



From Husserl to Husserl (Review)

Stefania Centrone (Hgrs.), *Versuche über Husserl*, 276 S., Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg, 2013. ISBN 978-3-7873-2408-8

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This volume was conceived and edited by Stefania Centrone, who contacted to several research fellow on Husserl's phenomenology. Each chapter is written with care and has substantive import, furthermore deal other philosophers in greater or lesser degree. *Versuche über Husserl* starts from the basic premise that there is a significant program in the husserlian phenomenology and devotes his efforts to show this program. To provide some structure for the exposition, I shall comment each chapter in that follow.

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“Edmund Husserl. Leben, Werk und Wirkung” (pp. 9–32) by Wolfgang Künne. This is an excellent paper on Husserl's life and work, and it was based on his biography. The essay is focused on his philosophical development, from his origins as a mathematician and astronomer until his academic relationships with philosophers such as Carl Stumpf and Franz Brentano, his mentor and professor. The book *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* is precisely the one that makes a deep influence on young Husserl, specifically in *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1891). Likewise, in Leipzig, Husserl met Thomas Masaryk, student of Brentano, and latterly the first president of Czechoslovakia, who also influenced him. In Berlin, Husserl met, studied and became assistant of prominent mathematician, Karl Weierstrass, and later, of Leopold Kronecker. The result of these facts was



Philosophy of Arithmetic and *On the concept of Number* -his postdoctoral lecture qualification, State doctorate (1886)-. Both works constituted an important breakthrough on his career. On those papers we can find some indications about phenomenological concepts, such like, the ideality in superior order, fusion (*Verschmelzung*), figural moments (heritage of Stumpf) and a certain kind of intentionality.

On his years in Halle, and recently having come to Göttingen, Husserl developed a philosophical work majority reflected in his *Logical Investigations* (1900-1901) and so the possibility of a Pure Logic, the ideality of significations, and the first approaches to a phenomenological explication of knowledge. At Halle also was established the “Philosophical Society of Göttingen” with the participations of Alexander Pfänder, Adolf Reinach and Moritz Geiger, not to forget Thomas Lipps. In 1913, Husserl published *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* as a general introduction to a pure phenomenology. This work presents an emblematic, programmatic and mature version of phenomenological issues. It also offers a vision about the fundamentals problems such like: temporality, corporality, intentionality and phenomenological pure ego. By this time it is produced a schism among the firsts phenomenologist’s of Göttingen and the access, although this had been visible since 1907 until transcendental region.

Wolfgang Künne also studies the importance of Stein and Heidegger, both as Husserl’s assistants. Heidegger used to frequent Husserl since 1917 so he had the opportunity to read some manuscript on several issues and Items. E. Stein, who came to Freiburg in order to elaborate her doctoral dissertation, also had a



crucial role for the edition of *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*. Furthermore, Roman Ingarden, Ludwig Landgrege y Eugen Fink, got to Freiburg to meet and talk over several issues, editions, translations, etc. Ludwig Landgrebe became a Husserl's assistant in 1923, and since 1939 he collaborated with Eugen Fink. Both are known as Husserl's closest associates, but Fink was who wrote the *Sixth Cartesian Meditation*, a sort of new expression and continuation of Husserl's work. Ludwig Landgrebe edited and wrote *Experience and Judgement*, a piece of exceptional phenomenology. Another work that Künne revises are the *Cartesians Meditations* (1931), their reception and translation in France, principally with Levinas, and finally *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy* (1936). Exhausted and sick, Husserl died on April 27, 1938. After his death, H.L. van Breda (Franciscan philosopher and theologian) rescued thousands and thousands of pages or folios now located at the Husserl-Archives in Leuven. At the end of this essay, Wolfgang Künne presents an index containing every yearbook published since 1913 to 1930.

The Markus Stepanian's paper, "Es war mir nicht gegeben, Mitglied seiner Schule zu bleiben – Husserls Kritik an Brentano", is such an interesting essay. It is a clear example of how to bring on a dialogue two philosophers around a classic work: *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*. Stepanian divided this paper in three parts: the first part is advocated to life and works of Brentano. The second part is dedicated to Brentano approach of Psychology as science of the experience of consciousness, and the last part deal with critics among Husserl and Brentano. In addition, the paper presents the life and work of Brentano, and his links with several specialists (such like Trendelenburg). Stepanian present a general sketch of



philosophy at century XIX, context in which Brentano developed his work: a road that he takes as a philosophical support and psychological acquaintance, as evident, secure and scientific too. Stepanian linkages the Brentano works with the proposal of W. Tatarkiewicz, who states that by that time was Comte who maintained a strong impulse to the Positivism into the European thought. Stepanian also shows that on Brentano existed a scientific spirit, an approach from a kind of *Neo-Kantianism that includes even P. Natorp. Both, Natorp and Brentano, keep a scientific role into natural and human sciences, but basically, at the philosophical and psychological visions. Indeed, the process of descriptive psychology originates itself from the fact that it bases everything in inner experience (perhaps very close to Husserl's early approaches).*

The Brentano distinction between internal and external perception (p. 44, ff.) is essential for the study of Husserl and Brentano, issue generally discussed in phenomenological circles. Stepanian states that this is a fundamental phenomenological distinction, due to it deals with the foundation of what could be a phenomenology of perception based on simple adequate and clear truths, (fifth and sixth of the *Logical Investigations* by Husserl), which prevents the free assumption of psychological and metaphysical propositions. Summarizing, Stepanian declares that: “internal perception is a perception essentially evident of intentional phenomena, while the perception external is a perception essentially no-evident of unintended phenomena” (p. 51). At the last part of the paper we can find the critics of Brentano psychology and the Husserl reformulation in adequate and inadequate perception without assuming Brentano mistake -called



phenomenalism- because this approach does not distinguish among consciousness and things that appear what they content.

Versuche über Husserl also contains other essay by Wolfgang Künne, “Intentionalität: Bolzano und Husserl”. The quote from which begins this essay is lapidary: “Intentionality is the name of the problem encompassed by the whole of phenomenology” in *Ideen I* §146 (p. 97). Indeed, this concept linkage the philosophies of these authors, Bolzano and Husserl, from *The paradoxes of infinity* to the *Theory of Science*, through the work of Twardowski, *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und der Gegenstand Vorstellungen*, from which Husserl develops a manuscript called “intentional Objects”, where the role of re-presentation in its intentional context is the common thread and from where is analyze Husserls philosophy in its relationship with the emerging philosophy of logic. Precisely, we should remind the distinction that appears in the fifth of the *Logical Investigations* between intentional object of the act, the matter of the act (as opposed to its quality) and intentional nature of the act, same inquiries that from a fregean analysis derive in a pure and simple object and its significance, in other words, between objective directions and the how of the reference.

Also, the editor, Stefania Centrone, who later did a great job, to share us an excellent work whose issues are logical and mathematical aspects in the early Husserl,¹ now presents a fruitful background of the relationship between Husserl and Frege in his contribution “Aspekte des Psychologismus-Streits: Husserl und Frege über Anzahlen und logische Gesetze” (pp. 65–96). The relationship among

¹ Centrone, Stefania, (2009), *Logic and Philosophy of Mathematics in the Early Husserl*, Springer, Heidelberg/ London/ New York.



Husserl and Frege is not limited to well-known review of *Philosophy of arithmetic*. It also includes a series of letters, explicit references in his works, “simples” mentions and discussions of each other that starting in 1884 and ending in 1936. One of these discussions can be found in the reviews that both did on Ernst Schröder's book *Lectures on the algebra of logic*. By the way, about the concept of number, Centrone evokes the fact that for Husserl the number is a set of “something in general” (*Etwas überhaupt*), Husserl adds that the concept of number is obtained from the reflection of the collected objects considered as “something in general”, i.e., 1 and 1 and 1, the relational unity “and” is a structural property (syncategorematic), while each member is considered as identical with itself and it is numerically different from others. Husserl claims that a set must have the following characteristics: an extension (*Umfang*), a content (*Inhalt*) and genesis (*Entstehung*). From these features, the founder of phenomenology derives the following theses:

1. The concept of set is a basic concept for what cannot be defined
2. The extension of a whole must be considered from something given intuitively
3. The genesis of the concept of set is due to psychological “abstraction, but only as a step to the logical development of this notion.

The core of the arguments of Husserl will be, then, that a whole is not mere sum of its members but it is constituted by an internal connection or Collective connection (*Kollektive verbindung*) that allows us to grasp it as a whole. The essential feature of Collective connection is that we can grasp both: the “set” as representing the logical contents of the sets and their numerical representations. On this basis, we could make a series of distinctions about the types of acts into enumeration, for



example: 1) acts of first order: we're awareness of a set; 2) acts of second order: we're awareness of them as "something"; 3) acts of third order: we're awareness of all those as "somethings"; 4) acts of fourth order: we're awareness of all the wholes, as when adds a set a new set. This last consideration, deeply logic and symbolic, Husserl complements the characteristic numerical, which is based on a sign system that eliminate all contingency.

Still the balance is not inclining on one side, since Frege made great contributions to logic, thereby instituting a kind of "logicism". Husserl, however, I think, failed to intent amalgamate his ontology in *Philosophy of arithmetic*, which cost him to be taken into to psychologism, and although is true that this work could be named as a "Psychology of arithmetic" is not a kind of psychology that Frege strongly criticized. Indeed, although Husserl attempted to clarify epistemologically the foundations of mathematics, based on a psychology, that does not mean that Husserl founded (clearly) the analysis of the number in a mere "mental condition" or the "psychological relations" as part of "the mental", these are previous steps of a descriptive psychology, but meaning Brentano sense.

In this same book, Dagfinn Føllesdal wrote two essays: "Husserl und Heidegger über die Rolle des Handelns bei der Konstitution der Welt" (pp. 145–166) and "Rechtfertigung bei Husserl und Wittgenstein" (pp. 167–192). In the first contribution, Føllesdal begins with the clarification of the concept of intentionality and with a brief digression on the concept of noema, the role of the constitution in the World (*Welt*), even some participation active of corporality, and finally the translation (and anticipation) of heideggerian phenomenology to a phenomenology hermeneutical. In the second study, Føllesdal begins with the



concept of perception, fundamental concept in phenomenology, and their intuitive fulfillment, it compared with the work of Wittgenstein since Føllesdal localizes the practical role, adequate and consistency, even from a theory that emphasizes the linkage of phenomenology with the classical analytic philosophy, starting from the formal ontology.

The essay written by Eduard Marbach, “Wer hat Angst vor der reinen Phänomenologie (pp. 193-217)” is perhaps the most researcher into the Husserl's philosophy. Without methodologies from any analytical approach, Marbach deals with fundamental concepts such as reflection and eidetic reduction, dissimilar other contributions in this book, whose cores consist of analytic philosophy topics, Marbach develops his defining from the methodological role that is phenomenological reduction, the role that it plays in a positioning transcendental and pure as eidetic of the pure consciousness.

George Heffernan in his essay “Vom Wesen der Evidenz zur Evidenz der Wesen” (pp. 219–254), achieves to writes a completed paper about the second volume of Husserlian, *The Idea of Phenomenology -Die Idee der Phänomenologie* were five lectures delivered in 1907 at the University of Göttingen, from April 26 to May 2, 1907. They served as an introduction to lessons on physical thing, later published as *Ding und Raum* (Hua XVI)-. This paper supposes that is well-known, at least among scholars of Husserl that the first approach of the phenomenology is as a theory of knowledge; the sixth *Logical Investigations* is clear evidence of this. Therefore, Heffernan presents the husserlian epistemological motivation and the formation of central phenomenological just as transcendental consciousness, noema, etc. The purpose of Heffernan is to show how these lessons has like



objective, among others, to analyse the phenomenological reduction, to explicit the attempt to penetrating into the issue of the constitution of being in consciousness and the subject of the evidence. This is also one of the *leitmotif* of the text. Heffernan focuses on what essence of knowledge means in terms of evidence, that is, from “self-giving or give itself” (*Selbstgegebenheit*), in a kind of searching evidence for essences. The result, according to Heffernan, is that Husserl developed a type of eidetic knowledge that described the evidence in its absolute sense and especially apodictic, spread out field experience, but placing the intuition of essences in the conscience and not a metaphysical plane. Moreover, I think it is not perhaps the best introduction to phenomenological epistemology.

In “Einfühlung und das Verstehen einer Person” (pp. 255-276), Christian Beyer remarks the great importance of Inter-subjectivity into the phenomenological field, the ethical understanding of the other person, from what Husserl developed in *Ideas II*: empathy, the personalist attitude, i.e., when we talk and interact with others, his value as Person, both in love and aversion, sharing a world environment in complete empathy. Furthermore, Beyer analyzes the conference or lessons taught in 1920/1924 by Husserl and their linkage in cognitive science and philosophy of mind.