EDITOR'S INTRODUCTORY ESSAY [1]

A short biographical note

Dietrich von Hildebrand was born in 1889 in Florence, as the sixth child and only son of the German sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand, who created many famous works, such as the *Hubertusbrunnen* in Munich. Adolf von Hildebrand was also an original thinker and wrote an influential book on aesthetics, *The Problem of Form.* The personalities of his parents and of his five older sisters, among whom the outstanding painter Lisl (Elisabeth Brewster) deserves a special mention, formed the young Hildebrand (Gogo as his friends called him) as much as the beauty of Italy, of art and of music, which he loved intensely.

In spite of the great effect his family had on him, neither their ethical relativism nor their liberal protestantism which accepted Christ only as an extraordinary human being, influenced him. Even as a small boy he argued against his sisters' and father's ethical relativism and from early childhood on he had a strong faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ totally against the beliefs of his family.

His father, whose house was a center of art and culture, visited by the greatest European artists and musicians of the day, hired renowned scholars to give his son an excellent private education at home. At the age of seventeen, Hildebrand enrolled as a student of

[1] This Introductory Essay was written for the present (third) English edition of Hildebrand's *What is Philosophy?* I wish to acknowledge the extensive constructive criticisms and valuable suggestions I have received from my colleague Professor Barry Smith in writing it.

philosophy at the University of Munich, where he studied with Hans Lipps and Alexander Pfänder, to switch in 1909 to Göttingen, where he pursued his studies under Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, and Adolf Reinach, who in 1910 had become Hildebrand's only philosophical teacher and remained his real philosophical model.[2]

Max Scheler, too, had a great impact on Hildebrand's philosophic thought. His first major book, *Formalism in Ethics and a Non-Formal Ethics of Value* (1913), had brought great fame to Scheler and his philosophic brilliance as well as the extraordinary charm of his personality made him an influential figure in Germany. As a young student Hildebrand became Scheler's closest personal friend and remained so for many years (1908-21). He organized privately paid courses of lectures given by Scheler in Göttingen after the latter had to leave the University of Munich because of a private scandal. In the demagogically conducted show-trial against Scheler, Hildebrand also defended Scheler against personal attacks and calumnies. But Hildebrand was not uncritical of a certain lack of discipline and of other negative traits in Scheler's academic and personal character. Hildebrand was therefore not his student in the sense of being his disciple. Moreover, in his doctoral work on ethics Hildebrand had already made quite independent discoveries. Developing the idea of "value response" as an affirmation of goods for the sake of their inherent objective value rather than for the sake of their fulfilling our quest for happiness, he distinguished two radically distinct points of view of motivation: the "intrinsic good" of value and the merely subjectively satisfying. Hildebrand also developed an explanation of moral evil as not grounded in igno-

[2] The very active role Hildebrand must have played in Husserl's seminars in Göttingen is reflected by the oral account of his friend and fellow student of this time, Sigfried Johannes Hamburger. Hamburger claimed that Hildebrand regularly intervened in those seminars in order to explain to the students what Husserl had said; then he explained to Husserl what the students had meant. And sometimes he explained to Husserl what he himself had really intended to say.

rance or error but in a choice guided by an entirely different point of view of motivation than the good action: one's own subjective satisfaction - in indifference to the question of the intrinsic good. Hand in hand with this went a critique of Scheler's explanation of good and evil as stemming from right and wrong value-preferences of the higher or lower value.

In 1914 Hildebrand converted to Catholicism and wrote thereafter many religious books, the most important ones of which deal with marriage, sexual ethics, and the transformation in Christ.[3] Hildebrand became one chief promoter of a new Catholic philosophy and theology of marriage in which the one-sided emphasis on procreation and education of children was broken and the central significance of personal love as key for understanding the value of sex was emphasized. Hildebrand in this connection even gave rise to a change in the previous Catholic terminology according to which the generation and education of offspring had been defined as the "first end" of marriage. He distinguished "meaning" and "end," and spoke of the fulfilment of love as the primary meaning of the sexual act, as distinct from its "first end" (procreation). These contributions led to a certain revolution in Catholic teaching on marriage during the last decades, culminating in the theology of the human body presented by Pope John II according to which the deepest essence of the human body consists in its becoming a gift and fulfilling the mutual gift of spousal love. Even religiously motivated celibacy is conceived both by Hildebrand and by Pope John

[3] His book on marriage was published in 1928 in German, and in 1942 in the first English edition. Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Marriage,* 4th edn (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1984); see also his *In Defense of Purity* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1931); latest edition (Steubenville, Ohio: Franciscan University Press, 1989); *Transformation in Christ* (New York: Longmans/Green, 1948; latest edition Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1990). His positive vision of sexuality in marriage and his philosophy of love as the central meaning of marriage, at first sharply opposed by some Catholic circles, became influential for the thought of the Popes from Pius XII to John Paul II and for the doctrine of marriage of the Second Vatican Council.

Paul II as a gift of love to God proper to incarnated persons. In later years, Hildebrand also published a number of books on the Church crisis in the sixties and seventies. All his religious books contain a strong philosophical dimension.

Hildebrand's independence of mind manifested itself especially in his unrelenting fight against racism and against other elements of the Nazi ideology. Since the unsuccessful Hitler Putsch of 1923 on the Nazi hit-list, Hildebrand had to flee in 1933 to Austria. In Vienna, through a journal which he founded,[4] Hildebrand fought uncompromisingly against the Nazi-ideology, uninfluenced by any of his friends or by public figures and churchmen who tried to see some good points in Hitler's activities and ideas and warned him against the dangers for his own life after Hitler had declared him a degenerate enemy of the German people. In 1938, when the Nazis entered Austria, he had to flee again hours after the *Anschluss.* He went - via Switzerland, France, and South America - to New York, where he taught, until his retirement, at Fordham University. He died on January 26, 1977 in New Rochelle, N.Y.

On Hildebrand's doctoral thesis, *The Idea of a Moral Action,* Husserl wrote: "This dissertation I have studied with great joy. I would almost say that the genius of Adolf von Hildebrand was inherited by his son, the author, in the form of a philosophic genius. In fact, in this work we find the manifestation of a rare gift to draw on the depths of phenomenological intuition, to analyze the object of these intuitions sharply and to capture them by means of the most rigorous method . . . I can propose for this important thesis only the grade *opus eximium.*"[5]

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[4]The title of the journal was *Der christliche Ständestaat.* Articles he published there on the errors of Nazi ideology and sections of his more than 2000 pages (hitherto unpublished) memoirs are scheduled to be published in the Spring of 1991in German.

[5]Translation mine, J.S. The full text, edited by Karl Schuhmann, is contained in *Aletheia* 5 (forthcoming).

Husserl commented on the book extensively[6] and published it in the *Jahrbuch fur Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung.* Husserl and his collaborators Scheler, Reinach, and Geiger also published in their journal Hildebrand's second book (his *Habilitationsthese)* on *Morality and Ethical Value Cognition,* a book known for its penetrating studies of different kinds and roots of moral value blindness.

Among his many works, the most important philosophical books, besides the ones already mentioned and his *What is Philosophy?* (1960), are his *Ethics* (1957)[7], his *Metaphysics of Community* (in German 1931), his *The Essence of Love* (1971, also in German), his posthumously published work *Moralia* (1980) and his 2 volume study, *Aesthetics* I and II (1977, 1984, also so far available only in German).[8]

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[6] The only other book in Husserl's library so carefully worked through is Heidegger's *Being and Time.* See on this Karl Schuhmann, "Husserl and Hildebrand," *Aletheia* 5 (forthcoming).

[7]This book appeared in 1957 under the misleading title "Christian Ethics" which described only the last chapter of the work. Therefore, from the second edition on, Hildebrand changed the title.

[8]Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Ethics,* 2nd edn (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978); *What is Philosophy?,* 2nd edn (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1960; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973); *Die Idee der sittlichen Handlung,* in: *Jahrbuch fiir Philosophie and phdnomenologische Forschung,* Bd. III (Halle a.d.S.: Niemeyer, 1916; 2nd edn, 1930; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 3rd edn, 1969); *Sittlichkeit and ethische Werterkenntnis,* in: *Jahrbuch für Philosophie and phänomenologische Forschung,* Bd. V (Halle a.d.S.: Niemeyer, 1922; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2nd edn, 1969; Valendar-Schönstatt: Parris Verlag, 3rd edn, 1982); *Ästhetik 1, Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. V (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1977); *Ästhetik* 2, *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. VI (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984); *Metaphysik der Gemeinschaft, Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. IV (Regensburg: Habbel, 4th edn, 1975); *Das Wesen der Liebe,* in: Hildebrand, *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. III (Regensburg-Stuttgart: Habbel/Kohlhammer, 1971); *Moralia, Gesammelte Werke* Bd. IX (Regensburg: Habbel, 1980).

Hildebrand's *What is Philosophy?*

Hildebrand's *What is Philosophy?* is - with respect to its quality - a philosophical classic, though it is recognized only by few to be such.[9] I shall briefly explain both why it is a great book and why its importance has not been more widely recognized.

To achieve this purpose, I shall consider briefly: 1. The historical background of the work in the early development of phenomenology, 2. Dietrich von Hildebrand's contribution to the methodology of phenomenological realism, 3. The importance of the present book for the critique of transcendental idealism, 4. Anglo-Saxon empiricism and Hildebrand's more radical "empiricism of essences", 5. Hildebrand's *What is Philosophy?* as radical objectivist apriorism.

The historical background of the work in the early development of phenomenology

It passes for a rather well-known fact that the thinkers united in the so-called "phenomenological movement" shared no clearly defined philosophical tenets. It is usually supposed that they were united somehow with respect to the method of philosophy. Neither one of these views is true, however, when taken at face value. Certainly, the phenomenological movement was, during its first phase, relatively united with respect *both* to certain important theses and to the conception of the phenomenological method. This is true especially for the so-called Munich-Göttingen phenomenological circle, particularly

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[9]An earlier and shorter version of What is *Philosophy?* was published in 1950 in German under the title Vom *Sinn philosophischen Fragens and Erkennens* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1950).

for the years immediately following the publication of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*.[10] During that time, a number of students went from the University of Munich to Göttingen in order to study under Husserl. Most of them had been students of Theodor Lipps and went to Göttingen, at the latter's suggestion, in spite of the fact that Lipps himself had defended precisely the kind of psychologistic logic which Husserl's *Logical Investigations* had criticized so sharply.

Husserl had objected to psychologistic logic chiefly on the grounds that it was empiricist and as such unable to explain the necessity of logical laws. This necessity, Husserl argued, can in no way be derived from vague and contingent laws concerning actual events of thinking on the part of individual human subjects nor from mere tautologies or definitions of logical terms. Husserl had objected likewise to the subjectivism of psychologism (and of the Neo-Kantianism with which it became associated), arguing that the laws of logic in their strict essential necessity are binding for every thinking being *because* they are grounded in objective logical essences and therefore are independent of any empirical psychological laws as well as of any subjective phenomena. He had thus defended both the strict necessity and the objectivity of logical laws.

On similar grounds, Husserl had also criticized sharply the relativism inherent in psychologism. By going back to things themselves, i.e. (in this connection) to an uninhibited intuition and painstaking analysis of the logical data and the essences of judgment, truth, verification, etc., Husserl introduced a new, objectivist philosophical method, a method which consisted in a rigorous return to "things themselves" as they present themselves in experience. From this new method Husserl expected a greater perfection and a renewal of all areas of philosophical research. Philosophy - hitherto in his eyes a set of

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[10]This work which gave rise to the phenomenological movement was published in Germany in 1900/01. See Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations,* trans]. J.N. Findlay, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1970).

vague and misleading theories - was to become a pure and rigorous science, able to progress from the level of private opinion to become an intersubjective possession of all philosophers who would be ready and willing to adopt the new objective science of "phenomenology."

Yet how can logic be grounded by a method whose starting point is experience? Can experiences give rise to anything but a vague psychology of human thinking? Husserl answers this question by distinguishing, in addition to sense-experiences or sensuous intuitions, also what he calls "categorial intuitions" which relate to objective universal essences and to essential laws. We reach these when we turn aside from the mere factualities of the objects of experience and concentrate upon their pure essences.

Such essences, Husserl claims, are strictly necessary, universal, timeless, objective and wholly independent of human subjectivity. They bind our consciousness not because of some empirical or other subjective necessity of thinking but rather because all real and possible minds, when and insofar as they think correctly, are thereby subject to those purely logical essences and laws inasmuch as they understand them in their intrinsic necessity.

Husserl's philosophy appeared at the turn of the century to be a new breakthrough to a classical objectivism of the sort which had not been defended so strongly since Leibniz - an objectivism to which Hume and Kant seemed to have dealt deadly blows from which earlier brands of objectivist philosophies, especially the systems of dogmatic metaphysics denigrated by Kant, were never again to recover. And yet here, in Husserl, the objectivism of classical and medieval thought seemed to have risen once more to its highest splendour.

Husserl did not remain alone in holding these views, but was soon surrounded by students and collaborators who held similar positions both on method and on the fundamental contents of the new objectivist philosophy and conception of logic. Johannes Daubert, Max Scheler, Adolf Reinach (the most precise analyst in the Mu-

nich-Göttingen circle and a very original thinker in his own right), Alexander Pfänder and Moritz Geiger developed a phenomenological philosophy which was fundamentally identical to that of Husserl and rehabilitated, against psychologism and Neo-Kantianism, the Platonic-Augustinian philosophy of "eternal truths" which had dominated Western philosophy until Leibniz.[11] The early realist phenomenology gave a new methodological and "modern" foundation to this "classical" realist philosophy of necessary truths.

That a question cannot be true, that a proposition expressive of a judgment cannot simultaneously both be true and false, that colours must be extended in at least two dimensions, that a promise engenders a claim on the part of the promisee and an obligation to fulfil it on the part of the promisor, that an act of doubt of all truth necessarily presupposes the real existence of the subject of such doubt, that the straight line is the shortest connection between two points, that moral values presuppose a free subject - all these states of affairs and countless others are necessarily such as to obtain. Hence the propositions which assert these necessary states of affairs are necessarily true and no consciousness could make them false or is needed to "constitute" their truth

And none of these and similar propositions can be reduced to tautologies. Their truth does not become evident from mere definitions of the terms of the subject of these propositions but can only become evident by a "categorial intuition" into the essences of the things in question. And none of these a priori principles and states of affairs can be reduced to subjective forms of thought and perception.

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[11] We speak here in general terms and are aware of the fact that nominalism and other movements in medieval philosophy had denied such "eternal verities" and that René Descartes, in holding that they are created by God, had called the eternal truths into question before the post-Leibnizean empiricist and idealist assaults on them. Nevertheless, the leading medieval philosophers including, especially, Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure, and early modern philosophers, especially Descartes in his *Meditations,* justify our generalizing statement.

Why is this important?, the reader might wonder. Why is it that Adolf Reinach could deem the existence of such essential necessities so important that he could even go as far as to say that "when one thinks the matter through to the end", they are part of "that which is most important in the entire world?"[12] Because no truth, no logic, no mathematics, no value, no ethics, no knowledge, no science, no person, no love, no striving for good and avoiding evil, no God - are knowable or even possible without the existence of such a priori necessary elements. Therefore, if these are just subjective constructions, as Kant or Hume, Humberto Maturana or Michael A. Arbib hold, our whole world is transformed into "pure imagination *(Vorstellung),"* to speak with Schopenhauer. Then we are enclosed, as Friedrich Nietzsche put it, in the "spider webs of our thoughts" and "should despair if we could even look for one moment outside the prison-walls of our subjectivity" where no values, no meaning, and no purposes exist and nothingness reigns. Complete relativism and nihilism follow, in the last analysis, if a priori essences are denied - even if this is realized by few authors. Therefore not only the question of their existence but also that of their nature and objectivity are of the utmost importance.

Essential necessities and their objectivity had been defended by Husserl in the *Logical Investigations* (1900/01), as mentioned above. In 1905, however, when Husserl gave the Vienna lectures later published under the title *The Idea of Phenomenology*[13], Husserl adopted a tran-

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[12] Adolf Reinach, "Über Phänomenologie," in: Adolf Reinach, Sämtliche Werke Texkritiscbe Ausgabe in zwei Bänden, Bd. I: Die Werke, Teil I: Kritische Neuausgabe (1905-14), Ted 11: Nachgelassene Texte (1906-17); ed. Barry Smith and Karl Schuhmann (München and Wien: Philosophic Verlag, 1989), pp. 531-50, 543 (my own translation).

[13] See Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology,* transl. by William P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), particularly lecture III, pp. 33-42, where Husserl speaks of "pure phenomena," "absolutely immanent data as the object of phenomenology, which gives evidence to the influence of Kant's Critique. See also *ibid.,* lecture V, pp. 52-60, in which Husserl speaks of the constitution of

scendental phenomenology which was much influenced by his reading of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and which indeed contained a more radical subjectivism even than that of Kant: Not only did Husserl come to embrace the conviction that man can reach neither any strictly absolute essential necessities nor any transcendent being of "things in themselves"; he held indeed that it made no sense to speak of a being in itself, independent of human subjectivity. He thought, more radically than Kant, that all objects of human consciousness are entirely constituted by transcendental subjective consciousness and dependent on it, and that the idea of being and reality outside of the limits of the sphere of *noemata* and of the intentional objects of human consciousness was an outright absurdity.[14]

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time-consciousness and individual essence as well as of the constitution of different modes of objectivity.

“And the object is not a thing which is put into cognition as into a sack, as if cognition were a completely empty form, one and the same empty sack in which now this, now that is placed. But in givenness we see that the object is constituted in cognition ...," (p. 59)

[14] The most important texts on this are not translated into English. See Husserl, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1959), II and *III Beilage,* pp. 81-3:

> Could not an omnipotent . . . liar-spirit have created my soul in such a way . . . that of all the objects which it intends . . . nothing would exist? . . . Perhaps there is nothing at all outside of myself . . . The transcendent . . . can in principle not be experienced . . . transcendent knowledge (seems to be) impossible.

See also E. Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations,* trans]. D. Cairns, 5th impression (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1973), IV, 73, pp. 83-6:

> Transcendency in every form is an immanent existential characteristic, constituted within the ego. Every imaginable meaning, every imaginable being, whether the latter is called immanent or transcendent, falls within the domain of transcendental subjectivity . . that constitutes meaning and being . . If transcendental subjectivity is the universe of possible sense, then an outside is precisely - nonsense . . . phenomenology is *eo ipso* "transcendental idealism," though . . . not psychological idealism . . . Nor is it Kantian idealism, which believes it can leave open, at least as a limiting concept, the possibility of a world of things in themselves.

In this way, Husserl abandoned the central idea of the *Logical Investigations* that we can reach objective essential necessities which are equally true and valid in any possible world - for any thinking being - because they are transcendent to, and independent of, any and all human consiousness and from any and all constituting activity.[15] Transcendental phenomenology, with its methodological and metaphysical implications, was not shared by the majority of the members of the Munich-Göttingen circle. It also made Husserl in many ways much more similar to Kant than to other philosophers who were called phenomenologists, and who were among his most outstanding followers and students, such as Reinach.[16]

Leaving even aside various later developments within the phenomenological movement, particularly those associated with the names of Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others, let us insist on the difference between Husserl's later theoretical stance in comparison to that expressed in the *Logical Investigations* not only as concerns the content of philosophy, but also as concerns its method. From 1905, and even more clearly from 1913 on, Husserl's conception of phenomenology was marked by a sharp contrast to that of the phenomenological realists in Munich and Göttingen who remained faithful to the earlier thinking of their "master" - as they called him.

For the philosophical approach of this school of "phenomenological realists" Adolf Reinach became the first spokesman, for example in his lecture, *On Pbenomenology,* and also in his magnum opus, *The Apriori*

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[15] See E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, op. cit, p. 140:

What is true is absolutely, intrinsically true: truth is one and the same, whether men or non-men, angels or gods apprehend and judge it. Logical laws speak of truth in this ideal unity set over against the real multiplicity of races, individuals and experiences, and it is of this ideal unity that we all speak when we are not confused by relativism.

[16] See Josef Seifert, (London/Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987).

in Civil Law of 1913.[17] In these writings, Reinach analyses the nature of phenomenology as a faithful and precise investigation of essences and of essentially necessary states of affairs related to them. He applies the phenomenological method in such lucid analyses as prompted Hedwig Conrad-Martius, in her preface to his "Concerning Phenomenology," to call Reinach "den Phänomenologen an sich and als solchen," *the phenomenologist par excellence.*[18]

He extends Husserl's critique of the subjectivistic and psychologistic interpretation of logical laws, seeking to establish the *absolute* necessity of essences and of essential laws in all spheres where these arise, whether they concern colours, acts of promising or commanding or apologizing, mathematical or other spheres of objects.

Max Scheler had spoken in this context of a "material" (non-formal) a priori, i.e., of necessary and intelligible objects of cognition which cannot be reduced to tautologies and linguistic definitions of corresponding terms. In whatever way we "redefine" such terms, the given essential necessities remain the same. They so little depend on definitions - as analytical propositions in fact do - that they even condemn certain definitions as absurd if they contradict the essences in question. For example, if I distinguish among morally good acts a group of "non-free morally good acts", then my definition is as absurd as is the definition of a square circle as "a geometric plane fig-

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[17] See Adolf Reinach, "Concerning Phenomenology," transl. Dallas Willard, *The Personalist 50* (Spring *1969), pp. 194-221.* Reprinted in *Perspectives in Philosophy,* ed. Robert N. Beck (New York: Holt, Reinhart, & Winston, *1961* and *1969).* See likewise A. Reinach, "The Apriori Foundations of the Civil Law," transl. J.F. Crosby, *Aletheia 111 (1983),* pp. xxxiii-xxxv; 1-142. The original works are A. Reinach, "Ober Phänomenologie," in: Adolf Reinach, *Sämtliche Werke,* ed. Barry Smith and Karl Schuhmann, op. cit., pp. 531-50. See also Adolf Reinach, "Die apriorischen Grundlagen des bürgerlichen Rechts," in: *Sämtliche Werke*, ibid., pp. 141-278.

[18] See Hedwig Conrad-Martius, Preface to Adolf Reinach, *Was ist Phänomenologie?* (München: Kösel, *1951), p. 7;* "Concerning Phenomenology," ibid. See also Reinach, "The Apriori Foundations of the Civil Law," transl. John F. Crosby, op. cit., pp. 1-142.

ure which is both such that each point on its periphery is equidistant from a center M and which has four straight sides of equal length." For it belongs to the essence of moral values that they presuppose freedom, just as it belongs to the essence of circles that they cannot be square. In such manner, essential necessities govern, to some extent, the meaning of definitions themselves. Therefore they can obviously not be explained as deriving from nothing but definitions. The same non-derivability of material a priori laws follows from the fact that the necessity in question remains, whatever the definition, whereas purely analytical necessities dissolve as soon as other definitions are chosen. For example, a *vieillard* is necessarily old (by definition) and a bachelor is necessarily unmarried (by definition) and these are tautologies grounded in definitions. But nothing in an old man or in a bachelor makes their state of being old or unmarried necessary - apart from the definitions. Therefore, as soon as I use another definition, such as "this man," the necessity dissolves and the man is neither necessarily unmarried nor necessarily old. In cases of authentic essential necessities, the necessity remains regardless of any change of definition.

Reinach thought that there is an inexhaustible plenitude of such essential necessities in all areas of being. He attempts to show that we are dealing here with necessary facts which *objectively* cannot be different from what they are, which are intelligible to our cognition and which can become evident to us. Here Reinach asserted, more strongly even than the Husserl of the first edition of the *Logical Investigations,* the mind-independent nature of these essential laws. In pursuing this line of thought, Reinach criticized - more explicitly than Husserl had done before - Kant's interpretation of the a priori as founded in the subject. Moreover, Reinach insisted that any innatism, according to which we are born with a priori ideas, as well as any kind of psychologism, must fail to do justice to the *phenomenological datum* of this essential necessity of logical laws or of the corresponding a priori structures in reality, a necessity which exists in itself and yet gives itself with indubitable certainty to the knowing subject. To show that this is

so by a variety of new distinctions, and to give arguments on behalf of this position, is what Chapter 4 of the present work undertakes to do.

Reinach insisted, furthermore, in a sense against Husserl who suggested that all psychology and all *sciences of the real* are empirical, that not only ideal meanings such as logical entities but also real entities, for example motion, and in particular personal acts such as perceiving, dreaming, promising, etc. possess necessary essences. Of course, Husserl himself presupposes this in much of what he says about "regional ontologies" and causality;[19] he admits this implicitly also by his essential analyses of acts and of their relations to their objects, but he still defends the general view that a priori sciences refer only to ideal unities of meaning, not to the real.[20] In this view of Husserl lies one motive for his turn to transcendental idealism. The ego which he investigated could not be understood as the real ego (which for him would have been the object of empirical psychology), but had to be interpreted as a sort of "ideal" or transcendental ego. The later Husserl did not recognize that intelligible and necessary essences and states of affairs - when they are the essences of all real beings in any possible world - allow the philosopher to find laws by which also the transcendent world of reality and of experience is governed.

Let us give a few examples of essentially necessary facts which govern each real being in this as in any possible world, bearing in mind that each of these examples would require a more careful treatment.

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[19] See on this, for example, Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, transl. W.R. Gibson (1931), 2nd edn (New York: Macmillan, 1967), Bk II and III; *Cartesian Meditations*, op. cit.

[20]Concerning the alleged unbridgeable gap between sciences of the real and those of the ideal, according to Husserl, see the following text:

> The psychologist logicians ignore the fundamental, essential, never-to-be-bridged gulf between ideal and real laws, between normative and causal regulation, between logical and real necessity, between logical and real grounds. No conceivable gradation could mediate between the ideal and the real. (Logical Investigations, op. cit., p. 104.)

Motion presupposes necessarily time and can take place only during a specific "individual span of time"; it always fills more time than the unextended instant, always takes up a concrete part of the continuum of time. It admits changes of speed, of direction, etc. without ceasing to be the same act of motion. Motion is by its essence absolute and not relative (so-called relative motion presupposes absolute one), can occur without change of location of the object (as in the spinning of a top) or traverse space in such a way that it continuously moves through an infinite diversity of "places," etc.[21]

Or think of some essential laws regarding sense perception. Sense perception requires a certain immediate "bodily" self-presence of the perceived object as opposed to objects whose existence we can only infer. Sense perception always has some intentional object, i.e., an object which is "bodily self-present," of which it is the perception and towards which it is consciously directed. The object of sense perception is clearly distinct from perception itself; it has colour or other sensible predicates, none of which can possibly be possessed by sense perception itself which is characterized by other essential marks, such as presupposing necessarily a subject or "I," the conscious living of perception "from within," etc. Moreover, the act of sense perception necessarily excludes being the object of other sense perceptions; I can never see my seeing, hear my hearing, nor can I hear my seeing, etc.

Or take the case of promising mentioned above. The act of promising is in need of being heard by its addressee; otherwise it does not exist but is only an attempted promise. Yet it differs from other "social acts" which stand in need of being "heard," such as an act of declaring my will. Such a declaration of will, to which some philosophers wish to reduce promising, may cause expectations but it does not engender any bond of claim and obligation and differs entirely from promis-

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[21]Cf. Reinach, "Über das Wesen der Bewegung," in: Reinach, *Sämtliche Werke,* op. cit., pp. 551-88.

ing.[22] Upon being "heard," the promise by necessity engenders in the promisee a claim to its fulfilment, but a claim which as such can only exist *vis-à-vis* the person who makes the promise. In him - and necessarily not in the recipient of the promise or in some other person - there arises an obligation to fulfil the content of the promise. Upon fulfilment of this content, the claim becomes non-existent (is extinguished). A promise necessarily requires an object which is distinct from itself; it can never be its own object. A promise directed towards oneself is intrinsically impossible, as is a promise directed towards an inanimate object or a plant. The obligation resulting from it can in most cases be cancelled by the recipient of the promise, not however by its subject.

These and countless other real and ideal necessary essences and essential relations, however many further differentiations they call for, are not only of an empirical, psychological nature but possess strict essential necessity. They are grounded in the being-such and in the having-to-be-such of the respective things themselves.

In this way, Reinach says himself that he solved the Kantian problem of the transcendental deduction by dissolving it, by showing that it is an unnecessary pseudo-problem. He affirmed that it is unnecessary to demonstrate how "subjective a priori forms" dominate the objective world of our experience and of its objects - because it is evident that as soon as we discover truly essential and intrinsic necessities, we understand that these are not subjective forms of thinking and that they dominate - simply in virtue of their essential necessity - not only our experience but any real being in any possible world that falls under these essences.[23]

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[22] Reinach, "The Apriori Foundations of the Civil Law," op. cit.

[23] See Reinach, "Concerning Phenomenology," op. cit. See also Reinach, "Kant's Interpretation of Hume's Problem," transl. J.N. Mohanty, *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy,* 7, 161-88.

Another very important point emphasized by Reinach in his phenomenology of cognition is the receptivity of the act of cognition which was denied in the "Copernical Turn" described by Kant in the Preface to the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason.* There Kant holds that philosophers have always assumed that our cognition is formed by its object and so dependent on it. Since they have been unable to solve the fundamental problems of metaphysics that way, we should, he argues, try the opposite hypothesis, namely that the objects of cognition are shaped by our cognition of them. Reinach attempts to refute this fundamental thesis of German idealism, widespread also in many empiricist theories of knowledge which explain cognition as a construction of the world. This he does by means of a pure phenomenology of the essence of knowledge and of its intentional directedness. The intentional direction in cognition goes from the object to the subject, consists in a disclosing of that which is to our mind. Even if we deny this, and hold that knowledge is a production of its object, we presuppose the receptivity of this knowledge. For only if the idealist, when claiming the creative nature of knowledge, is expressing his discovery of what knowledge is *really* like, could he truly know that knowledge is creative and not receptive. Otherwise he would only construe something which is not. But if he has to *discover* the creativity of knowledge in order to know it, he contradicts his own claim that knowledge is productive, and thus precisely not discovering, of the properties of objects. The denial of the fundamental receptivity of all cognition, and in particular of philosophical cognition, leads in this way to contradiction. By elaborating this contradiction by means of a phenomenology of the receptive essence of cognition as well as by a careful analysis of those truly spontaneous (non-receptive) acts associated with knowledge such as asserting, Reinach demonstrates the violation of the datum of knowledge which occurs as soon as cognition is interpreted as constitution or as creation and production of an object. These points, which Hildebrand was to explain further, were also un-

folded in Reinach's major work on *The A priori Foundation of the Civil Law*[24]

What is in question here is no less than the fate and fundamental nature of the phenomenological method. The method of philosophy for Reinach, Daubert, Hildebrand and others, on the one hand, and for the later Husserl, on the other hand, are not two expressions of the same phenomenological philosophical school, but rather two fundamental and radical opposites within the history of philosophy. If Reinach's conception of phenomenology is right, then phenomenology is capable of renewing again classical philosophy in all its areas, including philosophy of man, ethics, metaphysics, etc. The later Husserl's conception of philosophy, however, immerses him in modern philosophical thought in its most subjectivistic form.

At the Congress, *Die Münchener Phänomenologie,* held in Munich in 1971 in honour of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Pfänder, van Breda emphasized that Reinach introduced an entirely new Augustinian element into the phenomenological movement.[25] I

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[24] See the English translation of this work by John Crosby, quoted above, and his extensive commentary, which relates Reinach's work to contemporary analytical philosophers, such as John Searle, and Austin. Crosby shows how the speech-act theorists, much later than Reinach, discovered important facts which Reinach had discovered before, and also criticizes them for attempting to reduce essential necessities to linguistic structures. On the relationship between Reinach and the modern speech act theorists cf. John F. Crosby, "Reinach's Discovery of the Social Acts," *Aletheia 3 (1981),* pp. 143-94; Klaus Hoffman, "Reinach and Searle on Promising - A Comparison," in: K. Mulligan (ed.), *Speech Act and Sachverhalt: Reinach and the Foundations of Realist Phenomenology,* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, *1987),* pp. 91-106; Kevin Mulligan, "Promisings and other Social Acts: Their Constituents and Structure," in: K. Mulligan (ed.), *Speech Act and Sachverhalt,* op. cit., pp. 29-90. See likewise Barry Smith, "Ten Conditions on a Theory of Speech Acts," *Theoretical Linguistics, 11 (1984),* pp. 311-30; Barry Smith, "Materials towards a History of Speech Act Theory," in: A. Eschbach (ed.), *Karl Bühler's Theory of Language,* (Amsterdam: Benjamin's *1987).*

[25] This is certainly true to a great extent also of Max Scheler, who was even more explicitly "Augustinian" in a certain phase of his philosophical writing than was Reinach.

believe that van Breda did not see that Husserl's *Logical Investigations* themselves were, possibly via Leibniz and in particular via Bolzano, influenced by the great Augustinian philosophical tradition also - and, more importantly, that they embodied the same "Platonic" philosophy of the things themselves as was embraced by Augustine himself.[26] Nevertheless, it is true that a new, albeit "sober" Platonic phenomenology (one which recognized the timelessness and absoluteness of essential necessities) was introduced much more clearly by Reinach than it had ever been intended by Husserl. No wonder, since for Reinach not Husserl but Plato, on whose philosophy he offered courses in Göttingen, was the greatest philosopher. In a positive sense, Reinach's new Platonism was more "sober" than historical Platonism inasmuch as it stayed clear of the latter's free-floating speculations about reminiscence, prenatal life of the soul, etc., and inasmuch as Reinach engages in a kind of analytical and precise analysis historically speaking more characteristic of Aristotle than of Plato. Negatively speaking, it was a more "sober" Platonism inasmuch as it lacked some of the enthusiastic and grandiose speculative metaphysical element of historical Platonism.

With the exception of some excellent analyses of the a priori problem in Max Scheler[27] - analyses which exceed those of Reinach in ingeniousness and wealth of interesting aspects but lack the precision and clarity of Reinach's investigations and which are mixed with some gratuitous and unfounded assertions - nobody within the realist branch of the phenomenological movement had written as clearly

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[26] Husserl's chief references to Leihniz and Bolzano are contained in Chapter 10 of the "Prolegomena to Pure Logic," *Logical Investigations, op.* cit., pp. 212-24.

[27] Max Scheler's most important analyses of the a priori are the following: Max Scheler, Formalism in *Ethics and* Non-Formal *Ethics of* Values, trans]. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 45110. See on the a priori also Max Scheler, On *the Eternal* in Man, transl. Bernard Noble, (Hamden: Archon Books, 1972), pp. 198-213.

about this objectivist concept of phenomenology as had Reinach.[28] Of course, there were a number of phenomenological authors, such as Moritz Geiger, Alexander Pfänder, Max Scheler, Edith Stein, Roman Ingarden, Hedwig Conrad-Martius, and others who went in a similar direction. Scheler's discussion of the a priori in his Formalism may even have preceded that of Reinach.[29] Still Reinach made a singularly clear contribution towards an objectivist theory of the a priori.

The real and fundamental importance of the realist phenomenological methodology is largely overlooked even by sympathetic authors, for example, by Herbert Spiegelberg in his book, *The Phenomenological Movement,* even though Spiegelberg himself is a student of Alexander Pfänder who with Moritz Geiger, was one of the main representatives of the realist phenomenological movement in Munich. Pfänder's *Logik is* one of the great masterpieces of "realist" and objectivist phenomenological analysis.

Only recently, through its further systematic development and through a new history of phenomenology, as this is being presented especially by Barry Smith and Karl Schuhmann, have philosophers once again begun to recognize the wrong estimate of Munich, and of realist phenomenology in general, as if this brand of phenomenology

[28] On other authors see K. Mulligan (ed.), *Speech Act* and *Sachverhalt: Reinach* and *the* Foundations *of Realist Phenomenology, op.* cit. Concerning Daubert's objections to idealism, see Karl Schuhmann and Barry Smith, "Against Idealism: Johannes Daubert vs. Husserl's *Ideas I,*" *Review of Metaphysics*, 38, no. 4 (1985), pp. 764-93. See also R.N. Smid, "An Early Interpretation of Husserl's Phenomenology: Johannes Daubert and the Logical *Investigations," Husserl Studies,* 2, no. 3 (1985), pp. 26790; and Karl Schuhmann and Barry Smith, "Questions: An Essay in Daubertian Phenomenology," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 37 (1987), pp. 353-84.

[29] In Husserl's Yearbook, it appeared after Scheler's Formalism but in the same year (1913). Who was actually first in discovering or discussing an objective "material" a priori and to what extent Husserl's Logical Investigations (1900-01) influenced both, is a question for historians to explore.

had a less developed and less critical methodology than that of Husserl.

However, partly because Reinach - who died at the early age of 34 - did not address the issue with the necessary completeness, and partly because he abstained from stating the ultimate implications of his interpretation of phenomenology with respect to a critique of Husserl's own conception of phenomenology, his contribution remained unrecognized in its true and crucial significance.

Dietrich von Hildebrand's contribution to the methodology of phenomenological realism

It is against this background that one has to see Hildebrand's *What is Philosophy?* as a work of epistemology which continues the contributions of phenomenological realists, particularly that of Reinach, and brings to a new level of clarity the conception of phenomenological philosophy which Reinach's works imply. The main contributions of Hildebrand in the present work, contained mostly in chapters 1, 4 and 5, are the following: In the first chapter, Hildebrand develops further the analysis of the receptivity of knowledge, the character of knowledge as participating receptively in essences and beings which are discovered, not constituted, in the act of cognition. One could speak here of a fundamental insight into the non-constituting nature of cognition. Cognition is in virtue of its necessary essence an intentional and receptive act. Inasmuch as an act changes or creates its object, it is not knowledge at all. To have emphasized this receptive transcendence of knowledge is nothing new with respect to Reinach, but Hildebrand elaborated this fundamental trait of cognition qua cognition more fully and undertook new efforts to bring it to evidence, for example by distinguishing receptivity from passivity and by elaborating an account of the act of cognitive receiving and of other non-receptive acts

that follow upon knowledge, such as theoretical responses of conviction, of doubt, etc., and asserting. Above all, he emphasized explicitly that this insight, when developed with clarity and rigour, refutes the central Kantian thesis according to which our cognition is not receptively dependent on the object known, but, on the contrary, determines the object of cognition. Hildebrand also states what Reinach failed to express with equal clarity, namely that the receptive transcendence of knowledge refutes also the later Husserl's theory of radical constitution. While Reinach had deplored Husserl's turn to idealism from 1905-13,[30] he did not present any written critique of it.[31] Hildebrand himself, however, did not develop this point extensively, which might be one of the reasons why the historical significance of the present work remained hidden. Others have since presented such investigations.[32]

Of the same, if not of greater importance, is Hildebrand's development of the method of philosophical knowledge as rational insight and analysis of essential necessities, and particularly his investigation into the only kind of object that lends itself to such objective and simultaneously informative (synthetic) knowledge a priori: necessary essences.

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[30] See on this Hildebrand, "Selbstdarstellung," in: Ludwig J. Pongratz, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1975), pp. 77-127.

[31] There are passages in Reinach's work which begin to point this out. See, e.g., A. Reinach, "Paul Natorp's 'Allgemeine Psychologie nach kritischer Methode'," in: A. Reinach, *Sämtliche Werke, op.* cit., pp. 313-31, and "Einleitung in die Philosophie," in: A. Reinach, *Sämtliche Werke, op.* cit., pp. 369-513.

[32] See F. Wenisch's investigations into this method - particularly in relationship to modern logic and theory of science, as well as to empiricism: Fritz Wenisch, "Insight and Objective Necessity," *Aletheia IV* (1988), pp. 107-97; and by the same author, *Die Philosophie and ihre Methode* (Regensburg: Habbel, 1981). I tried to develop further the critique of Kant and the later Husserl, implicit in Hildebrand's work, in my books, *Erkenntnis objektiver Wahrheit. Die Transzendenz des Menschen in der Erkenntnis,* 2nd edn (Salzburg: A. Pustet, 1976); *Back to Things in Themselves. A Phenomenological Foundation for Classical Realism,* op. cit., Chaps I-IV.

He contrasts those necessary essences which are the proper objects of philosophical, and of certain sorts of mathematical and scientific, knowledge, with those sorts of essences which, while they contain much inner meaning and therefore allow for being investigated scientifically, *lack* essential necessity. Examples of these are all species of plants and animals, for instance cats, shelties (Shetland sheep dogs), or oak-trees, with their respective characteristics, or the anatomic structure of the human body, of its organs, all objects of organic chemistry or the number and movements of the stars, etc. We find in such non-necessary essences meaningful *Gestalt*-principles, authentic generic and specific marks, to some extent even a different kind of "necessity of nature" - but no strictly necessary bond that would tie together, for example, the shape of noses, paws, etc. of cats with the voices or noises they produce. Cats, dogs, or human bodies could have all their attributes but have huge noses, or T-bone shaped ones, etc. These meaningful but non-necessary essences Hildebrand calls also, in contrast to merely arbitrary conglomerations of predicates (i.e., "accidental such-being unities"), "genuine such-beings" which allow for the meaningful distinction between individual and universal marks and can be the subject-matter of science.[33]

Whereas Husserl had believed that by simply bracketing the existence and transcendent status of an essence one could reach a priori knowledge, and while Reinach did not clearly exclude this in his *What is Phenomenology?,* Hildebrand saw that the bracketing as such is in no way sufficient to lead to philosophical knowledge. Rather, the objects of philosophical knowledge and specifically of insights into es-

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[33] The German word *"Sosein,"* which either corresponds to essence or to a part thereof (distinct from what-being), is translated by Hildebrand not as so-being which might sound more English but as "such-being." Thus I shall use this term too, usually set in quotation marks. On different meanings of "essence" and "such-being" see also J. Seifert, "Essence and Existence. A New Foundation of Classical Metaphysics on the Basis of `Phenomenological Realism,' and a Critical Investigation of 'Existentialist Thomism'," *Aletheia 1* (1977), pp. 17-157; *I,* 2 (1977), pp. 371-459, especially Chap. I.

sential necessities are clearly distinct from the contingent essences and natures which require empirical investigations, experiments, descriptions, etc., in order to be known. By contrasting these "contingent essences" with the essentially necessary ones, Hildebrand did not only delineate the sphere of philosophy from that of empirical sciences, but he arrived at a much better grasp of the datum of essential necessities as such.

Hildebrand worked out three fundamental characteristics and conditions of this knowledge: 1) The essential necessity of some essences has an objective, absolute and intrinsic character, the phenomenological investigation of which forbids any explanation of it as constituted.

The "absoluteness" of this necessity means that no innerwordly or extrawordly cause whatsoever could alter it and that it simply could neither be different nor suspended by any power. St. Bonaventure used to express this absolute necessity by saying that not even divine omnipotence could change or suspend it. The "intrinsic" character of this necessity means that its source does not lie in any will or mind or other cause outside the essence itself: it is a necessity in virtue of the essence itself.

Therefore, necessary essences such as that of the triangle, of freedom, of the person, of forms of logical thought or of the promise, and the essentially necessary states of affairs grounded in them, stand in sharp contrast with conventions such as the rules of chess, as well as with subjective transcendental necessities of thought, psychological or any other merely subjective "necessities." Essential necessities differ also from other contingent necessities such as those of the laws of nature.

2) Further, necessary essences and essentially necessary facts are characterized by a rigorous rational *Einsichtigkeit,* an "incomparable

intelligibility," and 3) by the apodictic certainty which we can gain about them in our knowledge.[34]

In working out these three marks of the knowledge of an "objective synthetic a priori," Hildebrand establishes also the absolute unconstitutedness and unconstitutability of these essential necessities by any human or transcendental consciousness.[35]

Moreover, following some important contributions of Max Scheler in this regard, Hildebrand developed a classical distinction between different problems which were confused in the famous a priori discussion from Plato to Kant and to our century. He showed that the Kantian question as to the conditions of the possibility and first formal principles regarding each sphere of objects, as well as the question as to the conditions of the possibility of experience bears in no way on the other classical question of the a priori, which Kant himself had posed, namely the question whether there is a knowledge which both has a necessary object and is apodictically certain. For we must not confuse two entirely different things: a "necessary presupposedness by the subject" and an objective and intrinsic essential necessity. Kant, in his attempt to explain synthetic necessity and certainty, also misinterpreted radically the nature of the necessity of the object of this knowledge and the nature of apodictic certainty.

To show that something is the condition of the possibility of experience does *nothing* to show that it itself possesses certain character-

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[34] See also, with regard to essential necessities, Scheler's "Theory of the Three Facts" in: Max Scheler, *Selected Philosophical Essays,* transl. David R. Lachterman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973) where Scheler offers his theory of the "pure fact," which is to some extent parallel to Hildebrand's "necessary such-being unity." The marks of essential necessity which Hildebrand delineates are all in Reinach (and even more extensively in Scheler), but it would be wrong to claim that these marks were unequivocally and explicitly grasped and distinguished from other non-necessary essences by anyone before Hildebrand.

[35] See J. Seifert, *Back to Things in Themselves. A Phenomenological Foundation for Classical Realism, op.* cit.

istics such as necessity or that this objective necessity can be known with apodictic certainty. In addition, Kant - who mentions only the *necessity* and *apodictic certainty* of a priori knowledge - omitted from his list a third mark of "a priori knowledge": the *incomparable intelligibility* of its object which is *in no way* explained by its necessary presupposedness by the subject. Hence we have to do here with entirely different meanings of the a priori: that which by its essence is necessary and highly intelligible and known to be such with certainty, on the one hand; on the other hand that which is necessarily presupposed by the subject and, possibly, known with certainty to be thus presupposed.

Moreover, conditions of the possibility of objects or experiences, or "transcendental formal principles" for all experience and for all objects, possess objective and universal validity only if they are also essentially necessary facts. Otherwise, we could only know - by some "transcendental deduction" - that human beings, or rather I myself, have to experience the world and myself in certain forms. And even this must remain doubtful if I do not presuppose an objective essential necessity of my subjectivity as such which I discover and do not constitute. For if my subjectivity itself has no essentially necessary structure it could change and be otherwise. Thus we would have to speak with Kant's *opus postumum* of the "transcendental accidentality" of our subjective forms of experiencing and thinking the world. These could be different and thus would not be the *necessary* but only the *presently unavoidable* conditions of our experience. At any rate, any real "being the condition of the possibility of something," be it the subject itself or an object, presupposes objective essential necessity.

Hildebrand uncovers another ambiguity in the notion of the a priori which leads right to the heart of phenomenology and refutes its interpretation as an analysis of subjective experience: He showed that a priori knowledge in the sense of a knowledge which possesses independence from all experience is not required at all in order to do justice to the knowledge of necessary essences. On the contrary, and here

lies another great phenomenological contribution in his book, Hildebrand showed that there is a kind of experience, called by him "such-being experience," which differs entirely from that sort of "empirical experience" whose validity depends on the observation of existing essential *facts*.[36] For example, we cannot know what a species of monkeys or a breed of dogs are characterized by without being sure that we observed existing examples of these species and not merely imagined or dreamt ones. Our scientific zoological knowledge would be totally worthless if it were based on the mere experience of the "such-being" of certain animal species and not on their actual observation. Philosophical knowledge of the essence of justice or of promising, however, does not depend at all on the question whether the examples we consider are real or merely imagined just judges or promisings, whether they are dreamt about or actually existing. But is philosophy then independent of all experience as Kant states (and to some extent even Reinach claims)[37]? Hildebrand answers "no." *Soseinserfahrung* (the experience of so-being, i.e., "such-being-experience") in the sense of some experiential contact with colour, consciousness, freedom, etc. is indeed required for all, or at least for most, knowledge of necessary essences.[38] I cannot understand that the quality of the colour "violet" lies in-between red and blue, without ever having perceived colour, having been blind from birth on. I cannot understand

[36] See on this Balduin Schwarz, "Dietrich von Hildebrands Lehre von der Soseinserfahrung in ihren philosophiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhängen," in: B. Schwarz (Hrsg.), *Wahrheit, Wert and Sein. Festgabe fur Dietrich von Hildebrand zum 80. Geburtstag* (Regensburg: Habbel, 1970), pp. 33-51.

[37] See Adolf Reinach "Concerning Phenomenology," op. cit. In the German original, the texts of Reinach which speak of an independence of all experience, in spite of such terms as *Wesenserschauung* and "intuitive presenting of essences," which presuppose such an experience, are: "Über Phänomenologie," in: Adolf Reinach, *Sämtliche Werke, op.* cit, pp. 543-6.

[38] See on this also Balduin Schwarz, "Dietrich von Hildebrands Lehre von der Soseinserfahrung in ihren philosophiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhängen," op. cit.

that love, by its essence, requires a certain benevolent intention towards the beloved person, if I lack any acquaintance with love, be it through my own experience or through fiction. There may be some examples, such as "consciousness" or "being," which are "inborn cognitions" in the sense that I know them with my first experience of anything and do not require some special experience of something being-so-and-so, an experience which not every man possesses. The third sense of "a priori" then indicates cognitions which are prior to all experience (as a priori forms, *die im Gemüthe bereitliegen* = which lie ready at hand in consciousness, as Kant puts it, or "inborn" ideas). In its strict sense, this third sense of a priori contradicts the receptive nature of knowledge. No content of knowledge can just be "in" the mind without having disclosed itself to us in some form of experience or inference. In this sense, too, Hildebrand is empiricist and rejects any "apriorism." Only in the sense of an experience of essences or existing facts which are given in any conscious experience and do not require the acquisition of a special experience at a given point in time, would Hildebrand admit that some contents might be "a priori" in this loose interpretation of the third sense of this term.

If "a priori" then means "prior to any experience," the knowledge of essential necessity must in no way be "a priori"; it cannot even be apriori in the sense that absolutely no experience would be contained in this knowledge or lie at its root. Thus Hildebrand reforms and clarifies also the Husserlian theory of *"kategoriale Anschauung"* (categorial intuition), by showing the peculiar nature of its link to experience.

In showing that the independence from experience required for a priori knowledge does not involve an independence of this knowledge from any kind of experiential access to essences, Hildebrand overcomes the decisive starting-point of Kantian subjectivism. For even if experience is required for the knowledge of apodictically certain and necessary facts, their explanation as contributions of the subject is neither necessary nor even plausible. It is not by moving away from all experience and objects of experience that one reaches "necessary a

priori forms." On the contrary, the objective necessity of the latter can precisely not be justified by tracing them back to subjective forms of thinking. Rather, only an experiential basis of the "a priori" can lead to the source of justification of synthetic a priori claims - namely to a non-subjective a priori knowledge of objective necessary essences. It would be unreasonable indeed to mistrust this experience, - as if getting involved in "experience" as such meant "getting empirical" in the sense of "empirical science."

Moreover, Hildebrand did justice to phenomenology as a science of the given and of that which is experienced, without limiting it, as the unfortunate term "phenomenological description" suggests, to some form of empirical description of human experience and its object. The empiricist corruption of phenomenology, which occurs when the latter is reduced to some set of mere descriptions of human experiences rather than being understood as rigorous analysis of objective essential essences, is, one could say, overcome by this important step in Hildebrand's book.

The present work of Hildebrand has many other merits which include the rehabilitation not only of things and essences in themselves, but also of the objectivity of meaning of those appearances which are indeed dependent on human subjectivity.[39] May the reader himself become convinced that we deal here with a major contribution to the foundation of realist phenomenology, as was explained recently by Rocco Buttiglione.[40]

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[39] See on this Chap. V of Hildebrand's book.

[40] See on this Buttiglione, "Saggio Introduttivo: L'Essere a Persona' di Seifert: Sfondo teoretico a significato di quest'opera," in: J. Seifert, Essere a persona. Verso una fondazione fenomenologica di una metafisica classica a personalistica. (Milano: Vita a Pensiero, 1989), pp. 9-75; see especially pp. 16-34.

I have attempted to continue Hildebrand's investigations, and to show their full applicability to a reform of classical realist philosophy. See J. Seifert, Back to Things in Themselves. A Phenomenological Foundation for Classical Realism, op. cit. I have also attempted to show in this volume (especially pp. 77-117), what Hildebrand him-

Since every great philosophy was great by its going back to things themselves, phenomenology in this sense is seen by its adherents also as a highpoint of everything good in *philosophia perennis* from Plato through the high Middle Ages up to Leibniz. While this conception of phenomenology as authentic philosophy whenever it was properly practiced, a conception which establishes a profound link between phenomenology and the tradition of *philosophia perennis* in its Aristotelian-Thomistic, Platonic-Augustinian, as well as Cartesian-Leibnizian sense, has not yet been recognized adequately by the larger philosophical community, there is an increasing number of students of Hildebrand who understand the significance of his contribution, and of other thinkers who pursue independently similar lines of thought.[41]

Apart from the circle of students and friends of von Hildebrand, I wish to mention especially the representatives of two intertwined movements in Poland, which were heavily influenced by Roman Ingarden, but also by Karol Wojtyla: the Polish personalist ethics, represented by thinkers such as Tadeusz Styczen and Andrzej Szostek, as well as the more epistemological school of Roman Ingarden, represented, among others, by such thinkers as Andrzej Poltawski, Antoni Stepien, and Wladimir Strozewski. In Spain, philosophers such as Antonio Millan-Puelles, Juan-Miguel Palacios, Rogelio Rovira, Juan-José

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self does not develop in the present book, how the whole notion of epoché, its applicability to philosophy, etc. needs to be radically reinterpreted. Thus "realist phenomenological philosophy" is something entirely different from phenomenology as found in the later Husserl and from a philosophy based on epoché while perfecting and remaining faithful to Husserl's original "principle of all principles," that every cognition must be based on that which gives itself from the object.

[41] I think here especially of the publications of F. Wenisch, J. Crosby, D. Fedoryka, B. Marra, A. von Hildebrand, B. Schwarz, J. Seifert, and others. See also the journal Aletheia, as well as our series at Routledge, Studies in Phenomenological and Classical Realism, two philosophical series which further and express this philosophical movement.

García de Norro, Mariano Crespo, and others form a centre of phenomenological realism in Madrid.

In a new development, an intense interest in realist phenomenology combines with a background in analytic philosophies. Here Roderik Chisholm has to be mentioned. Also the Manchester circle formed by Wolfe Mays and continued by Barry Smith must be mentioned here. Smith moved in 1989 from Manchester to Liechtenstein, accepting an invitation to become full professor of philosophy at the International Academy of Philosophy in Liechtenstein. A growing number of young philosophers in Germany, Holland, Hungary and other central European countries develop phenomenological investigations in this vein.

Also in Italy, an increasing interest in this movement within the phenomenological tradition is found among thinkers such as Michele Lenoci, Massimo Serretti, Roberto Poll, L. Albertazzi, Rocco Buttiglione and others.[42] One can in fact speak of a new wave of interest in this hitherto largely forgotten part of the phenomenological movement, from many sides and different angles. A large number of thinkers from many nations pursue with intense interest this philosophical movement.

Other thinkers such as Ismael Quiles (Argentina), Agustin Basave de la Valle (Mexico), Tarcisio Padilha (Brasil), and many others move in similar directions. One may begin to speak of a world-wide interest in this phenomenological realism which extends even to the People's Republic of China.

[42] See Buttiglione "Saggio introduttorio," op. cit. See also M. Lenoci's books on A. Meinong and E. Husserl. One should mention here also D. Falcioni, M. Genghini, and other young philosophers in Italy.

The importance of the present book for the critique of transcendental idealism

As indicated already in the preceding section, the present book is important in terms of showing that the development of the phenomenological return to things themselves does not lead to some variety of German idealism but, on the contrary, constitutes that kind of liberation from idealism which the earliest students of Husserl in Göttingen had expected but which Husserl himself betrayed through his unphenomenological construction of "transcendental phenomenology."

A phenomenological realism along the lines indicated includes not only a realism and objectivism of "essences" - the elaboration of the objectivity and absoluteness of essential necessities - but also a new *existential realism* and a phenomenology of the meaning and language of "existence" (to be) and of its existential implications.[43] The existential realism within the phenomenological movement developed, however, especially from a new analysis of the *cogito* of Augustine and Descartes - which implies a sharp critique of Husserl's interpretation of the *cogito*[44] - and from a dialogue with Gilsonian existentialist Thomism.[45]

Thus our view concerning the impact and significance of phenomenological realism contrasts sharply even with Spiegelberg's who certainly sympathizes with "phenomenological realists" but presents

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[43] Thomas Aquinas, Etienne Gilson, and others speak here of the *actus essendi*

[44] See Seifert, "Kritik am Relativismus and Immanentismus in E. Husserl's `Cartesianischen Meditationen'," SIM 14/1970, pp. 85-109; the same author, *Back to Things in Themselves,* op. cit.

[45] See on this especially D. von Hildebrand's unpublished lectures on epistemology, "Wesen and Wert menschlichen Erkennens," (Salzburg, 1964), as well as J. Seifert, *Erkenntnis objektiver Wahrheit. Die Transzendenz des Menschere in der Erkenntnis,* op. cit., and J. Seifert, *Back to Things in Themselves. A Phenomenological Foundation for Classical Realism,* op. cit. See also W. Hoeres, *Kritik der transzendeutalphilosophischen Erkenntnistheorie* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969).

their positions somewhat ashamedly in the light of a school which merits more consideration in spite of the fact that it was regarded by Husserl as an uncritical version of phenomenology. In Spiegelberg's *The Phenomenological Movement* the contribution of the Munich phenomenologists appears as a minor subdivision within phenomenology, and this with some reason - because Spiegelberg relies heavily on the contributions of Alexander Pfänder, which, in methodological respect, are indeed rather negligible.

Instead, if we are correct, phenomenological realism turns out to be the only truly critical and consistent phenomenological philosophy. It is quite the opposite of the less significant and uncritical part of the phenomenological movement. On the contrary, as was hinted at above, transcendental phenomenology as well as transcendental idealism of any kind, involves itself in radical contradictions and absurdities and is in no way systematically carrying out the phenomenological maxim "back to things themselves."[46]

Particularly because in the English-speaking world transcendental phenomenology has remained rather uninfluential, we shall turn now to the relationship between Hildebrand's phenomenology and Anglo-Saxon empiricism.

Anglo-Saxon empiricism and Hildebrand's more radical "empiricism of essences" as "experiential apriorism"

There is, first, an important unity between the phenomenological method in the sense of Franz Brentano, Max Scheler, Dietrich von Hildebrand, as well as many others, and Anglo-Saxon empiricist phi-

[46] It was one main purpose of *Back to Things in Themselves*, op. cit. to show this with the necessary rigour and to demonstrate the momentous implications of these discoveries and distinctions for the understanding of the phenomenological method.

losophies. In fact, Scheler speaks of an empiricist bent of phenomenology and calls phenomenology even positivism, implying thereby that phenomenology is just as keen as any variety of positivism and analytical philosophy could be to remain faithful to the given, to the data, to experience.[47] In this respect, the largely constructive methodological reflections of the later Husserl are incomparably more foreign to analytical philosophy than is the thinking of Reinach, Hildebrand, or Scheler. In fact, Herbert Spiegelberg has pointed out long ago similarities between Pfänder and Austin; and Kevin Mulligan, John Crosby, Barry Smith, and others have recently shown that there are striking similarities between the analytic speech act philosophies and Reinach's and Hildebrand's investigations of the essences of acts which give rise to legal entities. Reinach's theory of speech acts, which he treats under the name of "social acts," is now pretty well explored. Hildebrand however made highly interesting and hardly noticed contributions to "speech act theory" by introducing a theory of the speech act of *"Verlautbarung"* - the declaring of acts such as of love or hatred which differs from other social acts in that it is not only in need of being heard by its addressee but its addressee must coincide with the object of the act. In addition, the object of this "declaring an act" as well as of the act which is being "declared" can only be a person, one and the same person. While I can communicate the fact that I love to anyone, I can declare love only towards the person whom I love. Moreover, in hearing this declaration of love, much more happens than a mere social act; the act which is being declared reaches the

[47] Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values, op.* cit., pp. 51ff. See also Max Scheler, "Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition," in: Scheler, *Selected Philosophical Essays,* trans). David R. Lachterman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 136-201, p. 138: "The ‘ray’ of reflection should try to touch only what is ‘*these*’ in this closest and most living contact and only so far as it is there. In this sense, but only in this, phenomenological philosophy is the most radical *empiricism* and positivism."

other really[48] via the speech act (the act of declaring love, for example). Hildebrand investigates other speech acts such as a marital vow which differs from a normal promise in many ways (for example with respect to the "cancellability" of the promise by its recipient).[49] In unpublished lectures and course-notes Hildebrand investigated the speech act theory further along these and other lines.[50]

At the same time, however, and this could become a welcome addition to the empiricist movement in the Anglo-Saxon countries, Hildebrand adds a new, broader concept of experience, again developing further contributions which reach from Franz Brentano and Carl Stumpf to Max Scheler and Adolf Reinach: experience is not restricted to sense perception, nor to its role in the verification or falsification of hypotheses. Certainly, Karl Popper and modern post-Popperian empiricism have corrected in many ways Carnap's views which identified anything that is not given to the senses with meaningless "metaphys-

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[48] In his *Metaphysik der Gemeinschaft,* op. cit., pp. 21 ff., Hildebrand distinguishes the intentional contact of objects, the "intentionary" *(intentionär)* and the real contact with persons.

[49] See Hildebrand's *Metapbysik der Gemeinscbaft,* op. cit., especially Chap. 2; and his article, "Die rechtliche and sittliche Spare in ihrem Eigenwert and in ihrem Zusammenhang" in: Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Die Menschheit am Scheideweg,* (Regensburg: Habbel, 1955), pp. 86-106. See on the problem of social acts and speech acts John F. Crosby, "Reinach's Discovery of the Social Acts," *ibid.,* See also: Klaus Hoffman, "Reinach and Searle on Promising - A Comparison," op. cit.; and in the same volume Kevin Mulligan, "Promisings and other Social Acts: Their Constituents and Structure," pp. 29-90. Also see Barry Smith, "Ten Conditions on a Theory of Speech Acts," *Theoretical Linguistics,* 11 (1984), pp. 311-30 and, by the same author Barry Smith, "Materials towards a History of Speech Act Theory," in A. Eschbach (ed.), *Karl Bühler's Theory of Language,* (Amsterdam: Benjamin's 1987). Both Smith and Crosby think that Reinach's analysis is more precise than that of Searle and of other modern authors on speech act theory. See also Armin Burkhardt, *Soziale Akte, Sprechakte and Textillokutionen: A. Reinach's Rechtsphilosophie and die moderne Linguistik,* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986).

[50] He investigates, among other speech acts, asserting, lying, promising, communicating, praying, praising, commanding.

ics." Popper and his followers have introduced a legitimate role for all kinds of hypotheses which might serve to explain experience. But they still do not allow for a radically new original experience which brings us into contact with data that are just as much *given* to cognition as objects of sense. The new empiricisms along the very different lines of Popper and Kuhn still retain empirical sense experience as ultimate criterion of verification or falsification. They interpret this either in the form of a hypothetical realism à la Popper or a relativism such as the philosophy of science of Kuhn. Also Kuhn admits non-verifiable paradigms and models which bring about revolutions in science. In this respect he is quite Popperian. But he abandons their truth claim, which Popper admits[51] and sees science as being more like a series of puzzles than as a serious undertaking aiming at truth. Other empiricists become even radical historical constructionists or 'nihilists of science' for whom anything regarded by a community or even declared by individuals as "science" is science.[52]

One thing is held in common by all the above: both hypotheses and models which cannot be directly verified or falsified by sense-experience are identified in contemporary empiricism and critical rationalism with man-made, historically changing paradigms or "world 3 objects" (Popper) - precisely because there is no original non-sensory experience such as Husserl's "categorial intuition" or Hildebrand's "such-being experience." In this point, Thomas Kuhn and Karl Popper - as well as countless others - are still clearly heirs of David Hume and Rudolf Carnap.

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[51] Even though Popper thinks that the truth-claim of science is condemned to failure by the latter's actual restriction to a mere approximation to the truth or to verisimilitude.

[52] According to Paul Weingartner, *Wissenschaftstheorie* I (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1971), p. 11 ff., "Everything which is represented and may be taught at least by one chairholder at any present University in the world (past ones included), may be called a science."

Precisely because experience has a much wider scope than empiricism admitted, such data as truth, theory, argument, etc., which cannot be verified and theories about which cannot be falsified by the senses, are not, as in empiricism, rejected or reduced to ultimately unsubstantial hypotheses. Rather, there are countless data of an entirely different kind from those which are graspable in sense perception. When Mackie, in his ethics, gives us a new ultra-positivist account, according to which any datum which cannot be examined by sense-experience is queer or quaint, he was rightly criticized by John Finnis, among others, for having overlooked the fact that even according to his own theory logical arguments, logical laws, and theories themselves, and certainly the truth of propositions, would have to be declared quaint or queer objects.[53] But if experience gives us access

[53]John Finnis quotes Mackie as follows:

> If there were objective values, then they would be entities or qualities or relations of a very strange sort, utterly different from anything else in the universe. Correspondingly, if we were aware of them it would have to be by some special faculty of moral perception or intuition, utterly different from our ordinary ways of knowing everything else. We get the notion of something's being objectively good, or having objective value, by reversing the actual direction of dependence here, by making the desire depend upon the goodness, instead of the goodness on the desire.

Finnis comments on these passages as follows:

> This is Mackie's theory of objectification: supposedly objective qualities of acts, states of affairs, etc., are really just the projection of feelings and wants. Mackie thinks his theory is true; he *asserts* the proposition or propositions which I just quoted. Now my quotation was itself a collection of sounds in the air, marks on the page; those sounds or marks were intended to mean, and in fact meant, the proposition. But intentions are *utterly different* from anything else in the universe. And the relationship between expression and proposition, the relationship which we call meaning, is utterly different from anything else in the universe. If you take as your model of *entities, qualities and relations* just those entities, qualities and relations which will figure in physical, chemical, biochemical . . . theories (and if you do not ask any questions about what it is for something to be a theory and for a theory to be a true theory), then you will be inclined to say that intentions, meanings and truth are utterly queer, and that the understanding of intentions and meanings and the adjudging of truth or falsity are so different from observing, inspecting, surveying, measuring and comparing

also to such data as truth and logical laws, which any theory presupposes, these are no longer quaint objects and constructs unverifiable by any experience. Rather, they are data given to experience.

Moreover, values, norms, moral imperatives - which any empiricist ethics and science likewise presuppose, be it explicitly or implicitly[54] - are not unverifiable constructs. On the contrary, there are quite definitely data which correspond to value language, as Scheler, Hildebrand or Finnis have demonstrated through their penetrating investigations into values and goods - and it is these data which Mackie, with many other empiricist philosophers, fails to perceive as such, for the simple reason that he presupposes an entirely insufficient notion of experience.

Hildebrand's aforementioned distinction between two radically different meanings of experience, as well as his distinction of three kinds of essences or such-being unities, open the way to a recognition of the great variety of data and of proper experiences in which they can be given.

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that one had better give that understanding and adjudging the label "special faculty of intuition," i.e., fishy.

Still, any project of explaining away intention and the understanding of it, or meaning and understanding of it, or truth and the assessing of it, is a manifestly arbitrary and self-refuting project … In each case, when we observe that the picture or model to which Mackie implicitly appealed cannot accommodate even the simplest facts about intention, meaning and truth facts instantiated by every one of his own assertions - we are entitled to conclude that his talk about queerness and special faculties in relation to our judgements about the good and the bad, the right and the wrong, fails to give any reason for doubt about the objectivity or truth of such judgements.

Both the Mackie and Finnis quotations are taken from John Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 57-9.

[54] On the necessary presupposition of values such as truth, rationality, etc. in any speaking or writing, cf. D. von Hildebrand, *Ethics* op. cit., Chap. IX. On the necessity of presupposing freedom, see also Hans-Eduard Hengstenberg, *Grundlegung der Ethik* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969), Chap. 1.

Moreover, this new broader "empiricism" solves another classical problem posed by any previous empiricism and rationalism alike: as to how universals and experience relate to each other. A simplified version of Hildebrand's answer to this question is: universals are neither necessarily constructs, nor hypotheses or assumptions simply inferred from experience, nor constructs of the intellect "*cum fundamento in re*" which could never themselves be *given* in experience. Rather, experience in the sense of the "such-being experience" or "experience of essences" can itself be in contact with universals. Possibly one could interpret the meaning of this "experience" in Hildebrand in two ways: 1) It refers to the pre-philosophical contact with what and how things are (a first kind of unclear and diffused "such-being experience"). Naïve experience brings us into contact not only with sense impressions or individual existing objects but also with the universal structures of things. 2) The intellectual intuition of intelligible essences itself is a "purified" and perfected form of "experience of essence." In this act of clearly "seeing" essential structures, an act which goes beyond the pre-philosophical contact with essences, the intellect experiences essences; their intelligible nature is itself present to the mind. A brief look into the history of this question shows the originality of this realist phenomenological position. Plato tried to explain this second kind of "experience of essences (forms)" as *anamnesis,* as a recollection; or better, he assumed that an originally *giving* experience of essences was restricted to an existence of the soul prior to birth. He did not allow for an original form of experience of universals in this life but only for recollecting a previous vision of them. French rationalists and Leibniz were "innatists" and thought that the a priori must lie in the mind prior to any experience. Kant followed them in this, reinterpreting their "inborn ideas" as transcendental subjective forms of intuition and thought. Aristotle and other ancient and medieval philosophers had thought that the senses receive sense-impressions and the "possible intellect" receives forms, but the "active intellect" produces the universal as such, detaching it as it were from its merely

implicit presence in sense-impressions and the individualized, sensible forms they carry.[55] Hildebrand's position differs from all of these. In the case of necessary essences, and only here, the universal essences (universals) themselves are given in a special sort of intellectual experience which becomes possible only through the intelligible necessity of the object of such an experience. In this point developed by Hildebrand lies a decisive breakthrough in the theory of experience. For the necessary essences are themselves given to us, in their universality, because their intrinsic necessity, which includes strict universality, is given to us.

The universal is here not constructed, and it is not a mere name, or assumed hypothetically, as Popper and other forms of empiricism, positivism, and nominalism would make us believe, but rather the essence in its universal validity is grasped and experienced in a unique cognitive mode of experience. How is this claim to be verified? Ultimately through an immediate cognition of the sort which Aristotle has declared to be the foundation for all arguments. There is no demonstration or proof for this claim because it is given in a superior form of cognition than argument: by insight.[56] However, carefully studied examples of such essential necessities and other methodic steps (such as showing the contradictions which result from denying essential necessities) can serve as methods or arguments for gaining such insights.[57]

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[55] The so-called "*species sensibilis*" in medieval philosophy, as contrasted with the "*species intelligibilis*" which the active intellect "produces" in a sense. Aristotle's rejection of eternal forms and theory of abstraction led him somewhat inevitably to this position. On the ontology of essences here presupposed cf. J. Seifert, "Essence and Existence, a Critical Investigation of 'Existentialist Thomism'," *Aletheia I (1977), pp. 17-157,* Chap. 1.

[56] See on this Fritz Wenisch, *Die Philosophie and ihre Methode* (Salzburg: A. Pustet, 1976); the same author, "Insight and Objective Necessity. A Demonstration of Propositions Which are Simultaneously Informative and Necessarily True," *Aletheia IV* (1988), 107-97.

[57] See on this Seifert, *Back to Things in Themselves, ibid.*

For ethics, philosophy of man, metaphysics, and any other branch of philosophy, including logic and language-philosophy, this is a decisive methodological contribution.

In introducing this concept of experience, Hildebrand also lays the foundation for distinguishing the knowledge of essential necessities both from linguistic habits or "depth-grammatical rules" of language - interpreted in the manner of Wittgenstein[58] - and from tautological propositions. Any attempt to reduce the synthetic a priori, or, as we much prefer to say, the propositions that express essentially necessary facts, to mere consequences of defining concepts, and drawing from such definitions, by means of formal logic, consequences in the form of non-informative propositions, fails radically. The irreducibility of the synthetic a priori to analytical or other non-informative propositions can even be shown prior to a justification of these propositions - by pointing out how they differ, in their logical structure, from any noninformative propositions.[59] It is a new matter entirely and an important step, however, to show the basis of their knowledge in experience.[60]

The experience Hildebrand introduces, which differs from the merely empirical experience plus logic recognized in Anglo-Saxon empiricism and many versions of analytical philosophy, allows for a tracing back of such propositions to data and *experiences sui generis,* which show clearly both that any attempt of reducing such proposi-

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[58] See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigation,* third edition, transl. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1968), fr. 89-90; 111, 290, 387, 594, 664. See also Stegmüller's thorough exposition of Wittgenstein's notion of depth grammar *(Tiefengrammatik)* and of the use he makes of this idea in rejecting any Platonism and any notion of an objective a priori: Wolfgang Stegmüller *Haupt-strömugen der Gegegenwartsphilosophie,* 4th edn (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1969), pp. 576-600; 685-96.

[59] See on this particularly Fritz Wenisch, "Insight and Objective Necessity," op. cit.

[60] See Hildebrand, *What is Philosophy?,* op. cit., Chap. IV.

tions to tautologies and their declaration as paradigms or constructs fail.

Hence, one must speak in Hildebrand of a more radical empiricism than the one present in analytic philosophy, where the fundamental concepts of a theory itself, of logical laws, etc. are really not included within the scope of that which is given in experience. At the same time, this radical empiricism can only be an objectivist apriorism in the sense that the necessary moments presupposed in all empirical experience are themselves also given in experience. Thus Hildebrand's radical claim that each object of authentic philosophy must be a *datum* given in experience but a datum that is given only in the appropriate mode of experience, could be considered as a far more consistent and radical theory about the strict relationship of philosophy to experience than the limited notion of "empiricism" prevalent in the Vienna circle and in the subsequent and rather moderate critics of neo-positivism, who share the latter's basic assumptions and concept of experience, such as Popper, Feyerabend, and others.

One could even speak of a Hildebrandian "empiricism of the a priori" or, better still, of an "empiricism of essences," a term which should not however suggest that the investigation of essences is a pure description, rather than a rational penetration into highly intelligible structures.

A philosophy which avoids "what is?" questions, as Popper recommends, and which fails to admit any experience in which its own fundamental presuppositions and such things as concepts, propositions, truth, a theory, etc. are *given,* has a very restricted notion of experience and is in this respect not truly empiricist, i.e., not truly tracing back each notion it presupposes to experience. Authors such as Mackie demonstrate this point because they presuppose, on the one hand, many such objects which they claim to be "quaint" because not given to sense-experience, and on the other hand they have no way of

justifying their implications about these "queer objects" by reference to any kind of experience.

In this manner, one could consider *What is Philosophy?* as a major contribution towards expanding a limited concept of empiricism to a "radical empiricism.”[61] However, let me emphasize again that this has nothing in common with a position that would restrict philosophy to a set of propositions to be verified by sense perception or to a set of hypotheses open to falsification by sense perception. In this respect, Hildebrand's work constitutes a radical break and implicit criticism of Anglo-Viennese empiricism and of mainstream linguistic philosophy.

Hildebrand's "What is Philosophy?" as radical objectivist apriorism

Without contradicting his "radical empiricism" - in the sense of a view to the effect that all cognition is founded in experience and goes back to some self-given and self-giving object of experience - Hildebrand's work can also be understood as a fulfilment of the long tradition of a philosophy of the a priori, in the sense introduced by Plato in the *Meno,* namely as a philosophical justification of necessary and apodictically certain truth[62] which are informative and non-tautologica1.[63] With all its sharp critique of Kantian subjectivism,

[61] Max Scheler's philosophy is a direct source of this expanded, empiricism. William James and others envisaged something similar.

[62] Kant came to replace the term "truth" by "proposition," a very far-reaching decision. Cf. J. Seifert, *Erkenntnis objektiver Wahrheit. Die Transzendenz des Mereschen in der Erkenntnis,* 2nd edn. (Salzburg: A. Pustet, 1976).

[63] Kant frequently speaks of non-tautological, necessary and apodictically certain propositions, for example in Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena,* trans]. L. W. Beck, (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1951), Preamble. The existence of non-tautological necessary

the work also answers Kant's question as to how "synthetic propositions a priori" are possible.[64] Hildebrand's book not only answers how they are possible but how their truth can be known.

If we consider empiricism and transcendental idealism as the two main streams of modern thought and especially of modern epistemology, one might say that Hildebrand's book criticizes both on very essential points, and yet integrates their positive inspiration and improves them both. In fact, What is *Philosophy?* could be regarded as an embodiment of both a full-fledged empiricism or "experiential philosophy" and an objectivistic apriorism.

Paradoxically, precisely by enlarging the notion of experience, Hildebrand becomes quite able to defend a cognition which is independent of "experience" in the sense of being independent of any form of sense perception and verification or falsification through sense perceptions, and independent of any other way of induction or psychological inner perception, etc. If we deal with the experience of necessary essences and essentially necessary facts, these may disclose themselves to us and may be *given* to us even in a single case and indeed even in the mere imagination of a single case which would involve an instantiation of them. They can be given, indeed, even when we consider them in themselves, as when we consider the intelligible ratio of numerical relations or of a centigon, and certain laws and essentially necessary facts grounded in them, without having to consider any instance of them. In any such cognition, since the universal and intelligible essence is itself given to us, our knowledge is totally independent of empirical verification in the sense of perceptions and of all other

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and apodictically certain propositions is in fact the central theme of the *Critique of Pure Reason.*

[64] This question "Wie sind synthetische Urteile a priori möglich?" (how are synthetic propositions a priori possible?) is according to Kant *the* question of philosophy. See his *Critique of Pure Reason,* and his *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics.*

forms of cognition which have to rely on the reality and facticity of things in the real world.

In fact, we recognize that any experience of facts - such as "I exist" or "there is a house" - already presupposes and involves insights into essentially necessary facts and possibly also knowledge of propositions derived deductively, based on such insights. For example, the evidence of my existence in the *cogito* presupposes that I have some understanding of necessary and universal principles such as that "everything is identical with itself" (including the "I" of which I speak here); that some things possess an identity throughout some temporal duration which differs essentially from identity restricted to the mere instant (otherwise I could only say that I know that one I was, another one will be); that "the same thing cannot both be and not be in the same sense and at the same time"; that "evident knowledge such as of the fact that I exist is receptive and not constructive of objects," etc. Without these and many other insights into universal and essentially necessary facts all evidence about facts would be thrown into skeptical doubt.

Moreover, while Hildebrand in no way restricts the a priori to the most universal principles and formal conditions of any concrete object of our experience, he does indeed recognize also this meaning of the a priori in Kant: the formal conditions of the possibility of things. In this way, space and time are the formal conditions of all material objects and movements and the principle of contradiction and the principle of causality are the conditions of the possibility of all being and change. Yet Hildebrand would interpret this sense of a priori in its authentic meaning as a matter of the "objective essentially necessary facts which are presupposed by something" - and this is decisive and places in fact the Kantian discovery on an entirely new basis, namely it bases it on the objective essences themselves. Moreover, "essentially necessary conditions of possibility" are in many cases not only modes and necessary conditions of the possibility of subjective givenness and appearance and of immanent objects of experience, but also conditions

of the possibility of any individual reality and of any real being in themselves - in any possible world. Through basing the theory of the conditions of the possibility of objects on insights into objective essential necessities, it becomes evident that these conditions apply to all possible and real worlds and not just to experience and appearances. In this way, Hildebrand not only solves the problem of Kant's "transcendental deduction" as to how these forms apply to experienced objects but also the ontological problem of how "essentially necessary conditions of the possibility" apply to *any* appearance and *any* reality in any possible and real world. The cognition of necessary essences and essentially necessary states of affairs which are *eo ipso* necessary laws for everything that falls under them solves this problem by unmasking the Kantian pseudo-problem of how our merely subjective forms of intuition and thinking apply to objects. Rather, the universal essential and necessary laws of any real and possible world are *themselves* given in the such-being experience and in the experience of the intellectual intuition which elucidates these data. Because they are neither subjective nor contingent laws, they must apply to any object of experience and to all things in themselves.

Yet by no means are all essentially necessary facts formal conditions of the possibility of objects. Some refer to material contents such as to specific colours or sounds, some to real beings, others to possibilities, to impossibilities, or to appearances, still others to the different personal acts, values, and to different ethical contents and oughts. Thus the sphere of the objective "synthetic a priori" is infinitely richer than Kant had imagined when he conceived of it as the totality of the formal "conditions of possibility."[65]

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[65] Besides the "subjectivization," it is precisely this "impoverishment" of the a priori which Max Scheler objects to in Kant's ethics in his Formalism, op. cit., pp. 54 ff., and which Adolf Reinach objects to in his Concerning Phenomenology, op. cit., pp. 212-22; in the German original, see "Über Phänomenologie," op. cit., S. 546 ff.

Above all, however, Hildebrand, following the great philosophical tradition of ancient and medieval philosophy, but critically improving it through a rigorous application of the phenomenological method, rediscovers that central meaning of the a priori which Plato had discovered in the *Meno* and in the *Phaedo* yet which neither he nor Kant had clearly recognized: that which philosophers looked for through millennia when they sought for "ideas" *(eide)* or synthetic a priori laws or "inborn ideas." These were expected to ground necessary, intelligible and apodictically certain truths, but they could not do so. For the only explanation of such truths lies in reality simply in the intrinsically necessary essences and essential states of affairs which can be known with apodictic certainty precisely because of their incomparable intelligibility and intrinsic necessity which presents itself to an experience and cognition sui *generis.* And it is in the elaboration of this central meaning of the a priori that Hildebrand's work can be considered a culmination point in the classical quest for the a priori from the *Meno* on.

Conclusion

Of course, the reader himself must test the book and the claims made about it and in it. It is only through his own return to those things themselves which are spoken of in Hildebrand's work that the reader can establish the validity of his philosophical claims. There is no way to learn philosophy other than through philosophizing oneself.

Our high opinion of the value of the present book does not prevent us from seeing that there are many important questions which this book raises without answering them sufficiently, for example: Even granted that the appeal to insights into essential necessities is both necessary and rationally justified, how is such an appeal related to phi-

losophy as "knowledge by means of dialectical arguments?" Does the method of philosophy not require more than insights or the pointing at them? Does it not demand even more than a systematic exposition of them? What are the forms of arguments admitted by an adherent of rational intuitions when opponents deny these insights? How is philosophical criticism and the use of logic in philosophy related to the method of insight, etc.? Which place does inference and logical derivation of conclusions from premises hold in philosophy? What are the cogent arguments Hildebrand offers against a radical empiricism or idealism? As indicated, some of these open questions were addressed by others, still others will have to be answered by generations of phenomenological realists. However, the attentive reader will discover the seed of an answer to such questions in the present book itself.

May the reader's concentration not be disturbed or offended if Hildebrand's attack on an analytic philosophy which today is largely passée in the Foreword or elsewhere in the book, seems too harsh or unjustified to him. Hildebrand's occasional references to his religious faith should neither prejudice the reader against the book nor for it. As a philosophical work, it calls for a philosophical reading and a philosophical critique which has only one purpose in mind: the examination of the truth of what is being said and the examination of the philosophical reasons and clarity with which it is argued.

May such a critical examination of the work and an appropriation of the insights it contains lead the reader not only to a true estimation of the worth of this much underrated book but to a philosophical renewal in our time and to a return of philosophy to its great and classical issues which have been so sorely neglected in recent times.

From what has been said it should become clear that this book not only fills a gap in the English language philosophical literature but fulfils at once both goals of the present series: to deal with classical and with phenomenological realism which are - in the last analysis - not

two but one single endeavour. For any truly classical realism is such only in the measure to which it truly returns to things themselves.

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Josef Seifert

Internationale Akademie für Philosophie im Fürstentum Liechtenstein, Schaan