On Reinach's Realism

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Abstract: It is commonly assumed that Adolf Reinach (although he never applied the word to himself in his published work) was a full-fledged realist. The aim of this paper is to clarify in what sense Reinach can be called a "realist." I identify two distinct realisms in Reinach. First, Reinach advocates a metaphysical realism. He defines logic as an ontology of mind-independent states of affaires and seeks to build up a Meinong-style theory of the object based on a non-Husserlian understanding of Husserl's intuition of essences. Second, Reinach also defends an epistemological realism according to which the burden of proof weights not on the realist, but on the idealist: "We have the right to believe in the outside world."

Keywords: Reinach, realism, states of affairs, propositions, Meinong

What was most characteristic of the Munich-Göttingen phenomenologists was their — undoubtedly non-Husserlian — interpretation of Husserl's motto, "Back to the things themselves!" This interpretation has two distinct and closely interrelated aspects: first, an uncompromising robust realism; second, a blind faith in the intuition of essences, understood in terms of a realism of essences or ideas. Adolf Reinach's views on these two points seem quite original when compared to the *Logical Investigations* and the Munich-Göttingen mainstream view. The aim of this paper is to clarify in what sense, if any, Reinach can be regarded as a "realist."

The answer to this question is less obvious than it may seem. The reference to "reality" (*Realität*) and "real ontology" (*Realontologie*) does not play a central role in Reinach's thought, as it does in other members of the Circle. Reinach never applies the word "realism" to himself in his published work, and his critique of idealism (Husserlian or otherwise) is generally more subtle and implicit than could be expected. Additionally, Reinach's realism covers a variety of views: his critique of Husserl, his theory of states of affairs, and his interpretation of Berkeley's *esse est percipi*. It is unclear whether this variety can be reduced to a univocal definition of realism.

I have two starting hypotheses. I will assume, first, that Reinach can legitimately be called a "realist," and secondly, that Reinach's realism actually involves two heterogeneous components. On the one hand, his theory of states of affairs clearly assumes a metaphysical realism. On the other hand, Reinach also defended an epistemological realism as part of his theory of experience expounded in the *Introduction to Philosophy* of 1913.

1. Metaphysical realism

Let us begin with metaphysical realism.

Reinach developed an original conception of states of affairs and logical knowledge — a conception that is more akin to Meinong's theory of objects than to Husserl's views in the first edition of the *Logical Investigations*. To some extent, Reinach and Husserl, in their philosophies of logic, share a common concern. Both seek to determine, so to speak, the ontological commitments of logic taken as a genuine theory. If logic is a theory, then there is a sense in which logical laws are "true"; if logical laws are true, then we must be able to identify *what* they are true of. There are many possible answers to this question. The logical psychologist claims that logical truths are about mental states, while the logical Platonist holds that they are about propositions conceived of as separable semantic entities. On my interpretation, Husserl's *Logical Investigations* offers a third way between psychologism and Platonism.[1] His line of thought is as follows: logic is certainly about propositions conceived

[1] This (non-Platonist) reading of the *Logical Investigations* cannot be argued for here. For detailed arguments, see Denis Seron, "Phénoménologie et objectivisme sémantique dans les *Recherches logiques* de Husserl," in *L'idée de l'idée: Éléments de l'histoire d'un concept*, ed. B. Leclercq and B. Collette-Ducic (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 245–67; Denis Seron, "Objectivité et subjectivité dans la critique husserlienne du relativisme," in *Psychologie et psychologisme*, ed. M. Gyemant (Paris: Vrin, 2015), 177–201. Similar views are found in Jitendra N. Mohanty, *Husserl and Frege* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), and Martin Kusch, *Psychologism: A Case Study in the Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge* (London New York: Routledge, 1995). In my use of the term here, an object *x* is "separable" from another object *y* if, and only if, it is possible that *x* exists while *y* does not. Mind-independency is a special case of separability. In Husserl's view, logical objects such as propositions are "ideally apprehended moments" (*Momente*) of certain mental acts, that is, mind-dependent objects that the logician, as opposed to the phenomenologist, studies independently of their mental realization ("in themselves," "*in specie*"). See *Logische Untersuchungen*, in *Husserliana* (= Hua), Vol. XIX/1: *Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*, ed. Ursula Panzer (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1984),

in specie, that is, in abstraction from their realizations in mental states. However, the epistemological claim that the logician conceives of propositions *in specie* does not entail the metaphysical claim that propositions are separate entities. Ontologically speaking, propositions have no reality except in the mental states that potentially realize them. They are nothing outside the mind, but only properties or "species of judgments." Logic, as a theory of propositions, therefore requires a "phenomenological foundation" that brings to light its intuitive sources in inner experience. This is the meaning of Husserl's call "Back to the things themselves!" In a nutshell: Husserl rejects both logical Platonism and logical psychologism, affirming both the *ontological* inseparability of logical objects and the *epistemological* autonomy of logic with respect to empirical psychology. The fact that numbers are properties of groups of individuals does not imply that arithmetic is an empirical science. Likewise, the logician must apprehend propositions "in themselves," through ideation, independently of their mental instantiations, even though propositions are no more than properties of mental states.

Reinach's theory of states of affairs largely reflects the same concern. Through his notion of state of affairs, Reinach sought to elaborate a bold realist approach to the ontology of logic, in contrast with Husserl's approach which is not realist in the same sense. In the *Investigations*, Husserl endorses some form of logical realism: what is true is true in itself; what exists exists in itself. However, this realism is basically a *logical* realism and, as such, a provisional (not yet phenomenological) step. Husserl's ultimate position in the *Investigations* is not Bolzano's semantic objectivism, but lays out the phenomenological foundation thereof, that is, the claim that logical objects are ontologically inseparable contents of mental states of a certain type. "Phenomenological foundation of logic," in Husserl's view, means the same as as much as "non-realist foundation of logical realism." The phenomenologist is not primarily concerned with truth *in itself*, but with the "experience of truth" or evidence.[2] In contrast with this,

352 [B343], English translation: *Logical Investigations*, trans. John N. Findlay (London New York: Routledge, 2001), Vol. 2, 79, modified.

[2] Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, Hua XVIII: *Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*, ed. Elmar Holenstein (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1975), 193 [A190]; Engl. trans., Vol. 1, 121. In the *Sixth Investigation*, Husserl calls "object" the content of a fulfilling intention, as opposed to the "meaning content" or content of a "meaning intention." See *Logische Untersuchungen*, Hua XIX/2: *Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*, ed. Ursula Panzer (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1984), 671 [A614]; Engl. trans., Vol. 2, 280: "The essential homogeneity of the function of fulfilment … obliges us to give … to each fulfilling act whatever the name of an 'intuition', and to its intentional correlate the name of 'object'." Clearly, this object is not the object that exists mind-independently, but merely the "object as represented" or "intentional object." This latter may thus be defined as the intentional content of an intuition.

Reinach proposes a realist account of logical knowledge which does not entail a return to logical Platonism. Logic, he claims, is neither a theory of propositions taken as "*species* of judgment," nor a psychology of judgment or a Platonist theory of propositions, but *a theory of states of affairs*.[3]

The argument for this is found in the essay on negative judgment of 1911 and in the *Introduction to Philosophy* of 1913. As a first step, Reinach sets out five necessary and sufficient conditions for being a state of affairs.[4] Roughly, states of affairs and only states of affairs [1] can be believed or asserted (*geglaubt oder behauptet*), [2] stand in relations of implication, [3] have modalities, [4] can be positive or negative, [5] and can be known (*erkannt*). It is the second condition that is crucial. States of affairs can stand in relations of implication, that is, in Reinach's terminology, relations of "grounding" (*Begründung*). Wherever there is such a relation of implication, there must be one or more states of affairs.

Secondly, Reinach offers the following definition of logic:

> Logic is (1) a general theory of science, insofar as it provides the laws of grounding in general (*Begründungsgesetze*) and thus gives the form for the relations of grounding that apply to all sciences; [and it is] (2) a special theory of science, insofar as it refers to the laws of grounding that are relevant for special sciences, and to types of special science.[5]

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[3] To my knowledge, the only other philosopher besides Reinach who holds such views was Roderick Chisholm (see his papers "Events and propositions," *Noûs* 4/1 (Feb. 1970), 15–24; "States of affairs again," *Noûs* 5/2 (May 1971), 179–89; "Events without times: An essay on ontology," *Noûs* 24/3 (June 1990), 413–27). Chisholm tends to reduce propositions to states of affairs and hence propositional logic to a theory of states of affairs. See "States of affairs again," 180, note 4: "I also believe that the theorems of logic are most plausibly interpreted as pertaining to what I have called states of affairs." This is a direct consequence of Chisholm's definition of propositions as being states of affairs "such that the laws of propositional logic may be interpreted as being applicable to them" ("Events and propositions," 19).

[4] Adolf Reinach, "Zur Theorie des negativen Urteils," in *Sämtliche Werke: Textkritische Ausgabe*, ed. Karl Schuhmann and Barry Smith (Munich: Philosophia Verlag, 1989), Vol. 1 (hereafter cited as *TnU*), 114–117; English translation by Barry Smith: "On the theory of the negative judgment," in *Parts and moments: Studies in Logic and Formal Ontology*, ed. Barry Smith (Munich: Philosophia, 1982), 336–341. Also "Einleitung in die Philosophie," *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 1 (hereafter cited as *Einl.*), 427, and "Wesen und Systematik des Urteils," *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 1, 343–4.

[5] *Einl.*, 453.

Logic is a theory of demonstration or, in equivalent terms, a theory of implication relations. (It is worth noticing that Reinach's confusion between inference and implication creates serious difficulties, but I will not discuss this issue here.) Since logic is a theory of inference, that is, a theory that formulates rules for grounding a judgment in another judgment, its objects must be relations of implication. Now, as we have just seen, Reinach holds that relations of implication do not hold between judgments or propositions, but rather between states of affairs. Therefore, logic must be redefined in realist terms, as a theory of states of affairs — in opposition to the interpretation of logical laws as laws governing judgments or propositions in themselves:

> A proposition is true when the state of affairs which is correlated with it obtains (*besteht*). And two contradictory propositions cannot both be true because two contradictory states of affairs cannot both obtain. Thus here too the propositional law is reducible to a law which relates to states of affairs (*führt auf ein Sachverhaltsgesetz zurück*). At the same time this provides an example which may indicate the sense of our claim above, that the major part of traditional logic will prove to have its foundations in a general theory of states of affairs (*daß große Teile der traditionellen Logik sich ihrem Fundamente nach als allgemeine Sachverhaltslehre herausstellen werden*).[6]

In this sense, Reinach's aim is to *ontologize* propositional logic. As he declares in the essay on negative judgment, "the laws of deduction … are, properly conceived, nothing other than general principles expressing relations between states of affairs."[7] This leads Reinach to reword the classic laws of traditional logic in terms of states of affairs. The principle of non-contradiction actually means that "two contradictory states of affairs cannot both obtain."[8] The principle of excluded middle means that "there is no middle between a state of affairs' obtaining and its non-obtaining."[9]

However, this conclusion needs to be qualified in two respects. First, it is important to note that Reinach's purpose was not merely to eliminate propositions in favor of states of affairs, as Chisholm did some decades later. Reinach explicitly maintains Husserl's distinction between proposition, state of affairs and judgment, even warning against the prevailing

[6] *TnU*, 138, Engl. trans., 376, slightly modified.

[7] *TnU*, 115, Engl. trans., 339.

[8] *TnU*, 138, Engl. trans., 376; *Einl.*, 477.

[9] *Einl.*, 477.

tendency among Austrian philosophers to confuse propositions with state of affairs.[10] Secondly, Reinach does not mean to reduce all logical laws or categories to ontological laws or categories of states of affairs. In Reinach's view, it still makes sense to say that logical laws are laws of judgment or proposition. As he claims in the essay on negative judgment, this is a direct consequence of the distinction between judgment, proposition and state of affairs.[11] For example, this distinction allows one to differentiate between an affirmative judgment about a negative state of affairs (I assert that this umbrella is not red) and a negative judgment about a positive state of affairs (I deny that this umbrella is red). Thus, the classification of judgments is not reducible to that of states of affairs. Reinach's view is not that logic has nothing to do with judgments and propositions, but rather that it refers to them *only in a derivative sense*: logic is primarily about states of affairs. It certainly makes sense to say that logical laws, as rules of inference, are about propositions or judgments, but this talk is legitimate only in a derivative sense.

In any case, Reinach's theory of states of affairs involves a strong form of logical realism. As Reinach repeatedly claims, states of affairs, unlike propositions in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, are essentially mind-independent entities. "States of affairs," he declares in the 1914 lecture "On Phenomenology," "obtain independently of what consciousness apprehends them, and of whether they are apprehended by any consciousness at all."[12] This is a significant divergence from Husserl's philosophy of logic. As suggested above, Husserl's view seems to be that, although logic is epistemologically independent of psychology and relativism is therefore false, propositions are ontologically dependent moments of the mental states that instantiate them.

Another interesting point concerns the Meinongian implications of Reinach's theory of states of affairs. For the semantic objectivist, whether Platonist or Husserlian, the class of

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[10] Unpublished notes, Ana 379 B II 5, 371 in the Bavarian State Library, quoted by Kevin Mulligan & Barry Smith, "Adolf Reinach, An intellectual biography," in *Speech Act and Sachverhalt: Reinach and the Foundations of Realist Phenomenology*, ed. Kevin Mulligan (Cham: Springer, 1987), 24: "All Austrians confuse propositions and states of affairs continually." Two notes in the essay on negative judgment suggest that this critique is directed, among others, against Meinong (*TnU*, 114 and 116; Engl. trans., 374). Reinach's view is somewhat problematic in this respect. See the excellent discussion in James DuBois, *Judgment and Sachverhalt: An Introduction to Adolf Reinach's Phenomenological Realism* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1995), 115–8, opposing Barry Smith, "Logic and the *Sachverhalt*," *The Monist* 72/1 (1989), 52–69.

[11] Cf. *TnU*, 122; Engl. trans., 351.

[12] Adolf Reinach, "Über Phänomenologie," *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 1 (henceforth cited as *ÜP*), 544–5; Engl. trans., 213 modified. See also *TnU*, 137, Engl. trans., 374.

propositions includes not only true, but also false propositions. Likewise, Reinach's statal logic admits obtaining as well as non-obtaining states of affairs. In explicit reference to Meinong, Reinach separates the object from its existence and the state of affairs from its obtaining, and hence conceives of both existence and obtaining not as "essential moments" of objects and states of affairs, but as extrinsic first-order properties:

> Just as we can separate (real or ideal) objects from their (real or ideal) existence and recognize without further ado that certain objects, such as golden mountains and round squares, do not exist (or even, that they could not exist), so we separate also the state of affairs from its obtaining and speak of states, like the being golden of mountains or the being round of squares which do not obtain or, again, which could not obtain.[13]

This view leads us into the heart of Reinach's realism. It is tempting to regard his realist philosophy, like those of Conrad-Martius and Ingarden, as a variant of Meinong's theory of objects. The philosopher's task, according to Reinach, is first of all to distinguish types of objects and to clarify the corresponding modes of being: "Insofar as philosophy is ontology or the a priori theory of objects (*Gegenstandslehre*), it has to do with the analysis of all possible kinds of object as such."[14] Philosophy is primarily ontology. And since existence and obtaining are not intrinsic characters of objects and states of affairs, this ontology must include non-existing objects and non-obtaining states of affairs.

Interestingly, Reinach, like Husserl in the *Ideas I*, prefers to use the term "ontology" instead of "theory of object."[15] The reason for this is that he uses the word "object" to denote entities

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[13] *TnU*, 116–7; Engl. trans., 340-341 slightly modified. See on this point James DuBois, *Judgment and Sachverhalt*, 32–4. Other members of the Circle such as Pfänder and Conrad-Martius have developed on this basis an original interpretation of existential judgments that is quite characteristic of the Munich-Göttingen phenomenology. See Alexander Pfänder, "Logik," *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* 4 (1921), 139–499; Hedwig Conrad-Martius, *Das Sein* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1957).

[14] Adolf Reinach, "Die apriorischen Grundlagen des bürgerlichen Rechtes," in *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 1, 145. The term "a priori theory of object" comes from the *Third Investigation* (*Logische Untersuchungen*, Hua XIX/1, 228 [A222]; Engl. trans., 3).

[15] *Einl.*, 394. See Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, Book I, ed. Karl Schuhmann, Hua III/1 (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1976), 27–8 [23]; English translation by Fred Kersten, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Book I: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1983), 22: "[In my *Third Investigation*] I

that are not states of affairs, and subsumes both objects and states of affairs under the umbrella term “objectivity” (*Gegenständlichkeit*).[16]

It is anything but clear what such a Meinong-style ontology has to do with the phenomenology of the *Logical Investigations*. This question points to a second important component of Reinach’s philosophical program as a whole. There is something more involved in Reinach’s ontology than in Meinong’s theory of object. And this something more, in Reinach’s view, is the intuition of essences, which he views as definitive of phenomenology.

In the “Introduction to Philosophy,” Reinach imposes on his phenomenology two constraints which he terms the “major thesis” and the “principle” of phenomenology (*Hauptsatz und Grundsatz der Phänomenologie*). The “major thesis” corresponds to the task of classifying and clarifying types of objects: “To every domain of objects,” Reinach claims, “there corresponds a sphere of a priori content — a priori laws of essence, and this sphere is to be investigated prior to any empirical proof.”[17] The “principle” adds a further condition:

> Much work and effort are needed for one to know the essential structures and reach the things themselves. It has been said that phenomenology starts with the “intuition of essences.” This sounds mystical, but this is clear.[18]

The Reinachian philosopher is a phenomenologist insofar as she is guided by the intuition of essences, and this is probably her last remaining link to Husserl’s *Investigations*. By the way, this link is rather tenuous, since, in the first edition of the *Investigations*, it is not the phenomenologist but the logician that performs ideation.

To sum up: Reinach is a metaphysical realist inasmuch as he endorses semantic objectivism and interprets semantic objectivism as a realism of states of affairs. His metaphysical realism is phenomenological insofar as it is based on the intuition of essences. These two aspects are closely linked. Reinach’s notion of intuition of essences differs not only from Husserl’s, but

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did not venture to take over the expression ‘ontology’ which was objectionable on historical grounds; rather I designated this investigation … as part of an ‘a priori theory of objects,’ a phrase contracted by Alexius von Meinong to make the word ‘object-theory.’ Now that times have changed, however, I consider it more correct to rehabilitate the old expression, ‘ontology.’”

[16] *TnU*, 114; Engl. trans., 338.

[17] *Einl.*, 440.

[18] *Einl.*, 448.

also from that used by the other members of the Munich-Göttingen Circle.[19] To intuit essences, in his view, amounts to "knowing" a priori states of affairs (*Wesensverhalte*). That is why Reinach, when talking about eidetic intuition, prefers to use the verbs *erschauen* and *erkennen* that he usually reserves for states of affairs — as opposed to *schauen* and *anschauen* that he uses to denote Husserl's ideation construed as an *object* intuition.

This latter point enables us to better understand what the phenomenologist's task is according to Reinach. Taking up Meinong's construal of existence as a first-order property, Reinach describes existential judgments in terms of existential states of affairs (*Existenzialsachverhalte*).[20] If existence is an extrinsic first-order property, then states of affairs of the form /*x* exists/ or /*x* does not exist/ are no more problematic than states of affairs of the form /*x* is yellow/ and /*x* is not yellow/. Existential states of affairs are dyadic states of affairs that correspond to existential judgments with a predicative form (for Reinach, existential judgments, unlike impersonal judgments such as "It is raining", are predicative). This must apply to all types of objects and hence to judgments of the form "*x* is fictional," "*x* is an ideal object," "*x* is an *ens rationis*," and the like. Accordingly, the phenomenologist's task is to clarify real existence, fictional and ideal being, and so on, conceived as first-order properties, and to elucidate, on the basis of the intuition of essences, in what a priori relations existential states of affairs stand to one another. As Reinach claims on the opening pages of his 1914 lecture "On Phenomenology," the natural attitude already confronts us with existing and non-existing objects (*seienden oder nicht seienden Objekten*). The phenomenologist's task is to go a step further and subject these existing and non-existing objects to the method of *Wesenserschauung* (cf. *ÜP*, 531–41). This is, in a nutshell, the philosophical agenda underlying Reinach's entire ontology — an agenda that is very similar to that of Ingarden and Conrad-Martius.

2. Epistemological realism

Leaving metaphysical realism, I now pass to Reinach's epistemological realism. This topic is treated in less detail in Reinach's published work, probably because it plays only a peripheral role in his thought as a whole. The main passages relevant to this issue are found in the course

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[19] Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Vol. 1 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965), 199–201.

[20] The term appears at least once in Reinach: *Einl.*, 437.

"On the Essence of Motion" of 1913/14,[21] and at the end of the "Introduction to Philosophy" of 1913, in a chapter devoted to logic and the theory of knowledge. Importantly, the passage of the "Introduction to Philosophy" is in part a reworking of an earlier course devoted to empiricism, of which only incomplete notes by Winthrop Bell have been preserved. For this reason, these pages are primarily concerned with classical empiricism, especially Locke's indirect realism and Berkeley's *esse est percipi*.

In these texts, Reinach defends a form of robust realism to the effect that the philosopher should assume the existence of mind-independent entities *until shown otherwise*. In opposition to the modern idealism originated by Descartes, his claim is that the burden of proof is not upon the realist that believes in mind-independent reality, but upon the idealist who calls this belief into doubt and thinks it necessary to justify it.[22] Roughly, his argument runs as follows:

His first attack is upon Berkeley's view that it makes no sense to talk of a reality that is not perceived, and that there must therefore exist a God that ensures the permanence of things outside the human mind. Expectedly, Reinach rejects the premise. It is false, he argues, that "things exist only in the acts apprehending them and that all things must therefore be apprehended (*erfaßt*)".[23]

An interesting point here is that, in spite of his realism, Reinach does not thereby abandon what he calls the "principle of exhibition" (*Grundsatz der Aufweisbarkeit*), namely the assumption that all existence *can* be apprehended by a consciousness (cf. *Einl.*, 483). This leads him to defend two distinct theses: First, it is a priori possible that there exists a reality independent of any consciousness. In other words, the concept of an existence that is not apprehended is not self-contradictory. Second, all existence *can* be apprehended. This second thesis corresponds to Husserl's critique of the Kantian thing in itself and to his "principle of all principles."

It may seem surprising that Reinach maintains the "principle of all principles." This suggests at least that his realism is somewhat weaker than the realism endorsed by Roman Ingarden in the 1920s. In Ingarden's view, this principle is definitive of Husserl's transcendental idealism

[21] Adolf Reinach, "Über das Wesen der Bewegung," in *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 1, 551–4.

[22] See the similar critique of Husserl in Barry Smith, "Husserl, language, and the ontology of the act," in *Speculative Grammar, Universal Grammar, and Philosophical Analysis of Language*, ed. Dino Buzzetti and Maurizio Ferriani (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1987), 205–27.

[23] *Einl.*, 483.

and should be rejected for the sake of realism.[24] The "principle of all principles" was also challenged by Alexander Pfänder, although for different reasons. In his *Logic* of 1921 and already in an unpublished course from 1905/06, he regards it as a variant of Hermann Lotze's relational construal of existential judgments — a construal he strongly rejects saying that "x exists" and "x is perceivable" do not have the same meaning and thus must correspond to two distinct states of affairs.[25] From this he concludes that it is a priori possible for a non-perceivable object to exist.

The upshot thus far is that the existence of a mind-independent reality involves no contradiction and is a priori possible. This does not entail realism, since this does not rule out the possibility that there exists no independent reality. However, another significant thesis in the "Introduction to Philosophy" is this: "Real existence (*reale Existenz*) is not something that one can establish a priori, and experience alone can be of help in this respect."[26] This thesis is explicitly directed against ontological proofs and the proof of the immortality of soul in the *Phaedo*. It is a concession to empiricism, although Reinach criticizes empiricists for overlooking types of objects that are accessible through other forms of "apprehension" than sensory experience.

The general idea is that one must distinguish between the question whether mind-independent existence is a priori possible and the question concerning its empirical "attestations" (*Ausweise*) or "indications" (*Existenzialhinweise*). The same idea is present in Pfänder's 1905/06 course quoted above. In that text, Pfänder argues not only that *esse* does not have the same meaning as *percipi* and that the two therefore correspond to different states of affairs, but also that Berkeley's *esse est percipi* derives from a more general confusion between the "question of right" (*Rechtsfrage*) and the "question of meaning" (*Bedeutungsfrage*). The former question is about the justification of existential judgments. Thus, one can ask whether perceivability provides a reliable ontological criterion. Even supposing that it does, however,

[24] The most famous formulation of the "principle of all principles" is found in § 24 of the *Ideas I*, Hua III/1, 51 [43], Engl. trans., 44: "Every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition." For an extensive discussion of Ingarden's critique, see Denis Seron, "Intentionnalité, idéalité, idéalisme," *Philosophie* 105 (2010), 28–51. In this paper, I defend the view that the "principle of exhibition" attacked by Ingarden is just a variant of the "principle of all principles."

[25] Alexander Pfänder, "Logik," 192–194, and *Logik und Erkenntnistheorie 1905/1906*, Pfänderiana BI-3.

[26] *Einl.*, 437.

this criterion says nothing yet about the nature of existence itself.[27] If you ask what existence means and search for metaphysical rather than epistemological conditions, then the equivalence between existence and perceivability is obviously false. Like Conrad-Martius in § 9 of her *Realontologie*, Pfänder declares that existence may well be a necessary condition for perceivability, but that perceivability can in no way be a necessary condition for existence.

This suggests an interpretation of Husserl's "principle of all principles" that is more nuanced and accurate than the metaphysical interpretation proposed by Ingarden. Indeed, there is good reason to think that Pfänder's distinction is already in both Husserl and Reinach, and that the two philosophers agree on this point. As I have suggested elsewhere,[28] it is plausible to say that Husserl, through his idea of an equivalence between existence and perceivability, sought to enunciate an epistemological norm rather than a metaphysical thesis claiming that all existence is relative to a constituting consciousness. Husserl's actual claim in § 24 of *Ideas I* has no implications for what existence means; it relates to the "question of right" rather than to the "question of meaning." In other words, it is merely a normative claim about existential positions: perceptual experience is the sole "legitimizing source" (*Rechtsquelle*) of existential positions. This point is more apparent in § 136 of the *Ideas I*, where the "principle of all principles" is expressed in terms of rational motivation and "legitimizing ground" (*Rechtsgrund*). In any case, such an interpretation has at least two important consequences. First, the equivalence between existence and perceivability is thereby rescued from Ingarden's objections. Second, this reading suggests that Ingarden was wrong to hold that the equivalence between existence and perceivability had something to do with the relativity of the noema.

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[27] Alexander Pfänder, *Logik und Erkenntnistheorie 1905/1906*, Pfänderiana, BI-3, 89: « a) *Esse* = *percipi* (Berkeley) being perceived. Difference in meaning. Existence endures when *S* does not. ... Not a condition for existence. Existence is a condition for perception. ... Confusion of the question of right with the question of meaning. ... b) To exist = to be capable of being perceived, to be perceivable. Difference in meaning. *S* exists without being perceivable. ... Existence is a condition for perceivability … *S* is perceivable because it exists. And not: it does not exist because it is not perceivable. Perceivability is a consequence of existence. Perceivability functions as a sign (*Zeichen*) for existence, it is not existence itself." See also, in the same sense, Hedwig Conrad-Martius, "Realontologie. I. Buch," *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* 6 (1923), 165–6.

[28] Denis Seron, "Un empirisme de style husserlien," *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 114/1 (2016), 49–71. This reading corresponds — although not exactly — to what Andrea Marchesi ("On Husserl's Exhibition Principle," *Husserl Studies* 35 (2019), 97–116) calls the "transcendental" (as opposed to "metaphysical") reading of Husserl's exhibition principle.

This understanding of perception as a source of rational beliefs is very close to what Reinach proposes within a realist framework. Although the non-existence of the external world is a priori possible, Reinach argues, outer perception provides us with "fulcrums" (*Anhaltspunkte*) or "indications" (*Hinweise*) in virtue of which "we have the right to believe in the external world."[29] Reinach's idea is in some ways close to Husserl's idea of a proto-doxa. It is that we *primarily* have perceptions that justify the belief in the external world, and that doubting the external world is possible only *at a secondary stage*, when new perceptions occur or we lose our trust in such-and-such external perceptions:

> It is a priori possible that [the belief in the external world] be overcome —, but this is possible only in perceptions, namely in [new] perceptions that we trust more than we trust the previous ones. How could a hallucination be recognized as such without a perception that is different from it? … In perception, a fulcrum is there. If we have a perception, then I can no more say [whether the object is there or not]. Non-existence is still *possible*. But here confirmation (*Bestätigung*) can intervene until doubt, even though not meaningless, is unjustified (*unberechtigt*).[30]

In short, our belief in the external world is made legitimate by external perception. By contrast, the Cartesian doubt requires being justified (*berechtigt*). This is not metaphysical realism, since the belief in the external world, although legitimate, may be false. This is a form of epistemological realism — which Reinach expectedly opposes to the Descartes-inspired idealism promoted, among others, by the neo-Kantians.[31]

Most importantly, this epistemological realism overlaps only in part with Husserl's position in *Ideas I*. There is a big difference between saying that perception can legitimate existential positions, as Reinach does, and saying, like Husserl, that perception *alone* can legitimate an existential position, whatever it might be. Husserl's "principle of all principles" states that perception is a necessary and sufficient condition for rational belief.[32] By contrast, Reinach's

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[29] *Einl.*, 484.

[30] *Einl.*, 484.

[31] Cf. *Einl.*, 484.

[32] See Hua III/1, 315–316 [283], Engl. trans., 327 (my emphasis): "But the posited characteristic has as its own a specific rational character, as a distinguishing mark accruing to it essentially, *if and only if* (*dann und nur dann*

claim is that perception is a sufficient but not necessary condition for legitimate belief: every perceived object is such that you are entitled to posit it as existent. But it does not follow from this that every object you are entitled to posit as existent is perceivable.

Conclusion: Realism and phenomenology

In conclusion, Reinach is a realist in at least two distinct respects. First, he defends a logical realism that conceives of logic, or at least the core part of it, in terms of a realist ontology of states of affairs, and he seeks to build a Meinong-style theory of object, based on a realist and non-Husserlian understanding of the intuition of essences. Second, he defends an epistemological realism according to which it is not the realist's belief in the external world that needs justification, but the idealist's doubting of it.

Although Reinach explicitly takes up the act/content/object distinction, the issue of intentional content is very seldom discussed in his surviving work. His discussions of propositions, for example, are always peripheral, which is not to say superfluous. Reinach is a realist in the sense that he is concerned primarily with "objectivities" construed — unlike Husserl's noemata — as being mind-independent.[33] The difference between Reinach's realist phenomenology and Husserl's transcendental phenomenology boils down to the fundamental difference between a theory of objects and a theory of intentional content. In this respect (and although the two views are not necessarily incompatible), it is right to oppose Reinach's claim that states of affairs are subject-independent to Husserl's thesis of the relativity of the noema. Given this, it is not surprising that Husserl expressed severe reservations about Reinach's ontologism, which he viewed as antithetic to his own "phenomenology of consciousness."[34]

This helps shed light on Husserl's relationships with his realist pupils. It is undeniable that these latter were more sympathetic to the *Logical Investigations* than to the theory of phenomenological reduction in the *Ideas I*. However, it is somewhat misleading to oppose Husserl's transcendental idealism to a realism allegedly shared by the Husserl of the

… *wenn*) it is a position on the basis of a fulfilled, originarily presentive sense and not merely on the basis of just any sense."

[33] See Hua III/1, 205 [184]; Engl. trans., 216, where Husserl opposes "the tree *simpliciter*, the physical thing belonging to Nature" to the "perceived tree as perceived which, as perceptual sense, inseparably (*unabtrennbar*) belongs to the perception."

[34] Karl Schuhmann, "Husserl und Reinach," in *Speech Act and Sachverhalt: Reinach and the Foundations of Realist Phenomenology*, ed. Kevin Mulligan (Cham: Springer, 1987), 249–50, who, however, significantly qualifies this antagonism.

Investigations (first edition) and the Munich-Göttingen phenomenologists. The notions of (material) ontology and phenomenological intuition of essences that are so characteristic of Reinach's realism appear only after the *Investigations*. They find their first systematic formulation in section 1 of the *Ideas I* — which can be read, for this reason, as a major concession to the realist phenomenologists in view of their responses to the first edition of the *Investigations*. This remains true even though Husserl interprets the two notions in a way that is alien to Reinach's thinking.[35] Finally, the overall picture that emerges from our discussion is that Reinach's realism is as remote from the idealism of the *Ideas I* as from the psychologizing, Brentano-inspired approach favored in the *Investigations*, and that this realism may have deeply influenced Husserl after the "transcendental turn," especially with respect to ontology and phenomenological ideation.

[35] The principal difference is that phenomenology is defined in *Ideas I* as a theory of *immanent* essences (Hua III/1, §§ 60 and 75). This naturally leads us to ask what Reinach's Platonic-Meinongian ontology has to do with "phenomenology." See Herbert Spiegelberg's conclusions in *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Vol. 1, 201. Reinach's view that his realism is "phenomenological" insofar as it is based on ideation is far from straightforward. For example, it is unclear why, as Reinach claims in his lecture "On Phenomenology," this should not apply to geometry as well.