

Preface to the Russian Edition of Edmund Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, Volume 1: Prolegomena to Pure Logic (1909)¹

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Edmund Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, the first volume of which is devoted to an exposition of the concept and the foundations of the science of logic, is now being brought to the attention of the Russian reader. These *Investigations*, in the opinion of specialists, is one of the most outstanding works in the literature on logic of recent years. Regardless of whether we share his own particular viewpoint, Husserl's indisputable merit lies in the fact that the *Logical Investigations* introduced genuine clarity into fundamental logical concepts, and thereby assisted in the resolution of disputes that otherwise might have gone on forever owing to the ambiguity and indefinite nature of the concepts and terms. Examples of such disputes are those concerning the "normative" versus the "natural" character of logical laws, the objective nature versus the subjective nature of cognitions, the relation between logic and psychology, etc.

Husserl himself takes the point of view that could be called idealistic objectivism [идеалистическимъ объективизмомъ]. He draws a sharp and clear distinction between

¹ "Предисловие редактора русского издания," in *Логические исследования*, translated by E. A. Berstein, St. Petersburg: Knigoisdatelnyo, 1909, pp. VIII-XI. The original pagination is indicated using angled brackets. All footnotes have been added by the translator. The translator would like to thank Thomas Nemeth, Anna Yampolskaya and Rodney K.B. Parker for their comments and edits.

the objective *content* of thought, which is ideal and logical, and the subjective *process* of thought, which is real and psychological. On the basis of this distinction, Husserl firmly rejects all attempts to translate [перенести] the content of thought into either subjective cognitions or psychological categories applicable to the process of thinking, and derived from an examination of the latter. This position stands in an ambiguous relation to the ideas of Kant, and to contemporary philosophical teachings that reflect the influence of <IX> Kant. On the one hand, no one more deeply than Kant noticed the fundamental difference between the psychological *origin* and the logical (or epistemological [гносеологическим]²) *significance* of our ideas, between the genetic (causal) *explanation* of cognition in psychology and its critical *clarification* in epistemology. Suffice it to say that this distinction ended the centuries-old dispute between empiricism and rationalism by establishing that cognition psychologically arises from experience, yet cannot logically be wholly *grounded* on empirical data. On the other hand, however, we can also say that no one contributed to the spread of psychologism and subjectivism in philosophy more than Kant, who made the whole objective world “rotate” around human consciousness. The concepts of “consciousness,” “reason,” and so on, were used by Kant in such multivalent and hardly clarified senses that, as we know, it is quite difficult to grasp the true meaning of the corresponding statements that he makes. Yet it is impossible to deny the presence of direct contradictions in his analysis of cognition, and it is indisputable that both of these motives – psychologistic and anti-psychologistic – are present and even sharply expressed in his philosophy. This gives rise to, as Husserl correctly remarks (at §38), “an inextricable tangle of true and false statements.”³ The extent to which this entanglement still prevails in contemporary epistemology, which is strongly influenced by Kant and different forms of Kantianism, is shown by Husserl’s instructive analysis of the logical works of Sigwart, Erdmann, Lange, *et al.* Husserl, at least, makes the state of affairs perfectly clear by resolutely adhering to Kant’s anti-psychologistic tendency and by equally strongly rejecting the opposite, psychologistic tendency.

Of even greater importance is Husserl’s work in opposition to the already clearly psychologistic and relativistic ideas that have recently gained popularity. We mean here

² Throughout the text, the word “гносеология” has been rendered as “epistemology” rather than the literal translation “gnoseology” – a term which is foreign to many English speakers. However, it should be noted that the differences between these two terms are important in Russian philosophy. The word *episteme* means “knowledge” in the strict sense of *rational* knowledge, whereas the word *gnosis* denotes any kind of *cognition*. Not all cognitions are knowledge. While some cognitions are rational, inferential, deductive, etc., others are intuitional or instinctual. Russian philosophers use the word “gnoseology” precisely because it accommodates modes of cognition which are not specifically rational, hence including a wider range of cognitions within the scope of the theory of knowledge.

³ Frank cites p.107 of the Russian translation. For the English translation of Husserl here, we have opted to follow that of J.N. Findlay, and replaced Frank’s “смешение” with “entanglement” in the subsequent sentence for the sake of consistency.

not only Mill’s views on logic, but primarily <X> “empiriocriticism”⁴ as well as the brand-new form of skeptical relativism – so-called “pragmatism.” Empiriocriticism, which enjoys exceptional recognition among some of our intelligentsia, is concisely presented, and keenly and masterfully criticized, especially in chapter IX of this book. Husserl recognizes the fruitfulness and the legitimacy of the “principle of economy of thought” as a teleological point of view on the psychology of cognition, and combines this with a convincing clarification of the inconsistency of this philosophical conception, as it claims to stand in place of a genuine epistemological analysis. Because the publication of his book (in 1900) preceded the flowering of this movement, Husserl was silent concerning “pragmatism.” However, the reader will have no difficulty relating Husserl’s general arguments to criticize this severe form of subjectivism. Husserl’s principled objectivism thus acquires a cultural and philosophical significance, as a lone but powerful protest in the scientific spirit against the pervasive influences of the skeptical and subjectivist mindset that threaten to undermine the credibility of scientific truth and shake its self-sufficient value.

The translation of the first volume of Husserl’s work did not present any special terminological difficulties, because the new logical terms introduced by Husserl that are the most complex and difficult to translate were abundantly used only in the second (more specific) volume of his *Investigations*. Either they were not mentioned at all in the first volume, or they were used only sporadically and without firmly established technical meanings, so that they could be rendered descriptively on the basis of the general context. Doubts arose, however, concerning the translation of the term “*Wissenschaftslehre*.” The word “наукоучение” [science of knowledge], on which I settled for its translation, is partially inconvenient in that it has historically been associated with Fichte’s system, to which Husserl’s ideas do not stand in any close relation.⁵ However, to replace it with the expression “теорія науки” [theory of science], which is more convenient in other respects (although a less accurate translation), <XI> proved impossible, precisely because the *theoretical* character of this discipline is presented in Husserl’s work as a contentious issue to be resolved. On the other hand, if the author uses the term “*Wissenschaftslehre*” – which in German too after all is directly suggestive of Fichte’s system – in its new meaning, not adhering to Fichte’s doctrine, but to Bolzano’s homonymous doctrine, then there would be no reason not to keep the same term in the Russian translation.

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⁴ Frank has in mind here the work of Richard Avenarius and Ernst Mach.

⁵ In 1900/01, Husserl still had not thoroughly come to grips with the transcendental idealisms of Kant and Fichte. At the time when he was writing the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl still thought of Fichte, accepting Brentano’s view, as a mystical, speculative thinker. It was not until later that Husserl would come under the influence of Fichte.