MEINONG'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

MARTINUS NIJHOFF PHILOSOPHY LIBRARY
VOLUME 28

For a complete list of volumes in this series see final page of this volume.

Meinong's Theory of Knowledge

by

Marie-Luise Schubert Kalsi

Southwest Texas State University

1987 **MARTINUS NIJHOFF PUBLISHERS**
a member of the KLUWER ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS GROUP
DORDRECHT / BOSTON / LANCASTER

Distributors

for the United States and Canada: Kluwer Academic Publishers, P.O. Box 358, Accord Station, Hingham, MA 02018-0358, USA

for the UK and Ireland: Kluwer Academic Publishers, MTP Press Limited, Falcon House, Queen Square, Lancaster LA1 1RN, UK

for all other countries: Kluwer Academic Publishers Group, Distribution Center, P.O. Box 322, 3300 AH Dordrecht, The Netherlands

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Schubert Kalsi, Marie-Luise.

Meinong's theory of knowledge.

(The Martinus Nijhoff philosophy library ; 28)

Bibliography: p.

Includes index.

1. Meinong, A. (Alexius), 1853-1920--Contributions in theory of knowledge. 2. Knowledge, Theory of--History--20th century. I. Title. II. Series: Martinus Nijhoff philosophy library ; v. 28.

B3309.M24S36 1987 121'.092'4 87-12400

ISBN-13: 978-94-010-8129-0

e-ISBN-13: 978-94-009-3641-6

DOI: 10.1007/978-94-009-3641-6

Copyright

© 1987 by Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht.

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1987

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publishers,

Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, P.O. Box 163, 3300 AD Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

Dedicated to the Memory of My Parents

Anning Schubert

and

Dr.-Ing. Carl Schubert

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	IX
List of Abbreviations, XIII	
I. Meinong, Brentano, Chisholm	1
A. Alexius Meinong the Person, 1	
B. Meinong and Brentano, 3	
C. Meinong and Chisholm, 17	
II. Perception	27
A. General Remarks, 27	
B. Internal Perception, 32	
C. Sphere of Ideas and Sphere of Judgments, 38	
D. Psychic Analysis, 39	
E. Production of Ideas, 44	
F. Perception of Temporally Distributed Objects, 46	
III. Time and the Temporal	50
A. General Remarks, 50	
B. Subjective Time, 52	
C. Persistence, 54	
D. Objective Object Time, 55	
E. Perception of Temporal Determinations, 57	
F. Additional Remarks, 61	
IV. FANTASY	63
A. Fantasy Ideas and Dispositions, 63	
B. Production of Fantasy Ideas, 66	

VIII

V. MEMORY	71
A. General Remarks, 71	
B. Judgments of Existence, 72	
C. Memory Judgments of Being Thus-and-So, 74	
D. Assumption Versus Judgment, 76	
E. Memory of Objects of External Perception, 78	
F. Memory of Feelings and Their Objects, 80	
G. Remembering Judgments of Subsistence, 84	
H. Negative Memories, 86	
VI. ON EVIDENCE	88
A. Introduction, 88	
B. Judgments, 89	
C. Preliminary Description of Evidence, 90	
D. Presumptive Evidence, 91	
E. Evidence for Certainty, 93	
F. Evidence as Property, 96	
G. Evidence as Fundamental Act, 97	
H. Evidence as Content, 99	
I. Absence of Evidence in Judgments Capable of Evidence, Unawareness of Present Evidence, 100	
J. Evidence and Truth, 103	
K. Evidence and Linguistic Systems, 105	
L. A Principle of Evidence for Internal Perception, 107	
M. Evidence of Memory Judgments, 110	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	113
INDEX	120

FOREWORD

In recent years there has been a renewal of interest in Meinong's work; but since the bulk of it is still encased in his quite forbidding German, most students are limited to the few available translations and to secondary sources. Unfortunately Meinong has been much maligned - only in a few instances with good reason - and has consequently been dealt with lightly.

Meinong stood at a very important junction of European philosophical and scientific thought. In all fields - physics, chemistry, mathematics, psychology, philology - revolutionary strides were being made. Philosophy, on the other hand, had run its post-Kantian course. New philosophical thinkers came from different disciplines. For example, Frege and later Russell were mathematicians, Boltzmann and Mach were physicists. Earlier Bolzano and then Brentano were originally theologians, and Meinong was a historian.¹

The sciences with their new insights and theories offered an enormous wealth of information which needed to be absorbed philosophically; but traditional philosophy could not deal with it. Physics presented a picture of reality which did not fit into the traditional schemes of empiricism or idealism. Ontological and epistemological questions became once again wide open issues. For example, atoms at first were still considered to be theoretical entities. But once they were accepted as real objects, how would the epistemologist deal with them?² Moreover, what should be done with objects such as light waves, which occupy time but not space?

There was Frege with his eternal objects, cardinal numbers and sets, and *Gedanken*, whose forerunner had been Bolzano with his *Satz an sich*. There was the beginning of empirical psychology, especially Carl Stumpf and his *Tonpsychologie* which occupied Meinong's thoughts a great deal. Meinong took an active part by founding the first psychological laboratory in Austria at the University of Graz into which he invested all his available finances, including any raise in salary.

There was also Sigmund Freud in Vienna. Even though his theories have been

¹ Good descriptions of the intellectual climate of that time are to be found in two books: David Lindenfeld, *The Transformation of Positivism* and J. C. Nyiri (ed.), *Austrian Philosophy, Studies and Texts*.

² Meinong, *Ges. Ausg., Ergänzungsband*, p. 169.

very influential, as everyone knows, most philosophers were not so much concerned with his problems as with the problem of reality and our knowledge of it.

From the junction at which, among others, Brentano, Frege and Meinong stood (Frege unfortunately did not directly correspond with Brentano and Meinong), three schools grew forth: phenomenology, analytic philosophy and the philosophy of language. So that junction is very important for modern philosophy and deserves our careful attention. Many philosophers are still influenced by the thoughts of these men. R. M. Chisholm is a prime example of one who owes Meinong and Brentano in equal measure and in whose own philosophy the ideas of both men, especially of Brentano's in recent years, live forth.

My primary interest is the theory of knowledge and consequently the world which it entails. Within its domain the theory of memory has occupied me most of all. Since I had spent many years studying and also translating Meinong's work, I turned again to him. My subject matter turned out to be intriguing and very difficult to get hold of.

Concerning the Subject Matter of this Book

In this book perception, memory and evidence are discussed. Time and fantasy are intimately connected with them. Except evidence and time, the subject matter of Meinong's philosophizing as it is discussed in this book was not anymore directly inherited from Brentano. Of course, it originated from the problems that were first considered by Brentano.

The purpose of this book is to construct a systematic explanation of Meinong's theory of memory. Memory has always been a fascinating subject for me, and up to now I had not been able to find a suitable treatise of it. My interest does not lie in the reliability and evidence of memory about which Meinong wrote in detail in his paper "*Zur erkenntnistheoretischen Würdigung des Gedächtnisses*," and which also will be discussed in this book. My main interest lies in the origins and mechanics of memories from the standpoint of psychological philosophy. Meinong did not leave us such a theory. But throughout his work enough material can be found which allows us to construct a truly Meinongian theory of memory. It was very difficult to find access to the subject matter itself. Many other conditions had to be fulfilled before the problem of memory proper could be attacked.

At first it seemed that the knowledge of Meinong's theory of perception, especially the perception of temporally distributed objects, would suffice to gain access to memory. But we do not only remember what we have once perceived externally; we remember many other things, such as dreams and poems, as Meinong also notes.

Then it became obvious that, from Meinong's writings, a concept of time had to be worked out and explained, if at all such a concept was to be found there. Temporal determinations are very important for the discrimination between existing and subsisting objects and especially, of course, for the determination of past, present, and future and for the question if there are in fact a past, a present and a future.

But even the examination of Meinong's concept of time did not suffice. In order to describe the process of remembering, a certain type of ideas needed to be explained. They are fantasy ideas. For at the basis of memory judgments there are exclusively fantasy ideas.

After all these matters will have been researched and discussed, the theory of memory will result from them almost automatically. As is usually the case with Meinong, materials must be searched for, processed, and interpreted; and they had not necessarily been written down by him for the purpose for which they serve here. But they must be utilized in such a way so that a construction of a coherent theory can be accomplished. This is seen in the following.

During his active years Meinong produced bits and pieces of theories of perception, time, and memory which naturally correspond to different periods of his ever evolving psychological research and theoretical work. The pieces he left us do not make a uniform theory. He never maintained that they were consistent. It is the purpose of my book, however, to make a proposal for a Meinongian theory of perception and memory. Then the evidence of perceptual and memory judgments will be discussed according to Meinong's own theory of evidence, which also must be distilled from his work first. It goes without saying that only Meinong's own material will be used for the construction of those theories.

The following concepts are necessary for the understanding of this book but will not be explained again: judgment, assumption, idea, objective, objectum.³ There are other concepts and theories which were necessary for the construction of the theories which will be proposed in the following. They will be explained and explicitly adapted to our purpose. They are sphere of ideas, sphere of judgments, psychic analysis, idea production. They proved to be sufficient for the construction of a theory of perception. In virtue of them the perception of changing and moving objects and of objects which are seemingly unchanged but are very large can be explained.

I am very grateful to Professor Roderick M. Chisholm for his generous help and critical advice and to Professor Rudolf Haller through whose generosity this project became possible. I thank Dr. Reinhard Fabian and Dr. Hans Zotter, both of the University of Graz, for their help in my studies of Meinong's unpublished literary remains in the manuscript department of the university library. My special thanks go to my friend Barbara Lambert for the final preparation of the manuscript. I thank Todd Horst for his technical effort concerning the software needed to prepare the camera ready copy. I appreciate the many hours which my son, Carle Kalsi, spent working on the index of this book.

³ comp. *Em. Pres.*, Introduction, *M. on O. of H. O.*, Introduction.

LIST OF ABBREVIATED BOOK TITLES OCCURRING IN THE FOOTNOTES

Alexius Meinong:

Ges. Ausg.

Gesamt Ausgabe

Volume I:

"H. St. I"

"Hume-Studien I"

"Abstr. u. Vgl."

"Abstrahieren und Vergleichen"

"Empf."

"Über Begriff und Eigenschaften der Empfindung"

"Phantasie"

"Phantasie-Vorstellung und Phantasie"

"Kompl. u. Rel."

"Zur Psychologie der Komplexionen und Relationen"

"Psy. An."

"Beiträge zur psychischen Analyse"

Volume II:

"H. St. II"

"Hume-Studien II: Zur Relationstheorie"

"Gedächtnis"

"Zur erkenntnistheoretischen Würdigung des Gedächtnisses"

"G. h. O."

"Über Gegenstände höherer Ordnung und deren Verhältnis zur inneren Wahrnehmung"

Volume III:

"Üb. em. Präs"

"Über emotionale Präsentation"

"Werttheorie"

"Psychisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie"

XIV

Volume IV:

Ann. II. *Über Annahmen, 2nd edition Ausgabe*

Volume V:

"Gegenstdsth." *"Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften"*

"Erf." *"Über die Erfahrungsgrundlagen unseres Wissens"*

"Kausal." *"Zum Erweise des allgemeinen Kausalgesetzes"*

Volume VI:

Mögl. *Über Möglichkeit and Wahrscheinlichkeit*

Volume VII:

Verm. Schr. *Selbstdarstellung. Vermischte Schriften*

Erg. *Ergänzungsband*

Franz Brentano:

Deskr. Psy. *Deskriptive Psychologie*

Psy I. *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt I*

Psy II. *Psychologie vom emiprischen Standpunkt II*

Roderick M. Chisholm:

F P **The First Person**

Ess. on Ch. **Essays on the Philosophy of R. M. Chisholm**

Th. of Kn. **Theory of Knowledge (2nd. ed.)**

Kalsi:

Em. Pres. **On Emotional Presentation**

M. on O. of H. O. **A. Meinong on Objects of Higher Order**