

## **Brentano's Revaluation of the Scholastic Concept of Intentionality into a Root-Concept of Descriptive Psychology<sup>1</sup>**

**CYRIL MCDONNELL**

**Abstract** It is generally acknowledged that it is principally due to Brentano and his students, in particular Husserl, that the medieval-scholastic terminology of 'intentional act' and 'intentional object' re-gained widespread currency in philosophical circles in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. This paper examines Brentano's original re-introduction and revaluation of the Scholastic concept of intentionality into a root-concept of descriptive psychology. It concentrates on (1) Brentano's modification of the Scholastic concept of object-relatedness of the will to depict the object-relatedness of all psychical-act experiences in consciousness, (2) Brentano's modification of the Scholastic concept of the abstracted form of sense residing intentionally in the soul of the knower to depict the directly intended object of consciousness, and (3) the significance of these modifications for understanding what commentators now call 'Brentano's thesis'. It notes that Brentano develops not one but two descriptive-psychological theses of intentionality both of which are entirely unScholastic. It also notes, however, that part of the original meaning of the metaphysical distinction that the Scholastics drew between 'intentional indwelling' (*inesse intentionale*) and 'real being' (*esse naturale*) continues to play a critical role in Brentano's revision of the concept of intentionality in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874) and in his lecture courses delivered at Vienna University on *Descriptive Psychology* (1887-91), and that this part of the original meaning of the Scholastic concept of intentionality remains both alive and intact in Brentano's 1874 study and in Husserl's (in)famous transcendental reduction of *Ideas I* (1913). Thus the paper argues that identifying what Brentano accepts, rejects, and adds to the original Scholastic concepts of 'intentional act' and 'the intentional indwelling of an object' cannot be evaded in the proper elucidation and evaluation of 'Brentano's thesis'.

### *Introduction*

Throughout his career in philosophy, Husserl reiterated the point that he began his philosophical path of thinking in phenomenology and phenomenological research in the aftermath of Brentano's re-introduction of the Scholastic concept of intentionality, and his

<sup>1</sup> This is a revised and extended version of a paper delivered at the *Irish Philosophical Society's* Autumn Conference on 'Perspectives on Medieval and Scholastic Philosophy', held in collaboration with the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy, Queen's University Belfast, in November 2005. I would like to thank both the participants of that conference for their questions, and the referee whose request for clarification on some points in my initial draft has helped greatly.

transformation of it into a root-concept of descriptive psychology.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Husserl went as far as to maintain in 1931 that ‘his [Brentano’s] conversion (*Umwertung*) of the scholastic concept of intentionality into a descriptive root-concept of psychology constitutes a great discovery, apart from which phenomenology could not have come into being at all’.<sup>3</sup> In this paper, I wish to concentrate attention on Brentano’s revaluation (*Umwertung*) of the Scholastic concept of intentionality that occurred in his elaboration of the concept of the intentionality of consciousness in his lectures on ‘Descriptive Psychology’, given at Vienna University in the late 1880s and early 1890s,<sup>4</sup> and, prior to that, in his initial and famous re-

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Phänomenologische Psychologie, Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1925, Gesammelte Werke*, Husserliana (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1968), Vol. IX, ed. by Walter Biemel, ‘§ 3 d Brentano als Wegbereiter für die Forschung in innerer Erfahrung – Enkdeckung der Intentionalität als Grundcharakter des Psychischen’, pp. 31–5; *Phenomenological Psychology. Lectures, Summer Semester 1925*, trans. by John Scanlon (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), ‘Section (d) Brentano as pioneer for research in internal experience—discovery of intentionality as the fundamental character of the psychic’, pp. 23–7. Cf., also, Husserl’s tribute to Brentano, ‘Erinnerungen an Franz Brentano’, in Oskar Kraus, *Franz Brentano. Zur Kenntnis seines Lebens und seiner Lehre*, Appendix II, (Munich, 1919); ‘Reminiscences of Franz Brentano’, trans. by Linda L. McAlister, in *The Philosophy of Brentano*, ed. by Linda L. McAlister (London: Duckworth, 1976), pp. 47–55, p. 50

<sup>3</sup> Edmund Husserl, ‘Author’s Preface to the English Edition’ of *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. by W.R. Boyce Gibson (London: Unwin & Allen, 1931), pp. 5–22, in particular pp. 16–17; *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch, Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, (Halle: Niemeyer, 1913); Hua Vol. III/ 1 & III/ 2 ed. by Karl Schumann (1977, 1995)

<sup>4</sup> Cf., Franz Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology*, trans. and ed. by Benito Müller (London: Routledge, 1995), *Deskriptive Psychologie*, ed. by Roderick M. Chisholm & Wilhelm Baumgartner (Hamburg: Meiner, 1982). The first time that Brentano delivered a lecture-course entitled ‘Descriptive Psychology’ was in 1887/88, and he repeated these, without major revision, in 1888/89 and 1890/91. Thus Husserl, who had attended Brentano’s lectures in Vienna University from 1884/6, would not have attended these lectures. Müller informs us, however, that ‘[E]ven though Husserl left Vienna by the time the present lectures were read by Brentano, he was in possession of a transcript (by Dr Hans Schmidkunz) of the 1887/8 lectures which is kept in the Husserl Archive in Leuven, (call number Q10).’ (Introduction, Part I, *Descriptive Psychology*, p. xiii, n. 14.) Dermot Moran also notes that after Husserl left Vienna in 1886 he still ‘diligently collected Brentano’s lecture transcripts, e.g. his *Descriptive Psychology* lectures of 1887–91, his investigations of the senses, as well as his studies of fantasy, memory and judgement’. See *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), pp. 18–19. In ‘Reminiscences of Franz Brentano’, Husserl tells us that Brentano’s ‘thinking never stood still’ (p. 50), and that the way in which Brentano attempted to clarify the origin of the meaning of concepts employed in the normative sciences of Logic, Ethics, and Aesthetics, through the application of his

introduction of ‘what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object’ in his 1874 unfinished study *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint (PES)*.<sup>5</sup> It seems to me that unless we can reasonably determine both what Brentano actually subscribes to in the Scholastic concept and what changes he implements to that concept, the full meaning that Brentano attributes to this root-concept of descriptive psychology will be either not fully understood or not properly evaluated.<sup>6</sup> This paper will not address, however, the

descriptive-psychological method of inquiry, was the most enduring memory he held of these lectures; indeed, ‘it was from his [these] lectures that I first acquired the conviction that gave me the courage to choose philosophy as my life’s work’ (p. 47–8). For a lucid account of the impact of the descriptive method that Brentano was developing in these lectures on Husserl’s initiation and formation in philosophy, see Theodore De Boer’s excellent, short article ‘The Descriptive Method of Franz Brentano: Its Two Functions and Their Significance for Phenomenology’, in *The Philosophy of Brentano*, ed. by Linda L. McAlister, pp. 101–7.

<sup>5</sup> Franz Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, trans. by Antos. C. Rancurello, D.B. Terrell & Linda L. McAlister (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973; Routledge, 1995), p. 88; *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1874)

<sup>6</sup> For a defence of the Scholastic credentials of Brentano’s account of intentionality in *PES*, see Ausiono Marras, ‘Scholastic Roots of Brentano’s Conceptions of Intentionality’, in *The Philosophy of Brentano*, ed. by Linda L. McAlister, pp. 128–39. What Marras successfully defends in his paper, however, is the Scholastic account, and not Brentano’s account. Thus, the major conceptual discrepancies between the Scholastic account and Brentano’s ‘new’ thesis of intentionality are neither noted nor addressed in his paper. A similar absence is present in a more recent article, written by Dale Jacquette, ‘Brentano’s Concept of Intentionality’, in *The Cambridge Guide to Brentano*, ed. by Dale Jacquette (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 98–130. Jacquette seems to approve of Marras’ treatment of Brentano’s thesis (cf. p. 125, n. 5) thus the actual modification of the scholastic meaning of intentionality does not feature in his paper either. For an examination of the historical origins of the meanings of various versions of the Scholastic concept of intentionality that Brentano’s terminological use of the term in *PES* (1874) points back to, in particular to late medieval Scholasticism, see Klaus Hedwig’s ‘Intention: Outlines for a History of a Phenomenological Concept’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 39 (1979) pp. 326–40. In *PES*, however, it is quite clear that Brentano deviates considerably from the meanings of the Scholastic concept noted by Hedwig (cf., esp., pp. 328–30). Given that ‘there is no evidence’, as Hedwig points out, ‘that Husserl himself studied the Greek and scholastic sources from which the concept of *intention* derived’ (p. 333), we can see why Husserl is correct in his own self-evaluation to maintain that he begins philosophizing in the *aftermath of the descriptive-psychological modification of the Scholastic concept of intentionality by Brentano*. Cf., also, Klaus Hedwig, ‘Der scholastische Kontext des Intentionalen bei Brentano’, in *Die Philosophie Franz Brentanos*, eds R. M. Chisholm and R. Haller, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1978) pp. 67–82, and P. Englehardt ‘Intention’, *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 4 (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1976), pp. 466–74

controversial issue of Husserl's advancement of Brentano's concept of intentionality because this would require a major study in itself, and Theodore de Boer has already accomplished this in his masterful work *The Development of Husserl's Thought*.<sup>7</sup> Nor will this paper deal with the many disagreements that still exist among commentators and critics concerning the interpretation, meaning and validity of the various versions of 'Brentano's thesis', that were elaborated after Brentano.<sup>8</sup> Rather, the focus of this paper is on the general features of the two scholastic concepts of intentional act and intentional object that Brentano modified and that are most relevant both to the understanding and to the evaluation of Brentano's new descriptive-psychological concept of the intentionality of

<sup>7</sup> Theodore De Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, trans. by Theodore Plantinga (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978); *Die ontwikkelingsgang in het denken van Husserl* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1966). See also Klaus Hedwig, 'La discussion sur l'origine de l'intentionnalité husserlienne', *Les Etudes Philosophiques* (1978) pp. 259–72. Brentano, of course, thought that Husserl's descriptive-*eidetic* psychology had *not* advanced his idea of descriptive psychology, and that Husserl had wrongly accused him of psychologism. Cf. Brentano, *PES*, 'Appendix (1911), Supplementary Remarks, IX 'On Genuine and Fictitious Objects', pp. 291–301; XI 'On Psychologism', pp. 306–7. This philosophical dispute between Brentano and Husserl is still on-going among commentators today. Cf. Robin D. Rollinger, 'Brentano and Husserl' in *The Cambridge Guide to Brentano*, pp. 255–76

<sup>8</sup> A complicating factor in this entire matter, no doubt, is the fact that several of Brentano's students and followers, whilst advocating critical allegiance to Brentano's original concept, promoted different versions of 'Brentano's thesis', and these versions themselves often came into direct conflict not only with Brentano's doctrine but also with each other. Cf. Dermot Moran, 'The Inaugural Address: Brentano's Thesis', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* Supplementary vol. LXX (1996), pp. 1–27. This commentator believes that Brentano's more immediate students (Twardowski and Husserl are named together) interpret 'Brentano's thesis' more faithfully than later analytic commentators who follow R.M. Chisholm's 'influential account' (*ibid.* p. 2) unfurled in the 1960s. Philip J. Bartok, however, has recently argued that both analytic and phenomenological approaches do not do entire justice to 'Brentano's thesis' in that 'each reads Brentano in terms of philosophical concerns and standards that were not his own'. 'Brentano's Intentionality Thesis: Beyond the Analytic and Phenomenological Readings', *Journal of History of Philosophy*, vol. 43, no. 4 (2005) pp. 437–60, p. 439. It is of importance in evaluating 'Brentano's Thesis', therefore, to be sure about *whose* thesis and *which* thesis of intentionality that is the target of either interpretive elucidation or critical evaluation. Bartok tries to steer a course back to 'Brentano's thesis' itself, which means for this author navigating 'a route between the excesses of these two "analytic" and "phenomenological" influential readings of Brentano's thesis' (p. 439). Bartok does not return to the Scholastic terminology used by Brentano, however, nor does he address the modifications that Brentano actually introduces to the meaning of the Scholastic concept of intentionality in the elaboration of descriptive psychology. Thus, 'Brentano's Intentionality Thesis' is not completely read on its own terms, though this is the intention (cf. p. 439 and no. 8).

consciousness. Even within these limitations, the matter is one of immense complexity.

*Brentano's Revaluation of the Scholastic Concept of Intentional Act into a Root-Concept of Descriptive Psychology*

Towards the beginning of his course of lectures on *Descriptive Psychology (DP)*, which Brentano first delivered at Vienna University in 1887 and repeated, without major revision, in 1888 and 1890, Brentano remarks to his students,

[T]he peculiarity which, above all, is generally characteristic of [human] consciousness, is that it shows always and everywhere, i.e. in each of its separable parts, a certain kind of relation, relating a subject to an object. This relation is also referred to as 'intentional relation' (*intentionale Beziehung*). To every consciousness belongs essentially a relation. ... The one correlate is the act of consciousness; the other is that which it is directed upon (*DP*, p. 23).

Elaborating further on what he exactly means by this, Brentano lists the following examples for his students: 'seeing and what is seen. Presenting and what is presented. Wanting and what is wanted. Loving and what is loved. Denying and what is denied etc.' (*DP*, p. 24). Brentano, however, claims no originality in spotting this 'intentional relation' in consciousness. In fact, Brentano claims that Aristotle was the first to recognise this, and also says: '[A]s highlighted already by Aristotle, the correlates display the peculiarity that the one alone [the act of consciousness] is real, whereas the other [the object of consciousness] is not something real (*nichts Reales*)' (*DP*, p. 24).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Brentano does not tell his students where exactly he found this in Aristotle. In the 'Editors' Notes', Baumgartner and Chisholm remark that here, 'Brentano is evidently referring to *Metaphysics*, 1021 a, 30' (*DP*, 180, n.9). This is in keeping with Brentano's own similar citation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Book V, Chapter 15, 1021a 29, in his *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, trans. by Roderick M. Chisholm & E. Schnerwind (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p.14, n.19; *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis* (Leipzig, Duncker and Humblot, 1889). There are, however, major *conceptual* differences between Aristotle's account of this 'relation' in *Metaphysics*, Book V, Chapter 15 and Brentano's account in *DP* and in *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*. We thus have to look outside of the passage that Brentano actually alludes to in order to follow Brentano's line of reasoning. This explains, nevertheless, why commentators cannot find and have not found any direct clues in *the actual* passage itself from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, or in similar passages from Aristotle's *De Anima* which Brentano also alludes to (cf. *PES*, 88–89, n.), for helping them to unravel *Brentano's understanding* of the 'intentional relation' that he claims exists between acts of consciousness and their objects.

In a public lecture before the Vienna Law Society which Brentano also delivered around this time, on 23 January 1889, entitled ‘The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong’, and which he later published in the same year as part of his work in ‘descriptive psychology’,<sup>10</sup> Brentano re-iterates this same point about our consciousness, maintaining,

The common feature of everything psychological often referred to, unfortunately, by the misleading term ‘consciousness’ (*Bewußtsein*), consists in a relation that we bear to an object. The relation has been called *intentional*; it is a relation to something which may not be actual but which is presented as an object. There is no hearing unless something is heard, no believing unless something is believed; there is no hoping unless something is hoped for, no striving unless there is something that is striven for; one cannot be pleased unless there is something that one is pleased about; and so on, for all the other psychological phenomena.<sup>11</sup>

Brentano’s main concern about the understanding and possible misunderstanding of the nature of our consciousness itself, therefore, would appear to be this: that if we do not start from the outset by taking the term ‘consciousness’ (*Bewußtsein*) as denoting the existential fact *that* consciousness is *always* a consciousness of something, then we will be misled by the term into thinking that consciousness, in its actuality, is something other than that, that is to say, that one’s own actual consciousness is something that has no intrinsic bearing on the objects of which consciousness is a consciousness.<sup>12</sup> What this thesis of

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Brentano ‘Foreword’ to *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, pp. ix–x

<sup>11</sup> Brentano, *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, p. 14

<sup>12</sup> Brentano had already made this exact same point earlier in *PES*, but nowhere in *PES* does Brentano actually *describe* this relation between the acts of consciousness and its objects as an *intentional* relation. Rather, there we read: ‘(I)n the first place ... the term “consciousness,” since it refers to an object which consciousness is conscious of (*von welchem das Bewußtsein Bewußtsein ist*), [it] seems to be appropriate to characterise psychical phenomena precisely in terms of its distinguishing characteristic, i.e., the property of the intentional in-existence of an object’ (p. 102). The ‘intentional in-existence of an object’ in consciousness is a different concept of intentionality to the ‘intentional relation’ of the acts of consciousness towards its objects, alluded to in *DP* and in his 1889 lecture. The former concept is one that Brentano himself tells us he retrieved from Scholastic epistemology, *PES*, p. 88, and we will deal with it in more detail in the following section. The concept of ‘intentional relation’, which Brentano would also lead us to believe he retrieves from Scholastic theory of knowledge, is in fact an extension of the Scholastic theory of the object-relatedness of the acts of the will. A complicating matter in addressing Brentano’s adaptation of the Scholastic concept of intentionality into a root concept of descriptive psychology, therefore, is

intentionality stresses, therefore, is the relatedness of our ‘acts of consciousness’ or ‘psychical phenomena’ or ‘psychological phenomena’—terms which Brentano takes to be all synonymous expressions, whatever about the reservations he may have about using the misleading term of ‘consciousness’ (*Bewußtsein*)—to their objects, whatever the latter may be.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding his use of the term ‘intentional’ in his description of the relation of conscious acts to their objects in his 1889 lecture, Brentano later added a written note to the published text, remarking that ‘[T]he expression ‘intentional’, like many other of our more important concepts, comes from the Scholastics’.<sup>14</sup>

Brentano, then, would like both the students attending his lectures on ‘Descriptive Psychology’ and the reader of his 1889 lecture to believe that Aristotle and the medieval Aristotelian Scholastics held a similar, if not an identical thesis to his own about the existence of an intentional

the fact that he adapts the meanings of two different concepts of ‘*intentio*’ that are found in Scholastic thought, one concerning the intentional act of the will and another concerning the abstracted form of sense (or intelligible *species*) residing intentionally in the soul of the knower. H. D. Simonin, who has carried out an extensive and meticulous examination of both of these concepts in the writings of St Thomas, demonstrates that St Thomas never confuses the two different meanings of the one and same term (‘un seul et même terme’) of *intentio*, when the latter is employed in either the cognitive or conative order. Cf. Simonin, ‘La Notion d’*intentio* dans l’oeuvre de S. Thomas d’Aquin’, *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 19 (1930), pp. 445–63, p. 451. Brentano, however, modifies the meaning of both of these Scholastic concepts in the elaboration of descriptive psychology. Furthermore, these concepts of ‘intentional act’ and ‘intentional object’ become conceptually correlative concepts in Brentano’s descriptive psychology, something which is impossible for St Thomas, but which is not only possible but actually the case in all of Husserl’s writings, for example.

<sup>13</sup> For Brentano, therefore, our consciousness cannot be (reducible to) a particular feeling (of happiness or unhappiness) or a mood but contains a structural unity of its own, that is to say, a ‘real unity’ of multiplicity, *PES*, p. 165. And because there is a ‘real’, ‘natural unity’ of ‘acts’ and ‘objects’ in consciousness, a descriptive science of these phenomena is possible. Thus Brentano’s account of the ‘unity of consciousness’ in *PES* Book II, Chapter IV ‘On the Unity of Consciousness’, pp. 155–76, is of pivotal significance to his project of a descriptive science of psychical phenomena in general. Thinkers as diverse as William James and Husserl, despite their different views from Brentano’s on this matter, agreed with Brentano that ‘this tenet [of the unity of consciousness] has been *misunderstood* by both its supporters and its opponents’ (*PES*, p. 163, my emphasis) in modern scientific psychology.

<sup>14</sup> Brentano, *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, p. 14, n.19. As a source reference for this reference (and for the Scholastics), Brentano cites Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, Book V, Chapter 15, 1021a 29, as in the ‘Editors’ Note’ in *DP* above. See n. 8 above, however.

relation or a directedness that resides in all of our acts of consciousness towards their objects.

The Scholastics, however, did not (and could not) hold the view that all of ‘our conscious acts’ or ‘everything psychological’—even if we grant Brentano his un-Aristotelian and post-Cartesian modern elision of the concept of ‘everything psychological’ with ‘our acts of consciousness’ or ‘the mental’—bear an intentional relation to their objects in the way Brentano suggests. The Scholastics did not regard acts of sensation, for example, as bearing any such intentional relation to their objects. Neither did they regard acts of cognition *per se* as intentional acts. Rather, the Scholastics, strictly speaking, regarded only those acts over which I have at least some degree of control in bringing about and which I execute with at least some degree of foresight as intentional acts, i.e., as acts that ‘consist in a relation that we bear to an object’. In this regard, the opposite of an intentional act for the Scholastics would be an act performed by an agent that had unintended outcomes, or an act that is related to an outcome which can have no relation at all to the agent’s actual intention, such as, for instance, an act of sensation experienced when hitting one’s shin in tripping over a stool, or an act of wishing (*velle*) ‘that the weather be good tomorrow’.<sup>15</sup> Part of the very meaning and

<sup>15</sup> This is Brentano’s own example, taken from 1907. The example in full reads: ‘But wanting, willing, and desiring do not thus abstract from circumstances; they involve preference that takes into account whatever I happen to be aware of at that particular moment. It should be noted that I can thus want or desire a particular thing without at all believing it to be something I can bring about myself. I can want that the weather be good tomorrow, but I have no *choice* in that matter.’ ‘Loving and Hating’ (Dictation, May 19, 1907), Appendix IX in *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, p. 151. Having *no* choice in that matter—i.e. in weather conditions—would suffice to rule out such wants as intentional acts of the will for St Thomas and the Medieval Scholastics. Cf. Simonin, ‘La Notion d’*intentio*’, p. 452. This example, taken *after 1905* when Brentano had relinquished his 1874 *PES* views on consciousness containing immanent, intentional objects, illustrates well, nevertheless, the difference between the way the Scholastics regarded intentional acts and the way Brentano, from a descriptive-psychological point of view, regards intentional acts of consciousness. Brentano, however, appears to be entirely oblivious of his own deviation from the Scholastic concept of the ‘intentional relation’ that is characteristic of the activity of human acts of the will, in his *actual use* and understanding of the concept of ‘the intentional’ in his 1889 lecture and 1907 note on ‘Loving and Hating’. This explains, somewhat, Edmund Runggaldier’s remarks, that ‘[I]t is well known that Brentano distanced himself in the course of time [by 1905] from the doctrine of intentional inexistence without, however, discarding the doctrine of intentionality [‘as directedness toward an object’]’ ‘On the Scholastic or Aristotelian Roots of “Intentionality” in Brentano’, *Topoi*, vol. 8, no.2 (1989), pp. 97–103, p. 98. This does not justify this commentator’s conclusion, however, that ‘[I]ntentionality in this



understanding of an intentional act for the Scholastics, then, is that the end in view (*intentio finis*) is executable by the agent.<sup>16</sup> The intended goal (*finis intentus*) is thus an integral part of the ‘intentional activity (*in-tentio*)’ itself.<sup>17</sup> In this context, to say that ‘I have an intention in mind’ simply means for St Thomas that ‘I intend to do something’, or indeed that ‘I intend to refrain from doing something’.<sup>18</sup> Whether we manage to reach our objectives, or are thwarted for whatever reason in reaching those objectives, the intention to do so, nevertheless, still exists.<sup>19</sup> The origin of the meaning of this concept of ‘*intentio*’ or ‘intentional activity’ for the Scholastics, therefore, does not so much come from the sound of the term itself ‘*in-tentio*’, as St Thomas says, ‘*Intentio, sicut ipsum nomen sonat,*

modern sense [qua ‘Brentano’s intentionality as directedness toward something other’] is also rooted in the classical Aristotelian and Thomistic works’ (p. 102), if this is taken, as it is by this author (similarly to Marras), as pointing to the Medieval-Aristotelian account of sense knowledge as knowledge of ‘physical’ or ‘corporeal’ (p. 102) things in the world, gained *via* abstraction by the powers of the active intellect, a theory that Brentano did hold in his 1866 *Psychology of Aristotle* but rejects in *PES*.

<sup>16</sup> ‘Le mot [*intentio* in Latin] lui-même signifie tendre vers un but: ‘in aliud tendere’ ... parmi les facultés de l’âme, le rôle moteur est assuré par la volonté; l’action de tender, *intentio*, est donc, en termes propres, le fait de la volonté’ (Simonin, ‘La Notion d’*intentio*’, p. 452). The term ‘*intentio*’ or ‘intention’ also occurs in Scholastic theory of cognition. Here, however, it has an entirely different meaning to the one that it enjoys in Scholastic theory of volition. Simonin’s conclusion about the main difference in the meaning of the same term, pending on whether it is being used in the conative or cognitive order in the writings of St Thomas, is, that ‘[C]omme acte d’une tendance, la notion s’applique d’abord et proprement aux seules puissances de l’appétit, elle désigne une impulsion motrice, un influx causal. Au contraire, dans l’ordre de la connaissance, la notion d’*intentio* perd complètement son sens moteur, elle convient à l’objet possédé par l’esprit dont elle désigne le mode d’être spécial’ (p. 461, my emphasis).

<sup>17</sup> Thus we find the following expressions among the Scholastics depicting this concept of intention in terms of: ‘*intentio finis, finis intentus, id quod agens intendit.*’ (Simonin, ‘La Notion d’*intentio*’ p. 447).

<sup>18</sup> This is not to say that both images and the power of imaging (*phantasia*) play a pivotal role in the planning of any action for Aristotle and the Aristotelians. Nevertheless, the crucial point in this Scholastic theory of the ‘*intentio* (intentional activity)’ of the will is that the immanent intention of any particular act of the will is fulfilled when the action is completed. It is only in the completion of the intended outcome of an action that the intention itself, therefore, is fully revealed for what it is, and so, it is only in the completion of the action that the intention as such can be properly inferred and knowable either by me or by others, however difficult that might be, and however difficult that might be capable of being proven or disproven in a court of law, as the audience of the Vienna Law Society attending Brentano’s 1889 lecture would have well known.

<sup>19</sup> This is an important concept that comes from the Scholastics, and it is the same concept of ‘intent’ that Brentano’s audience of his 1889 lecture would have heard, discussed and disputed in courts of law.

*significat in aliud tendere*;<sup>20</sup> though it does this *also*, as much as it comes directly from our experience and understanding of acts of the human will.<sup>21</sup>

It is of course true that the Scholastics did not deny the *analogical* predication of such '*intentio* (intentional activity)' to the activity of beings other than human e.g. the 'striving' of plants towards the light of the sun, the 'decision' of birds to migrate to sunnier climates in winter, or the 'building' of honeycombs and webs by bees and spiders respectively.<sup>22</sup> In all of these cases, such intentional activity (*intentio*) clearly touches upon the question of 'final causality' for the Scholastics, and indeed it is derived from it.<sup>23</sup> Spiders and bees, however, do not really make decisions to build webs or honeycombs. Nor does a plant consciously strive towards the heat emanating from the sun. Rather, these expressions must be

<sup>20</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 12, 1c., quoted by Marras, 'Scholastic Roots of Brentano's Conceptions of Intentionality', p. 135, n. 26. What Marras does not point out to the reader (and appears to be unaware of) is that St Thomas supplies this etymological elucidation of the term '*intentio*' in a question that is devoted to the human will, and not in an account of cognition as Marras intimates.

<sup>21</sup> In the discussion of 'Brentano's thesis', much has been made of where the Scholastic Latin term of '*intentio*' is derived. Many commentators draw attention to the Latin rendering of Al-Farabi and Avicenna's Arabic term *ma'na* ('a meaning', 'essential content', 'idea', 'concept', 'essence'), following Herbert Spiegelberg's remarks in his well-known 'Intention and Intentionality in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl', originally published in 1933/34 in German as 'Der Begriff der Intentionalität in der Scholastik, bei Brentano und bei Husserl', and revised without major changes in 1969, and translated into English in 1976 as 'Intention and Intentionality in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl' by Linda L. McAlister, in McAlister ed. *The Philosophy of Brentano*, pp. 108–27. Cf. P. Engelhardt 'Intention', *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, pp. 466–74; K. Hedwig's 'Intention: Outlines for a History of a Phenomenological Concept', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 39 (1979) pp. 326–40, esp. pp. 328–30; E. Runggaldier, 'On the Scholastic or Aristotelian Roots of 'Intentionality' in Brentano', *Topoi*, (1989), pp. 97–102, p. 100; R. Sorabji, 'From Aristotle to Brentano: The Development of the Concept of Intentionality', in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, ed. Julia Annas (1991), *Supplementary Volume: Aristotle and the Later Tradition*, ed. by H. Blumenthal and H. Robinson, pp. 227–259, pp. 236–37; P. Simons, 'Introduction to the Second Edition', *PES* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. xiii–xxii, p. xix; D. Moran, *An Introduction to Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 47; p. 482, n.80. All of these remarks, however, mainly concern the Latin translation of the notion of '*intentio*' when deployed in the cognitive order, and not the notion of '*intentio*' when deployed in the conative order.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Simonin, 'La Notion d'*intentio*' pp. 453–4

<sup>23</sup> This, however, must be understood in an *analogous* sense to the way the intentional activity of the human will expresses itself. Cf. Simonin, 'La Notion d'*intentio*' p. 454. Cf., also, Herbert Granger, 'Aristotle on the Analogy between Action and Nature', *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 43, no.1 (1993), pp. 168–76

interpreted in their proper context, that is to say, in the thoroughly teleological understanding of nature that characterises medieval-Scholastic thought in general, and living organisms in particular.<sup>24</sup> In other words, it is for the good (*bonum*) of the plant in its natural being (*esse naturale*) that it ‘strives’ both metaphysically and automatically (but ‘unknowingly’ and ‘unwillingly’) towards the sun in order to receive the warmth of its light. It is otherwise concerning what a human being may or may not be inclined to set out to achieve because not everything that that being consciously strives to realise for that being’s own good does realise that being’s own good (either morally or metaphysically). Human beings, as morally free beings, cannot be capable of acting morally *and* automatically for their own good all the time. Human beings, as a matter of fact, make mistakes in this department, but such mistakes cannot be put down to a fault in nature. Nevertheless, it is still the case for St Thomas that it is only in those acts of the will that are chosen and undertaken by a free rational being that ‘*intentio* (intentional activity)’ is regarded as intentional activity ‘*principaliter et proprie*’, for, it is only in those acts that the ‘*intentio*’ or intentional activity contain *within itself* its own causal efficacy, i.e., its self-directedness.<sup>25</sup> This is why St Thomas concludes that ‘*intentio*’ or intentional activity is *a property* of the *acts* of our will: ‘*intentio est proprie actus voluntatis*.’<sup>26</sup>

When the Scholastics employed the term ‘intentional’ to describe the ‘relation we bear to an object’, therefore, it depicts the particular kind of self-directedness that characterizes the immanent striving of the activity of the will of a doer of an action towards its objectives and the outcome of that action.<sup>27</sup> The Scholastics, however, did not regard *all* of

<sup>24</sup> Cf. James McEvoy, ‘*Finis est causa causarum*: le primat de la cause finale chez S. Thomas’, in *Finalité et intentionnalité: doctrine thomiste et perspectives modernes*, ed. J. Follon et J. McEvoy, Éditions de l’institut supérieur de philosophie (Bibliothèque philosophique de Louvain, no. 36), Paris/Leuven 1992, pp. 93–111. Cf., also, James McEvoy, ‘The Teleological Perspective Upon Nature’, in *Finalité et intentionnalité: doctrine thomiste et perspectives modernes*, pp. 1–8

<sup>25</sup> Simonin, ‘La Notion d’*intentio*’ p. 453

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 452

<sup>27</sup> Thus Brentano’s footnote reference in *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong* (p. 14, n. 19) to Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, Book V, Chapter 15, 1021a 29 as the place where his account of ‘intentional relation’ can be found is somewhat misleading because ‘intentional relation’, *in the way Brentano understands it*, is not discussed there at all—or, at most, *very differently* to Aristotle’s views. It is thus understandable why commentators, who take Brentano at his own word in the 1889 footnote, or previously in *PES* (p. 88), and even after his so-called crisis of immanence of 1905 and his development of a doctrine of ‘reism’, find it somewhat incomprehensible to square Brentano’s *descriptive-psychological* views on the intentionality of consciousness

our ‘acts of consciousness’ or *all* of our ‘psychological phenomena’, as Brentano calls them, as possessing this property. The Scholastics did not regard our acts of cognition, for example, as intentional acts *per se*, though they did emphasise the point that acts of cognition generally unfold on the basis of a co-operation between the will and the intellect of the individual knower to engage in such acts precisely because the will (*voluntas*) will be involved in anything a human being wants (*velle*) to do, and this includes wanting to know something. The Scholastics, however, did not deny the existence of involuntary acts of knowledge. We could end up knowing something that we either did not want to know or did not set out to know, after all. In Scholasticism, therefore, acts of cognition are not strictly comparable to intentional acts of the will. Rather, in Scholastic theory of knowledge, intelligibility is elicited from data presented by the knower through the exercise of the agent intellect. The outcome of this process results in a modification of the knower’s potential to become an actual knower of that-which-is-knowable. Before, during, and after this process, both knower and that which is potentially intelligible retain their specific natures and their respective ontological integrities. The immanent ‘striving’ or ‘impulse after’ achieving its own ends or goals (*tendere in aliud*) that is characteristic of the dynamic of the will, therefore, is *not found* in acts of the intellect. What is found in acts of the intellect instead, is the abstractive ability of its operations to discover (*in-venire*) the truth of its knowledge-claims about whatever it is that is under consideration, even if it turns out to be the case, on closer examination as St Augustine acutely noted, that both in the process of the discovery of that truth and in the discovery of the truth itself a certain amount of psychological happiness (*gaudium de veritate*) is also registered, as a matter of (lived) fact, in the soul of the human being.<sup>28</sup>

For the Scholastics, then, acts of cognition are not by nature intentional acts. Nor did the Scholastics regard acts of sensation as intentional acts either. Such acts occur without the will or the intelligence of a human being. When a human being touches ‘physical things’ in the ‘external world’, the potencies of the sensitive soul (*anima sensitiva*) of that living being are activated, resulting in acts of sensation for that individual being.<sup>29</sup> This encounter between ‘physical things in the external world’

with any Aristotelian realist account. Cf. Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, ‘The intentional relation’, pp. 47–52

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Joseph McBride, *Albert Camus* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1992), esp. Chapter 3, pp. 25–40

<sup>29</sup> Franz Brentano, *The Psychology of Aristotle, in Particular His Doctrine of the Active Intellect*, trans. by Ralph George (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California

and ‘the embodied sensitive soul of the human being’ demonstrates for Aristotle and the Aristotelians the corporeal nature of the sensitive soul (in the human being)—a view that Brentano defends with admirable clarity in his 1866 Habilitation thesis on *The Psychology of Aristotle, in Particular His Doctrine of the Active Intellect*. Furthermore, because acts of sense *knowledge* are founded upon actual acts of sensation of *physical things existing in the external world* this explains why the modern problematic of bridging the gap between consciousness and the external world does not arise for Aristotle or for the Aristotelians (or appear in Brentano’s 1866 study of Aristotle’s psychology).<sup>30</sup>

Brentano’s expressed view in the late 1880s and early 1890s that *all* of *our* psychical-act experiences—acts of sensation, cognition and volition etc.—bear an *immanent intentional relation* to their respective objects, therefore, deviates considerably from the way in which the Scholastics both used and confined the meaning of the term ‘intentional’ to designate the object-relatedness that is characteristic of acts of the will, and only acts of the will. In fact, Brentano’s expansion of the application of the term ‘intentional’ to include *all* psychical-act experiences that are discernible within human consciousness ‘led’, as John Passmore remarks, ‘to his being grouped with the followers of Schopenhauer as a “hormic” psychologist, for whom “objects” are purposes, or ends, and “acts” are the impulses which strive towards those ends’.<sup>31</sup> Brentano, however, clearly means no such thing; rather, Brentano’s view is quite a straightforward view, but it does require that we confine our attention to the way in which psychical-act experiences (in consciousness) present themselves as acts that are specifically directed towards their objects. In other words, Brentano presents his ‘thesis’ on the directedness of the acts of consciousness towards their immediate objects as a strictly intuitive item of knowledge that is discoverable about consciousness itself from

Press, 1977) p. 17; *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles, insbesondere seine Lehre vom nous poiëtikos*. (Mainz: Kirchheim, 1867)

<sup>30</sup> An act of sensation, therefore, is not *ipso facto* an act of sense knowledge for Aristotle and the Aristotelians, though the latter act is dependent on the existence and co-operation of the former. Nevertheless, the Scholastic-Aristotelian position, as succinctly summed by Brentano, is thus: ‘Whatever is in the intellect is also in sense, though the relation [between acts of sensation and acts of knowledge and their respective objects] *is not the same in the two cases*’ (*The Psychology of Aristotle*, p. 88, my emphasis). Brentano deviates completely for this view in his 1874 *PES* and in his lectures on *DP*.

<sup>31</sup> John Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1957; Penguin Books, 1968; 1980), p. 178

within reflection upon the nature of conscious acts themselves.<sup>32</sup> In this

<sup>32</sup> This is what Brentano really means by ‘inner perception’ i.e. inner reflection. Depending on the context, however, ‘inner perception’ can mean at least one of four things for Brentano, namely: (1) ‘incidental awareness’ (*Bewusstsein nebenbei*), i.e. the awareness of being aware which forms an integral part of a conscious act. This facet of a conscious act is ‘an accessory feature included in the act itself’ *PES*, p. 141. Brentano retrieved this doctrine entirely from Aristotle. Cf. Brentano’s direct quotation of Aristotle’s, *Metaphysics*, Book XII, 9: ‘Knowledge, sensation, opinion and reflection seem always to relate to something else, but only incidentally to themselves’ *PES*, p. 132. This doctrine is central to Brentano’s understanding of the ‘unity of consciousness’ *PES*, ch. IV, a point re-iterated by him in his lectures on *DP*: ‘The fact which was already asserted by Aristotle ... that there is no consciousness without any intentional relation at all is as certain as the fact that, apart from the object upon which it is primarily directed, consciousness has, on the side (*nebenher*, incidentally), itself as an object’ *DP*, p. 26. This incidental awareness is ‘part of the nature of every psychical act’ (*ibid.*). Incidental awareness, however, is not a self-sufficient act but parasitic on a conscious act. Cf., De Boer, *The Development of Husserl’s Thought*, p. 36. Husserl acknowledges both the importance and the validity of this doctrine but because ‘incidental awareness’ is not an attentive act it can play no *methodological* role in the elaboration of *the scientific description of acts and their objects* in descriptive psychology (this has confused those commentators who think it does). Incidental awareness, therefore, does not feature in Husserl’s elaboration of his mentor’s idea of a new science of descriptive psychology. Cf., Husserl, ‘Appendix: External and Internal Perception: Physical and Psychological Phenomena’, *Logical Investigations*, ed. D. Moran (London/New York: Routledge, 2001) pp. 852–69. Inner perception can mean for Brentano (2) the Lockean hypothesis of an inner accompanying act of perception supervening on all conscious acts, hence, all psychical-act experiences are automatically being perceived, and so, accordingly called ‘phenomena’. Thus, for Brentano, there is no such thing as an unconscious perception or any other kind of unconscious psychical-act experience as it actually occurs. *PES*, pp. 102–3. Husserl rejects this doctrine, finding no evidence of an inner additional perceptual act of consciousness supervening on one’s actual experience but admits that all psychical-act experiences are in principle ‘*ready to be perceived*’ if they become objects of inner reflection (see (4) below). Inner perception can also mean for Brentano (3) the perception of the existence of a currently lived psychical-act experience (and its intentional object, if it exists): ‘In the case of cognition through inner perception, what we perceive is that a psychical act exists’ *PES*, p. 141. This is a doctrine which Husserl develops as ‘immanent perception’ in *Ideas*, which is apodictic, albeit limited strictly to the present, and it plays a pivotal role in his transcendental reduction. Finally, inner perception means most importantly for Brentano, from a methodological point of view, (4) the natural ability of consciousness to reflect upon its own content *PES*, p. 30; pp. 276–7. This designates both a philosophical stance and a methodological approach to the study of consciousness that Brentano takes from Descartes, Locke, and Hume, and one that Husserl follows *methodologically* (and approvingly) in his entire path of thinking about consciousness, cf., *Ideas*, § 77 ‘The Phenomenological Study of Reflections on Mental Processes’ (*Erlebnisreflexionen*). Even if Brentano confusedly uses the term ‘inner perception’ to denote all of the above four different things, this does not excuse commentators confusing the different meanings of that term as

regard, Brentano has clearly aligned his thinking *methodologically* to the tradition of modern ‘psycho-analytic’ inquiry instigated by Descartes, and advanced by Locke and Hume, where knowledge of consciousness is to be wrought from within immediate reflection on consciousness itself. In doing this, Brentano has also, and unequivocally, relinquished his previously held Aristotelian approach to psychology. Instead, we now hear Brentano both insisting and (re)assuring his audience of his 1889 lecture that: ‘Inner perception tells me that I am now having such-and-such sound or colour sensations, or that I am now thinking or willing this or that.’<sup>33</sup> In fact, Brentano had already adopted this ‘modern conception’ of psychology some fifteen years earlier, in his 1874 publication of *PES*, for, in response to Hume—but not against Hume—Brentano had already conceded that in matters of psychological inquiry ‘[W]hether or not there are souls, the fact is there are psychical [mental] phenomena’ (*PES*, p. 18).

The starting point for Brentano’s new science of descriptive psychology, therefore, is the particular experiencing of consciousness of a ‘mentally active subject’, where the approach to the study of that consciousness has been *philosophically pre-determined* in line with the tradition of modern psychological inquiry proposed by Descartes, Locke and Hume. The facticity of one’s own actual consciousness and *its* contents, i.e., ‘immediate experiential facts’ (*Erfahrungstatsachen*) (*DP*, p. 139), now becomes for Brentano that behind which we cannot step, methodologically speaking, as far as Brentano’s new science of descriptive

employed by Brentano, though it certainly does make it more difficult for commentators to know which meaning or meanings of the term Brentano is actually using in a particular context. Once the various meanings of this term are acknowledged, however, Brentano’s concept of ‘inner perception’ is not as incoherent, incomprehensible, or esoteric as critics sometimes portray it.

<sup>33</sup> Brentano, *On the Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, pp. 19–20. In *PES*, Brentano had already adopted this ‘modern definition’ (*PES*, p. 18) of ‘psychology as a science’, maintaining that ‘Psychology, like all natural sciences, has its basis in perception (*Wahrnehmung*) and experience (*Erfahrung*). Above all, however, its source is to be found in the *inner perception* of our own psychical phenomena (*der eigenen psychischen Phänomene*). We would never know what a thought is, or a judgement, pleasure or pain, desires or aversions, hopes or fears, courage or despair, decisions and voluntary intentions if we did not learn what they are through inner perception of our own phenomena. Note, ... we said that *inner perception* (*innere Wahrnehmung*) and not introspection, i.e. inner *observation* (*innere Beobachtung*), constitutes this primary (*erste*) and indispensable source (*unentbehrliche Quelle*) of psychology.’ *PES*, Book I, Psychology as a Science, Chapter 2 ‘Psychological Method with Special Reference to its Experiential Basis’ (‘Über die Methode der Psychologie, insbesondere die Erfahrung, welche für sie die Grundlage bildet’), § 2., p. 29; pp. 40–1, trans. modified.

psychology is concerned.<sup>34</sup> This means that for the descriptive psychologist (or ‘psychognost’)<sup>35</sup> the intentionality of consciousness is an item of knowledge that is only visible and verifiable from within the methodological parameters of inner reflection on the nature of conscious acts themselves. In other words, ‘descriptive psychology’, unlike its component discipline which Brentano calls ‘genetic psychology’ (and which corresponds to the natural-scientific manner of investigation in empirical psychology), seeks direct, non-hypothetical, intuitively demonstrable knowledge-claims about our consciousness as such.<sup>36</sup>

‘Another important difference’ that Brentano notes between the kind of knowledge-claims that are sought in ‘descriptive psychology’ in comparison to the kind generated in ‘genetic psychology’ is that

<sup>34</sup> That *this basis* becomes *dispensable* in Husserl’s elaboration of the intuition of essences in the *Logical Investigations* (1900–01), therefore, was incomprehensible to Brentano. See, however, Bartok, Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis, p. 442.

<sup>35</sup> Brentano coined the term ‘*Psychognosie*’ for the descriptive part of the science of empirical psychology and the term ‘psychognost’ for the descriptive psychologist. He borrowed the idea of dividing the science of empirical psychology into two component parts, a descriptive and a genetic part, from a model that occurred in other natural sciences. ‘In the same way as orognosy and geognosy precede geology in the field of mineralogy, and anatomy generally precedes physiology in the more closely related field of the human organism, psychognosy [descriptive psychology] ... must be positioned prior to genetic psychology’ *DP*, p. 8. The main aim of the descriptive science is to describe clearly what the genetic, natural-scientific part would later attempt to explain causally using the method of observation, hypotheses and experimental technique. Cf. Brentano’s letter to Oskar Kraus in 1894, published in the Appendix of *PES*, pp. 369–70. How descriptive-psychological truths that are by nature non-hypothetical, intuitively demonstrable and *a priori* knowledge-claims about consciousness itself are exactly related to or complemented by natural-scientific knowledge-claims that are hypothetically demonstrable, empirically verifiable and truths that are probably true of the physical world about us, including ourselves as hypothesized ‘things’ in and of that world, does not feature as problematic in Brentano’s thought. This problematic relation between philosophy as descriptive psychology and the natural sciences, however, did occupy Husserl’s attention greatly in the development of his thought. Cf. De Boer, *The Development of Husserl’s Thought*.

<sup>36</sup> In *PES* Brentano believed that just as physics had established itself as ‘the science of pure physical phenomena’, so too psychology could become the natural science of ‘psychical phenomena in general’ (pp. 98–100). It is only after *PES* that Brentano realised the autonomous nature of the ‘descriptive part’ of psychology, independently of all natural-scientific manner of inquiry [= ‘metaphysical hypotheses’, *PES*, p. 64], as he had elaborated it. Herbert Spiegelberg concludes that because Brentano’s *very idea* of descriptive psychology entails ‘a peculiar intuitive examination of the phenomena [of consciousness], *right from its inception* it ‘establishes itself as an autonomous enterprise, if not as a separate one’ from all other established natural sciences, such as, for instance, ‘psychophysics and physiological psychology’. *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1994), p. 35



descriptive psychology ‘is an exact science, and that in contrast, genetic psychology, in all its determinations, in an inexact one’ (*DP*, p. 4–5). By an exact science, Brentano means those ‘sciences which can formulate their doctrines sharply and precisely’, such as, for instance, ‘a mathematician doesn’t say: the sum of the angles of a triangle is often, or usually, equal to two right angles. But he says that this is always and without exception the case’ (*DP*, p. 5). Descriptive psychology seeks this latter kind of precision and accuracy in its knowledge-claims. By comparison, all natural-scientific investigations, including genetic psychology, seek knowledge-claims that are true for the most part but not necessarily true, and so, the ‘stimulation of a retinal part [of the eye] by a light-ray of a certain frequency [which] induces the phenomenon of blue’ does ‘not always’ induce the phenomenon of blue ‘as it is not true in case of (a) colour-blindness, (b) interruption of the conductor, severance of the nerve, (c) losing in competition (*Besiegtwerden im Wettstreit*), (d) replacement by a hallucination’ (*DP*, pp. 6–7).

Brentano’s division of the sciences into exact and inexact sciences reflects, by and large, the epistemological division that famously occurs in ‘Hume’s fork’ concerning knowledge-claims pertaining to ‘matters of fact’ and ‘relation of ideas’, and before Hume, to Leibniz’s distinction between ‘truths of fact’ and ‘truths of reason’.<sup>37</sup> Descriptive psychology, nevertheless, seeks ‘*vérités de raison*’, that is to say, items of knowledge that are eternally true. Descriptive psychology, therefore, does not seek empirical generalisations the truth of which could always be otherwise. In this respect, it is worthwhile to mention in passing that Brentano *never* employed the method of the natural sciences in his actual (descriptive-psychological) philosophizing and *never* proposed the method of the natural sciences for his new science of descriptive psychology.<sup>38</sup> Nor did Brentano engage in any historical-hermeneutic analysis of the meaning of our lived experiences (*Erlebnisse*) in the radical and comprehensive manner advocated by Dilthey, in what Dilthey *also termed* around this time ‘descriptive psychology’.<sup>39</sup> In contrast to this, Brentano employed a more

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Oskar Kraus, ‘Introduction to the 1924 Edition [of *PES*]’ ‘Appendix’ to *PES*, pp. 396–408, p. 370

<sup>38</sup> One of the theses that Brentano publicly defended in his *disputationes* at Würzburg University in 1866, and that commentators remark, was the well-known thesis: ‘The true method of philosophy is none other than that of the natural sciences.’ Descriptive psychology clearly employs no such method, however. Cf. de Boer, ‘The Descriptive Method of Franz Brentano: Its Two Functions and Their Significance for Phenomenology’, p. 106

<sup>39</sup> Identity in terms, however, is not equivalent to identity in concepts. Dilthey develops an entirely different concept of ‘Descriptive Psychology’ to that advanced by

mathematical model of reasoning in his descriptive method because the task for the descriptive psychologist is to pick out those essential features that are intuitively demonstrable in all psychical-act experiences and *their* immanent objects that *cannot*, in an *a priori* manner of speaking, be known *to be* otherwise. According to Brentano, the object-relatedness of all conscious acts, the ‘intentionality of consciousness’, is just one such discernible structure that is evidently true of the nature of psychical-act experiences themselves. Like all descriptive-psychological items of knowledge, this item of knowledge, the object-relatedness of all psychical-act experiences, expresses for Brentano, then, a ‘*truth of reason*’, and so it is grasped ‘at one stroke and without induction.’<sup>40</sup>

Because all psychical-act experiences that occur within consciousness bear an intuitively demonstrable structural relation (a directedness) to their objects, Brentano believes that he is justified in borrowing the term ‘intentional’ from the Scholastic theory of the object-relatedness of acts of the will to depict the ‘relation we bear [in consciousness] to an object’—though *Brentano thinks* he is borrowing the term ‘intentional’ from an aspect connected to the object-relatedness of acts of cognition which he claims to have found in Scholastic epistemology, and which we will discuss in the following section—as a way of describing the activity of consciousness itself. This is why Brentano is not deviating in any significant sense either from *the meaning* or from *his use* of this *well-known* Scholastic term ‘intentional relation’ to describe the directedness of *psychical-act* experiences towards their objects, or the referential characteristic, or the ‘aboutness’ of consciousness, as it is sometimes called today. What *this* tenet of the *intentional* relation (*intentionale Beziehung*) of the acts consciousness to their objects amounts to philosophically, in terms of either realism or idealism, *still* figures, however, in the dispute about both the proper interpretation and the correct evaluation of ‘Brentano’s thesis’. For the remainder of this section, how Brentano understands this ‘thesis’ will be our only concern.

Brentano (and Husserl). Cf. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Descriptive Psychology and Historical Understanding*, trans. by Richard M. Zaner & Kenneth L. Heiges, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977); containing ‘Ideas Concerning a Descriptive Psychology and Analytic Psychology (1894)’, originally ‘Ideen über eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie’, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band V. (Leipzig und Bern: Teubner, 1924), pp. 139–240. See also ‘The Understanding of Other Persons and their Expressions of Life (ca. 1910)’, ‘Das Verstehen anderer Personen und ihrer Lebensäußerungen’, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band VII (Leipzig und Berlin: Teubner, 1927), pp. 205–27.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. O. Kraus, ‘Introduction to the 1924 Edition [of *PES*]’, in ‘Appendix’ to *PES*, pp. 396–408, p. 370

The first and perhaps the most obvious point about Brentano's revaluation of the scholastic concept of the object-relatedness of intentional acts of the will to depict the object-relatedness of all conscious acts is that this is a thesis about consciousness itself. This is why the arrow of the intentionality of consciousness, as Brentano understands it in his 1889 lecture and in *DP*, does not extend *outside* of consciousness but remains within consciousness (and its activity).<sup>41</sup> In other words, for Brentano, access to consciousness, as it was for Descartes, Locke and Hume before him, is 'peculiarly direct and certain as compared with our knowledge of anything else'.<sup>42</sup> If this is a correct understanding of the way Brentano understands his own 'thesis', how can we understand Brentano remarks in his 1889 lecture that the intentional relation of consciousness to its object 'is a relation to something which may not be actual (*wirklich*)<sup>43</sup> but which is presented as an object'? This claim assumes that consciousness is directed towards objects that, at least some of the time, are actual. And if we take such actual objects to be real objects existing outside of consciousness as such, then is not a realist 'development' of Brentano's thesis, at least in principle, possible, if not entirely justifiable?<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, if this thesis is maintaining that it does not matter whether the actual object of consciousness is a real object existing outside of intentional consciousness or a merely mental object knowingly

<sup>41</sup> Moran notes that 'G.E.M. Anscombe, "The Intentionality of Sensation: A Grammatical Feature", in R. J. Butler, ed., *Analytical Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), p. 160, traces the medieval meaning of *intentio* to *intendere arcum in*, 'to aim an arrow at' ("The Inaugural Address: Brentano's Thesis", p. 5, n. 9). The activity of aiming an arrow towards some object—which it might always miss, of course, only to hit something else unintentionally—however, does not convey the intrinsic and immanent self-directedness of the object-relatedness that is characteristic of the activity of the will towards *its* objects that seems to underpin Brentano's revaluation and understanding of the Scholastic concept of '*intentio*' in his descriptive-psychological investigations into the nature of the acts of presentation upon which consciousness is founded. The metaphor of the 'arrow', however, is used quite a lot by commentators both in the discussions and in the evaluations of 'Brentano's thesis'.

<sup>42</sup> Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 178. Cf., also, *PES*, p. 91

<sup>43</sup> From now on, when I use the word 'actual', it is as a translation of the German adjective *wirklich(es/en)*, as used by Brentano. This in order to avoid the awkwardness caused by trying to represent the grammatical agreement found in the German language in an English language article, where such grammatical agreement is simply not a feature of the language.

<sup>44</sup> This, in effect, is what Kazimierz Twardowski proposes in his *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen. Eine psychologische Untersuchung* (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1894). Translated into English as Kasimir Twardowski, *On the Content and Object of Presentations. A Psychological Investigation*, trans. Reinhardt Grossman (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977).

intended by the intentional act itself, then is not a so-called ‘philosophically neutral’ defence with regard to either realism or idealism of Brentano’s thesis, at least in principle, possible, if not also entirely justifiable? This issue concerning what the actual objects of intentional consciousness are has generated much dispute, and it has given rise to ‘realist’, ‘idealist’, and so-called ‘neutral’ interpretations of ‘Brentano’s thesis of intentionality’, interpretations that were to haunt Husserl’s development of that thesis likewise.<sup>45</sup> Setting all such interpretations of ‘Brentano’s thesis’ aside for the moment, we know, however, what *Brentano* is *not saying* in his thesis. He is not saying that that which consciousness is a consciousness of is a ‘real object’ existing as it actually does outside of consciousness and independently of any connection to our actual consciousness.<sup>46</sup> ‘Inner perception tells me that I am now

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Moran, *An Introduction to Phenomenology*, ‘Realism and Idealism in the *Logical Investigations*’, pp. 121–3

<sup>46</sup> According to one recent commentator: ‘Brentano held a model of the intentional relation, which may be illustrated as follows: psychic act – intentionally relates to – immanent objectivity (may or may not be real thing).’ (Moran, *An Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 57). Unless the ‘real thing’ is a ‘psychical-act experience’, this model would misconstrue Brentano’s view, however. From about 1874 to 1905, Brentano did believe that ‘real things’ existed outside of consciousness but such things are precisely not the directly intended objects of consciousness, and so, outside of the domain of descriptive psychology. Rather, they belong to the field of the natural sciences. ‘We have seen what kind of knowledge the natural scientist is able to attain. The phenomena of light, sound, heat ... are not things which really and truly exist. They are signs of something real [which the natural scientist studies], which, through its causal activity, produces presentations of them, of phenomenal colours, sounds etc. in our experiences. We can say that there exists something which, under certain conditions, causes this or that sensation. ... But this is as far as we can go. We have no [direct] experience of that which truly exists, in and of itself [= outside of actual experience and hypothetically explained objects of natural science]’ *PES*, p. 19. Thus the natural scientist begins with phenomena (e.g. colours, sounds, etc.) in order to show how they really and truly exist (as light rays, sine waves, etc.). *Twardowski*, however, as Moran notes, believes that the real objects of outer sense perception are real things in the world, and that these objects are *also* directly intended in addition to the intentional object (content) possessed by the mind (cf., *ibid.*, pp. 56–7). Hence the plural ‘presentations (*Vorstellungen*)’ in the title of his 1894 book *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*. Brentano, however, does not subscribe to two directly intended objects. Husserl, also, was sharply critical of *Twardowski* on this duplication of intentions, and maintained *Brentano’s line* that only one intended object of any given psychical-act experience is intended, notwithstanding the many ways in which the act intends it. For Brentano, then, as *Rollinger* notes, ‘[W]hen we see colours and hear sounds, we accept the objects in question as belonging to the external world, but Brentano follows the line of modern philosophy which will not allow for this acceptance as evident or even true [because natural science has demonstrated it as patently misleading, as a matter of fact, in Brentano’s eyes]. This is not to say,

having such-and-such sound or colour sensations, or that I am now thinking or willing this or that.<sup>47</sup> This, however, still does not tell us what the *actual* objects of intentional consciousness are to which Brentano's thesis clearly refers. To understand Brentano's remarks here in his 1889 lecture, it is necessary to digress somewhat, and to follow de Boer's advice in noting three things that Brentano distinguishes in *PES*, namely: (1) the psychical, (2) the physical phenomenon, and (3) the physical object of natural science.<sup>48</sup>

In *PES*, the immediate objects of outer sense perception, what Brentano calls 'physical phenomena', are sensorially perceivable qualities e.g. a sound I hear, a colour I see, an odour I smell etc. (*PES*, pp. 79–80; p. 100; pp. 175–176). From a descriptive-psychological point of view on actual consciousness, a sound is part of the act of hearing but the sound does not have—or, at least cannot be directly known to have—any actual existence independently of the act of hearing. Similarly, a colour is part of the act of seeing but the colour as such does not have any actual existence independently of the act of seeing, and so forth for all such physical phenomena. This is why 'similar images which appear in the imagination' are no less 'physical phenomena' in the way Brentano understands this term (*PES*, *ibid.*).<sup>49</sup> Independently of the act of hearing and the act of seeing, however, Brentano believes that these 'physical phenomena' (sounds and colours) do have 'real and actual existence' but not as real colours and real sounds; rather, they exist as light rays (or light particles) and 'vibrations of ether' (sine waves) i.e. as the theoretically constructed object of physics, *which are precisely not the directly experienced objects of outer perceptual-sense experience as such*. Brentano, alas, calls these theoretically constructed objects of natural science 'physical phenomena' too (*PES*, p. 99)<sup>50</sup>—and this ambiguity of two completely different meanings for the

however, that Brentano denies the existence of the external world. As it turns out, he regards it as a legitimate [metaphysical] hypothesis in natural science. The vibrations of air [*viz.* Brentano's natural scientific explanation] and the waves of light that exist quasi-spatially and quasi-temporally, however, *are not the [phenomenal] sounds and colours which appear in time and space.*' (Brentano and Husserl, p. 260, my emphasis).

<sup>47</sup> Brentano, *On the Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, pp. 19–20

<sup>48</sup> Cf. de Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*.

<sup>49</sup> 'It is true that in dreams we have presentations of colours and sounds and various other forms, that we are afraid, get angry, feel pleased and experience other emotions. But that which these mental activities refer to as their content and which really does not appear to be external is, in actuality, no more outside of us than in us. It is mere appearance, just as the physical phenomena which appear to us in waking life really correspond to no reality although people often assume the opposite'. *PES*, pp. 175–6

<sup>50</sup> 'I believe that I will not be mistaken if I assume that the definition of natural science as the science of physical phenomena is frequently connected with the concept of

one term has led to confusion for commentators. It is of importance to distinguish the two meanings of ‘physical phenomena’ that Brentano subscribes to in *PES*, nevertheless. Colours, sounds, and so forth—physical phenomena in sense<sup>(1)</sup>—when considered from a strictly descriptive-psychological point of view enjoy phenomenal existence, that is to say, they exist as part of actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience, they exist as the objects of those experiences, but they exist only as long as the experience occurs. On the other hand, light-rays, sine-waves and so forth—physical phenomena in sense<sup>(2)</sup>—when considered from a natural-scientific-theoretical point of view enjoy actual existence, whether we are made aware of their actual existence as such through natural-scientific means, or not. The latter, however, are not the actual objects of outer perceptual-sense experience for Brentano. So, what are the actual objects that he claims intentional consciousness is a consciousness of?

Focusing on the ability of consciousness to reflect upon itself and to have itself as a ‘content of reflection’ (to borrow a phrase from Husserl) Brentano believes that in such reflection, psychical-act experiences are perceived exactly as they are in themselves. That is to say, these psychical-act experiences have actual existence. And because such psychical-act experiences are *perceived as such* (in inner reflection) they have phenomenal existence as well.<sup>51</sup> It is in comparison to these psychical-act experiences that have *both* actual *and* phenomenal existence that ‘physical phenomena’ (in sense<sup>(1)</sup>, e.g., colours, sounds) are declared by Brentano to be objects that have ‘*purely*’ or ‘*only* phenomenal existence’ (*PES*, p. 100, my emphasis) and *merely* mind-dependent existence. Since the objects of outer perceptual-sense experience do not enjoy actual existence independently of the actual psychical-act experience that presents them but, nonetheless, are evidently identifiable as the objects of those actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience, and since psychical-act

forces belonging to a world which is similar to the one extended in space and flowing in time; forces which, through their influence on the sense organs, arouse sensation and mutually influence each other in their action, and of which natural science investigates the laws of co-existence and succession. If those objects are considered as the objects of natural sciences, there is also the advantage [over ‘physical phenomena’ considered as sensorial objects of actual acts of outer sense perception, as is evident from the context] that this science appears to have as its object something that really and truly exists’. *PES*, pp. 99–100

<sup>51</sup> ‘In the strict sense of the term [*Wahrnehmung*], they [*psychical phenomena*] alone are perceived. On this basis we proceeded to define them as the only phenomena [in comparison to physical phenomena] which possess *actual existence* in addition to intentional [mental] existence’ *PES*, p. 97–8, author’s emphasis.

experiences themselves, in their actuality, are evidently perceived (perceivable, for Husserl) in inner perception, it now follows for Brentano that the intentional relation *within consciousness* ‘is a relation to something which may not be actual but which is presented as an object’.<sup>52</sup> The relation between inner perception and ‘its objects’, whether the latter are actual psychological-act experiences (psychical phenomena) or the immediate (merely phenomenal) objects of outer perceptual-sense experience (physical phenomena, colours, sounds etc), therefore, is *entirely* intra-psychical.<sup>53</sup> ‘Inner perception’, as Brentano stresses, ‘tells me [from a descriptive-psychological point of view] that I am now having such-and-such sound or colour sensations, or that I am now thinking or willing this or that’—no more, no less.

Such a view of intentionality in ‘Brentano’s thesis’, then, clearly does not mark any realist-epistemological ‘turn towards the object’, of Scholastic ancestry or of any other kind. Nor is it underpinned by any voluntarist account of the human mind. Neither does it depict the ability of consciousness to bestow meaning on its intended object, such as the theory of sense-giving (*Sinngebung*) elaborated by Husserl in his theory of constitution. Nor does it depict any ‘intentional stance’ I adopt towards the world, as developed by Dennett. Rather, it is a descriptive-psychological thesis about the nature of the acts themselves. That is to say, for Brentano, the object-relatedness or directedness towards objects in consciousness—the ‘intentional relation’ in consciousness between its

<sup>52</sup> From a strict descriptive-psychological point of view, then, the only things that really and truly exist as they are and as they are perceived in consciousness are one’s own actual psychological-act experiences, all of them intentionally related to their objects. ‘[The] correlates [of the intentional relation] display the peculiarity that the one alone is real, [whereas] the other is not something real (*nichts Reales*). A person who is being thought (*ein gedachter Mensch*) is as little something real as a person who has ceased to be.’ *DP*, p. 24. Commenting on this passage, Bartok thinks that this is an ‘intrusion of ... metaphysical theorizing [on Brentano’s part] into the middle of a descriptive psychological analysis’, even though Bartok admits that these are ‘metaphysical issues raised by his descriptive psychological studies’ ‘Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis’ p. 452, n.48, my emphasis.

<sup>53</sup> For one commentator, ‘Brentano’s reliance on the additional consciousness account ... concerning the unity of the act and the nature of its object’, which commits Brentano to the view that ‘[B]eing an object of an act is not exhausted by being physical or even sensory, since we can have a mental act as an object’, renders ‘Brentano’s very notion of physical and psychological phenomena ... largely incoherent’, and so, ‘(T)he whole account [of the distinction between physical and psychological phenomena] seems shot through with confusion’ Moran, ‘The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis’, pp. 21–2. David Bell expresses similar views in *Husserl* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 9. Cf. Bartok’s remarks on this, however, in his ‘Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis’, p. 450. See, also, n. 31 above.

acts and *its* objects or *its* contents—is an intrinsic feature of consciousness *itself*; no more, no less. What such intentionality really depicts for Brentano, in truth, is the passive possession by consciousness of its objects or its contents.<sup>54</sup>

The particular ‘revaluation’ (*Umwertung*) of the scholastic concept of intentionality that Brentano makes—and one that Husserl stresses in his own work—concerns Brentano’s adaptation of the scholastic theory of the object-relatedness of *acts* of the will into a basic descriptive-psychological *a priori* tenet regarding the object-relatedness of *all* psychical-act experiences (*Erlebnisse*) that are characteristic of human consciousness.<sup>55</sup> This revaluation of the concept by Brentano, however, is clearly made *from within* Brentano’s adherence to the modern principle of immanence as defined and defended by Descartes, where the separation of a lucid mind and an opaque body in human subjectivity is metaphysically assumed, and where the mind is acknowledged as the first and primary reality for philosophical investigation.<sup>56</sup> This is one place

<sup>54</sup> Bartok appears to think that this very fact seems to safeguard both ‘a route’ and ‘a fairer reading’, ‘Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis’, p. 439—and possibly a plausible philosophical defence—of ‘Brentano’s thesis of intentionality’, as it would be not weighted down with either an excessively analytic or an excessively phenomenological concern; rather, as Bartok argues, ‘[F]rom the point of view of the ostensibly descriptive investigations that Brentano carries out in *PES* and *DP* such metaphysical issues simply do not arise. That is, as long as one remains at the level of analyzing description of what is revealed in inner perception, questions about the relationship between entities or ontological categories discovered therein either to the “external” or non-phenomenal world, or to the metaphysical framework within which the descriptive study itself operates, cannot even be posed’ (p. 453). That there is a *dualistic* metaphysical assumption of a radical separation of a lucid mind and an opaque body in human subjectivity ‘within which the descriptive study itself operates’ is at least *implicitly acknowledged* by Bartok (p. 444), though these implications are not drawn out in his paper. Such a metaphysical assumption is sufficient for Heidegger in the 1920s, as well as other critics at the time, to maintain that the problem with Brentano’s and Husserl’s concept of the intentionality of consciousness is not intentionality as such but the metaphysical presuppositions underpinning both Brentano’s and Husserl’s *modern-Cartesian-theoretical* understanding of human subjectivity.

<sup>55</sup> Whether it was really Brentano or his pupils (Höfler, Meinong, Husserl, Twardowski) that are to be credited with this new concept, however, is a matter of dispute among commentators. See below n. 61

<sup>56</sup> According to Hedwig, ‘In contrast to Brentano, who usually refers to a historical context [of late Medieval Scholasticism, as is evident from the context], Husserl considers the conception of ‘mental’ or ‘intentional inexistence’ as an issue the potential adequacy of which must be tested by the description of the actual experience itself. This lack of historical references implies a first break with the philosophical tradition. At the same time, however, the specific ontological presuppositions according to which the intention is conceived as a kind of immanent-object-quality of



where a radical critique of this ‘thesis’ that Brentano elaborates could begin.<sup>57</sup> What this critique would call into question is not its ‘scientific’ or ‘Scholastic-Aristotelian’ credentials but the dualistic metaphysical presuppositions underpinning Brentano’s Cartesian-Kantian view of human subjectivity in which human intentional consciousness as such is thematized in the elaboration of his new science of descriptive psychology.<sup>58</sup>

*Brentano’s Modification of the Scholastic Concept of Intentional Object into a Root-Concept of Descriptive Psychology*

When Brentano first re-introduced the Scholastic terminology of intentionality in his 1874 publication of *PES*, he did not use the term ‘intentional’ as an adverb modifying the activity of the *relation* of the acts of consciousness to its objects, however; rather, he employed the term ‘intentional’ as an adjective qualifying the *object* in consciousness. In what is probably one of the most quoted passages from *PES*, Brentano famously remarks:

Every psychical phenomenon is characterised by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content,

consciousness are accepted without further qualifications. ‘Intention: Outlines for the History of a Phenomenological Concept’, p. 334. Here Husserl, however, is following completely Brentano’s descriptive-psychological approach, with presuppositions in place, and claims that whatever corrections he has to make to Brentano’s ideas (of intentional act and intentional object) he does so precisely by following *Brentano’s* descriptive-psychological *methodological demands*. See Husserl’s ‘criticisms of the illuminating views of Brentano’ in his ‘Appendix: External and Internal Perception: Physical and Psychical Phenomena’, in (1913 edition) of *Logical Investigations*, pp. 852–69, p. 858. Cf., also, Th. de Boer, ‘The Meaning of Husserl’s Idealism in the Light of his Development’, tr. by H. Pietersma, *Analecta Husserliana*, 2 (1972), pp. 322–32

<sup>57</sup> Such as has been undertaken in the work of Paul Ricoeur and Emmanuel Lévinas, for instance.

<sup>58</sup> Hence Heidegger’s condensed but correct assessment of Brentano and Husserl’s thematization of the intentionality of consciousness in his 1925 lectures delivered at Marburg University, that ‘it is not intentionality as such that is metaphysically dogmatic but what is built under its structure.’ Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. by Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 46–7. Whether Heidegger’s thematizing of human existence in ‘*Dasein*’ (in the way he understands that term) and which in Heidegger’s opinion grounds ‘the intentionality of “consciousness”’ contains in its very conceptualisation metaphysically dogmatic and phenomenologically unjustifiable assumptions is, of course, another thing, but one that will not be entertained here. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Macquarrie & Robinson, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967) p. 298, n. xxiii

direction towards an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every psychical phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love [something is] loved, in hate [something is] hated, in desire [something is] desired and so on (*PES*, p. 88).

This 1874 passage has evoked an immense amount of discussion and disagreement among commentators and critics concerning what exactly Brentano is saying, what he is not saying, what he means to say, what he does not mean to say, what is meant in the passage, and what is not meant in the passage.<sup>59</sup> Without endeavouring to unravel such controversy, and turning to the 1874 passage itself, Brentano defines psychical-act experiences, employing no less than ‘five typifying expressions’.<sup>60</sup> Every psychical phenomenon is characterised by (1) the intentional inexistence of an object, (2) the mental inexistence of an object, (3) an immanent objectivity, (4) reference to a content, and (5) direction towards an object. Expressions (1), (2) and (3) for Brentano, as de Boer notes, ‘are fully synonymous.’ These expressions all point to the fact that psychical-act experiences ‘include a content’, and that ‘this content is more precisely defined as intentional or immanent or mental’.<sup>61</sup> All of these expressions, therefore, depict unequivocally and univocally the mental immanence of objects in any given (temporal) psychical-act experience.

Expressions (4) and (5) are different aspects of psychical-act experiences. They are concerned with the directedness or relation (*Richtung, Beziehung*) of a psychical-act experience towards a content or an object. In the 1874 passage, Brentano understands these expressions to be describing the same thing, namely, the object-relatedness of psychical-act experiences. (It is only sometime *after PES* that Brentano speaks about

<sup>59</sup> Commentators have found any number of theses defining the psychical in this 1874 passage, from one to four. Victor Caston maintains that Brentano offers no definition at all of intentionality in this passage. Rather, Caston believes and stresses the point that ‘Brentano does not attempt to *define* intentionality. Instead, he appeals to medieval terminology to indicate what he is talking about and then, by way of explication, offers three glosses of his own: (i) possessing content, (ii) being directed upon an object, and (iii) having the object present in the act. All three are metaphorical—in fact, the first appeals to the very same metaphor as the third.’ V. Caston, ‘Towards a History of the Problem of Intentionality Among the Greeks’, in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, Vol. IX, 1993, ed. by John. J. Cleary and William Wians (New York: University Press of America, 1995), pp. 213–45 p. 217

<sup>60</sup> De Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, p. 6

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

this defining characteristic of psychical-act experiences in terms of an ‘intentional *relation*’.) Thus Passmore is correct to note that Brentano takes ‘these phrases [i.e. (4) and (5)] to be synonymous’.<sup>62</sup> Spiegelberg is also, therefore, correct to conclude about the 1874 passage that here Brentano gives us not one, as he says, but two defining characteristics of psychical-act experiences: one concerning the immanence of objects in consciousness and another concerning the directedness of consciousness towards its object or content.<sup>63</sup> Roderick M. Chisholm, likewise,

<sup>62</sup> Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 178. Twardowski thought that here Brentano blurred two different kinds of ‘presentations’ (*Vorstellungen*) that evidently occurred in an act of outer perceptual-sense experience e.g. the flower growing in the garden (*qua* real object) and one’s awareness of the flower growing in the garden (*qua* content of knowledge). This issue was both a subject of *dispute* between Twardowski and Brentano, and a point of departure by Twardowski from Brentano’s position of *PES*. Moran resurrects this controversial issue, when he remarks that, ‘[F]rom the passage quoted above [referring to Brentano’s 1874 *PES* passage], we see that Brentano employed two different formulations—between which he never distinguished: (i) directedness towards an object (*die Richtung auf eine Objekt*), and (ii) ‘relation to a content’ (*die Beziehung auf einen Inhalt*). He [Brentano] never separated his account of the intentional object from the notion of intentionality as a relation’ (‘The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis’, p. 5). Moran believes that Twardowski, *who does make this distinction in his 1894 study*, gives the better account here. See Moran’s further analysis on these lines in his *An Introduction to Phenomenology*, Ch. 1 ‘Franz Brentano: Descriptive Psychology and Intentionality’, in a section entitled ‘Twardowski’s modification of Brentanian descriptive psychology’, pp. 55–9. It seems to me, however, that re-introducing Twardowski’s 1894 distinction back into Brentano’s 1874 passage is neither philosophically helpful or historically accurate in understanding *Brentano’s* thesis, contrary to the approach outlined and taken in ‘The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis’, pp. 1–2.

<sup>63</sup> About this ‘second characterization of the psychic phenomenon, “reference to an object,”’ Spiegelberg remarks in his famous, widely consulted and re-issued study *The Phenomenological Movement* that, ‘as far as I can make out, this characterisation is completely original with Brentano’, but in Spiegelberg’s opinion, ‘(I)t was certainly none of Brentano’s doing that this new wholly unscholastic conception came to sail under the old flag of ‘intentionality’ (3rd edn 1994, 37; 1st edn, 1976, p. 40). Rather, Spiegelberg believes that ‘it is only in Husserl’s thought that the term “intentional” acquired the meaning of directedness toward an object rather than that of the object’s immanence in consciousness (1994, p. 97).’ Simons exercises a similar viewpoint in his ‘Introduction to the Second Edition’ of the re-print of the English translation of Brentano’s *PES* (1995, p. xix), believing that it is Brentano’s students (Höfler, Meinong, and Twardowski) rather than Brentano himself, who are responsible for the unScholastic conception of ‘intentional act’ being promulgated in the 1890s. Nevertheless, Spiegelberg does correctly note that for Brentano ‘the second characterization of the psychic phenomenon, “reference to an object,”—one that Brentano had spotted in *PES* (1874)—‘is ... the only permanent one for Brentano’ (*The Phenomenological Movement*, 3rd edn, p. 37) because ‘Brentano came to reject during

comments that ‘this passage contains two different theses: one, an ontological thesis about the nature of certain objects of thought and of other psychological attitudes; the other, a psychological thesis, implying reference to an object’.<sup>64</sup> These *two* features, nevertheless, express different things about the psychical, and so, they should be ‘carefully distinguished’, as De Boer has pointed out.<sup>65</sup> Often, however, they are not, and so, often they are confused.<sup>66</sup> According to Brentano himself,

what Brentano scholars call the crisis of immanence (*Immanenzkrise*) of 1905 ... ‘[the] very doctrine of the mental inexistence of the object of knowledge in the soul.’ (ibid., p. 48, n. 19) Moran thinks that ‘Husserl’s own breakthrough insight concerning intentionality came in 1898 (as he later recalled in *Krisis*) when he realised there was a ‘universal a priori correlation between experienced object and manners of givenness’. In other words, that intentionality really encapsulated the entire set of relations between subjectivity and every form of objectivity’ *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology*, pp. 18–19. Whoever promulgated the exact notion of the ‘object-relatedness’ of the ‘intentional act’ of consciousness, Husserl himself credits Brentano with the initial revaluation (*Umwertung*) of the Scholastic theory of the object-relatedness of acts of the will into a descriptive root-concept of the object relatedness of all psychical-act experiences (and credits himself with the working out of the implications of such ‘correlativity’ in the development of his own idea of phenomenology). Cf. Husserl’s remarks on ‘Brentano as pathfinder (Brentano *als Wegbereiter*)’ in *Phenomenological Psychology. Lectures, Summer Semester 1925*, ‘Section (d) Brentano as pioneer for research in internal experience—discovery of intentionality as the fundamental character of the psychic’, pp. 23–7

<sup>64</sup> ‘Intentionality’, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edwards, 1967, p. 201

<sup>65</sup> *The Development of Husserl’s Thought*, p. 6

<sup>66</sup> According to Jacquette, ‘The passage is often said to contain two distinct theses. The first is an assertion about the ontological status of the objects of thought, and the second offers the intentional in-existence criterion of psychic phenomena’, ‘Brentano’s Concept of Intentionality’, p. 125, n. 5. Such a gloss on Brentano’s 1874 passage, however, makes two theses of one thesis because ‘the ontological status of the objects of thought’ and ‘the intentional in-existence [of an object] criterion of psychic phenomena’ cover the same territory for Brentano, namely, the thesis of immanence of objects in consciousness, whereas ‘relation to a content’ is another distinguishing feature of the acts of consciousness for Brentano. Jacquette, however, does continue to inform us that ‘We are equally concerned with both of Brentano’s theses, with the idea that the intentionality of thought distinguishes the psychological from the nonpsychological, and with the problems raised by Brentano’s obscure discussion of immanent intentionality, relation to a content, or intentional in-existence’ (ibid.). Spiegelberg, who recognises the two distinct theses of immanence of objects in consciousness and the directedness of consciousness towards an object, nevertheless, obscures this matter likewise by maintaining that, ‘[O]ne thing is clear, however; for Brentano the term ‘intentional’ is intimately connected with a conception of the experiential structure according to which all objects to which an experience relates are at the same time contained in this experience, they exist within it’ ‘“Intention” and “Intentionality” in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl’, p. 120. Daniel C. Dennett makes a similar point about ‘Brentano’s thesis’, when he remarks

however, out of all the characteristics of consciousness that are expressed in the 1874 passage, it is the fact that a psychical-act experience *contains an object* intentionally (mentally) within itself that enables us to evidently identify and positively distinguish ‘psychical phenomena in general’ (i.e. actual acts of sensing, thinking, willing, understanding, misunderstanding, loving, hating, fearing, despairing, hoping, worrying, taking an interest, no interest or a disinterest in something, and so forth) from ‘physical phenomena in general’ (i.e., colours I see, sounds I hear, odours I smell, tactile objects I touch, and the immediately presented objects of *all* acts of human consciousness, including normative acts of judgement, such as, for example, the content of a logical proposition).<sup>67</sup> Brentano makes this

that according to Brentano ‘some mental phenomena are “directed upon” an object (and these objects have unusual characteristics), and other mental phenomena are related to a content or proposition or meaning. There is some difficulty ... in wielding these two parts into a single characteristic of Intentionality, and yet intuitively Brentano’s insight is about one characteristic and an important one’ *Consciousness and Content* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969; Routledge: 1996), p. 20. Again, a similar point is made by Moran for, according to this commentator, ‘He [Brentano] never separated his account of the intentional object from the notion of intentionality as a relation. They express the one notion. In fact, if anything, his account of the intentional relation tends to collapse into his account of the intentional object’ ‘The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis’, p. 5. Simons blames Brentano himself for the confusion of the two theses, by suggesting that ‘Brentano had contributed to the ambiguity by offering several paraphrases of the phrase “intentional inexistence”: mental inexistence, existence as an object (objectively) in something, reference to a content, direction to an object, immanent object. ... Clearly they do not here mean intention in the sense of purpose, design, intent to do something, though the two notions are related.’ (Introduction to the Second Edition’, *PES* (1995), p. xx). Simons does not explain how the two notions of the ‘intentional’ or ‘mental inexistence of an object in consciousness’ and ‘reference to a content, direction to an object’, which are not to be confused with the notion of ‘intention in the sense of purpose’, are related in Brentano’s thought (or in any other philosopher’s thought, such as, for instance, and in particular, St Thomas). The conflation of the two theses continues in Bartok’s recent gloss on the 1874 passage as maintaining, ‘*all and only* mental phenomena [in comparison to physical phenomena] are characterized by the intentional inexistence of or directedness toward an object, *a claim* [my emphasis] that has come to be known as “Brentano’s intentionality thesis” or simply “Brentano’s thesis”, ‘Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis’, p. 437.

<sup>67</sup> According to Brentano, there are two, and only two classes of phenomena, namely, physical and psychical phenomena given to corresponding acts of outer and inner perception (*PES*, p. 77). Because Brentano admits of only two kinds of objects (psychical and physical phenomena) corresponding to two forms of perception (inner and outer perception), the ‘thinking of a general concept’ (*PES*, p. 79) because the content of a logical judgement is not itself an actual act of thinking (a psychical phenomenon), has to be regarded by Brentano as a ‘physical phenomenon’ (in the sense of a directly intended object). This is why Moran is correct to note that, for

very clear in the passage immediately following the famous 1874 passage, where he declares:

This intentional in-existence (*intentionale Inexistenz*) is characteristic exclusively of psychical phenomena. No physical phenomena exhibit anything like it. We can, therefore, define psychical phenomena by saying that they are those phenomena which contain an object intentionally within themselves. (*PES*, pp. 88–89)

And in a later passage Brentano re-iterates this point, saying that ‘we use the term ‘consciousness’ to refer to any psychical phenomenon [i.e. any actual psychical-act experience], insofar as it has a content’ (*PES*, p. 138).<sup>68</sup> Indeed, Brentano is thoroughly aware of the fact that the meaning of *this particular concept* of ‘the intentional (or mental) in-existence of an object’ that he claims to have found in Medieval-Aristotelian Scholastic philosophy is *not one that is well-known at all in everyday discourse or one with which contemporary natural scientists are familiar* because later on in *PES* he explicitly remarks in relation to the difficulty of settling disputes over both the meaning and the referent of the term ‘consciousness’,

In the first place ... the term ‘consciousness,’ since it refers to an object which consciousness is conscious of, [it] seems to be appropriate to characterise psychical phenomena [conscious acts] precisely in terms of its [consciousness’s] distinguishing characteristic, i.e., the property of the intentional in-existence of an object, *for which we lack a word in common usage* (*PES*, p. 102, my emphasis).

In relation to his own use and understanding of *this concept* of ‘intentional in-existence’, Brentano believes that he is in complete agreement with Aristotle’s position on this matter, for, Brentano explicitly tells us in an extended footnote added to the 1874 passage explaining the origin and development of this concept in Ancient Greek and Medieval philosophy that,

Brentano, ‘physical phenomena are not just sense qualities (tastes, colours etc.), but also include more abstract presentations such as ‘thinking of a general concept’ (*PES*, p. 79); ... abstract objects like triangles ... the mental life of others, e.g. ‘I know what you are thinking’ .... And of course in thinking of a triangle, which we might consider to be a mental object par excellence, for Brentano, the triangle is a *physical phenomenon*. ‘The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis’, p. 21

<sup>68</sup> And later still, Brentano re-iterates this same point again: ‘Nothing distinguishes psychical phenomena from physical phenomena more than the fact that something is immanent as an object in them’ (*PES*, p. 197). In *PES*, then, Brentano does not write about *die intentionale Beziehung*, as many commentators intimate, but about the ‘intentional in-existence of an object’ in consciousness.

Aristotle himself spoke of this psychical indwelling (*psychische Einwohnung*). In his books on the soul he says that the sensed object, as such, is in the sensing subject; that the sense contains the sensed object without its matter; that the object which is thought is in the thinking intellect (*PES*, p. 88 n.).<sup>69</sup>

And in another footnote, added this time by Brentano to the re-issue of (part of) his *PES* in 1911,<sup>70</sup> Brentano directly complains about the misunderstanding of the meaning of *this concept* of ‘the intentional inexistence of an object’ that he had first employed in the 1874 passage,<sup>71</sup> remarking that,

This expression [‘the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object’] had been misunderstood in that some people thought it had to do with intention and the pursuit of a goal. In view of this, I might have done better to avoid it altogether. Instead of the term ‘intentional’ the Scholastics very frequently used the expression ‘objective’. This has to do with the fact that something is an object for the mentally active subject, and, as such, is present in some manner in his consciousness, whether it is merely thought of or also desired, shunned, etc. I preferred the expression ‘intentional’ because I thought there would be an even greater danger of being misunderstood if I had described the object of thought as ‘objectively existing,’ for modern-day thinkers use this expression to refer to what really exists as opposed to ‘mere subjective appearances’ (*PES*, pp. 180–181 n.).<sup>72</sup>

Brentano, therefore, would lead us to believe both in the 1874 passage and in the 1874 and 1911 footnotes that he has not deviated, in any significant sense, from the meaning of the original Scholastic-Aristotelian concept of the abstracted form of sense residing intentionally as an object in the soul of the knower, and similarly existing objects of thought or of any psychical-act experience in consciousness.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> English translation of ‘mental inexistence’ for ‘*psychische Einwohnung*’ changed to ‘psychical indwelling’. Cf., note on p. 125 of German text.

<sup>70</sup> Brentano re-issued only Chapters 5–9 of Book II *Psychical Phenomena in General*, under the heading ‘The Classification of Mental Phenomena’, of *PES* followed by an Appendix. Cf. Brentano, ‘Foreword to the 1911 Edition, *The Classification of Mental Phenomena*’, *PES*, pp. xix–xx.

<sup>71</sup> The famous 1874 passage, however, was not part of the re-issue of the selected texts of Chapters 5–9 of Book II of *PES* for re-issue in 1911, as it occurs in Chapter I of Book II of *PES*.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Herbert Spiegelberg, “‘Intention’ and ‘Intentionality’ in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl”, in Linda L. McAlister ed. *The Philosophy of Brentano* (London: Duckworth), pp. 108–27, pp. 120–21

<sup>73</sup> Spiegelberg agrees with Brentano’s self-interpretation on this issue, and thereby misses the significant changes that Brentano actually makes to this concept of the

Brentano, however, is not the sole authority in the interpretation of his own text, or of the text of anyone else, for that matter.<sup>74</sup> Aristotle did not hold the view that ‘the sensed object without its matter’, when this is taken as referring to the abstracted form of sense knowledge residing intentionally in the soul of the knower, is the immediate and direct object of outer perceptual-sense knowledge, as *Brentano himself* clearly holds in *PES* (and in his lectures on *DP*). The immediate objects of sense knowledge for Aristotle and the Aristotelians are ‘physical things’ and *their* accidental modifications and properties existing ‘in the external world’, as Brentano had originally defended in his 1866 Habilitation thesis on *The Psychology of Aristotle, in Particular His Doctrine of the Active Intellect*.<sup>75</sup> The

abstracted form residing intentionally in the soul of knower that is advanced in Scholastic epistemology. It has been pointed out by Spiegelberg that the terminology of *Intentionalität* was not actually used by Brentano but by Husserl. Moran agrees with Spiegelberg, noting that, ‘The technical term *intentionalitas* did have currency in the late Middle Ages, and used to refer to the character of the logical distinction between *prima* and *secunda intentio*, but the modern use of the term intentionality owes to Husserl and not Brentano’ (*An Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 482, n. 80). Nevertheless, the concepts of intention of the will (*intentio voluntatis*) and intentional indwelling (*in*esse *intentionale*) were familiar concepts deployed in Scholastic theory of volition and in Scholastic metaphysics respectively, and the latter metaphysical concept is applied in the Scholastic epistemological concept of the abstracted form of sense (or intelligible *species*) residing intentionally in the soul of the knower. Brentano was well acquainted with all of these Scholastic concepts. Brentano, however, as we shall see in this section, deviates considerably from the original Scholastic meaning in his elaboration of the meaning that he gives to the concept of the ‘intentional (or mental) in-existence of an object’ in consciousness in *PES*, just as we have seen in the previous section how he deviated from the Scholastic concept of ‘intentional relation’ in depicting the object-relatedness of acts of consciousness in the elaboration of his descriptive psychology in *DP*. It is of both philosophical and historical significance to note that Husserl’s acquaintance with the concept of ‘intentionality’ comes in the *aftermath* of Brentano’s *descriptive-psychological* modification of both the Scholastic volitional concept of intention as ‘intentional act’ and the Scholastic epistemological-metaphysical concept of intention as ‘intentional [indwelling] object’.

<sup>74</sup> Bartok’s recent reiteration that ‘He [Brentano] insisted that the central doctrines of his psychology, the doctrines of intentionality and inner perception, were doctrines that had clear precedents in the work of Aristotle and the Scholastics’, ‘Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis’ p. 454, is just that, however, a reiteration of Brentano’s own misleading, self-interpretation. Cf., also, Bartok’s corresponding references at p. 454 n. 59. Brentano develops two entirely un-Scholastic-Aristotelian doctrines of ‘intentional relation (in the acts of consciousness)’ and ‘intentional object (in the mentally active subject)’. And Brentano means at least four different things by inner perception, only one of them, strictly speaking, is of clear Aristotelian ancestry, namely, ‘incidental awareness’. See above, n. 32.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Brentano, *The Psychology of Aristotle, in Particular His Doctrine of the Active Intellect*, esp., ‘Part III. Of the Sensitive Soul’, pp. 54–74



immediate objects of sense knowledge for Aristotle and the Aristotelians are not sensorially perceivable qualities (e.g. a colour, or a sound) that exist only as long as the actual outer perceptual-sense experience exists.<sup>76</sup> This is why Lawson-Tancred is correct to re-iterate Richard Sorabji's point that *for Aristotle* the psychological indwelling of abstracted forms of sense cannot be regarded as an exclusive property of the human soul because while they exist in actuality in the knower's soul 'in a manner of speaking', however difficult that might be to fully understand, they also exist in potentiality as accidental modifications of substances outside in the world.<sup>77</sup> In this regard, the 'intentional (or mental) in-existence' of abstracted forms of sense 'cannot be [*for Aristotle*] a hallmark of the sense object as such, as Brentano needs it'.<sup>78</sup> *For Brentano*, however, outside of the abstracted form as such, which are now understood by Brentano to be Lockean secondary qualities of outer perceptual-sense experience (e.g. a colour I actually see, a sound I actually hear), such 'physical phenomena' (colours and sounds) do not exist 'objectively' like that in any real sense at all as Aristotle and the medieval Aristotelians would have it, for example, as accidents inhering in substances; rather, they exist as actual light particles and sine waves as Brentano stresses in his 1911 footnote and throughout *PES* (and *DP*). Thus unlike Aristotle, Brentano can declare *in his new descriptive-psychological scheme of things* that 'the intentional or mental in-existence of an object', such as, for instance, a colour or a sound as it

<sup>76</sup> In Scholastic realism, acts of sensation are not, automatically, acts of sense cognition, though the latter acts are dependent upon the first and a result of a co-operation between acts of sensation and acts of cognition in the knower. See n. 29 above.

<sup>77</sup> Hugh Lawson-Tancred, 'Introduction', in Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)*, (London: Penguin, 1986), pp. 101–3. Sorabji also notes that for the Islamic and Medieval Aristotelians the abstracted form of sense residing intentionally in the soul of the knower, though a sign for the real thing existing extra-mentally, 'cannot yet imply awareness of the message' 'From Aristotle to Brentano: The Development of the Concept of Intentionality', p. 241, as it does in Brentano's 1874 passage. Thus Sorabji concludes, correctly, that 'Brentano's interpretation [in *PES*] was not faithful to Thomas, for whom intentional being did not imply awareness, although it may have implied a message' p. 248. Brentano did hold this position in his 1866 *The Psychology of Aristotle*, arguing that an act of knowledge, on the part of the knowing subject, 'does not imply in any way that the subject of the intellect is conscious of its intellectual properties' (p. 92). '[A]lthough it [the intellect] knows itself, it does not know itself either always or in the beginning, but only secondarily' p. 88.

<sup>78</sup> Tancred-Lawson, 'Introduction', in Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)*, p. 104

occurs in its respective psychical-act experience, is an exclusive property of our actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience.<sup>79</sup>

Spiegelberg, therefore, is correct to note that in the 1874 passage “intentional” for Brentano refers to the property of an object which is immanent in consciousness in a way analogous to that in which the species are immanent in the Thomistic-Aristotelian theory of knowledge.<sup>80</sup> The comparison is between the kind of existence characteristic of mental objects (*qua* abstracted forms of intelligibility) and extra-mental real objects (real things or substances in the world). When considered as the immediate objects of consciousness, the objects of sense and of thought (and of all psychical-act experiences), according to Brentano, do not have ‘real’ substantial existence either inside or outside of the mind, rather, they have ‘intentional existence (in the mentally active subject)’, in an analogous fashion to the way in which the abstracted form of sense or *intentio* or *species* is said to exist intentionally in the soul of the knower in Scholastic theory of knowledge. This ‘similarity between Brentano’s doctrine and the intentional inexistence of the Scholastics’ has been re-iterated by many commentators, and has been compared

<sup>79</sup> Herein lies one potent source for later questions pertaining to the irreducibility, or otherwise, of the ‘mental’ to the ‘physical’ that has either occupied or vexed many analytic commentators on ‘Brentano’s thesis’. Cf. Moran’s conclusion that ‘those who invoke Brentano as guardian of mental irreducibility are just plain wrong’ ‘The Inaugural Address: Brentano’s Thesis’, p. 27. Brentano’s stress on the intended object of outer perceptual-sense experience as an exclusive property of one’s *own* psychical-act experiences, however, causes *later* followers, such as Husserl, problems with accounting for our relationship to that which exists outside and yet integral to interpersonal relationships between oneself and another human being. See below, footnotes 107 and 108

<sup>80</sup> Spiegelberg, “Intention” and “Intentionality” in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl’, p. 122. Spiegelberg originally published this article in 1933/34 in German as ‘Der Begriff der Intentionalität in der Scholastik, bei Brentano und bei Husserl’. It is referred to as ‘the classic article on Brentano’ by Sorabji in ‘From Aristotle to Brentano: The Development of the Concept of Intentionality’, (1991), *Supplementary Volume: Aristotle and the Later Tradition*, ed. by H. Blumenthal and H. Robinson, pp. 227–59, esp. pp. 247–8, n. 116, though unfortunately, it is mis-titled in the note as “Intention” and “Intentionality” in the Scholastics, Brentano and [viz.] Hegel’. Victor Caston refers to Spiegelberg’s article as ‘a path breaking article of 1936’, and that ‘(H)is [Spiegelberg’s] results have so far been challenged only on points of detail; his overall approach, to the best of my knowledge, has not’. ‘Towards a History of the Problem of Intentionality among the Greeks’, (1993), p. 218. I would like to draw attention to De Boer’s extensive and meticulous study *The Development of Husserl’s Thought*, first published in Dutch in 1966 and translated into English in 1978, which challenges many major and fundamental *points of detail* (and the approach) upon which Spiegelberg’s influential interpretation of the concept of intentionality in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl rests.

favourably, for example, to ‘St Thomas Aquinas’s commentary on the relevant passage in Aristotle’s *De Anima*’ where St Thomas remarks,

[S]ense receives the form without the matter, since form has a different mode of being in sense perception than it has in the sensible thing. For in the sensible thing it has natural being; but in sense perception it has intentional being.<sup>81</sup>

*Unlike St Thomas and the Scholastics*, however, Brentano regards the abstracted form of sense, this intentional or mental object of perceptual consciousness, as *the end term* of outer perceptual-sense experience (or of sense judgement) in *PES*. Outside of the perceptual experience of immanent colours and sounds, there exist light rays and sine waves. Colours and sounds have ‘*only* phenomenal and intentional [= mental] existence’ in comparison to the theoretically constructed objects of physics. The theoretical objects of natural sciences, as a matter of established natural-scientific fact, in Brentano’s view, really and truly exist. It now thus follows for Brentano that our everyday normal acts of outer sense perception of physical phenomena (i.e. of colours) are inherently and naturally misleading because they take their objects (e.g. colours) to be existing ‘out there’ as it were, say, as accidents of hylomorphically constituted substances, just as Aristotle and the Aristotelians would have it, when they do not exist ‘out there’ as such. ‘For this reason, anyone who in good faith has taken them for what they seem to be is being misled by the manner in which the phenomena are connected.’ (*PES*, p. 91) Brentano’s view of our normal acts of outer perceptual-sense experience, such as seeing things coloured in the external world, as an inherently deceptive mode of knowledge indicates just how unAristotelian-unscholastic Brentano’s views are in *PES* and in *DP*.<sup>82</sup> By 1874, therefore, Brentano has relinquished *entirely* any Aristotelian-epistemological theory of abstraction—with which ‘Brentano *had concerned himself* [my emphasis] a good deal’ in the mid 1860s, as Spiegelberg

<sup>81</sup> Linda L. McAlister, ‘Brentano’s Epistemology’ in *The Cambridge Guide to Brentano*, ed. Jacqueline, pp. 149–67, p. 153

<sup>82</sup> Brentano’s view here on our normal acts of outer sense perception as being inherently deceptive is closer to St Thomas’ views on abnormal sense knowledge, such as, for instance, as St Thomas says, ‘(I)n the case of ourselves, deception comes about really in accordance with *phantasia* through which occasionally we cling to the likeness of things as if they were the things themselves, as is clear with people sleeping or the mad’ *Summa Theologiae*, 1, 54, 5, quoted by Marras, ‘The Scholastic Roots of Brentano’s Conception of Intentionality’, p. 134.

notes<sup>83</sup>—and, in its stead, adopted a version of direct mental (Cartesian–Lockean–Humean) representationalism against a background acceptance of the dominant natural-scientific world-view as expressed in his time.<sup>84</sup> These are Brentano’s (new) concerns in *PES*, as Bartok correctly reminds us.<sup>85</sup>

Brentano’s self-interpretation of his concurrence with the Thomistic-Aristotelian epistemological concept of the intentional indwelling of the ‘sensed object without its matter’ in the soul of the knower both in the *footnotes* appended to the 1874 passage and added to the 1911 re-issue, and Spiegelberg’s and many others’ re-iteration of that self-interpretation,<sup>86</sup> all overlook real and major conceptual differences between the way in which ‘the species’ or ‘*intentio*’, *qua abstracted form*, is said to be present in the soul of the knower in Thomistic-Aristotelian theory of knowledge and the way in which Brentano in the *actual* 1874 *passage* regards the presence of the intentional object of sense, and *a fortiori* the presence of any intentional object as an immanent content residing in consciousness. Thus Brentano’s deviation from both the Scholastic general metaphysical concept of intentional being (*esse intentionale*) and the Scholastic understanding of the application of this concept in their theory of knowledge requires careful analysis. For brevity, I will draw attention only to two major differences between the meaning of the concept of ‘intentional indwelling’ in Scholasticism and in the 1874 passage of *PES*, and to one highly significant similarity between the Scholastics and ‘Brentano’s thesis’ that remains thoroughly alive both

<sup>83</sup> Spiegelberg, “‘Intention’ and ‘Intentionality’ in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl”, p. 122

<sup>84</sup> Brentano’s shift in terminology away from ‘physical things’ in his 1866 *Psychology of Aristotle*, and towards ‘physical phenomena’ in his 1874 *PES*, by which Brentano means sounds I actually hear, colours I actually see, odours I actually smell, so-called *qualia* of sense experience, should suffice to alert commentators to the major conceptual shift in Brentano’s entire understanding of (philosophical) psychology.

<sup>85</sup> Bartok, ‘Brentano’s Intentionality Thesis’, esp. pp. 443–4; pp. 448–9

<sup>86</sup> Cf., also, Chisholm’s famous explication of ‘Brentano’s thesis’. According to Chisholm: ‘There is a distinction between a man who is thinking about a unicorn and a man who is thinking about nothing; in the former case, the man is intentionally related to an object, but in the latter case he is not. What, then, is the status of this object? It cannot be an actual unicorn, since there are not unicorns. According to the doctrine of intentional inexistence, the object of the thought about a unicorn *is* a unicorn, but a unicorn with a mode of being (intentional inexistence, immanent objectivity, or existence in the understanding) that is short of actuality but more than nothingness and that ... lasts for just the length of time that the unicorn is thought about.’ R. M. Chisholm, ‘Intentionality’, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (1967), p. 201

in the 1874 *PES* passage and in Husserl's later (in)famous transcendental reduction documented in *Ideas I* (1913).

In Scholastic metaphysics, the order of intentional indwelling or intentional being-in (*in esse intentionale*) is opposed to the order of natural being, *esse naturale* or *esse naturae*.<sup>87</sup> In nature, things can really exist in one another, and alongside one another, such as, for instance, matches in a matchbox or water in a glass tumbler. By contrast, a thing existing intentionally in another thing denotes a flowing and incomplete presence of the nature of one being in another being, e.g., the intentional presence of the sun in daylight or of a user of an instrument in using that instrument.<sup>88</sup> The woodcutter, for instance, who uses an axe to cut down a tree, does not really or naturally exist 'in' the axe as the tree is being hewn, nor does the axe really or naturally exist 'in' the woodcutter in the process. In their natural order of being both the woodcutter standing beside the tree and the axe lying on the ground are really distinct and separate realities. When the woodcutter, however, picks up the axe and fells the tree, there is an intentional union (*unio intentionalis*) of both woodcutter and axe in each other. From a general metaphysical point of view, the woodcutter is now said to be present intentionally in the axe used and the axe is intentionally present in the woodcutter. Of course the woodcutter is also intentionally doing the action and for a purpose but these volitional and teleological concepts of *intentio* (as *tendere in aliud*) are completely unconnected to the metaphysical concept of (*in*)*esse intentionale*. Rather, the latter concept of something 'being intentionally present in' another thing denotes the way one thing exists in another thing not 'really', or 'solidly', or 'totally' but flowing incompletely (*fluens et incompleta*).<sup>89</sup> From a Scholastic metaphysical point of view, therefore, the woodcutter is said to be intentionally present in the axe used to cut down

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Simonin, 'La Notion d'*intentio*' p. 456, and de Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, p. 44

<sup>88</sup> Quoting St Thomas, A. Hayen remarks, 'Instrumentalis virtus ... est fluens et incompleta in esse naturae.' Hence, as Hayen comments, 'La *virtus instrumentalis*, ensuite, ne possède qu'une réalité fugitive, 'fluide', mouvante, et pour ainsi dire 'spirituelle' au sens primitif du mot, qui oppose l'inconsistance d'un souffle aérien à la solidité du corps robuste et résistant' A. Hayen, *L'Intentionnel dans la philosophie de St. Thomas*, (Paris, 1942), p. 98. Cf., also, James S. Alberston, 'Instrumental Causality in St. Thomas', *The New Scholasticism*, 28 (1954), pp. 409–5

<sup>89</sup> Such a mode of being, therefore, is a spiritual form of being (A. Hayen, p. 98), but it would be quite absurd for St Thomas (as it was for St Augustine) to consider such a spiritual (*spiritalis*) mode of indwelling as mental (*mentale*) indwelling precisely because such indwelling (*inesse intentionale*) is a distinct mode of being from both the bodily or corporeal kind and the intellectual or mental kind. Cf. Gerard Watson, *Phantasia: in Classical Thought* (Officina Typographica: Galway University Press, 1988), p. 141

the tree, but the woodcutter is not really 'in' the axe in the same way that a match is really in a match-box, nor is the player of a lyre really present 'in' the instrument being played unless he is playing it so badly that you take it off him and hit him over the head with it, and then he may be said to be existing not intentionally but really in the lyre, and so forth. A thing existing intentionally in another thing, therefore, denotes a flowing and incomplete presence of the nature of one being in another being.

For the Scholastics, then, this mode of 'intentional in-dwelling of one object in another' is a discernible feature in the relationship between many things throughout the cosmos. In fact, the Scholastics appealed to this concept of 'intentional indwelling' in their theology as a way of trying to 'understand' their faith in the mystery of the triune God, where love of the Father for the Son and love of the Son for the Father is manifested in and through the intentional indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Such an account of intentional union (*unio intentionalis*) retains the notion of 'three persons' 'in' the 'one substance', and not the notion of three substances really existing in one substance (i.e., three Gods in one God), nor the notion of one substance comprising three real distinct parts, with three interlocking real relations, making up in total one God (i.e., three real parts of one God). Brentano himself alludes to this theological deployment of the concept of intentional in-dwelling by St Augustine and the Scholastics in their reflections on the triune God, in the extended footnote that accompanies the 1874 passage, and which many commentators note. And it is this same general metaphysical concept of 'intentional indwelling' that is being put to work specifically in the Scholastic epistemological theory of the abstracted intelligible species that resides intentionally, as opposed to really, in the soul of the knower. What this theory tries to explain is how I can become a knower of things (i.e. abstract their forms) without becoming those real things themselves because the real form does not reside in the intellectual part of my soul but an abstracted image or representative *through which [id quo]* I know the physical thing resides intentionally, and not really, in the intellect of the knower.<sup>90</sup> Thus the knower becomes what he knows 'in a manner of

<sup>90</sup> Just as we are usually unaware of the words we use to discuss reality of things around us, so too we are usually unaware of the abstracted intentions in our knowledge of things in the world. Thus Augustine likens such abstracted forms or images as 'signs' and as '*Verbum Mentis*', which Brentano draws our attention to in the 1874 note accompanying that passage in *PES*, p. 88 n. Abstracted forms of sense, then, are transparent 'instruments' used in the knowing process of which we are directly unaware, as Brentano correctly maintains in his 1866 *The Psychology of Aristotle* (98, and ff.). This is why the Scholastics considered such abstracted forms of sense as 'blind instruments' used in that process. Brentano completely deviates from this position in

*speaking*' (*DP*, p. 29, my emphasis), through an intentional union, and not through a real union. Marras puts this point well for the Scholastics, when he notes and stresses,

To say an object *exists formally* (immaterially, intentionally, etc.) in the subject [Marras means in the knowing subject engaged in an act of sense knowledge of a physical thing in the external world, as is evident from the context] is merely to say that the *form* of the object exists in the subject ('Lapis autem non est in anima, sed forma lapidis'). ... As the Scholastics put it, the form of the object exists in the subject as an attribute or *modification* of the subject (*sicut accidens in subiecto*). ... And, as any student of scholastic philosophy well knows, the form thus exemplified—the *species*—is not *that which* is (directly) known [*id quod cognoscitur*], but that *by means of which* the extramental object is known [*id quo cognoscitur*].<sup>91</sup>

In Scholastic epistemology, therefore, the intentional in-dwelling of the abstracted form of sense in the soul of the knower is *just one instance* where an 'intentional union' takes place in the world between one entity (the knower's soul) and another entity (the physical thing in the world which the knower comes to know) as Stein, Hayen and De Boer have all remarked, and as Brentano himself clearly reminds his reader of *PES*, in the extended footnote appended to the passage in 1874 upon its re-introduction.<sup>92</sup>

If we turn to Brentano's actual 1874 passage in *PES*, however, we find Brentano declaring here that 'the intentional inexistence of an object' is *exclusively* a defining feature of the psychical-act experiences of a mentally active subject. Such is not the case in Scholasticism. The intentional presence of the sun in daylight is not a 'psychical phenomenon' for the Scholastics, neither is the presence of the woodcutter in the axe used to fell the tree. In the 1874 passage, therefore, Brentano *literally modifies* the entire scope of the application of the

*PES* (and in *DP*). Brentano still, however, maintains that intentional objects of outer sense perception (colours) are 'signs'—something that Husserl was critical of, from a descriptive-psychological point of view, rather than simply as the intended object of the act of outer perceptual sense experience itself—but, for Brentano in *PES* and *DP*, they are not signs of physical things and their properties in the external world but of a theoretically constructed reality uncovered and determined via *natural scientific interpretation* (i.e. light rays or light particles).

<sup>91</sup> Marras, 'Scholastic Roots of Brentano's Conception of Intentionality', p. 131. This, indeed, is a lucid account and an unequivocal defence of the Scholastic realist epistemological position; but this is *not* the philosophical position that *Brentano actually holds* in the 1874 passage.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Hayen, *L'Intentionnel dans la philosophie de St. Thomas*, pp. 35–7

Scholastic concept of intentional in-dwelling to designate one thing, and one thing only, namely, the kind of mind-dependent-existence that is characteristic of the immediate contents of the *actual* acts present in human consciousness. Brentano now regards ‘the intentional inexistence of an object’ as exclusively a property of ‘mental objects’ of one’s own actual acts of consciousness. Indeed, Brentano appears to have been so successful in his re-introduction, revaluation and reduction of the original Scholastic metaphysical concept of ‘*(in)esse intentionale*’ in *PES* (1874) to an exclusively descriptive-psychological principle designating the mode of being of the contents of a ‘mentally active subject’ that this is probably why many commentators today in the philosophy of mind believe, incorrectly, that this is what the original Scholastic concept means, or even part of what the original Scholastic concept means, namely, the mental indwelling of an object and *its* particular (and questionable) ontological status of mind-dependent-existence in consciousness.<sup>93</sup>

Nevertheless, Brentano still concurs with the original Scholastic metaphysical meaning of intentional indwelling as denoting a distinct mode of being that is opposed to any real substantial mode of being (either inside the mind or outside of the mind).<sup>94</sup> And he agrees quite closely with Aristotle’s view that the abstracted forms of sense in acts of sense knowledge are dependent upon the activity of the intellectual part of the human soul (‘the mentally active subject’ for Brentano) for their

<sup>93</sup> Brentano’s rendering of the Scholastic thesis of intentional indwelling in the 1874 passage would appear to have led William Lyons into his belief that *this* is ‘part of one well-known medieval account of intentionality [that] involved making a distinction between *esse naturale* (natural existence, such as that of a tree or a rabbit) and *esse intentionale* (intentional or mental existence, such as that of a thought or mental image) ... ‘*intentionale*’ in the phrase ‘*esse intentionale*’ was derived from the Latin word *intentio*, which meant, roughly, ‘having an idea’ or ‘direction of attention in thought.’ *Approaches to Intentionality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 1. What is being distinguished in the Scholastic metaphysical concepts of *esse naturale* and *esse intentionale* is not, as Lyons would suggest, a modern, post-Cartesian distinction of ‘nature’ and ‘mind’ but two different modes of being-in e.g. a rabbit that jumps into the hollow of a tree stump is said to be really in the tree stump, in comparison to the flowing but incomplete presence of one real object in another real object such as, for instance, the intentional presence of sun in daylight, or of a user in an instrument used, or of the abstracted form of sense (‘having an idea’) in the soul of the knower. Nevertheless, Brentano’s own modification of the Scholastic concept of *esse intentionale* in the 1874 passage of *PES* to mean the mental indwelling of an object in consciousness and *its* peculiar ontological status of mind-dependent-existence did evoke much attention and criticisms from many quarters.

<sup>94</sup> Thus Brentano can abstract from the actual object as it exists outside of the mind and focus on the descriptive-psychological ‘content’ of any given psychical-act experience in his descriptive-psychological inventory. Cf., *PES*, pp. 93–4



existence, though Brentano no longer subscribes to Aristotle's supporting theory of the active intellect. Part of the *new* meaning, however, that Brentano attributes to this intentional object of sense in the 1874 passage—and one that is *not found at all* in Aristotle or in the Scholastics—is that this object is now to be regarded as the directly *intended* object of outer sense perception.<sup>95</sup> Because Brentano now regards all objects of the acts of consciousness *univocally* as the intended objects *of those acts*, it now follows for Brentano that all the immediate and direct objects of sensation, volition, cognition, judgement, love, hate, desire and so forth can be called '*intentional objects*', something that is not possible in Scholastic philosophy but something that is not only possible but actually the case in all of Husserl's writings.

In Brentano's new scheme of things, therefore, whether the intended object of a given psychical-act experience, such as for instance, that which is given to an actual act of outer perceptual-sense experience, is a real object existing in like manner outside of the mind, or not, this issue is to be 'bracketed', to use Husserl's metaphor, in any descriptive-psychological investigation into the nature of psychical acts and their intended objects. From a descriptive-psychological perspective, therefore, by the 'intentional inexistence of an object' Brentano simply means the *intended* object of any actual psychical-act experience that arises for a mentally active subject.<sup>96</sup> All of this, as Husserl quite rightly points out, is

<sup>95</sup> What this means for the early Husserl, for whom the intentional object is the end term of perception also, is that we can abstract from the actual extra-mental existence of the ultimate real object of outer sense perception without losing anything in our descriptions of that intended object. This, 'is the background of his [Husserl's early descriptive-psychological] epochē', (de Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, pp. 194–5). This descriptive-psychological *epochē*, that is already in operation in Brentano's *PES*, must not to be confused with, nor identified as the transcendental-phenomenological *epochē* in Husserl's celebrated *transcendental* reduction of *Ideas* I, i.e., the cancelling of an erroneous belief in the thesis of the natural standpoint. Nor should the transcendental reduction be confused with Husserl's earlier elaboration of 'eidetic reduction' and the process that is involved in 'eidetic ideation' in his *Logical Investigations*. Nor is 'the Being-question' (*die Seinsfrage*) that Heidegger endeavours to retrieve for phenomenology and phenomenological research, by any stretch of the imagination, a re-opening of the brackets set around the question of 'being' that occurs either in Husserlian descriptive-psychological analysis, eidetic ideation or transcendental reduction, manoeuvres that are characteristic of Husserl's development. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, however, appears to fuse all of these in his often-quoted 'Preface' to *The Phenomenology of Perception* that has been, and continues to be, so influential among commentators and critics of Husserlian and Heideggerean twentieth century phenomenology.

<sup>96</sup> Thus, as de Boer points out, in *PES* 'any inner relation between the intentional object and the 'real' object is eliminated.' *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, p. 192

‘derived out of consciousness itself in immanent description’, and marks a major ‘transformation [by Brentano] of the Scholastic [metaphysical-epistemological] concept of Intentionality [intentional indwelling]’, though Husserl is oblivious of this ‘slight change’ made by Brentano to *this Scholastic metaphysical-epistemological concept* of intentionality.<sup>97</sup> All of this, nevertheless, as Husserl also realised, though much later in his own career (i.e. after his *Logical Investigations* (1900–1901), and before his move to transcendental idealism around 1907–1908), *evades* rather than addresses any epistemological viewpoints on either realism or idealism.<sup>98</sup> And yet, all of this still concurs with the way the Scholastics understood the abstracted form of sense, or intelligible *species*, as dependent for *its* existence on the activity of the intellectual part of the soul of the knower. This object, in its manner of being, *must not be metaphysically confused with, nor identified to the actual mode of being of a real thing (res) existing outside of the mind*, just as Brentano, following the Scholastics, stresses in the 1874 passage. Interestingly, this scholastic distinction *still* continues to play a pivotal role in Husserl’s own celebrated reduction of the natural standpoint to the transcendental-phenomenological standpoint in *Ideas I* (1913) where the entire world of things that are given (known) through acts of outer perceptual-sense experience is (in)famously described by Husserl as having ‘*only*’ an ‘*intentional*’ mode of being ‘*for a consciousness*’ (i.e. as having *only* mind-dependent-existence for an individual’s actual consciousness) *in opposition to* the way the person, living in the natural standpoint, regards (naively and erroneously) the world, considered as the totality of things given to outer sense perception, as having real and actual existence in itself.<sup>99</sup>

*Some Conclusions, and Some Remarks Towards a Critical Evaluation of Brentano’s Descriptive-Psychological Concept of the Intentionality of Consciousness*

A complicating matter in addressing Brentano’s adaptation of the Scholastic concept of intentionality into a root-concept of descriptive psychology is the fact that Brentano adapts the meanings of not one but two different concepts of intentionality that are traceable to the Scholastics, namely, the concept of the intentional act of the will and the epistemological-metaphysical concept of the abstracted form of sense (or intelligible *species*) residing intentionally in the soul of the knower.

<sup>97</sup> Husserl, *Ideen III*, 59, quoted by J.C. Morrison, ‘Husserl and Brentano on Intentionality’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 31 (1970), pp. 27–46, p. 27

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Th. de Boer, ‘The Meaning of Husserl’s Idealism in the Light of his Development’, trans. by H. Pietersma, *Analecta Husserliana*, 2 (1972), pp. 322–32

<sup>99</sup> *Ideas*, §§ 27–62 (§49)

Brentano made major descriptive-psychological adjustments to both of these concepts, and so, he develops not one but two theses of intentionality, one concerning the object-relatedness of the acts of consciousness and the other concerning the mode of being that the object of which consciousness is a consciousness enjoys. Both of these theses, whilst bearing some family resemblance to their original birth certificates in Scholasticism, are entirely un-Scholastic concepts. Nevertheless, the two theses that Brentano develops are *conceptually* related, for, *once* the object of consciousness is viewed univocally as the directly intended object of a specific act of consciousness, as in Brentano's first thesis, it follows analytically from this descriptive-psychological claim that there is an act *hidden* but nonetheless present that intends that object. Hence the *need*, in Brentano's and Husserl's definition of descriptive-psychological and phenomenological analysis, for '*research*', and for '*inner reflection*', and for '*scientific investigation*' into the way psychical-act experiences, as thus construed on this intentional model of consciousness, present their objects in the elucidation of this intentional model of consciousness.<sup>100</sup>

Brentano's first thesis on the intentional object of consciousness as the directly intended object of consciousness (*PES*), therefore, implies the second thesis concerning the immanent *relation* of an act to that object (*DP*), a feature that Brentano had in point of fact spotted about our psychical-act experiences in *PES* but which he only began to refer to and emphasize as an 'intentional relation' after his 1874 publication, and in his lectures on 'descriptive psychology' delivered at the University of Vienna from the mid 1880s to the early 1890s.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, *this second* thesis of intentionality became so well known that we find Heidegger instructing his students in his 1927 Summer lecture course at Marburg University on *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, that,

Compartments have the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed-toward. Annexing a term from Scholasticism, phenomenology calls

<sup>100</sup> All of this, of course, will be lost if the intentionality of the acts of consciousness is interpreted in terms of 'openness', 'no-thingness', 'negativity', or 'the awareness of the There of Being, in which I find myself implicated as a being in Being' ('*Dasein*' in the way Heidegger understands that term) that is disclosable *methodologically*, in Heidegger's view, only from within the mood of *Angst*.

<sup>101</sup> From about the mid-1880s to 1905, Brentano held two theses of intentionality, one concerning the immanence of objects in consciousness and the other depicting the directedness of the acts of consciousness towards those immanent objects. After 1905, he abandons the thesis of the immanence of objects in consciousness but retains the directedness of the activity of the acts of consciousness as his thesis.

this structure *intentionality*. Scholasticism speaks of the *intentio* of the will, of *voluntas*; it speaks of intention only in reference to the will. It is far from assigning intention also to the remaining compartments of the subject or indeed from grasping the sense of this structure at all fundamentally. Consequently, it is a historical error as well as a substantive error to say, as is most frequently today, that the doctrine of intentionality is Scholastic. ... Nevertheless, Scholasticism does not know the doctrine of intentionality. In contrast, to be sure, Franz Brentano in his *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* (1874), under the strong influence of Scholasticism, and especially of Thomas and Suarez, gave sharper emphasis to intentionality and said that the sum total of all psychical experiences could be and had to be classified with regard to this structure, the manner of directing oneself towards something. ... Brentano influenced Husserl, who for the first time elucidated the nature of intentionality in the *Logical Investigations* (1900–01) and carried this clarification further in *Ideas* (1913).<sup>102</sup>

While it is philosophically true that Brentano emphasised the descriptive-psychological tenet that all psychical-act experiences could be and had to be arranged following ‘*the ways in which*’ (*PES*, pp. 197–198, my emphasis) such acts directed themselves towards their objects, the term that Brentano actually annexes from Scholasticism in *PES* is not the term of ‘*intentio voluntatis*’ but (a version of) the Scholastic concept of the abstracted form existing intentionally in the intellectual part of the knower’s soul.<sup>103</sup> Heidegger’s reading of Brentano’s later (second) thesis of intentionality (‘Brentano II’) back into the first thesis of intentionality (‘Brentano I’)—the only thesis of *intentionality* that is actually elaborated in *PES* (1874)—invariably overlooks *not only* the extensive re-working that the original Scholastic metaphysical concept of intentional indwelling (*inesse intentionale*) had undergone in *PES* *but also* the philosophical implications of that re-working for Husserl’s later development of both of Brentano’s theses of the intentional object as the intended object of consciousness and the intentional act as the object-relatedness of consciousness to its object. Notwithstanding Husserl’s well-known *descriptive-psychological* objections to Brentano’s (phenomenologically unjustifiable) view of the intended object of perception as a sign of something other than itself (i.e. of the effects of stimuli, the theoretically

<sup>102</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. by A. Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 58

<sup>103</sup> The actual terminology of ‘*intentionale Inexistenz*’, employed by Brentano in the 1874 passage, does not occur in Scholasticism (e.g. ‘*intentionale inexistencia*’), however, as Hedwig’s researches have shown. Nevertheless, Brentano’s allusions in *PES* are clearly to the particular metaphysical concept of ‘intentional indwelling’ (*[in]esse intentionale*) as applied specifically in Scholastic theory of knowledge.

constructed thing of physics) and Husserl's objection to Brentano's understanding of 'physical phenomena' as 'immanent sense data' (e.g., as 'reds' rather than as the red of the rose or as 'sounds' rather than as the song of the singer, i.e. as sensations actively interpreted through objectivating acts),<sup>104</sup> Husserl advances and elucidates both theses of intentionality that Brentano elaborated. Taking these two theses together, *the way in which* a psychical-act experience intends its object becomes the root-concept of Brentano's idea of descriptive psychology, for, it is not what or that such acts intend their objects that is the focus of attention in this new science but *the way in which* such acts intend their objects that must guide, in principle, any determination and classification of 'mental phenomena in general'. What this revaluation of the Scholastic concept of intentionality into a root-concept of descriptive psychology announces, nevertheless, as Husserl also well grasped, is a new way of looking at human consciousness where the experiencing subject, understood in a post-Kantian fashion, and its 'understanding of Being' (*Seinsverständnis*)—to borrow Heidegger's phrase—is taken as the primary reality for philosophic investigation.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>104</sup> 'I hear a *barrel organ*—the tones sensed are interpreted *as those of a barrel organ*' (Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, p. 860). 'I do not see colour sensations but coloured things; I do not hear sound sensations but the song of the singer' (ibid., p. 569). Husserl's view on the sense-bestowing (*Sinngebung*) function of the intentional activity of consciousness in the constitution of the meaning of objects presented *via* acts of outer perceptual-sense experience, however, is *Husserl's theory*, and not Brentano's, and it is a theory which Husserl derives from his view of the way in which consciousness animates and interprets the meaning of a word ('marks' on a page) and which he transposes onto his analysis and understanding of the meaning of perception. Cf. De Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, p. 163, and Moran, *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology*, p. 128. Dilthey, as was well known at the time, was highly critical of just such a theory because it is based upon an *unphenomenological* understanding of the experience of language (as Dilthey argues *against* Husserl).

<sup>105</sup> Heidegger, alongside many others, was critical of the phenomenologically unjustifiable Cartesian-dualistic metaphysical views of human subjectivity underpinning Brentano and Husserl's conceptualisation of the intentionality of consciousness and 'the understanding of Being' that this *at once* makes possible and *at once* excludes within the manner of 'inner reflection' practiced in Cartesian-Lockean-Humean 'psycho-analytic' fashion. Rejecting a Cartesian metaphysical view of consciousness underpinning the tenet of the intentionality of consciousness is one thing, but leaving the entire concept of human consciousness—such as is done in Heidegger's own conceptualization of '*Dasein*' (as he understands that term) and the 'understanding of Being' that is sent to *Dasein* (as Heidegger configures that sending)—is quite another thing, and one that is possibly tantamount to throwing the baby out with the bath water. Cf. Frederick Olafson, *Heidegger and the Philosophy of Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

It is not that surprising, therefore, that *Brentano's* new concept and understanding of the intentionality of consciousness cannot be readily deployed or satisfactorily refined *to resolve* substantive *philosophical* problems noted with the Cartesian-Kantian separation of human consciousness and the human body in human subjectivity precisely because it is premised on that very assumption in the first place.<sup>106</sup> This metaphysical dualistic assumption of a lucid mind and an opaque body in human subjectivity underwrites Brentano's *methodological* thematization of human consciousness as such in the elaboration of his new science of descriptive psychology. Likewise, it is not that surprising that Brentano's new concept of the intentionality of consciousness cannot be used to address many substantive *philosophical* problems concerning our 'understanding of Being' that even Heidegger acknowledges extends not only to the external world and to one's self but also to one's own fellow human being—of whom scant treatment, however, can be found in Heidegger's own work—given the paucity of the choice between 'the inner perception of our own psychical phenomena' and 'the outer perceptual-sense experience of physical phenomena (however appropriately the latter are phenomenologically described)' as the only two founded-modes of perception that are available *methodologically* to Brentano (and to the early Husserl) for the purposes of clarifying the origin of the meaning of our 'understanding of Being'.<sup>107</sup> And the

<sup>106</sup> Once this dualistic assumption is relinquished, and with it any philosophical investigation into 'consciousness as such'—i.e. Brentanean and Husserlian phenomenological readings debarred—the only remaining option for 'an important strand of research in contemporary analytic philosophy of mind', as Bartok remarks, would be to continue the 'search for an adequate analysis or theory of intentionality ... that succeeds in demonstrating its reducibility to the purely physical or, failing this, its outright eliminability', 'Brentano's Intentionality Thesis', p. 438. Success here, however, would corroborate Maurice Nathanson's prediction that, '[T]he naturalisation of consciousness is the death of consciousness' ('The Empirical and Transcendental Ego', in *For Roman Ingarden: Nine Essays in Phenomenology*, ed. by A-T. Tymieniecka (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), pp. 42–53, p. 53. There are other approaches and trends in philosophical analysis that come from outside the analytic and phenomenological traditions associated with Brentano and Husserl that could be profitably deployed in the search for an adequate analysis or theory of intentionality, which would not necessarily impale themselves on one of the horns of the dilemma of its reducibility or its eliminability noted by Bartok.

<sup>107</sup> Brentano does remark in *PES* that 'the relation of one human being to another, as far as their inner life is concerned, is in no way comparable to that which exists between two inorganic individuals of the same species, e.g., between two drops of water' p. 36. Thus Brentano subscribes to some form of irreducibility or, at least, incomparability of our mental life to at least a certain level of physical reality. Analysing this particular relation of one human being's inner life to a fellow human

inclusion of universal objects (e.g. colour) about which we can and do make eternally true *a priori* judgements (e.g. colour implies extension), that are given to eidetic ideation or intuition ‘in their bodily reality *so to speak*’, which Husserl famously expounds in his advancement of a descriptive-*eidetic*-psychological method in the ‘principle of all principles’ (*Ideas* §24) can fare, in principle, no better either in addressing these issues.<sup>108</sup> If the descriptive method instigated by Brentano and advanced by Husserl of reflecting upon one’s own actual intentional consciousness cannot seriously address all of these problems, then such problems are not, strictly speaking, basic problems of that method or in that science but an undesirable state of affairs *for* that method and *with* that science.<sup>109</sup> Those who recognised this undesirable state of affairs *as a methodological impasse* to genuine phenomenological research into human consciousness and into what human consciousness is a consciousness of would have one of two options left open to take. They would have to either (1) find a different method for phenomenological thinking to the kind that *Husserl*, following Brentano, practiced in their method of ‘inner perception’ and ‘inner reflection’ on intentional consciousness, or (2) incorporate alternative

being’s inner life, however, is *methodologically excluded* in the science of descriptive psychology, as Brentano conceives of it, because descriptive psychology is based on ‘inner perception’ of one’s own actual psychical-act experiences and their intentional objects, if they exist, whilst relying on the outer perceptual-sense experience of ‘physical phenomena’ as a possible means of approach would be a case in point of comparing the incomparable.

<sup>108</sup> The primary analogue for Husserl here is the givenness for perception and not the bodily presence of one’s fellow human being. Lévinas departs completely from any such founded mode of perception as the legitimate phenomenal basis to approach the otherness of the other that we do encounter ‘face to face’ *via* dialogue, for, even when we are talking to another person about that person herself the otherness of the other discussed is more than that and stands behind that. That Husserl *can* regard ‘Colour’ as an universal object that is given in its ‘living bodily reality’ (*in seiner lebhaften Wirklichkeit*), ‘present in the flesh’, ‘*in propria persona*’ to (eidetic) perception should be enough to alert commentators to the dominance of perception—and not the full presence of the living body of a fellow human being—in the analogy used here by Husserl and in Husserl’s thought. Cf., however, Moran, *Edmund Husserl: The Founder of Phenomenology*, p. 266, n.37.

<sup>109</sup> Towards the end of his survey on ‘the problem of empathy’ in Husserl and in some of his contemporaries, Moran concludes that Husserl, ‘in discussing the experience of one’s own body, ... invokes concepts of ‘innerness’ or ‘interiority’, ‘inner perception’ or ‘inner sensation’, and the whole sphere of oneness (*Eigenheitssphäre*), all of which call out for clarification, and perhaps involve more problems than they solve.’ D. Moran, ‘The Problem of Empathy: Lipps, Scheler, Husserl and Stein’, in *Amor amicitiae: On the Love that is Friendship: Essays in Medieval Thought and Beyond in Honour of the Rev. Professor James McEvoy*, ed. by Thomas A.F. Kelly and Philipp W. Rosemann (Leuven; Paris; Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2004), pp. 269–312, p. 311

methods outside of *Brentanean-Husserlian* descriptive-methodological confines into their own manner and practice of phenomenological philosophising (such as, for instance, Heidegger did, by appropriating and adapting aspects of *Dilthey's hermeneutic method* of 'descriptive psychology' in an effort to produce his own version of 'descriptive phenomenology' as 'hermeneutic phenomenology', famously announced and declared in the Introduction to *Sein und Zeit* (1927)—with Husserl's (and Brentano's) definition of the concept of 'descriptive psychology' accordingly '*losing out in the competition*' (*Besiegtwerden im Wettstreit*, DP, p. 7), if I may borrow Brentano's phrase).<sup>110</sup> Either way, Husserl's idea of one method for phenomenology and for phenomenological research (*für phänomenologische Forschung*) into the intentionality of consciousness and its objectivities would have to be relinquished. Either way, the issue at stake (*die Sache selbst*), nevertheless, remains the same, i.e., the better way to approach and to investigate the intentionality of human consciousness and its objectivities: 'Brentano's thesis'.

<sup>110</sup> Whether Heidegger really understood the cut and thrust of Brentanean-Husserlian methodological concerns for science and research into the intentionality of the acts of human consciousness and their objectivities, and whether Heidegger was fully aware of the impasse to where both Brentano and Husserl's respective methods of descriptive psychology and descriptive-eidetic psychology (and Husserl's later method of transcendental reduction) led, Heidegger's appropriation and integration of aspects of central tenets of *Dilthey's hermeneutic method* of 'descriptive psychology' into his own version of 'descriptive phenomenology' as 'hermeneutic phenomenology' in *Sein und Zeit* (1927) ensured that Husserl could *not be regarded today*, either philosophically or historically, as the *only* founder of twentieth-century phenomenology. But that is the subject-matter of another debate, and of another much disputed case among commentators and critics concerning the originality of philosophical ideas in the history of twentieth-century phenomenology and phenomenological research.