Chapter 5

Two Models of Foundation in the Logical Investigations

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A proper comprehension of the notion of "foundation" is crucial, among other things, for an understanding of Husserl's theory of intersubjectivity, his analyses of the relationship between body and mind, his determination of the relationship between nature and our everyday surroundings (Umwelt), and his theory of meaning and language. For example, with regard to Husserl's treatment of intersubjectivity, commentators and critics have observed that Husserl's theory is decisively shaped by the thesis that our experience of "others" as subjects is founded upon our experience of them as physical objects, i.e., by his attempt to anchor intersubjective experience in sense experience; or alternatively, with regard to his theories of mind and language, how his theory is based upon a positing of independent objects such as minds or ideal entities such as meanings without seeing how these are only abstractions from the concreta that are presented to us in experience, i.e., human beings or actual human language. In all of these cases, the way that one interprets the question of what is fundamental and the role that Husserl assigns to this question is decisive for a correct interpretation and evaluation of Husserl's position on the issues involved.

In this paper, I examine Husserl's Logical Investigations— with a special emphasis upon the Third and the Sixth Investigations—in order to see exactly how Husserl introduces and employs the notion of "foundation" (Fundierung) in this work. The thesis that will emerge is that there are two closely related yet distinct models of the relationship of "foundation" at work in the LI and that Husserl himself fails

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1All quotations will be taken from the Findlay translation of the 1913 edition of the Logical Investigations (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1970). Citations will be listed by volume number (roman numeral), followed by page number; the translation of some passages has been slightly revised.
to identify the difference between them clearly. The first of these can be called the “ontological model of foundation” and the second might well be termed “epistemological foundation model.” The former is prominent in the Third Investigation; the latter is developed above all in the Sixth Investigation. For Husserl the two notions not only share a common general meaning, but in many of the examples he uses in the Logical Investigations are also taken to coincide in their extension. Thus the question of foundation is reduced to the question of the most primitive components of acts of consciousness and these components are taken to be those which are identified in the direct sense perception of individual objects. I will argue that the identification of the two models of foundational relationships is not phenomenologically justified; and in closing I will suggest in a general way why one must avoid the identification of the two in order understand better just what Husserl is and is not claiming in many of his statements concerning what is fundamental in the regions of language and of persons.

Accordingly, the paper is divided into four sections. In the first section, I sketch out the model of “ontological” foundation as I see it employed in the Third Logical Investigation. The second section examines the model of foundation developed in the Sixth Investigation, i.e., the model I call the “epistemological model.” In the third section I suggest why Husserl might have failed to distinguish the two clearly enough at this stage of his thinking; and in the final section, I suggest how a more careful distinction between the two models might have allowed Husserl to develop certain insights into the nature of language and other persons more fully and, perhaps more importantly

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2 An important essay on different senses in which the notion of foundation is employed in the later Husserl to address the problem of the relationship between transcendentality and the empirical subject of knowledge has been published by José Huertas-Jourdan, “On the Two Foundations of Knowledge According to Husserl” in Essays in Honor of Aron Gurwitsch, ed. Lester Embree (Washington D.C.: Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology and University Press of America, 1984.) The question of foundation as the “occasion” of knowledge (the question of fact) may be seen as closely related to the notion of what is called the “ontological interpretation of foundation” in the present essay; the question concerning the de jure foundation of knowledge does not correspond closely to either of the two senses of foundation described here, but comes closer to the question of begründung mentioned in Footnote 1.

3 This is not to suggest that for Husserl ontology and epistemology are not essentially related disciplines, but rather just that the predominant approach towards resolving certain philosophical problems in the Logical Investigations is in the one case oriented rather straightforwardly upon and their essential relationships to each other and in the other upon the way that these objects constitute themselves for (or equivalently, are constituted by) consciousness. Which of these approaches predominates is important, I will argue, since the difference in the two approaches can lead to a difference in what it means to be fundamental and thus in the kinds of things that end up being accepted as such.
for us, can help interpreters place these insights into the proper perspective.

I.

In the Third Logical Investigation, the notion of "Fundierung," translated here as "foundation," along with verb form "fundieren" (to found) and the participial "fundierend" (founding) and "fundiert" (founded), is used to describe the difference between independent and dependent objects ("selbständige und unselbständige Gegenstände") or, equivalently, concrete and abstract contents ("konkrete und abstrakte Inhalte"). Put rather simply, the difference consists in the fact that the latter can exist only as parts (more specifically as moments) of the former: "In order to pin down the concept of non-independence, it is enough to say that a non-independent object can only be what it is (i.e., what it is in virtue of its essential properties) in a more comprehensive whole." (II, 453) Dependent objects and abstract contents are thus said

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4. There is an important difference between "Fundierung" and Husserl's most common use of the term "Fundament," which would also normally be translated into the English as "foundation." "Fundament" is used for example on II, 493 and on II, 523 in a Cartesian sense, according to which universal principles or essential laws may be used as explanatory principles from which specific cases may be derived. Cf. also the similar use of the German term "begründen" (and "gründen") e.g., II, 447 and 455, where it also refers to the logical foundation of the particular in a general principle. It is interesting to note that under the general rubric of "foundationalism" part of what is often understood is the belief that there is a closed system of basic principles from which many or all particular phenomena can or should be derived and that Husserl's use of "Fundament," "Begründung," and related terms would be especially relevant in this respect; yet that another sense of foundationalism is the belief that there is some originary given that can serve as the absolute starting point for knowledge. For the latter problem, Husserl's use of the term "Fundierung" (and in particular his theory of epistemological foundation) is more important than his use of the term "Fundament."

5. Cf. II, 436 concerning the equivalence of the two sets of terms; also in the Second Investigation §40-41.

6. A brief immediate history of the notion of existential dependence as received by Husserl is given by Eugenio Ginesberg, "On the Concepts of Existential Dependence and Independence" in Parts and Moments, Studies in Logic and Formal Ontology, ed. Barry Smith (Munich/Vienna: Philosophia Verlag, 1982). This article is a translation from the Polish version from 1959; the volume in which it is included contains a number of articles that deal with the parts/whole problem and the Husserlian treatment of it.

Discussions of the theory of parts and wholes in the Logical Investigations can also be found in Robert Sokolowski, "The Logic of Parts and Whole in Husserl's Investigations," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research (1967-68): 537-553, which also contains a brief reference to foundational relationships, and in his Husserlian Meditations (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), esp. pp. 8-17, where he indicates the importance of the relationship between parts and
to be “founded in” independent objects or concrete contents. Correspondingly then, independent objects or concrete contents are said to stand in a “founding” relationship to the dependent objects and abstract contents that they underlie.

This relationship, Husserl emphasizes, is not primarily a logical relationship and certainly not a psychological relationship that obtains between thoughts. Rather, laws concerning foundational relationships as discussed in the Third Investigation deal with the relationship between the possibility of one kind of object and its existence, with regard to the existence of another object of a specific kind:

Differences such as this, that one object ... can be ‘in and for itself’, while another can only be in or attached to some other, are not due to the facticities of our subjective thinking. They are real differences, grounded in the pure essence of things, which, since they obtain and we know of them, compel us to the statement: any thinking that deviates from them is impossible, i.e., a judgment which deviates from them is wrong (II, 444).

The laws concerning these relationships express an objective necessity inherent in what Husserl calls “the universal, ontological difference between abstract and concrete contents, or, as we deliberately called them above, independent and non-independent contents” (II, 452). Lawlike relationships of “foundation” expressed in terms of the relationship between wholes and parts then can best be spoken of as “ontological principles” and the relations they govern as relationships of “ontological foundation.”

What does it mean to say that one object is “founded in” another? Husserl answers:

wholes, and in particular the importance of the distinction between dependent and independent objects for Husserl’s entire philosophical project. Other essays on the relationship of parts and wholes in Husserl include Dallas Willard, “Wholes, Parts and the Objectivity of Knowledge” and Peter M. Simons, “The Formalisation of Husserl’s Theory of Wholes and Parts,” both of which are contained in the collection of essays on parts and moments edited by Barry Smith. Barry Smith emphasizes the importance of the notion of foundation for Husserl in the Logical Investigations and identifies Stumpf as an influence on Husserl’s thinking in this respect. See Smith, “Ontologische Aspekte der Husserlschen Phänomenologie,” Husserl Studies 3 (1986): 115-130.

7 In this paper, I will be concentrating on one-sided (as opposed to mutual) foundational relationships because priority is established only in them. (Cf., on the difference between them II/1, 205). Mutually foundational relationships, it should be noted, must themselves be founded in some comprehensive whole (261), in which both terms are one-sidedly founded. A fruitful employment of the distinction between mutual and one-sided foundation in Husserl can be found in Gian-Carlo Rota, “Husserl’s Third Logical Investigation: A Contemporary Reading” (invited address delivered at the 1989 Meeting of the Husserl-Circle).

8 On pp. 452-53 Husserl refers three times to the difference as “ontological.”
Definitions. If, according to an essential law, an $\alpha$ as such can exist only in a comprehensive unity, which ties it to a $\mu$, then we say that an $\alpha$ as such requires foundation through a $\mu$, or also that an $\alpha$ as such requires supplementation through a $\mu$. If accordingly $\alpha$, $\mu$, are actualized in a single whole and specific instances of the pure kinds $\alpha$ or $\mu$, which stand in the relationship just mentioned, we say that $\alpha$ is founded upon $\mu$, and that it is exclusively founded on $\mu$, if $\alpha$'s need for supplementation is satisfied by $\mu$ alone. . . . The indefinite expressions: $\alpha$, requires supplementation by, is founded upon a certain moment, plainly means the same as the expression: "$\alpha$ is non-independent." (II, 463).

A more concise definition specifically directed to the notion of foundation is the following: "A content of the species $\alpha$ is founded upon a content of the species $\beta$ if an $\alpha$ cannot by its essence (i.e., by law, in virtue of its specific nature) exist unless a $\beta$ also exists . . ." (II, 475). In view of the context of the part/whole relationship this definition makes clear that what is primary is the inclusive unity, the independent object in which the dependent objects exist only as moments. The issue is the ontological location of something in itself or in something else. Thus, for instance, redness as an object can exist only in some other physical object of which it is a quality. Both redness and spheres (as one example of a kind of physical object) would be genuine objects for Husserl, but redness is a dependent object which must be founded in some object such as a sphere. Since it cannot exist by itself without being founded in some other object, it is by nature an abstractum.

Taken in this context, the distinction aimed at is what traditionally has been described in terms of substances and their properties; certain kinds of things are capable of independent existence as substances, others depend for their existence upon instantiation in some substance.

"Since an abstract part also is abstract in relation to each more comprehensive whole and, in general, to any range of objects that comprehend this whole, what is abstract, relatively considered, is eo ipso abstract when considered absolutely . . . An abstract object simpliciter is an object in relation to which there is a whole with regard to which it is a dependent part" (II, 468).

In his essay "Parts of a Theory," op. cit., Barry Smith traces the historical development of the theory of parts and wholes and locates the late 19th century discussion of it in the succession to Aristotle’s theory of substance and properties (pp. 15-25). He stresses the importance of Husserl’s contribution to a theory of wholes and parts and claims that his work progresses beyond traditional mereology and represents "the single most important contribution to realist (Aristotelian) ontology in the modern period" (p. 37).

By emphasizing the ontological side of Husserl’s theory and stressing its most formal formulations in terms of dependency relationships, Smith is able to draw out a number of far-reaching and important consequences of Husserl’s theory in the Third Investigation, showing it to have implications far beyond the
Concrete contents are what have traditionally been called substances; abstract contents correspond more or less to properties—"more or less" because the notions of concrete and abstract as well as of dependent and independent, and thus the notion of foundation are "relative concepts." For instance, brightness can be said to be founded in some color; relative to brightness then, color is an independent object upon which brightness as a dependent object is founded.\(^{11}\) Husserl's conviction, one recalls, is that underlying all such dependency or foundational relationships, there are a priori laws specifying just what sorts of objects can exist independently and which can exist only as founded in other objects, and moreover specifying just what types of objects each of those dependent objects can or must be founded in.\(^{12}\) Without pursuing the question of

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\(^{11}\) Regarding dependent and independent as relative concepts, see II/1, 256ff.

\(^{12}\) II, 480: "A founded content, however, depends on the specific 'nature' of its founding contents; there is a pure law which renders the genus of the founded content dependent upon the indicated genera of the founding contents. A whole in the full and proper sense is, in general, a combination determined by the lowest genera of 'parts' in a specific context. For material unity there is a law. The
how Husserl proposed to identify and systematically classify these laws as part of a pure ontology, and in particular without pursuing the point of how Husserl conceived of “material a priori laws” as part of a universal ontology of nature, we can nonetheless ascertain that for Husserl there are a priori laws governing just what kinds of things are ontologically prior to others, in the sense of being those which are capable of founding other things of a certain kind, and that these things are taken to be the unifying wholes of which the founded things are “parts” in the broadest sense of the word.

The notion of “ontological foundation” as developed in the Third Investigation then grants a primacy to those things traditionally referred to as substances, to actually and independently existing unifying wholes over their constituent parts. To say that something is “ontologically prior” in the sense of “ontologically fundamental” ("fundierend" as opposed to "fundiert") means that its existence is what makes possible the existence of the other thing or things which exist only through or rather in it.

Before proceeding to the notion of foundation as developed in the Sixth Logical Investigation, two examples of ontological foundation from the Third Investigation deserve note, for each of them bears directly on the particular problems for which the question of foundation is crucial, and each of them will present problems for the identification of the ontological and epistemological models of foundation. The first concerns human beings as wholes with various kinds of parts: “A hand, e.g., forms part of a person in a way that is quite different from the way that the color of the person’s hand, the entire extension of the body, the mental acts, and also the internal moments of these phenomena do” (II, 465-66). The second concerns judgments: “The character of being a judgment is one-sidedly founded in the representations that underlie it, since these do not have to function as foundations for judgments” (II, 466).

Regarding the first example, a number of things are significant. First of all, not only are “moments” (the color of one’s hand) included in the discussion, but “pieces” such as a person’s hand as well. Although it is clear that the whole is also dependent for its existence upon the parts, Husserl does not view this as a symmetrical dependence, but grants priority to the whole over the dependent parts that constitute it. What is even more important about this example, however, is that Husserl does not say that the body is ontologically prior but rather the entire human being, encompassing body (hand, the extension of the different genera of wholes are determined by different laws, in other words, according to different genera of contents that are supposed to function as parts.”
body) and mind (psychic acts). According to this admittedly incidental statement, the extension of the body and parts of the body are abstractions from this one unified entity, human being, just as its mental states are. The most fundamental unity is the entire human being, not the body as a strictly physical object upon which all other characteristics of a human being, in particular his or her mental states, are founded. One might respond that by “human being” Husserl means a particular kind of physical object here, but then it is not clear how mental states are to be attributed to a strictly physical object; to this subject, however, we will return later.

The most important point, however, is the following. In this example, as well as in the ones which precede it, the founding entity is that which is concrete and thus more complex; the founded entity is only one moment or aspect of it, since it is abstract. What is foundational is the concrete, which is complex; what is founded is the abstract, which is simple. This model for foundation thus emphasizes the dependency of the abstract or simple for its existence upon the concrete, which in each case will be more complex. The ontological model thus grants a priority to the concrete over the abstract, and thereby implicitly also to the complex whole over its relatively simple moments.

The second case is more ambiguous. What is clear is that an “Urteilscharakter” is not an independent object, but rather must be contained in some other kind of act, an act that in general has the character of representing. If we take the representational act to which Husserl here refers to be the entire act, of which the act of assenting, “the entire judgmental character” is only one aspect or moment, then this passage can easily be accommodated into the ontological notion of foundation outlined above. Unfortunately, however, this does not seem to be what Husserl has in mind here, for he speaks of the representations as “underlying” the judgment and as being able to exist without it. This seems to suggest that representation is a specific and separate kind of act to which the act of assent may be added, but which does not depend upon the assent involved in a judgment to be the kind of act it is. Perhaps what Husserl is saying here is simply that the character of judgment is an accidental characteristic of this kind of act as a representational act, just as being dark-haired is an accidental characteristic of a human being, so that judging is not essential to the representational act in the same way that being dark-haired is not essential to being a human being. But even so, this kind of reasoning seems to derive from a different set of questions than those that are the predominant issue in the Third Investigation. For interpreted this way, the question whether something is fundamental turns less on the
question of whether something (e.g., judgmental character) is capable of existing on its own or must be founded in some other type of entity (mental acts in general or representational acts in particular) in order to exist, but whether it is possible to have a representational act without a judgmental character. If the answer is yes, and this is the answer that Brentano had given, then it turns out that what is foundational will be relatively simple over against the more complex act of judgment in which a judgmental character or component will be found. It will be inconceivable to imagine the one complex entity (the judgment) not implicitly involving the other more simple entity (the representation), but the converse possibility is conceivable. If this is so, then the model has changed from the complex concretum as the founding and the simple abstractum as the founded, to a model according to which the relatively simple of two possible entities (each of which is capable of independent existence) has foundational priority over the complex, because the latter is not conceivable without involving the former. The latter is incidentally also much closer to Brentano's notion of "Abhängigkeit" as Husserl here expressly notes (so that an interpretation of this passage as following Brentano's line—i.e., comprehending the judgmental character as something built upon and added to an act of representation—seems to be the correct one). It is thus also closer to what I call the model of "epistemological foundation," for it asks of two separate things, both of which inhere in something else and are thus constituent parts of a third thing (a higher-order act or object), whether one logically presupposes the other. This is the model of "foundation" that is the focus of the Sixth Logical Investigation. It therefore seems appropriate to turn to that Investigation to see how the model is developed there and why it should be no surprise to find the above example reflecting an ambiguity in Husserl's use of the notion of foundation.

II.

The Sixth Logical Investigation is devoted to epistemological investigations centering around the analysis of the fulfillment of intentions, in particular of fulfillment through categorial intuition. Here the notion of foundation is employed to describe the relationship between simple or sensual acts and the more complex categorial acts which are constructed on the basis of them, thereby contributing to the solution of the traditional epistemological problem concerning the relationship
between intuition and understanding. Although, just as in the Third Investigation, the question of meanings and the objects of intentional acts remains prominent in the final investigation, the emphasis is shifted to the acts in which these meanings constitute themselves and the acts in which the thereby constituted intentions may be fulfilled so that one can say that one "knows" or has the intended object. Questions about the relationship between various kinds of objects are traced back to questions about the various kinds of acts in which they are constituted and (in cases of fulfilled intentions) actually given to consciousness. The entire thrust of the Sixth Investigation is therefore epistemological and the question of foundation there concerns first and foremost epistemological relationships—of course with important, although for the most part indirectly drawn, ontological implications. It thus seems appropriate to term the examples of the foundational relationship described in the Sixth Logical Investigation as "epistemological model of foundation." How does this model differ from the model of "ontological foundation" that is developed in Third Investigation?

Whereas the notion of foundation employed in the Third Investigation is expressed primarily in terms of parts "existing in" wholes, the Sixth Investigation makes more frequent and explicit use of architectural images such as something that "sich auf etwas aufbaut," is constructed or builds upon something else, or something that is presented "auf Grund," or based on, something else in order to describe the dependency relationships that hold between various kinds of acts. For instance, in §5 Husserl claims that, "[w]hen I say 'this', I do not merely perceive, but rather on the basis of the perception a new act of intending—this is established that is directed to it and is dependent upon it, despite its difference" (II, 683). The question is not "in" which thing another kind of thing finds its existence, but rather on what basis a higher level act can be constructed, so that the more fundamental, the "founding" acts serve as the building blocks that must be employed in order to constitute a new sort of act that is then said to be "founded

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9II, 670. "In close connection with this last stance, we have the important distinction between sensuous (real) and categorial objects, determinations, combinations, etc., regarding which last it becomes clear that they can only be 'perceptually' given in acts which are founded upon other acts, and in the last resort, on acts of sensibility. In general we may say that the intuitive, and accordingly likewise the imaginative, fulfillment of categorial acts, is founded on acts of sense. The old epistemological contrast between sensibility and understanding achieves a much-needed clarity through a distinction between straightforward or sensuous, and founded or categorial intuition."

10Cf. concerning identification of intention and fulfillment as knowledge, II, 694ff.
in" or—perhaps better put—"founded on" these more basic and simpler acts.

Foundation is then defined as follows:

The foundedness of an act does not mean that it is built upon other acts in any manner whatsoever, but that a founded act, by its very nature or kind, is only possible as built upon acts of the sort which underlie it, and that, as a result, the objective correlate of the founded act has a universal element of form which can only be intuitively displayed by an object in a founded act of this kind (II, 813).

Again we see the concern for identifying the a priori laws governing dependency relationships that we find in the Third Life; but here we see that the dependency is no longer the dependency of an abstract thing upon the concrete entity of which it is a part, but rather of a complex higher-order act built up on the basis of a simpler lower-order act and—correspondingly and consequently—of a complex higher order kind of object constructed out of or on the basis of simpler objects. Both interpretations of the notion of foundation share the common root of expressing a dependency relationship, of one thing presupposing another;13 but the sense in which one thing presupposes the other is quite different. Husserl's model in the Sixth Investigation is the relationship between what he calls categorial acts, as founded acts, and the acts that they are ultimately founded upon—"ultimately" because they may be mediately founded upon other categorial acts, but if there is to be no infinite regress these must be able to be traced back to acts that are themselves not founded upon any others, i.e., for Husserl acts of sense perception. In fact, the distinctions between founded and founding acts, on the one hand, and categorial and sense presentation of an object, on the other, parallel each other so closely in the Sixth Investigation that Husserl defines the difference between categorial and sense acts of intuition in terms of the way the former are essentially founded upon the latter: "Acts of straightforward intuition we called 'sensusous'; founded acts, whether leading back immediately or mediately to sense, we called 'categorial'" (II, 817). The difference thus turns on the difference between simple and complex acts—and correlatively between simple and complex objects—with the more complex being founded ultimately upon some most primitive elements beyond which one cannot proceed. The latter are said to be more fundamental for the simple reason that it is possible to perform them without proceeding on to the more complex, higher-order acts, whereas

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13The general definition of Fundierung as a kind of dependency relationship has been explored by Gian-Carlo Rota, "Fundierung as a Logical Concept," The Monist, 72 (1989): 70-77.
the converse does not hold. All categorial acts—which are ways of relating various intentional contents—and therefore all categorial objects presuppose some intentional contents which they set in relation to each other, and the original source for this content is (in the broadest sense) sense intuition.46

Two points are particularly important here: 1) the higher-order acts and their corresponding higher-order objects are not reducible to the acts upon which they are founded, which is why categorial intuition is not reducible to sense intuition; and 2) the most fundamental acts are for Husserl sense intuitions, and these are not identical with the reception of sense data, as was assumed for instance by Locke, and with certain qualifications, by Hume, Kant, and the Neokantians as well.

Regarding point 1), Husserl points out that for example the higher order categorial act of intending “a and b,” which is founded upon the acts of representing “a” and representing “b” is not the same as simply intending “a” and then intending “b.” This is why Husserl refers to categorial acts as “new acts” and not just as a sum of the old ones (II, 683; II, 787). He remarks,

I can paint A and I can paint B, and I can paint them both on the same canvas. I cannot, however, paint the both, nor paint the A and B. Here we have only the one possibility which is always open to us: to perform a single new act of conjunction or collection on the basis of our two single acts of intuition, and so intend the together of the objects A and B. In the situation just viewed as an example, this act is constituted as an image presentation of A and B, while this together is only given as itself, in the manner of perception, and can only be given as itself, in a manner of perception, and can only be so given, in just such an act, an act merely modified in a manner that conforms to it, and which is founded on the perceptions of A and B (II, 798).

Accordingly then, the perception that counts as the fulfillment of a categorial intention is itself a unique kind of perception, founded in but not reducible to the simple perceptual acts on which it is based. This point is important, for it makes clear that to say that a certain kind of higher-order object, for instance a person, is founded in a physical object that is its body does not mean to say that this object is reducible to the directly sensible characteristics of the lower-order object, i.e., in this case, physical states of the body.

The second point is crucial for an understanding of why Husserl considered the extension of what is ontologically interpreted as fundamental and what is epistemologically interpreted as fundamental to be identical, and thus why Husserl does not explicitly and clearly

46See footnote 13.
distinguish between the two interpretations of the notions of foundation. The acts that are primary are simple ("schlichte") acts of perception. What is given in such perceptions are concrete sense objects and most especially the objects or contents of external sense perception (cf. e.g., II, 813-15 on this point). In the Sixth Investigation, Husserl clearly proceeds from the assumption that consciousness is not directed primarily to sense data, but rather to identifiable objects. What are typically considered sense data are not taken to be given directly but rather in basically the same way as other general objects, species such as redness, are, i.e., through abstraction from what is actually given in experience, which is existing individual objects. Only through complex categorial acts involving abstractions that are performed on the basis of the perception of some concrete object in which they (or in the cases of species, instances of them) are perceived are we conscious of simple sense qualities.9 The concrete objects of sense perception, independent objects that are made of sensibly perceptible properties, are what he calls "real" objects. The other objects, be they categorial objects in the usual sense such as collections, disjunctions, or the Sachverhalte to which judgments are directed, or universal objects such as redness, are constituted on the basis of the objects given in the primary acts of sense perception.

It thus becomes apparent how for Husserl what is primary or most fundamental according to both notions of foundation can coincide, and thus why he fails to recognize a tension between the two different senses of dependency that underlie the notions of foundation as they are developed in the Third and Sixth Investigations. In the following section, I would like to take a closer look at the assumptions that underlie this identification of the two notions and show why, first of all, many of these assumptions are later called into question by analyses of aesthetic or passive synthesis, and secondly and more importantly, why these assumptions present difficulties for a theory of higher-order phenomena such as persons and language.

III.

A passage in the Sixth Logical Investigation makes it clear that Husserl sees no conflict between the two notions of foundation and indicates why not:

Every concrete sensible object, as an explicit one, is straightforwardly perceptible, and so also every piece of such an object.

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9Cf. on this point Third LI, §§8 (II, 448ff.) and Second LI, (I, 429).
How does the matter stand with regard to the abstract moments? Their nature makes them incapable of separate being: their representative content, even where there is merely representation by way of analogy, cannot be experienced alone, but only in a more comprehensive concrete object. But this does not mean that their intuition need be a founded act. It would be one, if the apprehension of an abstract moment was necessarily preceded by the apprehension of the concrete whole or of its complementary moments, such an apprehension being an act of intuitive turning towards its object. This I do not find obvious. It is clear, on the other hand, that the apprehension of a moment and of a part generally as part of the whole in question, and, in particular, the apprehension of a sensuous feature as a feature, or of a sensuous form as a form, point to acts which are all founded, and in this case as relational kinds of acts . . . (II, 792).

Here we find explicit confirmation that Husserl at this stage considered the things that are primary in both senses to be identical and indications of the assumptions upon which this view depends, namely 1) that the primary objects for consciousness are independent objects and 2) that these are real objects composed of properties given in external sense perception on the basis of which all higher-order objects are constituted through various categorial acts. The statement that any concrete sense object can be explicitly and simply perceived along with the statement that sense traits are taken to be abstract, and thus founded contents confirms the first assumption. Confirmation of the second also involves reference to Husserl's description of simple perception as external sense perceptions, as laid out in §§ 58ff. of the Sixth Investigation and discussed above in Section II.

Both assumptions are necessary in order for the extension of the two interpretations of the notion of foundation to coincide. Without the first assumption, things like sense data could count as epistemologically fundamental even though they are obviously not what Husserl would call independent objects in the sense of the Third Investigation. Without the second assumption, one might count a higher order object—for instance, a social institution such as a club—as a whole and thus as an independent object so that it and not its members would be considered fundamental, even though the actual perception of a club is possible only through the perception of its members and certain modes of actions they agree to and follow. Such an object would then have to be considered ontologically, but not epistemologically fundamental. Or to use the example of a human being, the entire human being might be considered fundamental according to the ontological model, even though what would be fundamental according to the epistemological model would be the experience of the physical object that is taken to be the substrate of this higher-order object, the human being.
Difficulties with each of these two assumptions arise for Husserl in the course of further analyses in which different phenomena and questions move to the forefront of his attention. The first assumption, the thesis that the primary objects for consciousness are independent objects upon which later categorial acts are based, so that these are thus the most fundamental elements in an epistemological regard, faces difficulties from later analyses in the constitution of even simple objects such as "things" (Dinge) for consciousness. The integral role of processes considered under the heading of "aesthetic synthesis" in the *Ideas II* or under the heading of "passive synthesis" in other writings undermines the idea of a simple and direct perception of objects. Of course, already in the Sixth Investigation analyses of the variations in adequacy and fullness of the fulfillment of meaning intentions call into question the doctrine of an immediate and complete givenness of the object as a whole as well—at least in the case of "things." And even in the Third Investigation we read that unity is not a real, but rather a "categorial" predicate (II/1, 280). But these analyses apparently do not lead Husserl to reject the thesis that independent concrete objects are the basic elements out of which all other knowledge is constructed.

Furthermore, the question of how higher-order objects are to be constructed so that they can have ideal properties that are not instances of universal objects derived from sense intuitions is difficult to solve under the assumption that all intuitions are at bottom sense intuitions brought under some specific categorial form, unless we are to make a person's "having an interest" or a word's "bearing meaning" the correlation of a categorial act. What categorial operation is to be performed upon marks on a piece of paper or sounds uttered by a particular human being in order to bestow them with meaning as an objective trait is also difficult to imagine. How we can trace "having an interest" as a basic trait of persons back to some sort of traits possessed by the body, how we can abstract this out either as a singular or universal object from simple sense perceptions and the form we give them by combining them in a certain way is problematic as well. This problem does not present itself if we do not take the ontologically fundamental things to be physical objects, something that is not necessary if one does not assume that what is fundamental according to the epistemological model must be fundamental according to the ontolog-

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"The opening lines of the *Analysen zur passiven Synthese* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), Hua XL, indicate the problems involved in taking the pretensions of external perception for what they seem to be: "External perception is a constant pretension to perform something that according to its very nature it is incapable of performing." The very idea of a complete and adequate presentation of physical objects is what Husserl rejects as inadequate here."
ical model as well. The problems involved in each of these assumptions suggest that Husserl's assumption that the same things that are epistemologically fundamental must also be the things that are ontologically fundamental is misplaced.

IV.

The basic direction of phenomenological analysis will be different depending upon which of the two notions is predominant. It must be stressed, however, that the two models, precisely because they express different senses of what it means for something to be fundamental, are not mutually exclusive. Each of them answers to a different question that can be the legitimate subject of phenomenological inquiry.

In the case of the ontological model of foundation, the question is whether the object is capable of self-subsistence or whether, in order to exist, it must be instantiated in some other kind of thing. This is different from asking whether this is a genuine object or whether it corresponds to some unique meaning that is distinct from the meaning that corresponds to that of another object. Redness, for example, has a meaning-content all its own, even though in order for redness to exist as real, it must be a characteristic of some red thing. To answer the question of foundation in an ontological sense is then to say whether a thing can exist on its own or not and if not, in what kinds of things a thing of this type may or must be a part if it is to be actual. Here, the entity as a whole enjoys a kind of priority over any of its constituent parts, for they exist in (and in the case of moments only in and through) it. In the case of the epistemological interpretation of foundation by contrast, an element that is capable of being given as a simple real thing, a lower-order object, enjoys priority over a higher-order object founded upon it, even if the lower-order object is only a part of what it means to be this object.

To return to our original question about what is phenomenologically prior in the sense of more fundamental in the case of human beings, the answer will be different according to the sense in which we understand the question. According to the epistemological interpretation of the question, what is prior is the body,¹⁰ for it is possible for someone to

⁹Cf. as an example of such an approach §50 in the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, where the most fundamental experience upon which my experience of the other is founded is the encounter with a Körper that within the primordial sphere is not directly, but rather only by analogy endowed with the sense of a Leib. On the other hand, in the same paragraph Husserl is anxious to point out that the appearance of the body of the other as a Leib is not a conclusion by analogy, we do not first see a Körper and then later on the basis of an analogy
encounter a physical body without considering this a human being; however, it is impossible to intuit a human being except through a body. All human beings have bodies (Körper), but not all bodies are human beings. To point out the priority of the body in this sense is just to say that without bodies, there are no human beings.

But at the same time one can maintain that the complete entity, the human being, enjoys a certain priority over the body because what we intuit is not just a physical object with simple physical characteristics. What we intuit is a human being with a body, a body that is animated by what has traditionally been called a soul or mind, that directly and immediately is perceived as expressing emotions, acting on beliefs, fulfilling desires etc. Thus to be the kind of body it is, this object must be a part of a human being, so that in an ontological sense one can say that the higher-order object, the human being, is the foundation for the body that is present for us in our everyday experience of human beings. We are given the other as a mere physical object only in the theoretical attitude in which we abstract from all of the characteristics which we normally attribute to those things we recognize as human beings.

Of course, when the phenomena we are concerned with shift in this way, the distinction drawn in terms of ontological versus epistemological priorities begins to become less clear—not that there fails to be just as important and clear a difference between them, but one might consider what we have been terming the “epistemological model” an ontological one as well, for the question here is whether bodies can exist that are not the bodies of persons or whether persons can exist without bodies. Perhaps at this stage then it might be more helpful to consider the distinction in terms of the oppositions that underly them: the concrete vs. abstract and the simple vs. complex versions of foundation. The case of human beings makes clear that the two senses still do not collapse into each other.

conclude it is also a Leib, but rather immediately and directly perceive it to be a Leib “at a glance”. Husserl says. Nonetheless, however, he still sees this a the result of an Unstifung in which I have habitually come to endow certain kinds of Körper the status of Leiber, so that the experience of the Körper is still according to its genetic constitution, i.e., epistemologically, primary (Hua I, pp. 140-41).


Cf. the Fifth Cartesian Mediation: “If we stick to our de facto experience, our experience of someone else as it comes to pass at any time, we find that actually the sensuously seen body (Körper) is experienced forthwith as the body (Körper) of the other and not merely an indication of the other” (Ibid., 121).
Similarly when we are confronted with a spoken word, there is a sense in which the physical sound is fundamental, for without the sound, no word will be present, but under different circumstances the same sound could be present without there being the ideal component of meaning attached to it that makes it a word. Yet at the same time there is a sense in which the multi-faceted phenomenon word as a whole is prior, for the sound is there as one aspect or moment of a word, just as the ideal meaning of the word is present as another aspect of it. In the former sense, we have the sound as prior and in the latter we have the complete entity "word" as prior. Once one has broken down the identification of the senses in which a thing may be said to be fundamental with respect to other things, it is possible to maintain priority for the body (in the case of human beings) and the sound (in the case of the spoken word) while at the same time admitting the possibility or even necessity of considering the complete entity person or word with all of its properties, real and ideal, higher-and lower-order, as fundamental in a different and yet equally legitimate sense.

The aim of this paper has been to distinguish two different senses in which various objects may be considered fundamental or prior, and to show which questions each of the two notions addresses. Husserl's remarks on intersubjectivity and on language show that his analyses often address each of these kinds of questions, although for the most part it is what I have called the epistemological interpretation of the notion of foundation that dominates his thinking. If we are to make the most of his insights into the answers to each of these kinds of questions and to be able to put these insights into the proper perspective, it is then important to distinguish clearly between the various senses in which one thing can be said to be more fundamental than another in a Husserlian framework, even where Husserl himself fails to do so.