

Proposal for the workshop “Days of Judgement”, Leiden University, 25-27 September 2009*

Title of the paper:

WINDELBAND ON *ANERKENNUNG*: AN EARLY APPROPRIATION OF
BRENTANO’S IDIOGENETIC THEORY OF JUDGEMENT

General perspective and situation in current research field:

Theories of judgement have recently aroused considerable interest on account of the multi-dimensionality of the concept of judgement. The much-discussed book by Wayne Martin (*Theories of Judgment. Psychology, Logic, Phenomenology*, Cambridge University Press, 2008) is only one sign among others of this growing interest. Yet very few studies have considered the analysis of judgement given by the so-called *südwestdeutsche Schule* of neo-Kantianism. However, I have shown in my doctoral thesis (*Être et jugement*, Olms, to be published in 2009) that philosophers such as Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert and Emil Lask have developed a critical and multi-faceted theory of judgement, which presents many interesting aspects: 1) it is deeply concerned with the epistemological “grounding” problem regarding the *validity* of our judgments; 2) it involves both a subjective (psychological or “noetical”) dimension, namely that of our judging acts, and an objective (logical or “noematical”) dimension, namely that of the correlative propositions; 3) it is historically linked to other important views on judgement including those of Brentano, Sigwart, Lotze, Husserl, Heidegger and Frege. For all those reasons, one is justified to consider Windelband and his pupils—as Sluga also recently suggests in his discussion of Wayne Martin’s book—as relevant interlocutors in contemporary debates devoted to the articulation between judging *acts* and objective *contents*.

Topic and purpose of the paper:

Within the framework of this meeting, I would like to examine the Windelbandian theory of judgement from a very specific point of view, showing how this theory forms an early dissident “re-appropriation” of Brentano’s “idiogenetic” theory of judgement (Windelband’s article on negative judgement were published in 1884, so ten years after Brentano’s *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkte* and exactly ten years before Twardowski’s *Habilitationsschrift*). As we will see, this early re-appropriation has to be distinguished from the later Fregean one. My main goal will therefore be to compare the concept of *Anerkennung* developed by Windelband and his pupils (Rickert, Lask, Bauch) with that of Brentano and that of Frege. I will focus my attention on the following points: 1) the description of affirmative judging acts as “practical” acts of *Anerkennung*; 2) the explanation of negation as *Verwerfung* of a “neutral” (neither affirmative nor negative) content, 3) the rehabilitation of predicative composition (*sumplokè, synthesis*) as an essential characteristic of the noematical content; 4) the reformulation of Brentano’s reducibility-thesis (“every judgement is reducible to an existential judgement”) and its complementation by means of Lotze’s concept of validity (*Gelten*); 5) the rejection of the correspondence theory of truth to the benefit of a theory of correctness as “adjustment” of our judging acts to a “value” which is attached to the noematical content. Those five points will be reconstructed against the background of historical controversies and proposed for critical discussion.

* This proposal falls within the framework of my current postdoctoral research project on the theories of existential judgement from Kant to contemporary times (F.R.S.-FNRS project, 2007-2010).

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Dr Arnaud Dewalque
F.R.S.-FNRS Postdoctoral Researcher
History of modern and contemporary philosophy
Research Unit “Phénoménologies”
University of Liège (Belgium)