

## HUSSERL'S CRITIQUE OF BRENTANO IN THE *LOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS*

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### 1. THE INVESTIGATIONS: A NEGLECTED MASTERPIECE

Edmund Husserl's *Logical Investigations* (*Logische Untersuchungen*, 1900-01)<sup>1</sup> is undoubtedly one of the most influential, but also among

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<sup>1</sup> E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 2 Bände (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1900-1901). Husserl himself oversaw the publications of four editions: a revised Second Edition of the *Prolegomena* and first five Investigations in 1913, a revised Edition of the Sixth Investigation in 1921, a Third Edition with minor changes in 1922, and a Fourth in 1928. A critical edition, which also includes Husserl's written emendations and additions to his own copies (*Handexemplar*), has appeared in the Husserliana series in two volumes: Volume XVIII, *Logische Untersuchungen*. Erster Band: *Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*. Text der 1. und der 2. Auflage, hrsg. Elmar Holenstein (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1975), and Volume XIX, *Logische Untersuchungen*. Zweiter Band: *Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*, in zwei Bänden, hrsg. Ursula Panzer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1984). The only English translation is: Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 2 Volumes, trans. J.N. Findlay (London/New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul/Humanities Press, 1970) which translates from the Second

the most difficult and challenging, philosophical works of the twentieth-century. In this monumental work, extraordinarily rich in philosophical insights and rigorous conceptual analyses, Husserl inaugurated a new conception of phenomenology that would be hugely influential on subsequent European philosophy. However, unlike major works of similar stature, e.g., Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations*, or Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Husserl's work has not received much in the way of extended critical and textual exegesis and commentary.<sup>2</sup> Many of its suggestive conceptual clarifications (e.g. of the notion of mental content) still remain unexploited and undeveloped, while others (e.g. the conception of formal ontology, the notions of perceptual *Sinn* and categorial intuition, the accounts of naming and direct reference) are only now beginning to receive the critical attention they deserve. Of course, the immense length, density and complexity of the *Investigations*, its convoluted structure and meandering thought-paths, its repetitious mode of presentation, constant retracing of steps, and reviewing and revising of provisional results, have exasperated readers and contributed to its comparative neglect. While Marvin Farber, an American student of

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Edition. Hereafter, the *Investigations* will be cited as 'LI' followed by the relevant Investigation number, paragraph number, page number in the English translation, and volume number and page number of the Husserliana (abbreviated to 'Hua') edition of the German text.

<sup>2</sup> There is a considerable literature on Husserl but not a great deal focusing exclusively on the *Investigations*. Some notable exceptions are Robert Sokolowski, "The Structure and Content of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*," *Inquiry* Vol. 14 (1971), pp. 318-50; René Schérer, *La Phénoménologie des "Recherches Logiques" de Husserl* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967); J. N. Mohanty, ed., *Readings on Edmund Husserl's Logical Investigations* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977) and the articles in Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Husserl's, published a paraphrase of the *Investigations* in 1943,<sup>3</sup> it was not until 1970 that John N. Findlay produced the first and only complete English translation. With the hundredth anniversary of its publication upon us, and with the phenomenological movement receding into history, it is time to begin the task of a more measured philosophical assessment of the *Logical Investigations*, which Husserl always termed his "breakthrough work, not so much an end as a beginning" (*ein Werk des Durchbruchs, und somit nicht ein Ende, sondern ein Anfang*, LI, p. 43; Hua XVIII 8).<sup>4</sup>

As a first step towards a philosophical re-evaluation of the *Investigations*, in this paper I want to concentrate on considering some central issues in the important Fifth Investigation, where Husserl offers his own attempt to overcome the deficiencies of the existing 'descriptive psychology' as practised within the school of Brentano and Stumpf (his own mentors in philosophy) and sets out to provide his own *phenomenological* account of consciousness and the structure of intentional acts as part of his overall goal of describing and accounting for the constitution of meaning in general. Here Husserl faces up squarely to the legacy of Brentano. His central focus in the Fifth Investigation is Brentano's account of the three fundamental classes (*Grundklasse*) of mental acts, namely, presentations (*Vorstellungen*), judgements, and 'phenomena of love and hate', and his supposed 'well-known' law that all mental phenomena are either presentations or founded on presentations (LI V § 10, p. 556; Hua XIX/1 383). In

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<sup>3</sup> Marvin Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1943).

<sup>4</sup> See E. Husserl, 'Entwurf einer "Vorrede" zu den *Logischen Untersuchungen* (1913),' hrsg. Eugen Fink, *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* Vol. 1 No. 1 (February 1939), pp. 107-133 and No. 2 (May 1939), pp. 319-339, esp. § 6, p. 124; trans. P.J. Bossert and C.H. Peters as *Introduction to the Logical Investigations. Draft of a Preface to the Logical Investigations*, trans. P.J. Bossert and C.H. Peters (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1975), p. 32. Hereafter 'Draft Preface'.

deference to his master, Husserl treats this law softly (LI V § 24), saying that it is undoubtedly self-evident, but that other matters have been read into it, and hence he is seeking to ascertain its true interpretation. But, in his analysis, Husserl moves completely beyond Brentano's framework in a way that has not been fully appreciated. Of central importance, of course, to Husserl's radical departure from Brentano, is his consideration of the true nature of judgement and his account of categorial intuition in the Sixth Investigation, but the groundwork is laid in the discussion of Brentano's law in the Fifth.<sup>5</sup>

Husserl considers and then refines Brentano account of mental acts and the inner structure of intentional experiences both by questioning its consistency and conceptual sense and especially through a recourse to what he claims is evidence given immediately in intuition (something on which he puts greater stress in the Second Edition or 'B-Edition', see the paragraphs added to LI V § 27, for example). This sustained critique of Brentano signals the way in which Husserl was already conceiving phenomenology in the First Edition ('A-Edition') of the *Investigations*, and indicates the direction his work would take during the subsequent decade leading to the publication of the Revised Edition of the *Investigations* and to the new account of phenomenology in *Ideas I* in 1913. It is clear, despite his attestations in the First Edition, that Husserl was already conceiving of phenomenology in opposition to descriptive psychology, a move more clearly underscored in the Second Edition, when descriptive psychology is seen as inescapably linked to naturalism and to the modern psychological tradition since Locke. That is, Husserl was already focusing on the *inner essential structure* of intentional acts, their contents and objects, independent of all reference to real psychic episodes with their causal structure and

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<sup>5</sup> A very useful commentary is found in Markus S. Stepanians, *Frege und Husserl über Urteilen und Denken* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1998), pp. 246-283.

interconnections, and conceiving in terms of their ideal conceptual interconnections.

As is well known, following his studies in mathematics, Husserl read philosophy with Franz Brentano in Vienna from 1884 to 1886. He subsequently held his teacher in the highest regard. Even after his stay in Vienna, Husserl continued to collect diligently Brentano's lecture notes, including the transcripts of Brentano's lectures on descriptive psychology (1887-91), his investigation of the senses, as well as his studies of fantasy and memory. In subsequent years, Husserl would occasionally visit with Brentano and continued to send him his publications and to correspond with him, often on technical issues in mathematics and geometry, until Brentano's death in 1917.<sup>6</sup> On his own admission, Husserl claims to have been particularly drawn to Brentano's project for a reform of Aristotelian logic in his 1884-5 lecture course, *Die elementare Logik und die in ihr nötigen Reformen* ('Elementary Logic and its Necessary Reform'). Husserl recalled in his 1919 memorial essay for Brentano: "Brentano's pre-eminent and admirable strength was in logical theory".<sup>7</sup> Husserl seemed especially to be interested in and critical of Brentano's novel structure of judgements and his construal of judgement as assertion or denial of an

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<sup>6</sup> See Herbert Spiegelberg, "On the Significance of the Correspondence Between Franz Brentano and Edmund Husserl," in R. M. Chisholm and R. Haller, eds, *Die Philosophie Franz Brentanos* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1978), pp. 95-116.

<sup>7</sup> E. Husserl, "Erinnerungen an Franz Brentano", originally published in Oskar Kraus, ed., *Franz Brentano. Zur Kenntnis seiner Lebens und seiner Lehre* (München, 1919), pp. 151-67, reprinted in E. Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1911-1921)*, hrsg. Thomas Nenon und Hans Rainer Sepp, Husserliana XXV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1987), pp. 304-315, see esp. p. 309 [Hereafter 'Hua XXV' and page number], trans. by R. Hudson and P. McCormick, "Recollections of Franz Brentano," in Peter McCormick and Frederick Elliston, eds, *Husserl Shorter Works* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), pp. 342-351, esp. p. 345.

object. Indeed, Husserl, no doubt exaggerating somewhat, later presented his own *Logical Investigations* as an attempt to do justice to the extraordinary genius of Brentano by overcoming his having based his researches on psychologist grounding.<sup>8</sup>

It is usually assumed that Husserl – at least in the First Edition of the *Investigations* – was a relatively close follower of Brentano until his conversion to transcendental philosophy, an impression which is reinforced by Husserl's own statements. Husserl never ceased to hold Brentano – along with Weierstrass – in the highest esteem as his revered teachers, but, as he put it in his “Recollections”, he was not destined to remain a member of the ‘Brentano school’.<sup>9</sup> Even years later Husserl continued to pay tribute to his former teacher, e.g., in his 1936 work *Crisis of the European Sciences*<sup>10</sup> § 68:

This is the place to recall the extraordinary debt we owe to Brentano for the fact that he began his attempt to reform psychology with an investigation of the peculiar characteristics of the psychic (in contrast to the physical) and showed intentionality to be one of these

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<sup>8</sup> See the fragment Pl. 55, Konvolut F I 21, p. 47 reprinted in E. Husserl, *Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre (1908-1914)*, ed. U. Melle, Husserliana XXVIII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988), p. 460: “Brentano steht freilich selbst auf psychologischem Boden und hat ebensowenig wie die Idee der rein idealen Bedeutungslogik so nicht die einer idealen Bedeutungsetik erkannt. Und doch liegen in Brentanos Lehren die fruchtbaren Keime für alle weiteren Entwicklungen, und ich betrachte es als schönste Frucht meinen *Logischen Untersuchungen*, dass man nun endlich anfängt, diesem ausserordentlichen Denker gerecht zu werden”.

<sup>9</sup> See Robin Rollinger, *Husserl's Position in the School of Brentano* (Utrecht: Dept of Philosophy - Utrecht University, 1996).

<sup>10</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, hrsg. W. Biemel, Hua VI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1962), trans. David Carr as *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (Evanston: Northwestern U.P., 1970). Hereafter ‘*Crisis*’.

characteristics; the science of “psychic phenomena” then has to do everywhere with conscious experiences. (*Crisis* § 68, pp. 233-4; Hua VI 236)

But, crucially, Husserl continues:

Unfortunately, in the most essential matters he remained bound to the prejudices of the naturalistic tradition (*in den Vorurteilen der naturalistischen Tradition*); these prejudices have not yet been overcome if the data of the soul (*die seelischen Daten*), rather than being understood as sensible (whether of outer or inner “sense”), are [simply] understood as data having the remarkable character of intentionality; in other words, if dualism, psychophysical causality, is still accepted as valid. (*Crisis*, § 68, p. 234; Hua VI 236)

In other words, Husserl found in Brentano a naturalistic distortion of a true science of the mental. As Husserl himself confessed, in a late 1937 letter to Marvin Farber, it took him many years to extract himself from under the shadow of Brentano:

Even though I began in my youth as an enthusiastic admirer of Brentano, I must admit that I deluded myself, for too long, and in a way hard to understand now, into believing that I was a co-worker on his philosophy, especially, his psychology. But in truth, my way of thinking was a totally different one from that of Brentano, already in my first work, namely the *Habilitation* work of 1887, in part worked out in some detail in *Philosophy of Arithmetic* of 1891. In a formal sense, Brentano asks for and provides a psychology whose whole topic is the “psychic phenomena” which he on occasion defines also as “consciousness of something”. Though his psychology is nothing less than a science of intentionality, the proper problems of intentionality never dawned on him. He even failed to see that no given experience of consciousness can be described without a description of appertaining an “intentional object as such” (for example, that this perception of the desk can only be described, when I describe this desk as *what* and *just as* it is perceived). Brentano had no inkling of intentional implication, of intentional modifications, of problems of constitution, etc.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Husserl’s letter to Marvin Farber, 18 June 1937, translated in Kah Kyung Cho, “Phenomenology as Cooperative Task: Husserl-Farber Correspondence

Husserl's departure from Brentano was in fact a departure from the spirit of *psychologism*, an issue addressed in the *Prolegomena*, from *naturalism*, publicly rejected in *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*, from the attempt to think of phenomenology in terms of a psychology of whatever kind, an issue which preoccupied Husserl to the end of his days, and, in a way, a departure from the whole spirit of modern philosophy since Locke.<sup>12</sup> While the later Husserl (in the *Crisis*) continued to recognise the way from psychology as both the historical and in some sense the natural way into transcendental phenomenology, it is in a spirit of renunciation since psychology failed to take a proper view of the psychic and was forced into psychophysical dualism:

Psychology failed, however, because, even in its primal establishment (*Urstiftung*) as a new kind of [science] alongside the new natural science, it failed to inquire after what was essentially the only genuine sense of its task as the universal science of psychic being. Rather it let its task and method be set according to the model of natural science or according to the guiding idea of modern philosophy as objective and thus concrete universal science ... (*Crisis* § 57, p. 203; Hua VI 207).

In fact, as he confirms in his 1937 letter to Farber, Husserl had problems with Brentano's account of descriptive psychology more or less from the beginning of his career (germs of this critique are already evident in Husserl's first publication, *Philosophy of Arithmetic*, 1891), although he only came to articulate those problems in the course of

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during 1936-37," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* Vol 50, Supplement (Fall 1990), pp. 36-43.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, E. Husserl, *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927-31)*, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica Article, The Amsterdam Lectures "Phenomenology and Anthropology" and Husserl's Marginal Note in Being and Time, and Kant on the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. T. Sheehan and R.E. Palmer, *Collected Works VI* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997).



reflections over a longer period. In *Formal and Transcendental Logic*,<sup>13</sup> Husserl asserts that consciousness can be methodically uncovered so that one can directly see it in its performing and adds that

... Brentano's discovery of intentionality never led to seeing in it a complex of performances, which are included as *sedimented history* in the currently constituted intentional unity and its current manners of givenness – a history *that one can always uncover following a strict method*. (FTL § 97, p. 245; Hua XVII 252).

In other words, Brentano failed to recognise the promise of phenomenology. Husserl claimed that his own real breakthrough, never understood by Brentano, was to see the “universal *a priori* of correlation between experienced object and manners of givenness” which he claimed to have discovered in 1898 while writing the *Investigations* (see *Crisis* §48, p. 166n; Hua VI 169n.1). As the title of this section of the *Crisis* attests: Anything that is – whatever its meaning and to whatever region it belongs – is “an index of a subjective system of correlations” (*als Index eines subjektiven Korrelationsystems*, *Crisis* § 48, p. 165; Hua VI 168). Phenomenology became the new method for opening up an entire new research area quite distinct from any previous science, distinct from both logic and psychology.

Husserl then, eventually became Brentano's most trenchant and consistent critic, questioning the very bases of the latter's attempts to define the subject matter and method of psychology. Whereas most of Brentano's students, for example, Alexius Meinong, Kasimir Twardowski and even Carl Stumpf, accepted all Brentano's major

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<sup>13</sup> E. Husserl, *Formale und transzendente Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft. Mit ergänzenden Texten*, hrsg. Paul Janssen, Hua XVII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974), § 97, p. 251; trans. D. Cairns, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969), p. 245. Hereafter ‘FTL’ followed by paragraph number, page number of the English translation and Husserliana volume and page number.

premises and offered only minor alterations or additions to his descriptive psychology, Husserl, on the other hand, would ultimately reject the whole project as too embedded in naturalistic assumptions to be a genuinely radical and fundamental science of consciousness.

## 2. HUSSERL'S ATTEMPT TO APPLY DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY TO ARITHMETIC

In his *Habilitation* thesis, written at Halle under the direction of Carl Stumpf, *On the Concept of Number, Psychological Analyses*, printed, but not publicly distributed, in 1887 and later incorporated, as the first four chapters of his first published book, *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1891),<sup>14</sup> Husserl proposed 'psychological analyses' in the Brentanian sense. Although Brentano is rarely cited directly in this *Erstlingsbuch*, Husserl relies heavily on Brentano's distinction between physical and psychical relations to argue that the way we group items together in order to count them requires grasping higher level 'psychical' or 'metaphysical' relations between the items, as opposed to the more usual 'primary' or 'content' relations.

The structure of the *Philosophy of Arithmetic*, moreover, is organised around Brentano's distinction between 'authentic' (*eigentlich*) and 'inauthentic' (*uneigentlich*) presentations, distinguishing between the grasp of lower numbers (under ten, twelve or twenty, depending on which Husserl text we read) versus higher numbers which cannot be intuited directly and immediately and are given rather through symbols. Here, Husserl already signals his dissatisfaction with Brentano's way of discussing intentionality, but does acknowledge that psychical relations are intentional in that they are characterised by 'inexistence' (*Inexistenz*).

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<sup>14</sup> Both Husserl's *Habilitation*, *Über den Begriff der Zahl, Psychologische Analysen*, and his *Philosophie der Arithmetik* are reprinted in Husserl, *Philosophie der Arithmetik: Mit ergänzenden Texten (1890-1901)*, ed. Lothar Eley, Hua XII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970).

More than twenty years later, in his unpublished *Draft Preface* (*Entwurf zu einer Vorrede*) to the 1913 Edition of the *Investigations* Husserl acknowledges the importance of Brentano's concept of the psychical for helping think about relations between objects in a numbered group and also the appeal to 'inauthentic presentations' (*Draft Preface*, p. 34-35), but Husserl admits that he already had doubts that the concepts of *number* could in fact be gained that way – as opposed to the concept of a collection.

By 1901, in the Fifth Investigation, Husserl himself was referring to his 'deviating interpretation' from Brentano (LI V § 9, p. 553n; Hua XIX/1 378n), his 'departures' (*Abweichungen*) both from his master's 'convictions' (*Überzeugungen*) and his technical 'vocabulary' (LI V § 11, p. 557; Hua XIX/1 384). In the Sixth Investigation, Husserl speaks of separating "what is indubitably significant in Brentano's thought motivation from what is erroneous in its elaboration" (LI VI Appendix, pp. 858-9; Hua XIX/2 760). He wants to challenge Brentano's fundamental notion that 'presentations' are a distinct class of psychic acts which are found nested or embedded in all other acts. Instead, Husserl wants to argue that each class of objectivating acts has its own kind of objectivating, leading to a completely different construal of intentionality and of the essential relations between intentional acts.

### 3. THE STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATIONS

In order to situate our discussion of Husserl's critique of Brentano in the *Investigations*, let us briefly recall the aim and nature of the work. Husserl himself was the first to recognise that his work was not "one book or work in the literary sense" (LI, p. 46; Hua XVIII 11), but rather should be seen as a "systematically bound chain of investigations", "a series of analytical investigations" (*eine Reihe analytischer Untersuchungen*, LI, p. 259; Hua XIX/1 20), which would need

further elaboration through “resolute cooperation among a generation of research-workers” (LI, p. 256; Hua XIX/1 16-17). This work develops as a journal of philosophical discovery, an exemplification of his thought in progress. According to Husserl, the individual Investigations themselves proceed by lifting the reader from lower to higher levels in a ‘zig-zag manner’ (*im Zickzack*, LI, p. 261; Hua XIX/1 22), first employing concepts that are retrospectively given clarification in a reflective ‘turning back’ (*zurückkehren*). Indeed, Husserl’s whole approach has the character of such ‘backward questioning’ (*Rückfragen*).

The work is not meant to be a “systematic exposition of logic” (*eine systematische Darstellung der Logik*, LI III, p. 435; Hua XIX/1 228),<sup>15</sup> but rather aims to clear the ground towards such a system by offering an elaborate account of the ideal character of the objects and meanings employed by logic, and also by clarifying the conceptual nature and kinds of ideal acts of knowing (in the most general sense) involved in logical knowledge, specifically acts of intuiting, judging and so on. In the second volume of the *Investigations*, Husserl recognised that no systematic account of the nature of scientific knowledge could proceed on the basis of the sloppy mix of theories and presuppositions about the processes of signification, meaning and knowledge then current in philosophy and in the sciences. The whole approach to knowledge needed a complete overhaul, and hence Husserl does not want to draw on the tradition of epistemology of modern philosophy or of more recent empiricism or Neo-Kantianism. Thus, for example, in the Appendix to the Sixth Investigation, phenomenological clarification is needed to sort out the meanings of concepts of the psychic discussed

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<sup>15</sup> While not offering a “system of logic” Husserl hoped (in the First Edition) at least to be able to lay the ground-work for a “future construction (*Aufbau*) of logic”, see LI, Intro., § 5, Hua XIX/1 21 (A edition). Findlay translates the emended Second Edition version, where Husserl says he hopes to lay the ground-work “for a philosophical logic which will derive clearness from basic phenomenological sources” (LI, p. 260).

by Brentano in order to address fundamental epistemological questions (LI VI, Appendix, p. 859; Hua XIX/2 760). As Adolf Reinach would later put it, Husserl's phenomenology aimed to make appropriate distinctions among things people had treated as similar, and also to dispense with distinctions not present in reality.<sup>16</sup>

The first, stand-alone volume, *Prolegomena zur reinen Logik* (*Prolegomena to Pure Logic*), diagnoses and repudiates prominent mistaken views of logic and offers the strongest possible refutation of the then dominant *psychologistic* interpretation of logic, propounded by John Stuart Mill, Erdmann, and others, which Husserl viewed as leading to a sceptical relativism that threatened the very possibility of objective knowledge. Turning instead to an older tradition of logic stemming from Leibniz, Kant, Bolzano and Lotze, Husserl defends a vision of logic as a pure 'theory of science' (*Wissenschaftslehre*) - in fact, the 'science of science', in the course of which he carefully elaborates the different senses in which this pure logic can be transformed into a normative science or developed into a practical discipline or 'technology' (*Kunstlehre*). Some years later, in his 1906/7 lectures, *Introduction to Logic and Epistemology*,<sup>17</sup> Husserl characterised the work as a 'true breviary against psychologism' (Hua XXIV 201), which he describes, in strikingly religious language, as the 'original sin' (Hua XXIV 176) of philosophy, the 'sin against the Holy Spirit of philosophy' (Hua XXIV 176). For Husserl, the confusion of psychology and epistemology has bedevilled attempts to give a proper account of logic and of thought. This leads him to a reconsideration of epistemology through the introduction of a new point of view he calls 'phenomenology', a term already current in the school of Brentano but

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<sup>16</sup> See A. Reinach, "Concerning Phenomenology," trans. Dallas Willard, *The Personalist* Vol. 50 (1969), pp. 194-221.

<sup>17</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in die Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07*, hrsg. Ullrich Melle. Hua XXIV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1985). Hereafter 'Hua XXIV' followed by page number.

given a new orientation by Husserl. The *Prolegomena* itself does not give clear guidance as to how phenomenology is to distinguished from epistemology, although this topic does receive treatment in the Introduction to the Second Volume of the *Investigations*.

The second volume of the *Investigations*, subtitled *Investigations in Phenomenology and the Theory of Knowledge*, offers a series of extensive ‘analytical inquiries’ (*analytische Untersuchungen*) or ‘descriptive analyses’ into fundamental issues in epistemology and the philosophy of logic, including intricate philosophical discussions of issues in semiotics, semantics, mereology, formal grammar (the *a priori* study of the parts of any language whatsoever in regard to their coherent combination into meaningful unities), and the nature of conscious acts, especially presentations and judgements. These latter detailed descriptive psychological analyses of the essential structures of consciousness, in terms of intentional acts, their contents, objects and truth-grasping character, especially in the Fifth and Sixth Investigation, set the agenda for the emerging discipline Husserl fostered under the name *phenomenology*.

Husserl’s “phenomenological founding of logic” (*die phänomenologische Fundierung der Logik*, LI, Intro., p. 260; Hua XIX/1 22), that is, his clarification of the essential nature of logical knowledge as a preliminary to systematic formal logic and to science in general,<sup>18</sup> begins with his “phenomenology of logical experiences” (*Phänomenologie der logischen Erlebnisse*, LI, Intro., p. 252; Hua XIX/1 10). This aims to give descriptive understanding of the mental states and their “indwelling senses” with the aim of fixing the meanings of key logical concepts and operations, through elaborate and careful distinctions and

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<sup>18</sup> Husserl has various formulas to express the aim: “a philosophical laying down of the foundations of pure logic” (*eine philosophische Grundlegung der reinen Logik*, LI, p. 338; Hua XIX/1 112), the laying down of the “phenomenological foundations of pure logic” (*phänomenologische Fundamentierung der reinen Logik*, LI VI § 34, , p. 757; Hua XIX/2 643).

clarifications. Husserl begins from the existing technical language of Brentano: acts (*Akte*), presentations (*Vorstellungen*), judgements (*Urteile*), content (*Inhalt*), consciousness (*Bewusstsein*), and so on. For example, in the Fifth Investigation, Husserl carefully disambiguates the many senses the term ‘presentation’ current in discussions of his time (LI V § 44). He likewise gives an extended account of the various meanings of ‘content’ and ‘matter’. Husserl also finds that these terms may be legitimately used with different senses in different contexts with appropriate qualification. Much of his phenomenology in the Fifth Investigation is in fact conceptual clarification. How is this project to be understood?

#### 4. PHENOMENOLOGY, DESCRIPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND *ERKENNTNISTHEORIE*

In the *Investigations*, phenomenology is explained as an essentially neutral science, but, for the purposes of his inquiry into the foundations of logic, it is determined by essentially epistemological interests, and thus Husserl tends to equate phenomenology and epistemology, e.g., when he speaks of “[t]he epistemological or phenomenological groundwork of pure logic” (*Die erkenntnistheoretische, bzw. phänomenologische Grundlegung der reinen Logik*, LI, Intro. § 1, p. 250; Hua XIX/1 7). In the First Edition Husserl tended to move easily between three kinds of philosophical approach, which he tends to equate, namely: ‘phenomenology’, ‘descriptive psychology’ and *Erkenntnistheorie* (‘epistemology’, ‘theory of knowledge’), alternatively, *Erkenntniskritik* (‘critique of knowledge’).

Husserl tends to use the term ‘theory of knowledge’ in continuity with the Neo-Kantian tradition, to refer to the task of specifying the conditions for the possibility of objective knowledge, that is, how objectivity is accomplished in subjective acts of

consciousness.<sup>19</sup> Paul Natorp, for instance, had a similar approach, and was influential on Husserl while he was writing the *Investigations* (see LI V § 8). Husserl did not have a highly developed conception of epistemology in the First Edition, but returned to the subject in his 1906/7 lectures, *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge*, where he develops the structural relations between the critique of knowledge, formal ontology and formal logic. On this conception, the critique of knowledge is *first philosophy* (Hua XXIV § 31), which is in a sense prior to metaphysics, since only the proper clarification of the nature of objectivity in general can ground formal ontology and the material ontologies of the sciences.<sup>20</sup> After 1913, he tended not to portray his work as primarily theory of knowledge, and his subsequent evolution of the conception of phenomenological philosophy is a matter for another study, but he became aware that his earlier epistemological orientation had masked the true nature of the transcendental turn and been involved in another form of “epistemological psychologism” (*der erkenntnistheoretische Psychologismus*, see FTL § 56, p. 152; Hua XVII 160).

Descriptive psychology came from Brentano. In his lectures on *Descriptive Psychology* (1889), which Husserl had read in manuscript, Brentano had spoken of ‘descriptive psychology or descriptive phenomenology’ to differentiate this science from genetic or physiological psychology. Moreover, it was Brentano who first defined

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<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of Husserl’s epistemology, see Dallas Willard, “Knowledge,” in Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Husserl states a similar view of epistemology in his 1907 lectures, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*, Nachdruck der 2. erg. Auflage, hrsg. W. Biemel (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), p. 22, trans. Lee Hardy, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, Collected Works VIII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999), p. 19.



phenomena in the sense now used in phenomenology: a phenomenon is “what is perceived by us in the strict sense of the word”.<sup>21</sup>

The concept of *phenomenology*, provisionally introduced by Husserl in the Introduction to the *Investigations*, but uncovered gradually only during the course emerging fully-blown in the Fifth and Sixth, is not presented primarily as a *method* in the First Edition, but certainly is so considered by Husserl by the time of *Idea of Phenomenology* (1907, e.g., Hua II 23). In the First Edition of the *Investigations*, phenomenology is introduced as a presuppositionless mode of approaching epistemological concepts in order to exhibit them their conceptual contents and connections with other concepts with ‘clarity and distinctness’ (*Klarheit und Deutlichkeit*, LI, Intro., p. 252; Hua XIX/1 10). This clarification of concepts is achieved, not by linguistic discussions, but by tracing back these concepts to their ‘origin’ (*Ursprung*) in intuition.

In the First Edition, epistemology is said to be closely linked with “a pure descriptive phenomenology of the experiences of thinking and knowing” (LI, Intro., § 1, p. 249; Hua XIX/1 6), clearly indicating that Husserl already conceived of phenomenology as essentially broader, encompassing emotions, feelings and other ‘non-cognitive’ acts, which are not the specific concern of epistemology or logic. In 1907 he moves to a broader notion of a ‘phenomenology of experience’ and especially perception, whereas perception was only important in the *Investigations* as a component of knowledge.

In the *Selbstanzeige*, or author’s announcement, to the Second Volume of the *Investigations*, Husserl says that he is conducting a phenomenological clarification of logical acts of knowledge and not a “genetic-psychological clarification” (*genetisch-psychologische Erklärung*, Hua XIX/2 779). In his Introduction to the *Investigations*, Husserl

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<sup>21</sup> F. Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology*, trans. B. Müller (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 137. Hereafter ‘DP’.

explicitly identifies phenomenology with epistemological critique and ‘descriptive psychology’:

Phenomenology is descriptive psychology. Epistemological criticism is therefore in essence psychology, or at least capable of being built on a psychological foundation. (LI, Intro., p. 262; Hua XIX/1 24)

Husserl writes in the First Edition:

Phenomenology represents a field of neutral researches, in which several sciences have their roots. On the one hand, it serves as preparatory to *psychology* as an *empirical science*. It analyses and describes – in the specific guise of a phenomenology of thinking and knowing – the experiences of presentation, judgement and knowledge, experiences which should find their genetic clarification, their investigation according to empirical lawful connections. (LI, Intro. § 1, p. 249; Hua XIX/1 7)

In the Second Edition this paragraph is modified to read:

*Pure* phenomenology represents a field of neutral researches, in which several sciences have their roots. On the one hand, it serves *psychology* as an *empirical science*. Proceeding in purely intuitive fashion, it analyses and describes in their essential generality – in the specific guise of a phenomenology of thinking and knowing – the experiences of presentation, judgement and knowledge, experiences which, empirically treated as classes of real events in the context of animal natural reality, psychology submits to an empirical scientific probing.

In other words, Husserl is putting greater stress both on the role of intuition and on the idea of proceeding to grasping the essence. Both the A version and B version then proceed in the same manner:

Phenomenology, on the other hand, lays bare the ‘sources’ from which the basic concepts and ideal laws of pure logic ‘flow’, and back to which they must once more be traced, so as to give them all the ‘clearness and distinctness’ needed for an understanding, and for an epistemological critique of pure logic. (LI, Intro., § 1, p. 249-50 (translation modified); Hua XIX/1 7).

Husserl subsequently distanced himself from ‘descriptive psychology’ in his research notes from 1902 and in his public writings from 1903. While Husserl distinguishes both empirical and its sub-branch descriptive psychology from pure phenomenology, he leaves intact the claim that phenomenology subserves psychology as an empirical science. While psychology is a valuable empirical science, the reduction of meanings to psychological contents, i.e., ‘psychologism’, is a natural, ever present temptation to the mind (“at first inevitable, since rooted in grounds of essence”, LI, Intro. § 2, p. 253; Hua XIX/1 12), which can only be cured by phenomenological analysis. Only pure phenomenology, and not descriptive psychology, Husserl writes in the Second Edition, can overcome psychologism (LI, Intro. § 2, p. 253; Hua XIX/1 11-12).

In his 1902/3 lectures on epistemology, Husserl was already clarifying the distinction between descriptive psychology and phenomenology, which he characterises as a “pure theory of essences” (*reine Wesenslehre*).<sup>22</sup> In 1903, in his *Bericht über deutsche Schriften zur Logik in den Jahren 1895-1899*, for the first time in print, he explicitly repudiated his initial characterisation of the work as a set of investigations in ‘descriptive psychology’.<sup>23</sup> Repeating the language of

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<sup>22</sup> Two quotations (Ms. F I 26/83b and F I 26/12a) from the manuscript of Husserl’s lectures on *Erkenntnistheorie* are reproduced in the Editor’s Introduction to Hua XIX/1, pp. xxx-xxxii.

<sup>23</sup> E. Husserl, “Bericht über deutsche Schriften zur Logik in den Jahren 1895-1899,” *Archives für systematische Philosophie* Vol. 9 (1903) and Vol. 10 (1904), reprinted in Edmund Husserl, *Ansätze und Rezensionen (1890–1910)*, hrsg. B. Rang, Hua XXII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1979), pp. 162-258, trans. D. Willard, “Report on German Writings in Logic From the Years 1895-1899,” in E. Husserl, *Early Writings in the Philosophy of Logic and Mathematics*, trans. Dallas Willard, *Collected Works V* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), pp. 207-302. Hereafter ‘*Early Writings*’ and English page number; followed by Husserliana volume and page number.

the Introduction to the *Logical Investigations*, he calls for an ‘illumination’ (*Aufklärung*) of knowledge independent of metaphysics and of all relation to natural, real being, suggesting he is already moving towards the reduction:

This illumination requires a phenomenology of knowledge; for the lived experiences of knowing, wherein the origin of the logical Ideas lies, have to be fixed upon and analysed in the illumination, but in removal from all interpretation that goes beyond the real (*reellen*) content of those lived experiences. (*Early Writings*, p. 251; Hua XXII 206)

Husserl continues:

Phenomenology therefore must not be designated as “descriptive psychology” without some further qualification. In the rigorous and true sense it is not descriptive psychology at all. Its descriptions do not concern lived experiences, or classes thereof, of empirical persons; for of persons – of myself and of others, of lived experiences which are “mine” and “thine” – it knows nothing, assumes nothing. Concerning such matters it poses no questions, attempts no definitions, makes no hypotheses. In phenomenological description one views that which, in the strongest of senses, is given, just as it is in itself. (*Early Writings*, p. 251; Hua XXII 206-7).

Husserl goes on to say that phenomenology aims to arrive at a clear distinct understanding of the *essences* of the concepts and laws of logic through “adequate abstraction based on intuition”, a conception of ideating abstraction which will be sharpened over the years (in *Ideas* I, for instance). Unfortunately, a deeper analysis of ideating abstraction is beyond the scope of this paper, as we want to concentrate on Husserl’s struggles with the legacy of Brentano. However, it is worth pointing out that Husserl also departs from Brentano’s descriptive psychology in terms of his account of intuition. Brentano thought that *a priori* universal laws could be generated on the basis of single intuitions. Husserl went further in denying that intuitions need be

based on any factual occurrence in external or internal perception. Thus in the Second Edition of the *Investigations* Husserl added the following paragraph:

Assertions of phenomenological fact can never be epistemologically grounded in *psychological experience*, nor in *internal perception* in the ordinary sense of the word, but only in *ideational, phenomenological inspection of essence*. The latter has its illustrative start in inner intuition, but such inner intuition need not be actual internal perception or other inner experience, e.g. recollection: its purposes are as well or better served by any free fictions of inner imagination (*in freier Fiktion gestaltende Phantasie*) provided they have enough intuitive clarity. (LI V § 27, p. 607; Hua XIX/1 456).

Over the years between 1901 and 1913 Husserl refined his understanding of phenomenology as an eidetic science, and by the time of the Second Edition of the *Investigations* (1913) he had expunged most of the references to phenomenology as descriptive psychology and, throughout the work, had inserted phrases which emphasised the pure, *a priori*, essential nature of phenomenology, accessed through pure, immanent, essential intuition, without reference to reality or actuality. A typical example of these insertions is found in the Appendix to the Sixth Investigation:

Phenomenology is accordingly the theory of experiences in general, inclusive of all matters, whether real (*reellen*) or intentional, given in experiences, and evidently discoverable in them. Pure phenomenology is accordingly the theory of the essences (*die Wesenslehre*) of 'pure phenomena', the phenomena of a 'pure consciousness' or of a 'pure ego': it does not build on the ground, given by transcendent apperception, of physical and animal, and so of psycho-physical nature, it makes no empirical assertions, it propounds no judgements which relate to objects transcending consciousness: it establishes no truths concerning natural realities ... (LI VI, App. P. 862; Hua XIX/2 765).

In the same Appendix, Husserl emphasises that to doubt what is immanent in consciousness and given exactly as it is would be irrational

(*unvernünftig*, LI VI, Appendix, p. 864; Hua XIX/2 768). In other words, phenomenological method involves tracing concepts back to their sources in intuition although, in the Second Edition, Husserl insists that this is not to be understood as a kind of empirical-genetic investigation of how concepts arise in natural reality.

It was this attempt to secure the meanings of concepts in some kind of original intuition that led many philosophers to believe that Husserl had relapsed into the very psychologism he had abjured in the *Prolegomena*. Husserl acknowledged that his critics generally welcomed the *Prolegomena*, but thought that the Second Volume relapsed into precisely such psychologism. Such a worry was articulated later by Martin Heidegger,<sup>24</sup> but is also repeatedly referred to by Husserl at many points in his career. Thus, in his 1920 Foreword to the revised Sixth Investigation, Husserl challenges the apparently widespread accusation that he had rejected psychologism in the first volume of the *Investigations* only to fall back into it in the second (LI, Intro., p. 662; XIX/2 535).<sup>25</sup>

After 1913 Husserl increases the distance between phenomenology and all descriptive psychology (sometimes called ‘empirical phenomenology’ – see Hua II, Editor’s Preface, p. ix,<sup>26</sup> and Hua XIX/1 357 ll. 26-7), and even epistemology, which gradually drops out of the picture (it is mentioned only briefly in *Ideas* I § 62). Over the rest of his life, however, Husserl never left the question of the relation between psychology and phenomenology. Husserl recognised

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<sup>24</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Zur Sache des Denkens* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1969), trans. as “My Way to Phenomenology,” by Joan Stambaugh, in M. Heidegger, *On Time and Being* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 74-82.

<sup>25</sup> Husserl seems particularly stung by this criticism which he returned to many times, including in *Formal and Transcendental Logic* § 56, p. 152; Hua XVII 160-1.

<sup>26</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*, Nachdruck der 2. erg. Auflage, hrsg. W. Biemel, Hua II (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973).

that the confusion of the pure science of consciousness with psychology was inevitable, because, as he put it, rooted in grounds of essence. In the Second Edition of the *Investigations*, he recognised that the confusion arose, because the natural starting point is the psychological point of view (*die psychologische Einstellung*, LI V § 16, p. 576n.1; Hua XIX/1 441). This was also confirmed in the historical development of modern philosophy and science, as witnessed by the work of Brentano and others. In the *Crisis* Husserl also speaks of the way into phenomenology through psychology and gives an extended account of it.

##### 5. HUSSERL'S GROWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE BRENTANIAN FRAMEWORK

During the 1890s Husserl came to reflect more and more on the problems in Brentano's account chiefly through his reflection on Twardowski's essay on the distinction between content and object,<sup>27</sup> and in his draft essay on "Intentional Objects" (c. 1894-1898).<sup>28</sup> Husserl began to see more clearly the ambiguities that haunted Brentano's account of the structure of intentional acts. Brentano had been rather haphazard in his discussion of the content and object of intentional acts, and his use of the term 'inexistence' to characterise the intentional object had given rise to a generally unsatisfactory debate about the ontological status of intentional objects.<sup>29</sup> Husserl regarded

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<sup>27</sup> Kazimir Twardowski, *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen. Eine psychologische Untersuchung* (Vienna, 1894), trans. R. Grossmann, *On the Content and Object of Presentations. A Psychological Investigation* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977). For Husserl's draft review of Twardowski see *Early Writings*, op. cit., pp. 388-395; Hua XXII 349-56.

<sup>28</sup> *Early Writings*, op. cit., pp. 345-87; Hua XXII 303-48.

<sup>29</sup> For further discussion of Husserl's critique of Brentano's account of intentionality, see my, "Heidegger's Critique of Husserl's and Brentano's Accounts of Intentionality," *Inquiry* Vol. 43 No. 1 (March 2000), pp. 39-65,

the way this debate was developing – the discussion of non-existent objects - as entirely wrongheaded and set out to offer careful clarifications of key Brentanian terms, especially the terms ‘presentation’, ‘content’ (*Inhalt, Gehalt*), and ‘judgement’ (*Urteil*), and ultimately to radically question the most basic Brentanian distinction between inner and outer perception.

Husserl devotes a great deal of the Fifth Logical Investigation in particular to a careful unpacking of Brentano’s claims regarding the different definitions of consciousness in play, over the nature of intentionality and the kind of inner perception through which Brentano had claimed we were able to grasp the universal *a priori* laws governing the mental, especially the supposed law: ‘no mental act which is not either a presentation or based on a presentation’ (LI V, Intro., p. 534; Hua XIX/1 354). After an exhaustive analysis of the different senses of the term ‘presentation’, Husserl distinguishes various classes of acts including positing and non-positing acts and more generally his notion of ‘objectifying acts’ (LI V § 37) as a correct way of expressing what is true in Brentano’s loose conception of a presentation. Husserl also proposes a more general distinction between act-quality and matter to take care of features more crudely gathered under the name ‘content’. This ‘descriptive analysis’ (*descriptive Analyse*, LI V § 27, p. 611; Hua XIX/1 461), tortuous in its meticulous consideration of claim and counterclaim, actually represents Husserl doing phenomenology in his sense, deconstructing and criticising a philosophical claim in the light of a clear intuitive grasp of the matter itself.

What were Husserl’s problems with Brentano? Brentano wanted to specify both the domain and the method of psychology to secure its independence as a strict science. The domain was the domain of mental

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and my “The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis,” Inaugural Address to the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume LXX* (1996), pp. 1-27.



phenomena (following Lange's slogan: 'psychology without a soul', quoted LI § 7, p. 547; Hua XIX/1 371, A-Edition); the method was that of inner perception. Brentano begins by distinguishing mental and physical phenomena and then, in the much-quoted paragraph of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874),<sup>30</sup> he offers the following positive criterion for identifying mental states:

Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction towards an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgment something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on. (PES 88)

Brentano is talking of *phenomena*, that is, appearances to consciousness and not physical things. Moreover, his interest was in the *act of presenting* rather than in the *presented* content (usually understood as the 'physical phenomenon').

Brentano explains his distinction between mental and physical phenomena as follows: "the object of an inner perception is simply a mental phenomenon, and the object of an external perception is simply a physical phenomenon, a sound, odor, or the like" (PES 210). In imagining or dreaming of a blue colour, the 'blue' is the 'physical' component of the mental act of imagining or dreaming. 'Physical' here does not connote 'actual' or 'existing' and certainly not 'material' or 'spatial'. Physical phenomena include: "... a colour, a figure, a landscape

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<sup>30</sup> F. Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1973) 3 Vols., trans. A.C. Rancurello, D.B. Terrell, and L.L. McAlister, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, 2nd ed. with New Introduction by Peter Simons (London: Routledge, 1995). Hereafter 'PES' followed by the pagination of English translation.

which I see, a chord which I hear, warmth, cold, odour which I sense; as well as similar images which appear in the imagination". (PES 79-80)

Husserl interpreted Brentano as retaining the term 'physical phenomenon' solely for the primary object as immediately given in *sensory* experience, and perhaps in response to this, Brentano declared in an Appendix to his 1911 reprint of this part of PES that "the mental as well as the physical can become a primary object" (PES 278). When I attend to the mental life of others, e.g. 'I know what you are thinking', the act belongs to outer perception not inner. In his *Thing and Space Lectures* (1907), Husserl understands Brentano's physical phenomena to be the 'sensible contents' which act as presentational of a physical, spatial thing.<sup>31</sup>

Brentano accepted an account of the physical world, more or less along the lines later proposed by Ernst Mach and other *phenomenalists*, according to which we track the relations between changes in our sense organs and build putative laws of the world around that, without any direct knowledge of the way the physical world is in itself. For Brentano, the objects studied by physics lie outside consciousness, and as such are unknown or 'unintuitable' (*unanschaulich*, *Descriptive Psychology*, p. 4) in themselves. We do not know things in themselves (PES 19). Brentano retains this view all his life, writing, for example, in 1915:

On one occasion, in the presence of Lord Kelvin, someone said how it might be preferable not to speak of such a thing as the ether, since we know virtually nothing about it. To this, he replied, that however much in the dark we may be about the nature of ether, we are even more so in the case of the nature of matter. Actually, psychology, in so far as it is descriptive, is far in advance of physics. The thinking thing - the thing that has ideas, the thing that judges, the thing that wills - which we innerly perceive is just what we perceive it to be. But so-called

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<sup>31</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907*, hrsg. U. Claesges Hua XVI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), trans. R. Rojcewicz as *Thing and Space: Lectures of 1907*, Collected Works VII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997).

outer perception presents us with nothing that appears the way it really is. The sensible qualities do not correspond in their structure to external objects, and we are subject to the most serious illusions with respect to rest and motion and to figure and size.<sup>32</sup>

Our knowledge of physical phenomena is always fallible. We *infer* the existence and nature of physical objects, whereas, in contrast, we are directly acquainted with our own experiences. “Our mental phenomena are the things which are most our own” (PES 20).

Husserl was unhappy with these confusions between the physical and the psychical, which showed that Brentano was still caught in the grip of a certain naturalistic metaphysical picture and a representationalist account of knowledge. Moreover, Brentano had never adequately distinguished between two formulations of intentionality, namely, “directedness towards an object” (*die Richtung auf ein Objekt*), and “relation to a content” (*die Beziehung auf einen Inhalt*). He had even identified content with object (PES 138 note). Twardowski’s attempt to sort out the different senses in which one could speak about the content and object of the act was also fraught with deep ambiguities, for Husserl, since Twardowski treated the content as an immanent real part of the act and could not account for the *ideal unity* of the object grasped through the content.

Husserl’s maintained that Brentano’s true discovery was that intentionality had the specific character of ‘relating beyond itself’ and this must be given its due. In the Second Investigation (LI II § 23, p. 384-5; Hua XIX/1 168-9), Husserl had already introduced the idea that the central feature of consciousness was its *intending* (*Vermeinen, Intention*) and had already stated there that objects are not in consciousness as in a box (an image which is repeated over and over by

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<sup>32</sup> *On the Lorenz-Einstein Question*, 30 January 1915, Appendix to F. Brentano, *The Theory of the Categories*, trans. R. Chisholm & N. Guterman (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1981), p. 208.

Husserl, see for example *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, § 94). Husserl returns to these themes in the Introduction to the Fifth Investigation where he states that the notion of act, the more controversial notion in descriptive psychology, is under review. A key distinction occurs in LI V § 16, where Husserl distinguishes *descriptive* from *intentional* content. Here he acknowledges that what he had called real (*reelle*) contents, he had also called ‘phenomenological’ in the First Edition. He now wants to contrast them with *reale* or ‘intentional contents (but he eventually restricts *reale* to the metaphysical status of things in reality). Intentional contents are his primary focus in his attempt to specify the overall ‘semantic essence’ of the act.

Chief among Husserl’s criticisms of Brentano is the residual sensationalism of his account. Husserl denies we are directed towards sensory data in our awareness of an object. In fact, Husserl will deny that there is any act of sensing at all (See LI VI Appendix, p. 868; Hua XIX/2 774n). There are *sensations*, but they are part of what Husserl calls the matter of the act, and these sensations have to be taken up into a certain interpretation (*Auffassungssinn*) in order to play a role in determining the object. We don’t see our sensations, we see the object (LI V § 14). But for our purposes here, Husserl’s main criticism of Brentano in the Fifth Investigation concerns his inadequate conception of ‘presentation’ and the manner in which other acts (e.g. judgements) are supposed to be founded on acts of ‘mere’ presentation.

## 6. THE ACCOUNT OF THE STRUCTURE OF INTENTIONAL EXPERIENCES IN THE FIFTH INVESTIGATION

The aim of the Fifth Investigation is to analyse the concepts of *meaning* and *knowledge* in their highest generality, but the first part of this task is to uncover and clarify what Husserl calls in the First Edition ‘the constitution’ (*die Konstitution*) or the ‘inner structure (*innerer Bau*) and, in the Second Edition, the ‘phenomenological structure’ (*der*

*phänomenologische Bau*, LI V § 22, p. 597; Hua XIX/1 441) or ‘essential structure’ (*Wesensbau*) of intentional experiences, their contents and objects in the appropriately clarified sense of those terms. This requires a phenomenology of presentation and specifically a meditation on Brentano’s supposed law (LI V § 23). Husserl wants to clearly distinguish the *character* of the act from what belongs to its content (*Aktcharakter und Aktinhalt*, LI V, Intro., p. 534; Hua XIX/1 ), through his new distinction between *quality* and *matter* as inner components of all acts (LI V § 22).

## 7. DISAMBIGUATING THREE CONCEPTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE FIFTH INVESTIGATION

In preparation for this inquiry into the nature of acts, Husserl opens the Fifth Investigation with a critique of some current uses of that ambiguous term ‘consciousness’. In particular, he wants to clarify the identification of consciousness with inner perception such as one finds in Brentano (LI V § 5). However, Husserl’s discussion of consciousness here is quite underdeveloped, tentative and generally unsatisfactory. He does not justify his choice of the three characterisations of consciousness delineated, nor is he particularly clear in his handling of the notions of the *empirical* and the *pure* ego which crop up in connection with his second concept of consciousness (and which was revised in the Second Edition). It is clear that, despite the claim to be developing a science of pure consciousness, Husserl at this stage has little understanding of the nature of *consciousness* as such, and, in fact, most of the Investigation is devoted instead to clarifying the concept of intentionality and analysing the most basic law of Brentano’s empirical psychology.

Husserl finds his first concept of consciousness in modern psychologists such as Wilhelm Wundt, who understand consciousness as the flow of real, individual, empirical conscious experiences or

'events' (*Ereignisse*) which interpenetrate and interweave in the unity of a single consciousness (LI V § 2). On this account, all acts, their component parts, whether concrete or abstract, are counted as part of the content of consciousness (whether or not they are accessed by a special inner perception). In the Second Edition, Husserl adds a paragraph (LI V § 2, p. 537; Hua XIX/1 357) affirming that this approach can be construed in a purely phenomenological manner, if all reference to existence is stripped away. In elaborating on this first conception, Husserl specifically discusses the important and often confused distinction between different kinds of appearances (*Erscheinungen*), namely, apprehending the object and apprehending the experience of some aspect of the object (e.g. its colour). There must be a distinction between the appearing experience and the thing which appears (*das erscheinende Objekt*) in (or through) the experience (LI V § 2, p. 538; Hua XIX/1 359). Clearly this first concept of consciousness can be 'phenomenologically purified' to yield the deeper notion Husserl wants to work with. But he does not address this conception further in the Fifth Investigation.

Husserl's second concept of consciousness relates to a more traditional philosophical characterisation, deriving from Descartes and found in Brentano, of 'inner consciousness' (*innere Bewusstsein*) and 'inner perception', which he acknowledges is more primitive and has priority over the first sense (LI V § 6), but he recognises that Brentano tended to merge these two concepts together. Husserl here thinks there is an ambiguity between an adequate, self-evident perception (one which yields the thing itself) and the more philosophically problematic notion of an inner perception directed at an inner conscious experience. Husserl specifically mentions Brentano's account here as failing to distinguish between *adequate* perception and *inner* perception, but since the whole discussion invokes certain theories about consciousness Husserl puts it aside (he will return to this discussion in the Appendix to the Sixth Investigation). Husserl does recognise that

there is an important notion embedded in the discussion of inner perception, namely, the experience of certain kinds of *cogito* situation as self-evident. This pushes Husserl in the direction of the pure ego but his remarks on this ego in the First Edition are confused. Already in the First Edition he recognises correctly that what is at stake in the *cogito* cannot be the empirical ego. Husserl struggles to articulate a more satisfactory account of the ego, but as he notes in an ‘additional note’ (*Zusatz*, LI V, p. 551; Hua XIX/1 376), the entire discussion of the ego is irrelevant for the purposes of the approach of the *Investigations*. Husserl clearly had recognised at least some of the difficulties in untangling the notions of consciousness. In the Second Edition he excises a whole section (LI V § 7) which is remarkably Brentanian in tone in that it addresses the possibility of phenomenalism and that things may be no more than bundles of phenomena. Husserl’s claim is that these discussions ignore the difference between ‘descriptive content’ (*deskriptiver Inhalt*) and ‘intended object’ (*intendierter Gegenstand*) which had at least been recognised if not adequately treated in Descartes, Locke and others, and which must be the starting point of a true phenomenological examination of these issues (LI V, p. 547; Hua XIX/1 371).

Husserl’s third concept of consciousness is approached in terms of intentional experiences, acts which bring objects to notice, and it is with this concept that he remains for the rest of the Fifth Investigation. But it is not entirely clear how this third category is different from the phenomenologically purified field of the first characterisation of consciousness. This third version emerges from consideration of the question: how can being-an-object (*das Gegenstand-sein*) itself be considered by us objectively (LI V § 8, p. 550; Hua XIX/1 375). Husserl is focusing on what he tentatively calls (even in the First Edition) the essential correlation between act and object. It is clear that Husserl believes he still has some work to do on disentangling his own account of intentionality and adequate intuition from the traditional

account of inner perception. He returns to these themes in the Appendix to the Sixth Investigation.

### 8. BRENTANO'S LAW: NO MENTAL ACT THAT IS NOT A PRESENTATION OR BASED ON A PRESENTATION

Much of the Fifth Investigation is taken up with Husserl's interpretation of Brentano's 'well-known proposition' (*der bekannte Satz*), according to which judging, and other acts are incomplete in themselves, founded acts based on presentation (PES 80), such that it is presentation which supplies the intentional reference and hence the act's content, but on the basis of a single kind of act. Presentation is supposed to supply the act of reference whether or not it is an act of perception or fantasy. Husserl thinks this 'law' can easily be misunderstood, unless his quality/matter distinction is properly applied. Superficially, the law has only a 'pretended self-evidence' (LI V § 32) and his analysis is aimed at bringing out the true part/whole structure of intentional acts.

Traditionally presentations have been taken to be simple, but, Husserl argues, the presentation *Emperor* differs from the presentation *Pope*, so there must be a distinction between act of presentation and its content. This means that the quality /matter distinction infects the notion of presentation itself and hence presentations cannot be basic (LI V § 24). The difference in object on its own cannot be the reason why two presentations differ. The true situation is that the presenting feature is inbuilt into the act. The same sense contents taken up in the same way, may, on the one hand, be a perception in which the object is present *in propria persona*, and in another case it may be merely imagined, merely floating before us in a special way. The presentation is not a distinct act upon which the perceiving and imagining are founded but each takes up the matter in its own way. The *Auffassungsin*n can be grasped in a different mode or way (*Weise*, LI V § 27).



Husserl illustrates his claim with his famous example of the waxworks figure in the Panopticum museum in Berlin (LI V § 27). One way of interpreting the illusion is to say that there is a certain ‘mere’ sensuous presentation which is interpreted in different ways. First we see a real woman, then we really see a real waxworks figure that *represents* (*vorstellen*) a real woman (but not explicitly standing as a representation of some real woman, as a bust might represent Napoleon). The difference between seeing a woman and seeing a wax figure lies in the nature of the acts involved, and what is common, the matter, is an abstract part of the act. Husserl is against seeing this event as a case of same perception or presenting embedded in two different judgements, rather there are two intertwined types of perceptions which eventually come into conflict. But Husserl’s target is the view that there is an underlying complete act of presentation of the object.

Husserl rejects an interpretation of ‘presentation’ as a wholly neutral act underlying other acts of judgement, but he does accept that we can understand that acts are founded on some kind of objectifying act. In fact, his considered view is that the role supposedly played by presentations is in fact played by non-independent abstract aspects of the intentional essences of acts (LI V § 31). He considers the case of judgements about states of affairs. The matter of judgement is not the underlying presentation in Brentano’s sense. Husserl wants to distinguish a *judgement* (LI V § 28) in the sense of a realised act of judging from the mere *entertaining* of a judgement, a mental postulating of it without the commitment of assertion. Again, the act of judging does not contain the act of merely entertaining the idea, plus something extra, namely, some sort of assent (LI V § 29). Rather Husserl moves to a consideration of the different structural elements of judging, including the manner in which *judgings* (*Urteilen*) allow of being modified into nominalised forms, an *a priori* possibility belonging to judgements as such. The details of Husserl’s discussion of nominal acts, predications,thetic and non-thetic, single and many-rayed, acts are

beyond the scope of this paper, but they completely replace Brentano's layering of presentations and judgements understood as attesting to or denying these presentations. In Husserl's account, the idea of new acts being formed from modifications of other acts is dominant and this notion of *modification* takes us far from Brentano. Let us turn finally to the Appendix to the Sixth Investigation.

### 9. HUSSERL'S CRITIQUE OF BRENTANO IN THE APPENDIX TO THE SIXTH INVESTIGATION

In the Foreword to the revised edition of the Sixth Investigation, Husserl refers to the Appendix (*Beilage*) to this Investigation as 'much used' (LI VI, Foreword, p. 664; Hua XIX/2 536). Here Husserl makes some of his most devastating criticisms of Brentano's whole account of external and inner perception, initially without mentioning his name. This Appendix has only two major amendments in the Second Edition, both relating, as is usual with such changes, to an increased emphasis on the immanent consideration of psychical experiences with all transcendent worries excluded, and a definition of phenomenology as the *a priori* science of such experiences, taken immanently so that all issues connected with factuality are excluded (LI VI, App., p. 862-3; Hua XIX/2 765-6).

Husserl begins this important - but now much neglected - Appendix with an attempt to provide an account of the naïve understanding of outer perception (*äussere Wahrnehmung*) and self- or inner perception (*Selbstwahrnehmung, innere Wahrnehmung*). The distinction between consciousness of external things, on the one hand, and awareness of one's own self, on the other, often overlaps with another distinction, drawn from common sense, between sensuous experiences (which include experiences of one's body) and whatever is associated with the emotions, thinking, willing and feeling on the other. In addition, there is the sharp philosophical contrast found in the

tradition of Descartes and Locke which contrasts experiences caused by bodies with reflections on our experiences (LI VI, App., p. 853; Hua XIX/2 752). In Descartes, this emerges as a contrast between *corpus* and *mens*, in Locke, the contrast between *sensation* and *reflexion* (which includes the “acts and operations of the mind” or everything which Descartes deemed to be *cogitations*). In this Cartesian-Lockean tradition (which Husserl tends to run together as part of the legacy of modern philosophy) which is driven by epistemological interest in determining the criteria for self-evident apodictic knowledge, outer perception is considered untrustworthy (*trügerisch*) whereas inner perception is considered to be ‘evident’ (*evident*, LI VI, App., p. 853; Hua XIX/2 753), the only ‘true-taking’ perception worthy of the name (*wahrnehmen*). Husserl goes on to say that pressure was put on the Lockean contrast by the attempt to distinguish the domain of psychology as a science in that the distinction was used to explicate the subject of psychology which itself assumed already a certain conception of the psychical, foreshadowing similar accounts Husserl will give in *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science* and in the *Crisis*. For this reason, some returned to the Cartesian self-certainty, ‘the evident character’ as the criterion of the mental as opposed to outer perception.

Husserl is aware that Brentano understood consciousness as inner perception and took inner perception to be the genuine mark of the mental. Brentano’s criterion of ‘intentional inexistence’ simply picked out the same domain as that of inner perception. The supposed advantage of Brentano’s distinction is that it was metaphysically neutral and that it treated physical phenomena without relation to causal origin in the outside world. No reference is made to ‘transcendent’ external objects; rather experience is considered in terms of its immanent characteristics. According to this immanent description as carried out by Brentano sense data stood out as essentially different from the psychic acts which grasped them.

So far, Husserl is scrupulously reporting the views of Brentano, this ‘highly estimated thinker’ (*hochgeschätzter Denker*, LI VI Appendix, p. 857n; Hua 758n), correctly characterising him as holding that every psychic act can itself function as the content of another psychic act. In fact, for Brentano, every act of primary intending has a secondary act which intends itself:

Every mental act is conscious; it includes within it a consciousness of itself. Therefore every mental act, no matter how simple, has a double object, a primary and a secondary object. The simplest act, for example the act of hearing, has as its primary object the sound, and for its secondary object, itself, the mental phenomenon in which the sound is heard. (PES 153-154)

Husserl thinks the whole discussion needs a more fundamental phenomenological clarification, while Brentano seemed to have achieved a non-metaphysical, non-transcendent descriptive account of “the true givenness of the phenomena” (LI VI, App., p. 856; Hua XIX/2 756) in fact it is replete with confusion.

First of all the distinction between inner and outer as traditionally drawn does not coincide with the distinction between evident and non-evident. Not every perception of a psychic state is evident, since some can present with bodily locations (toothache, pain in the throat), which can be mistaken (LI VI Appendix, p. 859; Hua XIX/2 761). In the First Edition, Husserl raises the question whether inner perceptions can be externally grasped, in other words are they also transcendent objects. In the Second Edition, Husserl is more certain: inner perceptions are still bits of the transcendent world, whereas a true phenomenology must treat them without any reference to the transcendent. As he puts it: “The pure presentness of experiences presuppose a purely phenomenological attitude which will inhibit transcendent assertion” (LI VI, App., p. 860; Hua XIX/2 761). Moreover the distinction between evident and non-evident

appearances does not mark out two separate *classes* of experience, as in Brentano, but rather the phenomena of adequate versus inadequate *givenness*, a matter he had treated at length in the Sixth Investigation.

Husserl then considers the objection that perhaps his own account has confused *perception* with *apperception*, a term which has appeared from time to time in the *Investigations* without explicit definition. But Husserl argues that this distinction cuts across the one he has been considering in that both outer and inner perception are apperceptions. When I see a house I am in fact constituting certain undergone sensuous experiences as a house, my perception is apperceived. Everything in consciousness appears and it is this appearing which Husserl calls *apperception*. This is a bold move which deflates the traditional way of contrasting perception and apperception.

Husserl goes on in the Appendix to criticise more directly Brentano's employment of his central terms – *Erscheinung* and *Phänomenon* – repeating worries about these terms earlier in the Fifth Investigation (LI V § 2). His main concern – even in the First Edition – is that Brentano has not adopted the correct stance towards immanent psychic givenness, misunderstanding and misinterpreting the role of sensations in particular, and confusingly treating them both as bits of the world and also as items resident in consciousness. Husserl is emphatic that we cannot treat sensations in this way, nor can we consider physical objects as “complexes of sensations” (*Komplexionen von Empfindungen*, LI VI 861; XIX/2 764). He again stresses that in fact we do not perceive our sensations, rather they are undergone, *lived through*, but that out of them are constituted physical objects, which are transcendent and which we treat as having properties entirely distinct from our sensations. Thus, an object has a certain colour as an actual property, e.g., the house is brown, and this is something different from, though analogous to the sensory experience of brownness (LI VI App., p. 866; Hua XIX/2 770). Husserl is particularly emphatic that Brentano has misunderstood the nature of sensations. Husserl cannot speak of

*sensory* acts (*Akte des Empfindens*) at all; sensations belong to the content or matter of certain perceptual and imaginative acts, but there are no sensory acts. Instead passively undergone sensations are taken up and interpreted in acts (footnote LI, p. 868-9; Hua XIX/2 774) they are “bearers of an interpretation” (*Träger derjenigen Auffassung*).

Husserl arrives at a very definitive epistemological contrast between two kinds of perceptions, which he thinks is vastly more adequate than the opposition between inner and outer which stems both from common sense and from modern philosophy. Husserl’s contrast is between acts that find fulfilment in what is present before them and acts which always go *through* what is present before them to constitute some thing which is understood to be transcendent. This section is most revealing and worth quoting in full:

... the second [pair = evident versus non-evident] expresses the epistemologically fundamental antithesis studied in our Sixth Investigation, the opposition between *adequate* perception (or intuition in the narrowest sense, whose perceptual intention is exclusively directed to a content truly present to it) and the mere supposing, *inadequate* perception, whose intention does not find fulfilment in present content, but rather goes through this to constitute the lively, but always one-sided and presumptive, presentedness of what is transcendent. In the first case the experienced *content* is also the *object* of perception, in the second, content and object fall asunder. The content represents what it does not itself have, what is, however, made manifest to it, and what is, in a sense, its analogue (if we confine ourselves to what is immediately intuited), as body-colour is an analogue of sense-colour. (LI VI App. p. 866; Hua XIX/2 769-770)

Husserl’s contrast here is between a content which is given as it is and between a content which is a presentiment of a larger transcendent element. But how does this distinction differ from Brentano’s insistence that the inner perception is given as it is, that its essence is its appearance, *esse est percipi*, whereas outer perception is always capable of being doubted? Husserl believes he has fixed Brentano’s distinction more tightly.

Husserl is sure that we cannot doubt the adequate, purely immanent perception, since there are no residual intentions within it that remain unfulfilled. The object is not merely believed to exist but given *as it is in itself*. In the case of a toothache we normally treat that as a transcendent object – a pain *in the tooth*, and so we can be mistaken, as it could easily be mistakenly located in a healthy tooth. On the other hand, the pain, precisely as presented to us, as experienced by us. Note here – for Husserl this does not mean the sensation pain abstracted from all transcendent reference, but precisely the pain as it presents to us with its accompanying transcendent reference taken just as that and not naturalistically as something in the outside world (LI VI, App., p. 866-67; Hua XIX/2 770-771). What is notable is that this passage is relatively unchanged in the Second Edition. In other words, Husserl's awareness as to the manner in which the adequate perception must be understood without reference to the transcendent claim it makes regarding what is going on in the world is already evident. Husserl already intends phenomenology to be achieved in immanent essential viewing.

Of course, Husserl's account of sensation and of the kind of interpretation it undergoes was not at all satisfactory and he offered several revisions of it, to put himself even further beyond Brentano's sensationalism and immanentism. His struggles to articulate the true noetic-noematic structure of intentional acts are articulated in *Ideas I* and elsewhere. But for our purposes here, Husserl's powerful and extensive critique of Brentano in the Fifth Investigation and the Appendix to the Sixth offers a very rich resource for interpreting Husserl's departure from Brentanian descriptive psychology, and provides a more accurate account of his early understanding of the nature and practice of phenomenology. Husserl's nuanced discussion of Brentano shows his philosophical thinking in practice, constructing and clarifying his own position through a careful and conscientious presentation and then dismantling of the received account. It is my

view that Husserl's turn to transcendental idealism merely confirms this departure from Brentano already evident in the First Edition of the *Investigations*. As Husserl could already write in 1900: "The course of my development has led to my drawing apart, as regards basic logical convictions, from men and writings to whom I owe most of my philosophical education". (LI, Foreword, p. 43; Hua XVIII 7)

His life's work subsequently was dedicated to articulating the understanding of phenomenology first uncovered in the writing of the Fifth and Sixth Investigations.

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