

Kimberly Baltzer-Jaray
Reinach and Hering on Essence

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies
King's University College (UWO)
Canada
e-mail: kbaltzer@uwo.ca

Jean Hering's "Bemerkungen über das Wesen, die Wesenheit und die Idee" (1921) was his first major phenomenological investigation into formal ontology. He states in a footnote to the introduction to the essay that his thoughts on this matter arose from discussions in Edmund Husserl and Adolf Reinach's philosophy seminars that he attended at the University of Göttingen in 1913. The notes Reinach took during these sessions offer us a brief but quite rich examination of the concept of essence as employed in the domains of logic, metaphysics and epistemology, as well as critical discussion of the terms used by philosophers when talking about essences. This paper will supply some of the philosophical context of Hering's essay, highlight Reinach's criticisms of some of its central ideas, and further illuminate the character of the realist phenomenology that Hering proceeded to develop after WWI.