

Book reviews
Нови заглавия

TRUTH AND MEANING. CATEGORIES OF LOGICAL ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE BY TODOR POLIMENOV

Polimenov, T. (2018). *Truth and Meaning. Categories of Logical Analysis of Language*. Sofia: University Press “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 386 pp.

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Years before defending his PhD thesis on Gottlob Frege’s logical breakthroughs, Todor Polimenov made a name in the Bulgarian contemporary philosophy with his excellent commentaries and translations of some of the most important Fregean pieces. A few years ago, I wrote that Todor Polimenov is the ‘father of the Frege studies in Bulgaria’. I still hold this opinion today.

Polimenov has now authored a second book – *Truth and Meaning* – which came out just a few months ago and which is in many ways linked to the name and the achievements of the originator of modern logic. It can hardly be otherwise since the logical analysis of language is applying all the techniques of modern logic inherited from Frege.

The book, however, is *not* about how logical analysis of language is to be conducted. Polimenov’s aim is stated explicitly at several occasions in the book and it is this: “to build the theory in which the instruments of logical analysis are created, *i.e.* the theory of introducing the concepts by means of which it [the analysis] explores problematic phenomena.” (p. 98).

Truth and Meaning is very clearly structured in two parts – a historical one, bearing the title of “History of Logical Analysis of Language”, which includes the first eight chapters, and a systematic-philosophical one, entitled “Categories of Logical Analysis of Language”, where the rest of the chapters from the ninth to the twenty second are situated. As the title of the second part shows (it is, in essence, a repetition of the book’s title) this second part is the more important one, it “carries” the theoretical weight of the work. The first historical part, however, by no means is to be neglected: it is requisite for understanding the whole book and in my opinion, it is here that the “bridges” between *Truth and Meaning* (2018) and Polimenov’s first voluminous work *Substances, Universals, and Propositions. Metaphysics and Philosophy of Language* (2013, Sofia: Vulcan 4, 213 pp.) are to be discerned.

The writing of *Truth and Meaning* is led by a powerful ambition, the ambition to close the circle of the basic notions of logical analysis of language. As pointed above, this is done in the systematic part of the book. The start is given in chapter nine where Polimenov discusses how Aristotle and Frege define logic, and especially what is the fundamental notion from which logic begins. For the traditional logicians this is the notion of *concept* and thus that of mental representation while for Frege it is the notion of *truth* and thus – that of proposition. According to Polimenov, from here it is a small step to identify the notion of *speech act* as the starting point of investigating and constructing a system of categories of the logical analysis of language, and Polimenov consequently makes this move.

From chapter nine henceforth Polimenov is consistently unfolding step by step the main notions of the logical analysis of language, such as *truth condition*, *elementary sentence*, *predicate*, *second-order predicate*, *singular term*, *definite description*, *proper name*, *intension*, *extension*, *proposition*, *concept*, *class*, etc. This is often done on the basis of careful examination of interesting examples which help the reader both to better realize what had been introduced prior to the example and to gain a deeper understanding of how the chain of searched for categories are related to one another.

This gives the book the flavor of ‘an introduction to a specific style of philosophizing’ (p. 14) and I would strongly recommend it to the students in their early stages of familiarizing themselves with Analytic philosophy. The readers, however, should be reminded that the book is not an ‘easy read’ in the trivial sense: the readers are advised to pay attention to Polimenov’s recommendation in the beginning to go through Evgeni Latinov’s book *Symbolic Logic* (2010) in advance which might be beneficial for understanding *Truth and Meaning*. Nevertheless, the book is meant to be readable by itself and seeks to not presuppose the techniques of symbolic logic as well as very special philosophical knowledge.

In conclusion, I would like to once again emphasize Polymenov’s original and very fruitful approach applied in identifying, ordering and presenting a system of categories of the logical analysis of language. In my opinion, this approach explains the undoubted success of the study and the usefulness of the book to all who would wish to deepen their knowledge on a specific aspect of contemporary Analytic philosophy.

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