

Husserl's Critique of Psychology and his Relation to the Brentano School¹

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Franz Brentano, it has been argued², is far too often neglected among contemporary philosophers and does not receive the attention he deserves, given the importance of his contributions to philosophy. In fact, Brentano is nowadays mentioned mainly for his thesis that intentionality is a characteristic mark of the mental, and when someone wants to stress his eminent role in the history of philosophy, she usually does so by adding the quite long and impressive list of his students who became important philosophers (as well as psychologists, politicians, etc.) such as Edmund Husserl, Alexius Meinong, Anton Marty, Christian von Ehrenfels, Sigmund Freud, Tomas Masaryk, and others. Brentano was described a charismatic teacher: students frequented his courses even when they were not part of the required program. His goal was to train them to approach philosophy – and psychology – in a scientific manner and to become independent thinkers for whom facts are more important than philosophical traditions. At the same time, however, especially after his giving up teaching in Vienna and moving to Florence in 1896, he often reacted quite disappointedly when he saw that his former students deviated from his philosophical position and developed their own views. Husserl describes this ambivalence of Brentano's personality in his *Recollections of Franz Brentano*:

No one surpassed him in educating students to think independently, yet no one took it harder when such thinking was directed against his own entrenched convictions. (Husserl, 1919, 161, engl: p. 345)

¹ I want to thank Christian Beyer for discussions and helpful comments on an earlier draft of the paper. I have also profited from discussion at a conference on Husserl in Montreal (2001), where an earlier version of this paper was presented. I thank the organizers Denis Fisette and Sandra Lapointe for inviting me to present this paper.

² Cf. Poli (1998) and Albertazzi, Libardi and Poli (1996).

It is not by accident that Husserl put these strong words in a text that was meant to pay tribute to Brentano, for he got to know both aspects of Brentano's personality quite well. Husserl had taken courses with Brentano at the University of Vienna from 1884–86. Brentano's style of teaching and his scientific approach to philosophy had impressed him so deeply that he decided to abandon a career in mathematics and devote himself completely to philosophy (cf. Husserl 1919, 153f). Husserl's interest was well-received by Brentano, who seems to have enjoyed the philosophical discussions with his student: he found warm words to recommend Husserl in his letters to Stumpf – without even having seen a piece of his written work, as he admits – and invited him to his summer residence in St. Gilgen am Wolfgangsee.

After the turn of the century, however, things changed. When Husserl left Vienna to write his *Habilitation* with Stumpf at the University of Halle, Brentano and Husserl hardly communicated with each other any more. After a long period of silence, Brentano took up the correspondence with Husserl to thank him for the dedication of *Philosophy of Arithmetic* – 13 years after the book had been published. (Obviously Brentano had forgotten about this dedication, for he had already expressed his thanks already in a letter from May 1891, immediately after the publication of the book.) In this letter, he assures Husserl that he did not hurt his feelings by deviating from his position. This statement was, however, formulated in a manner typical of Brentano, as though he would expect Husserl to convince him that he did not deviate, at least not in essential points, from his teacher's position.³ Husserl did not fulfill this expectation, though. Instead

³ This impression is substantiated by the letters that follow. After hearing that Husserl confirmed his deviation from his position, he emphasised that he still had a duty to be critical of his students, even more than the student is critical of the teacher. He then goes on to say that the student must not believe that his teacher's critique might be motivated by touchiness or a conviction of infallibility, but rather by a desire to strive for truth. Brentano's disappointment is also manifest in remarks he makes about Husserl to other people. In a letter to Bergmann, for example, Brentano uses the following example when he talks about inner perception: "like, for example, if Husserl perceives himself and thinks to perceive a great philosopher, which could hardly be called a veridical perception" (Brentano, 1946, 85, letter from September 17, 1906). In another letter, Brentano describes Husserl's philosophy as "abstruse theories which

of pledging his loyalty to Brentano he answered by emphasizing that even though it was not easy to give up the position of his former teacher, it was unavoidable to move forward.

I began as a disciple of your philosophy ... but once I had matured to independence I could no longer remain one. (Husserl, 1994, 22)⁴

Pressed by Brentano “to name one single important point, in which you think to have deviated from and gone beyond me” (Brentano in Husserl, 1994, 24), adding that his poor eyesight did not allow him to read a lot, Husserl answered with an outline of his critique of psychologism and a sketch of his distinction between normative and pure logic. In the following years they corresponded and even met in Florence, but the only aspect of Husserl’s new philosophical position they discussed was his critique of psychologism, which is probably what Brentano had in mind when he wrote to Stumpf:

With our Husserl, I fear, it will not end well. Unmerited praise ties him closer to certain ideas which I could easily prove completely wrong, if only he asked me to. (Brentano, 1989, 141 letter from 1909)⁵

This passage – as well as other remarks Brentano makes about Husserl in letters to students (e.g. Hugo Bergmann) – clearly shows that Brentano did not appreciate Husserl’s move. He was disappointed because he felt misunderstood and left out, a feeling that was reinforced by Brentano’s increasing blindness, which made him feel more and more isolated.

neither are true nor, where they consider other opinions, outline them correctly” (Brentano, 1946, 120f, letter from Oct. 15, 1908)

⁴ “Ich begann als Jünger Ihrer Philosophie ... und konnte, als ich zur Selbständigkeit herangereift war, nicht bei ihr stehen bleiben.” The German word *Jünger* has a strong religious connotation, more so than the English word *disciple*.

⁵ “Mit unserem Husserl, fürcht ich, wird’s auch nicht gut werden. Unverdientes Lob bindet ihn immer fester an gewisse Einfälle, die ich ihm, falls er nur möchte, leicht als völlig verfehlt erweisen würde.”

I

After this short description of the personal relation between Brentano and Husserl I now want to turn to the question of what Husserl's critique of psychologism consists in and why it is so important for his philosophical relation to Brentano. Husserl characterizes logical psychologism as a position according to which the normative rules of logic are based on descriptive laws of empirical psychology. Psychologism thus conceived is an empiricist attempt to naturalize logic by reducing the laws of logic to the laws of psychology which, in turn, are inductive generalizations of observable facts or, to be more precise, of facts that are perceived by inner perception. In his critique of psychologism Husserl follows two strategies. First, he argues that psychologism leads to unwanted consequences: the laws of empirical psychology are inductive generalizations of the mental activities of individual human beings. In consequence, they are the laws only of *human* psychology which might be very different from those of animal or Martian psychology. Psychologism, thus, leads to a form of subjectivism (if the mental life of only one person is considered), relativism (if we consider only a specific group), or anthropologism.

Second, and more important, Husserl points out that the laws of logic cannot be based on an empirical science, a science of facts, since they are apodictically valid and, as Husserl puts it, over-empirical. Husserl distinguishes between normative and pure logic, on which the former is based. Pure logic is not a normative discipline; normativity rather comes into play through bridge laws, which state that we *should* think logically or that a proper justification *should* fulfill certain standards. Normative logic, which was also called the *art of correct thinking*, offers us rules which thus govern our psychological activities. This connection between psychology and logic might explain why there is such a strong tendency to reduce logic to psychology. The laws of pure logic, on which these normative rules are based, however, are not just inductive empirical generalizations which hold to a certain degree of probability. In order to do their job the laws of pure logic must hold apodictically, they are *a priori* rather than empirical truths. Pure logic, in other words, is not about psychological phenomena, in fact, it is not about anything real at all, but rather about a sphere of ideal objects,

i.e. about the essential characteristics of theories and of concepts like proposition, concept, truth, object, state of affairs, etc.⁶

Most of the *Prolegomena* is dedicated to the critique of psychologism. Husserl emphasizes, however, that this negative part is not a goal in itself, but rather connected to a positive goal. In the *Selbstanzeige*, a short outline of the *Prolegomena*, Husserl writes that by “[b]eing directed against predominant psychologism, the *Prolegomena* try to revive the idea of a pure logic” (Hua XVIII, 261).⁷ And when Husserl writes a draft for an introduction to the second edition of the *Logical Investigations* in 1913, he complains that many readers have misunderstood the *Prolegomena*, reasoning that these misunderstandings stem from the fact that readers content themselves with his attack on psychologism and do not consider the rest of the volume. He emphasizes that he actually had a different purpose with these *Prolegomena*: “All effort [was] made to convince the reader to accept this ideal sphere of being and science [*i.e.*, *the sphere of propositions, concepts, etc.*]” (Husserl, 1939, 113).⁸ Husserl’s main goal, thus, is to advocate pure logic, a theory which is about ideal objects and, consequently, presupposes Husserl’s acceptance of abstract entities. And only insofar as they advocate pure logic, the *Prolegomena to a Pure Logic* can be understood as preparatory work to the *Logical Investigations*, for only after having accepted the realm of ideal objects, could Husserl give up Brentano’s empirical standpoint and develop Brentano’s method of descriptive psychology into his own phenomenological method, which includes the intuition of essences. In addition, it allows him to develop his theory of intentionality without adopting Brentano’s early immanentism, according to which the intentional object is immanent to the act, and to

⁶ Husserl’s talk of “pure logic” and “ideal objects” seems to invite a Platonistic interpretation, but Husserl explicitly warns against reading too much into this doctrine (cf. 1939, 118). The fact that Moritz Schlick interpreted Husserl along Platonistic lines was one of the main reasons why he lost his interest in phenomenology; his (mis)interpretation can be seen as one of the reasons why analytic philosophy and phenomenology started to drift apart. I discuss this point in my (2003).

⁷ “Gegen den herrschenden Psychologismus gewendet, suchen die *Prolegomena* also die Idee einer reinen Logik neu zu beleben.”

⁸ “Alle Mühe wird daran gewendet, den Leser zur Anerkennung dieser idealen Seins- und Wissenschaftssphäre zu bestimmen.”

unfold his theory of meaning, both of which involve the acceptance of ideal objects.

These considerations show that the core of Husserl's deviation from Brentano in the *Prolegomena* is not primarily the question of whether logic can be based on empirical psychology, but rather the question of whether it makes sense to accept the realm of the ideal. Most of the other points where Husserl deviates from Brentano follow from that point. Thus, Husserl's *Prolegomena* are more than a punctual deviation of Brentano's doctrine through the critique of psychologism, they are rather a substantial emancipation from Brentano's philosophy.

Given the importance of his critique of psychologism in his relation to Brentano, it is interesting to note that Husserl does not explicitly criticize his teacher in the *Prolegomena*. In fact, he mentions Brentano only once, without discussing his position at all. He does, however, attack explicitly the empiricism of John Stuart Mill, who in turn had a strong influence on Brentano. In addition, he discusses the positions of Spencer, Sigwart, Erdmann, as well as the one he himself advocated only nine years earlier in his *Philosophy of Arithmetic*.⁹

What caused Husserl to change his views, to give up his early position and to turn away from Brentano? It is often pointed out that Frege had a great influence on this development of Husserl. We know that Husserl was acquainted with Frege's work from very early on: he discusses Frege's theory of numbers already in *Philosophy of Arithmetic* which he sent him in 1891, together with some shorter texts. In 1894, Frege harshly criticized Husserl in his review of *Philosophy of Arithmetic*. "In reading this work," Frege writes, "I was able to gauge the devastation caused by the influx of psychology into logic" (Frege, 1894/1972, 337). It seems that this critique, even though it was quite harsh, had considerable influence on Husserl, for he said more than three decades later in a conversation with Boyce Gibson that "[i]t hit the nail on the head".¹⁰ Apart from a few conversations¹¹,

⁹ In recent literature, doubts have been raised whether Husserl's early position was, in fact, psychologistic. I do not want to discuss this question here. It is important for my point, however, that the years between 1894 and 1900 are characterized by a decisive move in Husserl's philosophy, a move that considerably influenced his relation to Franz Brentano.

¹⁰ Quoted in Føllesdal, 1982b, 55.

however, Husserl hardly mentioned Frege as an influence on his position. Even in the *Prolegomena* he mentions Frege only once in a footnote (cf. Hua XVIII, 172), but does not discuss his views. He rather acknowledges the influence of such philosophers as Lotze, Leibniz, Herbart, Kant – which, in itself, can already be seen as rebellion against Brentano – and Bolzano. The latter is mentioned mainly in the context of pure logic. Several years later, in the *Draft to an Introduction to the Logical Investigations* Husserl mentioned that when he first read Bolzano's *Wissenschaftslehre* "I mistook, however, his original thoughts on presentations, propositions, truths 'in themselves' as metaphysical absurdities" (Husserl, 1939, 129).¹² Only his reading of Lotze helped him to fully appreciate Bolzano's work and to accept his ontology of ideal propositions, concepts, etc. Even in the thirties, when asked directly about Frege's influence on his abandoning psychologism, Husserl acknowledged Frege's importance, but again emphasized that he was strongly influenced by Bolzano, whose book he had found in a used bookstore.¹³ In fact, Husserl must have thought that Bolzano's influence was so obvious, that he found it necessary to state explicitly that in his *Logical Investigations* he is not merely commenting or critically outlining Bolzano's theory.¹⁴ These considerations do not show,

¹¹ Cf. Føllesdal: "... there is no explicit acknowledgement in Husserl's work of his having been influenced by Frege. However, there are three oral expressions of indebtedness." (Føllesdal, 1982b, 55) (to Roman Ingarden: "Frege war entscheidend—Frege was decisive"; to Boyce Gibson: Frege's criticism "hit the nail on the head"; and to Andrew Osborn who asked him about Frege's influence on the abandonment of the psychological approach. "Husserl concurred.")

¹² "Seine originellen Gedanken über Vorstellungen, Sätze, Wahrheiten 'an sich' missdeutete ich aber als metaphysische Absurditäten."

¹³ "Andrew Osborn visited Husserl 1935 in the Black Forest to ask him about Frege's influence on the abandonment of the psychological approach of the *Philosophie der Arithmetik*. Husserl concurred, but also mentioned his chance discovery of Bolzano's work in a second-hand book store." (note by Spiegelberg, quoted in: Schuhmann, 1977, 463).

¹⁴ "Überhaupt wird der Vergleich der vorliegenden logischen Untersuchungen mit dem Werke Bolzanos lehren, daß es sich bei ihnen keineswegs um bloße Kommentationen oder kritisch nachbessernde Darstellungen Bolzanoscher Gedankenbildungen handelt, obschon sie andererseits entscheidende Anstöße von Bolzano – und außerdem von Lotze – empfangen haben." (Hua XVIII, 229)

of course, that Frege's influence was not important for Husserl's rejection of psychologism, but they do show that his turn concerning that question, which marks the core of his deviation from Brentano, was strongly influenced also by Bolzano (and triggered by Lotze).¹⁵

In this context it is quite ironic to note that Brentano claims for himself to have introduced Husserl to Bolzano. Husserl, who knew about Bolzano probably from Weierstrass¹⁶, had, in fact, encountered Bolzano's *Paradoxes of the Infinite* in one of Brentano's courses, which explains Husserl's initial rejection of Bolzano's views on abstract objects. When teaching Bolzano to his students, Brentano wrote in a letter to Hugo Bergmann, he did not intend to recommend Bolzano as a teacher and guide. "What they could learn from him, I could tell myself, they could better learn from me..." Meinong, Twardowski, Husserl, and Kerry, Brentano complains, were not able to recognize the wrong aspects of Bolzano's theory. "I can completely refuse the responsibility for the strangeness and absurdities that both Husserl and Meinong have adopted under the influence of Bolzano" (Brentano, 1946, 125f). Moreover, in his letters to Husserl he congratulates him for being influenced by a thinker as noble and serious as Bolzano, since one can learn even from the errors of serious philosophers more than from the truths of the superficial ones. "But" Brentano adds, "the realm of thought objects [*Gedankendinge*] which even a respectable thinker as Bolzano has had the presumption to accept, cannot ... be accepted. It could be easily shown to be absurd." (Brentano in Husserl, 1994, 32, letter from Jan. 9, 1905) – he does not, of course, explain how.

Interestingly enough, Husserl systematically plays down the importance of Bolzano's influence in his letters to Brentano; whenever he mentions

¹⁵ For a discussion on Bolzano's influence on Husserl and the role of Lotze in this relation, cf. Beyer (1996).

¹⁶ Husserl used Zimmermann's textbook in school. Cf. Rollinger (1999, 69). It is doubtful, however, that he was acquainted with Bolzano's name or doctrines through Zimmermann. Husserl owned the second and third edition of Zimmermann's textbook, and, as Edgar Morscher has pointed out, there is little left of Bolzano's influence in these editions (unlike the first, but even there Zimmermann explicitly refers to Bolzano only three times). Cf. Morscher (1997, 156ff.). I would like to thank Wolfgang Künne for drawing my attention to this point.

Bolzano, he adds that he is quite stimulating, his position, however, is all in all not very satisfactory, which is why Bolzano could not be called a teacher – a description that Husserl wants to reserve for Brentano.

II

Let us now turn to the debate between Brentano and Husserl about psychologism. I have mentioned above that this topic is the only philosophical topic the two philosophers discussed in their letters. In all the years after the publication of the *Logical Investigations*, they only met one more time, in Florence in March 1907. Even at this meeting they hardly talked about philosophy – Husserl, who was traveling with his wife, seemed to prefer to do sightseeing in Florence, where he had not been before – and when they did, it seems that Brentano did most of the talking. “At one point,” Husserl writes in his *Recollections of Franz Brentano*, “he wanted to hear and had me explain without interruption the sense of the phenomenological research method and my former fight against psychologism. We did not come to an agreement” (Husserl, 1919, 166). Brentano’s take on the same meeting is somewhat different. He wrote in a letter to Bergmann that Husserl “said that he always assured people that I was not really a psychologist, thinking, it seems, that with that he is clearing me from a horrible suspicion.” A few lines later he continues: “I got to hear some grotesque affirmations” (Brentano, 1946, 93). In addition, Brentano states that his Florentine discussions with Husserl did not help him a lot in understanding his new position.¹⁷

In fact, Brentano seems to have had some unclear ideas about the full impact of Husserl’s critique of psychologism. He realized that the core of the disagreement is that Husserl advocates the idea of a pure logic and thus is ready to accept the existence of abstract entities. He does not seem to have appreciated, however, that Husserl presented several arguments to justify that position. Instead, he concentrates exclusively on the argument that psychologism entails a form of subjectivism. In all places I know of

¹⁷ Cf. Brentano (1946, 121): “Doch sie haben darüber mehr Urteil als ich, der sein Buch nie studiert hat, und in den Florentiner Gesprächen mit ihm nicht sehr weit gekommen ist.”

where Brentano talks about psychologism – in the appendix to the second volume of the *Psychology* as well as in letters to other students¹⁸ and in the letter in which he replies to Husserl’s outline of his attack on psychologism – he refers to this argument only. In his reply to Brentano’s letter, Husserl outlines his attack on psychologism for a second time, this time without even mentioning the argument concerning anthropologism, though. He writes:

The modus Barbara like any logical or mathematical axiom contains not the least bit of physical or psychological ‘nature’ ... [*When we are doing pure logic*] we are not doing physics nor psychology and psychophysics, we are not within the realm of nature, but in that of ideas, not in the realm of empirical ... generalities, but in that of ideal, apodictical, general laws, not in the realm of causality, but in that of rationality. (Husserl, 1994, 37)¹⁹

In the rest of the letter (four printed pages!) Husserl tried to further explain the distinction between normative and pure logic. Half a year later, Brentano answered that the vague statements of the letter were not sufficient for him to make a judgment about Husserl’s new position; Husserl should rather have delivered one concisely formulated sentence in which he expresses his innovations: a request that Husserl could not fulfill because of his present state of nervous exhaustion, as he notes in his reply.

In short, we can state that Brentano, whenever he discusses the charge of psychologism, defends himself against one single argument according to which psychologism entails a form of subjectivism or anthropologism. Brentano’s reply was that he never held a form of subjectivism or anything that entails that position – without ever giving an argument, using affirmations like “I have always very firmly rejected and opposed such absurd subjectivism” (Brentano, 1995, 306). And Brentano continued to

¹⁸ Cf. Brentano (1995, 306f), the letter to Marty: (Brentano, 1966, 225f).

¹⁹ “Ein Satz wie der Modus Barbara, wie irgend ein logisches und mathematisches Axiom enthält von physischer und psychischer ‘Natur’ nicht das Mindeste. ... Wir treiben in ihr [*der reinen Logik*] weder Physik noch Psychologie u. Psychophysik, wir stehen nicht im Reich der Natur, sondern in dem der Ideen, nicht im Reich der empirischen (assertorischen) Allgemeinheiten, sondern in dem der idealen, apodictischen, generellen Gesetzlichkeiten, nicht im Reich der Causalität, sondern in dem der Rationalität.”

concentrate exclusively on that point even when Husserl had explicitly told him that this argument did not apply to him (which, by the way, explains why Brentano got the impression that Husserl as well as Daubert, whom he met in Munich in 1907²⁰ to discuss Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, tried to convince him that he is not really a psychologist). When Husserl tried to explain where they actually disagree, however, Brentano appears not to have listened at all.

III

So far I have argued that Husserl's critique of psychologism and his idea of a pure logic is the decisive point in his deviation from Brentano's position. Now I want to address the question of how this point determines Husserl's relation to other members of the Brentano school.

Husserl was, of course, not the only student of Brentano who had problems fully accepting all aspects of his doctrine. Brentano's early characterization of intentional inexistence, according to which the intentional object is immanent to the mental act, has caused a number of students to protest; which raises the question of whether Husserl's development was really an individual strike of independence rather than a move characteristic of the Brentano school. Given that Brentano could never have accepted that move, one might come up with the question why these like-minded philosophers did not found a *Sezession*, i.e. a reform group that moves out from the original movement, a step which would not have been all that atypical in Austria at the turn of the century.

One of the first to criticize this aspect of Brentano's doctrine was Twardowski in his book *On the Content and Object of Presentations*, which is one of the first books in the Brentano school where Bolzano's philosophy is discussed at length. Twardowski proposes to distinguish

²⁰ Cf. Brentano, 1946, 96: "Ich hatte den Mann [*Husserl*] selbst ein paar Tage bei mir, und die Durchreise durch Muenchen gestatte mir auch, seinen dortigen Hauptverfechter Daubert persönlich kennenzulernen. Ich stellte mehrfach Fragen. In den Antworten schien ein Wunsch, die Differenzen moeglichst zu mildern, unverkennbar. Der Terminus ‚Psychologist‘ wurde sehr unschuldig gedeutet. Er wuerde so auf uns keine Anwendung haben."

between the object and the content of the mental act, only the latter of which is immanent to the act. Even though this reform does not amount to an acceptance of ideal objects which, as we have seen above, made Husserl's critique of psychologism possible, Twardowski's distinction can be characterized, as Barry Smith puts it, as "parallel, in many ways, to Frege's distinction between sense and referent, though translated into the psychological mode" (Smith, 1994, 157). Husserl was well acquainted with Twardowski's book. He reacted to Twardowski's position already in a manuscript from 1894²¹ and wrote a review two years later, after his rejection of psychologism. The review was not published, though, and there are no indications of whether Husserl sent a copy of the manuscript to Twardowski. Husserl's main critique concerns Twardowski's identification of "the meaning of a name with the content of the corresponding presentation" (Hua XXII, 347) and therefore with a real part of the act, a psychological entity, arguing that the meaning of the word must rather be an ideal object. Even though Husserl did not adopt Twardowski's position, the distinction between object and psychological content was an important stimulus for developing his own views on intentionality. Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, on the other hand, had a strong influence on Twardowski, who gave up his psychologistic views after having read Husserl's work²², as he remarks in his autobiographical "*Selbstdarstellung*." The two philosophers, however, hardly communicated with each other. In addition, after his assignment to the University of Lvov Twardowski published less and concentrated more on teaching, which helps to explain why they could not together propose a reform of Brentanism. At Lvov, however, Twardowski had a strong influence on a younger generation of Polish philosophers, such as Roman Ingarden, some of who became interested in Husserlian phenomenology and came to study with Husserl.

Twardowski had a strong influence also on another student of Brentano, Alexius Meinong. On the basis of Twardowski's distinction between

²¹ "Intentionale Gegenstände" In: Hua XXII, 303–384.

²² Cf. Twardowski (1991, 19f): "Aber die einige Jahre später erschienenen *Logischen Untersuchungen* Husserls ... überzeugten mich, dass es möglich sei, die psychologische, also empirisch gewonnene Erkenntnis so als Grundlage logischer, also apriorischer Sätze zu betrachten."

attributive and modifying adjectives Meinong argues that we can ascribe properties to objects even if these objects do not exist. On the basis of this distinction Meinong rejects Brentano's immanentism but can still account for those mental acts that are directed towards objects that do not exist. The result is Meinong's ontology, which at first look – and arguably only at first look – might seem to be somewhat extravagant, since it holds that there are objects that do not exist, including even contradictory objects like round squares.

Husserl and Meinong, it seems, would have had quite a lot of common ground to work on. Like Husserl, Meinong took an anti-psychologistic standpoint²³ which, at least to some degree, was influenced by Bolzano.²⁴ In addition, Meinong writes in his *Theory of Objects*: “the entire tenor of the *Logische Untersuchungen*, as well as many of the particular statements that are contained in it, convinces one that, despite certain differences in detail (at present unavoidable), the author's goal is the same as our own” (Meinong, 1960, 94). Moreover, the two were in contact and sent each other their publications throughout the eighteen-nineties.

The main reason why the two philosophers could not work closer together seems to be of a sociological rather than of a philosophical nature. Husserl and Meinong both thought that they substantially influenced the other and complained about not having been given sufficient credit. The argument culminated when Husserl got to read Meinong's book *On Assumptions* from 1902. He immediately wrote him a letter, complaining that his *Logical Investigations* are mentioned only once, and in a footnote. Meinong replied, remarking that he should have behaved like Husserl, who did not quote the Graz school at all. On that note, their correspondence came to an end.²⁵ But even if the two would not have behaved so over-

²³ “I have already expressed elsewhere my basic agreement with E. Husserl's attack against ‘psychologism’ in logic. ... Today, ... I can completely support my previous expression of agreement and extend it still further to many another of those ‘problems.’ It is, then, perhaps a dissent of relatively minor importance that I would not refer these problems precisely to ‘pure logic.’” For a comparison of Meinong's and Husserl's anti-psychologism, cf. Modenato (1995).

²⁴ For a comparison of Meinong and Bolzano on their logical realism, cf. Morscher (1972, esp. 78ff).

²⁵ With the exception of two letters which are not philosophically relevant.

sensitively, there are serious doubts that they could have worked together on the same program, for both had ambitions to create their own philosophical movement. Even though Brentano tried to train them in approaching philosophy scientifically, they could not manage to work together on the same problems. As a result, their positions drifted further and further apart; they thus reached a point where collaboration became impossible also for philosophical reasons. Missing a unifying figure – someone who could have taken the role of Brentano and guide the new movement – they were doomed to stay, as Husserl puts it, “two travelers on one and the same dark continent. Of course we often see the same and describe it, but ... often in different ways” (Hua XXIV, 444).²⁶

This illustrates why Husserl could not find a common ground with those members of the Brentano school who had similar problems with Brentano’s philosophy as he did. His relations with those members of the Brentano school who were more faithful to Brentano’s doctrine, like Stumpf, Marty, and Kraus, on the other hand, was overshadowed by more profound disagreements²⁷, some of which were those that complicated Brentano’s philosophical relation with Husserl.

In conclusion, we can state that Husserl’s development in the decade between *Philosophy of Arithmetic* and *Logical Investigations* brings not only a change in Husserl’s views on the foundations of logic, but also a strike of emancipation from Brentano’s influence. This was not an easy step for Husserl, as he states in a letter to Brentano from 1905 in which he tries to convince him that his change of opinion was not a result of his academic ambition or opportunism, but rather that he was forced to it, as it were. He was aware that with his new position he would not make many friends in academic circles, but

things gained such a power over me that I could not act differently – even though I fervently wished to find a modest job which could guarantee me some

²⁶ “Wir sind wie zwei Reisende in einem und demselben dunklen Weltteil. Natürlich sehen wir oft dasselbe und beschreiben es, aber entsprechen unseren verschiedenen Apperzeptionsmaßen, vielfach verschieden.”

²⁷ For a discussion of the relation between Husserl and the individual members of the Brentano school, cf. Rollinger (1999).

independence and space for personal development. These were hard times for me and my family... (Husserl, 1994, 26)²⁸

This strike of emancipation from Brentano brings Husserl the discovery of ideal objects, and thus the necessary presupposition which allows him develop what he is most famous for: his phenomenological method.

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²⁸ "Im Übrigen habe ich nicht aus Tugendhaftigkeit so gehandelt, sondern aus Zwang. Die Sachen gewannen eben solche Gewalt über mich, daß ich nicht anders konnte – trotz des brennenden Wunsches nach einer bescheidenen Stellung, die mir äußere Unabhängigkeit und die Möglichkeit größerer Wirkung gewähren könnte. Es waren harte Zeiten für mich und meine Familie..." (Brief vom 3.1.1905)

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