

A hitherto unknown text by Bolzano on his  
*Beyträge*

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In 1810, Bolzano, who at the time taught “religious doctrine” at the University of Prague, published his *Beyträge zu einer begründeteren Darstellung der Mathematik* (*Contributions to a Better-Grounded Presentation of Mathematics*). This work consisted of two parts (one on the concept of mathematics and its division; another one that provided an attempt at a new logic) and an appendix (on the Kantian theory of the construction of concepts), and it was planned to be the first in a series of *contributions* in which, beginning from its foundations, he planned to address all theoretical disciplines of mathematics. Bolzano in fact worked on this project for some years but, in view of the few and “superficial” reviews of its first instalment, in 1817, in the preface to his *Rein analytischer Beweis* (*Purely Analytic Proof*), he announced that he had decided to postpone the publication of any subsequent *contributions*. However, he never published any further instalments of such a project and, not being entirely satisfied with the logic included in his *Beyträge*, on the importance of which he insisted in two of his works published in the mid-1810s, he began to work on what eventually became his *Wissenschaftslehre* (*Theory of Science*), published in 1837.

In this talk I will present a short text written by Bolzano in 1810-11 on his *Beyträge* that was hitherto unknown to his scholars and which I recently discovered. This text was published anonymously in 1811 and a draft of it is preserved at the Literární archiv Památníku národního písemnictví (LA PNP), which, however, was assumed to be Bolzano’s transcription of a review that would have been published at the time but

the provenance of which was unknown. I will explain the history of this text and the evidence that allowed me to elucidate its authorship. But, in addition to this, I will discuss the *Beyträge* in the light of two reviews of it published in 1810-11 (Bolzano's transcriptions of which are held at the LA PNP) and of the hitherto unknown text on it, which provides an unusual insight into what we must take Bolzano himself to have considered most noteworthy about his 1810 work, namely his "outline of a new logic". By contrast, while over the years the general aim of this work to improve the 'grounds' of mathematics has been praised, the part on logic has usually been considered, as his contemporaries did, as non-innovative and even deficient. And yet, as Bolzano's 1811 text points out and as I will show, this part did contain some "new and fruitful views".