

Chapter Five. Meanings in general vs. Objects in general : An ontological dichotomy

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§ 22. The 'dimension of things' and the 'dimension of truths'

In our discussion of Frege's ontology we put forward arguments for distinguishing a generalised Fregean 'realm of senses' as constituting an isolated ontological category, and we have claimed that the important ontological demarcation line lies not, as Frege thought, between (saturated) objects and (unsaturated) 'functions', but between object-entities and meaning-entities. So far we have been able to do no more than sketch the basis of this distinction, but now, if brief particular indications are to give way to a more adequate general analysis, it will be necessary to go more deeply into Husserl's phenomenology of meaning.

The 'ontological' aspect of Husserl's theory of meaning finds its clearest expression in the first volume of LU where it forms an indispensable part of the theory of 'pure logic' ('pure theory of science') hinted at above.<sup>124</sup>

Husserl begins with an analysis of scientific theory in general, pointing out that although science is, as the psychologists had stressed, both a psychological and an anthropological phenomenon, still what makes science science

is certainly not its psychology, nor any real context into which our acts of thought are fitted, but a certain objective or ideal interconnection which gives these acts a unitary relevance, and, in such unitary relevance, an ideal validity. [But] two meanings can be attached to this objective interconnection which ideally pervades scientific thought, and thus also to science as such: it can be understood as an interconnection of the things to which our thought experiences (actual or possible) are intentionally directed, or on the other hand, as an interconnection of truths in which this unity of things comes to count objectively as being what it is. These two things are given together a priori, and are mutually inseparable. (LU, 228; LI, 225).

Thus where there arises a problem for Fregean philosophy as to which of the two dimensions: the ontological and the logico-linguistic, is to be counted as primary in the determination of the ontological category into which any

given entity must be conceived as falling (see §§ 58 f below), for Husserl, problems in this area are avoided by the fact that in the Husserlian framework the two dimensions 'are given together a priori and are mutually inseparable' :

Nothing can be given without being thus or thus determined, and that it is, and that it is thus and thus determined, is the self-subsistent truth which is the necessary correlate of the self-subsistent being. This self-evident inseparability is not, however, identity... This at once appears in the fact that truths which hold of truths do not coincide with truths that hold of the things posited in such truths. (Loc.cit.)

This perfect correlation between the ontological dimension of objects and the logical or (broadly) epistemological dimension of truths will be of the utmost importance in the investigations which follow. As we have seen, certain intellectually tempting consequences of this 'perfect correlation' are such that they lead to unacceptable results; hence our task will be to determine the precise nature of the correlation, and the limits of the philosophical consequences which we can allow ourselves to draw from it.

If it is 'objective or ideal interconnections' between the contents of particular theoretical acts which distinguish science as such, so, as Husserl recognises, the first task of pure logic as pure theory of science becomes the determination of those concepts (or unities of essential or cognitive content) 'which constitute the idea of unified theory' (LU, § 67) by making such interconnections possible. Husserl recognised that these concepts must fall into two distinct groups, one group consisting of concepts which relate to "things" and their interconnections, concepts such as object, state of affairs, plurality, relation, totality of objects, and so on (LU, §§ 67-68) and a second group consisting of concepts which relate to "truths" and their interconnections, concepts such as concept, proposition, truth, the concepts of the elementary connective forms, of logical consequence and logical consistency, the concepts theory, theory-form, and so on, (LU, § 67).<sup>125</sup>

Husserl tells us that he is here defending a categorial distinction amongst formal concepts, that is, amongst concepts under which fall all entities, i.e.

'everything that appears in thought'. These are concepts which

are independent of the peculiarity of any material of knowledge, and under which all the concepts and objects, propositions and states of affairs, etc. that specially appear in thought, must be ordered. (LU,245; LI,237).<sup>126</sup>

Yet despite Husserl's clear insight into the object/meaning (or: thing/truth) dichotomy the ontological theory which this dichotomy implies is absent from Husserl's work. Fortunately, on the basis of Ingarden's work on the distinction between three interrelated though separate ontological disciplines of existential, formal and material ontology (StEW, e.g. I, § 9), we can state in a very precise way why such an ontology was not developed by Husserl. In virtue of an insufficiently refined framework of formal ontology, we can say, Husserl failed to draw any strictly ontological consequences of his conceptual distinction as implying a parallel distinction on the side of the entities themselves. This was because, for Husserl the three words 'entity', 'thing' and 'object' were in effect synonymous. As Ingarden points out, Husserl

carried out his analysis of the form of the object with the conviction that he was seeking the form of the pure something-in-general, in the widest sense. (StEW, II/1, p.242, n.6; cf. Swiderski, 1975, p.82).

For Ingarden (as e.g. for Meinong) not every entity (Gegenstand) is an object (Objekt): the latter are distinguished by their ontological form from entities of other forms, e.g. from properties and states of affairs.<sup>127</sup>

Within the Ingardenian framework it is possible to draw an absolute (formal-ontological) distinction between objects [Objekte], more precisely: objects-in-general, on the one hand, and meanings, more precisely: meanings-in-general, on the other. Such a distinction, which will be recognised as a precise form of the opposition between 'ordinary referents' and 'referents which may serve as senses' which we put forward (on p.37) above as a first approximation to an ontological interpretation of Frege's semantics, is not something wholly foreign to Husserl's thought, however. Indeed it can be claimed that it is just such an ontological dichotomy which plays a crucial role in Husserl's later philosophy, especially in his theory of the relation between logic (which concerns itself, at the strictly formal level, with 'truths and the

interconnections among truths') and mathematics (concerned, at the same level, with 'things' and their interconnections) discussed in brief outline in § 16 above. The opposition is touched on only obliquely in Husserl's strictly phenomenological writings in virtue of the fact that one half of the dichotomy - the category of objects - fell behind the brackets of the phenomenological reduction, which had come to establish itself as Husserl's chief methodological device. The latter might indeed be identified as a decision to leave out of account all of the laws, principles, and facts which pertain to interconnections amongst objects, in order to ensure that no alien presuppositions - whether derived from psychology, from anthropology, from physics, from biology or even from logic, conceived as an 'object'-discipline i.e. as the science of reasoning with symbols - should detract from the rigour of philosophy as an independent prior discipline. Trace-elements of the ontological dichotomy are to be found in Husserl's later writings, but these never blossom into a developed theory. For example in the important manuscript B III 12 on "Noema und Sinn" Husserl writes:

Sinne stehen also gegenüber Sachen, den reinen Sinneswahrheiten gegenüber Sachwahrheiten (p.87a).

And there is an occasional broad use of the term 'wirklich' by Husserl as assigned not merely to spatio-temporal objects but to all entities 'accessible prior to the phenomenological reduction' (McIntyre and Woodruff Smith, 1975, p. 131, n.11), that is to say, to all object-entities, to all entities which form the subject-matter of the positive sciences, including mathematics. This terminology is important, since excluded from the domain of the 'wirklich' under this (occasional) use by Husserl, are precisely those entities which belong to the category of meanings-in-general which we are here attempting to delineate

### § 23. The category of objects-in-general.

(This section expands the preliminary remarks contained at the end of Ch.1 to the level where it will be possible to develop the present detailed descriptions of its sister category of meanings-in-general; the full theory of objects as such is postponed, however, to the second part of the present work).

The category of objects-in-general is to include, besides individual objects proper, also all those entities which are, with objects, dovetailed within the realm of 'ordinary reference' (of that which stands over against the cognitive subject). Thus it is to include, properties (of individual objects), relations, (between such objects), states of affairs, events, processes, and so on. Whenever, in what follows, we talk of the 'category of objects', of 'object-entities', of 'transcendent objects of reference', and the like, it is to members of each and all of the above sub-categories (and perhaps others) to which we should be taken as referring. When we wish to narrow the focus of attention we shall attempt always to be careful to talk in terms of 'objects proper' or of 'individual objects' - and it is a reflection of the terminological redundancy which we have come to accept in the present work that these terms and their variants ('thing', 'individual thing', etc.) should be treated as synonymous. Similarly we shall distinguish properties in general from properties of individual objects, and so on.

The justification for designating the broad domain which is constituted by all of the above sub-categories as the 'category of objects' lies in the fact that the members of each sub-category all seem to demand a substratum of objects proper as their ontological support: thus where we can imagine an object which exists whilst participating in no processes (e.g. an ideal (atemporal) object), it does not seem possible to imagine a process as existing except as something which is undergone by objects. With this notion of ontological support in mind we can see that there is a whole range of entities which are dependent upon objects in other, less uniform ways: for example holes, rainbows,

minds (considered as real psyche), pangs of hunger, the equator, the North Sea, and so on, all of which must be recognised as belonging, with the objects which constitute their ontological support, to the domain of objects in general.

The objects-proper which belong to the category of objects-in-general can themselves be divided into various sub-categories (see StEW,II/1,Ch.VIII). For example we can distinguish individual real objects, such as atoms, human bodies, tables, etc., higher-order real objects, such as swarms of bees, galaxies, and universities, and also (as both Husserl and Frege allow), individual and higher-order ideal objects such as geometrical figures, numbers, sets, etc. It is also possible to distinguish various purely intentional objects such as Snow White, Quetzalcoatl, perhaps even large cardinals of Cantorean set theory. The criteria which must be met before a particular candidate entity is admitted to the class of purely intentional objects are, as we shall see, difficult to formulate. Here we remark only that those which are 'admissible' (and our use of this term should not be taken to imply that there are other 'non-admissible' purely intentional objects) exist only in so far as they are intended as existing in particular acts or networks of acts, e.g., on the part of readers of fiction or of Aztec worshippers. What gives such entities their intersubjective identity is, ultimately, their being bound up with autonomous objects (artefacts), and in particular with linguistic texts (actual copies of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs or of the Aztec scriptures).

§ 24. The category of meanings-in-general.

The second category, the category of meanings-in-general, is to contain all individual and higher-order conceptual formations of the following kinds: concepts themselves, propositions, (identified as the senses of predicate expressions and of complete declarative sentences, respectively). Also it is to contain whole theories and other, more or less complex systems of propositional meanings (including partial actualisations of theories, literary works considered as systems of meanings, and so on).

Each of the meaning-unities so far considered can be identified as a sense or as a complex of senses along Fregean lines, and we have no qualms in appealing to Frege's work in the preliminary delineation of the nature of meanings-in-general. But we must again draw attention to what we see as the crucial inadequacy of the Fregean account; that it is purely 'language-based'. Senses, for Frege, are ascribed directly to particular expressions, i.e. we are to

think of there being connected with the sign (name, combination of words, letters), besides that to which the sign refers, which may be called the reference of the sign, also what I should like to call the sense of the sign, wherein the mode of presentation [ of the reference ] is contained. (SuB, 26, my emphasis).

The nature of the 'connection' between signs and their senses is left totally undetermined in Frege's philosophy, and hence that theory fails to throw any positive light on the connections between senses and the cognitive experience of using and understanding language, despite the fact that the latter presents itself as the exclusive area of 'operation' of senses. This inadequacy becomes apparent only when we recognise the incorrectness of the ascription of unique meaning-entities to expressions in all their (inferentially equivalent) contexts of use. In order to take full account of the ways in which meanings vary in systematic and non-systematic ways with epistemologically and non-epistemologically relevant variations in contexts of use, it is necessary to overhaul completely the language-centred approach to the theory of meaning, and to replace it by an approach which concerns itself directly with the experiential contexts within which meaning-entities are actualised.

The earliest attempts to develop mental act-centred theories of meaning in the modern period were made by psychologistic philosophers in the latter half of the 19th century. Psychologism is important, as we have seen, in forming a connecting link between Husserl and Frege, being a collection of views against which both philosophers reacted strongly. But we have also seen that despite massive inadequacies of the psychologistic doctrine, the psychologists must be given credit for their recognition of the importance of thought, and of what is given in thought, for the foundation of any adequate philosophical theory. A philosophical theory of logic, for example, which was adequate on the purely syntactic level to arguments as formulated e.g. within mathematical texts, but which rested on an account of the nature of logical laws or of logical consequence which was wholly alien to that which was given in our experiences of devising, understanding and (especially) validating such arguments, would have to be counted as an inadequate theory, no matter what advantages it might otherwise possess. Husserl - but not Frege - shared this recognition; consequently he was aware of the necessity to adopt a cognitively-founded approach to philosophy which would satisfy the requirement that the theory which results should serve to explain how the objective configurations, such as linguistic meanings and logical laws, which are the philosopher's immediate concern, relate to the subjective experiences in which these configurations are actualised. Even when the psychologistic approach is left out of account, however, there is still more than one way in which it is possible to develop a theory of meaning which meets this requirement, and three of the major alternatives are considered in the section which follows.

## § 25 . Approaches to the theory of meaning.

There are three alternative approaches to the theory of meaning which have been advanced as meeting the requirement of adequacy to first-person cognitive experience which was stated above, each explaining in a different way the relation between, in Husserl's words, 'the subjective knowing and the objective content known' (LU,VII; LI,42). These can be designated as (1) the 'Herbartian' approach, (2) the approach of Husserl in the LU of regarding meanings as universals (as 'species'), and (3) the 'Fregean' approach, which was taken over, in a modified and generalised form, by Husserl in his Ideen. We discuss each of these in turn.

### (1) The 'Herbartian' approach to the theory of meaning.

Herbart held that the relation between our subjective cognitive experiences and objective meanings or concepts is one of identity.<sup>128</sup> He was able to retain a theoretical commitment to the peculiar subjective dependence of the former and to the true objective content of the latter by the device of acknowledging two separate and independent modes of conceiving one and the same 'two-sided' cognitional subject-matter. That is, the difference is more of a difference of aspect, than a difference of object. (Cf. the quotation from Sluga on p.77). Herbart recognised both an empirical mode of access, within which the peculiar objective, logical content 'gets lost', and also a non-empirical mode (which he designates as 'abstractive') which alone is adequate to the grasping of this objective content. Thus Herbart writes:

all our thoughts can be dealt with from two sides, as activities of mind and as regards what is thought through them. In this latter respect we call them concepts. This word, meaning what is conceived enjoins abstraction from the manner in which we receive, produce or reproduce thoughts. (Herbart, 1883, § 34, p.77, cf. LU, § 59).

Hence while

everyone certainly has his own concepts: Archimedes investigated his own concept of a circle, and Newton likewise his own. There were

two concepts [only] in the sense of psychology; logically speaking there was only one concept for all mathematicians. (Herbart, 1824/25, II, p.120).

There is much that is of value in this Herbartian approach, not least in the anticipation, in Herbart's conception of an abstractive, non-empirical mode of conceiving the data of experience, of the phenomenological notion of categorical or essential intuition. However there is too much of a tacit appeal to a species of Leibnizian pre-established harmony between the psychological and the logical 'sides' of experience for the doctrine to be taken altogether seriously. Further the valuable material in Herbart's work is dilute indeed when considered within the context of his general philosophical theorising. In particular the views on logic just expressed are presented by Herbart alongside a more dominant set of views which reflect a normative conception of logic, and it is clear that Herbart himself was unaware where the line was to be drawn between the two sets of views perhaps even of the fact that such a line was necessary. Nevertheless Herbart was careful enough to recognise a distinction between a (still normative) discipline of pure logic, which has to do with the relations of what is thought or thinkable independently of any concern with the activity of thinking or with the psychological and metaphysical possibilities of such thinking, and a discipline of applied logic which,

like applied ethics, stands in need of psychological knowledge; for one must first discuss the character of the material in conformity with which one desires to shape prescriptions [of an appropriate type]. (From Husserl's account of Herbart's theory of logic, LU, 217, Findlay's translation, LI, 216, slightly amended).

But Herbart's more general use of the term 'logic' is such that he can oppose logic as the 'morals of thought', to psychology as the 'natural history of the understanding' (1883, § 180). He thereby fails to recognise that any normative discipline of the former type (including ethics itself) rests on a prior theoretical discipline, a discipline whose scope and subject-matter we may expect to be comparable to other ideal disciplines such as pure mathematics.

Now just as Herbart recognises as valid a normative approach to logic, so we may expect him to accept such an approach in the theory of meaning, that is we may expect him to misconceive the true unity of meanings, as something which exists only in the limit which is demanded by prescription, rather than to conceive this unity as something which resides in the fact of what is actually achieved. (Cf. note 6 above). The normative conception of meanings implies, of course, that it is impossible to give the positive account of the substantial relations between subjective experiences of meaning (with the actualised meanings carried by such experiences) and the objective (e.g. logical) unities meant in those experiences<sup>129</sup>, thus the virtues of Herbart's more original insights come to be lost.

(2) Meanings as universals : Husserl's Logical Investigations.

The nature of the platonist theory of meaning advanced by Husserl in LU may be seen in the following criticism which Husserl made against the views of Herbart discussed above. Husserl tells us that Herbart, in locating

what is essential to the ideality of the logical concept in its normativeness, thereby shifts the sense of true, genuine ideality, of the unity of meaning, into the dispersed multiplicity of experiences. The fundamental sense of ideality, which puts an unbridgeable gulf between ideal and real, is thereby lost. (LU, 218; LI, 217, trans amended slightly).

Given this 'unbridgeable gulf' how — if at all — does Husserl find it possible to clarify the relations between objective ('ideal') meaning-configurations and the subjective ('real') experiences in which these are actualised? Before we answer this question we shall find it useful to consider Husserl's problem as it arises for the specific case of propositions.

According to the standard conception advanced, inter alia, by Bolzano, Moore, W.E. Johnson, and Russell<sup>130</sup>, propositions are transcendent entities which 'stand over against' (gegenüberstehen) our minds as the objects (Gegenstände) of our beliefs, thoughts, wishes, and so on. That is to say, someone who thinks that Novikov refuted Burnside's conjecture is held to stand in a certain relation

not to Novikov or Burnside (either or both of whom may e.g. fail to exist), but to the proposition Novikov refuted Burnside's conjecture. Similarly someone who desires an apple stands in a certain relation not to any apple or apples, but to a proposition such as I desire an apple here,now. It is of course possible to take a (formally quite coherent) view to the effect that belief, thought (and other propositional attitudes: hope, fear, desire, memory, and so on) are complex, perhaps dispositional affairs, resting, in the end, not on propositions but on sentences, either as tokens or as types.<sup>131</sup> Such an approach provides however not so much a theory of propositional attitudes, as a more or less adequate model of such attitudes, useful for certain purposes but philosophically incomplete and (as normally presented) incomplete. This is because there is a peculiar cognitive content involved in propositional acts: our outwardly directed acts are consciously given as directed in a determinate way (and this is true even where there happens to be nothing 'in the actual world' toward which they are directed). It is respect for this cognitive content which makes commitment to propositions (propositional objects) of such acts - as 'carriers' of their cognitive content - so tempting to certain philosophers. The problem is to explain how the given objects are grasped: Husserl's or Gödel's conceptions of an eidetic 'intuition' seem inappropriate, since such intuitions themselves, to the extent that they can be effected at all, seem to depend upon a prior understanding of sentences.

Husserl's conclusion, most forcefully expressed in his 1903 answer to criticisms of LU made by M. Palagyi, was not that propositions were to be denied, but rather that they must be recognised as entities which are related to minds in a quite different way from the way in which objects of experience, mathematical objects, etc., are related: propositions are not objects, but sentence meanings, where the latter are conceived (in opposition to, say, Frege) as belonging to a category quite distinct from the category of objects. As we have seen however, the ontological theory which would have supported this insight on Husserl's part was never developed by Husserl. In consequence

Husserl failed to draw the indispensable consequence from this categorial dichotomy, as implying a difference in the mode of grasping of propositions, and meanings in general, from the mode in which object-entities, and in particular object-universals (essences, species) are grasped. Thus whilst Husserl recognised clearly that in a given propositional act, or in a given act of using or understanding meanings of other kinds, we are not related to the propositions or meanings involved as we are to object-universals which may correspond to them, nevertheless he continued to advance the view that those propositions and meanings are themselves universals or essences, not of objects, now, but of the acts of meaning in which they are intended. A given proposition is seen as related to those acts of judgment to which it belongs as their identical intention in just the same way as, for example, the species redness relates to individuals of 'the same' red colour. Propositions thus have the "ideal" being or validity<sup>132</sup> of objects which are universals [allgemeiner Gegenstände]; and, thus, that being which is established for example, in the "existence proofs" of mathematics. (Husserl, 1903, p.290, as trans. by Willard, 1972, p.99).<sup>133</sup>

Husserl's advance upon the work of his predecessors with this IU theory is summarised by Willard as follows: that whilst

for Bolzano (and most anti-psychologists) the relation of mind to propositions is intentionality, for Husserl it is instantiation or exemplification,

something which yields an

obviously increased intimacy of the connection

as between mind and proposition in a way which enabled Husserl to refute those psychologists who held that this 'intimacy' was to be explained in a far from equally satisfactory way. (Willard, 1972, p.99: Willard even goes so far as to suggest that Husserl's account of the universal-particular instantiation-relation between propositions and subjective act-contents can properly be compared to Gustav Bergmann's doctrine on the nexus of instantiation, see Bergmann, 1964, p.34 et passim, Willard, op.cit. note 20).

Willard suggests that this aspect of IU should be greeted as Husserl's major contribution to the theory of meaning, and as the key to Husserl's

success in opposing psychologistic theories of meaning. In contrast we wish to argue that the LU theory of meaning is nothing more than a temporary staging-post on the way to the fully developed theory of the Ideen. (For a more detailed discussion see Kung, 1973, 674-80). For the major problem with the LU theory with its view of meanings as related (however intimately) to corresponding subjective act-contents as universals are related to particulars, fails to explain how in a particular act it is just this objective meaning which comes to be meant in the act. How, in asserting 'this apple is red' do I succeed in satisfying a conscious intention to make just this affirmation? That is to say, how do I go further than merely affirming e.g. that the apple has features which coincide with certain real characteristics which I simultaneously experience with my utterance of 'red'? Ought we, perhaps, to follow Frege and appeal to a notion of objectified concepts as the referents of predicates? We should then be able to explain how I succeed in affirming that the given apple is (objectively) red, by conceiving my act as involving 'transparent' reference to two transcendent entities, the apple and the concept red, such that what I affirm is that the former (objectively) falls under the latter.

Such an approach is unacceptable however. First of all because it involves a deliberate running together of 'falls under the concept c' and 'possesses the property p', where the distinction between these two relations is philosophically among the most difficult to explicate, (see § 41 below). And secondly because Frege's theory merely postpones the solution of the problem of the objectively meant constituents of our subjective acts. For, of course, given Frege's theory we now have equal difficulty in explaining how I succeed in affirming that the apple falls under the concept red, and not merely in affirming that the apple has features which coincide with certain real characteristics which I experience with my utterance of 'falls under the concept red'. The temptation to assume on my behalf an intention to affirm that the apple falls under the concept falls under the concept red must clearly be resisted. It is a radically new approach which is required, the basis for which, as we shall see, is provided not by Frege's theory of concepts but by the sense-reference theory of meaning, to which we now turn.

## (3) The 'Fregean' approach to the theory of meaning

It was sometime between the appearance in 1900/01 of the 1st edition of LU and of the first book of the Ideen in 1913 that Husserl became aware of the inadequacy of the LU account of the meaning-relation as the relation of universal to particular. Küng (1973) has argued that it was the influence of Frege which led Husserl to dissatisfaction with this account, and, more importantly, which showed Husserl the way to an alternative theory of meaning according to which, in Küng's words, meaning

is neither something real nor an ideal universal essence, but rather something third. (1973,676).

The suggestion is that it was Frege's theory of sense and reference, with which Husserl is known to have been familiar, which served as inspiration for Husserl's new approach, and Küng is able to point to the occurrence in Husserl's writings at this time of just those examples ('Victor at Jena', 'vanquished at Waterloo', etc.) which Frege had employed in his exposition of the sense-reference theory (see p.6f. above).

But Husserl must have recognised, too, that the Fregean account as it stands was inadequate. For in his concern to develop a logically precise and grammatically well-behaved formal language within which context-sensitivity (in the wide sense) was to a large degree camouflaged, Frege failed to learn the true lesson of an epistemological approach to meanings, that it is with the epistemological context itself, and the acts which constitute it, that the primary locus of meanings must be seen to lie, and not with the linguistic expression as such. In spite of this inadequacy the Fregean approach is nevertheless structurally correct, and it is Frege's three-term account of meaning which effectively forms the basis of the more adequate theory which is developed by Husserl in Ideen—at least when that theory is viewed against a background of realism of the type defended in the present work: for Husserl, of course, such a background cannot be assumed, something which reveals itself most conspicuously in Husserl's peculiar theory of reference which seems to deny 'reference' as such. — See Küng, 1975, pp.67ff.

From the standpoint of our 'Husserlian' theory, we might say that the experiential contexts which co-determine the meanings of particular expressions are recognised as configurations which are established (and can only be established) by conscious acts, and which are maintained in being by such acts. Any other approach to meaning-determining contexts, e.g. Frege's approach which seems to rest on large-scale changes in scientific or in 'public' knowledge, cannot provide a sufficiently refined framework within which all of the crucial distinctions between meanings can be captured. Once we have achieved the level of refinement which is consequent upon such an account of meaning-determining contexts there is an additional bonus that it becomes possible to generalise the notion of meaning itself, extending it such that it applies to all acts 'whether these are intertwined with expressing acts or not' (Id, I, 256; cf. Føllesdal, 1969, p. 681). Every type of act has a corresponding type of meaning-entity which is so structured, ontologically, that it can serve as the carrier of the 'content' of that act, much as the proposition serves as the carrier of the cognitive content of an act of judgment, and so on for each of the other categories of linguistic meaning here distinguished. Thus our generalisation of Frege's 'realm of senses' begins to take on an even more radical flavour :-

Consider an act of perception which is given as the perception of an edible apple (it is, so to speak, a gastric-juice-laden perception), but which is in fact the perception of a wax fruit. Hitherto one would give an analysis of such an act by appealing to a so-called perceptual object - a perceptual 'edible apple' - additional to and distinct from the reference of the act. In Husserlian terms however there is only one object - the wax fruit - involved in the act, together with an act-meaning which determines the act as being a perception of that object as edible. Clearly Frege's theory, in being language-rather than act-based, resists any such generalisation of the notion of meaning. Thus the 'knowledge' which can be allowed to determine meaning in Frege's 'epistemological' theory of sense is seen as something spartan indeed when compared to the vast array of forms of (perceptual, gastronomic, aural, tactile) knowledge which can be acquired: such knowledge can determine meaning, for Frege, only to the extent that it is linguistically expressible.