The Göttingen Four and the Exchange of North American and German Phenomenology

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Georg-August-Universität (Göttingen, Germany) has long been at the forefront of bilingual English-German scholarship, owing first to its founding by the British King George II (who was also a member of the German nobility), second to the participation of his English speaking offspring in the ruling life of the university, and third because thereafter it nurtured a robust network of exchange programs with English language universities. Likewise, its tradition of English liberalism, combined with its place at the origins of the German Romantic movement, meant that it was often surprisingly resistant to demands of intellectual submission to the sovereign or the theology faculty. Many scholars traveled there to conduct their work in this climate of relative freedom and respect for individual inquiry.

This article focuses on four scholars who conducted research at Georg-August-Universität—listed, in the order of their arrival: Josiah Royce (1876, as a graduate student), Edmund Husserl (1901–1916, as a professor), William Hocking (1902, as a graduate student), and Winthrop Bell (1911–1914, as a graduate student). The latter two were graduate students at Harvard under Royce and at Göttingen under Husserl, and they did much to interpret ideas between their teachers and between English and German language phenomenology.

Considering the relation of these four philosophers, there are strong reasons to look for a robust relationship between early North American phenomenology and German phenomenology, particularly by way of Harvard philosopher Royce, who began writing on what he called the “New Phenomenology” from 1879, and the Göttingen/Freiburg philosopher Husserl, who began writing on phenomenology from the last years of the 19th century. While the connection between Roycean and Husserlian phenomenology has been largely overlooked in histories of philosophy, a small but enduring community of scholars has noted striking similarities between Royce’s phenomenology and European phenomenology. Not including Royce’s and Husserl’s own work in this regard, we may date the origin of third-party comparisons of their thought to 1902, with Hocking.

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Some historical background is in order. First, as for Royce as a foundational modern phenomenologist, he commenced work in 1879 on his “new phenomenology” (in his phrase), as Loewenberg showed in his analysis of Royce’s unpublished writing—soon, that is, after Royce’s graduate studies in Göttingen. As Kegley and Sherover have further demonstrated, Royce’s early phenomenological sketches were followed by a lifetime of labor developing this phenomenological insight, centered on his groundbreaking work on the philosophy of time.¹

Second, Royce and Husserl not only share that they were graduate professors to Hocking and Bell and scholarly residents in Göttingen, but they shared important teachers and influences in common as well: James, Fichte, Strümpell, Rickert, Windelband, Lotze, Kant, Hegel, Brentano, and Wundt foremost among them. In fact, Husserl and Royce missed, by only a year, being classmates in Leipzig’s philosophy seminars.² That they had so many aspects of their education in common is a partial explanation for why they so quickly became interested in each other’s work, relative to most of their compatriots. Royce appears to have been the first American philosopher to publicly address Husserl’s thought in his 1902 presidential lecture to the American Psychological Association. Costello’s record of Royce’s 1913–1914 Harvard seminar demonstrates that he remained dedicated to this study. That Royce brought Husserl to prominence in America well prior to World War I is a noteworthy fact in its own right, given that histories of early phenomenology typically note Husserl’s North American influence as appearing only after the war, and then only marginally at first. In fact, Husserl’s thought did not trickle onto, so much as flood, the American scene, by Royce’s efforts, and those of his students Hocking and Bell, who thereafter became professors at Harvard University.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Husserl appears to be the first German philosopher to direct a dissertation on Royce, and paid him high praise, telling the dissertation’s author: “Royce is an important thinker and may only be treated as such.”³ While some German appropriations of Royce


²Royce, Husserl’s elder by several years, arrived and left Leipzig first. He commenced his graduate studies as Husserl commenced his undergraduate education.

were independent of Husserl, as with Windelband’s Roycean turn in his 1909 Rektoral address at Heidelberg,⁴ it is clear that Husserl played a central role in importing Roycean phenomenology to the European continent.

Finally, while Husserl and Royce are well-known philosophers, with a stream of articles and books recently dedicated to explicating their respective systems, what of Hocking and Bell, whose work is more rarely cited in contemporary discourse? Historians of Husserlian phenomenology have studied the efforts of Husserl’s second-generation North American students at Freiburg to a greater extent than the first generation at Göttingen. In fact, it was Hocking and Bell (the Göttingen students) who as professors at Harvard enabled the Harvard–Freiburg exchange to flourish after the war. In the decade after Royce’s death, they were the most important North American interpreters of Husserl’s methods, and recommended many promising Harvard students like Charles Hartshorne, Marvin Farber, and Dorion Cairns to terms of study with Husserl—significant facts for the future of English-language phenomenology, since Hartshorne has been described as the greatest metaphysician of the latter part of the twentieth century, while Farber and Cairns became principal leaders of the English-language phenomenological movement. However, even if we ignore Hocking’s and Bell’s subsequent professorial careers and focus only on their graduate studies at Harvard and Göttingen, we will find that they played a crucial role in the history of philosophy as interpreters between the phenomenological traditions of the North American and European continents, especially by their efforts in teaching Royce’s phenomenology to Husserl at crucial stages of his development as a philosopher.

**Royce in Relation to Phenomenology**

The need for systematic study of links between Royce and Husserlian phenomenology is confirmed by examining the record of scholars, who observe numerous and striking theoretical similarities between them. For instance, Herbert Spiegelberg writes that Husserl’s appropriation of idealism and his critique of realism approaches “the idealism of Josiah Royce to such an extent that one may well be curious about the significance of this parallel and even raise the question of possible contacts.”⁵ He notes, in particular, the similarity of Royce’s notion of “meaning as purpose” to Husserl’s theory of intentionality, and of Royce’s social idealism to Husserl’s theory of in-

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tersubjectivity. Further, he suggests that Royce’s “remarkably keen” public commentary on Husserl’s *Logische Untersuchungen* may have been the source of Peirce’s knowledge of Husserl.

Jitendranath Mohanty finds “no better means of explicating Husserl’s point” on the internal relation of intention and fulfillment in external meaning than in Royce’s “well-known doctrine … [which] comes as near to Husserl’s doctrine as any other view held by any other philosopher.” 6 Farber—himself a participant in the Harvard-Freiburg exchange—writes that “[a]mong recent idealists, Royce particularly invites comparison with Husserl” and suggests strong similarities between their analyses of experience, while criticizing Spiegelberg for underestimating similarities between Royce’s and Husserl’s work on logic. 7 These discussions have occurred as asides in publications primarily dedicated to other matters, and I have found only two authors, Kegley and Goicoechea, who have written accounts primarily focused on the relation of Royce and Husserl. Kegley, who has given the most extensive account, describes “important phenomenological themes in Royce’s thought,” showing how his Gifford Lectures of 1898 advance a “phenomenology of judgment.” She notes strong similarities between Royce’s and Husserl’s critique of the mathematization of nature and their studies of the temporal nature of consciousness. She writes that “Royce was insisting on the intentional character of ideas and mental acts before Husserl and even perhaps before Brentano.” 8 The influence of Royce’s phenomenology of intentionality is a topic that will merit its own dedicated study, given that Hocking and Kegley both suggested Royce’s study may have preceded Brentano’s, and given that the shared doctrine of intentionality has been the similarity between Royce and Husserl most noted by scholars.

David Goicoechea, following Spiegelberg’s note on Husserl’s interest in Royce, published an article focusing on harmonizations between Royce’s *The World and the Individual* and Husserl’s phenomenology. In particular, he analyzes Royce’s reductions and his logical work, and notes significant similarities between Royce and Husserl’s relation of Being and Idea. Goicoechea writes that “with a process which is much like Husserlian free imaginative variation [Royce] focuses on the notion of the independence of idea and reality as the core of realism. Through conceptual analysis he sees

that independence cannot mean that reality is ‘outside the mind’ or ‘other than mind.”

Furthermore, scholars have identified relations between Royce and the broader phenomenological movement. Already in 1930 Lanz suggested strong similarities between Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) and Royce’s *The World and the Individual*. It is interesting to note that Royce’s philosophy of death, from the second volume of the *World and the Individual*, seems to have anticipated a trend that dominates the *Festschrift* on Husserl that Lanz reviews. Recent accounts have continued to call attention to relations between Royce and Heidegger’s phenomenologies; as Ricci observed, “Josiah Royce’s discussion of the temporal and the eternal in 1901 bears a remarkable resemblance to Heidegger’s meditation on time in *Being and Time*.”

Ideas whose inventions are often credited to Heidegger—for instance being as time, and being towards death—are already fully formed in Royce’s two-volume masterwork *The World and the Individual*, which appeared decades before *Sein und Zeit*. Goicoechea, Corrington, and Sherover have also noted close relations between Royce’s philosophy and Heidegger’s.

Royce has been brought into dialogue with other phenomenological figures. Tunstall has recently written on the relation among Royce, Husserl, Levinas, and Marcel, especially in relation to questions of the ethics and epistemology of alterity. Royce’s relation to neo-phenomenological Continental hermeneutics has been noted by such scholars as Apel, Corrington, Stikkers and Vessey—Apel writing that Royce’s philosophy is the closest American relation to German hermeneutics, while Vessey judges that “Royce’s connection between interpretation and community ... provides the best intersection of Continental and pragmatic theories of interpretation.” Stikkers compares Royce with Hans-Georg Gadamer, and suggests that the addition of Roycean considerations can profitably inform Gadamerian analyses of com-

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13 Karl-Otto Apel, *Transformation der Philosophie* (Frankfurt, 1976), 205. Also see Apel’s *Der Denkweg von Charles S. Peirce* (Frankfurt, 1975), 204.

munity and tradition, the self, and the primacy of texts,\textsuperscript{15} while Corrington shows how Royce can move beyond subjective considerations dominant in hermeneutics to consider intersubjective ones as well.\textsuperscript{16}

In turn, European appropriations of Royce have had an effect on subsequent North American philosophy. For instance, Richard Hocking described the rebirth of American interest in Royce, following several decades of neglect, as arising from the American reading of discussions of Royce by French phenomenologists and existentialists, enduring since at least as early as Gabriel Marcel’s influential studies of Royce in *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* in 1918–1919.\textsuperscript{17}

**Husserl’s Study of Royce**

Although Royce and Husserl were students of a remarkably similar intellectual climate—one that included a sizable Jamesian influence,\textsuperscript{18} in addition to the influence of numerous German and idealistic philosophers—this fact still seems insufficient to explain the many parallel developments found in their philosophical writings, even when we consider that both were working to bridge the divide between the new American pragmatism and the then-dominant Kantian tradition. There were many other ways that this could have been done without reference to the argument that pure phenomenology supports idealism and is a demonstration of the Absolute. If Royce and Husserl had been merely following trends, then they would have, on the one hand, latched onto the possibility that phenomenology would support the “new realism,” proving discreteness between the real and ideal, which was a trend intended to sweep aside the then-dominant Kantian idealistic (rationalistic, a priori) tradition; or, if they had been reactionary in opposition to this new trend, then on the other hand, they could have remained firm with Kantian epistemological idealism.


The tendency in the brief historical accounts relating Royce and Husserl has been to ascribe the beginning of Husserl’s interest in Royce to 1911, with Bell’s arrival in Göttingen. If Husserl’s Roycean education had commenced so late, then the importance of Royce’s phenomenology to the origins of Husserlian phenomenology would be somewhat modest, since by 1911 Husserl and his followers were well on their way to developing the public presentation of their phenomenological method (even though what may be termed its first major published treatise, Husserl’s *Ideen*, did not appear until 1913). If this is true, then we could hold, then, no special place for Royce as an original contributor to the Göttingen phenomenological method.

There are, however, important reasons to look earlier than 1911 for Husserl’s study of Royce, and even prior to the 1904–1905 origins of Husserl’s focus on the phenomenology of time (during his winter semester lectures at Göttingen), and his focus on pure phenomenology (as opposed to his earlier and more limited notion, from 1899, of phenomenology as a description of inner experience). Considering evidence of Husserl’s interest in Royce prior to his study of pure phenomenology will allow us to look beyond mere coincidences between Royce’s and Husserl’s phenomenological research, and rather suggest a profound Roycean impact on early Husserlian phenomenology.

19 Bell himself thought that he was the major source of Husserl’s interest in Royce and that Husserl had not heard of Royce beyond that he was an American idealist who argued with William James (at a moment when Husserl had identified his own problems with James). It is not surprising that Bell would not have known of Hocking’s discussions with Husserl a decade earlier, and did not sufficiently attend to the fact that Husserl picked Royce out of a lineup, so to speak—he asked Bell to write on Royce after having asked Bell to list American idealists. We might imagine that Bell and Hocking would have come into closer contact prior to Bell’s studies in Göttingen if Bell had known that he was to study in Göttingen after his completion of his Master’s at Harvard; however, Bell initiated his Ph.D. studies in England, but had to leave England due to lung problems he suffered there, and so ended up in Germany as a last-minute change.

20 While Husserl first published the term ‘phenomenology’ in 1899, he did not hit upon the idea of making phenomenology his central focus of his philosophical thinking until 1903 (by Hocking’s account) or 1904-1905 (by others’ accounts), and there is a considerable distance between the systematic philosophy of his later years and the descriptive psychology implied by his earlier use of the term. As Mohanty observes, “The years 1905–1910 are the years during which [Husserl] makes the most important discoveries of his life, discoveries which determined the rest of his thinking.” Jitendranath Mohanty, “The Development of Husserl’s Thought,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, ed. Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 57.
A first clue that Husserl’s interest in Royce began prior to 1911 is Bell’s own report that he himself did not personally propose the topic of Royce for his dissertation, but rather that Husserl requested it. Bell’s role was not, then, to initiate Husserl’s interest in Royce’s philosophy. Nevertheless, we may describe Bell’s role as being very important—he did not merely give an introduction of Royce to Husserl, but rather a Master Class on Royce’s phenomenology not only to Husserl but also to the broader Göttingen phenomenological circle.

What, then, are likely sources of Husserl’s awareness of Royce prior to 1911? Hocking’s friendship with Husserl from 1902 is one route. However, let us first consider circumstantial evidence, as we recall that Royce was during those years one of the most internationally prominent American philosophers and one of its most prominent psychologists. Over a period of about a decade, Royce had served as president of both the American Philosophical Association and the American Psychological Association, lectured at prominent European forums, including the 1898–1900 Gifford Lectures in Scotland and at the 1908 Heidelberg Philosophy Congress (where he was the only native English-speaking philosopher to give a plenary lecture), and he had served as chair of the Harvard philosophy department, which was arguably the world’s most prominent philosophy department, especially given its place at the center of the pragmatism controversy that had enveloped much of the philosophical world. Royce had worked on synthesizing pragmatism and idealism for decades before the two sides clashed in Europe, and for those who wished to do more than defend one side and attack the other, Royce’s position held great attraction. But even for those who did wish to defend one side or the other, Royce could at least speak to them in sympathetic terms.21

Also, earlier than 1911, selections of Royce’s work had been translated into German,22 and discussions of his thought had appeared in German philosophical literature.23 In addition, Husserl and Royce personally knew some philosophers in common—such as Moritz Geiger—and they shared at


22 The first example I have found is Christian Ufer’s 1894 translation of Royce, “Wie unterscheiden sich gesunde und krankhafte Geisteszustände beim Kinde?”

23 Perhaps the greatest area of German discussion of Royce’s work was his logic, overlapping with one of the central concerns of Husserl’s early research.
least one professor—e.g., Wundt—in common from their nearly overlapping student days in Germany in the 1870s.

Further, it is at least very plausible that someone would have alerted Husserl to the fact that Royce discussed his work in his presidential address to the American Psychological Association in 1902. Husserl might indeed have been as surprised as Spiegelberg to learn that a world-famous philosopher was discussing his work in such a prominent forum; although Husserl was at this point becoming known domestically as a promising logician, he was still years away from being the leader of the internationally prominent German school of phenomenology.

The case for mutual influences between Husserlian and Roycean phenomenology does not rely merely on such indirect proofs. Why, then, should we commence with a consideration of such evidence? The main use of such discussion is to show that the philosophical works of both Royce and Husserl was able to enter into dialogue by virtue of the fact that both were members of a robust community of interpretation that existed between North American and German philosophy. Far from national isolation, it was by participation in an international phenomenological community that there came to be a great deal of German philosophy in Royce, and a great deal of American philosophy in Husserl.

**Hocking’s Early Mediation Between Royce and Husserl**

It is commonly acknowledged that Hocking was Husserl’s first philosophically important international student, but considerations of Hocking’s relation to phenomenology usually stop at this point. More than this, Hocking played a key role in exporting Royce’s phenomenology to Germany and Husserl’s philosophy to America, and his own mature philosophy proved an important influence on the development of Continental philosophy, especially Marcel’s.

After his 1902 studies with Husserl, Hocking returned to Harvard and wrote his dissertation under Royce’s direction. Subsequently, in his well-published academic career spent mostly at Harvard, he became one of the most important commentators on Royce’s philosophy. It is important to note that some of Hocking’s books are to be found in Husserl’s personal library.

Hocking was a main heir to the fortune of Royce’s systematic idealism, and

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24 Wilshire’s work is a notable exception.

he was, along with Hartshorne, among the most important comparative interpreters of Royce and Husserl during the twentieth century.

Hocking's friendship with Husserl, commencing in 1902, was long enduring. In addition to their shared interest in systematic idealism in relation to pragmatism, their friendship owes much to the fact that Hocking arrived in Göttingen prior to Husserl's fame as the leading light of German phenomenology and Hocking was at that time one of Husserl's few students. While various commentators have described Hocking as Husserl's first prominent international student, moreover he may have been the first student of any nationality who traveled to Göttingen with the primary purpose of studying with Husserl—the commencement of the well-known Munich Invasion of students who traveled to Göttingen is typically dated to circa 1905, and sometimes to as early as 1903, but it is clear that Hocking arrived still earlier. We may say that the Harvard Invasion of Göttingen commenced, then, prior to the Munich Invasion. While the Munich exchange has been given vastly more attention in histories of phenomenology, the Harvard exchange will prove, I believe, to be even more important in terms of its formative influence on German and American phenomenology.

That it was Hocking in particular who was Husserl's early teacher of Royce is an important fact, given that Hocking was in a privileged position to describe Royce's method. As indicated, Hocking studied with Royce at Harvard before studying with Husserl, and, during his time in Germany, he was very much under the influence of Royce's philosophy in general and in particular of *The World and the Individual*, the two-volume record of Royce's Gifford Lectures which had recently appeared in print.

In his theoretical comparison of Husserl and Royce, Hocking writes that Royce "anticipates the major insight of Husserl ... the judgment that *Wesen*, essence, is there as a factor of experience." Similarly, Royce focuses attention "precisely on that note of Being-*per-se* from which Husserl's *epoché* would abstract."27

Hocking, in his reminiscence of his time with Husserl in Göttingen, indicates that Royce was central to their discussions. Hocking writes that the second volume of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* reminded him at once of "Royce's doctrine of the Real as fulfillment of purpose," and that "distinctions between Royce and Husserl were not slow in making themselves felt." Hocking, in his analysis of Husserl's 1903 correspondence with him, suggests that Husserl meant to include Royce among the "Neufichteaner"

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26 This is evidenced by the philosophically significant correspondence between them, collected in the third volume of Husserl's *Briefwechsel*, ed. Elisabeth Schuhmann and Karl Schuhmann (Kluwer, 1994), 129–174.

(New Fichteans), and in the same year began to identify his own “position as Phänomenologie.”

We may witness the origins of Husserl’s move towards systematic idealism during these first years after Hocking’s departure; even as Husserl’s frustrated disciples, hopeful that Husserl was advancing a doctrine of realism in opposition to Kantian idealism, apparently did not recognize his turn to idealism until the publication of the *Ideen* in 1913—a turn to idealism that has been compared by numerous scholars, as we have seen, to Royce’s idealism. Royce and Husserl both refused to admit final discreteness between the real and the ideal, since it is both the case that ideas are real, and that they enter into creatively transformative relations with the real objects of their intentions—and here Husserl and Royce differed both from metaphysical realism and from epistemological idealism that eschewed metaphysical speculation. Husserl and Royce were surprisingly realistic, even in their idealism.

Hocking likely underestimated his own role in importing Husserlian philosophy to the English language. For not only did his friendship with Husserl influence the decision of a number of Harvard students to study with Husserl in Freiburg after the war, but, at least as importantly, he kept American interest in Husserlian phenomenology alive during a period of marked anti-German sentiment during and after World War I. While it is indeed the case that after the war Hocking carried on a tradition of Husserl studies that had been established at Harvard by his teacher Royce prior to the war, it is very important that he chose to protect the flame after Royce’s death rather than allowing it to be extinguished. He could have gone the way of Alfred Chandler, another of Husserl’s Harvard students at Göttingen, who severely criticized his former teacher Husserl in print during the war, despite his seeming early sympathy with phenomenology prior to the war. Had Hocking followed this path, the influence of Husserlian phenomenology in America would have been cut off at its Harvard roots. Had this happened, it is difficult to imagine the possibility of the robust Harvard-Freiburg philosophical exchange that flourished after the war—an exchange heavily supported by Hocking.

Were it not for Hocking’s powerful and sustained protection, it is not obvious that German phenomenology would have received a fair hearing in the anti-German climate of those days. Although he did not self-identify as a phenomenologist, he was a friend and protector of the movement, and by

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The Gottingen Four

virtue of his professorial work at Harvard, phenomenology certainly found a more secure and prominent home in the English language than it would have received without his efforts. However we may regard as a still more important fact Hocking's earlier exportation of American phenomenology and idealism to Gottingen at a crucial point of Husserl's intellectual development—just before Husserl was to metamorphose from a specialist in logic and mathematics to a systematic idealist of the first rank.

Winthrop Bell

Had Royce's and Husserl's mutual interest in one another's thought began and ended in 1902, we might regard these as curious but isolated instances. However, just as Royce confirmed his 1902 interest in Husserl a decade later by his discussion of Husserl in his Harvard seminar, so too Husserl's 1902 interest in Royce was confirmed a decade later with his hand-picked selection of Royce's recent graduate student, Winthrop Bell, and his commissioning of Bell to write a dissertation exploring the phenomenological dimensions of Royce's epistemology.

In the early 1920s, Husserl wrote to Hocking, at that time a professor at Harvard, and suggested that he should find a teaching post at Harvard for Bell—Husserl's first North American PhD student. Bell was indeed hired by Harvard's philosophy department, where he appears to be the first Husserlian phenomenologist to teach in the United States.

What then of the primacy of Royce and Hocking, both of whom knew Husserl's thought well before Bell's arrival in Germany? In fact, Royce's studies of Husserl occurred prior to the development of Husserl's focus on pure phenomenology, and likewise Hocking's time with Husserl occurred before Husserl's central focus had shifted to phenomenology. Royce and Hocking had been interested in Husserl as a logician. Bell, on the other hand, was a resident of the Gottingen phenomenological community during its Golden Age and during one of Husserl's most important periods of creativity, and was present for the publication of Husserl's Ideen. So, too, Bell was both student and professor at Harvard during its own Golden Age. While Royce and Hocking made Husserl's name known to North American audiences, it was Bell's Canadian and American professorships that were the beachhead of the influence of Husserlian phenomenology on philosophy conducted in the English language.

Despite Bell's prominent early posts and his important role as interpreter between American and German phenomenology, his philosophi-
cal work has not yet received its own dedicated study. Although his name appears frequently in histories of early German phenomenology, typically his mention is limited to just a name in lists of Husserl's Göttingen students. Several other accounts have noted Bell's financial generosity to Husserl and the wider phenomenological circle, including substantial support of Husserl's research in the difficult economic time after the war.

On the several occasions when Bell's contributions to phenomenology have been discussed at greater length, the usual suggestion has been that his arrival in 1911 marked the origins of Husserl's Roycean education. This misapprehension is perhaps a central reason why deep connections between Royce's and Husserl's phenomenologies have been frequently overlooked in most histories of philosophy, since this late arrival would mean that Royce's influence was not present at the formation of Husserl's phenomenological method. We could still (with Spiegelberg) look for Roycean influences on the Ideen, published during Bell's time in Göttingen, and afterwards, but not on Husserl's formative research on pure phenomenology and the phenomenology of time.

However, Husserl was interested in Royce prior to Bell's arrival in Göttingen—an interest so strong that Husserl would have "nothing else," in Bell's phrase, than that he write his dissertation on Royce. Far from it being the case that Bell foisted the topic of Royce's phenomenology on Husserl, rather the situation is quite the opposite: Bell was surprised, having traveled so far to study European philosophy, to be asked to write on so familiar a topic as his recent graduate school professor at Harvard, where Bell had received his Master's degree in philosophy.

If it is not the case that Bell introduced Royce's thought to Husserl, what then were his contributions to the interpretation of American and German phenomenology? A full treatment of this question must be reserved for future studies, but we may briefly consider two areas of influence. First, Bell did not present an introductory but rather an advanced class on Royce to Husserl and to Göttingen's phenomenological circle—and this he did during a crucial period of the development of the new German phenomenological movement in the years surrounding the publication of Husserl's masterwork, the Ideen. Royce's influence was felt elsewhere in the Göttingen circle as well: on Bell's friend Edith Stein's philosophy of empathy, on his fellow Göttingen

31 Mount Allison University Archives, Winthrop Pickard Bell fonds, 8550/1/101—item no. 8.
32 Bell's and Husserl's mutual student Dorion Cairns's account is useful here in terms of its description of Bell's early studies in Göttingen, even as his account of the process by which Bell later received his Ph.D. contains errors. "Phenomenology: Continuation and Criticism, Essays in Memory of Dorion Cairns." (Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 5.
students Koyré and Hering,\textsuperscript{33} and scholars have noted strong resemblances between Royce and Marcel, Levinas, Heidegger, and other later representatives of the European phenomenological movement. Bell’s translation of Royce into German, with an eye towards Royce’s relevance to phenomenology, surely was an important aid to the phenomenological circle’s access to Royce’s ideas.

Second, it appears that Bell was the first English language professor of Husserlian phenomenology in both Canada, at the University of Toronto, and in the United States, at Harvard University (or, at least, the first personally trained by Husserl). In North America, he performed significant labors introducing Husserl’s thought in the English language through his teaching efforts, personal communications, assistance with the translation of Husserl into English, and his recommendation of promising students to terms of study with Husserl.

I have suggested that misattribution of the commencement date of Husserl’s study of Royce has been a significant reason that relations between Roycean and Husserlian phenomenology have been widely neglected in the history of philosophy. However, the still more important reason for this neglect was World War I, a serious blow to international phenomenological cooperation. For several years the war severed links between the Harvard and German phenomenological communities, and it resulted in Bell’s imprisonment in Germany between 1914–1918 as a civilian prisoner of war.

Bell, as a citizen of one of Germany’s first enemy nations, Canada, was trapped in Germany after Great Britain’s declaration of war. Husserl and the committee conducted Bell’s oral examination at his place of detention, and passed him with honors. However, stoked by the anger of the conservative German press, public outrage boiled at Husserl and the rest of Bell’s committee for having dared promote an enemy citizen.\textsuperscript{34} He was summarily expelled from Göttingen’s student rolls, and forbidden the doctoral degree.

Had Bell’s career proceeded along a normal path, formative mutual relations between Royce’s and Husserl’s phenomenology, and modern American and German phenomenology, would likely be facts commonly acknowledged in histories of philosophy. For, already in the early months of 1914, Bell was on a fast track to professional academic success, with his two graduate professors Husserl and Royce well-established as internationally influential philosophers. The academic job offers he received at Toronto and Harvard soon after he was released from prison (and after he was engaged


\textsuperscript{34} Perhaps the most detailed published account of this period of Bell’s life is found in Edith Stein’s Life in a Jewish Family (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1986), 301–303.
for a period of time as a Reuters correspondent in Germany, after the war) are testament to the strength of his résumé.

Given Husserl's offer in 1922 to publish Bell's dissertation in the series he controlled, coupled with the promising beginnings of Bell's career at Toronto and Harvard in the early 1920s, why have we not heard about his philosophical work? A large part of the answer has to do with the fact that he did not take Husserl up on this publication offer. Even if this had been his only philosophical publication, it would have explained a lot.

In a broader sense, Bell's lack of a philosophical publishing record is a complicated story. However, in brief, his promising academic career in philosophy was derailed because he had started it so late in life due to his imprisonment in Germany for nearly the entire duration of World War I and because Georg-August-Universität embargoed his PhD until 1922, eight years after his dissertation had been successfully defended. By the time Husserl offered to publish his dissertation, Bell was far distant in time and space from his research notes and advisors and his committee had scattered to different institutions. I strongly suspect that the dissertation he successfully defended in 1914 was intended as a penultimate rather than a final draft, and was hurried to a defense by Husserl before the political situation turned still worse. To have edited the draft to publishable form eight years later in the United States while attending to the requirements of a demanding teaching load would have involved tremendous labors. Such labors would have been far lesser had he been able to complete the work in Germany in 1914.

Perhaps it is too strong to say that Bell was robbed of his first major publication, but indeed he faced serious and insurmountable impediments in bringing to public light a document that would have done a great deal to explicate early connections between American and German phenomenology. We may hope that his dissertation will be published in the near future, in fulfillment of Husserl's recommendations, and to finally rectify a serious injustice.

Bell was already thirty when he defended his dissertation, and due to the interruption of the war, it would be eight years until he finally could begin his academic career in earnest as a doctor of philosophy. Despite his career's promising beginnings in the 1920s at some of North America's most prestigious institutions—Toronto, Harvard, and Radcliffe—it appears that Bell found that he was unable to support his family in his middle age on what amounted to a novice assistant professor's salary. He left his professorship

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35 While he hardly left a trace as an author of publications in philosophy, he left a substantial and still-cited publishing record in the discipline of history.

36 So too it might be the case that its rough edges owe to the fact that the time he had budgeted for editing was consumed with the legal procedures associated with his incarceration.
after several years of teaching, and started a successful career in business with his brother Ralph. He later returned to academia as a trustee of his alma mater, Mount Allison University, and as a historian.

I hope to return to discussions of Bell’s role in the interpretation of German and American phenomenology in the near future, including his role in transmitting Royce to Heidegger. Scholars since at least as early as Lanz in 1930 have noted the resemblance of Royce’s and Heidegger’s theories, and Bell’s work is one of the most plausible routes by which Royce may have come to influence Heidegger. Indeed, a significant portion of Bell’s financial support of Husserl found its way to Heidegger, and it is difficult to imagine that Heidegger would have been ignorant of the source of these funds. Likewise, given the fact that Bell and Heidegger were members of the rather close-knit phenomenological social circle gathered around Husserl, it is almost impossible to think that Heidegger would have remained ignorant of Bell’s incarceration, the national scandal surrounding Husserl’s attempted promotion of Bell in 1914, and of Husserl’s successful efforts to finally secure the PhD for Bell. The effort to silence Bell’s work likely called more attention to it, at least so far as the phenomenological circle was concerned.

For the moment we may leave this discussion by noting another important fact that Bell leaves us as his bequest: that he delivered to Husserl all of Royce’s major writings. From this we know that Husserl, during the composition of his *Ideen*, had direct, unmediated access to Royce, the founder of American phenomenology—in addition to plural sources of mediated access. With this knowledge, we can read Royce and Husserl alongside one another with a new enthusiasm for uncovering formative mutual influences between modern American and German phenomenology.

### Towards an Understanding of Relations Between American and European Phenomenology

While Hocking and Bell were far from exclusively responsible for establishing communications between the phenomenological traditions on the two continents, they played a crucial part as interpreters between them. Still, their importance in this regard has been almost entirely overlooked in histories of philosophy. The theoretical relation of Royce and Husserl, meanwhile, has received significantly more attention, but attention to the historical un-
derpinnings of these relations has been neglected. By attention to these historical relations, we may justify previous attempts to establish communications between modern German and North American phenomenology, and indeed, we may begin to significantly expand this inquiry into other aspects of these national philosophical traditions; specifically, to consider Husserlian phenomenology in formative relation to pragmatism, transcendentalism, idealism, semiotics, and personalism. Systematic theoretical and historical comparisons will be an imperative task for scholarly research in the near future, in order to develop dialogue between two continental philosophical traditions which significantly influenced one another at their origins, but which have become largely separated in recent inquiry.

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