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Carnap's *Aufbau*: A Case of Plagiarism?

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This paper addresses the topic of Austrian Philosophy as a potential influence on Carnap by means of a case study, namely, the alleged influence of Husserl on Carnap's first major book, *The Logical Structure of the world* (hereafter: *Aufbau*).¹ In a recent article, Verena Mayer formulates a very radical claim, specifically that in the *Aufbau*, Carnap somewhat plagiarized Husserl, stealing ideas from the then-unpublished manuscript of *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy II* (hereafter: *Ideen II*). The aim of this article is to refute this claim. Though Carnap might have been acquainted with Husserl's manuscript, there is no indication that he took a significant amount of ideas from the latter. In section 1, I provide a survey of the various accounts of Husserlian influences on Carnap as developed over the years by Verena Mayer and Guillermo E. Rosado Haddock. None of these accounts involves plagiarism, literally speaking, but some involve varieties of *ideendiebstahl* (theft of ideas). These accounts of Husserlian influences on Carnap include: (a) a more neutral *initial account*, which does not involve any accusation of *ideendiebstahl* yet; (b) a *weak*

¹ Work on this paper was supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF research grant P31716). For helpful comments, I am grateful to Verena Mayer. The present paper is intended as an appendix to Damböck 2019, which provides an extensive account of the development of the *Aufbau*. I do not repeat here every detail that is already found in Damböck 2019. For matters of space, references to primary sources are generally not provided in the present paper as they are already to be found in Damböck 2019. Therefore, if the reader is interested in the details of the empirical evidence that supports my account, the present paper is not an independent source at all, but must be read against the background of a previous reading of Damböck 2019. The general argument, however, is easily grasped even for readers that are not familiar with Damböck 2019.

account, which only involves the more general claim of Carnap's being influenced by Husserl but failing to acknowledge this influence; and (c) a *strong account*, which adds the more specific hypothesis that the *Aufbau* is basically a convoluted presentation of ideas that were stolen from *Ideen II*. In section 2, the weak account is rejected for empirical reasons; there is no evidence at all that supports the weak account, whereas at the same time there is plenty of evidence that refutes it. In section 3, the strong account is identified to be: (a) empirically ill-founded because it directly hinges on the validity of the weak account; and (b) methodologically ill-founded for being based on similarities alone, many of which can be identified in the *Aufbau* and in several other books that belong to a certain philosophical genre.

1. Mayer's and Rosado Haddock's account of Husserl's influences on Carnap

In this paper, I focus exclusively on the Husserlian influences that are relevant for the *Aufbau*. Therefore, I discuss here the influences that Husserl had on Carnap's dissertation *Der Raum* only insofar as they are also relevant for the *Aufbau*.² Moreover, I exclusively aim to review various theses on Husserlian influences on the *Aufbau* that were formulated by Mayer and Rosado Haddock, ignoring other important aspects of this relationship. In particular, I hardly discuss any of the systematic aspects of the relationship between Carnap and Husserl.³ This is somewhat unfair, to be sure, because it implies that all these points where Mayer and Rosado Haddock correctly point out certain affinities and overlap between Carnap and Husserl are ignored. For the present purpose, though, it must suffice to say that I widely agree with the neutral aspects of the discussion in the respective texts by Mayer and Rosado Haddock. These neutral aspects – viz., what I call the initial account – are also in wide agreement with the recent state-of-the-art interpretations of the relationship between Carnap and Husserl by Carnap scholars, such as Thomas Ryckman and A.W. Carus. However, the present paper exclusively aims to evaluate those aspects of the writings of Mayer and Rosado Haddock that

² For discussion of these influences, see Carus 2007. 127-135; Sarkar 2003; Stone 2009 as well as Rosado Haddock 2008. Chapter 1.

³ For reviews of the philosophical similarities and differences between Carnap and Husserl, see Ryckman 2007; Carus 2016; Damböck 2017. 176-181; as well as the writings of Mayer and Rosado Haddock that are discussed here, together with Richardson 2010.

accuse Carnap of stealing Husserlian ideas and, therefore, I henceforth take the neutral aspects for granted here without any further discussion.

The accounts of the Husserlian influence on Carnap by Mayer and Rosado Haddock were formulated in three different contexts: (a) (Mayer 1991, 1992), two papers that mainly consist of what I will call here the *initial account*; (b) (Rosado Haddock 2008), a book that consists of key features of the *weak account*; and (c) (Mayer 2016), an article that consist of the *strong account*. Before I go on to discuss these accounts, I start with some general observations on the notion of plagiarism and ideendiebstahl involved here.

1.1 Some observations on plagiarism and ideendiebstahl

To set the stage for the present discussion, it is first necessary to identify what exactly “plagiarism” might mean here. This is particularly important because Mayer’s strong account is based on a notion of plagiarism that is by no means uncontroversial. Firstly, Mayer sets aside the now-common notion of plagiarism that involves the literal reproduction of passages of a text. Mayer, in turn, does not claim at all that Carnap might have plagiarized Husserl in this sense; rather, she restricts her understanding of plagiarism to cases where “not inconsiderable thought content stem from the work of another author, without this authorship being acknowledged” (Mayer 2016. 176). For Mayer, this also includes cases where the non-acknowledged source was not published yet. “This would even constitute a particularly perfidious case of ideendiebstahl (theft of ideas)” (ibid).

This notion makes sense, insofar as it is certainly true that in most cases where certain big figures accuse each other of plagiarism, the reproached injustice is ideendiebstahl, rather than copying portions of a text. Note also that there already exists a very prominent example of accusation of ideendiebstahl with regard to Carnap, namely, Wittgenstein’s (in)famous reproach that Carnap had stolen his account of physicalism;⁴ however, this and other famous examples also show how extremely problematic all kinds of “plagiarism” accusations immediately become as soon as we no longer consider the copying of a text but mere ideendiebstahl. First, it is often not clear at all what exactly the respective idea in question is. Second, the idea in question is quite often something that simply was hanging in the air and then became formulated in various varieties by different authors almost simultaneously.

⁴ See Stadler 2015. 224-228.

Third, the idea in question is usually formulated somewhat differently by different authors and has subtly different functions in the respective contexts. Therefore, it seems groundless to talk about *ideendiebstahl* at all as long as it does not become considerably clear that (a) the idea in question is sufficiently clear and precisely expressible, (b) there is good evidence that a person first came across the idea only in the presumably-plagiarized text, and (c) both the original author and the plagiarizer use the idea in the same way. As soon as any one of these conditions does not hold, the entire matter becomes all too muddy.

Consider the following example. An author, B, might take certain ideas from a book or author A but essentially receives these ideas in a non-affirmative way, i.e., developing her own alternatives that might show similarities but diverge in such a significant way that it won't be accurate at all to straightforwardly say "this idea was taken from A." Rather, B would have to start here to distance herself, such as by saying things like "there is a somewhat similar idea to be found in A, but A does not get it right, my own version differs, I do not buy A for this and that reason, etc." In a case like this, it may happen that B simply decides to leave the diverging account of A as it is, i.e., not mentioning it at all. The reason might be simply a question of space and legitimate selection of focus. B is no longer all that interested in A. She wants to develop an alternative account, at a different level of argumentation, with different targets in mind. Getting involved in a lengthy discussion of A would simply make no sense in the present context. Do we have any good reason to accuse A of plagiarism, even though she was initially inspired by B but in the end does not acknowledge this source of inspiration in her writing? Probably not. It is certainly true, however, that plagiarism accusations often take exactly that form. Therefore, it seems to be a good idea to be suspicious of plagiarism accusations of that kind and to treat them very carefully. In the present example, it would be a massive exaggeration, if not a malicious imputation, to call A a plagiarist because she had scientifically valid reasons not to mention B.

To conclude, it tends to be rather silly to talk about *plagiarism* in cases like the one mentioned above; also, the alternative notion of *ideendiebstahl* is very problematic in all its varieties. However, for the present purpose, I will keep the notion on the table, having noted all necessary restrictions. I will *not* use the term "plagiarism" here any longer, keeping the latter for the straightforward case of copying portions of a text without acknowledgement. Rather, I distinguish three different cases of alleged and/or actual "ideendiebstahl":

- Ideendiebstahl is *not* to be attributed in the following case. An idea, X, that is found in A is used in B without acknowledging A (although B read A) and it additionally holds (a) that B's approach to X is significantly different from A's and that (b) B also read and got inspired by several other sources where X or related ideas can be found. I will call this a case of *pseudo-ideendiebstahl*. Pseudo-ideendiebstahl, in turn, though being neither plagiarism nor ideendiebstahl at all, is typically found in cases of polemical sources that somewhat try to devalue B and to demonstrate B's moral inferiority, in comparison with A. Such moral accusations are, at the end, more a matter of taste or non-cognitive emotional stance. In that sense, such accusations are legitimate, to be sure; however, it is not legitimate to use a twisted reality in support of emotional readings like that. The interpreter is legitimately uttering her feelings if she only points out that, in her view, B is morally inferior in comparison with A; however, she illegitimately uses the notion of ideendiebstahl (or even plagiarism) if only pseudo-ideendiebstahl is involved.
- Ideendiebstahl *is* to be attributed in cases where sufficient evidence shows that B directly took an idea X from A without acknowledgement as soon as X: (a) is sufficiently clear and precisely expressible, (b) was initially found by B in A and only in A, and (c) is used in B in the same way than in A. I will call this a *concrete ideendiebstahl*. A concrete ideendiebstahl is not necessary a fraud, but it is bad scientific practice at least, which can be justifiably criticized (even, and in particular, in emotional readings that argue for B's moral inferiority in comparison with A).
- Ideendiebstahl is also to be attributed in cases where sufficient evidence shows that a person B studied with a person A, had discussions with A, read texts by A, took classes by A, and (a) was obviously significantly influenced by all these interactions and (b) is perfectly aware of this fact but still (c) fails to acknowledge or even denies these interactions, for example, in an autobiography or interview. I will call this a *general ideendiebstahl*. General ideendiebstahl is not so much a matter of scientific practice, at least in cases where it is not accompanied by concrete ideendiebstahl, because there is no typical way to acknowledge such general influences in scientific publications. The mistake involved here, rather than being a matter of bad scientific practice, is more a question of morality and personal character (and therefore, of course, also legitimately can be invoked in the context of emotional readings of B).

None of the accusations of Mayer or Rosado Haddock involve plagiarism, literally speaking, i.e., the copying of passages of a text; however, some involve varieties of ideendiebstahl. The initial account of Mayer does not involve any accusation of ideendiebstahl or plagiarism at all, whereas the weak account of Rosado Haddock involves an accusation of general ideendiebstahl and the strong account of Mayer involves an accusation of concrete ideendiebstahl. Let us now review these three different accounts.

1.2 The initial account (mainly Mayer 1991/92)

In (Mayer 1991, 1992), a neutral account of the parallels between the *Aufbau* and several writings by Husserl is formulated, which was later elaborated in several respects in (Rosado Haddock 2008) and is still present in (Mayer 2016). I describe this neutral account here by means of some idealizations because the relevant writings already contain traces of the weak and strong accounts (this holds, in particular, for Rosado Haddock's book). However, the neutral account is important because it contains several qualifications with whom not only Husserl scholars, such as Rosado Haddock and Mayer, would agree, but also all appear to be acceptable for recent Carnap scholars, such as Ryckman and Carus. The neutral account consists of the following points:

- (a) Carnap's *Aufbau* is influenced by his reading of Husserl, which includes the main published writings, such as the *Logical Investigations* and *Ideen I*, but possibly also the manuscript of *Ideen II*;
- (b) This influence involves significant parallels between the *Aufbau* and *Ideen II* and other writings by Husserl;
- (c) In particular, Carnap possibly took the term "constitution" directly from Husserl and tried to somewhat reimplement an approach similar to the "constitutional theory" of *Ideen II* at the level of formal logic;
- (d) On the other hand, there are also significant differences between Husserl and Carnap, including the absence of any "transcendental ego" in the *Aufbau*;
- (e) Carnap studied with Husserl in the winter term of 1923/24 and tried to receive support from Husserl for his plan to habilitate at the University of Freiburg; however, Husserl did not support Carnap's plan, and Carnap finally submitted his habilitation thesis in

December 1925 in Vienna (the thesis was the initial manuscript of the *Aufbau*, which was published in 1928);

- (f) The influences of Husserl on Carnap have been widely overlooked by Carnap scholars for a long time; we should appreciate them in order to develop more accurate accounts of the relationship between Logical Empiricism and continental European philosophy in the last decade.

This account does not involve any accusation of ideendiebstahl or bad scientific practice because Carnap very well did refer to Husserl in the *Aufbau*. Because the extent to which Carnap was influenced by *Ideen II*, specifically, remains unclear, one may not necessarily expect any reference to this then-unpublished manuscript. Also, there is no conclusive evidence at all that Carnap ever read *Ideen II* or even heard of the manuscript. Still, it is not *impossible* that Carnap read the manuscript because during the winter term of 1923/24, Carnap interacted with Husserl's assistant, Ludwig Landgrebe, who prepared the manuscript. Why shouldn't Landgrebe hand over the manuscript to Carnap for some time or at least report to him about certain aspects of the latter? There is no evidence, to be sure, that supports this, but it is fair to say that there is also no counter-evidence that refutes it.

1.3 The weak account of ideendiebstahl (Rosado Haddock 2008)

The weak account of ideendiebstahl is basically a product of Rosado Haddock's book and certain speculations to be found there, which (Mayer 2016) picked up again and somewhat radicalized even further. Unlike the strong account, the weak account is not based on any strong claims about the influences of *Ideen II* on the *Aufbau*. Rather, the weak account claims that (a) Carnap interacted with Husserl much more than the initial account claims and, as a consequence of this, he was (b) influenced much more strongly than the initial account may suggest; in spite of this, Carnap (c) systematically (and intentionally) ignored these influences in his autobiographical writings. More specifically, the weak account is based on the following claims:

- (I) Carnap not only studied with Husserl in the winter term of 1923/24, but he firstly went to Freiburg after WWI in order to study with Husserl; Carnap presumably took classes with Husserl already before 1923 and he definitely attended several of Husserl's

seminars and lectures during the three semesters that followed winter term of 23/24, i.e., during the entire period where he worked on the manuscript of the *Aufbau*.

- (II) Thus, between the fall of 1923 and winter of 1925/26, Carnap was in close contact with Husserl and some of his students, including Ludwig Landgrebe; he frequently interacted with all of them and wrote the *Aufbau* against the background of these intense interactions that, therefore, became the main matter of inspiration for the *Aufbau* manuscript.
- (III) However, because Carnap finally submitted his habilitation thesis in Vienna, supported by Moritz Schlick, who was a strong critique of Husserl, he decided not to hang a lantern on the interactions with Husserl any longer; later on, he simply ignored them and almost entirely ignored Husserl in his autobiography, although he knew perfectly well that Husserl was a major influence, at least during the years 1924 and 1925 when Carnap wrote the *Aufbau*.

The weak account, therefore, is based on a perfectly empirical claim, i.e., that Carnap had much more interactions with Husserl than initially expected – and, of course, it stands and falls with this empirical claim. If those interactions occurred and deeply influenced and framed the period when Carnap wrote the *Aufbau*, we have a clear case of general ideendiebstahl here, because neither in the *Aufbau* nor in Carnap's autobiography did Carnap sufficiently appreciate these deep influences. Therefore, if the weak account holds, we are justified in accusing Carnap of somewhat immoral social behavior.

1.4 The strong account of ideendiebstahl (Mayer 2016)

The strong account assumes both the initial and the weak account, but also adds another very strong and ingenious element that explicitly can be found only in (Mayer 2016), i.e., the claim that Carnap basically used *Ideen II* as the primary source of the *Aufbau*. He took almost everything from Husserl, both the elements of constitution theory and the way in which they are connected. The reason for this theft of ideas was that Carnap, in 1925, got under serious time pressure – he only began writing the manuscript of the *Aufbau* in spring and Schlick was continuously insisting on getting the manuscript submitted in the summer. Carnap took the option of stealing material from Husserl's unpublished work as an easy way to deal with this dilemma. He exploited Husserl's manuscript intentionally and with explicit fraudulent intent.

Therefore, he tried to somewhat change certain aspects of Husserl's initial account in order to mask his actual source. The *Aufbau* is nothing but a somewhat twisted and degenerated copy of *Ideen II*, and Carnap, during his entire lifetime, successfully managed to keep this fraud unrecognized, intentionally never mentioning Husserl as the real (and only) source of the *Aufbau*. The strong account is thus clearly accusing Carnap of concrete ideendiebstahl.

2. The weak account is not supported by empirical evidence at all

The crucial claim of the weak account, namely (I), is entirely empirical. If Carnap did not just interact with Husserl during the winter term of 1923/24, but also during the following three semesters, this would entirely change our picture of the development of the *Aufbau* because the received view is rather that Carnap distanced himself from Husserl in 1924 and started to work on the manuscript of the *Aufbau* in the fall of 1924 only against the background of this, say, de-Husserlization of his philosophy. This view, which is defended extensively in (Carus 2016) as well as (Damböck 2019), would become, at the least, very problematic if it turned out that Carnap studied with Husserl and interacted with him and his students during the entire period where he actually wrote the *Aufbau*. It would be untenable, then, to claim that Carnap moved away from Husserl in 1924, no longer taking him as an important source when writing the *Aufbau* in 1925. The weak account, in turn, stands and falls with the empirical soundness of (I), because the speculations in (II) and (III) become plausible only if (I) appears to be true. Therefore, first and foremost, we need to get clear about the empirical facts here.

What did happen in 1924/25?

First, it must be noted that Rosado Haddock, Mayer, Carus, and Damböck all assume that Carnap did start to write the manuscript of what later became the *Aufbau* only in fall 1924 and that the manuscript was finished in December 1925. This general picture is well-supported by evidence from Carnap's diaries and his correspondence.⁵ Therefore, we can take this part of the story to be uncontroversial. Disagreement, in turn, only concerns the question of *how long* Carnap interacted with Husserl. Let us review the respective arguments and sources.

⁵ For a very detailed examination, see Damböck 2019. The following description of the intellectual development of Carnap in the early 1920s is developed in this paper in much more detail. For the respective empirical sources, see this paper.

I focus here on the most recent formulation in (Mayer 2016. 186-189, 193-194), although at least parts of what is said there can already be found in (Rosado Haddock 2008. 47-8). Both Mayer and Rosado Haddock also suggest that Carnap *might* have already taken courses with Husserl before 1923. Because they do not have any evidence that supports their claim and, more importantly, this side of the empirical picture is only of minor relevance for the weak account, we henceforth ignore this here. More relevant is the general question of why Carnap moved to Freiburg in 1919. Mayer suggests that he moved to Freiburg in order to study with Husserl (Mayer 2016. 186); however, this is certainly not the case. Carnap moved to Freiburg because the family of his wife owed an estate there, called Wiesneck (in Buchenbach, near Freiburg). Carnap and his family moved to Wiesneck because they found optimal living conditions there and for no other reason. Firstly, in 1919, Carnap did not intend to study philosophy any further, but rather finished his studies with a *Staatsexamen* and intended to become a high school teacher. It was only in the fall of 1920 that Carnap decided to strive for a career as a philosopher and only then did Carnap start to read Husserl in the first place.⁶ Then, Husserl played an important role as a source of Carnap's dissertation, which was finished in January 1921. However, as far as the diaries indicate, there were no personal interactions between Carnap and Husserl until the fall of 1923.⁷

Until 1923, though considering himself a philosopher of science, Carnap made no significant effort towards the establishment of an academic career. He was financially independent then – because his stepfather was a rich farmer – and therefore did not feel the need to go to academia as long as he could easily survive as a private scholar. However, in 1923, Carnap and his family visited Mexico for some months, where Carnap's stepfather owed an estate. Because of this somewhat conflictual visit, together with huge financial losses during the hyperinflation that took place in Germany in the very same year, Carnap realized that he no longer could manage working solely as a private scholar. Therefore, the natural move for him in 1923 was to try to find a place to habilitate in order to finally start building a career as an academic philosopher. He firstly contacted Bruno Bauch in Jena and Heinrich Scholz in Kiel. After getting back to Freiburg from his Mexico trip in fall 1923, he also immediately got in touch with Husserl. The reason for the latter was certainly that Carnap preferred not to leave

⁶ See Carnap forthcoming. The first Husserl text that Carnap read was *Ideen I*, at some point in September or October of 1920.

⁷ However, see also footnote 9, below.

Freiburg, mainly for private reasons, and not necessarily because of any particular affinities with the philosophy of Husserl. The Husserl episode of the winter term of 23/24 is well-documented in Carnap's diaries;⁸ however, the diaries also indicate that the Husserl episode of the winter term of 1923/24 was the first time that Carnap actually met Husserl in person;⁹ and they also indicate that the Husserl episode ended in February 1924. After having extensively reported on his interactions with Husserl in the diary between October 1923 and February 1924, in the remaining parts of the diaries that Carnap wrote until his emigration to the US in December 1935 (that cover more than 500 pages in print), Husserl is mentioned only eight times, and no personal interaction is ever mentioned.¹⁰ The picture we receive from the correspondence is similar. There is some mentioning of Husserl, but no indication of any personal interaction, such as attending courses and the like. However, Mayer, following Rosado Haddock and somewhat counteracting the evidence, claims that Carnap attended Husserl's "Oberseminar," and presumably also his lectures, during the three semesters that follow the winter term of 23/24. Why does Mayer commit herself to this far-reaching claim? Mayer mentions, as evidence, Karl Schumann's Husserl chronicle (Schumann 1977. 281), indeed indicating that Carnap participated in Husserl's Oberseminar between the summer term of 1924 and the summer term of 1925. However, Schumann's claim is based on a letter that Ludwig Landgrebe wrote to the author in 1976,¹¹ namely, more than five decades after the period in question. Given that there is no indication at all that Landgrebe's reminiscence might have been based on any reliable source, such as diaries or signature lists, it must be assumed that Landgrebe simply was wrong here and did not recollect correctly the period when Carnap went to Husserl's Oberseminar and also met Landgrebe, namely, the winter

⁸ I do not repeat the respective quotations here, because this episode is extensively covered by both Carus 2016. 138-145 and Mayer 2016. 186-189.

⁹ This is not to be conclusively drawn from the diaries because there are a couple of months between 1919 and 1923 where Carnap apparently wrote no diary at all. At any rate, Husserl is *not* mentioned in the diaries until October 1923. Also, there is hardly any mentioning of Husserl in Carnap's correspondence before that time.

¹⁰ Until 1930, Husserl is mentioned five times, but only in cases where Carnap discusses Husserl's writings and philosophy with Schlick, Kraft, and other members of the Vienna Circle. Then, on June 19 1933, Carnap mentioned a meeting with Landgrebe that is also reported by Mayer and Rosado Haddock. Finally, in 1935, Carnap mentioned Husserl's lectures in Prague (which he did not attend).

¹¹ Unfortunately, the letter by Landgrebe seems to be lost; it is not available, at least in the Schumann Nachlass at Leuven. I got this information from Verena Mayer via personal communication (email from November 23 2018).

term of 1923/24. This becomes even more likely as Landgrebe, in turn, fails to mention Carnap's presence at the Husserl seminar in the winter term of 23/24; therefore, Landgrebe most likely simply mixed up his reminiscences a bit more than 50 years later. It seems very likely that Landgrebe, in his letters, simply wanted to say that he met Carnap in Husserl's Oberseminar *at some stage in the 1920s, possibly around 1924/1925*. This is *almost* true, to be sure. Also, we may note here that certainly neither Landgrebe nor Schumann might have been aware of the huge importance we now put on the question of *when exactly* Carnap went to Husserl's seminar. At any rate, I conclude that Landgrebe most likely incorrectly remembered exactly when he met Carnap in Husserl's seminar. Evidence from the diary tells us that this took place not between the summer term of 1924 and the summer term of 1925, but already in the winter term of 1923/24.

Mayer is perfectly aware of the fact that the only real evidence we have here, namely, Carnap's diaries, by no means suggests that Carnap attended Husserl's courses after February 1924. However, Mayer qualifies the diaries in a very negative way here, claiming:

Carnap's diaries for its most parts contain notes on private events (shopping, walks, feelings, visits of friends etc.), who possibly were intended to serve as memory aids. Beside of this, there are sometimes also some notes on important professional events *being by no means reliable though*. For example, there is no hint to be found on the work on the habilitation thesis and its submission. The diaries, therefore, are not such documents that may allow us to conclude the existence or non-existence of events being not noted. (Mayer 2016. 186, my emphasis)

This suggests that Carnap only somewhat occasionally wrote certain superficial things in the diaries, hardly covering professional events and, in particular, not covering the work on his habilitation thesis at all. However, this is anything but true. Firstly, note Carnap's habilitation thesis. Work on the latter is not just mentioned by Carnap in the diary, but reported extensively and meticulously. The term "Konstitutionstheorie" shows up 30 times, only during the year 1925, always indicating work on the habilitation thesis. In an additional document complementing the diary, Carnap even protocolized each single paragraph he wrote on graph paper. Additionally, work on the habilitation thesis is extensively documented in the correspondence. It is also not true that Carnap's notes are not reliable. There is no indication that Carnap did not take the task of writing the diary seriously. On the contrary, from 1923/24 onward, Carnap obviously got the impression that he had become part of an important philosophical movement and therefore tried to document all kinds of professional events as precisely as possible. Though it is true, on the other hand, that Carnap hardly ever reports

personal feelings – he almost never adds emotional statements to his diary – he always tries to be as accurate as possible concerning mere matters of fact. This does not imply, to be sure, that *everything* we do not find in the diary necessarily never happened. However, it does imply at least for the period in question here – viz., the years from 1924 onwards – that Carnap obviously *tried* to write down everything that happened during the day if it had at least minimal relevance. The diaries of 1924 and 1925 cover about 90 pages in print, although Carnap always tries to be as brief as possible. During a 726-day period, between January 6 1924 and December 31 1925, there are only 108 days that are not covered by an entry and there are never more than 4 consecutive days without an entry. If at a certain day there is no or only a very brief entry to be found in the diary, this occurred due to vacation, illness, or a very intense period of work. The entries, on the other hand, cover all kinds of *external* events, such as travelling, meeting people, or having a party. The entries almost never cover *internal* events, such as personal feelings or thoughts. Therefore, the period in question is covered extensively and with every desirable detail, in particular, concerning all kinds of professional interactions, for example, with Schlick and the Vienna Circle, with Franz Roh and Sigfried Giedion, and with Wilhelm Flitner and people in Leipzig, including Hans Freyer and Hans Driesch. Note also that travelling to Freiburg was not particularly easy for Carnap. He firstly had to walk two kilometers to the train station at Himmelreich, then go to Freiburg by train, and walk to the University again. Such a trip took at least half of a day and sometimes Carnap even stayed overnight with friends at Freiburg in order to avoid all-too-frequent commutes. Carnap usually reports on his visits to Freiburg in the diary, also indicating where he went and which people he met. Therefore, if there would have been any meeting with Husserl between March 1924 and December 1925, we definitely would find a report in the diary. Though it might be true that Carnap was no longer a big fan of Husserl in 1924/25, he still was certainly aware of the fact of Husserl being the world's most famous philosopher at that time. Why should he refuse to note visiting such a celebrity in the diary?¹²

¹² There is one option to be mentioned here that is at least implicitly suggested by Mayer, namely, that Carnap somewhat intentionally did not add his meetings with Husserl in 1924 and 1925 to the diary because he intended to plagiarize Husserl from the start. However, apart from the fact that this version is dangerously close to becoming a conspiracy theory of some kind, it is by no means plausible or even consistent. If the strong account holds, this would imply that Carnap, only somewhere in 1925, decided to plagiarize Husserl, after getting pressed by Schlick to finish his habilitation thesis as soon as possible. So, why did Carnap fail to mention his meetings with Husserl during the entire year before that alleged event? Note also that, for philological reasons, it

To conclude, there is no evidence whatsoever that Carnap met Husserl (or Landgrebe) during the period in question (viz., March 1924 until January 1926). Rather, evidence from the diary makes it almost evident that there were no interactions with Husserl or Landgrebe at all. Therefore, the weak account clearly must be considered empirically falsified.

3. The strong account is empirically and methodologically ill-founded

The strong account is also based on an empirical claim, though one being less easily verified or falsified, namely, the claim that Carnap read the manuscript of *Ideen II* at some stage. The claim is less easily falsified because it is significantly vague. Possibly, Landgrebe had told Carnap at some stage in the winter term of 1923/24 about the manuscript or had even shown portions to him. If this had happened, it is not likely that Carnap would have taken this to be so important as to describe it in the diary. On the other hand, the strong account implies an acquaintance with *Ideen II* that goes very far beyond a casual glance of a manuscript. In this way, even the strong account somewhat hinges on the weak account. In order to become plausible, the claim that the *Aufbau* is mainly a result of copying ideas from *Ideen II* necessarily involves the idea that Carnap must have been in the closest touch with Husserl and other people, such as Landgrebe, during the entire period when he was preparing the manuscript of the *Aufbau*. Therefore, as soon as it turns out that Carnap was not in touch with Husserl and people from his group during that period at all, the entire strong account becomes similarly unlikely and ill-founded. Therefore, we are justified in calling the strong account empirically ill-founded (viz., falsified).

That said, the strong account is also ill-founded at a methodological level. In order to demonstrate this, let us assume for the sake of the argument that Carnap had access to the

almost certainly can be ruled out that Carnap might have removed the Husserl-related portions from his diary only later. The diary is a huge corpus of material, indeed, covering six decades at several thousand pages of shorthand material. Almost all these sources appear to be the original sources, rather than copies or transcripts. This is true, in particular, for the entire period in question. In order to fake these original sources, Carnap would have had to work for weeks. More importantly, one would certainly be able to figure out that the version of the diary that covers the period in question is a transcript simply because original sources always contain various traces of daily use that transcriptions fail to contain. Therefore, speculations suggesting that Carnap intentionally hid his meetings with Husserl in the diaries, either from the start or by means of a later act of forgery, are clearly pointless.

manuscript of *Ideen II* at any time while writing the *Aufbau*. This would imply that *Ideen II* might have been present to Carnap in the same sense as other books, such as the monographs of Hans Driesch, Hans Freyer, Günther Jacoby, Oswald Külpe, Ernst Mach, Wilhelm Ostwald, Josef Petzold, Johannes Rehmke, Heinrich Rickert, Bertrand Russell, Moritz Schlick, Wilhelm Schuppe, Hans Vaihinger, Theodor Ziehen, and others that were mentioned in the *Aufbau*. All these monographs show significant parallels with the *Aufbau* and *Ideen II* in that they offer similar construction procedures in one or another way. Therefore, in order to evaluate the similarities between the *Aufbau* and *Ideen II* that Mayer highlights, these similarities firstly would have to be compared with those similarities that we can find between the *Aufbau* and the other books in the list. Due to space considerations, we cannot provide such a comparison here at all. Note, however, that exactly a comparison of that kind is what Mayer's account is lacking, for in order to justify the claim of concrete ideendiebstahl, it is by no means enough to point out certain similarities between the *Aufbau* and *Ideen II*. One also would have to demonstrate that these similarities *only* hold between the *Aufbau* and *Ideen II*. Only if Carnap could have found the ideas in question *only* in *Ideen II* and in *no other* book that he was citing in the *Aufbau* the accusation of concrete ideendiebstahl would cease to be entirely implausible. Even then, however, one additionally would have to provide certain rock-solid arguments for Carnap having *Ideen II* on the shelf, while writing the *Aufbau*, in order to, say, obtain a somewhat viable proof of guilt. Arguments of the former kind clearly do not exist. It is neither to be expected that any further account of the plagiarism story might be able to provide evidence of the latter kind, for it seems rather obvious – though it cannot be proven here in detail – that all kinds of similarities as well as dissimilarities between the *Aufbau* and *Ideen II* also show up in one or another way in any book of the aforementioned list. Most importantly, some of these books were read by Carnap before 1923 and even before he first started to read Husserl. Moreover, the first sketches to the *Aufbau*, which already contain large parts of the later layout of spheres of reality and their mutual relationships, was already formulated in August 1920, viz., at a time where Carnap had not yet read Husserl at all. In this early manuscript, the major influences are Wilhelm Ostwald, Bertrand Russell, and some representatives of the Dilthey School and Neo-Kantianism. To conclude, Mayer's strong account is not only empirically but also methodologically ill-founded. Carnap could not only find the same ideas contained in *Ideen II* in a huge number of books who were at least partly mentioned by him in the *Aufbau*, but it also appears that the main parts of the philosophical layout of the *Aufbau* were already developed long before Carnap allegedly got acquainted

with *Ideen II*, some of them even before he firstly started to read Husserl. This implies that there is no reasonable way at all to talk about ideendiebstahl here.

The bottom line is that Carnap neither plagiarized Husserl nor did he take ideas from Husserl without enough acknowledgement. Having noted this, we may now move on in order to investigate all these interesting aspects of the relationship between Carnap and Husserl that remain on the table after having rejected the “plagiarism” hypothesis of Mayer and Rosado Haddock.

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