

ADOLF REINACH IS NOT A PLATONIST

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Contemporary scholars have generally labelled Adolf Reinach, a founding member of early phenomenology's Göttingen Circle, a Platonist. Because Reinach conceives of states of affairs as neither real nor ideal, as involved with timeless essences and necessary logical laws, many have hastily concluded that states of affairs are Platonic entities. In this essay, I analyse Barry Smith's argument that Reinach is a Platonist. Smith's widely accepted argument often becomes utilised to show that Reinach and other phenomenologists, including Husserl, are Platonic realists (or, simply, Platonists). A closer look at Reinach's text indicates, however, that he is not committed to Platonic realism.

Scholars like Barry Smith and Artur Rojczak¹ have erroneously contended that since Reinach's philosophy conceives of states of affairs as subsisting entities that are independent of our cognition and acknowledgment, involved in relationships with essences and *a priori* connections, he necessarily defends a Platonistic approach to the ontology of states of affairs. Platonism, here, refers to the dualistic and idealistic notion that primary or true reality consists of eternal, immutable, non-physical archetypes, or *forms*, which exist in a separate world, thus entailing that what we experience in the world through the senses is simply imperfect, inferior copies. Contrary to this common view, I argue that Reinach acknowledges not only states of affairs that are rooted in and in-

¹Rojczak, like Smith, holds that Reinach's states of affairs are independent of our cognition and acknowledgement, that states of affairs occupy a realm separate from things, and they are extra-temporal and unchangeable. According to Rojczak, states of affairs are higher order-objects in a Meinongian sense, meaning that they are built up out of ordinary objects. Further, the realm of states of affairs is complete implying that in this realm "there are already given existent states of affairs for every possible judgement and for every possible expression of it." Artur Rojczak, *From the Act of Judging to Sentence: The Problem of Truth Bearers From Bolzano to Tarski* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2005),100.

separable from the timeless essences to which they refer and the immutable necessary laws they follow but also states of affairs that come into being and pass away, for example, those which refer to objects of claim and obligation, or enactments. Moreover, I argue that Reinach's work is informed by Aristotelian (and explicitly non-Platonic) presuppositions shared by members of the School of Brentano, the very same members that Smith *et al.* credit as responsible for Reinach's Platonism. Both Smith and Rojszczak concur that Meinong and Bolzano are highly feasible sources of Reinach's Platonism, but disagree whether to consider Husserl suspect as well: Smith believes Reinach inherited his Platonistic approach from Husserl,² whereas Rojszczak argues that Reinach's work stands in contrast to Husserl's.³ Despite the lack of consensus concerning Husserl, both agree that Reinach is a Platonist.

The argument Smith provides to demonstrate Reinach's Platonism in the conception of states of affairs consists of three points; all points are said to be found in Reinach's work as characteristics of states of affairs:

- a) *States of affairs* are independent of any judgement or cognition on our part;
- b) *States of affairs* constitute a special 'realm', distinct from the realm of objects;
- c) *States of affairs* enjoy an eternal existence: objects (*realia*), for Reinach, may come and go, but *Sachverhalte* are immutable.⁴

Smith's first characteristic is correct, the second is misleading in its use of the word 'realm,' and the third is completely inaccurate.

States of affairs as independent of our judgements and our cognition, the first characteristic in Smith's list, is an accurate portrayal of Reinach's description of the objectivity that states of affairs enjoy. In *Theory of Negative Judgement*, Reinach writes "If a state of affairs ob-

²Barry Smith, "On the Cognition of States of Affairs" in *Speech Act and Sachverhalt: Reinach and The Foundations of Realist Phenomenology* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), 201; cited hereafter as CSA.

³Rojszczak, 99.

⁴Smith, CSA, 201.

tains, it obtains independent of anyone's consciousness...To deny *in principle* that the obtaining of states of affairs is objective is the absurd standpoint of absolute epistemological skepticism...”,⁵ and later in *Concerning Phenomenology* Reinach adds, “But ‘states of affairs’ obtain (*bestehen*) indifferently of what consciousness apprehends them, and of whether they are apprehended by any consciousness at all.”⁶ States of affairs being *a priori* in nature, the predication of them is necessarily grounded in their nature (the being-A of B), are subject to laws that are independent of our cognition or recognition, laws that are necessary and essential: “The laws in question hold of the essences as such, in virtue of their nature. There is no accidentally-being-so in essences; rather, there is a necessarily-having-to-be-so, and an essentially-cannot-be-otherwise.”⁷ Concerning these independent laws, there is also the mention that syllogistic laws are really nothing but universally valid relationships of states of affairs, implying that states of affairs are subject to the *a priori* laws of logic.⁸ So, on the point of states of affairs being independent, Smith is correct.

According to Smith's second characteristic, states of affairs constitute a special ‘realm’ that is distinct from the realm of material objects (*realia*). This point is debatable since Reinach never outright says that states of affairs constitute a special distinct ‘realm.’ Reinach consistently describes states of affairs as properties grounded in the nature of the object, or that the predication of them is grounded in the nature of the thing, and never argues that states of affairs are actually distinct from the realm of objects.⁹ States of affairs and the essential connections they participate with become separated from their objects, or rather are brought to ultimate ‘givenness,’ when one performs ‘essence intuition,’¹⁰ and this

⁵Adolf Reinach, “Theory of Negative Judgement”, (tr.) D. Ferrari in *Aletheia: An International Journal of Philosophy* 2, 1981: 56; cited hereafter as TNJ.

⁶Adolf Reinach, “Concerning Phenomenology”, (tr.) Dallas Willard, *The Personalist*, 50 (1969): 213; cited hereafter as CP.

⁷Reinach, CP, 210.

⁸Reinach, TNJ, 35.

⁹Adolf Reinach, “The A Priori Foundations of Civil Law”, (tr.) J. F. Crosby, *Aletheia: An International Journal of Philosophy* 3 (1983): 6; cited hereafter as APF. Also found in TNJ, 35, and CP, 213.

¹⁰Essence intuition involves the phenomenological method, and it was with his lecture *Concerning Phenomenology* that Reinach attempted to show the Marburg audience that

seems to be the only way one can come to ‘apprehend’ states of affairs as distinct from their objects. Reinach never uses the word ‘realm’ when talking about states of affairs, but consistently uses the word ‘sphere’ (*Sphäre*). What is contestable in Smith’s account is the use of the word ‘realm’ as it has blatant Platonic connotations attached to it. The translation of the German word *Sphäre* as ‘realm’ suggests Platonism, and Smith’s argument seems to rely on these suggestive connotations.

To some the difference between ‘realm’ and ‘sphere’ may seem a moot point. To Reinach it seems to have been important for he employs ‘sphere’ consistently and exclusively for states of affairs, and uses the terms ‘realm’ or ‘domain’ (*Reich*, *Bereich*, or *Gebiet*) when discussing subjects like Ethics, or Aesthetics, or the entire applicable area of the *a priori*. A discussion of the historical usage of ‘sphere’ can shed light on Reinach’s employment of the term, especially since the development of ‘sphere’ affected German jurisprudence literature and theories on social acts. And this historical tracing should also further demonstrate that Reinach’s adherence to ‘sphere’ was a great effort on his part to refrain from using language with Platonic undertones.

According to the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, the development of the modern term ‘sphere’ stems from 18th-century ideas on individual or social philosophy, possibly from the French word *sphère*, where the concept came to signify boundaries or measures assigned to the human condition.¹¹ In Fichte’s *Foundations of Natural Rights*, ‘sphere’ is appropriated in just this sense: ‘sphere’, in the context of natural law, comes to mean a locus of activity originating from a free individual that is distinct from the free activities of others. Original rights are the rights individuals have independent of political order or laws, also known as the ‘conditions of personality’ or free agency, and belong to the individual by virtue of what makes them a person—the ability to set ends for themselves. According to Fichte, the underlying principle of original rights is “that each is to limit his freedom, the sphere

the phenomenological method was the only method able to bring to ‘ultimate givenness’ the essential structures of an object: “Today I have continuously stressed the fact that a peculiar and immense effort is required in order to surmount the distance which naturally separates us from objects and to attain to clear apprehension of them. It is precisely in this respect that we speak of phenomenological *method*.” (CP, 220)

¹¹Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer (eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, *Band 9: Se-Sp* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995), 1373.

of his free actions, through the concept of the freedom of the other (so that the other, as free in general, can exist as well).¹² Fichte proposes the idea that original rights secure the freedom of individuals to act. When many individuals freely act the result is that individuals will naturally restrict each other's actions. What this creates is an exclusive, external sphere of freedom within which an individual's free agency is realised: the rational necessity of original rights and other rights Fichte defends, like property, lie "in the fact that in order to realise themselves as persons, human subjects require an exclusive sphere of activity within which they are free to carry out ends that are entirely their own—ends that, once translated into actions, mark them in the external world as individuals, distinct from all others."¹³ Fichte's conception of sphere proved extremely important indeed; modern German legal theory still utilises the idea of a personal sphere of rights today.¹⁴

Later, in the 20th century, phenomenologist Max Scheler developed his '*Sphärentheorie*,' which consisted of twelve irreducible spheres of consciousness or '*Bewusstseinsphäre*': the Absolute, the Thou-I relation (the "with-world"), the outer world, the inner world, aliveness, inanimate matter, the outer world of our co-subjects belonging to the with-world, what "I" know of the outer world, the outer world of my own particular with-world, the inner world of my own particular with-world, my own inner world, and the lived-body.¹⁵ These spheres of consciousness resemble a pre-given framework, albeit not a Kantian synthesis, and if "taken by themselves and without any meaning specific to their appropriate object, they possess only an amorphous, intuitive content."¹⁶ These spheres of consciousness are passive, purely a priori 'there,' described as constituting all directions of experience and knowledge. It is more than likely that both Fichte and Scheler influenced Reinach's utilisation of 'sphere.' Reinach's legal training would have acquainted him with Fichte's ideas on personal spheres of free action, and there is brief mention of Fichte in a discussion of natural law in *The A Priori Founda-*

¹²J. G. Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Rights*, (ed.) Frederick Neuhouser, (tr.) M. Baur (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 102.

¹³Fichte, xxiv–xxv.

¹⁴Ritter and Gründer, 1374.

¹⁵Manfred Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler: The First Comprehensive Guide Based on the Complete Works* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997), 127.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 127.

tions of Civil Law. Concerning Scheler, Reinach became well acquainted with him during regular philosophical discussions at Daubert's house (about 1908), worked with him closely on the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* project (about 1911), and attended some of his lectures (about 1908).

The third line of Smith's argument, that states of affairs have an eternal and immutable existence in contrast to temporal objects (*realia*), is erroneous in several respects. To begin with, in his *Theory of Negative Judgement*, Reinach demands that one must "distinguish states of affairs as objectivities of a totally different nature from objects in a narrower sense, be they of a real (e.g., things, sounds, experiences) or ideal (e.g., numbers, sentences, concepts) nature."¹⁷ Reinach clearly wants to distinguish states of affairs from ideal objects as much as from real objects, conceiving of a third type of object with a wholly different mode of being. This is not to say that states of affairs cannot participate with ideal objects, but they are not themselves ideal objects. Reinach also expresses disagreement with using the term 'existence' when describing states of affairs. Instead, Reinach prefers, especially pertaining to judgement, the word 'obtain,' for it signifies that states of affairs are a third type of object that is neither real nor ideal.¹⁸ At the very least, 'subsistence' is preferable to 'existence' to demonstrate clearly the special mode of being states of affairs possess.

In his argument, Smith is correct to point out that states of affairs do not enjoy the same type of existence material objects do. He is incorrect, however, advocating they enjoy an eternal existence, as this equates them with ideal objects and in the Platonic sense no less. In other words, Smith's description "eternal" not only is an inaccurate depiction of states of affairs, but also does not accurately represent **ideal** objects in the Reinachian sense. Ideal objects, for Reinach, enjoy a timeless or atemporal type of existence, meaning that they exist outside of time rather than existing at all times. When talking of universals, Reinach writes, "our thoughts are not only directed towards temporal, but also atemporal ob-

¹⁷Reinach, TNJ, 34.

¹⁸In footnote 34 of *Theory of Negative Judgement*, Reinach writes that it is proper, when describing real or ideal objects, to speak of an *existence*. Conversely, when talking about states of affairs, one must always describe them as obtaining or not obtaining. This clearly demonstrates that Reinach conceives of states of affairs as existing differently and separately from ideal objects as much as real objects. (TNJ 61)

jects, which we call ideal, and of which true statements can be made just as much as real objects...”¹⁹, and when arguing for the recognition that civil law has *a priori* foundations he says, “That $2 \times 2 = 4$ is a fact which is perhaps not understood by some persons but which exists independently of being understood, independently of being posited by men, and independently of the lapse of time.... One thinks that there is simply no such thing as legal principles which stand in themselves and are timeless-ly valid, such as we find for instance in mathematics.”²⁰ On a semantic level, Smith’s characterisation of states of affairs possessing “eternal existence” in his argument demonstrates that he misunderstands ideal objects in the Reinachian sense, and next his conceptual mistake of identifying states of affairs as Platonically ideal objects will be explored in detail.

Smith’s error in describing states of affairs as eternal and immutable entities becomes further illuminated by reference to Reinach’s analysis of social acts of promising and enactment. In his article *The A priori Foundations of Civil Law*, Reinach describes again a third kind of object, an object that is neither physical (i.e., material or psychological) nor ideal:

We shall show that the structures which one has generally called specifically legal have a being of their own just as much as numbers, trees, or houses, that this being is independent of its being grasped by men, that it is in particular independent of all positive law.... [L]egal entities such as claims and obligations have their independent being.... We shall see that philosophy here comes across objects of quite a new kind, objects which do not belong to nature in the proper sense, which are neither physical nor psychical and which are at the same time different from all ideal objects in virtue of their temporality.... They are *a priori* laws, and in fact, as we can add, synthetic *a priori* laws.... Together with pure mathematics and pure natural science there is also a pure science of right, which also consists in strictly *a priori* and synthetic propositions and which serves as the foundation for

¹⁹Adolf Reinach, “The Supreme Rules of Inference According to Kant”, (tr.) J. M. DuBois, *Aletheia: An International Journal of Philosophy*: Volume 6, 1994.

²⁰Reinach, CP, 2.

disciplines which are not *a priori*, indeed even for such as stand outside the antithesis of *a priori* and empirical.
(APF 4–6)

Claim and obligation are what result under certain circumstances, although not exclusively, in an act of promising: when one makes a promise, what arises is a bond between two parties in which one party makes a claim and the other party is under obligation to grant or perform the act.²¹ The relationship between the act of promising and the resulting claim and obligation is one of necessary ground and consequent: claims or obligations cannot be grasped alone—in order to understand them one must trace back to the initial act of promising. Because the relationship between promising and claim and obligation is one of ground and consequent, it necessarily involves states of affairs: “A ground or consequence is always a state of affairs, and can only be a state of affairs.... they, and they alone, can stand in relationship of ground and consequent.”²² Claim and obligation, upon entering the world, are not physical or material entities nor are they purely psychical experiences; claim and obligation hold even when the subjects bound by them are not experiencing them, such as in sleep. They are also not ideal objects since claim and obligation arise in time, and once the promised act is performed, they disappear or dissolve.²³ This dissolution of the claim upon the act’s completion is universally and necessarily grounded in the essence of the claim itself, making it a synthetic *a priori* object: “This is not a statement which we

²¹Reinach adds that, under such circumstances where claim and obligation result from an act of promising, this generation lies in the very essence of the act of promising. (APF, 15)

²²Reinach, TNJ, 34–5.

²³Reinach later writes, “We being by putting forward as a general and self-evident *a priori* law: no claim and no obligation begins to exist or is extinguished without some ‘reason.’ It is quite clear: if a claim is to emerge (be extinguished), then at the moment when it emerges (is extinguished) there must have come about something out of which or through which it emerges (is extinguished). And we can add right away: whenever exactly the same thing occurs again, the corresponding claim must also emerge (be extinguished) again. It is necessarily and sufficiently determined by the event. We are surely familiar with this principle of the definite determination of temporal existents. The only remarkable thing is that we have found here a new and peculiar sphere of its validity.” (APF, 14)

could not have gathered from many or from all instances experienced by observation, it is rather a law which is universally and necessarily grounded in the essence of the claim as such. It is an *a priori* statement in the sense of Kant and, at the same time, a synthetic one. In the ‘concept’ of claim nothing is ‘contained’ in any possible sense about the fact that the claim dissolves under certain circumstances.”²⁴ Claim and obligation also necessarily involve a bearer and content: claim and obligation are correlative in that each has identical content, and there is a mutual relationship between the bearer and the partner interwoven according to strict *a priori* laws.²⁵ Because claim and obligation are subject to necessary *a priori* laws and are founded on *a priori* connections, they necessarily involve states of affairs—states of affairs that are temporal.

Enactment, for Reinach, is a social act that expresses oughtness: through enactment one can posit that a state of affairs ought to obtain, that something ought to exist, or that a certain action ought to be performed.²⁶ An enactment necessarily presupposes a person who issues it and lacks any other personal moment, as its content does not refer to or include any person at all. The positing character of enactment is “relative to the positing acts and there is no independently existing being which runs parallel to it and to which it has to correspond. Though it is especially easy to confuse this ought with the objective ought-to-be, it is nevertheless clear that this latter ought, grounded as it is in moral value or moral rightness, has nothing to do with the positing character which exists only as the correlate of the enacting acts of a person.”²⁷ Enactment does not conform to any objective ought-to-be²⁸; rather, enactments, even ones based on objective moral ought, can be arbitrarily enacted and are temporal. Moreover, Reinach writes, “Only that which can be and can

²⁴*Ibid.*, 9.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 12.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 107.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 108.

²⁸For Reinach, judgements are one type of conforming act. Judgements differ from enactments in their relation to their content. Judgements, by their very nature, ‘render’ in their positing something pregiven. (APF, 107) When a judgement posits the existence of an object, even if the object does not exist, there is an existence-in-itself that the judgement positing tries to conform to—to posit as existing something which is meant as existing. (APF, 107) Enactments, on the contrary, do not conform since there is no independently existing entity running parallel to the enactment.

also not be, which can have a beginning, duration, and an end in time, is the possible content of an enactment.”²⁹ So, not only is enactment itself temporal, but the possible contents of an enactment must also be temporal, and this includes the intrinsic properties that are states of affairs. Reinach further adds that the content of an enactment can never meaningfully be something *a priori* necessary or something *a priori* impossible: it would be meaningless to enact “2 x 2 ought to be 4” or that “square circles ought to exist.” The content of an enactment, according to Reinach, should meaningfully be synthetic *a priori*, and something that possibly can become realised.

Further demonstration that Reinach is not a Platonist in his conception of states of affairs comes via the argument Chisholm offered in his introduction to *Realism and The Background of Phenomenology* that defended Meinong’s “*So-Sein*” against the same charge. Chisholm’s reconstruction of the Platonic realist’s argument is as follows:

- a) There are truths which hold of things that do not exist, i.e., things that do not exist may yet have properties;
- b) only that which is real can have properties;
therefore,
- c) there are real things that do not exist, and reality is thus not coextensive with existence.³⁰

Reinach, like Meinong, would accept the first premise: both admit that one can make true propositions about objects that subsist or enjoy a mode of being other than existence, objects like concepts, logical entities, or future objects. Also, both describe the ability to make affirmative or negative judgements concerning states of affairs. Both Reinach and Meinong would reject the second premise because non-real objects, ones that subsist, or for Meinong ‘absist,’ are capable of having properties just the same as real objects. Although the “round square” is logically impossible, I can still describe the roundness and squareness it would have.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 108–9. Additionally, Reinach writes that a comprehensive *a priori* theory of social acts would work through the different things attributed to such acts, e.g., logical correctness of acts, groundedness, and efficacy, to name a few.

³⁰Roderick Chisholm, (ed.), *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology* (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), 8.

The same applies to golden mountains or purple swans: I can attribute and describe properties they would have while still knowing that they are not real objects, or capable of being real objects. Meinong, as Chisholm points out, would consider the Platonist as having a prejudice for the real or actual: “The totality of objects, according to Meinong, includes not only those real things with which Plato was concerned, but also everything impossible—such objects as the round square...[such an object] is not a bare nothing; for when we refer to it, we refer to something.”³¹ Reinach would concur completely with Meinong, for his own work concerns itself with objects of all kinds and modes of being—objects that are possible or impossible, and objects that are real, ideal, and subsistent. Both Reinach and Meinong would, generally, agree with the conclusion, although now the rejection of the second premise has damaged the conclusion's strength significantly.

A last means by which one can clearly see that Reinach is not a Platonist comes via the words of his good friend and fellow phenomenologist Hedwig Conrad-Martius. She arrived in Göttingen in 1910 and quickly became a central figure of the Göttingen Philosophical Society, a group formed by the Munich students who left Theodor Lipps to join Husserl. This is how she became acquainted with Reinach and his close friend and colleague Theodor Conrad, whom she married in 1912. Conrad-Martius had the unique pleasure of knowing Reinach both personally and professionally; she not only took classes under him at Göttingen but also, through her husband, gained Reinach's friendship through conversations and letters. Until his death in 1917, Reinach continued a close friendship with the Conrads, writing them a total of 111 letters and postcards between December 31, 1902, and November 12, 1917.

In Conrad-Martius' Introduction to *Adolf Reinach Gesammelte Schriften: Herausgegeben von seinen Schülern*, she writes that Reinach's philosophical personality was such that “in his own central philosophical position and in his disposition as a philosopher [he was] a kindred spirit of Plato. This of course not in the sense of any particular Platonic doctrine (he was not a ‘Platonist’!), but rather only in the particular philosophical eros which animated him.”³² Reinach was an admirer of Plato, a

³¹*Ibid.*, 9.

³²Hedwig Conrad-Martius, “Einleitung” in *Adolf Reinach Gesammelte Schriften: Herausgegeben von Seinen Schülern* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1921), xxvi–xxvii. The English

man who carried out philosophical inquiry in the spirit of Plato, but was not a Platonist in his theories. The best way to further illustrate what she means is to quote Reinach himself. When talking about the unmediated nature of essence-analysis, how direct access to the facts themselves is possible without word-signification, Reinach says, “To a certain degree, the step from Socrates to Plato is what is in question here. Socrates did signification analysis when, in the streets of Athens, he put his question:—‘You talk of such and such. Now just what do you mean?...By contrast, Plato does not start with words and significations. He aims at the direct view of the ideas, the unmediated grasp of essences as such.’”³³ In this quotation, Reinach sees himself akin to Plato in the sense of communicating a project, a method that will allow philosophers to have direct access to the world of essences and things themselves.

Final Thoughts

Smith’s view that Reinach upholds Platonism in his conception of states of affairs is incorrect. With the use of Smith’s own list of characteristics, Reinach’s own work and with the help of Chisholm and Conrad-Martius, the argument that Reinach is not a Platonist has been substantiated. But one must ask, with so much evidence in Reinach’s texts, how did this erroneous position arise? In my opinion, this confusion about the nature of states of affairs arose in part through a general mistake concerning *timeless* and *eternal*, something many academics do without pause or notice. I believe, however, mistaken conclusions such as this one are most likely to occur when one already possesses a bias for Platonism. Here, because states of affairs are subject to timeless and immutable laws, and actively engage with necessary, timeless and immutable essences, the conclusion arrived at was that all states of affairs are eternal and immutable. A more appropriate and accurate admission would be that *some* states of affairs are immutable, *some* are timeless (as opposed to eternal), and *some* are temporal and changing, such as those involved in speech acts.

One must also inquire why there is a desire to see Reinach and other phenomenologists, as well as members of the Austrian tradition, as

translation is from J. F. Crosby, “Reinach as Philosophical Personality,” *Aletheia: An International Journal of Philosophy* 3 (1983), xxx–xxxii.

³³Reinach, CP, 210.

Platonically grounded. This is a difficult question to answer with precision, however, I would put forward the idea that it has to do with our inability to get beyond the dichotomy of real and ideal objects, that is, our failure to recognise and grasp a third type of entity. This third type of object has brought to light how inadequate our descriptions are; there is more to the world of objects than just the ideal and the physically real, and this thought is unsettling: the classifications we have grown comfortable with are no longer adequate, and instead of answering the call made by Reinach and others to accept and classify this third kind of object, philosophers have taken recourse in a traditional conceptual distinction. This third object ties it to the Austrian Tradition; through its conception from Stumpf to Reinach this third type of object has encountered skepticism and ignorance, only to be lost with the subjectivist transcendental turn in phenomenology. If we are to attempt a true return to *things themselves*, entailed in this endeavour is a return to the origins of phenomenology; we must recognise this third type of object as one that has played a central role in its foundation.

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