around the possibility of knowledge when experience is the sole means of uncovering reality. According to the German philosopher, synthetic a priori truths cannot be *de re*. Rather than delineating the mind-independent essences of objects, these truths articulate "necessary preconditions for the experience of objects". Consequently, the ontological quest for entities in reality transforms into a reflective examination of our conceptual scheme.

Williamson has asserted that reasoning alone can yield knowledge of reality, dismissing appeals to Kantian authority as unsupported by enduring arguments (Williamson, 2004: 111). However, this assertion, at most, addresses Kant's explanation of synthetic a priori knowledge through transcendental idealism and does not tackle the Kantian challenge to explain how *de re* synthetic a priori truths might be possible. Williamson himself acknowledges the lack of a full understanding of how thinking can provide new knowledge but asserts that logic and mathematics constitute overwhelming evidence of its possibility.

Strawson's descriptive metaphysics holds its ground in this context. However, the philosopher encounters another challenge. In his view, space is defined by the relationships among material bodies, meaning that material bodies serve as the structural components of spatial organization. These bodies are pivotal for the referential identification and re-identification of all other entities. According to transcendental idealism, an individual can only have a priori knowledge of what

they themselves impose upon things. Synthetic a priori propositions express characteristics imposed on the objects of experience by our cognitive apparatus during the processing of sensations. Strawson contends that in this aspect, transcendental idealism is open to criticism.

When transcendental idealism is set aside, Strawson argues that synthetic a priori propositions become a residue of statements that are neither analytic nor empirical, although they possess a distinct character or status. For example, the idea that empirical reality constitutes a unified spatiotemporal system doesn't seem contingent. If someone were to describe a type of thing and events related to it but insisted that the object had no location relative to here, and those events had no temporal relation to the present within our temporal system, we would interpret it as suggesting that the events hadn't truly occurred, and the thing didn't genuinely exist. In expressing this, we reveal how we engage with the concept of reality. Strawson concludes that we are grappling with something that conditions our entire way of talking and thinking, and this is why we perceive it as non-contingent. "Hence, it is 'not contingent' that empirical reality forms a single, unified, spatiotemporal system" (Haack, 1979: 362).

If we take to account that something shapes our entire manner of communication, it's not a straightforwardly explanation why philosophers should consider it non-contingent. The propositions of descriptive metaphysics can be considered as an expression of the norms of representation in Wittgenstein's understanding – in other words, as certain rules that guide the meaningful use of words by the speaker. The main ideas of descriptive metaphysics should be defined as an expression of the norms of representation in Wittgenstein's understanding.

- (i) Every event is spatiotemporally related to every other event and
- (ii) Every event has a cause.

Statement (ii) is related to the principle of causation. It enables the speaker to infer from any identified event that there must be a cause for that event, known or unknown to the speaker.

However, such operation (ii) has disadvantages. The human conceptual scheme does not consider the concept of an "uncaused event" to be meaningless. If one morning the speaker sees dinosaur tracks on the ceiling, he has reason to abandon the search for an explanation, perhaps because the laws of nature deny the possibility of such a fact. However, the appearance of tracks on the ceiling will still be an event for the speaker. Any physical change in space and time qualifies as an event, even if a causal explanation cannot be found. Thus, the term "event" and the linguistic rules governing its use inherently do not include the requirement of being caused. The same applies to (i).

For Kant, propositions (i) and (ii) are analytic. However, in his teaching there are no convincing arguments in favor of the fact that there is a conceptual necessity. Strawson would explain it as follows – we have the ability to know a priori not only "what we ourselves have put into them", but only what we have included in the concept of things or objects of experience. A concept is a product of human thinking.

Due to their constitutive role in the conceptual scheme, propositions (i) and (ii) achieve a priori status. But not all a priori propositions can be reduced to definitions or explanations. To solve this problem, one must assume that not all conceptual or analytic truths are trivial. Upon further investigation, it may turn out that they are non-trivial precisely because they are not definitional in nature.

Consider proposition (i). As indicated by Strawson's own analysis, the connection between the concept of an event and that of a unified spatiotemporal framework is facilitated by the notion of reality. Notably, (i) doesn't merely follow from a more general principle stating that everything real is part of a unified spatiotemporal framework. While facts are real, they are not spatially or temporally located, as highlighted by Strawson.

Likewise, in the case of (ii), events must be deemed caused not because random and chaotic changes don't qualify as events, but rather because persistently chaotic events cannot serve as possible objects of self-conscious experience. The validity of this claim remains a subject of contention. However, if anything can substantiate the *a priori* status of propositions (i) and (ii), it is the intricate interplay among diverse concepts. Strawson effectively demonstrates that descriptive metaphysics holds the potential to establish such intricate conceptual connections, spanning ontological notions like causation, space, and time, and epistemological notions like experience (Glock, 2012: 407-411).

The study of cosmological systems requires a clear definition and the selection of an appropriate methodology. Chinese cosmology is characterized by a close connection between the concept of the universe and socio-cultural and political factors (the union of politics and doctrine). It is important to approach the cosmological theory as a whole system. But most of the approaches, on the contrary, propose to separate the view, which gives rise to a whole series of binary oppositions: philosophy and history, ideas and institutions, words and deeds, culture and politics.

The historical approach considers Chinese cosmology as a political history. In contrast, the philosophical approach considers the cosmological system as a way of thinking, a product of the mind or a philosophical school. This in turn tempts the researcher to consider, for example, Chinese cosmology in comparison with Western philosophy and science, which is not always appropriate. This creates a biased view where cosmology is seen as a philosophical school that gives ideas ontological and analytical priority, relegating socio-cultural and political factors to the background. A mind-centric approach significantly limits cosmology. A large layer of symbolic and cultural material escapes the researcher's field of view. (Wang, 2000: 4-9)

Historical and philosophical approaches made a significant contribution to the development of cosmology. However, no single approach is universal and sufficient. Strawson solved a similar problem, returning metaphysics to the field of analysis of representatives of analytical philosophy. It is his approach that in the future can provide the necessary tools for the analysis of non-European cosmologies as integral systems that include a whole complex of socio-cultural and political factors.

Conclusion

In the context of Anglo-American philosophy, the successor to positivism is ordinary language philosophy – or, to provide a more precise descriptor, the theory asserting that the meaning of verbal expressions, including philosophical concepts, is revealed through their established usage. It continues to uphold certain key tenets of positivism, such as the idea that the philosopher's duty is to oversee not the domain of truth, which belongs to science, but the more fundamental realm of meaning.

While ordinary language philosophy maintains some continuity with positivism, it deviates on several important doctrines. One such departure is from the positivist doctrine that rendered metaphysics meaningless. Ordinary language philosophy embraces the conviction that any expressions successfully used in various forms of cultural life have sense in their specific contexts of use. Consequently, it acknowledges a broader range of sensible expressions than positivists, who limited us to logical tautologies and verifiable empirical information.

Strawson's application of the methodology of linguistic philosophy, particularly the philosophy of natural language, to return metaphysics to the field of view of analytical philosophers suggests that this methodology has significant prospects for the study of non-European cosmological systems, in particular Chinese cosmology. Classical approaches

to cosmology – historical and philosophical – have significant limitations. They break the integrity of the system by offering a key focus either on political history or on ontology and philosophical concepts. The methodology of everyday language makes it possible to consider the cosmological system in its integrity – considering the socio-cultural and political factors inherent in Chinese cosmology.

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