§1. THE COMMON ORIGIN OF HUSSERL’S AND GURWITSCH’S THEORIES OF INTENTIONALITY

It is important and, perhaps, surprising to realize that both Husserl and Gurwitsch depart from the theory of wholes and parts in order to formulate their respective insights into the nature of intentionality. Indeed, Husserl developed his theory of wholes and parts in his first major work, the *Philosophy of Arithmetic* of 1891—extensively refining the theory in the second volume of the *Logical Investigations* of 1901.¹,² Its significance for his theory of intentionality was publicly stated twelve years later by Husserl in the first volume of the *Ideas*, Part I, Chapter One. Gurwitsch likewise developed a theory of wholes and parts in his first major work, “The Phenomenology of Thematics and of the Pure Ego” of 1929.³ Based

partly on criticism of Stumpf’s and Husserl’s theories of whole and parts, the significance of Gurwitsch’s theory for the meaning of intentionality is also expressed twelve years later in his essay, “On the Intentionality of Consciousness,” published in 1940.4

It is my belief that this striking historical parallelism has deep philosophic roots which not only touch on the validity of the theory of wholes and parts as basic to the formulation of the problem of intentionality, but which also disclose the originality of Gurwitsch’s account of intentionality.

In this paper I have set myself two tasks—first, to briefly state the role Husserl’s theory of wholes and parts plays in his formulation of the problem of intentionality, and the paradox to which it leads; second, to briefly state the gist of Gurwitsch’s criticism of Husserl’s theory of wholes and parts and the consequent resolution of the paradox with the correlative formulation of the nature of intentionality in a manner original with Gurwitsch.

§ 2. HUSSERL’S THEORY OF WHOLES AND PARTS.

In the Third Logical Investigation Husserl discusses wholes and parts of wholes with respect to two relationships: that between whole and parts, and that between coordinate parts of the same whole.5 Among the latter is the further distinction between discrete and nondiscrete parts. By “discrete” parts of the same whole, for instance, Husserl means those parts whose contents have nothing in common. In line with what Husserl says at the beginning of the Third Investigation,6 it may be asked if mental processes and their objects make up a whole, and furthermore, if they do, what sorts of parts are they—discrete of non-discrete? If they are discrete, are these parts in some manner related to one another?

Discrete parts are further resolved into ones that are mutually self-sufficient and ones that are mutually non-selfsufficient.7 If it is the case, for instance, that mental processes and their objects are discrete parts of the

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5 Logische Untersuchungen, II,1 III. Unters., §1; II,1 II Unters., §1.
6 Ibid.,1 pp. 222, 224f; ibid.,2 pp. 225, 227, 228.
7 Ibid.,1 p. 224; ibid.,2 p. 227.