We bring to light a movement in the early history of analytic philosophy which connects in with the European intellectual legacy that finally shaped the role of language in philosophy. This development and its cultural heritage was the Dutch Significs Movement. In the beginning, it was driven by linguistically-minded philosophers and cultural reformists. It was a strong candidate for the basis of communication and meaning. Its initial ideas are found in the Dutch writer-reformist Frederik van Eeden's Nachlass dating from the late 19th century. Its heyday coincided with that of the Vienna Circle, but the remnants were upheld much longer until bleakly faded in the turmoil of the mid-century's analytic and symbolic genre. The signific forum took an open-minded stance towards philosophy and alienated itself from the supporters of symbolic logic characteristic to the Vienna Circle.

Brouwer, van Dantzig, de Haan, Borel and Brouwer's teacher Mannoury were the most visible figures. Though Brouwer was one of the driving forces in the early phases, Mannoury was its most influential advocate when Brouwer's decision to dissociate himself from academic life took reality.

The ideology lived on for over five decades. Its origins go to a pre-VC era, to Lady Welby's research on cultural and language philosophy. Welby and van Eeden were planning the first summit of what was to become the Signific Circle already in 1907. The early stages thus coincide with that of the early meetings in Vienna that prefigured the Schlick Circle. During 1917-22, attempts were made to institutionalise significs in Amsterdam as a new philosophy department. When the department soon closed down, the Signifische Kring was summoned in 1922-26. The activities were broadened into International Society for Significs which lived on until 1960s without ever gaining much international reputation. But the lack of support does not explain the demise. Significs even circumvented the sin of empiricism, the sorting of truths into factual and conceptual.

The movement died in the barrage of Anglo-Saxon philosophy of language and the analytic phase in philosophy that associated its roots with Fregean thought. The goal was to achieve a much finer analysis of language. Unlike empiricism, significs did not venerate science at the expense of metaphysics. It aimed at tackling the lack of understanding, misinterpretations and ambiguities of language in society, especially scientific communication by analysing natural language in terms of layers that its pragmatic and functional analysis would reveal.

What was the core idea? Welby was in close touch with linguists. The semantics sprouted up from them covered lexical meaning, but Welby took it to cover sentences, taking a better note of the psychological state of utterer and interpreter and the context that shapes meaning. Significs boasted semantics as the point of departure in the analysis of language. Including Michel Breal's early lexical studies on semantic change and the later, truth-conditional formal logic and the language/metalanguage distinction, significs was not limited to such opposing strands. Neither did it bog down in explaining pragmatics in speech acts. Its aim was to create a functional analysis of language based on the layering into analytic and synthetic branches as well as into several functional compartments. Because of such dissentions, one should not attempt to locate the kindred spirit of significs within the origins of analytic philosophy. Rather, its roots go back to Peirce's pragmaticist theory of signs, semeiotics. And Peirce was not an outsider to the analytic genre. Significs has also been considered to be along Morris' psychological semiotics. Although Morris and Mannoury were personal acquaintances, the convergence was meek. There are further links: Wittgenstein's aunt Clara visited van Eeden along with her sister to study Dutch. Van Eeden was Welby's friend. Van Eeden wrote in 1893-97 a treatise that is poorly known but was quite ahead of its time, "Redekunstige grondslag van verstandhouding". When reprinted in 1925, it was hailed as the first work in the philosophy of language in the Netherlands.

Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* is reminiscent of van Eeden's treatise in terms of style and, at places, content. Wittgenstein was likely to have made acquaintance concerning Welby's work when he was a post-graduate student in Manchester in 1908. Ogden had worked as Welby's assistant in his youth and become later Wittgenstein's colleague in Cambridge. Wittgenstein’s reception of Ogden's book was lukewarm. One can only conjecture that Wittgenstein veiled his possible intellectual debt to Welby or van Eeden.

The connections between significians and their contemporaries, including their role in the origins of analytic philosophy have been neglected by historians. I suggest further probing including biographical data and the role of language in significs and early analytic philosophy.