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Some Remarks on Husserl's and Seifert's Ontology of Propositions

ABSTRACT: In the article I present and compare two conceptions of the ontological status of propositions (meanings of sentences). The first was formulated by Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, in the early period of his philosophical activity, and the second by Josef Seifert, the contemporary Austrian phenomenologist. On Husserl's view, a proposition is an ideal abstract exemplified by particular acts of judging. The relation of exemplification is dichotomous: a proposition is exemplified or not. The critical point of this theory is that the meaning or sense of our mental acts is changeable, and the proposition as a kind of ideal being is not. Seifert's theory attempts to explain variability of meanings by replacing the relation of exemplification with that of participation. Participation has degrees, and therefore a judgment made by a human subject may be more or less similar to the ideal proposition in God's mind. The extent of that similarity can be bigger or smaller, and this gradation of similarity provides an explanation why meanings can change without thereby abandoning the absoluteness of truth.

KEY WORDS: Husserl • Seifert • ontology • judgment • proposition • meaning • relation • truth

The aim of this paper is to compare two phenomenological ontologies of propositions: one proposed originally by Edmund Husserl in his *Logical Investigations* and the second one worked out later on by the contemporary Austrian phenomenologist Josef Seifert.

The ontology and theory of meaning (including that of propositions, that is, propositional meanings) elaborated by Edmund Husserl in his *Logical Investigations* are still regarded by some philosophers to be one of the most valuable Husserl's contributions to realistic analytic phenomenology and to phenomenological semantics. One of the most influential contemporary proponents of such a view is Barry Smith, who maintains that the Husserlian theory of meaning put forth in *Logical Investigations* is both elegant and bold¹. The reason why this theory is evaluated in such a favorable way rests on the fact that

¹ B. Smith, *Logic and Formal Ontology*, [in:] *Husserl's Phenomenology: A Textbook* edited by J.N. Mohanty and W. R. Kenna, Washington 1989, p.33.

Husserl is thereby able to account in a very natural way for the fact that the laws of logic apply to actual thinkings, speakings and inferrings, and his theory may indeed be said to represent a synthesis of logical objectivism on the one hand, and act-psychology on the other².

To understand better the cornerstone of the theory of meaning in question it will be helpful to bring into account that it is, as Smith says, “a synthesis of logical objectivism on the one hand, and act psychology on the other”. The value of Husserl’s theory of meaning now discussed, understood as a kind of synthesis of the two opposed views, consists in the fact that this theory makes possible to overcome difficulties following both from subjectivist and objectivist theories of meaning, but at the same time it has the advantages of logical objectivism and act-psychology. Bernard Bolzano’s and Gottlob Frege’s theories of meaning may serve as examples of logical objectivism, on the one hand, and Kazimierz Twardowski’s early view on the content of presentations may serve as an example of subjectivist theory, on the other.

The thesis of logical objectivism is that there is an ontological difference between mental acts, i.e. presentations and judgments, linguistic expressions, i.e. sentences, utterances or statements, on the one hand, and that what is meant by these acts and expressions on the other. Mental acts and their linguistic expressions are temporalized segments of the real world. What is meant by the acts and expressions in question belongs, according to the logical objectivism, to the ideal realm of timeless entities. Bolzano called such entities “propositions in themselves” (*Sätze an sich*)³ and Frege named them “thoughts” (*Gedanken*)⁴. The thinkers of the Anglo-Saxon tradition such as Bertrand Russell, George E. Moore and Lizzie Susan Stebbing (she was a student of William E. Johnson), called the entities in question “propositions”⁵. “Propositions in themselves” can be apprehended by a conscious subject, but it is not necessary for them to be apprehended because they “exist” independently of any consciousness and its activity. According to logical objectivism, propositions or thoughts are the subject matter of logic. The mental acts through which these logical entities are known to us belong to the subject matter of psychology. Briefly speaking,

² B. Smith, K. Twardowski; *An Essay on the Borderlines of Ontology, Epistemology and Logic*, [in:] *The Vienna Circle and the Lvov-Warsaw School*, ed. K. Szaniawski, Dordrecht/Boston/London 1989, pp. 337–338.

³ B. Bolzano, *Wissenschaftslehre. Versuch einer ausführlichen und größtenteils neuen Darstellungen der Logik* 1837, p. 77.

⁴ G. Frege, *Schriften zur Logik und Sprachphilosophie*, Hamburg 1978, p. 47.

⁵ See D. Willard, *Logic and the Objectivity of Knowledge*, Athens 1984, p. 180.

logical objectivists say that logic is a science completely independent of psychology because there is a fundamental ontological difference between judgment and proposition.

Dallas Willard in his monograph devoted to the Husserlian philosophy of logic has studied various theories of propositions and confronted their properties. Some of these properties have already been mentioned above, but there are at least two further features of propositions which should also be taken into account here: firstly, the proposition is not identical with a sentence, but the meaning or sense of an (indicative) sentence is a proposition. Secondly, when the proposition is related to a mind, its relation is, or principally is, that of an object of thought or of the so called "propositional attitudes", such as belief or doubt. It is "before" the mind. This is sometimes obscurely expressed by saying that it is the "content of belief or judgment"⁶. It is worth noting that the meaning of a sentence is from the ontological point of view a sort of an additional object of an act. The primary object of an act is a thing or a state of affairs a given act is referred to.

A proponent of the subjectivist theory of meaning holds that there is no ontological difference between mental acts and what they mean (their meanings). It is said that meanings are real entities, and the science which deals with meanings, i.e. logic, is part of psychology.

Husserl's philosophical response was negative both to objectivism and subjectivism. First, it was not clear for him what kind of relation obtains between the ideal proposition and the reality of performed mental acts such as judging, inferring, etc. Husserl clearly rejected Bernard Bolzano's theory of "propositions in themselves"; he wrote that: "his 'propositions in themselves' previously appeared to me as mythical entities, suspended between being and nonbeing"⁷. Second, Husserl criticized objectivist claim that a proposition is the object of mental experience, and the relation which obtains between judgment and proposition has an intentional character. He says that if, for example, we make a statement, we judge the thing it concerns, and not the judgment in the logical sense⁸. In short, Husserl calls these objectivistic claims into question because they do not acknowledge the formal ontological difference between propositions (let us call them here "semantic entities") and objects ("non-semantic entities").

⁶ *Idem, The Paradox of Logical Objectivism*, [in:] *Readings on Edmund Husserl's Logical Investigations*, ed. J. N. Mohanty, M. Nijhoff, Hague 1977, p. 48.

⁷ E. Husserl, *A Reply to a Critic of my Refutation of Logical Psychologism*, [in:] *Readings on Edmund Husserl's Logical Investigations*, ed. J. N. Mohanty, M. Nijhoff, Hague 1977, p.37.

⁸ E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, Vol.2, Tübingen 1913, pp.103 -104.

His refutation of Twardowski's view may serve as an example of his criticism of the subjectivist theory of meaning. Twardowski claims that the object of a presentation is what is designated by the name which expresses the content of the presentation⁹. According to Twardowski, the relation of an act to its object is analogous to the relation of a name to its referent. The semantic relation between name and its referent is achieved by means of the name. An intentional relation between an act and its object is realized through the content of an act. Ultimately, both semantic and intentional relation is possible because of the content of an act. Husserl formulates his objections to Twardowski's identification of linguistic meaning with the content of an act in the following way:

Content as such is an individual, psychical datum, an existent here and now. Meaning (*Bedeutung*), however, is not something individual, not something real (*Reales*), never psychological datum. For it is identically the same 'in' a limitless manifold of individually and really distinct acts [...]. It would be absurd to take it as real part of the presentation¹⁰.

Husserl's criticism was, naturally, reasonable but it must also be borne in mind that Twardowski was fully aware of the problems indicated by Husserl and he tried to solve them in his theory of actions and products. And also in the time of *On the Content and Objects of Presentations* Twardowski's ontology taken as a whole was not a psychologist one since he admitted of nonexistent objects (I think we can call them "ideal objects").

One might conclude that it follows from the above Husserlian criticism of objectivism and subjectivism that an acceptable theory of meaning must satisfy at least two conditions:

(1) It has to accept the formal distinction between proposition and object taken as the target of the intentional act.

(2) It must claim that there is an ontological difference between proposition and judgment, i.e., between the ideal meaning of an act and its real content.

As we will see below, these conditions are necessary but not sufficient for a construction of a fully satisfactory theory of meaning. The most important issues concerning the ontological status of meanings are presented by Husserl in the following statement:

⁹ See D. W. Smith and R. McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality*, Dordrecht/ Boston /London 1982, pp.180–182.

¹⁰ E. Husserl, *A Reply to a Critic of my Refutation of Logical Psychologism*, *op. cit.*, p.350.

The manifold of singulars for the ideal unity of meaning is naturally the corresponding act-moments of meaning, the meaning – intentions. Meaning is related to varied acts of meaning – Logical Presentation to presentative acts, Logical Judgment to acts of judging, Logical Syllogism to acts of syllogism just as Redness *in specie* to the slips of paper which lie here, and which all 'have' the same redness¹¹.

Thus, for Husserl meanings are ideal entities which have a form of *species* exemplified by real contents of real acts of thinking and judging. Such an approach to the problem of meaning makes possible for Husserl to overcome difficulties resulting from the objectivist and subjectivist theories of meaning. Firstly, there is the categorical (formal) difference between propositions (*species*) and objects, in other words, propositions are never (in the direct attitude) primary objects of intentional acts in the way that things or states of affairs are. Secondly, universals are ideal entities, i.e., they have different ontological character from real mental acts. It also becomes clear that if a judgment is an exemplification of a proposition, then the relation which obtains between a proposition and an act (its propositional content) is not a kind of an intentional relation because the proposition is not any object of an act (naturally, a proposition could be an intentional object of a certain mental act provided that a subject would be intentionally directed toward it but such an intentional relation is not a basic natural intentional relation). In brief, the relation obtaining between propositions and acts (judgments) is not an intentional correspondence, but is a kind of instantiation or exemplification: proposition (as a universal) is exemplified by a judgment (as a particular).

Such a theory may also provide a solution to the problem of how logical laws can be applied to empirical acts of thinking. Logical laws as a kind of propositions are exemplified by some judgments; if judgments are really instances of certain propositions, then one can say that they are logically valid or true.

However, Husserl's doctrine leads to a crucial and difficult problem. According to Husserl, presentations (all that has been said about judgments can be applied to presentations taken in separation or as real parts of judgments) and judgments which we produce are exemplifications of ideal concepts and propositions. Thus, our presentations and judgments are (more or less) exact mental copies of ideal meaning units. But we observe significant changes in the sphere of meanings. Roman Ingarden and later on Josef Seifert stressed this fact very strongly. One could explain the occurrence of changes in the sphere of meaning, if meaning were to be taken as real entities

¹¹ *Idem*, *Logische Untersuchungen*, *op. cit.*, pp.101–102.

(human constructs). But, naturally, we have invariance and identity in the sphere of meaning and truth which is predicated of propositions. It seems to Husserl that the best way to explain the final fact (objectivity of truth) is to assume that meanings are ideal entities which are independent of the human mind. Therefore, it seems that meanings are human products, but at the same time they have to be ideal entities. Husserl's theory cannot account for this, let us call it: the 'paradox of meaning and truth'. Below we will try to consider whether Josef Seifert's theory of proposition and truth can deal with our problem better than the early Husserlian approach.

It seems that in order to better understand Seifert's theory of propositions one should present his arguments in defense of the absolute (objective and timeless) nature of truth. Seifert puts forward the following arguments¹².

The first argument (I) (let us call it the "Objectivity Argument") has three partly interrelated forms.

The first of these forms is based on the following observations.

(I)-1. There are truths which exist in all places.

(I)-2. There are truths which exist at all times.

(I)-3. Truth which exists in many places and times is one.

To explain these three facts, Seifert assumes that truth is universal: there exists one and the same identical truth¹³. But one truth can possess a universal inner identity only if it does not depend on human. So one can explain facts (I)-1 (I)-3 only if truth does not depend on the human mind.

Another form of the Objectivity Argument proposed by Seifert (it seems to be the *reductio ad absurdum* form) is the following one. Suppose that truth is mind-dependent. In such a case the following statements must be true:

(I)-4. A judgment which I make produces truth which did not exist prior to my act of judging.

(I)-5. "Truth" ("true") is the predicate of an act of judging.

(I)-6. It is impossible that the predicate 'true' which is predicated of my judgment is identical with the predicate of other judgments.

The statement (I)-6 is justified as follows:

¹² My presentation of Seifert's arguments is not my own logical reconstruction of them in the strict sense but a bit more succinct form of his own reasoning. Therefore, if I use logical verbs like "follows", "infer" etc., it does not mean that I suggest that a given argument is logically valid. The question of formal and material validity of Seifert's reasoning is not important for the aim of my paper.

¹³ J. Seifert, *Is The Existence of Truth Dependent Upon Man?*, "The Review of Metaphysics", 1982, Vol. XXXV/3., p. 465.

As the red color of ball produced today cannot be strictly identical with the red color of a ball which will be produced in the future, so two entities which come into existence at different times cannot have an exactly the same predicate¹⁴.

However, if we take into account statements: (I)-1, I(2), I(3), (I)-4, (I)-5 and (I)-6, then the thesis of the dependence of truth upon human mind (truth is not universal) can explain the same nature of a plurality of truth of the same content but cannot explain the "numerical" identity of truth. Therefore, because by making the assumption that truth depends on the human mind it is impossible to explain facts (I)-1, I(2), I(3), this assumption should be rejected as false and untenable¹⁵.

Also the third Objectivity Argument proposed by Seifert has the character of *reductio ad absurdum* argument.

(I)-7. Suppose that truth does depend on human mind.

Therefore, we can analytically infer that

(I)-8. The only bearers of truths are acts of judging produced by human minds.

(I)-9. Two acts of judging are never identical (See (I)-4 and (I)-5)).

(I)-10. Suppose, there exist two acts of judging which possess the same content and logical value.

From (I)-9, (I)-10, (I)-5 and (I)-6

(I)-11. There exist two truths.

From (I)-8 and (I)-9

(I)-12. Acts of judging come into existence and cease to exist.

From (I)-11 and (I)-12 it follows that

(I)-13. Truth can be multiplied and reduced.

However, (I)-13 contradicts the universality of truth (there exists one "numerically" identical truth)¹⁶.

The argument (II) concerns the timelessness of truth.

(II)-1. Truth depends on the human mind.

(II)-2. Truth has its beginning in time.

(II)- 3. There exists one identical truth which does not depend upon man and time (true, if the Objective Argument is correct).

From the statements: (II)- 1, (II)- 2 and (II)- 3 follows a contradiction. Therefore assumptions (II)-1 and (II)-2 are false¹⁷.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 465.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 466.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 467-468.

Argument (III) is based on the additional assumption that there are possible truths.

(III)-1. Alexius Meinong and Adolf Reinach maintain that states of affairs subsist independently of time and human minds.

(III)-2. Engendered acts of judging exist in time.

(III)-3. Acts of judging are the only bearers of truth.

(III)-4. There is one to one relation between each subsisting state of affairs and not engendered judgment.

From III- 3, and (III)-4:

(III)-5. A not engendered judgment is a possible bearer of truth.

From (III)-5:

(III)-6. There is a possible truth or a possibility of truth.

(III)-7. In order for a possible truth to exist (to be actual existing truth) there must exist at least one engendered judgment.

From (III)-7:

(III)-8. Truth depends on human mind¹⁸.

Thus, it seems that if states of affairs are objective and timeless, as Meinong and Reinach assumed, then truth depends on the human mind. To refute the last conclusion, Seifert argues that the distinction between possibility and actuality is not applied to truth because:

Is it not a property of propositions that they are true or false regardless of whether or not someone actually holds them in his judgments? Are not inferences also valid or invalid quite independently from the question whether the validity or invalidity of the respective forms of argument are understood by any person or not, or whether such forms of inferences are actually being used by anybody or not? Truth (as much as its thought-bearer, the judgment) seems to possess some mode of ideal being which is not subject to the difference between possible and real existence. It seems that the truth of possible judgments is as much and as really truth as the truth of actually held propositions¹⁹.

In other words, there are no possible truths, and (III)-6 is false, and, therefore, the conclusion (III)-8 is false too.

Another form of the argument based on “possible truth assumption” is the Seifertian analysis of the meaning of the expression “possible truth”. On his view, a possible truth is a truth which has not been expressed yet, and which has not been correlated to any judgment. However, this means that

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 468– 469.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p 469.

such a possible truth does not depend upon any real act of judging. Hence, truth does not depend upon the human mind. Therefore, conclusion (III)–8 is false. Seifert says that possible truth is even more real than the real one (belonging to actually produced judgments)²⁰.

Argument (IV): The logical unity of truth

(IV)–1. The truth of a judgment presupposes infinitely many other truths.

(IV)–2. The truth of any judgment is the logical “cause” of infinitely many other judgments (propositions).

(IV)–3. No man can actually comprehend an actual infinity of true judgments.

From (IV)–1, (IV)–2, and (IV)–3 it follows that:

(IV)–4. The set of true judgments is not identical with the set of judgments produced by human minds. The set of all true judgments is bigger than the set of true judgments produced by humans.

From (IV)–4, it follows that:

(IV)–5. There exist true judgments which are independent of the human mind (cannot be produced by human beings).

Therefore, truth does not depend on the human mind²¹.

Argument (V) rests on the observation that true propositions can be taken as elements of a set of true propositions which are logically related one to another. Seifert says that:

If truth could owe its existence to human acts of thinking, this ideal unity of truth would be a pure illusion. Truth would be something fragmentary and incomplete which grows in a most imperfect manner and in a quite exterior fashion by the addition of new propositions to those already in existence, without any logical or temporal unity. Truth would no longer resemble inner plenitude, order and unity could only be grasped by man with great labor and in a most imperfect manner. To deny the meaningful wholeness of truth, however, contradicts clearly the given essence of truth²².

In other words, if we assume that truth depends upon the human mind, then we have to reject wholeness of truth (ideal unity of truth). But the wholeness of truth belongs to the very nature of truth. This was proved by the argument presented above. Therefore, truth does not depend upon the human mind.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 470.

²¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 471–472.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 474.

In his defense of the absolute nature of truth, Seifert also resorts to some linguistic facts. According to him, many common linguistic expressions presuppose that truth is not dependent upon the human mind. He gives such examples as:

- “This man discovered the truth”;
- “He has got a very limited understanding of the truth”;
- “He longs for the full truth.”
- ”He is able to see something in the light of truth”²³.

If one formulated expressions consistent with the view that the existence of truth is dependent upon human, the ‘depth-grammar’ would be violated. Seifert gives some examples of such expressions:

- “Since the publication of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* the truth about causality and substance has come to exist”.
- “The truth about man disappeared in the 18th century”.
- “The truth about microphysical events did not exist a hundred years ago”²⁴.

It is possible to deliver many other such examples. In other words, according to this argument, the manner we speak can be taken as an additional reason for the independence of truth of the human mind²⁵.

Thus, the conclusion following the above presented arguments is negative in the sense that truth does not depend on the human mind, and, even more, that it is logically impossible that truth is dependent upon the human mind. However, as Seifert put it:

The truth presents itself as not dependent upon historical and contingent human thought. The truth which makes true the judgments formed by man is more than the correspondence of human judgments as such with reality, i.e., with independently existing states of affairs. Truth subsists in timeless manner and resists any attempt of interpretation which ascribes to it a being that emerges in time and passes away. Truth cannot partly exist, partly perish as is quite possible in the case of the predicates of judgments insofar as they are formed by the human mind in history. Truth is an ordered whole of sublimity, structuredness, and order which contains all logical connections and all dependencies between various truths of judgment.

In this ideal perfection truth can never be fully embodied in the human mind or in thoughts produced by man. Truth exceeds in its transcendent depth and beauty all those dimensions of it which can

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 477.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

be apprehended by man. Moreover, truth is one single truth which exists at all times and all places, or rather above and beyond all time and place, as one and the same entity. Hence it can never be a mere predicate of judgments formed by man at different times. In virtue of its infinity, truth likewise transcends all human thought and judgment. Truth remains the same quite independently of whether men acknowledge it in their judgments, reject it in their errors, or presuppose it without thinking²⁶.

Thus understood, the nature or essence of truth has consequences important for the theory of meaning and judgment. On Seifert's view, presentations and judgments which are made by human beings are only human constructs²⁷. However, there exist ideal, timeless concepts and propositions. They are not human constructs. They exist independently of any human mind. These ideal meaning entities are primary bearers of truth²⁸. True judgments which we make "participate" in those ideal true propositions²⁹. The ideal true propositions are "at the same time" thoughts belonging to the mind of God, or they are parts of God³⁰. The last statement is a consequence of Seifert's belief that ideal propositions presuppose the existence of an ideal and perfect mind which thinks of them. On his view, atemporal unchangeable possibilities are bearers of falsehood³¹. These atemporal possibilities do not possess the perfection of the ideal being as true propositions do. This is obvious position since truth is to be located in the divine mind, and, hence, falsity cannot be part of the divine mind because of divine perfection.

Seifert's theory of meaning can be described as "participation theory of meaning". This theory is free of the paradox resulting from Husserl's doctrine of meaning, firstly, because it takes into account changes of meanings. Changes of meanings result from the fact that presentations and judgments which people make are human constructs and not perfectly similar mental copies of ideal meaning units. Secondly, Seifert points out the ideality of meaning. He claims that the similarity of judgments and presentations produced at different times, places and by various persons can be explained by the existence of ideal meaning entities. Moreover, Seifert is able (with some important reservations mentioned below), like Husserl, to explain the fact that ideal concepts and true propositions (truths) also occur in actual

²⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 478–479.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 479.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 479–480.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 480.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 479.

human thinking. Husserl explains this by the exemplification of ideal meanings which is realized by the “matter” of real acts. Seifert does not speak of an exemplification but of participation; true judgments produced by human minds “participate” in ideal true propositions. Seifert propounds the Augustinian view concerning the ontological status of false propositions. According to Seifert, the bearers of falsehood are not, as in Husserl’s theory, ideal entities *sensu stricto*, but atemporal possibilities. These possibilities possess only a potential existence which is much less perfect than the timeless actuality of ideal true propositions. Thus, Seifert emphasizes metaphysical and axiological highness of truth in relation to falsehood. This highness has its additional justification in the fact that the ideal true propositions are divine judgments. If truths are divine judgments, then the bearer of falsehood cannot be ideal entities belonging to God’s mind because God cannot possess false beliefs.


Let us make some concluding remarks concerning both theories. Husserl and Seifert stress the absolute nature of truth (truth is objective and timeless), and, postulate that there exist ideal meaning entities. Naturally, Seifert’s ontology of propositions is theistic since true propositions are divine judgments. Therefore, Seifert’s position is a metaphysically richer view than Husserl’s ontology of propositions, because the former presupposes the existence of God, and the latter assumes only the ideal realm of logical entities. But the ideal realm of logical entities must be absolute in the sense that it has being *per se* and not in any mind. Husserl’s propositions are thoughts without any subject who would have them.

Both theories must demonstrate that there is a link between mental and ideal worlds. In Seifert’s case, the link is the relation of participation: human judgments participate in ideal propositions, which are divine judgments. It is not quite clear, however, what that relation consists in. The difference between exemplification and participation is not purely verbal because exemplification has no degrees (a proposition is exemplified or is not exemplified by a given judgment) and participation is not of this type (participation has degrees).

A judgment might participate in the content of a proposition partially or wholly. But, if the judgment participates only partially in the ideal proposition, then we face the problem of the truth degree: a judgment would be true only to a certain degree and would also be false to a certain degree at the same time, or it could be more false than true at one time, and more true than false at another time. This would create a big problem for Seifert’s theory because truth is absolute and has no degrees (a proposition is true or false). Certainly, propositions would not be affected by this fatal confusion of

logical values, but judgments are linked to propositions by a relation which makes it possible that such confusion will occur.

Seifert's theory of meaning is a metaphysical synthesis of realism and Platonism, as it was in Husserl's case. The realistic aspect of this synthesis rests on the claim that presentations and judgments are human constructs (not perfect mental copies of ideal entities). The Platonist element of this solution consists in the fact that human concepts and judgments participate in ideal meaning units. This form of synthesis of realism and Platonism is an alternative approach to the problem which we have labeled above as "the paradox of truth and meaning".

One must also stress the fact that in Seifert's theory, as in Husserl's, the relation between the mind and meaning entities is not the intentional correspondence (like in Bolzano's and in Frege's case) because participation is not any form of intentional correspondence and does not presuppose of any form of correspondence. Seifert, like Husserl, often says that states of affairs are objects of our judgments³². 

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³² See: *Ibidem*, pp. 471– 472.