

# CONTINENTAL ROOTS OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY - CARNAP AND FREGE AS EXAMPLES

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## ABSTRACT

For a long time controversies between analytic and continental philosophy have dominated the discussion. However, the distinction itself is already problematic in two different aspects. First, both characterizations are, in comparison, somehow asymmetrical, since “analytic” is a methodological determination, whereas continental is a “geographical” one. Second, the geographic classification in question, according to which analytic philosophers should be assigned to the Anglo-Saxon region, does not obtain. Analytic philosophers such as Frege, Wittgenstein and Carnap not only came from the continent, but also experienced their essential intellectual influences there (Frege and Carnap in Jena, Wittgenstein in Vienna). In the following I would like to demonstrate my assertion by taking Frege and Carnap as examples and showing their continental roots.

## KEYWORDS

ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY. CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY. CARNAP. FREGE.

## PART I: FREGE AND THE ORIGINS OF MODERN LOGIC

The wide recognition received by Frege stems from his foundations of modern logic, his theoretical investigations on the foundations of Mathematics (Arithmetic and Geometry) and his contributions to the philosophy of language. The emphasis on Frege's achievements corresponds in an odd way to the fact that the results of his investigations have been further considered from a systematic perspective, whereas his position within his own time has remained unclarified, except for some allusions to explicit references to Leibniz and Kant. Appreciation of Frege's efforts suffers from a hermeneutical deficit. It lacks historical contextualization.

For a very long time, the idea prevailed that Frege developed his most fundamental philosophical insights independently from others or in opposition to the rest of the German tradition of his time. This one-sided interpretation goes back to Michael Dummett, according to whom a kind of detachment between analytic and continental philosophy happens with Frege. He correctly explains that Frege is the founding father of analytic philosophy, when he writes: "Analytic philosophy is philosophy in the footsteps of Frege."<sup>1</sup> However, he overlooks and later on would not admit that there is no break here, but actually Frege's thinking is rooted in the continental tradition.

The discussion about the extent to which Frege had predecessors was notably sparked by the relation between Frege and Lotze. Here one should mention the controversy between Dummett and Hans Sluga that started with Sluga's book *Gottlob Frege (1980)*. In it, Dummett's image of Frege, which forgets the continent, is criticized and the agreements between Frege and Lotze are

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<sup>1</sup> DUMMETT, 1982, p. 192.

emphasized. The textual evidence provided by Sluga, however, was not enough to persuade Dummett to correct his view. In the meanwhile, further textual evidence was provided regarding Lotze's influence. Sven Schlotter found correspondence from Bruno Bauch, which shows that Frege himself recognized Lotze's importance for his own thinking: "I heard it from the lips of the great mathematician Frege, that for his mathematical, and I shall add something that Frege didn't say, trailblazer investigations, Lotze's suggestions were particularly meaningful." <sup>2</sup>

Lotze's influence upon Frege is multifaceted. Particularly relevant is his stimulus for the distinction between sense and reference. He writes that the expressions "7+5" and "42 - 22" designate the same numerical value, but, because of their linguistic form, they provide "different ways through which one can reach the same value"<sup>3</sup>. It is easy to recognize here Frege's motto, that two expressions can have the same reference, while having different senses, which characterize different modes of being (*Gegebenheitsweisen*) of the same reference. Frege also utilizes Lotze's ways-metaphor, when he says, that one can be led to the same thing "through different ways" <sup>4</sup>.

It is important to stress that exposure of the continental roots of Frege's thinking in no way diminishes the relevance of Frege's efforts, but leads to a better understanding of it. It could also be the case that the forerunners were able to see further than Frege himself. For instance, Frege did not notice Lotze's warning that "nothing could be more catastrophic" than the objectifying interpretation of the use of the definite article in the singular, "that leads to the reinterpretation of the new syntactical dignity (*Würde*) of the words into a new

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<sup>2</sup> From a handwritten manuscript (p. 22) on Lotze.

<sup>3</sup> LOTZE, 1874, § 353.

<sup>4</sup> FREGE, 1983, p. 95.

metaphysical dignity (*Würde*) of its content”<sup>5</sup>. It is precisely this catastrophe that Frege faces when he uses the definite article in the singular in conjunction with the numerical expressions (“the one”, “the two”, etc.,...) as a means of introducing numbers as logical objects with the linguistic form “the scope of the concept F”. It sounds like a repetition of Lotze’s warning, when Frege, in reference to Russell’s antinomy, later explains: “*One of the properties of language that is fatal for the reliability of thought is its tendency to create proper names to which no object corresponds.*”<sup>6</sup>

In *The origins of analytic philosophy* (1988) Dummett revises his initial position on the demarcation between continental and analytic philosophy, so that he could account for Bernard Bolzano and Edmund Husserl. The authors that Frege actually mentions, however, are not taken into consideration. Those are, along with Lotze, Johann Friedrich Herbart, Adolf Trendelenburg, Christoph Sigwart and the Neokantians, Otto Liebmann, Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich Rickert. Their influence stretches throughout all domains of Frege’s thinking<sup>7</sup>. In the following, I shall restrict myself to logic. Concerning this domain, the prevalent conception is that Frege developed his *Begriffsschrift*<sup>8</sup> in total independence from traditional logic, and replaced it with a formal mathematical logic.

This interpretation, propagated by both supporters of modern logic and advocates of traditional logic, shall be contradicted in three different aspects. First of all, Frege’s Logic is the endpoint of a discussion that was already put forward in traditional logic when confronted with Kant. Second, Frege’s intent does not revolve at all around a mathematization of logic, but, in the context of

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<sup>5</sup> LOTZE, 1878, p. 251; cf. for the use of the definite article also LOTZE, 1874, §§ 3f.

<sup>6</sup> FREGE, 1983, p. 288.

<sup>7</sup> See the detailed presentation in: GABRIEL; SCHLOTTER (2017).

<sup>8</sup> Unless indicated by italics as title, in the following “*Begriffsschrift*” always means the logical program of the same name.

his logicism, concerns the exact opposite, a logicization of mathematics, more precisely, of arithmetic. Third, Frege never thought of his *Begriffsschrift* as purely formal logic. In the sense of Frege's logicism, from mere logical forms one cannot acquire any arithmetic content. Even after the failure of the logicist's program, Frege stresses that logic is not "unconditionally formal", but has its "own concepts and relations, and it is only through them that it can have a content". Frege introduces as examples of logical concepts and relations "the negation, the identity, the subsumption, and the ordering of concepts" <sup>9</sup>.

In so doing, Frege positions himself, in opposition to Kant, Herbart and Drobisch, on the side of a content-oriented conception of logic, as already defended by Trendelenburg with regards to Aristotelian logic. There are noticeable similarities to Trendelenburg, especially in the *Begriffslehre*. Frege's emphasis that he was "far away" from establishing an "artificial similarity" between logic and arithmetic by conceiving the concept "as the sum of its characteristic marks (*Merkmale*)", turns out to be, because of similar considerations, an indirect reference to Trendelenburg<sup>10</sup>.

Frege's later interpreters were not the first to recognize in his remarks a demarcation from algebraic logic. His contemporaries were already able to see that. Against such an interpretation, however, one could object that Frege speaks here of a sum of characteristic marks and, therefore, that he has an intentional view/comprehension of concepts in mind, while in Boole an extensional view/comprehension lies in the background, which represents the logical sum

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<sup>9</sup> FREGE, 1906, p. 428.

<sup>10</sup> FREGE, 1879*t*, p. IV.

not as the conjunction of concepts' characteristic marks, but of concepts' scopes (classes) <sup>11</sup>.

Frege's demarcation from algebraic logic comes only later, after Schröder's criticism that he had not taken the works of Boole and others into consideration<sup>12</sup>. In the corresponding remarks, Frege is completely clear about Boole's and Schröder's extensional conception of concepts; for he himself says, that in such a view logical sums are built from the *scopes* of concepts<sup>13</sup>. Therefore, algebraic logic can be discarded as a point of reference of his remarks. An intentional view is already proposed by Trendelenburg<sup>14</sup>. In his *Logischen Untersuchungen* Trendelenburg accuses formal logic in the Kantian tradition of precisely such an "algebraic" understanding of concept formation (definition) <sup>15</sup>.

Frege's distancing from the characteristic marks calculus had the clear goal of avoiding Trendelenburg's criticism of his own *Begriffsschrift*. Trendelenburg's objection to formal logic, that it presupposes concepts "as given" <sup>16</sup>, is taken up by Frege in his later criticism of the extensional way of forming concepts and classes in Boolean logic, when he complains, that in it one must assume "a system of concepts as given". He points out as an advantage of his *Begriffsschrift* that it does not make use of "limits of already available concepts", but it "defines totally new limits"<sup>17</sup>. In this context a further commonality between Frege and Trendelenburg should be stressed, since both part ways with the understanding of judgment as constructed from pre-given concepts, and place the doctrine of judgment ahead of the doctrine of the concept.

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<sup>11</sup> See Frege's paper "Zweck der Begriffsschrift", p. 2; cf. THIEL, 1982, p. 756.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. SCHRÖDER, 1881.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. FREGE, 1983, p. 37.

<sup>14</sup> TRENDELENBURG, 1876, p. 23.

<sup>15</sup> TRENDELENBURG, 1862, vol. 1, p. 20.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> FREGE, 1983, p. 38-39.

Frege and Trendelenburg agree upon an organological model of concept formation that contradicts the idea of a “mere juxtaposition” (says Trendelenburg) of “associated characteristics” (says Frege), an idea that both authors assign to Kant. While Trendelenburg, in the tradition of genetic definitions, places an “organic link” that gives “life” back to “abstracted characteristic marks”, Frege sees the “fruitful concept formations” realized in the functional structure of the *Begriffsschrift*, which guarantees “a more intimate, I would like to say more organic connection of the determinations” than the addition of characteristic marks<sup>18</sup>. The organism-model is defended by Frege not only for the theory of concept formation, but he translates it to the doctrine of inferences (*Schlusslehre*), by allowing the axioms in mathematics to contain the sentences that follow from them as if in a “germ”, and identifying the basic laws of logic as those laws “which in terms of strength include in themselves all of them”<sup>19</sup>. Frege utilizes here a formulation that Trendelenburg makes use of in his translation of Aristotle (as translation of *dynámei*): “Clearly, general judgment has a greater significance, because, when in possession of the (logically) prior of two judgments, we also know and have the force of the (logically) later [...]”<sup>20</sup>

In the corresponding explanation Trendelenburg resumes this Aristotle passage by stating that we “control” (*beherrschen*) the individual through the general, since the “strength” of the individual resides in the general, namely, in the sense of a specification of the general<sup>21</sup>. One can thus state that Frege defends an organological view of logic, as already propagated by Trendelenburg. In

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<sup>18</sup> FREGE, 1884, § 88; also TRENDELENBURG, 1862, vol. 1, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> FREGE, 1879*t*, p. 25, Frege’s emphasis.

<sup>20</sup> TRENDELENBURG, 1876, p. 9 (§ 6). Translation of Aristoteles, *Analytica posteriora* I 24. 86a22.

<sup>21</sup> TRENDELENBURG, 1876, p. 12 (§ 6).

particular, the use of the germ-metaphor for the basic laws of arithmetic and the axioms of geometry is maintained throughout his work<sup>22</sup>.

Based on the thought expressed by Herbart that the number statement is a statement about a concept, there is a close connection between number and existence statements in Frege. In this sense, in both cases we are dealing with statements about concepts and, thus, with second order statements. The basic idea behind this view can be found in Herbart's analysis of the connection between particular judgments and number statements<sup>23</sup>. In fact, if we compare a particular judgment such as "Some apples are green" with a numerical statement such as "Five apples are green", it stands out that the determiner "some" and the numeral "five" are used analogously. This analogy can be stated as follows: The particular judgment is an undetermined number statement; and the other way around: The number statement is a statement of a determined particularity. Frege takes up the connection highlighted by Herbart in stating that "existence has a resemblance to the number", since in both cases properties of concepts are stated: "The affirmation of existence is nothing but the negation of the zero number."<sup>24</sup>

A peculiarity of Frege's logic is that in it a reduction of the traditional Kantian forms of judgment to assertoric judgment is undertaken, in which the traditional forms of judgment become forms of content<sup>25</sup>. Also in this development, Herbart (among others) stands as one of the forefathers. An essential step in this direction is to stress the classification of judgments according to its quality as the only essential one. Herbart advocates precisely this view<sup>26</sup>, which is later consolidated throughout the course of the 19th century in

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<sup>22</sup> On Frege's organism metaphor and its cognitive factuality, see GABRIEL, 1991, p. 71-79. Cf. Specially the indication (p. 79, note 23) that the transfer of the organism idea to axiom systems in mathematics can also be found in Frege's teacher, Karl Snell.

<sup>23</sup> HERBART: *Lehrbuch*, § 56.

<sup>24</sup> FREGE, 1884, § 53. Cf. with more details § 55.

<sup>25</sup> This has already been pointed out by THIEL, 1982, p. 12.

<sup>26</sup> HERBART, 1813, § 54.



act-theoretical interpretation. If one disregards infinite judgment (in Kant's classification), which is unanimously rejected as a separate form of judgment, acts of affirmation and negation remain as forms of judgment. Frege is then entitled to restrict judgment solely to the fusion of the act of affirmation with assertoric judgment, and to represent it via the judgment stroke in the *Begriffsschrift*. The act of negation is replaced by the affirmation of a negative content.

The reduction is not restricted to the forms of judgment, but is extended to the forms of content. Frege's remark about the relation between judgments: "The distinction between categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive judgments seems to me to have only grammatical meaning" <sup>27</sup>, is simply a reiteration of Herbart's statement: "The difference between categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive judgments belongs entirely to the language-form." <sup>28</sup> This already implies the possibility of defining the connectives of propositional logic through one another, with the help of the negation symbol. For Sigwart, too, the judgment forms of the relation are "frequently only grammatically different expressions of the same thought", which must also be supplemented by further "sentence connections"<sup>29</sup>, for example by the 'and', i.e., the logical conjunction.

An example, showing that observance of the historical context helps to better understand Frege, is offered in a somehow cryptic assessment of the question regarding the justification of logical laws in the *Basic Laws of Arithmetic*:

As to the question, why and with what right we acknowledge a logical law to be true, logic can respond only by reducing it to other logical laws. Where this is not possible, it can give no answer. Stepping outside logic, one can say: our nature and external circumstances force us to judge, and

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<sup>27</sup> FREGE, 1879, § 4.

<sup>28</sup> HERBART, 1887, p. 222; cf. 1912, §§ 60.

<sup>29</sup> SIGWART, 1873, vol. 1, p. 233.

when we judge we cannot discard this law [...] but have to acknowledge it if we do not want to lead our thinking into confusion and in the end abandon judgment altogether.<sup>30</sup>

Dummett – and not only he – reads this passage as if, for Frege, there is no non-deductive justification: “Any judgment that can be justified at all can be justified by a deductive derivation: he [Frege] does not allow for the possibility of any other form of justification.”<sup>31</sup> What is here overlooked, is that Frege himself recognizes another type of justification other than the deductive proof, whose place he says (“stepping out of logic”) to be the theory of knowledge:

The reasons which justify the recognition of a truth often lie in other already recognized truths. But if truths are recognized by us at all, this cannot be the only kind of justification. There must be judgments whose justification is based on something else if they need one at all. And here lies the task of the theory of knowledge. Logic has only to do with such reasons of judgments which are truths.<sup>32</sup>

The passage from the Basic Laws of Arithmetic quoted above offers, on closer inspection, a transcendental pragmatic foundation in a teleological form, whereby recognition of logical laws is a condition of the possibility of every judgment, a judgment that we cannot, in principle, avoid. It is surprising at first when Frege then remarks that he “neither wants to deny nor confirm this opinion”; since he actually does provide a foundation for it. It is, however, relevant for Frege to emphasize “that we have no logical conclusion here”, that is, the foundation is not of the logical type.

Frege's argument can be located in the context of the southwest German Neo-Kantianism of his time and thus be better understood. In particular, it

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<sup>30</sup> FREGE, 1893, vol. 1, p. XVII. The page numbers of the English edition match those of the German original.

<sup>31</sup> DUMMETT, 1991, p. 25.

<sup>32</sup> FREGE, 1983, p. 3.

shows great agreement with Wilhelm Windelband's characterization of the epistemic status of logical laws, which he presented in his paper *Kritische oder genetische Methode?* (1883). It should be highlighted that Windelband and Frege agree that the normativity of the laws of logic – as validity “for us” – refers to our will as “will to truth”. For Frege logical laws “set the standards for our thinking if it wants to attain the truth”<sup>33</sup>. Like Frege, Windelband already makes it clear that the validity (in the sense of being true (*Wahrsein*)) of the basic laws of logic (“axioms”) cannot be proven with “logical necessity”. Instead, however, the “teleological necessity” of these laws can be appointed, when we reflect upon the fact “that their validity must absolutely be recognized” if “thinking wants to fulfill the purpose of being true”<sup>34</sup>. The teleological necessity of basic laws arises, in this sense, from the purpose of thinking “to be true”, and in this sense, then, truth represents a value for us.

As a result, it can be stated: A transcendental justification is an epistemological one. It provides a non-logical justification of logical laws. In contrast to a logical justification, namely a deductive proof, which states “a ground of being true”, the epistemological foundation provides “a ground of our taking to be true”<sup>35</sup>; but it is, nevertheless, a ground. This is exactly how epistemology differs from psychology, which does not look for reasons/grounds, but rather for causes of our taking something to be true (*Fürwahrhalten*).

The aspect that truth represents a value deserves further investigation. Frege's talk of truth-values is mostly viewed as an analogy to the

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<sup>33</sup> FREGE, 1893, vol. 1, p. XVI, my emphasis.

<sup>34</sup> WINDELBAND, 1915, p. 109, my emphasis.

<sup>35</sup> FREGE, 1893, vol. 1, p. XVII.

mathematical talk of function-values. As is well known, Frege proceeds in such a way that he first defines concepts as functions whose value (for all admissible arguments) is one of the two truth-values<sup>36</sup>. Then, he also allows for truth-values to be arguments and thus comes to the, currently still relevant, analysis of propositional connectives (such as 'not', 'and', 'or', 'if - then' etc.) as truth-value functions, namely as those functions for which not only the values but also the arguments are truth values<sup>37</sup>.

Despite this function-theoretical role of truth values, the value-theoretical aspect must not be overlooked. The argument in favor of identifying the reference (*Bedeutung*) of a sentence with its truth-value shows that Frege makes use of the secondary meaning (*Nebenbedeutung*) of 'having a reference' (*Bedeutung haben*) in the sense of 'being important' or 'having value', in which he aims to lay down a connection between reference and value: "Thought loses value for us, as soon as we recognize that one of its parts is missing its reference."<sup>38</sup> In particular in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, this important nuance has been lost with the translation of '*Bedeutung*' as 'reference'. It—and thus the value and not the function-theoretical interpretation—provides the actual justification for speaking of truth values and, therefore, the basis of Frege's theory of judgment and assertion as acknowledgement of Truth-recognition (*Wahreitsanerkennung*).

Frege's value-theoretical conception of truth has as its forerunner, once again, southwest German Neo-Kantianism. Significant here is Lotze's distinction regarding the difference between truth and untruth (*Unwahrheit*) in terms of a "difference in value" between "combinations of ideas"

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<sup>36</sup> FREGE, 1891, p. 15.

<sup>37</sup> FREGE, 1891, p. 28; with more details: FREGE, 1893, vol. 1, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> FREGE, 1892, p. 33. This aspect was probably first pointed out by ANGELELLI, 1982.

(*Vorstellungsverbindungen*)<sup>39</sup>. It becomes the starting point of a theory of validity (*Geltungstheorie*) of judgment that has value-theoretical foundations. On the basis of the already mentioned act theory of judgment, Windelband interprets the decision in the judgment of cognition (*Erkenntnisurteil*) in a practical-evaluative sense. In the footsteps of Lotze's value-theoretical conception of the distinction between true and untrue, he carries out a parallelization of the logical with the ethical and aesthetic judgment, by grasping their commonality as a "value judgment". Windelband sharpens Lotze's view that affirmative and negative judgments are "two opposing secondary judgments" about the validity or invalidity of a combination of ideas<sup>40</sup>. In this sense, valuation (*Bewertung*) is not a secondary but the main moment of the judgment. In this context he introduces the term "truth-value" as an analogy to the usual talk of values, emphasizing that logical truth-value should be "coordinated with the other values"<sup>41</sup>. In Windelband's interpretation of the act of judgment as a decision about the truth value of a propositional content, the connection, characteristic of Frege's theory of judgment, between the act-theoretical and value-theoretical moment had already been implemented.

Windelband's approach was further developed specially by Rickert. Unlike Friedrich Nietzsche, who sees at work, in judgment, a "will to power", Rickert stresses that a "will to truth" manifests itself in "recognition of the truth-value". In a critical allusion to Nietzsche, he says: "Beyond good and

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<sup>39</sup> LOTZE, 1874, p. 4. The expression „Vorstellungsverbindung“ is also used by Frege (in the same sense of Lotze's one) in his earlier theory of judgment, where he affirms that the omission of the sentence's judgment stroke transforms it "into a mere imaginary connection": (1879, p. 1.)

<sup>40</sup> LOTZE, 1874, § 40.

<sup>41</sup> WINDELBAND, 1884, p. 173.

evil' it is possible for the purely theoretical man to stand, but never beyond true or false."<sup>42</sup> This emphasizes the transcendental character of the true-false distinction.

Also for Frege, judgment is an action (*Tat*) that is carried out by the subject as a "perpetrator"<sup>43</sup>. This action is the result of a "choice" between two opposing thoughts: "the rejection of one of them and recognition of the other is *one* action. One does not need, thus, a special name or a special sign for the rejection."<sup>44</sup> Here it is once again expressed, that for Frege there are not two, but only one act of judgment, given that the act of rejection is grasped as an act of recognition of the truth of the negated thought. If one disregards this difference from the authors of traditional logic, one could, then, say: by labeling the act, in which the truth value of a thought is decided as an "action" (*Tat*), Frege comes very close to the value-theoretical conception of Neokantianism, which grants to judgment a practical dimension. Moreover, he assigns a special (in today's sense 'pragmatic') function to the judgment stroke as a sign of assertion: The judgment stroke does not designate anything, but rather indicates that the content that follows from it is asserted<sup>45</sup>.

Frege's positive attitude in regards to the value-theoretical approach is expressed in the fact that he emphasizes the "kinship" of logic and ethics<sup>46</sup>, and also approvingly refers to the Neo-Kantian triad of values: "Like the word 'beautiful' in aesthetics and 'good' in ethics, 'true' indicates the direction

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<sup>42</sup> RICKERT, 1892, p. 90.

<sup>43</sup> FREGE, 1919, p. 151, note 10.

<sup>44</sup> FREGE, 1983, p. 201.

<sup>45</sup> FREGE, 1891, p. 22, note. 7. Thiel (1965, p. 117) already assigns a "pragmatic" role to the judgment stroke.

<sup>46</sup> FREGE, 1983, p. 4.

in logic.”<sup>47</sup> Conversely, the reduction of two acts of judgment to a single act of recognition corresponds to the introduction of an additional truth value on the object side. Rickert, on the other hand, starting from the question about the “object of knowledge”, initially leaves it all to a single truth value, namely the truth-value of truth, when he says that “every theoretical judgment contains the recognition of the truth-value”<sup>48</sup>. Even if he does not make an explicit distinction between two truth-values, he ends up introducing “the untrue or false” as an independent, objective “negative theoretical value”<sup>49</sup>.

We find Frege's value-theoretical recognition theory of judgment to be also advocated by southwest German value-theoretical Neo-Kantianism and even largely anticipated by it. The last step remains reserved to Frege, namely the expansion of the mathematical concept of functions while allowing for truth values to be values and arguments of functions. This step towards a thorough replacement of the subject-predicate structure of judgment-thinking (*urteilenden Denkens*) by an argument-function structure is of course also what makes modern logic so superior to traditional logic.

## PART II: CARNAP, DILTHEY AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

At an early stage, Günther Patzig, in his epilogue to the new edition of Carnap's *pseudo-problems in philosophy* (from 1966), already suspected of “a surprising connection” between Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie* and the “‘overcoming of metaphysics’ of the logical empiricists”<sup>50</sup>. Patzig's reason for

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<sup>47</sup> FREGE, 1918, p. 58 (the introduction sentence).

<sup>48</sup> RICKERT, 1892, p. 89.

<sup>49</sup> RICKERT, 1928, p. 264.

<sup>50</sup> CARNAP, 1966, p. 100.

his conjecture was provided by the central use of the expression “*Lebensgefühl*” in Carnap's radical critique of metaphysics in *Overcoming Metaphysics through the Logical Analysis of Language*. Patzig left his conjecture out there, but also named a man that would have mediated this possible connection, Herman Nohl, whose meetings Carnap attended as a student in Jena.

Nohl was one of Dilthey's students and as such a representative of *Lebensphilosophie*, which at the beginning of the 20th century competed with the Neo-Kantianism that had prevailed in Germany up to that point. The influence of the *Lebensphilosophie* on Carnap was ignored for a long time. Some peculiarities of Carnap's critique of metaphysics can only be understood with the inclusion of *Lebensphilosophie*. Perhaps with the radicalization of the contrast between analytical and continental philosophy, the idea that a classic of the analytical tradition like Carnap could have been influenced by a classic of the continental tradition such as Dilthey has never been brought up. Even Michael Friedman, a connoisseur of the relationships between analytical and continental philosophy, was very astonished when I pointed out Carnap's references to the *Lebensphilosophie* in a conversation years ago<sup>51</sup>.

Carnap's early philosophy presents itself as a ‘crossroad’ between modern logic, Neo-Kantian constitutional theory and criticism of metaphysics coming from *Lebensphilosophie*. He was directly introduced to modern logic by its founder, Gottlob Frege. The philosophy of Kant was conveyed to him by the Neo-Kantian Bruno Bauch, under the supervision of

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<sup>51</sup> In the meantime, Friedman (2000, p. 152, n. 208) has also agreed to this connection.



whom he then received his doctorate with the book *Der Raum* in 1921<sup>52</sup>, and Nohl stands for the influence of the *Lebensphilosophie*. If Carnap's relationship to Frege and Bauch corresponded to the usual (distant) academic customs of the time, Carnap's mention of Nohl makes it clear that there was a closer relationship between the two:

I remember with special pleasure and gratitude the seminars of Hermann [sic, Herman] Nohl (at that time a young instructor in Jena), in philosophy, education, and psychology, even when the topic, for example, Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie*, was often somewhat remote from my main interests. My friends and I were particularly attracted by Nohl because he took a personal interest in the lives and thoughts of his students, in contrast to most of the professors in Germany at that time, and because in his seminars and in private talks he tried to give us a deeper understanding of philosophers on the basis of their attitude toward life [*Lebensgefühl*] and their cultural background<sup>53</sup>.

The "deeper understanding of philosophers" conveyed by Nohl says that the motivating force for their different metaphysics was to be found in their respective *Lebensgefühl*. The basis of such an assessment, which Carnap adopts from Nohl, is Dilthey's doctrine of worldviews (*Weltanschauungslehre*).

Dilthey defines metaphysics as a "scientific worldview" (*wissenschaftliche Weltanschauung*)<sup>54</sup>. In light of the "historical consciousness" (*geschichtlichen Bewußtsein*), which in its comparative historical considerations leads to the understanding into the way in which the different metaphysical systems have come into being, these systems are shown to be relative regardless of their own claim to objectivity. Dilthey speaks here of an "antinomy" between the claim to "general validity" of scientific world views and historical

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<sup>52</sup> CARNAP, 1922.

<sup>53</sup> CARNAP, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> DILTHEY, 1968, p. 3.

consciousness<sup>55</sup>. This antinomy is to be resolved by the fact that philosophy makes itself aware that the "diversity of its systems" has grown out of the diversity of life itself. Contradictions arose because different views of life (*Lebensanschauungen*) have become, in scientific consciousness, metaphysical worldviews by claiming objectivity and consequently exclusivity<sup>56</sup>. Dilthey does not simply replace the contradiction between opposing systems from the point of view of their validity with a theoretical relativism, but traces it back to underlying opposing *Lebensgefühle* and thus gives a *practical* interpretation: "The ultimate root of the worldview is life" <sup>57</sup>.

If one accepts Dilthey's analysis, then the question arises whether metaphysics, through its form of representation, does not pretend to be something that it is not able to leverage in terms of content. Dilthey himself already objects to the theoretical claim of worldviews that these are not "products of thought"<sup>58</sup>, and emphasizes that the metaphysicians "have expressed the personal conditions of life that are effective for them as valid, conceptual systems"<sup>59</sup>. Therefore, Kant's question as to how metaphysics is possible as a science is rejected from the outset. Philosophy as a worldview is put on the same level as art and religion<sup>60</sup>. On the other hand, Dilthey recognizes different metaphysical systems from a historical perspective as genuine and authentic forms of expression of *Lebensgefühle*. The truth of metaphysics is replaced by the truthfulness of the metaphysician.

What Carnap and Dilthey have in common is the conception that metaphysics can no longer be judged as "true" or "false" from the point of

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> DILTHEY, 1968, p. 8.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. already the title in Dilthey, *ibid.*, p. 26.

view of validity, but that metaphysical systems, like styles in art, are expressions of attitudes towards life (*Lebensgeföhle*). In Dilthey, therefore, philosophy no longer occupies a special, foundational position, but becomes an object of investigation (among others) of the *Geisteswissenschaft*. Of course, this also makes the problem of such an approach clear: Philosophy loses its systematic claim. Dilthey hermeneutically dissolves the validity claim of philosophy into an understanding of its genesis by tracing the different philosophemes back to their place in the life of the authors. Carnap does not go that far.

Carnap follows the life-philosophical (*lebensphilosophischen*) genealogical understanding program only as far as metaphysics is concerned. But he himself sticks to the validity claim of philosophy. Since, according to Carnap, the theoretical claim of metaphysics turns out to be a misguided expression of attitudes towards life (*Lebensgeföhle*), for him the claim to validity of philosophy should be reduced to "scientific logic", i.e., to what is now called logic and theory of science (*Wissenschaftstheorie*), including the theory of science (*Wissenschaftstheorie*).

Given that the validity test of metaphysical systems is replaced in Dilthey by the genealogy of their origin and their development as a worldview, metaphysics can no longer be grounded, but it can still be understood. Understanding presupposes that metaphysical statements are meaningful. Here Carnap goes a step further, following Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, by attempting to unmask metaphysical problems as meaningless pseudo-problems. This lack of meaningfulness, however, only affects the propositional formulation of validity claims, not their underlying motives, which Carnap is also able to comprehend. To this extent, Dilthey and Carnap

basically agree that metaphysical statements have no *cognitive* meaning, so that metaphysical systems represent the failed attempt to force a worldview based on an attitude towards life (*Lebensgefühl*) into a pseudo-scientific system, which leads such worldview to lose its connection to life itself.

The efforts of Dilthey's student Nohl for a "deeper understanding of philosophers", which Carnap so emphatically emphasizes, therefore, instead of having the goal of providing *proofs of logical validity* (*logischen Geltungsprüfung*), should have been oriented towards a psychological *genesis* of the systems, tracing it back to the respective attitude towards life of the authors, as well as to expose these different attitudes towards life as the driving forces in the formation of the different metaphysical systems, thus making them understandable. In contrast to these hermeneutical efforts of understanding, the consequences drawn by Carnap from Dilthey's philosophy of life are more radical. In this context, further continental backgrounds are to be revealed.

Here one should mention F. A. Lange, who is one of the founders of Neo-Kantianism. Lange (even before Dilthey) interpreted Kant's view that the metaphysical need is an anthropological constant in such a way that, keeping in sight the "emotional needs" (*Bedürfnisse des Gemüts*) humans "need to complement reality by an ideal world that has been created by themselves"<sup>61</sup>. Metaphysical "speculation" has its origin here. Lange described it as "conceptual poetry"<sup>62</sup> (*Begriffsdichtung*) and thus coined an expression that Dilthey later also utilizes in his *doctrine of worldviews*<sup>63</sup>. Lange characterized metaphysics as a hybrid between thinking via concepts and a

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<sup>61</sup> LANGE, 1974, p. 987.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 982.

<sup>63</sup> DILTHEY, 1968, p. 201.

poetic "elevation of the mind" (*Erhebung des Gemütes*)<sup>64</sup>. At the same time he asks critically whether satisfaction of the needs of the mind should "over and over again assume the illusion of a demonstrative science" and instead determines poetry, especially Schiller's, as the appropriate form of expression<sup>65</sup>.

Talk about "emotional needs" (*Bedürfnisse des Gemüts*) goes back to Hermann Lotze, who already stressed: "between the needs of the mind/emotional needs (*Bedürfnisse des Gemüts*) and the results of human science, there is an old, never-ending dispute."<sup>66</sup> In the course of the 19th century, Lotze's formulation was taken up as a topos for the defense of an inductive metaphysics<sup>67</sup>, respectively, an independent value science, which, in southwest German Neo-Kantianism, substituted the scientific worldview<sup>68</sup>. In a central passage, namely at the end of the preface to the *Logical Structure of the World*, Carnap critically refers to this tradition, replacing the metaphysical motif by a methodological one: "We too, have "emotional needs" (*Bedürfnisse des Gemüts*) in philosophy, but they are filled by clarity of concepts, precision of methods, responsible theses, achievement through cooperation in which each individual plays his part"<sup>69</sup>.

In the final emphatic paragraph Carnap stresses that, the "style of thinking" mentioned here is also expressed "in artistic trends, especially architecture, and in movements that strive for a meaningful design of human life"<sup>70</sup>. What is

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<sup>64</sup> LANGE, 1974, p. 988.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 987.

<sup>66</sup> LOTZE, 1876, vol. 1, p. V.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. WUNDT: *System der Philosophie*, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup> RICKERT, 1910/11, p. 9.

<sup>69</sup> CARNAP, 1961, p. XV.

<sup>70</sup> CARNAP, 1961, p. XV.

meant here in particular is the *Neue Sachlichkeit* movement in architecture. Carnap gave several lectures at the Bauhaus in Dessau, including a version of *overcoming metaphysics through the logical analysis of language*<sup>71</sup>.

By subjecting metaphysics to the verdict that it is propositionally meaningless, Carnap radicalizes Lange's and Dilthey's positions and draws consequences from their problematization of the form of representation of metaphysics. On the one hand, Dilthey's analysis enables him to retain a remnant of comprehensible understanding. Carnap, on the other hand, ultimately replaces Dilthey's benevolent understanding program with an enlightening explanatory program that aims to "overcome" metaphysics.

Now Carnap in no way fails to recognize that something important can be addressed in metaphysics. He disputes, however, that it can be represented in the form of meaningful statements. Apart from this, Carnap admits that language still has functions other than making statements. Alongside a cognitive function it assumes an emotional one. This serves in particular to give expression of the attitude towards life (*Ausdruck des Lebensgefühls*). It is in precisely this function that Carnap sees metaphysics, which, however, attempts to clothe something in the form of statements that cannot be said. A legitimate need underlies metaphysics, one, however, which enters language in an inappropriate form. The adequate expression of the attitude towards life is to be not metaphysics, but art:

[I]n the case of metaphysics we find this situation: through the form of its works it pretends to be something that it is not. The form in question is that of a system of statements which are apparently related as premises and conclusions, that is, the form of a theory. [...] The metaphysician believes that he travels in territory in which truth and falsehood are at stake. In reality, however, he has not asserted anything, but only expressed something, like an artist<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> Cf. DAHMS, 2001,, p. 83.

<sup>72</sup> CARNAP, 1959, p. 79.

As the historical source for his surrogate thesis (“Metaphysicians are musicians without musical ability”) Carnap adduces Nietzsche, that metaphysician, “who perhaps had artistic talent to the highest degree”<sup>73</sup> and was hence able to give expression to the *Lebensgefühl* in the form of poetry (in *Zarathustra*).

If we consider the historical stock of philosophical forms of presentation, we find the complete spectrum between the poles of science and poetry. The question is always, according to which of these one orients oneself. Carnap orients himself methodically towards science, that is, towards the justification of statements. With him philosophy is absorbed by the logic of science; it no longer has contents of its own. These contents are passed on to poetry where they find the form appropriate to them. In a manner of speaking, with Carnap Frege’s *Begriffsschrift* lies on the desk and Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* on the bedside table. For the intermediate form of a “concept-poetry” (*Begriffsdichtung* in the sense of F. A. Lange) there is no place on either.

As a result of our investigation, one can hold that the philosophies of the classical analytic philosophers Frege and Carnap are, in different ways, deeply rooted in the continental tradition. Therefore, one should use the distinction between “analytic” and “continental” traditions for historical reasons, but not for systematic purposes.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

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