

Edmund Husserl Biography

Edmund Husserl

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Biography

Edmund Husserl was a German philosopher who founded a philosophical movement known as phenomenology, and explored the psychological basis and objective truths of mathematics.

Husserl was born in the Austrian town of Moravia to a middle-class merchant and his wife in 1859. After attending Gymnasium (or secondary school) in Vienna, Husserl entered University, attending first the University of Leipzig and then the University of Berlin to study both mathematics and science. In 1881, he transferred to the University of Vienna where he earned his doctorate, completing a dissertation on the **calculus** of variations. While in Berlin, he studied mathematics under the respected German mathematician Karl Weierstrass, and served as his assistant for a brief period before returning to Vienna to study philosophy.

In his first book, *Philosophie der Arithmetik (Philosophy of Arithematic)*, Husserl outlines a psychological theory of mathematics that asserts that mathematical truths have objective validity regardless of an individual's subjective views towards them, a view that would change in later works of the philosopher. *The Philosophy of Arithematic* was published in 1891, while Husserl was a philosophy lecturer at the University of Halle, and combines his mathematical expertise with a growing passion for philosophy.

Husserl moved to the University of Göttingen in 1901, where he taught philosophy for 15 years until being appointed to a professorship at the University of Freiburg in 1916. It was at Göttingen that Husserl wrote his most influential philosophical work, *Ideas: A General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1913), which is based on the idea that the meaning or essence of an event or object is not in the thing itself, but in the intentional consciousness of the person who perceives it. Husserl's concept of phenomenological reduction refers to a study of conscious reflection, of the mind itself and how it perceives real or imagined things.

Husserl remained at Freiburg for the remainder of his career, where he published several more philosophical works before retiring in 1928. He passed away in 1938 at the age of 69.