

HUSSERL'S REVISION OF THE SIXTH LOGICAL INVESTIGATION

I. THE HISTORY OF HUSSERL'S WORK ON THE REVISION OF THE SIXTH LOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Husserl was thinking of a revision of the *Logical Investigations* already in 1905 in connection with the failed plan for an English translation. In 1911 he began working on such a revision but because of his work on the first and second book of the *Ideas*, the work was delayed until after the publication of the *Ideas I* in April 1913. In the preface to the second edition of the *Prolegomena* and of the first five Investigations which appeared in the autumn of 1913 Husserl tells the reader that instead of republishing the *Logical Investigations* he originally planned to replace them by a series of systematic studies. When he realised, though, that this would take years to accomplish, he decided to write the *Ideas* first and to republish the *Logical Investigations* immediately afterwards. The *Logical Investigations* were to be revised so that they could be read and used as a complement to the *Ideas*, in that they would introduce the reader to concrete phenomenological work. The reader would first study the *Logical Investigations* and get acquainted with “attempts at genuinely executed fundamental work on the immediately envisaged and seized things themselves” and “with a group of fundamental questions in explicit investigation”. Then, he would turn to the *Ideas* for the elucidation of the method from ultimate sources, the delineation of the main structures of pure consciousness and the systematic presentation of the fields of investigation (cf. LI, 44–45 [Hua XVIII, 9f]).

This conception of a complementary relationship between the *Ideas* and the new edition of the *Logical Investigations* gave rise to a dilemma. It was impossible to raise the *Logical Investigations* completely and as a whole to the level of the *Ideas*. This would have meant to postpone the publication of the second edition *ad calendae graecas*. A simple reprint, on the other hand, was insufficient for the intended use of the *Logical Investigations* as a complement to the *Ideas*. With a heavy heart Husserl chose a middle path between a total revision and a simple reprint. Husserl mentions three guidelines which he followed when revising the *Logical Investigations*. First, nothing would be retained of which he was not fully convinced that it was, even if not true, at least worthy of a careful study. Second, whatever could be improved without fundamentally changing the course and style of the work would be improved. Third, and most important regarding the Sixth Investigation, in the course of the *Logical Investigations* the reader should be gradually led to a higher level of insight so that in the final Investigation the level of the *Ideas* would be reached. According to this guideline only the revised sixth Investigation had to be wholly and fully at the level of the just published *Ideas I*. That meant, effectively, that what Husserl had regarded to be

impossible regarding the whole of the *Logical Investigations* had to be achieved at least with regard to the Sixth Investigation: a radical and total revision.

Immediately after the publication of the *Ideas I* in April 1913, Husserl began to work on the revision of the *Logical Investigations*. In only two months he completed the revision of the *Prolegomena* and the first five Investigations. In approximately the middle of June Husserl turned towards the Sixth Investigation. On June 23 he wrote to Daubert: "I am in the middle of the revision of the sixth Investigation. Pity me! I have to finish the print (version) till the end of July." (Hua Dok. III/2, 65) Already in July the introduction and the first three chapters, as well as the first four paragraphs of the fourth chapter of the first part of the Sixth Investigation, were printed.

It is clear, from the proofs of the Introduction and of the first chapter, that Husserl started to revise the text of the Sixth Investigation in the same way as he had revised the previous five Investigations and the *Prolegomena*. He did not fundamentally alter the text of the first edition; the number, sequence and titles of the paragraphs are preserved, and he included even the same mistake in the numbering of the paragraphs in the first edition (it jumps from § 9 to § 11). Only at certain places was the text explicitly raised to the level of the *Ideas I*, by referring to the correlation between noesis and noema or to the difference between descriptive psychology and phenomenology. Just as in the revision of the *Prolegomena* and the first five Investigations, Husserl made ample use of the annotations in his author's copy of the *Logical Investigations*.

After he had received the prints of the Introduction and the first chapter, Husserl realised that a more radical revision was needed if he wanted to raise the Sixth Investigation to the level of the latest stage of his philosophical thinking. He started to rewrite the first chapter. Eventually he rewrote and enlarged the first five paragraphs of the first chapter using some of the pages from the proofs which were extensively revised. The proofs of the second, third and the first paragraphs of the fourth chapter and their detailed revision, together with the hand-written completion of the fourth chapter and the manuscript of the new fifth chapter show how much more radical and far-reaching the revision of the Sixth Investigation became.

On July 31 Husserl's wife wrote to Daubert that Husserl was working intensively on the Sixth Investigation: "It is hard work, the Sixth Investigation, the hardest that he has ever done." (Hua Dok. III/2, 68). In the middle of August the work came to a halt. Husserl went on vacation. At this point only the first part of the Sixth Investigation had been thoroughly revised and rewritten. The text of the chapters 2 – 4 had doubled in size compared to the first edition. During his vacation Husserl was visited by Daubert and it is very likely that they discussed Husserl's drafts for the revised Sixth Investigation. Unfortunately, we do not know anything about these discussions, including whether they had any influence on the decision Husserl made in the autumn of 1913 not to proceed with the revision of the Sixth Investigation.

When Husserl returned from vacation he tried to write a lengthy preface to the new edition of the *Logical Investigations*. But this work, too, he could not bring to a conclusion. The two fragmentary manuscripts were published after Husserl's death by Eugen Fink in the first issue of the *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*. Finally, in October 1913

the new and revised edition of the *Logical Investigations* was published—without the Sixth Investigation. In the preface to this new edition Husserl gives the misleading impression that the new edition of the Sixth Investigation is completed and in print.

Notes about a new ordering of the drafts from the summer written on the back of an invitation to a conference which lasted from October 4–6, indicate that in October Husserl had not yet abandoned these drafts. However, in a letter to Gustav von Spett from December 29 (cf. Hua Dok. III/3, 531). Husserl writes that he has suffered from exhaustion during the previous months and that this has led to a further postponement of the publication of the Sixth Investigation “for a couple of months”. As the letter makes clear further on, Husserl had in the meantime, i.e., since October, decided not to proceed with the revision from the summer of 1913, but to write a completely new Sixth Investigation. He mentions that he wants to do this on the basis of his extensive studies from the years 1902 to 1910. This refers to two extensive collections of older manuscripts Husserl put together as research material for his project of a new Sixth Investigation. It is probable that Husserl was busy for a while with collecting and studying this material.

In February 1914 Husserl writes to Aloys Fischer: “Right now I am in the middle of the new conception (“Neuausarbeitung”) of the VI. Investigation.” (Hua Dok III/2, 83), and in a letter from April 1914 he tells Rudolf Eisler that he is busy recomposing the final volume of his *Logical Investigations* (Hua Dok. III/6, 81). His work on the new Sixth Investigation in the winter, spring and early summer of 1914 consists of the writing of a new introduction and a new first chapter plus a number of research manuscripts which, thematically, are almost exclusively related to the newly conceived first chapter. The latest text from this radical effort to rewrite the Sixth Investigation is a “plan” for a “new presentation” from the summer of 1914. It shows that Husserl was still searching for a satisfying conception for the new Sixth Investigation. As he himself had predicted to try to rewrite the *Logical Investigations* meant to postpone its publication *ad calendas graecas*.

In 1917 Edith Stein used the revised proofs and manuscripts of the second, third and fourth chapter plus a few other manuscripts to compose two separate treatises entitled “The Emptiness Modification” and “Possibility and Consciousness of Possibility” for publication in the *Jahrbuch*. Since Husserl nowhere commented on Stein’s work and since there are no corrections or remarks by Husserl nor any other traces of his reading in Stein’s handwritten copies, it is possible that at the time he did not look at Stein’s work.

In the spring of 1921 the second, only slightly revised, edition of the Sixth Investigation is finally published. In the preface to this edition Husserl expresses his regret that he was unable to publish the radically revised text of the Sixth Investigation as announced in the preface to the second edition of the *Prolegomena* and the first five Investigations from October 1913.

Probably in the early summer of 1924 Ludwig Landgrebe made typewritten copies of the new draft of the first chapter from 1914 plus a few short supplementary texts, from Stein’s two treatises and from the stenographic manuscript of the fifth

chapter from the summer of 1913. There are only a few amendments and remarks by Husserl, mostly in the typescript of the fifth chapter and in the typescript of the supplementary texts to the first chapter. It is not clear whether at that point Husserl was still thinking of a publication of the material.¹

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It is a great pity that Husserl, in the autumn of 1913 abandoned his work from the summer on the revision of the Sixth Investigation in order to write a completely new text. The drafts from the summer of 1913 are of an exceptional quality. They show that Husserl was well on his way to incorporate the most recent results of his vast research into the structures of intuitive, signitive and categorial acts, of perception, fantasy and judging, of modalities, modifications and intentional implications into a phenomenological theory of knowledge. The manuscripts he wrote for the new Sixth Investigation in 1914 are devoted to a new theory of signs and signification and, as such, are of great philosophical interest. But, with the exception of the new draft of the first chapter (possibly only of a part of the first chapter), they do not advance beyond the stage of research manuscripts. Of major importance in Husserl's analyses in these manuscripts is the difference between signitive and significative intention, the first intention being the tendency which issues from the sign and leads on to the meaning giving act, the second being the intention of the meaning-giving act itself. Intention in the form of a tendency, or a striving has to be distinguished here from intention in the sense of being consciously directed either emptily in an act of meaning or intuitively towards an object. In conjunction with the distinction between signitive and significative acts Husserl revises and simplifies his theory of fulfilment. In the state of fulfilment the empty intention has been supplanted by the intuitive intention, and the awareness of the verbal expression is directly related to the intuitive intention. Whereas in the old theory of the *Logical Investigations* the expression consists of the word-sign together with its meaning intention, in the new theory it is only the word-sign with its signitive intention which expresses either an empty meaning intention or an intuitive intention. What this amounts to is that, in this new theory, the verbal expression is reduced to its sign-function.²

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¹ The whole body of Husserl's work on the revision of the Sixth Logical Investigation from the summer of 1913 and from the first half of 1914 is going to be published in two volumes in the *Husserliana* series.

² For a more detailed analysis of some of the texts from 1914 cf. my article "Signitive und signifikative Intentionen", *Husserl-Studies* 15/3, 1998/99, 167-181. Cf. further C. SINIGALIA, "Zeichen und Bedeutung. Zu einer Umarbeitung der Sechsten Logischen Untersuchung", *Husserl Studies* 14/3, 1997/98, 179-217 and R. BERNET, "Husserl's theory of signs revisited", in *Edmund Husserl and the Phenomenological Tradition. Essays in Phenomenology*, ed. by R. Sokolowski, Catholic University of America Press: Washington (DC), 1988, 1-24.

Returning to the work on the revision in the summer of 1913, the question arises why Husserl abandoned this work in the autumn of 1913. There are no indications that Husserl was dissatisfied with the overall quality of his work from the summer. His little "lie" in the preface of the second edition of the *Prolegomena* and the first five Investigations, that the Sixth Investigation was completed and in print, strongly suggests otherwise. There was certainly still much work to be done; in fact the whole second part of the Sixth Investigation still had to be worked through. But this would certainly not have been more work than writing a completely new text. A certain problem may have been that the revised text of the first part was already twice as long as the original text. A more serious problem existed regarding the original composition of the Sixth Investigation. It is one of the important new insights in the revised text that all meaning-giving acts are categorial acts which can only be fulfilled by categorial intuitions. According to this insight categorial acts have to be taken into account from the start whereas in the first edition they are only subsequently dealt with in the second part.

Judging from the manuscripts Husserl wrote for the new conception of the Sixth Investigation, there may be yet another reason for his abandonment of the revision from the summer of 1913. Husserl was particularly dissatisfied with the first Investigation. The new Sixth Investigation was to remedy the deficiencies of the first, particularly regarding the theory of signs. Finally there is an indication, in a letter to Hans Vaihinger from April 1914 (cf. *Hua Dok.* III/5, 212), that he turned away from the drafts from the summer because they did not originate in his current research activities and interests but only tried to integrate and summarise the results of his research from the previous years.

II. THE NEW DRAFT OF THE FIRST CHAPTER

The most important new insight in the new draft of the first chapter, or rather of the first five paragraphs of the first chapter is already intimated in his lecture-course on the theory of meaning from 1908. It consists in the statement that only acts of thought, i.e., categorial acts, can function as meaning-giving and meaning-fulfilling acts. According to the first edition, occasional expressions and proper names are acts of signification which refer directly and without categorial formation to an object and which are fulfilled by perception or by imagination. The new draft makes it clear that perception as such cannot fulfil a meaning intention, because all meaning intentions, even the nominal ones, are categorial and propositional acts, i.e., acts with a propositional function. Such acts can only be fulfilled by categorial intuitions, i.e., perceptions or imaginations which have been categorially formed.

If only categorial acts can be acts of meaning—be it as meaning giving or meaning fulfilling acts—then acts in order to be expressed, have to be transformed into categorial acts. The first edition opposes two possible answers to the question of which kinds of acts can function as meaning-giving acts. According to the first answer, all acts, of whatever kind, can be expressed, and by being expressed they function as meaning



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