

HUSSERL'S LOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS*

I

History has not been very kind to Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. Matters might have been different if Bertrand Russell had actually read, and understood, the copy he had with him in prison in Brixton during the first World War, but by and large the work has had practically no effect on exact philosophy in general or on analytic philosophy in particular. Husserl himself is largely to blame for this state of affairs, since shortly after completing the work he sailed off into somewhat muddier, metaphysical waters. His later writings tend to be unclear and to suffer from an excess of grandiose terminology, so that it is only sporadically that they continue or deepen the magisterial analyses and arguments of the *Investigations* of 1900/01. This state of affairs is reflected in the history of the editions and translations of the book. Findlay's readable but imperfect translation — in itself a considerable achievement — appeared seventy years after the work was first published, and the editors of Husserl's works in Louvain have reflected the prevailing philosophical atmosphere on the Continent in that, at least until recently, they have concentrated their energies on bringing out editions of Husserl's later writings. Now, however, some twenty volumes of collected works later, and over eighty years after the appearance of Husserl's one true masterpiece, a critical edition of the work is at last available in completed form.

Ursula Panzer's edition of volume II of the work, which comes nine years after Elmar Holenstein's edition of the *Prolegomena to Pure Logic*, the overture with which the six *Logical Investigations* proper begin, contains the texts of both the first (A) edition of 1900/1901 and of the second (B) edition of 1913/1921. The two volumes of the Panzer edition contain also the annotations and supplements interleaved between the pages of Husserl's own copy of the *Investigations*, and in her introduction the editor usefully summarises the changes Husserl made in this additional material and also the differences between the first and second editions of the *Investigations* themselves.

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What results is not, it must be admitted, easy to use for the reader interested in Husserl's first and in some ways more pregnant rendering of his ideas on logic. For the main text of the addition is that of B, a somewhat peculiar choice, given the easy accessibility of perfectly acceptable editions of B, and given also the intrinsic preferability of a comparative edition in which the second thoughts of the author are conspicuous as such, as contrasted with the rather topsy-turvy construction that is offered to us here. But this is mere carping. More important is the possibility that the editor may have tampered with Husserl's plastic and complicated style in the interests of uniformity. Husserl employs the device of capitalising the indefinite article in order to emphasise that he is talking about a single, complex entity. Thus on p. 326 (line 15) he refers to certain possibilities of combination of meanings which yield '*nur einen Bedeutungshaufen statt Einer Bedeutung*' ('only a heap of meanings, never One Meaning'). The editor has seen fit to convert '*Einer Bedeutung*' into '*einer Bedeutung*' ('only a heap of meanings, never a meaning'), which makes mincemeat of Husserl's point.

II

Husserl's own changes to the first edition — evident also in the annotations and supplements — fall into two main groups. First, there are the changes reflecting Husserl's conviction that he had discovered a new super-science of 'transcendental phenomenology' in which his earlier analyses would somehow have their place — but in such a way that they would come to be seen in a 'new and radically different light'. Second, more interesting and more substantial changes, in which Husserl alters the details of his analyses, descriptions and arguments, or assays terminological improvements of various sorts.

A characteristic change belonging to the first group is Husserl's occasional removal of the word 'appears' and its derivatives in favour of expressions such as 'is brought to self-givenness' and the like. The most striking and indeed most notorious such change concerns Husserl's notion of the 'ego'. In the first edition Husserl had set out an interesting and original no-ownership account of consciousness, one of the few such accounts that is not reduced to conceiving the experiences inhering in my body as a mere 'bundle'. For Husserl's *Investigations* provide the means which enable him to show how these experiences can hang together in an orderly way without any egological prop. In newly appended footnotes to §6 and §8 of the fifth Investigation, however, Husserl now tells us that he has in the meantime 'learned how to find' his pure ego — but fortunately he tells us also that this discovery is irrelevant to the inquiries he is here carrying out.

Another change, not of the same order of importance, though it seems to

have been of some significance to Husserl himself and has long fascinated his various phenomenologist-commentators, concerns the status and proper designation of the inquiries in the philosophy of mind to be found already in the first edition. The Husserl of 1900, like Brentano, and like other Brentano students, was happy to produce detailed and painstaking accounts of the structure and nature of judgments, assumptions, emotions and the like. These accounts had in common the assumption that psychology rests on a kernel of necessary truths capable of being known *a priori*. Husserl's and Brentano's name for this kernel of necessity is 'descriptive psychology', and a great many changes to the first edition of the *Investigations* are concerned with the problems raised by this discipline. But they show us a Husserl worried not by the question how the assumption of such necessary truths should be defended, e.g. against the criticisms of the empiricist; the Husserl of 1913 is worried rather by the task of distinguishing between a descriptive psychology that would concern itself with such necessary truths as they are instantiated in the psyche of an actually existing subject, and a new discipline of 'phenomenology' which would deal with the same necessary truths but this time in a 'pure and radical' fashion. Whereas Husserl had originally been happy to identify 'phenomenology' and 'descriptive psychology', he now takes great pains, in B and elsewhere, to stress that they are different.

Among the changes belonging to the second — interesting or substantive — group are those to be found in Husserl's discussions of indexicality. Husserl had earlier regarded indexical or, as he says, 'occasional' uses of language as derivative or deviant phenomena and his account of meaning in the *Logical Investigations* was developed on this basis. In a hitherto unpublished manuscript, however, Husserl sketches the beginnings of a more adequate view. He argues that the meaningful indexical use of the first person singular pronoun differs from the meaningful use of a proper name, because:

Who says: 'I' does not merely name himself, but he is conscious of this self-naming as such, and *this consciousness belongs essentially to constituting the meaning of the word 'I'*. (p. 813, emphasis added).

This idea can be generalised to apply to all occasional or indexical expressions. As Husserl points out, each indexical use of an expression such as 'that' or 'these' or 'here' must be bound up in a single whole with some act of perception on the part of the speaker. And he goes on to contrast such uses with the non-indexical use of a pronoun such as 'this' in anaphoric contexts. We also learn that, within a few years of completing the *Investigations*, Husserl had arrived at the conclusion that occasional or indexical uses of language are not the exception, but rather the rule:

'occasional moments lie in all assertions of the "concrete" sciences, first in all meanings referring to spatio-temporal objects but also in all meanings referring to empirical species' (p. XXXVII).

The second Investigation, in which Husserl argues for universals — his term is 'species' — under which both individual things and also e.g. individual properties and relations fall, is revised only slightly, and indeed the theory of species and instance here developed — which has its roots in the tradition of Aristotle and Porphyry — is important also to his later development.

Husserl's third Investigation is his superb account of essentialism, existential dependence and the theory of parts and wholes, topics which more than any others structure what Husserl has to say in the other Investigations and so provide us with the key to reading the work as a whole. This investigation was fairly extensively revised for the second edition, but not all changes are of equal value. Thus Husserl inserted e.g. the words 'pure' and 'essential' wherever he got the chance (often — significantly — substituting them for the word 'Aristotelian', a change which parallels the move from 'descriptive psychology' to 'phenomenology'). Ursula Panzer suspects that these alterations were designed to emphasise what is indeed a very important point, the distinction between necessary co-conception — the fact that it is impossible to *think* of *a* without thinking of *b* — and necessary co-existence — the fact that it is impossible for *a* to *exist* without *b*. Yet Husserl had seen as early as 1897 that the notions of dependence and independence, of parts and of moments, relate to all objects whatsoever and that these notions can be given a more than merely psychological interpretation. It therefore seems more likely that these verbal changes reflect rather Husserl's gradually encroaching concern with the task of settling the status of his theories, as contrasted with the more modest job of working out the descriptive details of these theories themselves, as they apply to the things, events and processes of the real, material world.

One felicitous verbal change to the third Investigation is Husserl's introduction of the term 'formal ontology' to cover all formal disciplines concerned with *objects* in the way that formal logic is concerned with meanings. Husserl's clarification of the distinction between formal logic and formal ontology and his still valuable account of the relations between both these disciplines and pure and applied mathematics are indeed among the most important and original contributions of the *Investigations* as a whole.

It is interesting that the terminology of the remaining Investigations has also, at a number of crucial points, been brought into line in B with the official theory of the third — again calling attention to the importance of the topics of moment or 'abstract part' and of dependence to Husserl's larger project. Thus for example a term like 'act-character' in A, becomes 'act-

moment' in B. And the printer's (?) erroneous 'momentary intuition' [*Momentananschauung*] in A has been corrected to 'intuition of a moment' [*Momentanschauung*] in B (p. 265, 1.23), the printer's error then unfortunately being reintroduced by Findlay as an error of translation. Findlay has in fact obscured most of Husserl's terminological revisions here (and thereby also the central importance of Investigation III and indeed the internal structure of many of Husserl's more detailed arguments) by utilising a range of distinct equivalents for 'moment' ('feature', 'aspect', 'element', etc.) more or less at random. This state of affairs is made still worse in the Boyce-Gibson translation of *Ideas* I, where 'moment' in the ontological sense [*das Moment*], as in 'moment of inertia' is confused with 'moment' in the temporal sense [*der Moment*] and translated as 'phase'. This error has given rise, in North America, to a whole industry of phenomenologist-commentaries on an entirely spurious Husserlian theory of 'the correlation of noetic-noematic phases'.

The most important substantial change to the third Investigation is the addition of useful new material on the nature of analytic concepts (§12 of the second edition). This material however replaces an extended discussion in A of the way in which the theory of existential dependence is to be applied to temporal succession and causality. This discussion is important because it throws light on a deep-rooted opposition between the theories of necessary dependence developed, respectively, by Husserl and by his teacher Brentano. Brentano's own theory, presented in lectures of 1887-91 now published as *Deskriptive Psychologie*, is in some respects no less powerful than that of Husserl. One crucial difference between the two, however, is that within the Brentanian framework one can accept necessary dependence relations only between simultaneous existents: the relation of necessary dependence can never relate entities existing at different points in time. This not only implies that Brentano's theory is inadequate to certain dimensions of temporal structure in the domain of conscious acts (e.g. relations involving memory or regret), but further, it prevents Brentano from providing, within his ontology, a place for the enduring material things of the spatio-temporal world.

The title of III § 12 in A is indeed "Concretum and thing. Generalisation of the concepts of independence and dependence via extension to the domain of succession and causality". We shall quote from it at length, both because it will give the English reader a suggestion of Husserl's 'Aristotelian' concerns in A, and of the style of his treatment, and also because it is absent from the Findlay translation.

Husserl points out first of all that the concept of a concrete or independent object, an object which can in principle exist in isolation from all other

objects, does not coincide with the concept *thing*. For we find concreta in this sense also, e.g., in the realm of sensations.

To the *unity of the thing* there belongs more than the individualised concretum; there belongs also (ideally speaking) a possible infinite manifold of temporally succeeding concreta of one and the same form, passing continuously into each other in the sense of the concepts of change and perseverance, this manifold being held together (either for itself or together with other associated manifolds of a similar constitution) through the unity of causality. This means that there obtains a lawfulness in relation to these manifolds which makes the concreta co-existing at any given point in time unilaterally dependent on those concreta of an arbitrarily chosen earlier point in time which are assigned to it in the sense of change or perseverance. (p. 261)

The unity of the thing therefore consists in the existence of a continuous series of temporally instantaneous concrete 'contents' or 'objects' — Husserl uses these terms interchangeably — tied together by a causal law.

There follows a brief formalised treatment of the relation between successive 'values' of a thing at successive instants (a relation later called 'genidentity' by Kurt Lewin), which is followed in turn by an account of the trans-temporal dependence that is manifested in the material world:

As a result of causality the concreta of a given instant are, whether of themselves or in consort with other co-existing concreta, dependent on those of an earlier instant — and thus in a certain sense non-self-sufficient. It must however be noted, that the concept of dependence used by us so far was defined only as dependence in co-existence... It is however easy to *generalise the concepts of independent and dependent contents* so that one would be able to distinguish between *cases of co-existence and cases of succession*. We need only so extend the concept of whole (and the concepts bound up analytically therewith), that one is allowed to speak not only of wholes (unities, connections) of co-existence but also of those of succession. Our concepts are then immediately applicable to *things*, whereby it is necessary only to observe the peculiar content which the talk of existence and co-existence take on when one talks of things. (p. 262)

Where, therefore, the Brentanian theory of dependence relations can be applied exclusively as a means of elucidating synchronic structures, Husserl's theory can be applied also to diachronies of various sorts, and was indeed so applied by Jakobson in his influential writings on the implicational universals of language acquisition and aphasia.

Two appendices (pp. 837-843 and 850-852) show Husserl grappling with problems in whole-part theory left open in the third Investigation: the nature of the relation between an instance of *red* on the one hand and its logical part *colour* on the other, and the distinction between this relation and the ordinary relation of inherence (e.g. of redness in a table); the notion of relative independence and the relation of this notion to various phenomenological examples; the relation between form and matter in a structured whole (whether this be a structured whole of acts or of meanings, or e.g. a thing and its properties):

A whole is not the parts taken together [*das Zusammen der Teile*], nor is it the parts together with the form, but the parts all together in this form. (The form is a concept that unites the whole in question with a manifold of possible wholes). (p. 841; compare *Tractatus* 2.0124-2.0141)

Husserl considerably revised the fourth Investigation, on *The Distinction between Dependent and Independent Meanings and the Idea of Pure Grammar*, the revised version being one and a half times the length of the original. Consider, for example, his treatment of the use of a proper name in § 3. Husserl here argues that the meaning-intention with which such a name is normally used — a certain mental event — is simple. The meaning of the name is therefore also simple, is not e.g. the meaning of any cluster of definite descriptions. But each such simple meaning act is necessarily associated with a variety of presentations [*Vorstellungen*], a fabric of presuppositions, reflecting what it is that the user of the name knows about its bearer. Thus when we use a proper name, our consciousness of the object (our meaning-consciousness) is not such that it is given merely as an empty somewhat, 'but as somehow determinate and typically determinable — whether as a physical thing, an animal, a human being etc. — even if not meant in such capacities'. (p. 307) And then, the interest of Husserl's theory is that he can exploit his apparatus of species and dependence relations as a means of providing an account of the way in which these presentations hang together with the act of name-meaning in such a way as to contribute to the intentional directedness of this act without being a part of the meaning of the name itself.

Husserl also puts forward a treatment of modification, i.e. of that family of syntactic operations which is illustrated in transitions such as that from (e.g.) 'breathtaking performance' to 'cancelled performance' or from 'red elephant' to 'non-existent elephant', or in the transition from verb-phrase to nominalisation or from use to mention. Husserl's elaboration of this notion in B owes something both to Marty and to Reinach (see also ch. 4 of Twardowski's *On the Content and Object of Presentations*). Its importance turns not least on the fact that philosophy itself, for example when it refers to *existence*, or to *meaning*, or to *species*, employs a systematically modified form of language, a form of language which will lead to misunderstandings — for example to Platonism — if one tries to interpret it in the light of the presumptions of our ordinary speech.

The fifth Investigation, too, was considerably revised, though most of Husserl's changes are of a terminological nature and are designed to connect up with Husserl's views in *Ideas I* about transcendental phenomenology. Husserl's extended 80 page argument in §§ 22-43 of this Investigation, dealing with the correct way to understand the connection between propositional force and propositional content, must be one of the first examples in

modern philosophy of the sort of extended, careful argument that has become the norm — or at least the ideal — in analytic philosophy.

The sixth Investigation was entirely re-written by Husserl and his rewritings are to appear, at some stage in the future, in a separate volume of *Husserliana*. Husserl did not himself bring these revisions to a publishable form, and therefore allowed the 2nd edition of this Investigation to appear in 1921 in a version merely 'partially revised'.

III

In recent years, particularly as a result of work by Føllesdal, McIntyre and Woodruff Smith, the so-called noema theory of meaning set out by Husserl in *Ideas I* has received a considerable amount of attention. The attractiveness of this later theory is due in part to the fact that Husserlian noemata resemble Fregean *Sinne*, and can indeed be seen as a generalisation of the latter. What is less often recorded is that Husserl had already, in the first edition of the present work, put forward another, quite different theory of meaning, resting on his twin theories of species and dependence. According to this earlier theory each mental event which is an act of language use, either for itself or taken together with other associated acts upon which it is dependent, *instantiates a species of a certain sort*. It is then this very species which Husserl identifies as the *meaning* of the linguistic expression in question.

This ('Aristotelian') theory of meaning, which is of course in need of considerable refinement, has a number of immediate advantages. In the first place it yields a simple account of the nature of linguistic communication (mental acts of communicating subjects may instantiate identical meaning-species). It yields also an elegant account of the relation between language and thought and of the relation between logical necessity and the contingent flux of mental events of judging and inferring. Moreover, this earlier theory appeals in its ontology only to the relatively familiar relations of instantiation (between instance and species) and intentionality (between act and object). On the later theory, in contrast, in which noemata function both as senses and as (mysterious counterparts of) reference, we have to accept in addition to instantiation and the intentionality of act and object also two further *sui generis* relations between the act and its noema and between the noema and its referent. Now it is a striking fact that, although the volumes under review contain a number of references to the second theory, and various terminological alterations designed to ease the transition to the latter, one finds no *arguments* for this second theory, just as no arguments are to be found in Husserl's later writings for his change of mind.

It is still unfortunately the case that the first, second, fourth and fifth

Investigations are without any sort of detailed exegesis or commentary, in spite of the fact that the problems they deal with are one and all the subject of great contemporary interest. The first Investigation contains a number of distinctions that have since become standard within the philosophy of language, though Husserl draws these distinctions in ways that involve greater attention to cognitive detail than has been usual among analytic philosophers.

The second Investigation argues that the notions of species and generality cannot be made sense of independently of an understanding of the notion of necessary or universal law. The fourth deals with the notion of syntactic completeness and incompleteness ('unsaturatedness') and presents a theory of syntactic and semantic dependence which influenced Lesniewski in his development of the first 'categorical grammar'. (Thus consider the relation between a name, a verb and the sentence they belong to. Husserl's account allows him to distinguish the relation of unilateral dependence of verb on name from the relation of bilateral necessary constituency between verb and sentence — every sentence necessarily contains a verb and every verb is necessarily a part of a sentence.) The fifth Investigation contains not only one of the most subtle accounts of indexicality in the literature of philosophy, but also detailed accounts of the distinction between propositional and non-propositional attitudes and of the connection between force and content (phrastics and neustics) for all mental acts and states.

Panzer's edition will, it is hoped, prepare the way for a detailed commentary on the whole of the *Investigations* of the sort that already exists in plenty for Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Now that there is a revival of interest in a number of quarters in just that combination of themes that the *Investigations* develop so masterfully — cognitive and perceptual psychology, formal ontology and formal meaning-theory and the thorny problems posed by any attempt to give these a unified treatment — such a detailed commentary would be more than welcome.

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