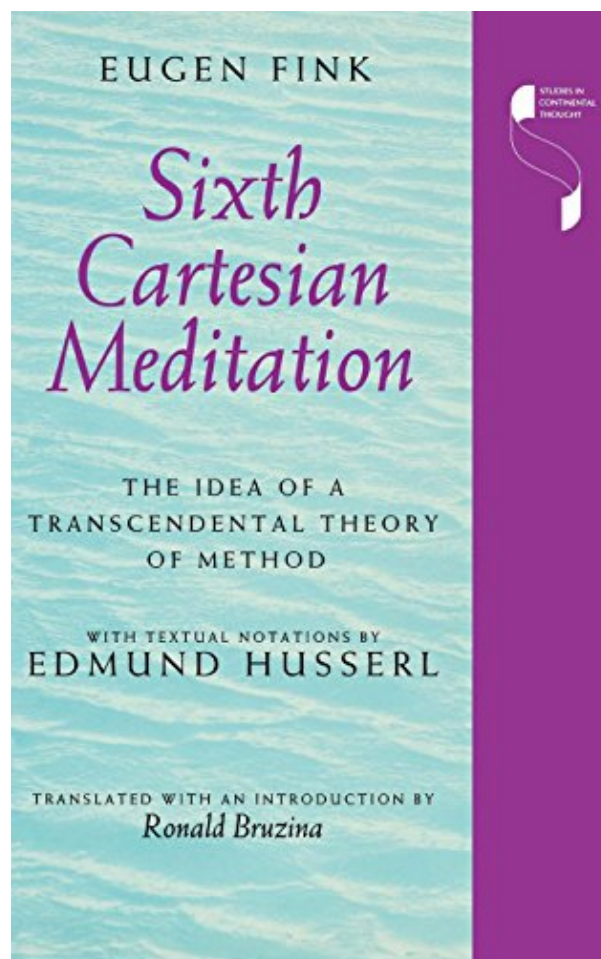
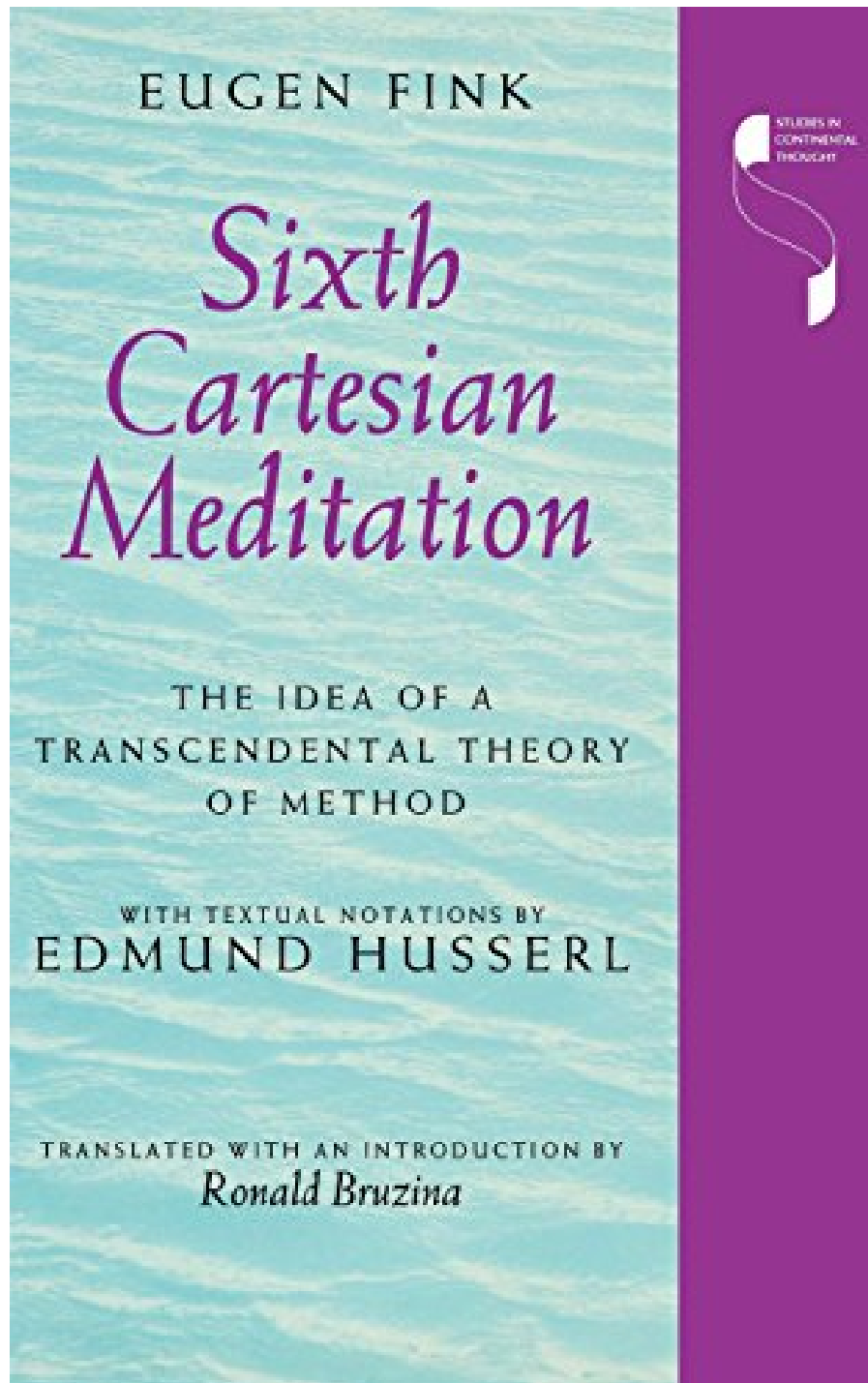


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Review

Fink's study of Descartes's sixth Meditation is an invaluable addition to the corpus of Husserl scholarship. More than simply a scholarly treatise, however, it is the result of Fink's collaboration with Husserl during the last ten years of Husserl's life. The textual notations and appendixes by Husserl, which are included in this book, demonstrate the close work between the two thinkers, and indeed they also show Husserl's endorsement of Fink's project. Bruzina, whose lengthy introduction sets forth the historical circumstances and context from which this work emerged, does a fine job illustrating the rightful importance of this work. This truly essential work in phenomenology should find a prominent place alongside Husserl's own works. For readers interested in phenomenology?and in Husserl in particular?it cannot be recommended highly enough.J. A. Bell, Southeastern Louisiana University, Choice, September 1995

Language Notes

Text: English

Original Language: German

About the Author

RONALD BRUZINA is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. He has published extensively on transcendental phenomenology.

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- Sales Rank: #1611350 in Books
- Published on: 1995-02-22
- Released on: 1995-02-22
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .91" w x 6.12" l, 1.23 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 304 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

A One of a kind book of transformation

By Tomaj

This is a one of kind book in the whole of human philosophy. It is an addition to Husserl's Cartesian Meditations; Husserl's Meditations consisted of five meditations, but the book lacked rigorous explication of the fundamental method of phenomenology, namely the very method which is the actual initiation into genuine philosophizing: Performance of the Reduction. Husserl himself was more consumed by explaining the infinite possibilities of his phenomenology, which is a post-reduction step; for this reason he kept it short when it came to the nature and actual method of performing the "Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction." But Eugen Fink, Husserl's assistant, was aware of the crucial significance of the reduction itself and its proper understanding and performance. Sixth Cartesian Meditation is Fink's major contribution to Husserlian phenomenology in which he explicates the true method of phenomenology. He clears the meaning and real sense of reduction, and does best at removing the misunderstandings of it which are possible in Husserl's own dense writings. Fink also attempts at grounding phenomenology itself by proving a method by which it is done; he attempts at a phenomenology of the transcendental onlooker; therefore, this work is indeed a phenomenology of phenomenology, as Fink himself claims so.

I have read many texts and many sources for a proper understanding of the reduction. None of them, including Husserl's own articulations of it, can communicate to the reader as Fink's book does. Fink in fact points the beginner toward reduction by a negative method; he tries to explain what reduction is by saying what it is not. And reduction, because of its radical and peculiar nature compared to other activities of natural cognition, cannot be reached by any way other than Fink's negative method.

I myself have never been a fan of reduction because, following the available literature and Heidegger's objections to it, I never believed it is possible at all. But it was by reading this work that I accidentally performed the reduction, which changed my life in a way that I will never be the same again, "the deepest personal transformation that mankind can ever bear."

So I definitely recommend this book to anyone who follows genuine philosophy and is burning with the curiosity of coming face to face with absolute truth. Coming face to face with transcendental onlooker had exactly the same effect on me as Husserl and Fink described; from the depth of the personal transformation that it offered, to the radical nature of the knowledge one gains access to, and the apodictically certain ground of such knowledge.

The is my Holy Bible.

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

Probably the Best book in Phenomenology

By jeremy.jae@cell.matrix.cn

Eugen Fink's Sixth Cartesian Meditation was written as the 6th part in addition to Husserl's 5 part Cartesian Meditations which Husserl gave as a lecture course in 1929. Fink himself was Husserl's editor and a student of his phenomenology. Fink worked so closely with Husserl and with his writings that he had mastered not

only Husserl's phenomenology but also the phenomenological method of epoché and reduction. The phenomenological reduction is a technique by which the subject makes a radical psychological shift in his thinking about the world, a total rejection of the cultural, scientific, and natural presuppositions and beliefs that prevent knowledge of and grasping of truth [transcendental reality]. There are in general two kinds of phenomenologists, outsider phenomenologists (those who exclusively study the phenomenological movement and history, or believe in its philosophical extractions), and insider phenomenologists (those who live in the reduced state of consciousness, perform the psychical act of phenomenological reduction and hence go beyond philosophy and science). History records that most likely Husserl himself was the only insider phenomenologist, however this book reveals that Fink also was an insider. In my opinion Fink not only did phenomenological science in the same manner as Husserl, I think Fink actually went beyond Husserl.

The Sixth Meditation not only lays the foundations for the idea of a transcendental theory of method, i.e. methods of the "how to" performing the phenomenological reduction of human consciousness, but also plans to endeavour into a phenomenology of phenomenology. Fink was to have written the so-called "Seventh Metaphysic", from which actual metaphysical renderings were to have grounded phenomenology as a metaphysics, as ontology - and hence as a truly accepted rational science. Before this could be completed the Nazi political movement came to power and Fink was exiled from Germany.

This dialectic masterpiece also has textual notations by Husserl contained in the Appendices at the end of the book where Husserl applies Fink's groundings of the transcendental methodic. The Appendices discuss actual political extractions for phenomenology.....with such things as "the phenomenological community" Husserl reveals his interest for phenomenology as a globalized state of co-awakening human consciousness.

Here I will sample quotes from Part One of the book:

"Instead of inquiring into the being of the world, as does traditional "philosophy" dominated by the dogmatism of the natural attitude, or, where inquiry is not satisfied with that, instead of soaring up over the world "speculatively", we, in a truly "Copernican revolution", have broken through the confinement of the natural attitude, as the horizon of all our human possibilities for acting and theorizing, and have thrust forward into the dimension of origin for all being, into the constitutive source of the world, into the sphere of transcendental subjectivity"

"The phenomenological system itself as the architectonic of transcendental philosophy cannot be drawn up ahead of time, but is only to be obtained from the "matters themselves" by passing through concrete phenomenological work"

"transforming himself through the deepest self-reflection, man transcends himself and his natural human being in the world, by producing the transcendental onlooker, who as such, does not go along with the belief in the world, with the theses on being held by the world-experiencing human"

"In the phenomenological reduction there occurs the "awakening" of the transcendental constitution of the world, and the process of coming to transcendental self-consciousness is accomplished. In and by the thematizing of the phenomenological onlooker constitutive cosmogony comes to itself, steps out of darkness and "being-outside-itself" into the luminosity of transcendental "being-for-itself"

What is interesting to note in the development of phenomenology is the effect Heidegger's ontology in *Being and Time* has had on Husserl's writings. For the presence of a concern for being, and justifications for pure phenomenology, justifications for the subordination of phenomenology over hermeneutic ontology is made clear in Fink's book. Both the language and the intent behind the dialectic has changed, for Husserl's Cartesian Meditations and this Sixth Meditation by Fink. For me, this book is the culmination of all phenomenological efforts, the resolution of the phenomenological movements place in history and the foundation for future institutions of evolutionary thought-science.

Bruzina's translation of Fink's manuscript is courageously correct, nothing in this translation has been compromised or dummed down. Not only that but the fonting, bracketing, and italics used complement the cryptic elegance of the text. I recommend this publication to anyone who seeks the deepest truths and has a liking for the most advanced systems of knowledge.

6 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

This book is important

By Brad McCormick

The "Sixth Cartesian Meditation" engages with crucial issues of what we might call the place of phenomenology in the human (social, existential, etc.) world, and the place of various aspects of the human world (e.g., science, phenomenology itself...) in phenomenology. The positions stated are generally described as being only beginnings of approaches to issues each of which requires a great deal of work which is beyond the scope of the text. And it seems to me that there is ample room for questioning whether the positions sketched out (or at least translated -- I have no idea what the original is...) are always beyond dispute in all their particulars. But it is a rare book that even **tries** to raise these issues, and I think the general outline presented for phenomenology as offering the [only] way to a radical and universal transformation of human life, such that all human existence hitherto will, in retrospect, be seen to have been naive, limited, etc., is sound. This is an extremely important book (of course there are others, but this one is short, and, for the difficulty of its subject matter, accessible). The task of humanity in our time is to get on with carrying out the detailed path of thinking it outlines, and, thereby, bringing that incommensurably better world into being. At the very least, the book helps us understanding how far our present "culture" falls short of what phenomenology makes possible for us. To adduce a phrase from Hermann Broch's *_The Sleepwalkers_*: "Raised high above the clamour of the non-existent...."

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