

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269631706>

# Foreword to the New Edition

Chapter · January 2012

---

CITATIONS  
0

READS  
179

1 author:



**Dermot Moran**  
Boston College

451 PUBLICATIONS 2,898 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

## FOREWORD TO THE ROUTLEDGE CLASSICS EDITION

### *DERMOT MORAN*

One hundred years ago, on 2 April 1913, Edmund Husserl published the First Book of his planned three-volume *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie* (*Ideas towards a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, hereafter 'Ideas') in Volume One of his newly founded *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* (*Yearbook for Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*),<sup>1</sup> a yearbook that he jointly edited with his fellow phenomenologists Alexander Pfänder (1870–1941), Adolf Reinach (1883–1917), Moritz Geiger (1880–1937) and Max Scheler (1874–1928). Husserl's *Yearbook* would become for the next two decades the major outlet for the new phenomenology,<sup>2</sup> and the first lengthy volume did not disappoint. It contained not only Husserl's programmatic *Ideas* but also Max Scheler's groundbreaking *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik* (*Formalism in Ethics and the Material Ethics of Value*).<sup>3</sup> The *Yearbook* became the official organ of the nascent phenomenological movement and was an astounding philosophical success. It produced eleven volumes in all and, indeed, Volume Eight would contain Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927)<sup>4</sup> along with a work by Oskar Becker (1889–1964) (later Jürgen Habermas' doctoral supervisor) entitled *Mathematical Existence*.<sup>5</sup> It can be said with justice that at least two of the *Yearbook's* publications—Husserl's *Ideas* and Heidegger's *Being and Time*—have established themselves as classic texts not

just of the phenomenological movement but to be counted among the great philosophical works of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup>

It is important for several reasons to have Boyce Gibson's translation available once more in print in the Routledge Classics series. Boyce Gibson's translation was the first of Husserl's works to appear in English and was for many years the only source for English readers. Moreover Gibson had personally studied with Husserl in Freiburg in 1928 and Husserl obviously held him in high regard, even supplying him with a number of unpublished manuscripts which expanded on or revised points discussed in *Ideas* (primarily on Husserl's changing views on the reduction).<sup>7</sup> Husserl saw the translation as an opportunity to elaborate on his new developments and promised to write both a Preface and a Postface to the translation. As Boyce Gibson recorded in his diary:

He [Husserl] will give it a *Vorwort* and *Nachwort*, stating here the 2 new directions of advance since the *Ideen*: 1st *Intersubjektivität (Einfühlung)* . . . 2nd Ego and 'Habit'.<sup>8</sup>

Husserl clearly wanted Gibson to include amendments and additions in his translation as an alternative to producing a new edition of the work. In the end, only the 'Author's Preface' appeared in the English edition, and again it was an important text for Husserl scholars in the Anglophone world until new translations of Husserl became available from the 1960s onwards.

Boyce Gibson's translation of Husserl's *Ideas* originally appeared in the Muirhead Library of Philosophy, a series founded in 1890 by John Henry Muirhead (1855–1940)<sup>9</sup>, professor of philosophy at the University of Birmingham. The series published all the notable philosophers of the day including Hegel, Bergson, Bernard Bosanquet, Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, G. F. Stout, among many others. Undoubtedly, Muirhead himself found Husserl's idealism congenial as he himself had been a student of the British Idealists Caird and Bosanquet.<sup>10</sup> Let us first introduce Edmund Husserl and put the *Ideas* in context.

The founder of phenomenology Edmund Husserl (1859–1938)<sup>11</sup> was born into a middle-class family of assimilated Jews on 8 April 1859 in Prossnitz, Moravia (now Prostějov in the Czech Republic), then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. He attended Gymnasia in Vienna and Olmütz (now Olomouc, Czech Republic) and in 1876 entered the University of Leipzig, where he studied mathematics, physics, and astronomy. He also attended

philosophy lectures given by the renowned philosopher and psychologist Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920). Encouraged by his friend, another philosophy student, Thomas Masaryk (1850–1937), Husserl began reading the British empiricists. In 1878 he transferred to Berlin University to study mathematics with the renowned mathematician Karl Weierstrass (1815–1897). In 1881, he transferred to the University of Vienna, where, in 1882, he received his doctoral degree with a dissertation on differential calculus.

Following a period in Berlin as assistant to Weierstrass, in 1884 Husserl moved back to Vienna to attend the lectures of Franz Brentano (1838–1917), one of the founders of experimental psychology. Brentano inspired Husserl to devote his life to philosophy. In particular Brentano's conception of intentionality, the idea that every mental experience is directed in its own characteristic way at some object, which may or may not exist, inspired Husserl to develop a new descriptive science of experience: phenomenology. Husserl invoked Brentano's *descriptive psychology* in his first publication, *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1891),<sup>12</sup> and initially identified phenomenology with descriptive psychology in his next book *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901).<sup>13</sup> The *Logical Investigations* was the remarkable result of ten intensive years of logical research, during which Husserl came to terms with the then contemporary logicians such as Mill, Boole, Bolzano, Schröder, Lotze and Frege. But the book was anything but a study of pure logic. The first volume *Prolegomena to Pure Logic* appeared independently in 1900 as a devastating critique of psychologism, the view that logical concepts are reducible to psychological operations. A second volume of six lengthy investigations, subtitled *Investigations in Phenomenology and the Theory of Knowledge*, was published in two parts in 1901, marking the real beginnings of Husserl's phenomenological description. In this second volume, Husserl introduces the idea of phenomenology as a science of essences and defends a kind of intuition (which he calls 'categorical intuition'), akin to sensuous intuition, that, however, grasps non-sensuous or categorical features of objects as well as apprehending states of affairs. As a result of the success of this book, Husserl moved from Halle to Göttingen where he began to attract gifted students who sought to pursue this phenomenology of essential description.

Husserl's phenomenology underwent a change of direction around 1905, a turn first publicly revealed in lectures given at Göttingen University in 1906–7, posthumously published as *The Idea of Phenomenology* (1907).<sup>14</sup> He now began to characterize his phenomenology in explicitly transcendental terms and introduced the notions of the *epochē* and reduction (often these

terms are interchangeable) as a way of leading from the consideration of consciousness in the natural attitude in daily life to the 'pure', i.e. non-empirical, consideration of the essence of consciousness removed from all reference to factual reality. However, although this transcendental turn was known to those attending his lectures, it was not announced in print until the publication of *Ideas* (1913). Thereafter, Husserl insisted that phenomenology should not be understood as the straightforward essential description of acts of consciousness and their correlated objects, but had to be understood in terms of acts (now termed 'noeses' or, following Descartes, *cogitationes*) and their intentional objects (now termed 'noemata' or, following Descartes, *cogitata*) considered in their purity, precisely as uncovered through the phenomenological reduction, namely stripped of everything empirical and every reference to factual existence. Phenomenology was to be a 'pure' science of essences, a 'new eidetics'. It was also to be a transcendental science that requires, as Husserl insists in his *Introduction to Ideas*, 'a new way of looking at things' far removed from the natural standpoint (Boyce Gibson, p. 3; Hua III/1 5). With the unplugging of the natural standpoint, all reference to existential reality is suspended, and, Husserl explains 'the phenomena of transcendental phenomenology will be characterized as non-real (irreal)' (Boyce Gibson, p. 4; Hua III/1 6).

Some three years after the publication of *Ideas*, on 1 April 1916, Husserl took up the Chair of Philosophy at the Albert-Ludwigs Universität Freiburg, where he would remain until his retirement in 1928. Again Husserl presented his ideas in his lectures, including a famous lecture to the Kant Gesellschaft in Freiburg on 1 May 1924,<sup>15</sup> in celebration of the bicentennial of Kant's birth, where he stressed the 'inexorable necessity' that led him to transcendental philosophy, and the 'obvious essential relationship' between his phenomenology and the transcendental philosophy of Kant (EP I Hua VII 230). But he published almost nothing until after his retirement.

In 1929 Husserl published *Formal and Transcendental Logic*,<sup>16</sup> an attempt to rethink the *Logical Investigations* from the transcendental point of view. One of the high points of Husserl's Freiburg years was his encounter with Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) in 1917. Heidegger had spent the summer of 1914 reading Husserl's *Ideas* as he reported in a letter to his mentor Krebs.<sup>17</sup> Through the early twenties Husserl and Heidegger became very close, sharing long philosophical conversations, even holidaying together. They attempted to collaborate on an article, 'Phenomenology', commissioned for the fourteenth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.<sup>18</sup> Although several drafts,

it became evident that their views diverged radically and, in the final submitted version, Husserl had excised much of Heidegger's contribution.<sup>19</sup> This failed collaboration revealed the growing fissure between their positions, and their relationship with one another deteriorated. Meanwhile Heidegger published his *Being and Time* (1927) in Volume VIII of Husserl's *Yearbook*. Heidegger also published an edited version of Husserl's *Lectures on Internal Time Consciousness* in 1928.<sup>20</sup> Husserl had encouraged Heidegger to complete this work but when he finally sat down shortly after his retirement to read *Being and Time*, he felt bitterly disappointed. He thought the work was an exercise in philosophical anthropology, a description of human existence in its everyday character, which completely missed the whole point of the phenomenological reduction.

The growing popularity of Heidegger motivated Husserl to go on the offensive to defend his life's work. He travelled to Amsterdam in April 1928 to deliver two public lectures on 'Phenomenology and Psychology', a development of his views as laid out in the recently completed *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article.<sup>21</sup> On 23 and 25 February 1929, in Paris, Husserl delivered two two-hour lectures entitled 'Introduction to Transcendental Phenomenology' (later published as the *Paris Lectures*)<sup>22</sup> at the Descartes Amphitheatre of the Sorbonne. In attendance were Emmanuel Levinas, Lucien Lévy Bruhl, Jean Cavaillès, Jean Héring, Alexandre Koyré, Gabriel Marcel, and the young Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jan Patočka. In 1931, a French translation of these lectures was published, edited by Levinas and Gabrielle Peiffer, assisted by Alexandre Koyré, entitled *Méditations Cartésiennes (Cartesian Meditations)*,<sup>23</sup> and for many years this was the only significant Husserlian text available in French. Husserl promised to produce a German version (see his 'Author's Preface to the English Translation', Boyce Gibson, p. 1) but held it back for further revisions. By now Husserl had a new assistant—Eugen Fink—and together they labored to produce a new systematic introduction to his transcendental phenomenology. In 1929, shortly after he returned from his trip to France, Husserl began to work with Boyce Gibson on the planned translation of *Ideas*.

In 1933, however, Husserl's personal situation completely changed. The National Socialist party came to power in Germany in January and by April of that year, based on new decrees, Husserl was officially precluded from teaching and publishing in Germany. On 4 May 1933, reacting to the decrees banning those of Jewish descent from public service, Husserl wrote to his longtime friend Dieter Mahnke:

Finally, in my old age, I had to experience something I had not deemed possible: the erection of a spiritual ghetto, into which I and my children . . . are to be driven. . . . We are no longer to have the right to call ourselves German; our spiritual work is no longer to be included in German cultural history . . . (my translation).<sup>24</sup>

Husserl suffered many prohibitions and indignities; eventually his German citizenship was revoked. He was denied participation in official delegations of German philosophers attending conferences such as the 1934 International Congress of Philosophy held in Prague, although he wrote a letter that was read out at the Congress and drafted a text, the so-called 'Prague Treatise'. He was, however, able to make private lecture trips to Prague and Vienna in 1935. Husserl was invited by the Vienna Cultural Society to deliver a lecture, 'Philosophy in the Crisis of European Humanity', in Vienna on 7 May, which, due to its popularity, was repeated on 10 May. Six months later, on 14 and 15 November 1935, on the invitation of the Philosophy Circle, Husserl delivered two lectures in Prague, entitled 'The Crisis of European Science and Psychology'. These two lectures marked a new beginning—and indeed the final phase of Husserl's philosophical activity. Husserl published the first part of his planned book (§§ 1–27 of the present edition of *Crisis*) in Belgrade in the yearbook *Philosophia* edited by Arthur Liebert, a German Neo-Kantian philosopher, who, like Husserl, had lost his professorship on account of being Jewish and was living in exile in Belgrade. Husserl envisaged the *Crisis* as a radical, historical, retrospective critique of his own philosophical contribution, as well as a definitive statement in a new form, an 'historical-material introduction' (*historisch-sachliche Einleitung*)<sup>25</sup> to his transcendental phenomenology. Some months after these two sections of the *Crisis* were published, in summer 1937 Husserl fell ill, and eventually died on 27 April 1938. He is buried in Güntherthal outside Freiburg.

Husserl was already 54 years old when he published *Ideas*, which for him was a programmatic book on the phenomenological method and on the scope of phenomenological philosophy (a new idea captured in the very title of the *Yearbook*). *Ideas* represented the first of his many 'introductions' to phenomenology as a 'method'. Later introductions would include the *Cartesian Meditations*<sup>26</sup> and the *Crisis of European Sciences*. Husserl has written the initial draft of the manuscript for *Ideas* in a hurry between September and October 1912. He had originally planned a different work for the first volume of his *Yearbook*—a study of judgement that went beyond the *Logical*

*Investigations*. He was also planning a new edition of the then out-of-print *Logical Investigations*, which he had been working on since 1911, but eventually he only turned to it after *Ideas* was published and the new edition appeared later in October 1913. But Husserl could not complete the full revision of the *Investigations* and so he intended *Ideas* to be his new primer of phenomenology. As he writes in his Foreword to the Second Edition of the *Investigations*:

I decided first of all to plan my *Ideas*. They were to give a universal yet contentful presentation of the new phenomenology, based throughout on actual executed work, a presentation of its method, of its systematic field of problems, of its function in making possible a strictly scientific philosophy, as well as a reduction to rational theory of empirical psychology.

(LU, I p. 4; Hua XVIII 9)

In fact, Husserl wanted to revise the *Investigations* so that it could be read from the new standpoint of *Ideas*. In the end, however, he realized that would require too much of a reworking of the *Investigations* and so he published a second partially revised version, and expressed the hope that readers would see how *Ideas* builds on that work. For Husserl, the *Ideas* offered an account of the phenomenological method and an outline of ‘the main structures of pure consciousness’ (LU I, p. 4; Hua XVIII 10).

Like all his other grand projects (e.g. the revision of the *Investigations*, the expanded German version of the *Cartesian Meditations* and the *Crisis*), the ‘*Ideas*’ project also remained unfinished and it too was effectively abandoned, although he wrote many drafts attempting to clarify the nature of his breakthroughs there (see *Husserliana* III/2 which contains many manuscripts written over the years). He gave up attempting to complete it and allowed it to be reprinted several times (in 1922 and 1928) during his life without alteration. Indeed, his main effort at revision would be the ‘Author’s Preface’ he contributed to the Boyce Gibson translation, published in 1931. It was not until more than a decade after Husserl’s death in 1938 that Walter Biemel in 1950 produced a *Husserliana* edition that included notes and comments by Husserl drawn from his own annotated copies of *Ideas*. In 1976 Biemel’s edition was replaced by Karl Schuhmann’s two-volume edition that has now become standard.<sup>27</sup>

In later years Husserl specifically alluded to the fragmentary character of *Ideas*, nevertheless it remains the main exposition of his phenomenology as



a system. As Husserl announces in his Introduction, the *Ideas* project was originally projected in three volumes. According to this plan, the first volume aimed to introduce the ‘general theory of the phenomenological Reductions which make the transcendently purified consciousness with its essential correlates perceptible and accessible’ (*Ideas*, Boyce Gibson p. 4; Hua III/1 7), and also to give a general account of the a priori, essential (eidetic) structures of pure consciousness. Volume Two was supposed to deal with the relations between phenomenology and the physical sciences and the human sciences (including psychology). Volume Three was supposed to deal with the ‘Idea of Philosophy’ through a consideration of the idea of first philosophy (Boyce Gibson p. 5; Hua III/1 7–8). During 1912, Husserl had written extensive drafts for the planned two subsequent volumes of *Ideas*, now known as *Ideas II* and *Ideas III*. Subsequently Edith Stein prepared drafts of *Ideas II* from 1916 to 1918 and, in 1924–1925, Ludwig Landgrebe took over the job of preparing *Ideas II* for publication. However, Husserl was never satisfied with this book and it was never published in his lifetime. It was eventually published edited by Marly Biemel in 1952.<sup>28</sup> *Ideas III*, subtitled ‘Phenomenology and the Foundation of the Sciences’, was also published in that year.<sup>29</sup> *Ideas II*, in particular, contains a detailed analysis of the constitution of the physical thing in nature (‘material nature’), the constitution of animal bodies, as well as the constitution of the person and ‘spiritual’ or cultural life generally. *Ideas II* gives a detailed account of the nature of the personalistic attitude and the naturalistic attitude which greatly expanded on the account of the natural attitude found in *Ideas Volume One*. *Ideas II* discusses the role of embodiment, empathy and many other themes that were subsequently taken up by Merleau-Ponty. The work does continue in the idealist vein of the first volume, arguing that the very notion of ‘nature’ is itself the product of subjectivity and hence the whole project of the naturalization of subjectivity is completely mistaken (see *Ideas II* § 64).

*Ideas Volume One* outlines the idea of phenomenology as a revolutionary new science, grounded in evident intuition, a science that would underpin all other sciences. *Ideas* was supposed to introduce consciousness as it is encountered in natural experience and then develop an account of the essence of consciousness removed from anything contingent or merely empirical (i.e. ‘pure’ in Husserl’s sense). In this regard, *Ideas* is a deliberately revolutionary work. It presents phenomenology as an entirely new science, an a priori science of essences, a ‘new eidetics’ (*Ideas* § 33) and it arrives at these essences through the newly announced process of *epochē* or reduction,

what Husserl calls in his Introduction ‘the general theory of the phenomenological reductions’.

As a new introduction to phenomenology, *Ideas* introduces many new phenomenological themes that had not been treated in the *Logical Investigations*. These new themes and Husserl’s new avowedly transcendental stance came as a surprise to many of the ardent admirers of his more realist period. The new themes include; the articulation of the ‘principle of all principles’ (*das Prinzip aller Prinzipien*) of phenomenology (*Ideas* § 24),<sup>30</sup> the exposition of the ‘natural standpoint’ or natural attitude (*Ideas* § 27ff.), its ‘general positing’ or ‘general thesis’ (*Generalthesis*, § 30), the idea of an intersubjective world (§ 29), the notion of ‘horizon’ (e.g. *Gesamthorizont*, *Ideas* § 1), the phenomenological *epochē* (§ 32), the phenomenological reduction, the concept of ‘pure’ or ‘transcendental’ consciousness (§ 33), the ‘pure’ or ‘transcendental ego’, the *noesis* and *noema* (§§ 86–96), the notion of the sensible *hyle* or ‘matter’ and the intentional *morphē* or ‘form’ (§ 85; 97), the *neutrality-modification* (§§ 109–111), the thing as an ‘Idea in the Kantian sense’, the idea of a phenomenology of reason, and so on. In addition, Husserl provides new clarifications of the distinction between the factual and the eidetic; distinguishes between *formalization* and *generalization* (§ 13); and offers a distinction between exact and morphological essences (§§ 73–74).

The title ‘*Ideen*’ could be an allusion to Plato’s ‘Ideas’ or, as Karl Schuhmann the Editor of the Husserliana edition speculates, an echo of the subtitle of Hermann Lotze’s *Microcosmos*.<sup>31</sup> The book is divided into four parts or Sections, each of which is divided into a number of chapters. Section One entitled ‘Essence and Cognition of Essence’ (*Wesen und Wesenserkenntnis*), translated by Boyce Gibson as ‘The Nature and the Knowledge of Essential Being’ is a fairly condensed outline of Husserl’s understanding of essence in contrast to fact and essentially rehearses doctrines from Husserl’s *Logical Investigations*. It is divided into two chapters—one on ‘Fact and Essence’ and the other entitled ‘Naturalistic Misconstructions’. This section focuses on matters of logic. Husserl clearly and sharply distinguishes between factual (e.g. geography) and eidetic sciences (such as geometry) and defends the possibility of intuition of essence or ‘essential insight’ (*Wesensschauung*). He points out that all sciences have an eidetic dimension—both in terms of requiring logic (an a priori independent science of essences) as well as assuming a certain conception of objecthood (and hence presupposing ‘formal ontology’—‘the eidetic science of the object in general’ *Ideas* §10). Husserl distinguishes between *formal ontology* (which includes both logic

and mathematics), which is strictly speaking the pure form of what objecthood is, and material ontologies which cover the various regions of being, specifically—material being, psychic being and the realm of spirit or culture. The latter two regions are dependent on the realm of material being. For two long, empiricist champions of the natural sciences have ignored the importance of essences. Essences are a special kind of object and they are apprehended in their own kind of seeing.

*Ideas* Section Two is entitled ‘The Fundamental Phenomenological Outlook’ (*Die phänomenologische Fundamentalbetrachtung*) and consists of four chapters that introduce the notions of the natural standpoint and its exclusion, the intentional nature of consciousness, pure consciousness and the nature of the phenomenological reductions. Husserl speaks of several kinds of reduction in *Ideas* and insists on the importance of a ‘systematic theory of phenomenological reductions’. The reduction begins (as he also outlines in his earlier *Idea of Phenomenology*) with a ‘philosophical epochē’ or bracketing: no item from any philosophical theory or doctrine can be imported into phenomenology; one must simply abjure all invocation of traditional philosophical idea or concept from whatever source (*Ideas* § 18). Husserl further proposes a ‘universal epochē’ (*Ideas* § 32) which he employs to suspend or inhibit the grip of the natural attitude or standpoint upon our thinking, i.e. to suspend our naïve assumptions about the nature of reality and indeed about the nature of consciousness. The thrust of the epochē is to ‘put out of action the general thesis which belongs to the essence of the natural standpoint’ (*Ideas* § 32), leading to ‘a new region of being’ being uncovered, namely, the domain of pure consciousness (*Ideas* § 33). What is at issue now is the essence of consciousness in general (*Ideas* § 34). Husserl’s analysis uncovers the essential structures of intentional consciousness, with its acts (*cogitationes*) and objects (*cogitata*). Perceptions present the perceptual objects in a certain manner; memories or fantasies modify perceptions and present their objects in correspondingly different ways. This whole domain, moreover, exhibits an a priori lawfulness which Husserl is at pains to document. But Husserl also wants to establish the absolute priority of consciousness vis-à-vis the objects which it intends (he carries this out largely in *Ideas* Section Two, Chapter Three).

*Ideas* Section Three is entitled ‘Procedure of Pure Phenomenology in Respect of Methods and Problems’ and also consists of four chapters. It is in this section that Husserl explains in more detail the nature of phenomenological reflection, the use of free imaginative variation in order to arrive at the seeing of essence, and introduces the key ideas of *noesis* and *noema* and their a priori

correlation. He also discusses at length the peculiar nature of the phenomenological *epochē* as one kind of a more general neutrality modification.

The fourth and final section is entitled 'Reason and Reality' (*Vernunft und Wirklichkeit*). Husserl is interested in the essence of consciousness. But consciousness is directed at reality or actuality (*Wirklichkeit*), judging about it, reasoning about it, doubting it, querying it and so on (*Ideas* § 135). A phenomenology of reason and reality is therefore called for, and one which focuses on the different kinds of *evidence* with which reality is apprehended. Husserl distinguishes between three kinds of reason—theoretical, axiological (connected with values) and practical. Husserl's discussion of a phenomenology of reason or rational consciousness represents an enormous broadening of the scope of phenomenology. Husserl is aiming at nothing less than a critique of reason, a radical revisioning of Kant's original project in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

A particularly important feature of *Ideas* is that Husserl introduces a new non-subjective interpretation of the a priori (for which Heidegger will later praise him). Husserl says that he intends to avoid the term 'a priori' as much as possible and instead employ the Greek term 'eidos'. In *Ideas* § 49, furthermore, Husserl introduces (in print—he had already discussed it in his lectures) a thought experiment concerning the possible 'annihilation' or 'nullifying of the world' (*Weltvernichtung*). Sometimes he explicitly speaks of the possible non-existence of the world. Husserl maintains that consciousness cannot be thought away in such an experiment and hence must be understood as having 'absolute being' whereas reality has to be understood as dependent being. In this section Husserl styles the world of pure consciousness as 'immanent being' and as absolute. Lived experiences are understood to be 'immanent' whereas 'transcendent' perceptions are those where the object is given in profiles or perspectives. A 'lived experience' or, as Bosanquet terms it, a 'vital experience' (*Erlebnis*) itself, unlike a material spatial object, is not given in 'perspectives' or 'adumbrations' (§ 42), but is as it is perceived. The 'self-givenness' or 'dator' character of lived experiences ('dator consciousness' *Ideas* § 67) as they are in themselves provides a kind of absoluteness on which Husserl can build his apodictic science. In *Ideas* (going beyond the sparse discussion of the ego in *Logical Investigations*), furthermore, Husserl also gives prominence to the very distinctive and peculiar presence of the pure ego in consciousness, also known as the *cogito* (§ 37; § 46), which he characterizes as a 'transcendence in immanence' (*eine Transzendenz in der Immanenz*, *Ideas* § 57). In many ways, *Ideas*, then, and not

just through the introduction of the *epochē* and reduction, takes a radical step beyond the *Logical Investigations* and anticipates many themes articulated in the *Cartesian Meditations* (e.g. the ego as a ‘transcendental residuum’, § 57).

Husserl continues to build on the basic insight of intentionality—all lived experiences are experiences of something, e.g. imagining a centaur, perceiving an object, and so on (*Ideas* § 36). But this intentionality, although it can be stated in banal terms, contains deep complexities (see *Ideas* § 82). Not all parts of the lived experience are intentional; in fact Husserl thinks that precisely the sensory matter is not intentional. These sensations are real phases of the experience understood as a temporal episode, whereas the objects of experience are in some sense transcendent to the experience. In themselves the sensory contents of the actual experience are not intentional until they are animated or enlivened in some way by a noetic act. In *Ideas* Husserl attempts to clarify the essential structure of the lived experience as intentional accomplishment. Under the reduction, he is careful to distinguish the object as experienced, i.e. the noema, from the transcendent object outside the experience. As he famously remarks, the real tree can burn up but not the noema tree (see *Ideas* § 89). At times, Husserl explains the noema as the equivalent of the notion of an ideal sense (*Sinn*), but he also sees the noema as quite particular to an individual’s experience, although it has a core that it shares with other experiences of the same object. In perception, the noema is the perceived as perceived; in remembering, the remembered as remembered (*Ideas* § 88). The object as meant—is, in Husserl’s somewhat unfortunate terminology, an *immanent* content of the act.<sup>32</sup> At times, he distinguishes between the noema and its *Sinn*, sense or meaning. He writes:

Each noema has a ‘content’, namely, its ‘meaning’, and is related through it to ‘its’ object.

(*Ideas* I § 129, Boyce Gibson, p. 269; Hua III/1 267)

Although Husserl uses the term ‘noetic’ from around 1907, the term ‘noema’ itself does not appear until the so called initial draft or ‘pencil manuscript’ of *Ideas* I, dating from October 1912 (Hua III/2 567). The notion of the noema continues to attract considerable debate from scholars. Dagfinn Føllesdal, for instance, has argued that Husserl’s ‘noema’ is in fact a generalization of Frege’s notion of ‘sense’ (*Sinn*), now extended beyond the realm of sentences to apply to all acts of intending, including non-linguistic perceptions.<sup>33</sup>

*Ideas* is also notable for introducing the very concept of a ‘pure’ or ‘transcendental phenomenology’ as a new way of exploring the life of consciousness (*Ideas* I § 86). Husserl opposes both a ‘Platonic realism’ (*Ideas* § 21) that he had earlier been accused of holding in the *Logical Investigations*) and also empiricism or ‘empiricistic naturalism’, which on his account denies the existence of essences and other abstract ideal entities (*Ideas* § 18). He defends an immediate seeing—not just of sensuous particulars but of situations or states-of-affairs. It is this eidetic intuition which was rejected as intellectualist and mysterious by both the Neo-Kantians and the Logical Positivists (such as Moritz Schlick).

Husserl’s *Ideas* caused something of a scandal among his followers at Göttingen (as Edith Stein recalled in her autobiographical *Life in a Jewish Family*), who thought it a return to German Idealism against which phenomenology—especially following Brentano—had pitted itself.<sup>34</sup> Johannes Daubert (1877–1947), for instance, thought Husserl had unfortunately strayed from the realism of the *Logical Investigations*.<sup>35</sup> Others criticized *Ideas* I on the basis of its overt Cartesianism. Thus, in his 1925 lectures in Marburg, *History of the Concept of Time*,<sup>36</sup> Martin Heidegger criticizes Husserl’s account of consciousness as ‘immanent’ and ‘absolute’ as an uninterrogated continuation of the presuppositions of Cartesian metaphysics. Similarly, Roman Ingarden thought that *Ideas* was a return to an earlier German neo-Kantian idealism.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, *Ideas* was reviewed positively by Husserl’s friend the Neo-Kantian philosopher and classical scholar Paul Natorp in the journal *Logos* in 1917.<sup>38</sup> Natorp presents Husserl as moving towards a reconciliation with Kant through his presentation of phenomenology as a form of transcendental philosophy, but he also offers some criticisms which Heidegger subsequently cites approvingly in his own 1919 lecture course.<sup>39</sup> Natorp had earlier reviewed Husserl’s *Logical Investigations*<sup>40</sup> and had praised it for broadening Kant’s understanding of the necessary conditions of possible experience but predicted that Husserl would move towards Kant as he came to overcome his naïve opposition between the empirical psychological realm and the realm of abstract idealities. Natorp was critical of Husserl for ignoring the status of the ego in the *Logical Investigations*; all lived experiences carry necessarily a relation to an ego. By the time of Husserl’s *Ideas*, he has come to recognize that Natorp was right and he admits he was wrong to take a position against Natorp (see the note in *Ideas* § 57, Boyce Gibson p. 112 and p. 335; Hua III/1 124). He now emphasizes—albeit in a Cartesian manner—the necessity to acknowledge the pure

ego and the intentional directedness that launches itself from the ego outwards to its object (see *Ideas* § 37). Husserl is clear that this phenomenological or pure ego cannot be found as a real part of the experience, or, under the reduction as a ‘phenomenological residuum’ within the sphere of experiences. The ego is indeed necessarily present in every experience, but as a stability, the ego remains ‘self-identical’ across experiences; in fact, Husserl now quotes Kant to the effect that the ‘I think’ must be capable of accompanying all my presentations (*Ideas* § 57). This ego has a very peculiar status in relation to the experiences it inhabits, it has its own peculiar form of transcendence—what Husserl calls paradoxically ‘transcendence in immanence’.

Outside of the European mainland, *Ideas* was reviewed in the English journal *Mind* in 1914 by the Oxford idealist philosopher Bernard Bosanquet as part of his overall review of Volume One of the *Jahrbuch*.<sup>41</sup> Bosanquet grasps Husserl’s intention very well. He distinguishes (as Husserl does) pure phenomenology from descriptive psychology. Bosanquet writes:

Phenomenology, then, if I have understood it right, is the science of the essential connexions of vital experiences (*Erlebnisse*), as rooted in their nature or character; not, for example, of their causal connexions as events in time. An elementary example is the truism that sound, essentially, is not colour; or, to cite what I judge to be a favourite instance—colour is essentially inseparable from extension.

Bosanquet’s translation of ‘*Erlebnisse*’ as ‘vital experiences’ is also better than the current ‘lived experiences’. Bosanquet also translates ‘*gebende Anschauung*’ as ‘dator intuition’ in which he is followed by Gibson. Of course Bosanquet is sympathetic to Husserl’s idealism:

The world, so construed, pre-supposes consciousness, as whose meaning alone it *is*—this I take to be the doctrine, and *prima facie* I have nothing against it. Of course, as the author insists, it is not Berkeleyan Idealism.<sup>42</sup>

Bosanquet does express worries that Husserl’s apriorism inevitably confuses the a priori with the *prima facie*. Husserl’s insights are provisional where the a priori must be absolute.

Husserl did not publish another book for over a decade (his next book-length publication was *Formal and Transcendental Logic* 1929, to which he refers in his ‘Author’s Preface’). Indeed, he reissued *Ideas* in 1922 including an

‘analytical subject index’ that had been prepared by Gerda Walther (*Ideas* was reprinted in 1928 but now with a new index prepared by Husserl’s then assistant Ludwig Landgrebe—aside from the index the text remained essentially unaltered<sup>43</sup>). Boyce Gibson translates this Index for his edition.

Husserl never revoked the plan of his work as set out in *Ideas*. Indeed, in his later years, he often sought to justify or contextualize his approach there. Thus, in a very late text from the summer of 1937, entitled ‘Towards a Critique of the *Ideas*’—perhaps the last text he wrote before he fell ill—Husserl writes that over his life he had devised various entry ways into transcendental phenomenology. In this text he characterizes the way into the reduction in *Ideas* as proceeding ‘in a single leap’ (in *einem Sprunge*)<sup>44</sup> into a new way of seeing and a new form of experience. He also says that *Ideas I* provided a way proceeding from ‘the natural concept of the world’ (*natürlicher Weltbegriff*, Hua XXIX 425) which he now characterizes as ‘the “concept” of the world of the “natural attitude”’, which he parses as ‘the pre- and extra-scientific life-world or the world that, correspondingly, has always been and always will be, in all of our natural practical life-interests, the standing field (*das ständige Feld*) of our interests, our goals, our actions’ (Hua XXIX 425). In this late text Husserl acknowledges that this natural conception of the world was sketched ‘only in the roughest lines’ (*nür in rohesten Zügen*) in *Ideas* Volume One. He further recognizes that the systematic analysis and description of this ‘Heraclitean-moving world’ indeed presents a great and difficult problem. He writes that the reduction to the life-world restores the sense of history missing from the Cartesian way:

We shall see that the life-world (considered omnitemporally) is nothing other than the historical world. From this, we can see that a complete systematic introduction to phenomenology is initiated and carried through by a universal historical problem. If one introduces the *epochē* without the thematic of history, then the problem of the life-world, that is to say, the problem of universal history, will be entirely left out. The way introduced in *Ideas* has its legitimacy, but now I maintain that the historical way (*den historischen Weg*) is more primary (*prinzipieller*) and more systematic.

(Hua XXIX 425–26, my translation)

This is an extraordinary admission. Husserl is effectively admitting that what he had uncovered in *Ideas*, namely, the naturally experienced world, would become the central thematic of his later work understood as the



attempt to understand the ‘life-world’ (*Lebenswelt*) in its historical and temporal unfolding. The historical way into phenomenology, moreover, is actually more primordial and more inclusive than the ‘Cartesian way’!

For many philosophers of the 1920s and 1930s—including Martin Heidegger and Oskar Becker<sup>45</sup>—and indeed until the appearance of the Husserliana editions in the 1950s, Husserl’s *Ideas* remained the definitive introduction to his phenomenology. *Formal and Transcendental Logic* does not have any of the programmatic scope of *Ideas*, whereas *Cartesian Meditations* essentially develops certain themes already given initial articulation in *Ideas* (although the whole discussion of intersubjectivity adds a dimension not found in *Ideas*). Neither of these works has the scope of *Ideas*.

In 1931, when Husserl was perhaps at the height of his international fame, *Ideas* was translated into English by the philosopher and psychologist William Ralph Boyce Gibson (1869–1935). Gibson was one of only a handful of English-speaking philosophers who had direct contact with Husserl (others include William Ernest Hocking,<sup>46</sup> Winthrop Bell,<sup>47</sup> Marvin Farber,<sup>48</sup> Christopher Verney Salmon, and Dorion Cairns).<sup>49</sup> Boyce Gibson was born in Paris on 15 March 1869, the son of a Methodist minister William Gibson, and was educated in England, at Kingswood School, Bath. He entered Queen’s College, Oxford, to read mathematics, and graduated with his bachelor’s degree in 1892; followed by his master’s in 1895; and eventually a doctorate in 1911. He initially taught mathematics at Clifton College, Bristol, but became interested in philosophy, and travelled to Germany to study with the idealist life-philosopher Rudolf Eucken (1846–1926) at Jena in 1893. He subsequently studied philosophy at Paris and Glasgow. He held lectureships in philosophy, psychology and ethics from 1898 in various London colleges, and from 1900 at Westfield College, University of London. In 1910, he became a temporary lecturer in philosophy at the University of Liverpool. The following year, in 1911, he was appointed to Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at the University of Melbourne, and he took up the post in 1912. He published a number of books on ethics and religion and translated works by Eucken. He published articles regularly in *Mind*, including a perceptive account of Husserl’s phenomenology, based largely on *Ideas*, in 1925.<sup>50</sup> In this article he summarizes Husserl’s teaching in *Ideas* but claims to find Husserl’s insistence on the direct nature of evidence too dogmatic. While direct immediate seeing is indeed an incontrovertible evidence for ordinary experience, it is not the same as the evidence of the scientist. Boyce Gibson writes:

Experiential self-intuition can indeed give us direct and living evidence of self-existence which no one can gainsay. But it is the evidence of life's own immediate self-awareness, not of reflective thought or science.<sup>51</sup>

He spent six months of his 1928 sabbatical in Freiburg with Husserl and recorded his time there in a diary.<sup>52</sup>

Gibson's *Ideas* was the first work by Husserl to be translated into English (Dorion Cairns' translation of *Cartesian Meditations* did not appear until 1960 and John N. Findlay's translation of the *Logical Investigations* did not appear until 1970). Husserl had long been aware of the need to spread phenomenology beyond the German-speaking world. In 1922 he visited England intent on establishing relations with English philosophers. Indeed, he was the first German philosopher to visit England after the Great War. From June 6 to the 12 1922, he gave four lectures at University College, London, at the invitation of Professor George Dawes Hicks, entitled 'The Phenomenological Method and Phenomenological Philosophy'.<sup>53</sup> In a letter to his Canadian student Winthrop Bell, Husserl described his London lectures as part of a new spirit of international co-operation. The lectures were not a success, despite meeting well-known figures such as Broad, Stout, and G. Dawes Hicks. The fourth lecture was chaired by G.E. Moore, then Editor of *Mind*. In the same year, Husserl was elected corresponding member of the Aristotelian Society.

Husserl considered the English translation of his work to be of such significance that, in 1930, he wrote an 'Author's Preface to the English Edition' of *Ideas*, and published a somewhat different German version of this text entitled 'Nachwort' ('Afterword' or 'Epilogue') in *Yearbook*, Volume XI.<sup>54</sup> This 'Author's Preface', translated by Boyce Gibson, reinforces the claim made in *Cartesian Meditations* that phenomenology is *eo ipso* transcendental idealism. Husserl explains that transcendental phenomenology, opens up—through what he now terms the 'transcendental-phenomenological reduction' an entirely new domain of experience, one that Descartes had originally uncovered but which he had failed to explore being misled by naturalism. This new domain is an infinite realm of experiences connected not logically or causally but through 'intentional implication'. According to this reduction the meditating self has to let go of every naturalistic assumption about its existence and nature and simply explore transcendental experience as it is uncovered. Indeed, Husserl claims that to every truth at the level of psychology there corresponds a truth concerning transcendental subjectivity. He is at pains to emphasize here that what he calls his 'transcendental-

phenomenological idealism' is not any Berkeleyan attempt to deny the existence of the external material real world. Indeed he claims to hold all current forms of idealism to be essentially absurd. He writes:

Our phenomenological idealism does not deny the positive existence of the real world and of Nature—in the first place as though it held it to be an illusion. Its sole task and service is to clarify the meaning of this world, the precise sense in which everyone accepts it, and with undeniable right, as actually existing.

('Author's Preface', Boyce Gibson p. xvii)

Husserl goes on to consider the world in terms of the continuous harmonious flow of our experience. The non-existence of the world, however, always remains a possibility. It is this thought of the 'nullification' of the world that led to the greatest debate among Husserl's followers. Husserl presents it as a thought experiment that confirms the unthinkability of the ego being non-existent whereas it always remains a possibility that the world can go out of existence. By the existence of the world Husserl simply means the presumption that our experiences continue to be harmoniously filled in the appropriate ways. But there is no guarantee that this will continue. As Husserl puts it, the 'possibility of non-Being . . . belongs to every Thing-like transcendence' (*Ideas* § 49). The self-givenness of immanent lived experiences, on the other hand, is entirely different in that these experiences are absolutely given: 'Every immanent perception necessarily guarantees the existence of its object' (*Ideas* § 46). The insight that the ego performing the *cogito* exists cannot be denied, even if the stream of experiences itself came to be incomprehensible. Against the backdrop of this contingent posited world is the positing ego that is *necessary* and *absolute*. Immanent being is 'absolute'. Husserl speaks of the 'detachability in principle (*prinzipielle Ablösbarkeit*) of the whole natural world from the domains of consciousness' (*Ideas* I § 46, Boyce Gibson, p. 89; Hua III/1 87). Husserl presents the 'detachability' or one-sided separability of the world from consciousness as the discovery implicit in the Cartesian *cogito*. The existent, natural world has to be understood as essentially correlated with and dependent on the constituting consciousness. To exist as a real thing is to exist transcendent to consciousness, nevertheless everything must be in principle experienceable by *some* consciousness. Furthermore, even if the world as experienced was a stream of sheer illusion with no coherence, it

would still be really experienced by the actually existing *cogito*. Husserl specifically describes consciousness as ‘absolute being’, which can never be understood simply as a part of nature, since ‘nature’ itself has to be understood as a correlate of consciousness (*Ideas* § 51).

Boyce Gibson’s translation was reviewed in *Mind* in 1932 by Christopher Verney Salmon,<sup>55</sup> an English philosopher, then a lecturer at Queen’s University Belfast, but who himself had written a doctorate under Husserl’s direction at Freiburg in 1927/1928, and who had already translated Husserl’s ‘Phenomenology’ article for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.<sup>56</sup> Salmon summarizes the overall aim of *Ideas* as follows:

*Ideas* is largely an attempt to reveal the nature of transcendental subjectivity, that new field of experience, by engendering a special attitude of mind which, Husserl believes, leads necessarily to its intuition.<sup>57</sup>

Salmon notes Husserl’s enthusiasm for promoting his new science. He writes:

The whole book is conceived in the belief that the a priori which phenomenology offers to scientific thought, whether this be what we ordinarily call scientific or philosophical, can only be reached after a kind of opening of the eyes of the blind through the special reductive discipline which he describes. There are times when he writes with the missionary zeal of one who has returned to the cave to persuade his former fellows to the sun.<sup>58</sup>

In general Salmon praises Boyce Gibson’s translation and indeed, his elegant translation attempts to capture Husserl’s complex terminology in plain English.<sup>59</sup> Of course, each translation has its own merits and defects and to praise Gibson is in no way to detract from Fred Kersten’s achievement (and Kersten himself acknowledges the aid he received from Gibson’s version). But Gibson does aim for efficiency and simplicity. Thus, for instance, he reduces the cumbersome German title simply to ‘*Ideas*’ (Husserl himself admitted to referring simply to his ‘*Ideen*’ in his letter to Boyce Gibson of 16 July 1930, see *Hua* III/1 xv) and speaks of the ‘view of the man in the street’ rather than Kersten’s ‘naïve human being’s conception’ as a rendering of the German ‘*Auffassung des “naiven” Menschen*’ (*Ideas* § 39); and he uses ‘worker in the field of essences’ instead of Kersten’s ‘scientific investigator of essences’ (*Ideas* § 24). Gibson does occasionally resort to Latinate phrases such as

‘dator intuition’ but here as we have seen, in this regard, he is following Bernard Bosanquet and the idiom of the day. Gibson also translates ‘natural attitude’ as ‘natural standpoint’ (*Ideas* § 27) whereas Bosanquet has ‘natural focus’. Similarly, he employs ‘primordial dator consciousness’ rather than Kersten’s ‘originally presentive consciousness’ (*originär gebendes Bewußtsein*, e.g. *Ideas* § 19). Neither is elegant, and I would personally prefer ‘originary giving consciousness’. Gibson recognizes that English does not have a clear way of differentiating between the German terms ‘*Realität*’ and ‘*Wirklichkeit*’ and he translates ‘*Wirklichkeit*’ sometimes as ‘reality’ or sometimes ‘fact-world’ as opposed to ‘actuality’. Similarly, Gibson translates ‘*aktuel*’ as ‘actual’ as opposed to Kersten’s ‘actional’. Gibson’s ‘intentional experience’ is to be preferred to Kersten’s ‘intensive experience’ (*Ideas* § 36). He translates ‘*Vergegenwärtigung*’ with the usual English word ‘representation’ (e.g. *Ideas* § 111) rather than Kersten’s neologism ‘presentation’ that, along with another neologism ‘presentification’, has become common in recent years in Husserl scholarship in English. He translates ‘*Phantasie*’ as ‘fancy’; and speaks more literally of the ‘fiction’ (Husserl’s text has ‘*Fiktion*’) of a centaur rather than Kersten’s ‘phantasying’ of a centaur (*Ideas* § 36). He renders ‘*Stellungnahme*’ as ‘attitude’ (e.g. *Ideas* § 115) rather than ‘position-taking’. Sometimes his language is quite poetic as when he refers to the founders of geometry in the ‘grey days of yore’ (*Ideas* § 94). At other times, Gibson’s translations struggle. Nevertheless, they are defensible. Thus Gibson renders the terms ‘*Sinn*’ and ‘*Bedeutung*’ as ‘sense’ and ‘conceptual significance’ and keeps ‘meaning’ as his translation of ‘*Meinen*’. Many others from Bertrand Russell to Michael Dummett have struggled to find a way to articulate in English this distinction (from their points of view made primarily by Gottlob Frege in 1891) between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*.

Since Boyce Gibson’s translation has a clear literary flow as well as historical importance in its own right, I have made very few changes to the text. I have, however, replaced Boyce Gibson’s term ‘*Logical Studies*’—his rendering of *Logische Untersuchungen* with the more usual ‘*Logical Investigations*’. I have changed the title of the first Section to ‘*Essence and Cognition of Essence*’. Similarly, I have changed part of the title of *Ideas* § 35 ‘*Inaktualitätsmodifikation*’ from Gibson’s inaccurate ‘*The Modal Form of Marginal Actuality*’ to ‘*The Non-Actuality Modification*’. The thought here is of consciousness putting on a non-actual modification rather akin to Ludwig Wittgenstein’s image in the *Philosophical Investigations* § 132 of the mind idling (an engine running but not in gear), except that for Wittgenstein this idling of language is a source

of confusion whereas for Husserl when the mind idles it continues to intend objects but no longer invests them with the belief of actuality. Husserl's *Ideas* remains a difficult and challenging text. Boyce Gibson's groundbreaking translation undoubtedly influenced a generation of Husserl's readers and will continue to do so in this second century of the reception of phenomenology.

University College Dublin  
2012