EDMUND HUSSERL: A PHILOSOPHER FOR ALL SEASONS?

Review of Barry Smith & David Woodruff Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, vii + 518 pp. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

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Edmund Husserl, a mathematician by training, student and later assistant of Karl Weierstrass, abandoned mathematics for philosophy upon writing his Habilitation's thesis in the last discipline, specifically, in what is now called 'philosophy of mathematics'. His first major work in philosophy, his Philosophie der Arithmetik of 1891 is an expansion of his Habilitation's thesis of 1887 Über den Begriff der Zahl. In 1900-1901 he published his philosophical masterpiece, the Logische Untersuchungen, a work still not completely studied by scholars, in which he dealt with problems in the philosophy of logic, philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of language, ontology, epistemology and — in the relatively unknown Sixth Logical Investigation --- specifically, with the epistemology of mathematics. In later works, i.e., essentially after his turn to transcendental phenomenology, he not only continued to deal with problems in the above mentioned areas, but also dealt with problems related to the ontology of nature and cultural objects, with the problem of the so-called 'life-world' and the philosophy of history, with ethical problems and with what he considered the foundational philosophical discipline, namely, phenomenology. Very few philosophers have dealt with so many philosophical issues and in such depth as Husserl, and very few philosophers have drawn the attention of such a diversity of scholars as Husserl has.