Translator's Preface

Almost everyone approaching philosophy as of the 20th century accepts that there is a 'divide' between the 'analytic' tradition, developed in Britain in the footsteps of Frege, Russell and G. E. Moore, and the 'continental' tradition, which forces together figures as diverse as Hegel, Heidegger, Habermas or Deleuze. While a few pages from each 'tradition' will quickly convince the reader that there is something very different (in style, in concerns, in background) between the two, there is something puzzling about the almost militant zeal with which one sometimes finds proponents of either tradition 'defending their camp' from external aggressions, most often by dismissing the existence of the aggression altogether: 'that is not philosophy' can be heard on both sides.

Although 'hostility' is not always the norm, indifference abounds. Academics and students from one or the other tradition will often find themselves pursuing questions exclusively in one tradition, and it can be very difficult to see how work being done on 'the other side' is relevant to the discussion on one's own side. Michael Dummett once complained that it is as if they were two different subject matters. If that were the case, we would be as unsurprised by this lack of communication as by the unremarkable mutual disinterest between physicists and sociologists.

That this is not the case can be seen in Luis Sáez Rueda's *El conflicto entre continentales y analíticos* (Barcelona, Crítica, 2002.) This work examines (from a continental perspective) the origins of the divide, and proceeds to investigate questions common to both traditions by carefully and critically examining the work of both parties, making them interact as seamlessly as if there were no such thing as 'the divide'. That this can (and has been!) done is the strongest objection to the 'two different subject matters' attitude.

Unfortunately, this book (now out of print) was only available in Spanish, a language that is not widespread in the English-speaking context of analytic philosophy. I have therefore endeavoured to provide an English translation of some fragments of the book. I was driven to do this by the value I perceive the work to have (for the reasons noted above), but also because I believe that the 'language divide' plays an important role in the perception of this philosophical divide.

After spending months working on the translation, I have come to realise three key difficulties that can make 'continental' philosophy seem so alien to an English-speaking analytic philosopher. First, there is a difference in *approach* (not just style): while analytic philosophers will often construct arguments and then proceed to dissect the parts of those arguments, continental philosophers tend to build the argumentation into the body of their work, where it coexists with the contextualisation of the problem, the development of concepts and terminology, and the discussion of

broader and related issues. This is similar to the work done in analytic literature when discussing the premises or the inference. Thus, analytic philosophy will often contain argumentation on 'two levels' (as it were): a standard form presentation of a particular argument, followed by a more detailed discussion (and argument) concerning its parts. Leaving aside issues about the soundness or validity of the individual inferences offered by particular philosophers, this should help dispel the misunderstanding that continental philosophy 'does not produce arguments'.

The second difference is one of *background*: continental work presupposes familiarity with thinkers and terms which analytic philosophers may have little exposure to ('transcendental conditions of possibility', 'constitution' and even 'sense' can seem alien or misleading). This can make it difficult to read for an 'outsider'. While I agree that some of the terminology can be unnecessarily obscure, I don not think that this is a general feature of *all* (good) continental philosophy; it presents no greater difficulty than any use of 'jargon' within a field where is has become widespread precisely because it is understood by, and established within, that field. Insofar as the alien terminology of continental philosophy responds to *this* problem (once again, I do not think that *all* of it does), the best way to 'bridge the gap' is to familiarise oneself with the terminology as one would with literature in other areas that are unfamiliar. This is no specific fault of continental philosophy: analytic philosophy also contains a fair amount of terminology that has been developed in the literature and does not exist elsewhere ('qualia' is one such coinage, and 'property' is liberally used by different authors as if were a perfectly clear notion!)

The third difference is the *language*: I found that many constructions which made perfect sense in Spanish (in this case, but the same applies to German, French and other languages,) became clunky and unidiomatic in English, when not down-right misleading. Given that most continental philosophy is *not* developed in English, the responsibility for this potential pitfall often lies with the translators. In seeking to be as close as possible to the original meaning, one can end up with long hyphenated words that would deter the most sympathetic reader. Sometimes, however, it is perfectly possible to render the 'continentalese' as it is sometimes (dismissively) called into clear and idiomatic English. I hope to have achieved this in my translation—I leave it to the reader to judge the measure of my success in this regard.

These issues are far more complex than this brief sketch would suggest, and I do not intend these points to be knock-down arguments or complete vindications of continental philosophy from all of the complaints (often well grounded, philosophically) that analytic philosophers have expressed about this tradition. I merely gesture towards what I perceive to be some core issues which hinder a proper understanding of continental philosophy by analytic readers unfamiliar with the tradition. I hope that these brief words will help to curb some of the initial preconceptions that these readers may have, as I invite them to approach the following text with

an open mind, to judge for themselves whether they recognise it as the work of a (perhaps eccentric) fellow philosopher, and not the unfamiliar musings of a colleague from another department. If at any point the readers find that they are engrossed in a philosophical discussion without stopping to think if it is 'continental' or 'analytic'—better still, if they find themselves face to face with a piece of *philosophy* which they would be hard pushed to call either 'analytic' or 'continental', then I would consider this small endeavour a success.

A note on the translation. I have translated the majority of the first chapter of *El conflicto entre continentales y analíticos* (but not *all* of it). I have chosen this material because it offers an alternative account of the history of the divide, framed in *philosophical terms*. That is to say, the book does not pursue the question of how academics and practising philosophers engage with or feel about each tradition; rather, it seeks fundamental philosophical commitments which serve, on the one hand, to give unity to each tradition, and, on the other, to explain the divide between them. At the same time, it offers a prime example (of which the rest of the book is full,) of a sympathetic and serious engagement across the divide, showing directly that there are common problems which both traditions are working on, and how they can effectively object and respond to each other. A number of 'Translator's Notes' in the footnotes expand on some translation choices and add additional information about terminology and some of the themes. The bibliography includes the English equivalents (where possible) of the works referenced in the translated portions, but no others.

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Ryan Acosta Babb

Leamington Spa, 2018

Please note

This is a **draft**. If you spot a mistake, or have any comments, criticisms or suggestions, please contact me at: r.acosta-babb@warwick.ac.uk.

Chapter 1
The Ideality of Meaning

We would like to show that the developments of both continental and analytic philosophy present structural similarities in their projects of *grounding sense in the world* and a *naturalising meaning,* respectively. This similarity results from a common tendency to incorporate meaning[1] in a space of relations which are immanent to the practical, vital or natural world. If this is correct, then we can identify a foundational moment in the formation of the divide: the idealism espoused by Husserl's phenomenology and Frege's philosophy of language. There are reasons to derive the development of each of the traditions from this crucial starting point, as a reaction against an anti-naturalistic conception of meaning, or as a loss of faith in a sort of immaculate purity suggested by language. Although both traditions may be assimilated along these lines, there remains a peculiar distance between them: an 'ontological gap' that obtains between what we shall call an *ontology of events* and an *ontology of facts*. The following analysis tries to show, on the one hand, that this ontological gap already sets up a contrast between Husserl's and Frege's philosophies; and on the other hand, that these philosophies are similar insofar as they act as respective starting points for each of the continental and analytic traditions.

We will begin by setting up the context of the problem, investigating the common ground that is the 'linguistic turn', as well as the identity of the contestants: the concepts of 'continental philosophy' and 'analytic philosophy'.

1.1. Preliminary Notions

We will undertake a comparative analysis whose historical roots lie in continental philosophy. However, we will restrict our attention to the 20th century, and therefore, must confront questions such as the following: what philosophical trends do we pick out by the term 'continental philosophy' as opposed to 'analytic philosophy'? What unity can we ascribe to 'analytic philosophy' as a whole? In what sense are we dealing with philosophical 'traditions' and, more specifically, with *different* philosophical 'traditions'?

1.1.1. Linguistic Turn and Copernican Revolution

Little would be gained if we tried to use the linguistic turn as a criterion that characterised the divide of contemporary philosophy; for, understood in a sufficiently broad sense, the turn has come to characterise both continental and analytic philosophy. It is true that the latter has the merit of

1 **Trans. Note:** *Lit.* 'meaning giving processes', by which are meant the processes or mechanisms through which language becomes meaningful.

having galvanized the linguistic transformation of philosophy; of forcefully showing that philosophy cannot remain detached from the analysis of language in light of the profound ties that exist between language and thought. This tendency is so apparent in analytic philosophy that it has come to be regarded as one of its defining features (See Dummet, 1993: Ch. 2). Having said that, it seems inadequate to make this prominent concern with language the distinctive feature of analytic philosophy. First, because such a characterisation would be too restrictive within analytic philosophy itself. Alongside the undeniably central role of language, we would have to consider other characteristics, such as its special regard for formal logic and scientific *episteme*[2] (although this relationship has changed over time); these features are not as especially prominent in the rest of the philosophical movements of the 20th century (see Hierro Sánchez-Pescador, 2000). Secondly, we note that although the history of continental philosophy has mainly ignored the importance of language, it has not done so in the past century. Many examples show the extent to which continental philosophy, no less than analytic philosophy, has acceded to the demands of the linguistic turn: in hermeneutics, language is the *medium* for the *emergence of sense*; for the second generation Frankfurt School[3], language is the hermeneutical-transcendental ground of sense and justification; in the philosophy of difference, language, whether in discursive or written form, bares witness to the emergence of differential elements.

In both cases, there seems to be a convergence in the way that language is brought to bare, in fundamental ways, on epistemological and ontological issues. We can characterise this convergence as follows. Both traditions have demolished the 'instrumental' conception of language which had dominated since the times of classical Greek philosophy. This conception reduces language to a mere medium for the transmission pre-linguistic meanings or representations. As has been shown by Apel (1973: vol. 2)[4], this 'instrumental' understanding, which he traced back to Aristotle and Plato, was widespread by the 17th and 18th centuries due to the assumption (made by rationalists and empiricists alike) that a clear distinction could be drawn between mental representations and linguistic-semantic unities. There are reasons for asserting that the 'linguistic turn' of the 20th century is a 'Copernican revolution' in that it places language beyond the instrumental conception, granting it a transcendental status, both epistemological and ontological.

This revolution may be understood both according to a precise and to a loose sense of the term 'transcendental'. On the strict, Kantian reading, language is transcendental in the sense that the

2 **Trans. Note:** According to the OED: 'Scientific knowledge, a system of understanding; specifically (Foucault's term for) the body of ideas which shape the perception of knowledge in a particular period.' [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/episteme—Accessed: 4th November 2018 18:20] This is precisely what is meant here.

3 **Trans. Note:** The author refers to this as the "re-enlightenment", as Habermas and Apel sought to correct and expand the enlightenment ideals whilst avoiding its perceived pitfalls.

4 **Trans. Note:** I could not find an English edition of the complete, two-volume work; the passage referenced does not appear in the selections translated by Adey and Frisby (see the Bibliography).

subject, ego or consciousness is transcendental for Kant and Husserl. When, for example, Apel declares that linguistic communication is the condition of possibility for what we encounter in the world to have a sense[5]; or when Wittgenstein asserts in the *Tractatus* that the 'limits of my language are the limits my world' (*Tractatus:* 5.6[6]), we witness a break with the instrumental conception along transcendental lines. According to the new enlightenment of Apel and Habermas, linguistic and dialogic universals must replace the transcendental structures of pure and practical reason: the Kantian subject is transformed into the subject of dialogue. Similarly, Wittgenstein's logicism in the *Tractatus* could be understood as an attempt to replace the transcendental subject with the underlying structure shared by language and the world: the subject coincides with the limits of the world, that is, with the 'logical form' of language.

According to this *strict* sense of 'transcendental', it would be in principle possible to establish an ultimate, stable and universal structure of language. Furthermore, this transcendental structure could be *deduced* or somehow 'proved' to be a condition of language by rigorous means. Another common feature of such accounts is the drawing of a 'strong' distinction between the transcendental conditions of language (*a priori*) and actual linguistic phenomena (*a posteriori*).

But not all interpretations of the 'linguistic turn' follow the strict reading. On a looser reading, language may be seen as an ontological and epistemological *transcendens* in a modern sense: not as a 'transcendent' substance or ultimate reality, but as the *medium* through which we can think about reality and, thus, as the basis for understanding it. Some examples of this interpretation in continental philosophy are the phenomenology of speech, the hermeneutic conception of language and the linguistic or 'written' character of difference. All of them go to show the thoroughgoing acceptance of the 'transcendental' conception of linguistic phenomena, which makes language the 'locus' of meaning and our understanding of the world.

Although the 'transcendental' character of language, in this broad sense, is assumed by both traditions, only analytic philosophy has explicitly made of this concern a particular and distinctive style. In continental philosophy, analyses of meaning are not always the necessary starting point of an inquiry. Frequently they appear at the end of the exposition, as the focal point which gathers many argumentative strands, or as a particular example used to test the strength of the main arguments. Other times, they merely figure within a global conception of language, or as a set of implicit assumptions. Analytic philosophy, by contrast, set out to make the *theory of meaning* a transcendental philosophical discipline, and assumed from the outset that any inquiry must

5 **Trans. Note:** I altered the original formulation: 'condition of possibility of the being of entities'. While this would make perfect sense to a continental reader exposed to the works of Heidegger and others, the terminology can seem forbidding to an 'outsider'. I think my formulation captures its essence without sacrificing clarity.

6 **Trans Note:** No source was given in the original, but *Tractatus* 5.6 is the most obvious candidate. I have corrected the quote accordingly, as it missed the possessives: *my* language and *my* world.

begin with an explicit analysis of the nature of language. In light of this, analytic philosophy has 'relocated' epistemology insofar as it replaces classical terms such as 'spirit' or 'consciousness' with semantic theories. Hence, we should not be surprised to find philosophers such as Davidson and Kripke tackling classical metaphysical problems. As Tugendhat has argued, analytic philosophy tends to approach central questions in ontology from the domain of semantic analysis. (See Tugendhat, 2016: part I, Chs. 3 & 4.)

This difference between continental and analytic philosophy, however, seems slight in comparison with the common acceptance of the 'linguistic turn' in the broad sense sketched above. The 'transcendental' character of linguistic phenomena is even presupposed by those philosophical trends which strive to undermine the identity and unity of such notions as 'sense' and 'meaning'. A clear example of this, in continental philosophy, is the 'philosophy of difference': it directly challenges the phenomenological tradition and foretells the 'death of sense', without thereby giving up language as the limit of discourse about reality (or about 'signs' according to Derrida). We find an analogous situation in the debate surrounding the existence of an ultimate, universal and clearly reconstructible linguistic structure, stimulated by the work the latter Wittgenstein, Quine and Davidson. This split can be seen as a step towards the 'death of meaning' (to use Ian Hackings somewhat dramatic phrase—Hacking, 1975), without diminishing the epistemological and ontological importance of semantic analyses. The efforts to 'de-transcendentalise' philosophy and put and end to the attempts to make language 'transcendental' in the strict, Kantian sense, do not undermine the contemporary understanding of language as a *transcendens* in the looser sense.

If we accept the 'linguistic turn', suitably understood, as common to both contenders in the divide, then we must examine more carefully and precisely the differences which justify our talk of 'opposing traditions'.

1.1.2. Profiles. 'Continental philosophy' and 'Analytic philosophy'

So many different schools of thought from the 20th century fall under the general rubric of 'continental philosophy' that we may question whether it is appropriate to bind them together in this way. Nevertheless, a common concern brings unity to this diversity: the problem of *sense.* Such was the consensus reached in the 1966 Congress of German Philosophers (Gadamer 1967), and there are good reasons for this. Starting with Husserl, the modern 'Copernican revolution' goes beyond the transcendental structures through which a (kantian) subject constitutes the objects of a sensible experience aided by categories of the understanding. Husserl's subject constitutes the *sense* which it ascribes to the being of entities; in other words it constitutes *the way* in which entities appear, or *how* they appear. Before being subsumed under the categories of judgement, entities or intentional objects that figure in experience, always appear *as* something, in a

particular *way of being*: an entity may be apprehended *as a* natural object, or *as an* aesthetic object, or *as a* religious phenomenon, *etc.* It is precisely this structure of reality, that it always appears 'as such-and-such', that phenomenologists call *sense*. Later on[7] we will look more closely at the way in which the various schools of continental philosophy from the 20th century have reacted against or amended the phenomenological ontology of *sense,* whilst seeking the inspiration for their methods, concepts and even lines of inquiry in the phenomenological tradition. Post-idealist phenomenology and existential philosophy relocate the constitution of meaning within factical, historical or corporeal existence. The 'new enlightenment' explores the relationship between truth and sense, focusing attention on questions of 'validity' and 'justification' along side the apprehension of sense. The philosophy of difference seeks to consummate the 'death of sense' by attacking its sacred places from the inside. Yet, in each case, reality can no longer be understood without acknowledging its role in the creation of *sense*: entities are, first are foremost, *understandable* as and though their modes of being, they are possible experiences of the *life-world.*

Looking at the other side of the divide, can we speak of 'analytic philosophy' as a single, unified tradition? We must begin by sharpening our concept of 'analytic philosophy', for 'continentals' tend to set themselves up against a straw-man by identifying 'analytic philosophy' with 'logical positivism'[8]—the phase of analytic philosophy characterised by a *verificationist* conception of meaning and a glorification of the scientific method as the only source of knowledge. This stereotype not only targets the central importance of semantics for authors such as Frege, Wittgenstein and Russell, but also the conviction that most philosophical problems are 'linguistic confusions', which leads to a conception of philosophy as a certain kind of 'therapeutic activity': the diagnosis and elimination of these confusions. Initially, this 'therapy' instigated a ruthless assault on continental philosophy.

By the above criteria, 'analytic philosophy' would certainly include the so-called *Vienna Circle* and natural language philosophers such as J. L. Austin. But although these themes are still fundamental to contemporary analytic philosophy of language, science and mind, this characterisation would exclude much anaglo-american philosophy from the sixties onwards, as argued by J. J. Acero. Nowadays, theories of meaning are not thought of chiefly as a therapeutic activity, but rather as a *theory* that accounts for, and makes ostensibly *valid* claims *about* meaning (hence about the grounds of reality or our knowledge of reality). In light of this change, we must accept that we are entering a 'post-analytic' phase in this tradition. Furthermore, since all these tenden-

7 **Trans. Note:** This is a reference to Chapter 2, not translated here.

8 **Trans. Note:** It should be noted that this conception of logical positivism is, in itself, a caricature, which may be allowed for the purpose of illustrating a prejudice. The actual doctrine is more subtle, but what is described captures a continental attitude to analytic philosophy which still exists, although I do not claim that it is all that prevalent.

cies are so varied and disparate, it seems preferable to refer to a 'tradition' instead of mere tendencies of schools of thought. (Acero Fernández 1991: 10*ff*)

The preceding considerations lead us to reject the stereotypical reduction of 'analytic philosophy' to the logicist, verificationist and scientistic tendencies of the *Vienna Circle* and related schools. Instead, we suggest characterising the analytic tradition through a common origin. Our reason for doing so is the *philosophical* continuity we detect between the foundational work from the beginning of the 20th century (*e.g.* by Frege, Russell and the 'first' Wittgenstein), and more recent developments (by Quine, Davidson, Goodman, Putnam, Kripke, Searle, Dretske, Sellars, Dennett and Fodor in the US, and Ryle, Strawson, Grice or Dummet in the UK, to name but a few).

J. J. Acero Fernández (2001)[9] insists that it is necessary to extend the label of 'analytic philosophy' to include both the foundational work in which philosophy was understood as an *activity* that sought conceptual clarity, and later philosophers who are producing theories which purport to make true claims about the nature of reality (chiefly, of course, through the analysis of language). On this more inclusive approach, we can no longer refer to the latter as 'post-analytic philosophy'. Using more precise terminology, Acero distinguishes between *constructive* philosophers, who strive to discover truths and incorporate them into wider theories; and *contemplative* philosophers who, like Wittgenstein, seek to clarify the concepts underlying any such theory, and to whom analytical clarity is not a means, but an end in itself.[10]

'Analytic philosophy' as we find it at the close of the 20th century, comprises a manifold of positions and tendencies which are nevertheless continuous with each other and a common origin. What underlying force unifies this tradition? Borrowing Gadamer's term, the 'effectual history' which we have traced out, despite its many different and interconnected events, is not exhausted by the dominant focus on *semantic theories* and a specific set of problems (notably that of scientific *episteme*[11] and it's relation to philosophy and, especially today, to the philosophy of mind). Neither will it suffice to include methodological precepts such as conceptual clarification, semantic analysis (whether as means for the elaboration of theories or as an end in itself), and frequent resorts to formal-logical tools to aid analysis. Such ingredients seem to be present, to varying degrees, within the different areas of analytic philosophy, but are not sufficient to draw the line that separates it from continental philosophy. In order to characterise the divide between the traditions, assuming that it exists, we cannot restrict our attention to structural discrepancies or different thematic interests. If, as we believe, there is a truly *philosophical* difference, then it must be found at the heart of the diverging ontologies of each tradition.

9 **Trans. Note:** Reference correct.

10 **Trans. Note:** This entire paragraph appears as a footnote in the original, but the material was substantial enough that I decided to incorporate it into the main body of the text.

11 **Trans. Note:** See my earlier note n. 2.

This guiding assumption, which we will gradually develop and qualify, describes the underlying unity of the analytic tradition whilst emphasising the contrast with the continental tradition. This contrast is apparent in the different ways in which each tradition approaches a common problem: that of sense and meaning. *Continental philosophy* seeks to *ground sense in the world,* whilst *analytic philosophy* tends to words a *naturalisation of meaning.* In the course of our analysis we will refine the difference between these approaches and, relatedly, we will develop the gap identified between an *ontology of events* and an *ontology of facts.* We shall see that this gap cannot be reduced to the opposition of phenomenology to a scientistic Logical Empiricism, which will appear as a special case in the wider context of the divide. We may go as far as to claim that the interplay of similarities and differences between the two approaches has remained a constant throughout the 20th century and is a central problem of our time.

Put in general terms, this ontological gap is to be understood as follows: on the one hand, the *ontology of events* builds into reality a dynamic element which is not, in principle, representable; on the other hand, the *ontology of facts* presupposes that reality consists of objects which can be, in principle, represented by referential expressions. For the time being, suffice it point out two differences which we think are most relevant. The first contrasts the notion of 'constitution of sense' (central to continental philosophy) with 'meaning-giving processes' (a landmark of analytic philosophy). The former finds its force in Husserl's call to 'return to the *life-world*', whilst for the latter this 'return' has been dissolved in favour of a naturalising project. The second difference presupposes the first and is internally connected to it. The concept of sense, in continental philosophy, has served to buttress reservations about, and even objections to, the naturalising project of analytic philosophy—even in cases where sense itself is under fire from within the continental tradition! Such reservations can be cast in the light of a general opposition to 'objectivism'[12] and the 'metaphysics of presence'.[13]

1.2. Phenomenological Ontology

The central role that phenomenology plays in continental philosophy goes hand in hand with its importance in the context of the divide with analytic philosophy. The appearance of phenomenological ontology on the battlefield is almost inevitable; it raises so many issues wherever it is brought up that it suggests a profound gulf between the traditions, fostering an animosity that

12 **Trans. Note:** In contemporary analytic philosophy, this term is associated with 'realism', *e.g.* 'moral objectivism' is the view that there are facts in the world deciding, in each case, what is right and wrong. Here, however, the term is being used to describe a tendency to make everything into an object. Thus, this continental reaction is the perennial revolt against a form of positivism that purports to carve up reality into fragments which can be given a precise meaning and studied as one would in the natural sciences. A common complaint, and one that exists in analytic philosophy too (*e.g.* debates about 'qualia' in the philosophy of mind), is that certain features of human experience cannot be neatly reduced and studied like this.

13 **Trans. Note:** I have omitted the following 6 paragraphs.

cannot be easily mitigated by appeal to the many and effective bridges that have been found between them.

Even so, why must we grant phenomenological ontology such a prominent role in our analysis of the tensions that arise between continental and analytic philosophy? In order to answer this question, it will help to first divest the core motive of phenomenology from its complex conceptual framework—which all too often serves as an effective repellent to the uninitiated—and focus our attention on the minimal category without which it would be impossible to imagine a phenomenological ontology: the 'sense phenomenon'[14].

1.2.1 Reality as a 'sense phenomenon'

One of the key tenets of phenomenology in general is, obviously, its conception of reality as a 'phenomenon' (and, more specifically, as a 'sense phenomenon'), a peculiar kind of ontology that has accompanied all of the developments, turning points and branchings of the movement throughout the 20th century. As we have been pointing out, the phenomenological core has not been relinquished by hardly any trend in continental philosophy; rather, it has been assimilated or integrated in various ways, albeit at the price of rigorous and critical restrictions on what might be expected of phenomenology.[15]

Reality, according to phenomenology, is a 'sense phenomenon'. We could explain the meaning and extent of this expression roughly, but most concisely, as follows. The term 'phenomenon' comes from Greek, meaning 'that which appears'. What appears, we might think, is a 'fact' or an 'object' in the customary empirical sense; but, according to phenomenology, what appears is something altogether different from this. What the meaning of the expression points to, the phenomenologist maintains, is not so much an 'objective content', as the 'movement' or 'event' through which something is presented as 'meaningful'; such an event conditions our referring to something real as a fact or object. The expression 'that which appears', in other words, does not refer to something which has 'appeared'; it points out the act or event of appearing, in which what appears 'shows itself'. By taking reality to be a 'phenomenon', phenomenology is an attempt to describe what 'shows itself'. (See *Ideas I*: §§23-24.) Crucially, what is shown in the act of appearing is not, in turn, an 'object' or 'fact' (in the aforementioned intuitive empirical sense) that had hitherto remained hidden, a potential object sheltered by the veil of our ignorance which has finally become actual by being ex-posed to our gaze. The act of appearance which underpins phenomena is the manifestation of a 'sense'. But sense, from a phenomenological point of view, is not the same kind of entity as an 'object', that can be represented or described; the 'apprehension' of

14 **Trans. Note:** This is to be understood as follows: What is sense? A phenomenon. What it means for sense to be a phenomenon will be explored later.

15 **Trans. Note:** Last sentence omitted, as it signals later material not incorporated here.

sense takes on the form of an experience that is responsible for the 'significance' of something insofar as it is this or that 'object'. According to Husserl, the experience in question is 'intentional', in that consciousness is directed towards something. Yet the intentional object is no mere collection of data, but rather 'consciousness makes possible and necessary the fact that such an "existing" and "thus determined" Object is intended in it, occurs in it as such a sense' (Husserl, 1979: 47; see §20.)

We could iron out the rough edges of this crucial tenet of phenomenology by approaching the whole issue through an analysis of the peculiar way in which it clashes with a powerful opponent. Phenomenological ontology is inherently committed to an understanding of reality which is irreconcilable with a reduction of meaning to the function of the 'formal structures' within a language. This confrontation has undergone many transformations corresponding to the development of phenomenology and the specific form adopted by the opponent. As a very explicit example, consider the 'structuralist' movement which began a vigorous expansion across Europe in the 60s. Structuralism—which spread to disciplines such as anthropology (Lévi-Strauss), psychoanalysis (Lacan), history (M. Serres), etc. after its beginning in semiology (Saussure)—became an 'antiphenomenological' movement insofar as it made 'sense' dependent on internal connections which are forged within a structure of relations amongst signs. This movement reduces the 'dynamic' or 'energetic' dimension of the 'showing of sense' to the 'static' dimension of mere 'forms', itself lacking all 'sense'. (See Derrida, 1978.) It is precisely this reduction of sense by way of 'form' which phenomenology, in all of its variants, finds inconceivable. Thus, P. Ricoeur mobilised a phenomenological critique in the heyday of structuralists semiotics. The French hermeneutist argues that, by studying language exclusively from the point of view of *langue* (*i.e.,* an immanent system of relations between signs) and neglecting the role of *parole* (*i.e.,* of speech), Sassure promotes a conception of language according to which systematic 'form' is self-sufficient and precedes the subject. But by doing so, he fails to explain both the creative use of language and the fact that linguistic structures can acquire a history. Ricoeur thinks that, in order to meet these shortcomings of structuralism, we must admit a capacity for speech to generate new forms of sense as a condition of possibility of the dynamic and creative aspects of language. Such a capacity cannot be guaranteed by a sign-structure which is independent of the subject who 'understands' the signs. Furthermore—and this is the apex of the argument—the generation of new forms of sense cannot be inferred from the *a priori* stability of a structure consisting of rules; for, insofar as this creative process defies all pre-existing prescriptions and rules, creating new and unique forms of sense, it is a process of emergence, an 'event'. (See Ricoeur, 1969.)

The same phenomenological idiosyncrasy becomes apparent in its interaction with the analytic tradition, which is our main concern in this inquiry. Accordingly, let us take note of the following

problem faced by an early phase of analytic philosophy linked to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein's logicism presupposed that language posses a 'logical form' which is independent of the particular ways in which subjects use the language—a surprising similarity with structuralism. Furthermore, this logical form, a deep structure common to both language and world, assumes the role of a disembodied, universal subject; the 'I' of solipsism is replaced by the logical form which marches in step with reality. (*Tractatus:* 5.6.4) Ricoeur's phenomenological demands can be rehearsed in this context if we emphasise logicism's neglect of the dynamic and creative aspects of language. For, strictly following the logicist conception, use is conceived as a mere 'realisation' of meanings which are pre-established or inserted '*a priori*' (*qua* 'immutable substances') in the deep structure of language. (See Apel, 1973: vol. 2) Furthermore, the example of logicism with respect to language serves especially well to illustrate another key concept of phenomenology, alluded to earlier: it requires presupposition the apprehension of 'sense phenomena' as a *conditio sine qua non* of of the 'significance' of reality. Logicism is associated with a referential conception of meaning, according to which meaning is explained by the correspondence between 'propositions' and 'facts'. But if we reduce semiotics to pure reference, we fail to explain how the 'referent' of our statements can be 'meaningful' for us. A mere dumb rigid connection between word and object, between sentence and fact, does not get us as far as a 'consciousness of' something, it does not suffice to explain how the connection itself can have a 'meaning' for the subject. Phenomenologically: the referent is 'meaningful' for us precisely because it can appear 'as something', 'as' that referent.

After witnessing how the phenomenological motif has played out in the preceding confrontations, we are in a better position to understand its character. The last example, regarding logicism in language, is conducive to an explanation of the concept of 'sense phenomenon' in relation to 'intentionality'. Intentionality (a concept that Husserl borrowed from Brentano and developed further) is the fundamental structure of consciousness, which explains how consciousness can ascribe 'significance' ('meaning') to that which it is conscious of. The structure 'consciousness of' is an *intendere,* a dynamic process or act by which the subject is 'oriented towards' and apprehends an 'object'. But the 'object' which is thereby apprehended or presented to consciousness is not merely a raw material, something *that* is; rather, it is an entity that is shown to us *as* being this *way*. What it presented to consciousness in this way is not a mere fact without a perspective; it is, rather, a perspective through its very act of presentation. Originally, the 'object' is the act of presentation of a certain 'mode', it appears in a certain *way*, 'as' this or that. And it is precisely this original character of the object that phenomenology call 'sense'. It follows from all of this that 'sense' is not something that can be added *a posteriori* to the 'object' (as if it were possible to grasp a sort of 'pure object'). Instead, 'sense' is essential to what we call an 'object'. According to phe-

nomenology, an 'object', what is 'real', is 'sense'. Furthermore, the 'object' is a 'phenomenon', an idea that we can elucidate by exploiting metaphors that derive from the aforementioned encounters with structuralism and logicism. The sense of 'sense' cannot be adequately captured by the metaphors of 'structure' and 'form'. The concept of a 'phenomenon' invites the distinction between 'form' and 'driving force' analogous to the way in which we distinguish 'topographical' features from an 'act': the former occur 'side by side', on the same level (horizontally), while the latter involves the emergence of elements connected in a single event (verticality). 'Sense' is *shown*, it comes about.

We can now give an appropriate answer to the question posed at the beginning of this section: why is phenomenological ontology a crucial component of continental-analytic divide? Because phenomenological ontology doesn't accept a central tenet of 'naturalism', to wit, that reality (assuming it is knowable by us) is something 'explainable', representable as a fact or law-governed relation. And, as we will try to show in the sequel, this naturalist assumption is generally accepted by analytic philosophers. A 'sense phenomenon' is not representable, but 'understandable'. Most of our subsequent reflections will revolver around this impasse, so we will dwell in more detail on the anti-naturalistic character of phenomenology, already vigorously developed by Husserl as he lay down the foundations of this movement.[16]

1.3. Exchanges between Husserl and Frege

So far, we have examined the confrontation between phenomenology and naturalism (of an 'objectifying' kind) in order to bring out the issues which fuelled the development of phenomenology. We must now investigate whether this contrast serves as an adequate starting point from which elucidate the similarities and differences between continental and analytic philosophy. The following considerations are motivated by the the conviction that this contrast does in fact shed light on the exchanges between Hussel's and Frege's philosophies. This comparison between the idealist origins of each tradition will also grant analytic philosophy the opportunity to show its credentials and prerogatives. Furthermore, given that so far we have developed phenomenology's claims as accusations, charity demands that we restore the balance by heeding the opponent's criticisms and proposals.

1.3.1 Frege's anti-naturalism and his 'phenomenological inclinations'

It is well known that Frege (1848-1925) played a foundational role in the modern philosophy of language. There are obvious parallelisms between his philosophy and that of his continental counterpart, Husserl. This kinship is due to the fact that, in the early stages of analytic philosophy, nat-

16 **Trans. Note:** I omit the following section in the original, 1.2.2..

uralism was considered a dangerous adversary.[17] Still, throughout the subsequent and divergent developments that began with this common starting point, we can discern more concrete ties which demonstrate the contrasts that we have been discussing so far. In order to bring out these contrasts we must bare in mind Frege's famous 'sense' and 'reference' distinction. For not only does it serve to support the rest of Frege's philosophy, it reaches the very heart of phenomenological enquiry.

Frege identified two basic semiotic functions, motivated by his conviction that expressions not only have a referent, but also *express* a sense. (Paradigmatic in this regard is Frege, 1892) This distinction has brought about as much clarity as perplexity. Frege's renowned example of the 'morning star' and the 'evening star', two expressions with different senses but the same referent, *viz.* the planet Venus, demonstrates the intuitive force with which this distinction has spread across the philosophical terrain. We talk about reality by introducing a certain intermediate element between reality itself and our way of knowing, thinking about or understanding it. Furthermore, this intermediate element reveals the speaker's expressive capacity to *con*-figure[18] what is presented to her. Yet a little thought will reveal that the distinction seems to contradict common sense in some areas, although it is founded on rigorous philosophical assumptions. Some of these problems stem from the unintuitive consequences of applying the distinction to proper nouns (what is their sense?) and, especially, sentences. A brief discussion of these difficulties will help us qualify and make precise the meaning of Frege's distinction.

The 'sense' of a noun or noun phrase is the way in which language presents the object, and this 'mode of presentation' is, according to Frege, a property of that object. Yet, oddly, proper nouns seem to lack this 'mode of presentation', for they are not descriptions and, therefore, lack the ability to express properties (as they are purely referential expressions). Frege concluded that the sense of a proper noun is merely that of the description or property which the speaker treats as equivalent to that name.[19] This solution has the advantage of seeming intuitively correct. The second problem we mentioned has a wider reach. The sense of a sentence is more complex: it is the 'ideas' or 'thoughts' *expressed* by the sentence. Confusion arises when we consider that the referent of the sentence must be its *truth value*, *i.e.* either truth or falsehood, an entity which, as an 'ideal planet', remains constant whilst being apprehended through different ideas. This conclusion follows from two principles: those of 'compositionality' and 'substitution'. According to the

17 **Trans. Note:** The sentence immediately following this one in the original is omitted as it added nothing and was confusing in English.

18 **Trans. Note:** Stress 'con' as in 'gathering together' these intermediate elements to deliver a final presentation to the subject.

19 **Trans. Note:** (For those unfamiliar with the sense-reference distinction.) For example, the sense of 'Sherlock Holmes' would be the sense of 'Fictional English detective who lived at 221b Baker Street, and is renowned for his discerning powers of deduction'.

first, the sense and the referent of a sentence—a complex expression—are functions, respectively, of the senses and the referents of its component expressions. According to the reasonable principle of substitution *salva veritate*[20] (a Leibnizian principle), one must be able to replace one expression for another with the same referent, without altering the truth value of the sentence in which it occurs. Clearly, the shared referent of the sentences 'Venus is the evening star' and 'Venus is the morning star' is their truth value. And so the 'sense'-'reference' distinction revives the ancient problems of the one and the many, of the immutable and the variable, in a way that can be easily linked back to Platonism. On Frege's conception, 'truth' appears as an sort of ideal 'archetype' from which thoughts participate. 'True' turns out to be the referent of all true sentences (just as 'false' is the referent of all false ones). Particular sentences express truth or falsity in different ways; they express ideas or 'thoughts' which, following Frege's distinction, must be considered as 'senses' of the truth values.

But, if we want to explore the ontological significance of the difference between Husserl's and Frege's concepts of 'sense', it is not necessary to focus on these internal difficulties. Analytic philosophy has had to tackle Frege's general programme without ignoring the details involved in the difficulties presented above. However, in order to identify the similarities and contrasts with continental philosophy, a more promising approach will be to consider the sources and implicit assumptions of the formulation of the problem of sense.

In order to appreciate the deep and rich links between Husserl and Frege, we begin by investigating some commonalities between them and which suggest a 'phenomeonological vocation' at the heart of Frege's project. This conclusion is motivated by the similarities between Frege's notions of 'sense' and 'thought', on the one hand; and Husserl's concept of a 'noema' on the other. (These similarities have been frequently noted and discussed in the literature.[21]) Setting aside the difficulties involved in identifying the 'sense' or 'referent' of any given expression (whether a denoting expression or a complex sentence), we will concentrate on how Frege understood the distinction itself. He took truth values to be objects which stand in the same relationship to sentences as individual referents stand to denoting expressions. Thus, in the same way that an object can appear, or be described through many different properties, truth and falsity are objects which can be presented in many different ways, through so many different ideas or thoughts. In both cases (*i.e.* individual referents and truth values), the referent is mediated by the 'intensional' function of signs[22]. A continental philosopher might put the point as follows: the 'content' of our 'un-

20 **Trans. Note:** Truth-preserving.

21 **Trans. Note:** The references were included in a large footnote not translated here.

22 **Trans. Note:** The *extension* of a sign is its referent, the object 'picked out' by the sign. (Usually a sign is a word, and its extension is an object in the world.) But linguistic signs can also convey sense—this is an *intensional* function of the sign.

derstanding' of the world belongs to the *medium*, to its 'sense'. Intriguingly, this content seems to stem from a *way of presenting* the referent. These thoughts would lead us to suppose that Frege's definition of what is real involves the Husserlian concept of a *noema*: the presentation of an entity with an 'as a' structure, showing itself as a *way of being such-and-such*. In other words: what is real appears as a 'sense'.

We can strengthen this convergence between the two thinkers by considering the relation between thought and reality. On Frege's account, this relation presupposes an understanding of the activity of thinking rather similar to the phenomenological notion of intentionality. That reality is inherently bound to a *mode of presentation* (*i.e.* its 'sense') implies that it is only one end of an act of apprehension. Husserl's notion of an intentional consciousness is built on the assumption that thought must be understood as an essentially receptive activity, and not as a mere effect of the 'spontaneity of understanding'—thus *contra* Kant and idealism. Thinking, insofar as it is an intentional activity, is apprehending, thinking *of* something. This insight is thus coherent with the claim that reality, as a 'sense phenomenon', must be understood as *showing itself*. It was Husserl[23] who laid the classical foundations for the idea that thinking is a non-empirical kind of receptivity. In his *Einleitung in die Logik* and *Logische Untersuchunge,* he tries to show that to think is, above all, to 'grasp a thought', and that thoughts can be true or false, independently of our grasping them; thus, they can poses their own kind of being or reality[24]. This crucial connection between Husserl and Frege (*i.e.* the objective existence of truth values) should become clearer after we analyse the second great similarity between them, already implicit in the first: their anti-naturalistic idealism.

Anti-naturalism and idealism are the central axes of the great philosophical systems of Husserl and Frege. For both, the content with a 'sense' (phenomenological for Husserl, semantic for Frege) is ascribed to a 'pure' or 'logical' realm which must not be confused with the real of facts. Grasping this content with a sense requires psychical acts (i.e. mental activity), but the content itself retains an ideal validity that cannot be reduced psychologically. Thus, both form of anti-naturalism are led to a common anti-psychologism.

In Husserl's case, it is telling that he blame naturalism for a crises which, as we have seen, is simultaneously humanistic and epistemological. The positivist paradigm—a form of objectivism, as we concluded earlier on—not only reduces subjectivity (constitutive of sense) to a collection of

23 **Trans. Note:** *Orig.* 'Frege', but this is a mistake, as he then goes on to say 'In his *Einleitung in die Logik* and *Logische Untersuchungen*', both texts by Husserl, not Frege.

24 **Trans. Note:** A crucial Husserlian device is the 'apriori of correlation', which links the intentional objects which make up the world with the subject's intellectual or perceptual acts in grasping or perceiving these objects. Thus, there is a sense in which the objects are subject-independent and grasped by him, but, conversely, there is a sense in which objects are constituted by the way in which they are grasped in a given intentional act. When we say here that 'thoughts have their own being', we are merely acknowledging the first side of this correlation: their being objects that a subject grasps.

facts (already constituted), but also commits the imposture of making truth contingent. Here objectivism hides behind an old foe: psychologism. Thus, throughout *Philosophy as a Strict Science*, Husserl is concerned to fight back naturalism in this guise, popular at the turn of the twentieth century, which endeavoured to deduce the laws of logic and other spheres of validity (such as ethics or aesthetics) from psychological events. Husserl's resistance to such 'reductivism' explains why, in the first volume of *Logical Investigations,* he linked phenomenology with the search for a non naturalistic 'pure logic'. Clearly, this 'logic' is not the kind of formal logic which analysts will brandish in their zeal to formalise natural language. Husserl's 'logic' seeks to ground the ideal laws of truth in the transcendental domain of consciousness which, as we have seen, is the 'life world' in which sense is experienced. This is because the intentional acts through which we experience sense exhibit ideal connections which are objectively valid. At the heart of this thesis lies a important difference between Husserl's and Brentano's concepts of intentionality. Brentano analysed different intentional acts as different species. Husserl discovered, beyond this taxonomy, an underlying context in which specific acts are situated. An object (*qua* 'sense phenomenon') is not the correlate of a single intentional act, but of a complex concurrence of multiple acts which are woven together to form a unity (Landgrebe, 1963). This unity includes, beyond what is currently given to consciousness, but also what could be given and which is grasped as part of the totality which conforms the object. Thus, the object is an 'ideal synthesis' towards which consciousness is directed as a unified complex of intentional acts.[25] According to Husserlian phenomenology, such an idealism is necessary because the synthesis in which the object consists is not a merely contingent association of 'data'. It is a unity of significant connections without which it would be impossible to think that object under any of the 'imaginative variations' which we may apply to it.[26] The stability of the object under such variations is a minimal and universal kernel of sense which phenomenological enquiry reaches after discarding the mutability and contingency which accompany its manifold appearances. Therefore, the 'ideal synthesis' distils the *essence* of the being in question, an essence that is not merely 'constructed', but rather is warranted *by itself* as an indis-

25 For example, a perceived object (in other words, a being insofar as it is the object of a perception,) is not reduced to the collection of its currently grasped facets; it also includes other aspects which are currently not present but implied by those that are, such as a side which, given the perspective, is hidden from view. In general, an object in the phenomenological sense is a complex synthetic unity. If we think of objects such as 'community', 'aesthetic object', 'instrument', etc., it will become clear that the phenomena which Husserl is talking about are not mere 'data', each singular and actual; rather, they are entities with a rich complex of aspects which can be understood as ideal possibilities.

26 Phenoemenologists reach the 'essence' or '*eidos*' of a region of being or typology of objects by a process of 'imaginative variation' which is very different from empirical generalisations based on concrete data. This process consists in imaginatively altering the experiences and data of an object in order to find a stable kernel, an invariable structure without which the object would not be recognisable as such in any of its possible presentations. This is why Husserl understood the phenomenological enterprise to include, not only the analysis of the fundamental structures of ontology—such as the subject, its being and its relation to the object—('formal ontology'), but also the ramifications of such an analysis through 'regional ontologies', each of which would analyse the 'essence' of a given domain of objects or region of being. (See, for example, *Ideas I*: §149; in general, Ch. 1).

pensable anchorage on which to fasten any thought about the object. In other words: the 'ideal synthesis' is required by the 'thing itself' and is, therefore, unavoidably objective. Thus, the call to go 'back to the things themselves' demands the combination of an ontological return to experience with a return to epistemic objectivity[27]. The 'world', as the realm of 'sense phenomena' constituted within the sphere of the 'life world', lies naked before us: the objective world, the true world. And so we see that the operations which underlie the grasping of sense are, at the same time, the universal validity conditions uncovered by an objective form of knowledge. Ultimately, the 'pure logic' investigated by phenomenology is the condition of possibility of both the constitution of the object and its objectivity (equivalently, of the validity of knowledge of the object.) Such is the irreducible ground which confers to all concrete acts of thinking a universally objective reference, the model of validity in general.

We find a very similar antinaturalistic idealism in Frege. 'Thoughts', for Frege, unlike mental events, are not part of the causal order operating in the *actual* world. They ere neither physical nor mental entities and, therefore, they cannot be understood as material brain states or as the by-products of such states. To borrow Popper's terminology, Frege would distinguish between 'world 1'—the world of physical objects; 'world 2'—the world of images, sensations and mental events, that is, the internal world of the stream of consciousness which Frege calls 'representations'; and 'world 3'—the world of thoughts and concepts. Thoughts, unlike entities of the first 'world', do not causally interact with each other (nor with physical objects). And unlike mental events, on the other hand, a thought's content does not depend contingent mental states. This content necessarily possesses a truth value which, as we have seen, is the thought's objective reference. Clearly, thoughts presuppose mental acts and events, that is, ingredients from the second 'world'. Thoughts do not arrive from outside consciousness as some kind of mysterious revelation or as the result of a moment of 'enlightenment'; they are grounded in the subjects mental acts. But their contents cannot be reduced to their psychological genesis. It is precisely through thoughts that truth and false are *presented* in a certain way; in other words, in thoughts truth or falsity are 'grasped'. Thoughts are the 'senses' of this ultimate referent, the truth value, and, as such, they are not subject to the causal laws governing physical objects or giving rise to and connecting mental states, feelings and other experiences. Ultimately, Frege held that thoughts are not part of the 'actual world' (*Wirklich*), firmly constrained by causal laws.

After this discussion, it should be easier to appreciate the precise similarities between Husserl's and Frege's anti-naturalisms. According to Frege, a 'thought' is the 'sense' of an expression and, as such, it transcends the 'actuality' of physical and mental facts. In a parallel manner to Husserl's 'essence', the Fregean 'sense' would thus express an 'ideal ties' of meaning whose objectivity can-

27 **Trans. Note:** That is, knowledge can have a firm foundation, it isn't 'relativised' to 'interpretation'.

not be reduced to the 'contstrcutions' of the subject. Furthermore, the truth value of a thought on the Fregean picture, like the ideal laws which condition the constitution of an the object for Husserl, is atemporal and unchanging. Truth, for both philosophers, must not be confused with the facts.

1.3.2. The gap between Husserl's and Frege's ontologies

Throughout the previous analysis we have seen that the respective foundations of analytic and continental philosophy take off from a common ground, exercised by similar concerns, and that this seeming convergence is far from anecdotal. The anti-naturalistic idealism that launched both developments is not just a neat taxonomical symmetry (for there have been many forms of idealism)—it has precise ontological implications for the divide. These implications, which have been gradually emerging throughout the discussion, revolve around the key relation between 'reality' and 'sense'. Briefly, in both cases the world (for Husserl, the object of an intentional consciousness; for Frege, the reference of our language) is *shown* in a *particular way*, a *sense*; and again in both cases, the way in which the subject can reach that *sense* involves a passive receptivity: sense is not merely 'produced', but 'grasped'. Together, these two thesis suggest an ontology which would be congenial to both Husserl and Frege. At the heart of of this ontology is the claim that reality *appears* before the subject, revealed within the subject's world (the 'life world' in Husserl, the world of language in Frege) as a particular *way of being*. We have already suggested that this crucial affinity between Husserl and Frege could be cast in phenomenological terms as an ontology of 'sense phenomena'. And this is precisely the 'phenomenological vocation' we suspected in Frege. But just how far can we stretch these 'family resemblances'?

Despite the many confluences at the dawn of both phenomenology and analytic philosophy of language, a fatal difference in perspective stymies any hope of reconciling Husserl's and Frege's philosophies. The impasse is founded on two complimentary yet mutually dependent asymmetries. The first asymmetry affects the way in which each develops the common idealist theme: Husserl's is a *transcendental* idealism; Frege's, a *Platonic* idealism. The second asymmetry, hinges on the way in which each has understood another common yet basic motif, encapsulated in such expressions as 'reality is presented in a particular way' or 'sense emerges'. The way in which this premise has been interpreted in each case has determined some of the opposing features of these traditions, and may help us to better understand the first asymmetry.

We can begin our investigation of the first asymmetry by comparing the notions of *noema* (Husserl) and *sense/thought* (Frege) in light of that core phenomenological notion, the 'apriori of correlation'. Husserl's *noema* (the essential mode of presentation of an object) conforms a unity alongside the manifold intentional acts which make up the *noesis*. The structure of this unity tran-

scends the concrete experience through which the object is grasped in this particular way or as having this particular sense. Furthermore, this unity implies a essential correlation, a mutual link between the experience of the object and the object itself, and which determines the being of each end of that relation. The phenomenologist tries to understand 'how the existing object following essential laws that are absolutely fixed is the correlate of conscious connexions of a quite definite essential content, just as conversely the being of systems thus articulated is equivalent to the existing object' (*Ideas I*: 263; see §86). This principle of a 'universal apriori of correlation' was present in Husserl's work as early as the *Logical Investigations*, and appears thought the rest of his career (San Martín, 1987: 22*ff)*. Here is a simplified account of the principle: it tries to reconcile two seemingly contradictory ideas. On the one hand, all being (insofar as it can be experienced) is a *being-for* the subject of the experience—a radically idealistic claim. On the other hand, we have the recurring ontological conviction that a being is *shown, presented to* or *grasped by* the subject of the experience, implying—against solipsism, and in more realist vein—that the being in question must be independent of the subject's consciousness. This paradoxical subject-object relation is one of Husserl's most fiercely and tightly argued conclusions, despite being dangerously counter-intuitive. That this thesis is well supported by Husserl can be seen since, on closer inspection, the key phenomenological notion of 'sense phenomenon' simultaneously involves two claims embodied by the 'aprirori of correlation'. First, because 'sense' is a *phenomenon* which presents reality, it must be *shown*: a fundamental characteristic of an entity as a 'sense phenomenon' is its self-giveness. Second, the *noesis* is a (passive) process of *grasping*. This two-sided aspect of the phenomenological ontology would be incomprehensible if the subjects experiences were described as mental processes that 'go alongside' the understanding of sense in the mind, or which form a physiological basis for those processes. Such an account would only focus on one side of the 'apriori of correlation': that sense must be grasped. In order to make sense of the claim that grasping a sense simultaneously constitutes it; in order to lend plausibility to the idea that what *shows itself* is, at the same time, a product of the subjectivity to which it appears, we must make subjectivity *transcendental.*[28] And, as we have been trying to show, this 'transcendentalisation' of subjectivity is precisely what phenomenology seeks to assert against what we have termed the 'naturalisation of consciousness'. *Constitutive* subjectivity, as a 'life world', is *transcendental* subjectivity[29]. The 'life world' contains the intentional acts and the synthetic products of those acts; for the phenomenologist, it is this 'life world', conceived in its totality, which cannot be reduced by psychologistic efforts.

28 **Trans. Note:** In the Kantian sense: the subject is a condition of possibility of the world and of its having a 'sense' for the subject.

29 **Trans. Note:** My emphasis on both 'constitutive' and 'transcendental'.

Going back to our analysis of the similarities between Frege's and Husserl's positions, we will find that one of the two sides of the phenomenologist's 'apriori of correlation' has a Fregean analogy. A reference presents itself or is shown through the *medium* of sense; thus, a reference is grasped, as is especially clear in the case of thoughts. However, nothing in Frege resembles the second side: there is no analysis of the transcendental acts responsible for the 'grasping' of 'thoughts'. The aforementioned taxonomy of the three worlds reveals that, for Frege, the experiential world consists of merely mental or psychological acts. His concept of 'sense' excludes the possibility that it (sense) is not only 'grasped' in a given act, but also 'constituted' within that act. This fundamental difference explains the contrast between Frege's and Husserl's idealist responses to the same naturalistic challenge. Husserl's phenomenological analysis demands logical purity, not only because the 'self-giveness' of the object requires an objectivity and ideality which escapes the contingent nature of physiological and psychological acts; but also because the genuinely subjective acts of grasping the object cannot be reduced in naturalistic terms: these acts are intentional experiences which must be attributed to a transcendental *Ego* for whom such acts are unavoidably self-evident. In this way, Husserl's idealism tries to combine the claim that reality is unconditionally valid with the claim that reality is necessarily a *reality for* the subject[30]. This anti-Platonistic view implies that the intentional object should not be understood as the sense (or a partial determination) of the a reference which exists 'in itself' (as Kant would say); rather, the intentional object *is* the referent, it is reality as such (not a mere medium of hidden reality 'in itself'). Compared with this complex development, Frege's Platonistic inclinations acquire a richer texture than that offered by his distinction between a world of physical objects, a world of experiences or 'representations and a world of 'thoughts' and concepts. For, in light of the comparisons drawn with Husserl's philosophy, we realise that the status of Platonic idea which Frege grants truth—an ideality which must be prepossessed in order to guarantee the objectivity of thoughts—in the end mirrors the naturalistic threat of reducing the subjective world. By endorsing a Platonic idealism, Frege not only locates *Truth* in a world *in itself* in which thoughts 'participate'; he also reduces the practical-vital world of the subject (the Platonic 'sensible world') to a sphere of pure contingency which is neither 'active' nor positively 'constitutive' with regards to meaning.

At this point we can further compare the difficulties which each position faces. Frege's Platonism shields the prescriptive logic of language from the pragmatic, 'everyday life' considerations which are woven into its use. Analytic philosophy's subsequent anti-Fregean reaction has sought to remedy this shortcoming in many ways in order to accommodate the richness of language left behind by Frege—ironically, his anti-naturalism led him to make language *un-natural*. Husserl

30 **Trans. Note:** In other words: Huserl is trying to reconcile a subject-related reality (as an idealist) with its independent validity for all subjects. The tension between these two claims is the old idealist problem of how reality can be stable for all subjects when it somehow 'exists' in each individual.

runs a different—in some sense opposite—risk, which has fuelled many debates that we will come to in our subsequent treatment of post-idealistic phenomenology and hermeneutics. By renouncing Platonism, Husserl may be forced to pay the price of an untenable solipsism. If all reality is reality *for* the subject of the experience, to such an extreme that it only makes sense in 'the domain of my peculiarly own essentiality, of what I am in myself, in my full concreteness or (as we may also say) what I am in myself as this monad' (Husserl, 1977: 105; see §47), has Husserl not forfeited the transcendence of the world beyond the subject and, with it, any prospect of an unconditional or ideal validity? Continental philosophy's anti-Husserlian reaction stresses precisely this point by trying to show the *trans*-cendence[31] of the world.

Setting aside for the time being the paths that each tradition has followed in dealing with these difficulties present in Husserl and Frege, let us return to the second asymmetry between them that we noted above. This time, the confrontation centres around the meaning of the concept of 'sense'. From a phenomenological point of view, an entity in its self-givennes and correlative constitution (between itself and the subject in this two sided act), is always a 'sense phenomenon' which must be *understood*, but cannot be reduced to a mere *description* or *explanation* of what 'appears' as a collection of 'contents' or 'attributes'. It must be *comprehended* because, insofar as it is set in a transcendental 'life world' it is, primarily, an 'experience' of 'being'. This sphere of of *acts* and synthetic *pro*-ducts forms the ontological substrate of transcendental phenomenology. Such a transcendental idealism contrasts with Frege's ontology. For according to the latter, 'sense' is primarily linked, not to acts, but to 'contents' which can be logically described or reconstructed. We must not forget that the sense of a denoting expression is tied to *linguistic expressions* (which express the *properties* of an object) and that a 'thought', *i.e.* the sense of a sentence, is a mental *content*. Frege thought that the sense of a denoting expression can be objectified (*i.e.* linked to an object) though a description, and that a 'thought' (or sense of a sentence) is objectified in propositions and can be reconstructed in an appropriate formal logic. As the subtitle to Frege's *Begriffsschrift* nicely sums up, it purports to develop a 'formula language, modelled upon that of arithmetic, for pure thought' (Frege 1879; adapted to British spelling). It is well known that this text inaugurated the logicist project of formalising natural language to correct its ambiguities and lack of precision; yet, given the formalism that it created, it can also be seen as an heir to Leibniz's dream to create a 'language calculus'.

Husserl's ontology privileges the event in which an entity presents itself *as* the way it does (correlated with a 'life world' or sphere of acts). But the event is marginalised in Frege's conception of 'sense', for it is exhausted by the semantic 'content' of an objectifiable 'description'. The

31 **Trans. Note:** The stress on 'trans' is there to signal the 'immanent' character of this reaction. Instead of taking a 'solipsitic' view of the subject (as Husserl allegedly does), later phenomenologists emphasise how the subject is part of that world, and this has consequences for the apriori of correlation.

object, viewed as a phenomenological *noema,* is not a *content* that is *present*, but the act itself of *presentation.* In parallel to this, at the opposite end of the 'apriori of correlation' (where the intentional act of grasping takes place), the *noesis* is a collection, not of facts, but of the subject's acts.

Thus, we have seen how a common feature of both Husserl's and Frege's ontologies, the presence of a notion of 'sense', is developed under very different interpretations. To sum up: both philosophers take reality to be inseparable from a *mode* of presentation. In unpacking this claim, Husserl's ontology takes up the form of an *ontology of acts* or *events,* understanding an object to be a 'sense *phenomenon*'. Frege's ontology, by contrast, takes up the claim to develop an *ontology of facts* (of what *is actual* or *can be actual*), making sense *objective* as a content which can be designated by language.

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N.B. This bibliography contains references for the texts cited in the *translated* portion of Chapter 1 only. Where possible, I have replaced the references in the original with equivalents in English translation, but I have not always been able to do so.

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