Discipleship and Dissent: Theodor Lessing and Edmund Husserl*

LAWRENCE BARON

Associate Professor of History, St. Lawrence University

The German philosophers Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and Theodor Lessing (1872–1933) usually are not associated with each other. As the father of phenomenology, Husserl ranks as one of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth century. This "philosopher of infinite tasks," as Maurice Natanson has called him,[1] developed a rigorous method for describing and analyzing the structure and essence of how human consciousness perceives and understands reality. Since Husserl believed that the crises confronting his era ultimately stemmed from the failure of modern philosophy to clarify the universal foundations of knowledge, he remained aloof from contemporary politics in order to pursue his quest for transcendental certainty.[2] Theodor Lessing, on the other hand, is remembered more for the political controversies surrounding his career than for his philosophy. As an outspoken pacifist, socialist, and Zionist, he became the target of right-wing students who successfully pressured the Prussian government in 1926 to remove him from his teaching position at the Technical Institute of Hannover.[3] He based his activism on a philosophical critique of the modernization and intellectualization of Western civilization. In retrospect, his ideas have been interpreted simplistically as part of the same irrationalist and primitivist trends that paved the way for Nazi ideology.[4] When Hitler came to power in 1933, Lessing immediately fled to Czechoslovakia where he was assassinated by two local Nazis.[5]

Yet Lessing attended Husserl's classes at Göttingen in 1906 and 1907 and aspired to become his disciple.[6] The next year Lessing authored a treatise on ethics and values in which he applied Husserl's methodology.[7] Indeed, he adhered so closely to Husserl's reasoning that Husserl accused him of plagiarism.[8] Coming at a time when both men felt professionally vulnerable, their dispute over this charge dashed Lessing's hopes of resuming his studies with Husserl.[9] The split between the two probably was inevitable because Lessing selectively employed Husserl's insights to validate an activist philosophy that bore little resemblance to orthodox phenomenology. Nevertheless, Lessing continued to credit Husserl with having exerted a major influence on his own intellectual development.[10] Thus, it is surprising that there is no substantive account of the relationship between Lessing and Husserl.[11] This article will attempt to fill that void and to assess Husserl's impact on Lessing's thought after their breach with each other.

Before focusing on this topic, it is necessary to trace Lessing's personal and intellectual evolution preceding his encounter with Husserl. After all, Lessing was not a tabula rasa when he was exposed to Husserl's doctrines. By 1906 Lessing already had

* The research costs for this article were paid for by a grant from the American Philosophical Society. Citations from unpublished material from the Husserl-Archief in Leuven, Belgium, appear with the consent of that archive. The author thanks Ulrich Melle of the Husserl-Archief for his invaluable assistance.

written many books and articles. Although these publications mostly consisted of dramatic, feuilletonistic, and poetic works, they also included two volumes dealing with several nineteenth-century philosophers.[12] In the same period, Lessing devoted much of his time to such social causes as the women's and worker's movements.[13] The philosophical and political outlook that he developed in those years colored the way he would interpret Husserl's theories.

Lessing maintained that the best philosophy represented the philosopher's attempt to fathom the significance of his own experiences and emotions.[14] Whatever the general validity of this assertion may be, it was true in Lessing's case where an extremely unhappy childhood led to a subsequent preoccupation with the tragic nature of existence and the duty to alleviate the suffering of others. Belittled by an authoritarian father, ignored by a mother who delegated her parental responsibilities to servants, treated as a lazy dunce by teachers, and stigmatized as a Jew by an increasingly anti-Semitic society, Lessing rebelled against the bourgeois values and prosperity of Bismarckian Germany.[15] Along with his only boyhood friend, Ludwig Klages (1872–1957), Lessing sought refuge from an overly egoistic, materialistic, and mechanistic culture in the romanticized realms of art, nature, and heroic self-sacrifice. Both youths had derived this last ideal from reading Wilhelm Jordan's rendition of the *Nibelungenlied*. Their mutual discontent with modern civilization persisted throughout their careers, but led them to opposite conclusions. Klages eventually blamed the evils of the present on the triumph of Jewish rationality and advocated a return to the instinctual spontaneity and mythic imagination of primeval peoples; whereas Lessing doubted whether such a conscious regression was possible and urged that a reverence for all forms of life be made the basis for reorganizing society.[16]

What transformed Lessing's adolescent alienation into a philosophical perspective was his introduction to the pessimism of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860). Advised by a sympathetic gymnasium teacher to read Schopenhauer's works,[17] Lessing found his personal torment echoed and explained in Schopenhauer's conception of the Will as a blind insatiable life force that is the source of all strife and suffering. Lessing's theory of misery (*Nottheorie*), which already was evident in his inaugural dissertation of 1899,[18] had its roots in this idea. According to that theory, primitive man had experienced himself as part of the world of nature. When human individuation destroyed this feeling of primordial unity, consciousness arose to shield man from the purposelessness and pain of existence by attributing order and meaning to it. Hence, to Lessing, thinking was a defense mechanism for counteracting the underlying chaos and misery of life (*die Wende der Not*).[19] Manfred Küchler aptly has summarized Lessing's theory of misery by paraphrasing Descartes' famous dictum: "I suffer, therefore I am."[20]

Equating agony with life itself, Lessing predicated his moral principles on the need to mitigate this pervasive agony. Here too Schopenhauer inspired him. Since Schopenhauer contended that all living creatures are really manifestations of the same universal Will, he recommended voluntary acts of compassion towards other beings as one way of overcoming the isolation of the ego through a sympathetic identification with their suffering (*mit-leiden*).[21] This ethic appealed to Lessing because it gave priority to relieving suffering and restored the individual's sense of belonging and responsibility to both society and nature. Furthermore, he preferred Schopenhauer's emphasis on the volitional and affective components of virtuous behavior to Kant's view of duty as the rational recognition of the categorical imperative's universal validity.[22] Lessing

would ground his future commitment to the liberation of various oppressed groups in this subjective morality. In his autobiography, he explained how his pessimism was related integrally to his social activism:

> The last decree of my wisdom reads: "Reduce misery!" Thus the circle was closed. For in my youth, I recognized that misery is the mainspring of life, and, when I was older, I recognized that it is our task to abolish it.[23]

Conversely, Lessing rejected philosophical stances which retreated from an involvement with the improvement of life on earth. He criticized Schopenhauer's aestheticism and asceticism for yielding to the temptation to numb or negate consciousness of pain rather than reforming the conditions that engender it. These lofty forms of escapism, which were propagated by Richard Wagner as well, had their counterparts among the masses who tried to forget their misery by drinking, making noise, and performing mindless work.[24] In Lessing's opinion, religion fulfilled the same anesthetic function by offering eternal salvation in a supernatural afterlife as compensation for enduring a wretched existence in the transitory corporeal world.[25] Despite his attack on religion, Lessing feared the potential danger posed by Nietzsche's atheistic superman who unscrupulously could aggrandize himself by exploiting and injuring those around him. This amorality obviously contradicted Lessing's conviction that the suffering of others is only an extension of one's own suffering.[26]

In the process of formulating the rudiments of his moral philosophy, Lessing grappled with the fundamental epistemological question of whether human perceptions and the knowledge based on them correspond to reality. Prodded to study medicine by his father in 1892, he quickly discerned the inadequacy of the natural sciences to explain and describe the universe. From the lectures of the chemist Kukulé von Stradonitz, the physicist Heinrich Hertz, and the zoologist August Weismann, Lessing learned that many of the "verities" of modern science, such as the existence of the atom, were no more than heuristic models which had not been confirmed empirically. His physiology professor, Eduard Pflüger, admitted no such skepticism about the accuracy of his analysis of biochemical reactions. Even though Lessing appreciated the practical value of this sort of information, he doubted if a "mechanical theory of life" ever could grasp the dynamic and subjective experience of living.[27]

But Lessing's strongest arguments against the objective truth of scientific laws and their positivistic counterparts came from his idiosyncratic amalgamation of insights from Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. While a medical student, Lessing attended the classes of Alois Riehl whose Kantian approach contrasted sharply with the scientific empiricism of his other teachers.[28] By 1906 Lessing considered Kant "the greatest German" and devoted a chapter to Kant's critique of reason in his book *Schopenhauer, Wagner, Nietzsche* which was published that year. Proceeding from Kant's theory of knowledge, Lessing postulated that the human mind creates its own version of reality by categorizing phenomena and attributing causal, spatial, and temporal relationships to them. Hence, all cognition is anthropocentric and relativistic. Lessing, however, faulted Kant for undermining this psychological relativism by positing the existence of a priori judgments and concepts, thereby endowing transcendental validity to synthetic mental operations. If Kant had been consistent, Lessing maintained, he would have had to admit that the a priori forms of thought were cultural rather than innate in origin.[29]

Lessing regarded Schopenhauer as the perfecter of Kantian epistemology who res-

cued it from its metaphysical tendencies. By removing the thing-in-itself from the noumenal world and identifying it as the Will, Schopenhauer demonstrated that both empirical knowledge and a priori ideas are subjective because they are the "representations" (*Vorstellungen*) of the individuated will, or the transmitted heritage of its ancestors, striving to master the universal Will. With Schopenhauer as his guide, Lessing defined consciousness as "the most concentrated and intensive form of energy" whose sole aim is to bring the incessant movement of the Will to a standstill. This process is achieved by converting the infinite, unintelligible, and purposeless life force into finite, intelligible, and purposeful constructs about the universe and man's place in it.[30] Herbert Poetzl has captured the radical implications of Lessing's epistemological speculations in the following comment: "All knowing thus depended on willing; or, said in another way, everything presumed to be logical was in reality teleological."[31]

Lessing buttressed his refutation of objective knowledge by invoking Nietzsche's analysis of the motivational origins of all ideological, philosophical, scientific, and theological systems. For Nietzsche, the assertion or sublimation of the will to power lurked behind every human activity and thought. Lessing reiterated this iconoclastic position by claiming that "one can and must trace values, ideals, and truths back to the nature of the ego which requires these values, ideals, and truths to affirm its life." Consequently, in his estimation, scholarly disciplines did not constitute bodies of knowledge (*Wissenschaften*), but rather forms of willing (*Willenschaften*).[32] This distinction is illustrated in Lessing's critique of historicism. As a youth, Lessing accepted Johannes Scherr's view of history as a meaningless succession of power struggles.[33] This in itself was a departure from the dominant academic schools of nineteenth-century historiography that purported to detect developmental patterns in the past, or, to re-create the past as it actually had happened. Drawing on Nietzsche's inquiry into the abuses of history, Lessing concluded that the reconstruction and interpretation of history retrospectively impose meaning and structure on the coincidental totality of historical events in order to justify contemporary power struggles and ideas. Therefore, history is a deliberate distortion of the past in the service of the present.[34]

Lessing did not feel that Nietzsche's diagnosis of the "all-too-human" genealogy of ideas and ideals was incompatible with his own belief in an altruistic morality. Insofar as he was a follower of Schopenhauer, Lessing already had implied that sympathy emanated from a selfish compulsion to sooth one's own agony by minimizing the pain of others. Nonetheless, the alleviation of the suffering wrought by the Will remained a positive and necessary goal. Lessing chided Nietzsche for confusing the ulterior psychological motives of moral behavior with the actual value of the moral act itself.[35] In his later writings, Lessing would compare this error to denying that a flower was beautiful just because its roots were anchored in the dirt.[36]

The contemporary figure who exercised the most influence on Lessing before he met Husserl was the psychologist Theodor Lipps (1851–1914). Between 1895 and 1904, Lessing studied under Lipps in Munich whenever his health and financial circumstances permitted.[37] Lipps stressed the formative role of consciousness in structuring and understanding perceptions and emotions. Rather than passively record external stimuli and internal feelings, consciousness actively arranges, comprehends, and responds to them through the processes of apprehension, apperception, ideation, and conation. Lipps was best known for applying this theory to the aesthetic concept of empathy

(*Einfühlung*). He interpreted empathy as the conscious projection of oneself into a work of art for the purpose of judging it on the basis of whether it produces pleasurable (beautiful) or painful (ugly) sensations.[38]

Lipps's explanation of mental activity provided a psychological foundation for Lessing's subjective nominalism. Lessing praised Lipps for discovering that apprehension and apperception filter and schematize otherwise random stimuli and feelings to neutralize (*entwirken*) the disturbing interruptions they make in the flow of the stream of consciousness. This simplification and organization of sensations, according to Lessing, enabled the human psyche to assimilate an anarchic myriad of outer and inner experiences with the least expenditure of psychic energy. Thus, he could cite Lipps's model of cognition to corroborate his own view of consciousness as a defense mechanism against an over-demanding life force.[39] Although he subsequently challenged Lipps's theory of empathy by claiming that there was an unmediated mental state (*Ahmung*) which transcended individuation,[40] Lessing initially relied on the idea of empathetic projection to characterize the way the mind projects itself into all of the objects which it perceives. He summed up this view by recalling a germane quotation from Lipps: "There is a real, material, objective, external world which is first given 'life' only when it is received by the supporting consciousness of a subject that imparts to it the nature of the soul."[41]

Lipps also gave Lessing his first exposure to Husserl's phenomenology. Influenced by Husserl's *Logical Investigations* (1900–1901), Lipps shifted the focus of his research from the mechanics of psychological processes to the universal truths which they reveal. In the aforementioned book, Husserl carefully distinguished between the ideal validity of pure logic and the psychological relativism of logical thinking. After identifying and bracketing the subjective distortions arising in the latter, he proceeded "to an analysis and description of the essential structures of the realm of the logical."[42] For Lipps, this approach entailed a radical reorientation of his previous methodology and objectives. The extent of Lipps's transformation from a "psychological geneticist to a noumenal phenomenologist," to use Lessing's description of it,[43] is evident in the following pronouncement which Lipps made in 1908:

> In the individual I, philosophy finds that supra-individual I which is reason. Thereby philosophy is given the real which transcends the individual consciousness, the real as such. . . . At the same time, this is the only manner in which we are capable of immediately grasping the 'thing-in-itself.'[44]

In these years, a number of Lipps's students became proponents of phenomenology,[45] and Husserl acknowledged Lipps as one of his intellectual allies.[46]

Although Lipps introduced Lessing to phenomenology, Lessing's decision to study under Husserl was as much a product of professional exigency as it was of intellectual affinity. From 1899, when he completed his doctorate at Erlangen, until 1906, Lessing barely eked out a living by teaching and writing on an irregular basis. Between 1902 and 1904, he taught at an experimental country boarding school in Haubinda, but he resigned from his position there to protest the school's new ban on the admission of Jewish students. In the winter of 1904, Lessing conducted two series of evening lectures for workers which were held at the main train station in Dresden.[47] He turned the first series, which dealt with Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Nietzsche, into a book. "Critical ethical and social questions," the topic of the second series, provided the subject material for the essays he would write under Husserl's influence.[48] Desperately longing for financial and professional se-

curity, Lessing harbored ambitions to create his own philosophical system[49] and to attain a teaching appointment at a university. To pursue the latter goal, he needed to write a second dissertation, the *Habilitationsschrift*, to obtain the *venia legendi* degree that would qualify him to lecture at a German university. With this aim in mind, he asked Lipps to write a letter to Husserl recommending that he accept Lessing as one of his graduate students.[50]

Though Husserl complied with Lipps's request, Lessing did not follow the proper procedures for becoming one of Husserl's candidates for the venia legendi. To be sure, Lessing attended Husserl's classes on Kant and on logic during the summer semester of 1906 and the winter semester of 1907 respectively,[51] but he never formally matriculated at Göttingen. When he started to apply for university positions in 1907, he asked Husserl to write a letter verifying that he had studied with Husserl in the past year.[52] Husserl must have agreed to do so because Lessing was being considered seriously for a teaching post at the Technical Institute of Hannover by October of that year.[53] Since his appointment there was contingent on the completion of a *Habilitationsschrift*, Lessing finished a manuscript entitled *Studien zur Wertaxiomatik* (*Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics*) which he viewed as the equivalent of a second dissertation. For publication purposes, this work was divided into three parts, two of which appeared as installments in the *Archiv für systematische Philosophie* and the other of which appeared as a monograph under the title *Der Bruch in der Ethik Kants* (*The Flaw in Kant's Ethics*). When the first of these was published in April, 1908, Lessing sent a copy of it to Husserl. Confronted then with Husserl's charges of plagiarism, Lessing finally informed Husserl that he had submitted the *Studien* to the Technical Institute as his *Habilitationsschrift* with the understanding that Lipps and Husserl would approve of it as such. This is why Lessing feared that Husserl's accusation could destroy his career.[54]

Disregarding for the moment the question of Lessing's culpability in this dispute, it should not be overlooked that in this period Husserl was revising his earlier ideas and, therefore, was particularly sensitive to the possibility of those around him publishing his findings before he had the opportunity to do so himself. In the years after the publication of his *Logical Investigations*, Husserl gradually moved away from its "descriptive eidetic psychology" to the transcendental phenomenology of his later works. His growing self-doubt, which was intensified by his rejection for promotion at Göttingen in 1905, climaxed the next year as indicated by this entry from his diary:

> Unless I become clear in general outline about the sense, nature, method, and principal features of a critique of reason, unless I succeed in thinking through, planning, stating, and grounding a general sketch for this critique, I will really and truly not be able to live. I have felt enough of the torments of unclarity, of wavering to and fro in doubt. I must achieve an inner firmness.[55]

Husserl first articulated his new approach in his classroom lectures and exercises, but waited until 1910 to write about it. In the interim, he jealously protected his claim to originality, suspecting that his intellectual precedence and influence might not be acknowledged by people who were aware of the advances he was making.[56]

Reading Lessing's first article on value axiomatics confirmed Husserl's worst fears. Therein Lessing developed a phenomenology of value and of valuation using terminology that often was borrowed from Husserl. Despite Husserl's obvious influence on the essay, Lessing mentioned Husserl only once in it, and, even then, he did not cite any particular source.[57] This oversight was

not entirely Lessing's fault. When his publisher had divided the original manuscript into three parts, he placed its foreword, in which Lessing listed Husserl's *Logical Investigations* as a major source for his analysis of value, at the beginning of the monograph on Kant's ethics.[58] In any case, Husserl was more upset by Lessing's failure to declare the extent of his dependence on the lectures and discussions conducted by Husserl in 1906 and 1907. He demanded that Lessing specify which of his ideas were gleaned from classes where Husserl had expressed opinions that superseded those enunciated in the *Logical Investigations*.[59] The following statement by Husserl clearly reveals his anxiety over being pre-empted by someone familiar with his thinking at this time:

> Since, for a number of years, my lectures are the only form in which I publicly have communicated the advances in my efforts to provide a foundation for philosophy, I cannot without protesting allow a person who has heard my lectures, in the way Dr. Lessing has done, to copy my intellectual outlines without even naming me, while he claims or seems to claim originality for himself in the entire manner of his presentation.[60]

Although Lessing became extremely apologetic, Husserl refused to settle for anything less than an exact citation of which lectures and lessons had influenced Lessing. In his initial response to Husserl's charges, Lessing wrote:

> It never occurred to me, even for a moment, to deny that the *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics* is wholly dependent on your ideas and stimulation, that it presupposes your phenomenology, that it *intended* to be nothing but a dissertation from your school of thought, and that it originally was written for nobody else but *you*.[61]

Since Lessing neglected to say any of these things in his manuscript, his confession has an inauthentic and retroactive ring to it. Be that as it may, he was willing to make amends for his transgression. In the letter quoted above, Lessing included a draft of a formal acknowledgment of his reliance on material covered in Husserl's courses. A revised version of this deferential declaration was appended to the second installment of Lessing's essay. It is worth presenting it in its entirety:

> It should be emphasized here explicitly that the epistemological approach founded by Prof. Dr. Eduard (sic.) Husserl of Göttingen recurs throughout the 'Value Axiomatic Studies' published in issues No. 1 and 2 of the *Archiv*. In their principal ideas, no less than in numerous details, these studies can and will not be anything but a continuation of the decisive impulse received in the exercises and lectures of that thinker from Göttingen. The purpose of such an academic work by a student is totally fulfilled when it refers to a new approach in philosophy and demonstrates an independent endeavor in this direction.[62]

Yet neither this statement nor other more obsequious versions of it[63] met with Husserl's approval. Instead, he deemed them "ambiguous" and terminated his correspondence with Lessing.[64]

The insecurity underlying the conduct of both Lessing and Husserl in this dispute has obscured the real issue in question, namely, is Lessing's *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics* a plagiarism of Husserl's teachings from 1906 and 1907? Although Lessing's formal acknowledgment appears to indicate that this is partially true, it cannot be taken at face value because he was trying frantically to appease Husserl and thereby save his job.[65] Husserl's intransigence may have been a legitimate expression of righteous indignation, or, given his obsession with the possibility that his ideas might be stolen before he had the chance to put them in print, it may have been based on an exaggeration of Lessing's intellectual indebtedness to him. In fact, Husserl's unpublished account of the affair limits the charge of plagiarism to topics and passages primarily from Lessing's first article. Moreover, it con-

tains this admission: "Dr. Lessing also has done his own work and in no way simply has reproduced."[66] This qualification to Husserl's allegations is missing in his subsequent comments on Lessing's study of values.[67] To resolve this matter, the offending article and other relevant sections of the entire essay must be analyzed and compared to Husserl's lecture notes from 1906 and 1907.

In *The Flaw in Kant's Ethics* (which was the first part of the *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics* even though it was published last), Lessing explained how his investigation of ethics and values had been prompted by an inconsistency in Kant's moral philosophy. As he had done in earlier works,[68] Lessing pointed out the discrepancy between the relativistic implications of Kant's epistemology and the a priori and absolute basis of his ethics. Construing the motivation for the actualization of moral duty as the rational recognition of the universal validity of the categorical imperative, Kant had furnished practical ethical action and the psychological factors leading to it with a metaphysical foundation. Lessing rejected Kant's line of reasoning as a deception since it seemed to have reconciled the eternal "ontological contradiction" between the ideal and real worlds. In Lessing's judgment, Kant had erred by positing an objective morality which was divorced from any of the subjective processes that transformed this morality into a choice to act in an ethical way in a specific situation. For a subjective nominalist like Lessing, morality and the values it is based on are created by the human will and consciousness to satisfy their "need for 'reassurance' (*Beruhigung*) through knowing and striving."[69]

Lessing's designation of morality and values as protective mental constructs reflects his syncretistic combination of the ideas of Schopenhauer and Lipps. His contention that absolute standards are formulated only to comfort the otherwise overburdened mind is obviously derived from Schopenhauer's view that the individuated consciousness must seek relief from the torments of the Will. Lessing's depiction of how the psyche pacifies itself is taken from Lipps's analysis of how the cognitive process edits, orders, and transforms experience into a coherent and comprehensible whole. This interpretation places all ideas and ideals in the service of a fragile consciousness defending itself against the chaos inherent in life. In *The Flaw in Kant's Ethics*, Lessing restates Lipps's theory by defining consciousness as a " 'reflex' to continuous objective friction with the multiplicity (of stimuli)" whose function is "the unification of this multiplicity."[70]

At this point, one might wonder why Lessing wanted to formulate axioms of morality and values considering his opinion that such absolutes were nothing more than mental fictions. Here is where Husserl's doctrine of intentionality first comes into play in Lessing's essay. To Husserl, phemonena, the contents of consciousness, possess a reality and essence as "objects" referred to and intended by consciousness. Rather than ascertain their empirical or metaphysical reality, Husserl accepts the existence of these phenomena as "reality-as-intended" which must be understood within the context of a "world-as-intended."[71] In one of his lectures from 1907, he explains intentional reality in these terms:

> Cognitive mental processes (and this belongs to their essence) have an *intentio*, they refer to something, they are related in this or that way to an object. This activity of relating itself to an object belongs to them even if the object itself does not. And what is objective can appear, can have a certain kind of givenness in appearance, even though it is at the same time neither genuinely (*reell*) within the cognitive phenomenon, nor does it exist in any way as a *cogitatio*."[72]

Lessing introduces the concept of intentionality into his discourse to justify the study

of the phenomena which constitute morality and values. His reasoning, as presented in the quotation below, clearly reveals Husserl's influence:

> When *"intentions"* are deposited in our "empirical" experiences and *"refer"* beyond the immanence of the experience to *real* "factual contexts" to prove that the experience is "not merely subjective", but the experience of an "objective something",-that is of a "real world"-then *this* "intention towards an experience" is of a totally different nature than that which points to a demonstrable *truth* beyond itself. But on what basis? Well certainly on the basis of its "evident experentiality"![73]

Once Lessing attributed this "reality-as-intended" to morality and values, he adopted Husserl's phenomenological approach to establish exactly what objective qualities were "intended" by moral thinking. Husserl's method for isolating the "pure phenomena" of consciousness was fully congruent with Lessing's epistemological skepticism. To focus only on what is given in consciousness, Husserl performed the "phenomenological reduction," a procedure whereby "everything transcendent (that which is not given to me immanently) is to be assigned the index zero, i.e., its existence, its validity is not to be assumed as such, except at most as *the phenomenon of a claim to validity.*"[74] Lessing appreciated phenomenology because its presuppositionless reduction enabled him to determine the "significance and essence which value possesses in general . . . without regard for whether this phenomenon is here or there, real or ideal."[75] Or, as he put it in his first article on value axiomatics, "phenomenology is not causal 'thinking' (for 'thinking' is itself transcendent), but a search for what is intended in conceptual thinking."[76]

Thus, Lessing was primarily interested in clarifying the "essential" elements of values rather than raising questions of their ulimate "being" or "cause." For this purpose, phenomenology represented a more appropriate methodology than the positivistic, metaphysical, and psychological explanations of morality whose conclusions Lessing distrusted. In keeping with his critique of historicism, he observed that positivistic studies of the historical development of morality betrayed a belief in evolutionary progress by assuming that contemporary values are better than those of the past because they had survived the test of time. Kant's recourse to a metaphysical justification of ethics struck Lessing as an "act of religious faith." Above all, Lessing wanted to combat the nihilism of Nietzsche's psychological autopsy on the body of traditional morality. From the outset of his first article, Lessing stressed that the "content of transcendental conclusions (*Feststellungen*) cannot be affected by my knowing everything about their origin."[77] In the introduction to the second edition of the *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics*, Lessing admitted that his book was in part a continuation of the debate with Nietzsche's genealogy of morals that he had begun in the pages of *Schopenhauer, Wagner, Nietzsche.*[78]

Whereas Lessing previously had invoked Schopenhauer's doctrine of sympathy to defend morality against Nietzsche's devastating criticism of it; he now appropriated a suggestion from Husserl to formulate laws of ethics and values and present them in absolute logical syllogisms. In the *Logical Investigations*, it will be recalled, Husserl recognized the irrefutable validity of logical axioms and denied that this quality was undermined by the relativism imputed to logical thinking by psychologists. He supported his case with this argument: "The principles of logic, the laws of the syllogism, etc., are absolutely exact and valid. Their 'lawfulness' is not an ideal but a realized possibility. These laws are justified not by induction but by apodictic evidence."[79]

As early as 1902, Husserl proposed in his lectures the possibility of developing axioms about moral values which would be ana-

logues to those of logic and mathematics. What angered Husserl the most about Lessing's study of value was that it was based on precisely this premise.[80] Lessing's dependency on Husserl's idea is quite apparent in the following passage from his disputed article:

> A pure theory of value! This "pure theory of value" would be an *a priori* and "transcendental" discipline. In the sphere of praxis, it would be a pendant to pure formal logic. A pure theory of value would contain all such predications about value which completely leave out considerations of volition and valuation. . . . This "pure theory of value" can be designated as an arithmetic of value. At its head must stand absolute, self-evident, intuitive, and general axioms. On the basis of these axioms, demonstrative value-mathematical propositions are articulated in a manner analogous to mathematics.[81]

Since Lessing expressed these value axioms in symbolic formulas, he realized that they could never represent anything more than abstract truths. Take, for example, the cardinal axioms of his system, the axioms of the identity of value:

1. If W is a value, then it has value.
2. If W is a value, then it cannot at the same time be value (A) and non-value (a).
3. If W is a value, then it must be either value (A) or non-value (a).[82]

Though such axioms are incontestable, they are also devoid of any practical applicability. To make the transition from abstract laws of value to the concrete realization of specific values, Lessing devised a normative system of valuation for judging the comparative merits of competing values, and a practical system of moral behavior for implementing the decisions based on such valuation.[83] Here too Lessing copied from Husserl who not only had divided logic into the same categories, but had proposed a parallel schema for the study of ethics: "Alongside pure ethics there is also a normative ethics and a practical ethics-the latter as a *'Kunstlehre'* (theory of an art) of 'ethical conduct.' "[84] The fact that Lessing utilized the distinctive term *"Kuntstlehre"* to denote the same concept is a rather incriminating clue about the source of his thinking.[85]

Thus, Lessing derived his analytical categories from Husserl's phenomenology of logic and his parenthetical remarks about its applicability to the study of ethics. This constituted the crux of the charge of plagiarism which Husserl hurled at Lessing:

> He has proceeded from the necessary and far-reaching analogy to the whole problem (in the broadest sense) as it exists in the logical and axiological-practical spheres, and, accordingly, has looked at the parallels that, under the broadest title of "logic," intersect and essentially relate these disciplines to each other, as I have attempted to delineate in principle in my lectures.[86]

Ulrich Melle, a Husserl scholar who currently is transcribing Husserl's lecture notes, has compared the lectures from 1906 and 1907 to the questionable sections of Lessing's essay and has concluded that Lessing had no right to claim originality for his subdivision of values into classes corresponding to those used in logic.[87] As long as Lessing cited only Husserl's *Logical Investigations* as a source for his work and insisted on the novelty of his approach towards values, he perpetrated an act of academic dishonesty.[88]

However, Lessing accurately acknowledged the extent of his intellectual indebtedness to Husserl in the addendum to the second installment of his essay. There he confessed that his study was an extrapolation of themes and methods which he had encountered in Husserl's courses. But he simultaneously contended that his application of Husserl's phenomenological model to the analysis of values had yielded "an independent endeavor in this direction." What Lessing surely meant was that he had used Husserl's insights to elaborate on a topic which Husserl had suggested, but had not investigated in comparable depth. Hus-

serl revealed that this was the case when he inserted the following statement in his unpublished commentary on Lessing's essay:

> Since I presented only examples of axiological axioms in my lectures in order to illustrate their character and the possibility of a formal axiology analogous to formal logic and arithmetic, the charge that I have made does not apply to Dr. Lessing's attempt to devise a systematic classification of axiological axioms and the immediate deductions drawn from them, and to discuss their meaning.[89]

In other words, even though Husserl's terminology and approach provided Lessing with the framework for his essay, Lessing's treatment of the subject was his "own work."

Despite its phenomenological orientation, *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics* subtly advanced Lessing's doctrine of social activism. This subordinate theme takes on more prominence if the essay is read in conjunction with the two trial lectures which Lessing delivered before the faculty of the Technical Institute of Hannover in October and December, 1907. In his second presentation, Lessing criticized most academic philosophers for their pedantic approach to their subject and urged that they focus their attention on the improvement of the quality of life on earth. He hypothesized that civilization soon would reach a state of entropy through the "exhaustive intellectualization of man's vital energy." Faced with the impending decline of the human race, philosophers should no longer enhance their own reputations with displays of esoteric brilliance. Instead, in Lessing's opinion, they should help the rest of mankind make this decline "a proud and dignified" one by setting a moral example. This "philosophy as deed," as Lessing called it, required the philosopher to strive for "the best possible" of attainable ethical goals. For Lessing, this continued to mean the alleviation of suffering.[90]

In the course of his diatribe against the theoretical philosophy that was taught in the German universities, Lessing tellingly attacked Husserl's phenomenology too. Although he conceded that it had exercised a "beneficial influence" in scholarly circles (which probably referred to its attempt to exclude presuppositions from the contemplation of the contents of consciousness), Lessing considered it to be the "antipode" of his "philosophy as deed." By limiting itself to an analysis of consciousness, phenomenology neglected the importance of man's material environment. Lessing decried this indifference to social problems:

> It cannot be doubted that a philosophy with an overdeveloped sense for logical and *a priori* techniques of thinking, exactly like that of mathematical abstraction, can acquire an antisocial and even an immoral character which then contaminates the personality and life style of the specialist (in that philosophy).[91]

Unless one assumes that Lessing intended to avoid this error in his study of value axiomatics, the above criticism would be just as pertinent to that study.

Indeed, a closer reading of *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics* reveals a dichotomy in the text. On the one hand, there is the strict phenomenological perspective that sets the tone of the work. This is understandable considering that Lessing wrote the manuscript in lieu of a dissertation and expected Husserl to approve of it as such. On the other hand, there are comments interspersed throughout the text that mirror the activist and anti-theoretical stance which Lessing espoused in his two trial lectures for the Technical Institute of Hannover. This material appears especially frequently in his annotations to the value axioms and in the sections dealing with the affective and volitional aspects of valuation and ethical ac-

tion. Moreover, Lessing sometimes cites his earlier books to indicate where a number of these ideas initially were expressed.[92]

While attesting to the universal validity of his value axioms, Lessing registered his doubts about their social relevance. He repeatedly stressed that absolute, eternal, and objective laws could not provide standards for the relative, temporal, and subjective decisions which people make in their everyday lives. The ideal nature of such laws precluded their actualization.[93] As Lessing noted in his critique of Kant's categorical imperative, a moral absolute intrinsically cannot accommodate itself to anthropological, psychological, and situational considerations.[94] Consequently, he concluded that moral laws only become practicable when they are related to the "material domain of human cognitive and motivational principles established by the disciplines of biology, political economy, and psychology."[95]

Lessing likewise undercut the supposed mathematical precision of his value axioms by showing that the comparative measurement of value is a qualitative and subjective matter and not a quantitative one. Citing a modified version of the Weber-Fechner Law that he had learned from Lipps, Lessing demonstrated that the positive or negative feelings generated by a value do not increase by arithmetic increments equal to the quantity of the value, but rather reach a mental threshold after which the intensity of these feelings decreases in response to each additional unit of the value.[96] As a concrete illustration of this process, he referred to the economic theory of marginal utility which postulates that the psychological cost and value of an item diminishes in proportion to the wealth of its owner. The assessment of value became even more problematic when Lessing adduced the futility of converting the value of human life and energy into monetary terms. He denied that a truly equivalent exchange value could ever be calculated for a person's physical health and labor.[97] Finally, Lessing reminded his readers that various moral imperatives could contradict each other in particular situations. If life and truth are fundamental values, he queried, then should one tell a critically ill mother that her son has just died given the possibility that such tragic news might kill her? With this example in mind, Lessing opined that "there is no conscious ethical action in which a conflict of values is not inherent."[98]

Having established the relative nature of practical moral decisions, Lessing recommended a flexible standard for resolving moral dilemmas. His solution was the same one he had advocated in his trial lectures the year before: choose "the best possible" of attainable ethical goals. He credited the philosopher Franz Brentano (1838–1917) with having first formulated this tenet. In his book *The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong* (1889), Brentano, who had been Husserl's mentor as well, had emphasized that moral acts always have an effect on society in general. For that reason, the virtuous person must gauge the impact of his actions on his "family, city, state, and all current life on earth." After determining what is the best alternative in light of these considerations, he must ascertain if it is realistically achievable. If it is not, he must decide on a course of action which is because otherwise he will court failure and end up being derelict in the performance of his moral duty. Lessing endorsed Brentano's ethical guidelines and appealed to fellow moralists "to fashion the best possible (results) for the time being out of what is empirically given."[99]

To concretize this precept of moral responsibility, Lessing presented the rationale for his idiosyncratic brand of socialism. Reiterating ideas that can be found in his writings as early as 1902,[100] he challenged the prevailing notion that socialism and indi-

vidualism were diametrical opposites. In his normative ethics, they represented different standards of valuation with the former minimizing and the latter maximizing the value of self-aggrandizement.[101] However, he perceived that these two principles of socio-economic organization were "correlative principles" which were analogous to the reciprocal biological processes of cellular differentiation and integration. From this perspective, "the complete socialization of society must atomize (society) completely in the same way." Therefore, Lessing envisioned a collectivized economy that would guarantee the necessities and opportunities for the individual to develop his or her talents to their fullest potential.[102]

Lessing typically included his justification for socialism in a section of his essay which was devoted to a discussion of the functional relationship between life and thought. Returning to the theme of the misery of existence, he continued to view the mind's selective structuring of experience as a defense mechanism against the chaotic flow of life. Although human consciousness creates a comprehensible and controllable reality for itself, it remains painfully aware of its individuated separation from its organic origins. Lessing reasoned that consciousness constructs an ideal realm of truths to transcend the demands and disturbances of life altogether. As part of this realm, morals and values provide goals for humanity. If mankind could achieve these goals, Lessing predicted, it would find its "death, complete ending (*Voll-endung*), self-dissolution, and salvation" from the "perpetual distress and pain" of its dualistic nature.[103] This final utopia resembles the "proud and dignified" state of entropy which he had urged his fellow philosphers to promote.

The preceding characteristics that Lessing ascribed to life, consciousness, and ideals prefigured what he subsequently would call "the theory of three spheres" (*Dreisphärentheorie*). According to this theory, which became the centerpiece of his mature *Weltanschauung*, there once had been a primal unity of all living beings. Lessing termed this the sphere of *vitalité* because it contained the elemental life force. When human consciousness started to distinguish between itself and the outside world, it imposed an artificial, temporal, causal, and spatial order on nature. This sphere of *réalité*, as Lessing named it, represented the conscious perception of experience. Anguished by his awareness of his mortal and imperfect existence, man also created a timeless and ideal sphere of *vérité*. In Lessing's system, this sphere of truth comprised the absolute laws of God, logic, and morality. The human condition, as Lessing understood it, entailed a willful struggle to integrate intuitive feelings of vitalité and the norms of vérité into the sphere of réalité. The ultimate aim of this quest is to deliver mankind from the torment of individuation.[104]

The "theory of three spheres" recapitulates Lessing's eclectic philosophical background. The sphere of vitalité obviously designates Schopenhauer's doctrine of the "blind Will."[105] The sphere of réalité is more of a hybrid concept describing what Kant called the phenomenal world and what Schopenhauer called the representational world.[106] But, as Lessing revealed in his later writings, it also reflects Lipps's contention that the human soul as the bearer of consciousness animates and anthropomorphizes the inorganic things it perceives by projecting itself and its qualities onto them. Finally, Lessing acknowledged that the sphere of vérité was the repository for Husserl's phenomenologically reduced objects of intentional consciousness. Retaining some of Husserl's terminology, he labeled these conceptualized "objects" the "eidetic phantoms of reason." Lessing credited Lipps and Husserl with having taught him that reality and ideality represent different modes of consciousness, rather than irreconcilable forms of being. The human mind could ei-

ther vivify experience as it did in Lipps's system or abstract it as it did in Husserl's.[107]

Although he disclosed his intellectual debt to Husserl, Lessing attempted to dissociate his own philosophical outlook from Husserl's phenomenology. In the expanded and revised second edition of *Studies Pertaining to Value Axiomatics* (1914), he deleted his earlier admission of his dependence on Husserl's lectures. Indeed, he dedicated the book to Lipps instead of Husserl. Furthermore, he now criticized phenomenology for subordinating everyday reality to the realm of formal concepts and absolutes. To avoid being classified as a disciple of Husserl, Lessing explained that he had utilized Husserl's terminology only because he had feared that the use of a more idiosyncratic terminology would have been awkward and difficult for others to understand.[108] As Lessing became even more politicized in response to World War One, the Russian Revolution, and the establishment of the Weimar Republic, he condemned phenomenology for fostering a passive attitude toward current events. In his judgment, it did this by focusing on the essential structure of human experience and neglecting the social content of that experience. Along these lines, he unfairly stereotyped phenomenology as a new form of scholasticism whose adherents gravitated towards metaphysical solutions for the practical problems of existence.[109] When philosophical arguments failed him, Lessing arrogantly insinuated that his falling-out with Husserl was due to professional jealousy on Husserl's part.[110]

It is not known whether Lessing's polemical outbursts bothered Husserl. The important thing for him continued to be the exposure of Lessing's act of plagiarism. Though adamant about this in 1908, Husserl did not push the matter to its conclusion at that time, perhaps, as one of his letters indicates, to "avoid a scandal."[111] Thus, he neither opposed Lessing's appointment to the faculty of the Technical Institute of Hannover nor published his accusatory commentary on Lessing's essay.[112] The issue surfaced again in 1914 when Husserl learned that the publisher Felix Meiner planned to release Lessing's axiomatic studies as a book. Husserl promptly informed Meiner of his charge of plagiarism and sent Meiner Lessing's incriminating letters from 1908 to prove it.[113] Apparently convinced by this evidence, Meiner still wanted to wait to hear Lessing's side of the story before withdrawing the book from the market.[114] In the end, Meiner refrained from taking that drastic action, but did point out in the advertisement for Lessing's book that Lessing employed Husserl's epistemology in his analysis of values.[115] Husserl finally set the record straight by inserting the following footnote in his book, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*:

> In the summer of 1902 and subsequently, I attempted to develop systematically the idea of a formal axiology and a formal theory of practice, not only in lecture courses and seminars devoted to this particular matter, but also in the context of lectures on logic and on ethics. All expositions with a similar sense that have since appeared in the literature derive, I dare say, from those lectures and seminars-however considerable the modifications that the thoughts communicated may have undergone. Above all, Theodor Lessing's *Wertaxiomatic* derives from them quite immediately.[116]

As this article has stressed, the case was not quite as clearcut as Husserl made it out to be. To be sure, Lessing initially was guilty of failing to document his dependence on ideas from Husserl's courses. Yet Lessing originally operated under the impression that Husserl would be flattered by the phenomenological approach of the essay on value axiomatics, and, accordingly, would certify it as the equivalent of a formal dissertation written under his tutelage. The similarities of Lessing's methodology and terminology in that work to Husserl's masked fundamental differences in the tem-

peraments and aims of the two men. Unlike Husserl, Lessing could never be content with meticulously clarifying the essential meaning of human perceptions and ideas. The distance between Husserl and Lessing stretched from the conceptual insights of epistemology to the active demands of social praxis. Or, as Lessing once exclaimed, "Philosophy is not what I know, but what I do."[117]

NOTES

1. Maurice Natanson, *Edmund Husserl: Philosopher of Infinite Tasks* (Evanston, 1973).
2. Ibid, 168–189; Marvin Farber, *The Aims of Phenomenology: The Motives, Methods, and Impact of Husserl's Thought* (New York, 1966), 9. For a statement of Husserl's position in the 1930s, see Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die tranzendentale Phänomenologie: Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Walter Biemel, *Husserliana, 6* (Hague, 1962).
3. Hans Mayer, *Der Repräsentant und der Martyrer: Konstellationen der Literatur* (Frankfurt a.M., 1971), 98–116; August Messer, *Der Fall Lessing* (Bielefeld, 1926); Michael Stephen Steinberg, "Sabres, Books, and Brown Shirts: The Radicalization of the German Student, 1918–1935," (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1971), 373–395. The students were protesting a satirical essay by Lessing in which he had opposed the election of Hindenburg as president of the Weimar Republic in 1925.
4. Kurt Hiller, *Koepfe und Troepfe: Profile aus einem Vierteljahrhundert* (Hamburg and Stuttgart, 1950), 301–307; Georg Lukacs, *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft* (Berlin-Neuwied, 1960), 16, 458; Mayer, 117–120. For a more balanced view of Lessing's philosophy, see Ekkehard Hieronimus, *Theodor Lessing, Otto Meyerhof, Leonard Nelson: Bedeutende Juden in Niedersachsen* (Hannover, 1964), 41–54; Herbert Poetzl, "Confrontation With Modernity: Theodor Lessing's Critique of German Culture," (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts, 1978).
5. "Professor Lessing ermordet," *Prager Tageblatt*, 58: 203 (August 31, 1933), 1; Mayer, 94–96; Cilek Roman, *Vystrely ve vile Edelweiss* (Prague, 1966). Unlike Lessing, Husserl remained in Germany even though he was dismissed from his professorship at Freiburg for being Jewish.
6. Husserl Archief, Leuven, Belgium (hereafter cited as HA)-RII (Lessing): Letter from Theodor Lessing to Edmund Husserl, 12 April 1908; Theodor Lessing, *Einmal und nie wieder* (Gütersloh, 1969): 402–404. (hereafter cited as *Einmal*).
7. This treatise was published as two articles and a monograph in 1908 which were combined into a book in 1914. See Theodor Lessing, "Studien zur Wertaxiomatik," *Archiv für systematische Philosophie*, 14, 1–2 (1908): 58–93, 226–257 (hereafter cited as "SzW."); Theodor Lessing, *Der Bruch in der Ethik Kants: Wert-und willenstheoretische Prolegomena* (Bern, 1908) (hereafter cited as *Der Bruch*); Theodor Lessing, *Studien zur Wertaxiomatik: Untersuchungen über reine Ethik und reines Recht* (Leipzig, 1914) (hereafter cited as *SzW*).
8. HA-RI (Lessing): Draft of Letter from Edmund Husserl to Theodor Lessing, 15 April 1908.
9. HA-RI (Lessing): Draft of Letter from Husserl to Lessing, after 23 April 1908.
10. Theodor Lessing, *Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen oder die Geburt der Geschichte aus dem Mythos* (Leipzig, 1927), 8–10. (hereafter cited as *Geschichte*).
11. Although some secondary literature notes that Lessing studied under Husserl, none of it investigates the matter any further. See Hieronimus, 22; Manfred Küchler, "Die literarische und philosophische Entwicklung Theodor Lessings," (*Prüfungsarbeit*, Technische Hochschule-Hannover, 1976), 44; Alois Roth, *Edmund Husserls Ethische Untersuchungen* (Hague, 1960), 166; Harold Landry, "Philosophie," in *Juden im deutschen Kulturbereich*, ed. S. Kaznelson (Berlin, 1959), 271.
12. For a bibliography of Lessing's publications, see Ekkehard Hieronimus and Luitger Dietze, *Theodor Lessing: Eine Lebensskizze und Bibliographie* (Hannover, 1972), 43–77. The two works on philosophy were: Theodor Lessing, *African Spir's Erkenntnislehre* (Giessen, 1900) and Theodor Lessing, *Schopenhauer, Wagner, Nietzsche: Einführung in moderne deutsche Philosophie* (Munich, 1906). (Hereafter the former will be cited as *Spir* and the latter as *Schopenhauer*).
13. Lessing, *Einmal*, 402; Poetzl, 104–113.
14. Theodor Lessing, *Philosophie als Tat* (Göttingen, 1914), 18–26. (Hereafter cited as *Philosophie*).
15. Lessing, *Einmal*, 19–171; Frederic V. Grunfeld, *Prophets Without Honor: A Background to Freud, Kafka, Einstein, and Their World* (New York, 1979), 79–81. For studies of Lessing's Jewish identity, see Lawrence Baron, "Theodor Lessing: Between Jewish Self-Hatred and Zionism," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, 26, (1981): 323–340 and Solomon Liptzin, *Germany's Stepchildren* (Philadelphia, 1944), 165–169.
16. Lessing, *Einmal*, 172–252, 415–447. For conflicting views on the question of whether Lessing influenced Klages or vice versa, see Hans Eggert Schröder, *Theodor Lessings autobiographische Schriften* (Bonn, 1970); Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner, "Von Weltschmerz des technischen Zeital-

ters: Ludwig Klages und Theodor Lessing," *Tribüne: Zeitschrift zum Verständnis des Judentums*, 8: 29 (1969): 3126–3146; Küchler, 65–75.

17. Lessing, *Einmal*, 236–239. The teacher was Max Schneidewin, a disciple and friend of the philosopher Eduard von Hartmann.
18. Lessing, *Spir*, 49–61; Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 84–132. In the second source cited here, Lessing calls this theory the "psychology of *Weltschmerz*."
19. Lessing, *Einmal*, 248–251; Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 87–93.
20. Küchler, 29–31; Hans Dieter Huesgen, "Geschichtsphilosophie und Kulturkritik Theodor Lessings," (Phil. diss., Mainz, 1961), 2–6; Poetzl, 144–148.
21. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Preisschrift über die Grundlage der Moral*, ed. Hans Ebeling (Hamburg 1979).
22. Lessing, *Spir*, 89–92; Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 70–72, 122–126. For a later statement of Lessing's preference for Schopenhauer's philosophy over Kant's, see Theodor Lessing, "Schopenhauer gegen Kant," *Jahrbuch der Schopenhauer Gesellschaft*, 12 (1923/1925): 3–25.
23. Lessing, *Einmal*, 252.
24. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 88–96, 125–208. For an analysis of Lessing's interpretation of noise as a modern narcotic, see Lawrence Baron, "Noise and Degeneration: Theodor Lessing's Crusade for Quiet." *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17: 1 (January 1982): 165–178.
25. Lessing, *Spir*, 92–96.
26. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 347–466. Also see Theodor Lessing, *Nietzsche* (Berlin, 1925).
27. Lessing, *Philosophie*, 218–240; Lessing, *Einmal*, 255–286; Poetzl, 71–74.
28. Lessing, *Einmal*, 263–264. For a summary of Riehl's ideas, see Mariano Campo, "Alois Riehl," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York and London, 1967), 7: 194–195.
29. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 50–75; Huesgens, 18–19; Poetzl, 149–150.
30. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 76–83; Lessing, *Spir*, 74–75.
31. Poetzl, 148.
32. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 250–322, especially 319; Huesgens, 47–50.
33. Lessing, *Einmal*, 205–210; Theodor Lessing, "Johannes Scherr," *Die Aktion*, 7: 39/40 (October 6, 1917): 540–542; Lessing, *Geschichte*, 102–103. For background on Scherr, see Heinrich Reintjes, "Johannes Scherr," *Geist und Zeit*, 1 (1958): 153–157.
34. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 266–269, 302–322; Poetzl, 165–173; Huesgens, 21–30; Wolf Goetze, *Die Gegensätzlichkeit der Geschichtsphilosophie Oswald Spenglers und Theodor Lessings* (Leipzig, 1930), 29–35, 40–54.
35. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 120–125, 297–302, 347–407, 445–455; Huesgens, 49–51.
36. Lessing, *SzW*, 84.
37. Lessing, *Spir*, 117; Lessing, *Einmal*, 401–402, 440–441.
38. Edward Bradford Titchener, *Systematic Psychology Prolegomena* (Ithaca, 1972), 206–212, 238–244; Arnulf Zweig, "Theodor Lipps," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York and London, 1967), 4: 485–486.
39. Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 25–27, 109–113; Theodor Lessing, *Ueber Hypnose und Suggestion: Eine psychologisch-medizinische Studie* (Göttingen, 1907), 3, 9–11, 45–49; Huesgens, 53–54.
40. Lessing, *Philosophie*, 127–151; Huesgens, 8–11; Küchler, 53–54.
41. Lessing, *Geschichte*, 8–9. Lipps used the term soul to designate the "carrier of consciousness that brings causal order to life." See Richard Müller-Freienfels, *The Evolution of Modern Psychology*, trans. W. Beran Wolfe (New Haven, 1935), 315–317.
42. Joseph L. Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenological Psychology: A Historico-Critical Study*, trans. Bernd Jager (Pittsburgh, 1967), 89–91; Theodore De Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, trans. Theodore Plantinga (Hague, Boston, and London, 1978, 214–301.
43. Lessing, *Philosophie*, 256–260.
44. Lipps quoted in Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community 1890–1933* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), 309–310.
45. Müller-Freienfels, 314.
46. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York, 1962), 204–206.
47. Lessing, *Einmal*, 401–402; Poetzl, 94–112.
48. "Philosophische Vorträge-Dr. Theodor Lessing-Winter Semester 1904/1905." A copy of this handbill is in the collection of Ekkehard Hieronimus of Hannover. The topics for the second series of lectures included a discussion of "the system of human values."
49. Martin Buber Archive: Hebrew University, Jerusalem: MS Varia 350/1/416, Letter from Theodor Lessing to Martin Buber, 27 June 1901.
50. Lessing, *Einmal*, 402.
51. HA-RI (Lessing): Edmund Husserl, "Erklärung zu Dr. Theodor Lessing's 'Studien zur Wertaxiomatik,' " April 1908, 2a. (hereafter cited as "Erklärung.")
52. HA-RII (Lessing): Letter from Lessing to Husserl, 24 May 1907.
53. Lessing, *Philosophie*, 1, 30. The first two essays in this collection were presented as trial lectures before the faculty of the Technical Institute of Hannover in 1907.
54. HA-RII (Lessing): Letters from Lessing to Husserl, 5, 12, 14 April, 1908.
55. Husserl quoted in De Boer, 305–307.
56. David Lindenfeld, *The Transformation of Positivism: Alexius Meinong and European Thought 1880–1920* (Berkeley, 1980): 244–246.

57. Lessing, "SzW," 64.
58. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 3; HA-RII (Lessing): Letter from Lessing to Husserl, 12 April 1908.
59. HA-RI (Lessing): Drafts of letters from Husserl to Lessing, 15 April and post-15 April 1908.
60. HA-RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 4a.
61. HA-RII (Lessing): Letter from Lessing to Husserl, 12 April, 1908.
62. Lessing, "SzW," 226.
63. Compare the published version to HA-RII (Lessing): Letter from Lessing to Husserl, 12 April 1908, "Beilage" to letter from Lessing to Husserl, 14 April 1908, Lessing, "Vorblatt," (for inclusion in *Der Bruch*), 24 April 1908. The "Vorblatt" was a printer's galley proof which shows that Lessing intended to acknowledge his indebtedness to Husserl's lectures in the monograph on Kant's ethics. Unfortunately, the publisher did not insert it into that volume. See HA-RII (Lessing): Letter from Lessing to Husserl, 25 April 1908, and Husserl's handwritten comments on the "Vorblatt" itself.
64. HA-RI (Lessing): Drafts of letters from Husserl to Lessing, post-18 and 23 April 1908. On the back of the draft dated post-18 April 1908, Husserl jotted down some notes to an unnamed third party in which he indicated that he rejected the sample acknowledgments which Lessing had sent him.
65. HA-RII (Lessing): Letter from Lessing to Husserl, 12 April 1908.
66. HA-RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 4a.
67. For example, see HA-MIII 10 III 7: Husserl, "Literatur zur Phänomenologie," 2; Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, trans. D. Cairnes (Hague, 1969), 137.
68. Lessing, *Spir*, 108–114; Theodor Lessing, *"Selbstanzeigen: African Spir's Erkenntnislehre," Kant-Studien*, 6: 1 (1901): 102–103; Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 69–83; Lessing, *SzW*, VII.
69. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 39–54.
70. Ibid, 60–71.
71. Natanson, 13; Husserl, *Ideas*, 107–111, 222–230.
72. Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, trans. William P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (Hague, 1964), 43. This book consists of lectures which Husserl delivered at Göttingen in 1907.
73. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 45–46.
74. Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, 3–5, 31–36; Natanson, 73–77.
75. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 47–49.
76. Lessing, "SzW," 64–68.
77. Ibid, 58–60; Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 54–60.
78. Lessing, *SzW*, VII, 83–86; Lessing, *Einmal*, 343–344. In the latter citation, Lessing notes that his study of value was prompted in part by a desire to refute Max Scheler's theory of *ressentiment*. Lessing and Scheler had been friends during the 1890s.
79. Husserl quoted in De Boer, 218.
80. HA-RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 1a–3a; Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, 137. Husserl expresses this same concept in *Ideas*, 374–377. For a more extensive presentation of Husserl's axiology of value, see Roth, 73–111.
81. Lessing, "SzW," 63.
82. Ibid, 80.
83. Ibid, 71–78.
84. Husserl quoted in De Boer, 224–225.
85. Lessing, "SzW," 64, 77.
86. HA-RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 1a, 4a. Here Husserl singles out paragraph four of Lessing's article as an example of how Lessing has plagiarized the analogy between logical and axiological laws. See Lessing, "SzW," 86–88.
87. Letter from Ulrich Melle to Lawrence Baron, 19 November 1981 (in recipient's possession). See HA-F I 25, F I 16, F I 10: Husserl, "Einleitung in die Logik und Erkenntnistheorie," Lectures 1906/1907.
88. Lessing, "SzW," 71. In this passage, Lessing describes his work as "the tentative steps of a beginner who has dared to walk on untrodden territory only with great uncertainty." The reference to "untrodden territory" infuriated Husserl. See HA:RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 2a.
89. HA-RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 4a.
90. Lessing, *Philosophie*, 1–73, especially 1–18, 56–66. The two lectures were entitled "Philosophie als Tat," and "Wissenschaft als Kraftökonomie."
91. Ibid, 23–24.
92. Lessing, "SzW," 82, 242–243.
93. Ibid, 76, 78, 85, 88, 253–257.
94. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 39–54; Lessing, "SzW," 243–253.
95. Lessing, "SzW," 256–257.
96. Ibid, 81–82. For an explanation of the Weber-Fechner Law, see Edward G. Boring, *A History of Experimental Psychology* (New York, 1950), 280–295; Theodor Lipps, *Psychological Studies*, trans. Herbert C. Sanborn (Baltimore, 1926), 266–327.
97. Lessing, "SzW," 82–85, 241–243.
98. Ibid, 233–234.
99. Ibid, 81, 92–93, 227–228, 230–231; Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 3. In the foreword to *Der Bruch*, Lessing lists Brentano's book alongside books by Lipps and Husserl as the major sources for his study of values. See Franz Brentano, *The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, trans. Cecil Hague (London, 1902). For information on the impact of Brentano's ethical theories on Husserl, see De Boer, 106–111 and Roth, 131–138.
100. Lessing, "Noch Einiges über den Lärm," *Nord und Süd*, 26: 309 (December 1902): 338–339; Lessing, *Schopenhauer*, 20–25; "Philosophische Vorträge-Dr. Theodor Lessing-Wintersemester 1904/1905." The closing lecture for Lessing's course on ethics is entitled "Socialism." Another is entitled "On Social Differentiation."
101. Lessing, "SzW," 238–240.
102. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 67–69; Lessing, "SzW," 84, 244–247.

103. Lessing, *Der Bruch*, 67–71.
104. Lessing, *Europa und Asien oder Der Mensch und das Wandellose* (Hannover, 1923): 333–366; Lessing, *Geschichte*, 75–77; Theodor Lessing, *Prinzipien der Charakterologie* (Halle a.S., 1926): 104–114. For explanations of Lessing's theory of three spheres, see Goetze, 22–29; Heironimus, *Theodor Lessing, Otto Meyerhof, Leonard Nelson*, 45–52; Poetzl, 144–148.
105. Lessing, *Prinzipien der Charakterologie*, 110; Theodor Lessing, "Wille und Vorstellung, die Krontermini," *Archiv für systematische Philosophie*, 26, 3/4 (April 1922): 87–98.
106. Lessing, *Geschichte*, 115.
107. Ibid, 8–10.
108. Lessing, *SzW*, III, XVIII-XIX, 6–7, 76. The last page listed here contains the only formal citation of Husserl's work, and it is to his *Logical Investigations*.
109. Lessing, *Geschichte*, 9–10, 120, 130–131; Lessing, *Europa und Asien*, 357–359. For refutations of the charge that Husserl's phenomenology was a new form of scholasticism or Platonism, see De Boer, 260–265, 402–407; Farber, 50–51.
110. Lessing, *Einmal*, 402–404.
111. HA-RI (Lessing): Draft of Letter from Husserl to Lessing," post-18 April, 1908, 1b.
112. HA-RI (Lessing): Husserl, "Erklärung," 1a. Husserl intended this "Erklärung," to be published in the *Archiv für systematische Philosophie*.
113. HA-RI (Meiner): Draft of a letter from Edmund Husserl to Felix Meiner, 4 May 1914.
114. HA-RII (Meiner): Letter from Felix Meiner to Edmund Husserl, 6 May 1914.
115. HA-RI (Meiner): Edmund Husserl, "Stenographic notes." These notes contain the advertisement which Husserl copied down. The advertisement also indicated that Lessing had based his work on Alexius Meinong's theory of objects. Lessing cited Meinong only once in the 1908 version of his essay, see Lessing, "SzW," 71; however, he relied more heavily on Meinong in the 1914 book, see Lessing, *SzW*, VIII, XI, XII, XVII-XIX, 2, 7, 9, 15, 19, 30, 114. This is because Meinong had taken an interest in Lessing's original essay and corresponded with him. See Alexius Meinong Nachlass: Universitätsbibliothek Graz, Austria 3967–3700: Letters from Theodor Lessing to Alexius Meinong, 25 April 1911, 12 June 1913; 10 February 1914; 2 October 1917; Alexius Meinong, *Abhandlungen zur Werttheorie*, ed. Rudolf Kindinger (Graz, 1968): 376, 410–412, 427–428, 439–442. For an analysis of the similarities and differences between Husserl's and Meinong's ideas, see Lindenfeld, 243–261.
116. Husserl, *Formal und Transcendental Logic*, 137.
117. Lessing quoted in Poetzl, 143. The quotation comes from Theodor Lessing, *Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen* (Hamburg, 1962), 316.