Eugenie Ginsberg

On the Concepts of Existential Dependence and Independence

Editorial Note by Peter M. Simons

The author of this article Eugenie Ginsberg was, with her husband, Dr Leopold Blaustein, a member of the Philosophical Centre at the University of Lwów between the wars. Both were murdered by the Nazis in 1942. According to the Polish phenomenologist Roman Ingarden, former teacher of Blaustein, in his obituary notice in Przegląd Filozoficzny, 1939/46, 334-37, neither left any manuscripts. These were presumably destroyed in the German occupation of Poland, along with so much other invaluable work.

Along with several book reviews, two other articles by the same author survive: one, from 1936, in child psychology; the other, dated 1929, is like the present paper a contribution to Stumpf-Husserl whole-part theory. (Cf. Ginsberg, 1929, in the bibliography at the end of the present volume.) It consists wholly of an exposition, criticism and reworking of Husserl’s ‘six theorems’ from §14 of the 3rd Logical Investigation (cited in §3 of the paper by Smith and Mulligan above).

Briefly, Ginsberg supplies a proof for Theorem I, which had been regarded by Husserl as self-evident. She offers a new proof for Theorem III and endorses Theorem V. Theorems II, IV and VI however she holds to be false. The same counterexample is used against each. It can be given most easily in connection with Theorem II. This runs:

A whole which includes a dependent moment without including as its part the supplement which that moment demands, is likewise dependent, and is so relative to every superordinate independent whole in which that dependent moment is contained.
Suppose we consider a whole \( a \) compounded of the colour and shape (understood as individual accidents, not as universal properties) of a particular brick in a wall. This is dependent upon the extension of the brick, and thereby also on the brick itself, but it is not dependent upon the wall, as – according to Theorem II – it should be. \( a \) requires the existence of the brick, but not the superordinate wall, since \( a \) can perfectly well exist whether the wall does or not, can predate and survive the wall, and would usually do so, as long as the brick did not change in shape or colour.

The criticism and counterexample fail because Ginsberg fails to observe the distinction which Husserl makes between foundation and relative dependence: an individual \( a \) of the species \( a \) is founded on an individual \( b \) of the species \( \beta \) if \( a \)s have to be supplemented by \( \beta \)s in order to exist at all, and \( b \) here does the job for \( a \); an individual is dependent relative to another individual if it is founded on something ‘within the range of’ the latter, i.e. is founded on some proper or improper part of it. Thus every case of founding is a case of relative dependence, but not vice versa. The brick example is just such a case: the colour+shape \( a \) is founded on the extension of the brick, and the brick is a piece of the wall, so \( a \) is dependent relative to the wall, but \( a \) is not founded upon the wall.

The mistake is quite understandable however, since Husserl is not always consistent in his terms, and introduces them in what, by modern standards, is a sloppy and haphazard fashion. The same confusion invalidates her other counterexamples, but does nothing to detract from the fact that she is the only author known to me to have taken Husserl’s semi-formal work on wholes and parts seriously enough to venture into print about it. In any case, as I have to confess in my own paper on the 3rd Investigation elsewhere in this volume, it is by no means easy to interpret Husserl here.

The article presented here gives a survey of modern whole-part theory, especially in connection with the distinction between dependent and independent parts. Ginsberg begins with Stumpf’s definitions of dependent and independent contents, proceeds to Höfler, Twardowski and Husserl, and ends with some suggestions of her own. Most space is spent discussing Husserl, which is in conformity with the 1929 article. The original language of this paper is Polish. This presents problems of translation, since the then current language of dependent and independent parts was German, and we are working in English. One of
the greatest incidental difficulties of whole-part theory is that there is a plethora of different terms and, worse still, conflicting uses of the same terms. Husserl uses the terms selbständig and unselbständig, which are usually translated as ‘independent’ and ‘dependent’, although Findlay occasionally uses the word ‘self-sufficient’ for the former, and translates the latter as ‘non-independent’ in order to bring out its negativity. There is arguably a closer notional similarity between ‘self-sufficient’ and selbständig and between ‘independent’ and unabhängig (which, together with its positive, Husserl also occasionally uses) than the other way round. However ‘self-sufficient’ perhaps carries additional connotations in English, and is in any case less common than ‘independent’. Findlay regards ‘dependent’ as too relative in its connotations to translate unselbständig, but as Husserl himself is at pains to point out, all dependence is also relative dependence. Husserl also points out that the notion which is expressed more commonly in German by the negative word unselbständig is in fact the more basic, and indeed in this context uses Abhängigkeit to make his point (LU III, § 5). It seems to me that since he makes no attempt to distinguish the senses in any explicit way, he understands the two German words as synonymous, and simply uses the commoner one. For this reason it appears unnecessary to use Findlay’s ‘non-independent’, but to render the most common German word by the most common English word, ‘dependent’.

While this policy works well enough for Husserl, it works less well for the more finely discriminated senses to be found in Ingarden’s Der Streit um die Existenz der Welt where four different senses of (in)dependence are distinguished. We give these in their German versions, with suggested English equivalents:

1. Seinsautonomie/Seinsheteronomie — (existential) autonomy/heteronomy
2. Seinsursprünglichkeit/-abgeleitetheit — (existential) originality/derivation
3. Seinsselbständigkeit/-unselbständigkeit — (existential) self-sufficiency/non-self-sufficiency
4. Seinsunabhängigkeit/-abhängigkeit — (existential) independence/dependence

These suggested translations differ somewhat from those employed by Helen Michejda in her translation of part of the work from its original Polish into English (Time and Modes of Being, Springfield, Ill.: Charles
While Ingarden originally wrote *Der Streit* in Polish, the same distinctions were forged by him in German for his 1929 Husserl-Festschrift paper “Bemerkungen zum Problem Idealismus-Realismus”, and it is to this paper that Ginsberg refers in her paper here. My suggestion for fixing terminology is then this: where Ingarden’s distinctions are made, or some similar distinctions resting on the same terminology, the scheme above should be adhered to. Where, on the other hand, as in Husserlian writings, the pairs (3) and (4) are not kept apart, there is no need to keep their English translations apart. This indeed is Fidnlay’s practice.

As to Ginsberg’s Polish; in her note on Ingarden she translates his *Selbständigkeit* by *samoistność* and *Abhängigkeit* by *zależność*, with the negative prefix *nie-* for the German *un-*, whereas Ingarden uses *samodzielność* for *Selbständigkeit* and *samoistność* as a synonym for ‘autonomy’. Now *zależność* is the standard Polish translation for the English word ‘dependence’, while the dictionary gives two closely related English equivalents for *samoistność*: (1) autonomous existence or spontaneity, (2) independence or self-containedness. Translated morpheme-by-morpheme the word comes out as ‘ability to exist by itself’, which might emerge as ‘self-existability’. Unfortunately, while the phrase admirably captures just what Husserl in particular is after, the word is somewhat barbarous, and certainly jars upon frequent repetition. Since Ginsberg alludes to Ingarden’s distinction without actually employing it, the more common English words will be used to translate the more common Polish (and German), after the fashion suggested as appropriate for Husserl, but not for Ingarden. In short, except in the comment on Ingarden in footnote 18, we translate *samoistność* as ‘independence’ and *niesamoistność* as ‘dependence’, and similarly for their cognates.
On the Concepts of Existential Dependence and Independence*

The concepts of existential dependence and independence which are the subject of our deliberations belong to that order of concepts in philosophy which hold out the hope that they can not only be intuitively grasped, but also precisely defined. In the philosophy of the last decades we find a whole series of efforts to define these concepts precisely, though various authors apply different names to them. The attempts made by Stumpf, Höfler, and Twardowski provide us with a series of ever more precise definitions of the concepts we are here examining, culminating in the investigations of Husserl, who devoted a separate work to these problems. Nevertheless, there are still certain difficulties and obscurities in their definitions. Hence, our critical analyses are supplemented by an attempt at a new definition, which is doubtless itself by no means finally definitive.

The most precise of all possible definitions of the concepts of existential dependence and independence can be used either for the purpose of creating a science that treats dependent and independent objects, or they can be applied in many different areas of philosophical research and in other fields. We find the beginnings of an eventual deductive system in Husserl, who formulated a series of assertions concerning dependent and independent parts and wholes. On the other hand, the fact that the concept of dependence can be applied in many areas, e.g. in the area of sense contents, psychic facts, meanings, activities and products, objects of higher order, etc., testifies to the fruitfulness of the distinctions which are the subject of this paper.

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* English translation of “W sprawie pojęć samoistności i niesamoistności”, Księga pamiątkowa Polskiego Towarzystwa Filozoficznego we Lwowie 12.II.1904-12.II.1929, Lwów, 1931, 143–68. (The author’s name is there given in its Polish married form: Eugenia z Ginsbergow Blaustetnowa.)
§ 1 Analysis of Stumpf's Definitions

Stumpf, in taking up the relationship of the representation of extension to that of colour qualities, divides all such simultaneously represented contents into two classes, according to their mutual attachments, namely (1) independent contents (selbständige Inhalte) and (2) partial contents (Teilinhalte), which correspond with what were later called dependent contents. We encounter independent parts whenever the elements of a complex of representations by their nature can be separately represented, and partial contents wherever this is not the case. As examples of contents independent of one another Stumpf lists (a) contents opposed to each other, (b) qualities of the various senses like colours and tones, (c) qualities of the same sense like the notes of one chord. Extension and colour are examples of partial contents. According to Stumpf, it is endemic to extension and colour not only that the one cannot exist in representation without the other, but also that a change in the first causes a change in the second. In point of fact both of these contents can change independently of one another: colour does not cease to be red or green when extension changes, but despite this fact colour does participate to some extent in changes of extension. From this mutual functional relationship between extension and colour it follows that both of them are by their very nature inseparable from each other and in a certain way comprise one whole content, of which they are only partial contents.

Let us consider the definition of partial contents and ask whether, indeed, when two objects are partial contents, they can never be separately represented, albeit that Stumpf stresses that such an impossibility must result from the nature of these contents. Thus were we to take ‘representation’ in the broadest meaning of the word, including all acts which make present an object, then partial contents would not exist at all, since each content could be e.g. signitively represented separately from the others. Thus, for example, we can signitively (i.e. with the help of a word) imagine redness without simultaneously imagining extension. On the other hand, if we take ‘representation’ in the sense of ‘imagination’, then the definition of partial contents – as those which cannot be separately imagined – will be correct only in a limited sense, namely with respect only to what is imaginable. This definition will be important in connection with dependent sense qualities, to which the original concept of dependence was first applied and with which Stumpf
was perhaps solely concerned. But since the concepts of independence and dependence are also applied beyond the area of sense contents, e.g. in the sphere of such things as relations, which cannot be imagined at all, or in the area of psychic facts, concerning which it is doubtful whether they can be imagined, this definition seems too narrow. In any case, one cannot define partial contents as contents which inherently cannot be represented separately from others.

Stumpf brings up still another point characteristic of at least certain partial contents; namely, he stresses the dependence of changes of colour on changes of extension. But we shall discuss this point later in connection with the discussion of Husserl's views.

§ 2 Analysis of Höfler's Definitions

We later encounter the concept of independence and dependence in Höfler's (though not under the same name). In his analysis of representations Höfler distinguishes three types of complexity of representations of contents. We find the first type of complexity in representations which contain 'parts' of the sort that may be represented separately and concerning which it is evident that each part of a simultaneously represented whole can exist independently of the remaining parts. Thus we can conceive each page of a book separately without conceiving the others, and one page may exist although the others do not exist, or may change although the others do not change. A second type of complexity is found in represented contents whose individual features Merkmale can, indeed, be distinguished from each other, but which cannot be separately represented and concerning which it is obvious that the qualities Eigenschaften of the object represented by these features cannot exist separately from the others. Thus colour cannot exist without any sort of shape, even though one can distinguish colour from shape. We meet the third type of complexity in represented contents which include features, say A and B, which are such that A can be represented without B but not B without A, and further one cannot conceive of B existing without A. For example, we may think of a colour which is not white, but we cannot, on the other hand, think of a whiteness which is not a colour; the same holds true with respect to foursidedness and shape, etc.
What we have stated above can either be regarded as two divisions of the same class of objects made on the basis of two different principles, namely (1) whether particular elements of a content can be represented without representing the others, (2) whether particular qualities of the object represented by the elements of a content can exist separately from the others – or as one division, the principle of which is two different features. Should we prefer to see two divisions here, then several doubts which we have already mentioned in § 1 arise with respect to the possibility or impossibility of separate representation. And concerning the principle of the second division, Höfler stresses that this dependence or independence must be such that it can be stated with evidence. With his division of a content based on the principle of the possibility or impossibility of separate existence and with his emphasis on the point of evidence Höfler anticipates the later definition of independence and dependence of Husserl.8

But the principle of division which we are discussing is not always consistently expressed. For when Höfler discusses the first and second type of complexity he speaks of the possibility or impossibility of the existence of some qualities without the others, whereas in discussing the third type of complexity he speaks of the possibility or impossibility of imagining certain qualities as existing without the others. These two things are not, of course, the same, and it is doubtful whether they even go together; therefore they cannot serve us as one of the principles of division.

But it is also doubtful whether the possibility or impossibility of representing A without B and the possibility or impossibility of A’s existing without B always go hand-in-hand, that is to say it is uncertain whether the classes of contents of representations derived from the divisions based on these two criteria are identical. For there is firstly no necessary connection between the psychological possibility or impossibility of representing something separately and the ontological possibility or impossibility of something existing separately. Further, there are cases such that A cannot exist without B but where they can be separately represented in imagination. Suggestive thinking, which we referred to in our criticism of Stumpf, can again serve us as an example. We shall discuss further the division of objects from the point of view of the possibility or impossibility of their separate existence when we deal with the views of Husserl, who discusses this division in detail.

If, on the other hand, we were to accept the view that Höfler’s pur-
pose was to present a single division based on two different features, that is, that belonging to the first class would be those contents which can both exist and be represented separately, etc., then this division would be incomplete, for there are those contents which do not belong to any of the classes which he distinguishes, e.g. those which can be separately represented but which cannot exist separately.

The above analysis concerns the definitions of Höfler published in the first edition of his Logic. In the second edition of 1922 Höfler changed the sections in which the question which interests us was discussed. We have considered the views contained in the first edition in such detail because we wished to present the history of the problem which interests us. In Höfler’s arguments from the first edition of his Logic, as we have seen, there are two meanings of dependence, one of which was later developed by Twardowski, the other by Husserl.

In the second edition Höfler takes up the question we are discussing in connection with the problem of psychic analysis. There he distinguishes two kinds of parts: separable \( \text{trennbare} \) and inseparable \( \text{untrennbare} \) parts, and along with these, two kinds of psychic analysis. Psychic analysis of the first kind consists in imagining separable parts as existing separately, and that of the second kind, in differentiating between inseparable qualities of an object. Inseparable qualities of an object may be either mutually or unilaterally detachable \( \text{ablösbare} \). The arguments of Höfler mentioned here do not move the question under discussion forward, since they do not define the concepts of separability \( \text{oddzielnosci} = \text{Trennbarkeit} \) and detachability \( \text{odłączalności} = \text{Ab­lösbarkeit} \) more precisely.

§ 3 Analysis of Twardowski’s Definitions

Many assertions on existential independence and dependence (though again in a different terminology) are found in Twardowski. In his deliberations this author uses the earlier concept of metaphysical parts. By ‘metaphysical parts’ he means parts which can be differentiated in the whole to which they belong through abstraction, but which cannot be separated from the whole in reality. According to Twardowski the concept of metaphysical part is interchangeable with the concept of quality \( \text{Eigenschaft} \), while the expression ‘quality’ is used here to mean also an aspect of a relationship obtaining between a whole and
certain of its parts (sc. the *metaphysical* parts) as against the relationship itself. So qualities in this sense are extension, colour, weight, etc.\(^{12}\)

In addition to the concept of metaphysical part we also find in Twardowski a concept homologous to that of inseparable part. Basing himself on the first principle of division which we find in Höfler, i.e. the possibility or impossibility of conceiving something separately, Twardowski divides the material parts of a representation into:

1. parts which are mutually separable, i.e. parts among which each can be conceived without conceiving the others,
2. parts which are mutually inseparable, i.e. parts which can, indeed, be differentiated from others, but which cannot be conceived without others,
3. parts which are unilaterally separable, i.e. such, for example, as parts A and B, of which one can, indeed, conceive A without B, but not B without A.\(^{13}\)

Mutually separable parts of the content of representation are, for example, the representation of individual pages and covers of a book, insofar as they are the represented parts of one book. For one can conceive the individual pages independently of one another, i.e. without conceiving the other pages or the covers of the book. Similarly, conceiving the cover is distinct from conceiving the individual pages of the book. A typical example of mutually separable parts of the content of a single representation is that of colour and extension: one cannot conceive colour without conceiving extension and vice versa. Representations of a genus and of a species subordinate to this genus stand in the relation of unilateral separability. For it is impossible to conceive a species without conceiving an appropriate genus. So in the representation of redness there must be a representation of colour, whereas the representation of colour does not of necessity imply the representation of redness.

Twardowski considers also the division based on the possibility or impossibility of separate existence, but he rejects it, since it assumes the existence of the parts of the object, while Twardowski regards objects and their parts as objects or parts of the objects of representation, abstracting from the reality, possibility or impossibility of their existence.\(^{14}\)

We shall attempt to relate the concept of metaphysical part to that of inseparable part. When we say that some part is metaphysical, we de-
fine its relationship to the whole of which it is a part, but we say nothing of its relationship to the other parts of the whole, whereas a part [if inseparable] is inseparable from the other parts of its whole. Moreover, inseparable parts are parts which cannot be conceived in insolation from other parts, while metaphysical parts are parts which cannot exist separately from the whole. The question is, however, whether a given part is metaphysical when it cannot, as a matter of fact, exist separately from the whole, or whether for a given part to be metaphysical it is necessary for it to be inseparable from its whole by its very nature. Husserl resolves this question in reference to dependent parts by accepting the second possibility.

In addition to the already mentioned negative point, still another positive point appears in the definition of metaphysical part, namely, that a metaphysical part can be distinguished within the whole by means of abstraction. But since each part can be distinguished in the whole with the help of abstraction this point appears to be unimportant.

However with respect to the division accepted by Twardowski based on the possibility or impossibility of conceiving something separately, one can observe the same thing as above, namely, that depending on the meaning of the word 'representation' it either does not designate all inseparable parts or it leads to the result that there are no inseparable parts at all.

§ 4 Husserl's Definitions

Husserl took up the problem of independence and dependence in detail in his third Logical Investigation. He encountered the concepts of existential independence and dependence in connection with his deliberations on parts and wholes. For according to Husserl a part of an object is everything that is 'in' a given object, that which a given object really constitutes and of which it is constructed — and what the object is of itself, i.e. in abstraction from all the relationships in which it is enmeshed. But in common parlance the word 'part' is not used in such a broad sense. When we attempt — according to Husserl — to clarify the differences that exist between the common concept of part and the concept defined in his way, we encounter the fundamental difference between independent and dependent parts. When we refer to parts in common speech, existentially independent parts or pieces [Stücke] are
meant, whereas Husserl's concept of part also includes existentially dependent parts or moments. And since each part can become an object (or content)\textsuperscript{17} of the representation directed toward it and itself may be regarded as an object (or content), the differentiation of independent and dependent parts points to a similar differentiation of objects (or contents), where the term 'object' is taken here in the broadest sense. Husserl defines the concepts of existential independence and dependence as follows:

An object is independent which by its nature is not conditioned in its existence by the existence of other objects; it could \textit{a priori}, i.e. by its nature, exist as it is even if nothing else but it existed, or if everything around it were to arbitrarily change. In the "nature" of the independent object, in its ideal essence, there is no dependence on other objects. In reality it can be such that other objects are given along with the existence of this object on the basis of certain empirical laws, but in its essence the object is independent of them.

On the other hand, a dependent object is one which in its essence is conditioned by the existence of other objects, which in its essence cannot exist if, simultaneously, other objects did not co-exist with it, supplementing it. Due to the co-existence with other objects essential to it a dependent object comprises one whole together with them. Hence, a dependent object can only exist as part of a whole.\textsuperscript{18}

\section*{§ 5 Analysis of Husserl's Definition of Dependence in Application to Objects}

Before we undertake analysis of the Husserlian concepts of dependence and independence let us call attention to the fact that it is doubtful whether the division of \textit{parts} into independent and dependent is coterminous with the analogous division of \textit{objects}, as Husserl implicitly supposes. It is very probable that not all objects are part of some whole, where here the term 'object' is understood in its most general sense, as Husserl intended,\textsuperscript{19} while the word 'part' designates actual rather than possible parts.

Let us now examine the Husserlian definitions of the concept of existential dependence, first with respect to the division of parts. This definition does not seem valid to us in all respects, because it is not imperative either (1) that the supplementary object should co-exist alongside the dependent object,\textsuperscript{20} or (2) that the dependent object be part of a
whole, which – in Husserl’s opinion – it is supposed to form together with the objects supplementing it.

Ad (1). It is universally accepted that a relationship is a dependent object with respect to its terms.\(^{21}\) Despite this the existence of a relationship does not perforce require the existence of its terms. If, for example, we consider the following relationship of consequence: ‘If wood is metal, then wood will melt in fire’ – the terms of this relationship are the states of affairs \(\text{[stany rzeczy]}\) indicated by the antecedent and the consequent. The consequential relationship obtaining between these terms exists or obtains despite the fact that they themselves do not exist. Similarly, if the relationship of contradiction exists between states of affairs, then of necessity it is always dependent with respect to the one existing and the one non-existing term – if the principle of the excluded middle and the principle of contradiction are correct. If dependent objects do not require the existence of supplementary objects, then neither do they require anything to exist concomitantly with them. As examples of such objects, in addition to those already mentioned, we can instance certain objects of derelativized concepts, such as cause \(\text{qua cause}\), and effect \(\text{qua effect}\). But these last objects remain in a relationship of \textit{formal} dependence to each other and not – as previously – in a \textit{material} one (see below §10).\(^{22}\)

Ad (2). Also invalid is the assertion that the dependent object can only exist as part of a whole which – in Husserl’s opinion – it is supposed to form together with the objects supplementing it.\(^{23}\) So, for example, the feature of difference of A from B is dependent with respect to both B and A. But despite this the feature of difference inhering in object A does not form any whole with object B.\(^{24}\) Similarly when relationships are dependent with respect to their terms, they do not form wholes with them. But there are also dependent objects which can exist only as parts of a whole. So, e.g. in order to exist, colour requires an inherent subject of which it could be a part. But the dependence of an object requiring a whole is only one kind of dependence of objects.

The above deliberations incline us to the following conclusion: the Husserlian definition of dependence, insofar as it concerns all dependent objects, is too narrow, for there are dependent objects which are not subsumed under this definition. We should then reflect whether Husserl’s definition could be retained in a narrower sense, namely, in reference to parts, whether parts of independent wholes or parts of dependent wholes.
§ 6 Analysis of Husserl's Definitions of Dependence in Application to Parts

Insofar as a part of an independent whole is concerned, it can be dependent only with respect either to the same whole or with respect to another part of the same whole. For if a part of an independent whole could also be dependent with respect to some other object existing beyond this whole, then the whole also would be dependent with respect to it, despite the fact that it is an independent whole.\(^{25}\) It is worth noting here that it is probable that if some part is dependent with respect to its whole then it is dependent with respect to a whole that is directly superordinate for both of these parts,\(^{26}\) but it can be either independent or dependent with respect to any other superordinate whole.

The definition of dependence given by Husserl is also important in reference to parts of independent wholes which are dependent with respect to a given whole as well as in reference to parts of independent wholes that are dependent with respect to other parts of the same wholes. The incorrectness of the second of our criticisms above in reference to the part of an independent whole stems from the fact that complementing this part may be either a whole whose make-up contains this part or some other part of this whole. Neither can we find any example of a part of an independent whole which would not fulfill the conditions enumerated in the definition of dependence given by Husserl. Consequently, both of the criticisms put forth above by us of the Husserlian definition of dependence are unimportant with respect to the parts of independent wholes.

We must still determine whether Husserl's definition is significant for dependent parts of dependent wholes. The matter presents itself differently here to the extent that for dependent parts of independent wholes we had only two possibilities (discussed above), whereas for dependent parts of dependent wholes we have three. For a part of a dependent whole may be dependent (1) with respect to its whole (2) with respect to an object lying beyond this whole (3) with respect to some other part of this whole. In the first two cases the matter presents itself just as above for parts of independent wholes. Husserl's definition — it would seem — is also significant here. Only the third possibility presents a difficulty, but only in a special case, namely, when part c of a dependent whole C is dependent with respect to an object P which lies beyond the whole C and with which C does not form a whole, nor of which is it a
part. In this case we are dealing with the relationship of a dependent object c [the original has ‘c₁’, which seems to be a mistake] to an object P supplementing it; for the fact that c is part of C has no bearing on the matter. But for dependent objects we pointed out that some exist for which Husserl’s definition is not valid. For example, if there were some dependent whole whose part was a relationship that had terms which were not parts of the whole, then this relationship would be dependent with respect to its terms, hence objects lying beyond this whole, and could exist even if its terms did not exist. 27

Summing up then, we can say that the definition of the concept of dependence given by Husserl is valid for dependent parts of dependent wholes in cases (1) and (2), but that in case (3) the definition is sometimes invalid.

§ 7 Analysis of Another Husserlian Definition of Dependence

In Husserl we find still another definition of the concept of dependence. With respect to certain contents, writes Husserl, we have evidence that a change in, or disappearance of, at least one of the contents accompanying them (but not contained in them) must change or abolish them also. With respect to others we lack such evidence. Contents of the first kind can only be conceived as parts of a certain whole embracing them, whereas the second would be possible even if nothing else besides them existed. The first are dependent contents, the second independent ones. 28

In connection with this definition Husserl mentions the analysis of the concept of dependent contents made by Stumpf, with which, after certain modifications, he agrees. We shall once more present it briefly here, but in the form in which it appears after Husserl’s modifications. Thus, a content dependent with respect to another is, for example, colour in relation to extension. In a certain genuine sense we can say that changes of colour are independent [niezależne] of changes in extension, in that colour in specie can remain the same when extension arbitrarily varies. But the colour given in concrete imagination remains in a relationship of functional dependency [zależności] on that extension in that concrete imagination. Colour thus conceived participates in changes of extension. In saying this we express the fact that a colour becomes
smaller, diminishes, and finally completely disappears solely because of
the changes in and disappearance of extension.

It is just as difficult to agree with this analysis as it is with the above
definition of the concept of dependent parts derived from it. The func­
tional relationship between colour and extension here is only superfi­
cial. One can ultimately say that the coloured surface changes along
with the changes in its extension; but the assertion that colour changes
along with changes in extension is completely incomprehensible. The
words ‘smaller’ and ‘larger’ applied to a colour are completely without
sense. Neither can one say that the quality of a tone changes along with
its intensity. The quality of a tone cannot be weaker or stronger. Per­
haps in this as well as in the previous case the point is whether along
with the diminishing of tone or extension the quality of tone or colour is
given to me less clearly, but the point is, in our opinion, unimportant for
quality or colour, since it relates only to a certain relative feature. Fur­
thermore, insofar as insignificant changes in the extension of large sur­
faces are concerned, one cannot speak of different levels of distinctness.
We shall observe, however, that even if the above analyses were valid,
the definition of dependence which we have examined here could not
be maintained. For let us take note of the same example of colour and
extension. Just as colour is dependent in relation to extension, so also
extension, given visually, is dependent in relation to colour. Thus there
should be a functional dependency between extension, given visually,
and colour. With a change of colour from green to yellow, extension
should also become yellow, but this can hardly be said.

In the definition of the concept of dependent contents still another
point was raised. For not only does colour change with changes in ex­
tension, but colour also disappears with the disappearance of extension.
We shall not dwell on this second point any longer, for it was discussed
above. The question involved here is the same as the question whether
the existence of a dependent object also requires the existence of an ob­
ject supplementing it.

§ 8 Analysis of Husserlian Definitions of Independence

Turning to the analysis of the first Husserlian definition of indepen­
dence, we can assert that, just as we rejected above the definition of
dependence in reference to all objects because it was too narrow, so
now we cannot agree with the definition of independence because it is too broad, precisely in reference to those objects for which the definition of dependence is too narrow. For since the concepts of independent and dependent objects are contradictory, so if some dependent objects do not fit the definition of dependence – and such, as we have seen, do exist – they must fit the definition of independence. But the definition is valid in a certain narrower range, namely, in the same one in which the Husserlian definition of dependence is significant.

But regarding the second definition of independence, according to which those objects are independent for which we lack evidence that a change in or the disappearance of at least one of the objects given along with them must change or annul them, this is also too broad. We gave examples above of dependent objects which fitted this definition of independence.

§ 9 An Attempt to Define Dependence and Independence

The attempts to define independence and dependence which we have discussed were of two kinds: (1) psychological, (2) ontological. The former defined independence or dependence with respect to the possibility or impossibility of separate presentation, and the latter with respect either to the possibility or impossibility of separate existence or to dependence on changes. Psychological attempts, as we have seen, encounter the following difficulty: that if the word ‘representation’ also included concepts, then there would be no dependent objects at all, but if it were to designate only ideas, then the division of objects into independent and dependent would be a valid division only for imaginable objects. But as far as ontological attempts are concerned, the definition of independence derived from the division based on the possibility or impossibility of separate existence turned out to be too broad (for it also included certain dependent objects like relations, states of affairs, etc.), whereas the definition of dependence was too narrow. And finally, with respect to the division based on dependence on or independence of changes we attempted to show that it cannot be maintained.

Hence, we shall now attempt to present a definition of independence and dependence which would be free of the above defects. We shall not attempt to define these concepts psychologically, i.e. by means of their relationship to psychic life, but we shall attempt to confine our defini-
tions to the ontological sphere. Following the example of Stumpf, Höf­
ler, and Husserl in our definitions we shall also use the expression that
something is necessary ‘from the nature of a given object’, for we wish
to stress that the relations we are discussing, e.g. the relations of depen­
dence holding between colour and extension, between a relation and its
terms not only occur in reality, e.g. the relation between cause and ef­
fect, but also some other new factor appears along with them which is
very difficult to define, but which we cannot ignore without violating
our intentions. Later on in our definitions we shall encounter the con­
cepts of state of affairs and subject of the state of affairs which we shall
not further analyze here.

In speaking of independence and dependence one should distinguish
relative and absolute independence and dependence. Let us begin
with the first. We state:

Object $P_1$ is independent with respect to object $P_2$ if for the existence or occur­
rence of $P_1$, $P_1$ by nature does not require the occurrence of any state of affairs
in which $P_2$ is the subject. \( ^{30} \) (besides the state of affairs that $P_2$ does not have to
be the subject of states of affairs required for $P_1$ to exist or occur as well as all
equivalent states of affairs in which $P_2$ is the subject.)

But object $Q_1$ is dependent with respect to object $Q_2$ if for the existence or
occurrence of $Q_1$ the occurrence of some state of affairs in which $Q_2$ is the sub­
ject is necessary.

On the basis of the above definitions one can easily formulate defini­
tions of absolute independence and dependence, according to which:

Object $P$ is independent if, by nature, its existence or occurrence does not re­
quire the occurrence of any state of affairs in which some other object not en­
tering the make-up of object $P$ is the subject.

Object $Q$ is dependent if, by its nature, its existence or occurrence does re­
quire the occurrence of some state of affairs in which some other object not
entering the make-up of object $Q$ is the subject. \( ^{31} \)

With regard to which states of affairs are required for the existence or
occurrence of a dependent object (both in the relative as well as the ab­
solute sense) one can distinguish various kinds of dependence. ‘$Q$ is de­
pendent’ may mean either that (1) $Q$ for its existence or occurrence re­
quires by its nature the occurrence of such a state of affairs that some
other object exist simultaneously along with it; (this is the kind of de­
pendence meant in the statement ‘colour is dependent with respect to...
extension', and this is the kind of dependence Husserl has in mind), or that (2) Q for its existence or occurrence by its nature requires the occurrence of such a state of affairs that some object has such and not other qualities, or that it has such and not another nature (e.g. the relation of difference subsisting between a plant and an animal, which is dependent with respect to its terms, requires that the plant possess certain features which the animal does not have and vice versa).32 Certain kinds of independence are coupled with the appropriate kinds of dependence. It is probable that one kind of independence or dependence is always vested in objects that belong to one category. So, e.g. the first kind of dependence is always vested in dependent parts of independent wholes. This fact could have some importance in establishing a criterion of independence and dependence.

§ 10 Possible Classifications of Dependence and Independence

Let us now reflect on a certain distinction in the realm of the concepts of independence and dependence, which we already discussed previously (§ 5). We say, for example, that part c is dependent with respect to the whole. This statement is ambiguous. For it may mean either that part c as a part of precisely this whole is dependent with respect to it; in this sense every part is dependent with respect to its whole; or it may mean that part c is dependent with respect to the whole not as a part of this whole, but as an object with such and not other features or such and not another nature. In this sense parts can be either independent or dependent with respect to the whole. Dependence in the first sense we call formal dependence, but dependence in the second sense, material or objective dependence.33 We can similarly distinguish formal and material independence. We can speak of formal and material dependence not only with reference to parts and wholes, but also beyond this. For example, all objects of derelativized concepts remain in a relation of mutual formal dependence. Persons who are parents are only dependent parents with respect to their own children and vice versa; a change, which is the effect of some cause, is consequently dependent with respect to this cause; a man who is a serf is dependent as a serf with respect to his master, etc.34 The dependence in these examples is formal dependence. For some object to be formally dependent with respect to another it is not sufficient for it to possess certain features in relation to
it. The fact that A is e.g. similar to B does not yet imply that it is formally dependent with respect to B. In defining formal dependence we shall be concerned with enumerating the conditions which an object must meet in order to belong to a certain class, but in defining material dependence we were concerned with listing the conditions which must be met for an object to exist or occur. The objects which we have discussed above as formally dependent are materially independent. Formal dependence and independence we could attempt to define as follows:

Object $Q_1$ as belonging to class $K$ is formally dependent with respect to object $Q_2$ if for $Q_1$ to belong to class $K$ the occurrence of some state of affairs in which $Q_2$ is the subject is required.

But object $P_1$ belonging to class $K$ is formally independent with respect to object $P_2$ if for $P_1$ to belong to class $K$ the occurrence of a state of affairs in which $P_2$ is the subject is not required.

Another division of independence and dependence is the division into absolute and relative independence and dependence. The pertinent definitions were formulated above in § 9. These concepts can be mutually related in the following way: (a) Object A, dependent with respect to B, is also absolutely dependent. (b) Object A, independent with respect to B, can be either absolutely independent or absolutely dependent, (c) Object A absolutely independent must also be independent with respect to any B whatever.

In speaking of the divisions of independence and dependence one should note that objects which stand in relations of independence and dependence to each other can be divided into pairs of objects (1) unilaterally independent or dependent, (2) mutually independent, and (3) mutually dependent.

Ad (1). Objects A, B are unilaterally independent if A is independent with respect to B while B is dependent with respect to A, or conversely.

Ad (2). Objects A, B are mutually independent if A is independent with respect to B and B is independent with respect to A.

Ad (3). Objects A, B are mutually dependent if A is dependent with respect to B and B is dependent with respect to A.

Substituting for the expression 'A is independent (or dependent) with respect to B' our definition of relative independence (or dependence) we say:

Ad (1). Objects A, B are unilaterally independent if for the existence
of e.g. A, by its nature there is not required the occurrence of any state of affairs in which B is the subject, but for the existence of B, by its nature there is required the occurrence of some state of affairs in which A is the subject. And so forth.

§ 11 Elements of the Relation of Dependence

In our deliberations up to now we have spoken of objects between which independence or dependence holds. Now we shall examine the terms of the relation of dependence. We say, for example, that extension is dependent with respect to colour or the pitch of a tone with respect to its intensity. These statements are ambiguous. For instance let us note a specific concrete red colour of a given book-cover. In this colour is found a certain concrete factor independent with respect to this redness due to which this specific colour belongs to the category of colour. This factor is colouredness (being-coloured). It is the same (or not the same) in redness, greenness, and in all other shades of colour. It must be distinguished from the object of the content of general colour, i.e. colour in specie which — as some assert — is only one and does not really exist. All of these shades of colour are dependent with respect to this factor of colouredness. Factors similar to colouredness are found in a specific extension, pitch of tone etc., but we do not have separate names for them. We shall call them extension and pitch in contrast to a specific extension, specific pitch, etc. So the statement that extension is dependent with respect to colour can mean (1) that extension is dependent with respect to colouredness, or (2) that a specific extension is dependent with respect to colouredness, or (3) that extension in specie is dependent with respect to colour in specie. We shall not examine the third case more closely, for it would be difficult to say anything well-founded. As far as the first possibility is concerned it should be stated that it does in fact occur. Indeed, extension is dependent with respect to colouredness. It could not exist if colouredness did not exist also. But the matter is rather different in the second case. A specific extension is not dependent with respect to a specific colour. The specific extension of a brown board could also exist if the brown colour of the board did not exist, e.g. if we were to paint the board green. The extension of the board would then remain precisely the same. Thus, if it is indeed true that the same specific extension can be joined with various colours,
then it does not require the same thing by nature of a specific colour, i.e. it is not dependent with respect to a certain colour. Thus the question is in which sense one should take the word 'colour' in order to be able to state that a specific extension is dependent with respect to colour. In our opinion a specific extension requires for its existence not the existence of a specific colour, but the existence of any concrete colour whatsoever, any element whatsoever from the spectrum of the concept of specific colour.\textsuperscript{41}

The question of the dependence of a relation with respect to its terms presents itself otherwise than with colour and extension. A definite relation obtaining between A and B is dependent with respect to A and B and thus with respect to its definite concrete terms. Thus it does not require just any terms whatsoever, in the way a definite extension requires just any sort of colour. If the terms were not A and B but some other terms C and D, then we would not be dealing with the same relation but with some other one.\textsuperscript{42} In all of the other cases distinguished above the question for relations is the same as for extension, pitch of tone, etc.

\section*{§ 12 Conclusion}

After determining the definitions of the concepts of independence and dependence it will be interesting to turn our attention to the application which these concepts find in the most diverse areas of inquiry. The most widespread is the application of the concept of dependence to the area of sense contents. So, for example, we encounter the relation of dependence between colour, extension and shape in the visual sphere, between the elements of a tone, that is, between its quality, pitch and intensity in the aural sphere, between roughness and a certain degree of hardness in the tactile sphere, etc. The concept of dependence has wide application in the psychic realm. A characteristic example of dependence which we find in this sphere is the dependence of certain psychic facts with respect to their psychological foundation. We also find the application of the concepts of independence and dependence in the area of meanings, e.g. in the case of distinguishing categorematic and syncategorematic words. Husserl devoted a separate work to these problems,\textsuperscript{43} where he based his science of semantic categories on the distinction between dependent and independent meanings. Further
areas of the application of the concept of dependence are found in the mutual relation between acts and products, features and the object in which a feature inheres, ‘derelativized’ objects, in the theory of objects of a higher order, etc.

The possibility of applying this concept in various fields of inquiry indicates that it is a concept that does not lack scientific importance and is therefore worthy of detailed analysis.

Notes

(For biographical and bibliographical information, we are indebted to the chief librarian of the University Library, Łódź, Dr Bolesław Świderski.)

1 E. Husserl, 1922, p. 262 f.
2 See E. Ginsberg, 1929. In this paper we tried to show that of the six theses put forward by Husserl and supposedly having the character of deductively proven assertions, four are either wrongly formulated or have invalid proofs.
3 C. Stumpf, 1873, § 5, p. 106 ff.
4 The distinction between contents which can be separately represented and those which cannot be separately represented is already found in Berkeley's *Treatise*. Indeed the concept of existential independence in a similar sense is used by Descartes and Spinoza in their definitions of substance, and they in turn derived them from still earlier thinkers.

5 Whether Stumpf would also accept the contrary, that changes of colour result in changes of extension is not clear from the text. Evidence that Stumpf would also accept this relationship in the opposite direction seems to be implied in the following: “Hieraus nun [namely from the relationship of extension and colour characterized above in the text] folgt, daß beide ihrer Natur nach untrennbar sind…” (loc. cit., p. 113). If only colour were in its changes dependent on extension, one could not conclude that both are by nature inseparable from each other, but only that colour is inseparable from extension.

6 A. Höfler, 1890, § 15.

7 In characterizing contents which we have called dependent Höfler further alludes to the dependence of changes of one quality or feature on the changes of the other qualities or features, but he does not go into the matter in more detail. This point as well as the division of contents based on the possibility or impossibility of their separate representation is common to both Höfler and Stumpf. A new element in Höfler in comparison with Stumpf is the division based on the possibility or impossibility of separate existence.

8 While for Höfler the evidence of experiences confirms dependence and independence, the corresponding point in Stumpf and Husserl is the nature of the contents or objects, from which dependence and independence derive. Thus while Höfler looks at the matter more from a psychological angle, Stumpf and Husserl treat it more ontologically.

9 A. Höfler, 1922, p. 121 f.
10 K. Twardowski, 1894, Ch. 9–11.
12 See Loc. cit., p. 58. Twardowski points out that the word ‘Eigenschaft’, and words which denote qualities, like ‘redness’, ‘foursidedness’ etc., are ambiguous. For sometimes they denote metaphysical parts possessed by the object, while at others they denote the relation of possession obtaining between an object and any of its parts. Later Meinong called attention to a similar ambiguity (1910, p. 57). He writes that by ‘blackness’ [Schwarze] or ‘difference’ [Verschiedenheit] is understood either the feature ‘black’ [das Schwarze] or ‘different’ [das Verschiedene] or else its position in a certain object, in virtue of whose possession it is black or different, i.e. the objective: being a black (or different) object.

13 Loc. cit., p. 65. As we can see, unilaterally inseparable parts are not considered in this division. The reason for this probably lies in the fact that the extension of the concept of unilaterally separable part is identical with the extension of the concept of unilaterally inseparable part. If parts A and B are unilaterally inseparable, then they are also unilaterally separable and vice versa. The terms ‘unilateral’ and ‘mutual separateness’ as well as ‘mutual inseparability’ come from Brentano, 1889. See Twardowski, loc. cit., p. 65.

14 Loc. cit., p. 51.

15 Husserl 1922.

16 Loc. cit., p. 228.

17 The word ‘content’ is here used by Husserl in a broad sense, embracing all individual objects and their parts (1922, p. 219). In this entire work Husserl uses the terms ‘content’ and ‘object’ interchangeably, whereas we retain the second term for this meaning. Concerning various meanings of the word ‘content’ in Husserl see R. Ingarden, 1928, p. 44ff.

18 Loc. cit., p. 236. In addition to the above definitions of the concepts of existential dependence and independence we also encounter certain others in Husserl, which are generalizations of Stumpf’s analyses and about which we shall speak later in § 7. Pfänder (in his 1921, p. 307) accepted Husserl’s definitions of independence and dependence. For Husserl and some other authors the starting point for the differentiation of the concepts of independence and dependence is the relation of part to whole. This differentiation can also be approached not only from the side of formal-ontological problems, but also from the side of existential-ontological problems, e.g. through distinguishing various meanings of the word ‘existence’. Of course, this kind of analysis can be carried out only by someone who adopts a position which recognizes various kinds of existence. R. Ingarden takes up the problem of independence and dependence from this point of view in his 1929. There he distinguishes four pairs of contradictories:

(1) existential autonomy and heteronomy [Seinsautonomie, -heteronomie]

(2) existential originality and derivation [Seinsursprünglichkeit, -abgeleitetheit]

(3) existential self-sufficiency and non-self-sufficiency [Seinselbständigkeit, -unselbständigkeit]

(4) existential independence and dependence [Seinsunabhängigkeit, -abhängigkeit]

[See editorial note preceding this essay.]

19 This most general concept of object in modern philosophy is encountered in Twardowski (1894, §§ 5, 7), then in Meinong, 1904, for whom this concept is basic for his theory of objects.

20 We call P a ‘supplementary object’ to object A if A is dependent with respect to P. E.g. we read in Meinong (1899, GA II, p. 386) ‘There are objects of which we can say that they have by nature an inner dependence [Unselbständigkeit]. I do not mean that dependence of occurrence whereby for instance a colour cannot be presented without an extension ... one can still call this [dependence] external by comparison with what I should like to call unfinishedness [Unferingigkeit], which attends e.g. the object ‘different...
ence’, when one tries to isolate it from that which is different.’ See also Erdmann (1892, p. 57): ‘Processes and relations are, as against things with properties, only dependently *unselbstständig* real’ (in the second edition the corresponding paragraph does not reveal the author’s position so clearly) and Pfänder (1921, p. 307): ‘The objects meant by concepts can be independent *selbständige* things or ... dependent *unselbständige* relations.’

It might be argued that the above criticism does not concern Husserl, since Husserl in his definition used the concept of existence in such a broad sense that he would have regarded both the above states of affairs and both terms of the relationship of contradiction as existing objects. If this interpretation of Husserl is correct, which is doubtful, then the above criticism would have to be regarded not as immanent but as transcendent, i.e. as carried out from a position which does not attribute existence to such objects.

To be sure, in the place cited above there was only mention that a dependent object is something which is one with the objects supplementing it, not that it forms a whole with them; but we may express it in this way, since in another place Husserl writes *(loc. cit., p. 240)*: ‘Dependent objects are objects of a pure species with respect to which there is an essential law that if they exist at all, they do so only as parts of more comprehensive wholes of a certain accompanying species.’

The above criticism, which uses an argument taken from the realm of relative characteristics, is also not an immanent criticism, since Husserl deliberately takes only absolute characteristics into account in his analyses.

See Husserl’s first Proposition, *(loc. cit., p. 264)*.

See Proposition 6a of my 1929, p. 12.

If one were to assume with Meinong that psychic facts are dependent with respect to their objects, then an example would be easy to formulate. For suppose we take e.g. perceptive imagination (c) which is part of perception, i.e. the dependent whole (C). This representation is dependent with respect to its intentional object lying beyond C. In this case both of our criticisms again become valid. First, perceptive imagination does not form any whole with its intentional object, and second, the existence of the intentional object is not required for its own existence (e.g. in the case of hallucination).

We find this distinction in Husserl, *(loc. cit., p. 257)*. Our definitions of absolute independence and dependence are closer to Husserl’s definitions than our definitions of relative independence and dependence.

Since a correct judgment or true statement corresponds to each occurring state of affairs, one might in defining independence and dependence speak of the existence of a true statement instead of the occurrence of a state of affairs, and instead of an object which was the subject of a state of affairs, one could speak of the concept or name of this object.

Following the position which accepts the most general concept of the object (Twardowski, Meinong) one could try to define independence and dependence in yet another way. According to this definition an object is independent if by nature its existence or occurrence does not require some X to be an object. An object is dependent if by nature its existence or occurrence does require some X to be an object. Relative independence or dependence could be defined in a similar way. But we believe that the definitions given in the text are more fruitful. — If non-existing objects are also independent and dependent, then we can define their independence and dependence as follows: P is independent if for P to be an object it is by nature unnecessary for a state of affairs to occur in which some other object not part of the make-up of P is the subject. We can define dependence similarly.
According to the definition of dependence which we gave above, every object dependent with respect to some object requires for its existence the occurrence of a particular state of affairs in which this object is the subject and, hence, is derivatively dependent with respect to this state of affairs, in both this sense and the former sense.

Pfänder's distinction between factual independence and dependence, and the independence and dependence attributed to objects due to certain thought forms (loc. cit., p. 307f.) should not be confused with our distinction between formal, and material or factual, independence and dependence.

Husserl (loc. cit., p. 253) also gives this type of example, but he does not further deal with them, since he devotes his remarks to material dependence.

For object A, independent with respect to B, can be dependent with respect to C, and so absolutely dependent, or else independent with respect not only to B but also to every other object, hence absolutely independent.


One should point out that the words 'independence' and 'dependence' at one time serve to designate a relation, and at another, to designate the relative characteristics built into this relation. However, this ambiguity is not harmful, since nearly everything we have said here about independence and dependence is equally valid in respect of meaning for both relations and relative characteristics.

But this factor is dependent with respect to any concrete colour whatsoever, i.e. must stem from redness or greenness, etc., hence it is absolutely dependent.

Yet further combinations are possible. We shall mention some of them later, whereas other absurd ones do not interest us.

Here we may be permitted to speak of dependence as a requirement of existence, since for dependent parts of independent wholes we have accepted Husserl's definition.

In addition to these possibilities — as we have mentioned — there can be still others, so e.g. a specific extension is dependent with respect to colouredness but already in a derivative sense. For a specific extension is dependent with respect to extension, while extension is dependent with respect to colouredness and, therefore, by transitivity, a specific extension is dependent with respect to colouredness. Extension is dependent with respect to any specific colour in a similarly derivative fashion. For extension requires colouredness, and this any particular colour, and so on.

We take a position here according to which the terms are the principium individuationis of relations.

Loc. cit., Treatise IV.

See Twardowski 1911.

Recently Roman Ingarden used this concept to explain the successive ‘unfolding’ of the parts of a literary work (1931, p. 321ff.)

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