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## Brentano's Modification of the Medieval-Scholastic Concept of 'Intentional Inexistence' in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874)

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Brentano is perhaps most famously renowned for his re-deployment of Scholastic terminology of 'intentional act' and 'intentional object' in the elaboration of his novel science of 'descriptive psychology' in the mid-1870s and 1880s. In this re-deployment, however, Brentano adapted the original Scholastic meanings of both of these terms. Thus Brentano advanced not one but two descriptive-psychological theses of intentionality.<sup>1</sup> These theses, however, are often not properly distinguished, and consequently they are more often confused. Nevertheless, once the two theses are distinguished, Brentano's basic descriptive-psychological tenet of the intentionality of consciousness is more readily understandable on its own terms. Whether Brentano's descriptive-psychological tenet is entirely acceptable philosophically, or not, of course, is another matter but this presupposes understanding in a straightforward sense what Brentano's doctrine is. In this article, I will be concerned mainly with Brentano's re-introduction of 'what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object' in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874),<sup>2</sup> even though it is Brentano's (second) thesis on 'intentional act', one that he developed after his 1874 publication, that is more generally well known and examined. While acknowledging that many versions of 'Brentano's thesis', as it is usually (and loosely) referred to by commentators today, have been re-worked in modern philosophy of mind, this article focuses attention on some of the main points of convergence and deviance between the original Scholastic concept and Brentano's 'new' concept of intentionality in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*.

### 1.1 Introduction

In a reference to Brentano's concept of the intentionality of consciousness, Husserl tells us 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> This article will not examine Husserl's advancement of Brentano's descriptive-psychological concept of intentionality because in order to address this matter, one would need to present a detailed study of the development of Husserl's thought from his earliest descriptive-psychological investigations in his *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1891), through his extensive descriptive-eidetic-psychological analyses in the two volumes of *Logical Investigations* (1900–1901), to his turn towards transcendental idealism in *Ideas: Book I* (1913), and to his later writings. Fortunately, Theodore De Boer, in his masterful study *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, has undertaken both an extensive and a meticulous examination of the unfolding of the concept of intentionality in Husserl's thought from his earliest writings, through his well-known *Logical Investigations*, and to his transition to transcendental idealism (around 1907–1908) that was later made known through Husserl famous and celebrated 'reduction' of the natural standpoint to the transcendental-phenomenological standpoint in *Ideas I* (1913).<sup>4</sup> Rather, in this article, I

wish to draw attention back to Brentano's initial 'revaluation' (*Umwertung*) of the Scholastic concept of intentionality in order to determine some of the main features which Brentano accepts, rejects and adapts from the Scholastic account in the elaboration of his new concept of intentionality. An assessment of the originality of 'Brentano's thesis' of intentionality, therefore, is the main focus of this article.

### §1.2 Background: Disagreement Over Interpretations of 'Brentano's Thesis'

Commentators and critics today *still* disagree among themselves about the originality (or lack of originality) of Brentano's concept of intentionality. And they disagree about the originality (or lack of originality) of Brentano's concept in respect to *both* the scholastic concept *and* the Husserlian concept of intentionality.<sup>5</sup> No doubt, the fact that Brentano employs scholastic terminology in a new context (i.e. in 'descriptive psychology') is one the main sources that has evoked much hermeneutic disagreement and difficulty. Another potent source of hermeneutic confusion lies in the fact that several of Brentano's own immediate students and 'followers' (e.g. Meinong, Höfler, Twardowski, Husserl, Sartre, Chisholm, to mention but a few), all developed their own versions of 'Brentano's thesis of intentionality', whilst maintaining that each of their respective versions either adhered to or (critically) advanced 'Brentano's thesis', even though *such versions themselves* are notoriously different from each other.<sup>6</sup> All of this complicates considerably the task of interpreting, understanding and assessing the historical and philosophical innovation of *Brentano's thesis*.<sup>7</sup> *Whose* thesis and *which* thesis of intentionality that one is addressing and evaluating are important questions to bear in mind when dealing with this matter.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, it is generally acknowledged that it is principally due to Brentano and to his students in the 1880s, and in particular to Husserl and to his extensive development of the tenet of the intentionality of consciousness in the elaboration of his idea of phenomenology in the 1900s, 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.

### 1.3 Brentano's Revaluation of the Scholastic Concept of Intentionality

Husserl first became acquainted with Brentano's doctrine of intentionality whilst attending Brentano's lectures at Vienna University from 1884–1886.<sup>9</sup> Brentano, however, had re-introduced (and modified) the Scholastic concept of intentionality some ten years previously, in his unfinished study of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874),<sup>10</sup> and had developed his thesis of intentionality in his lecture-courses on 'Descriptive Psychology' in the 1880s and in the early 1900s.<sup>11</sup> A characteristic of Brentano's thought, therefore, as Husserl correctly remarks, is that 'it never stood still'.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, before Brentano began teaching in Vienna University in 1874 and before the publication of his *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* in the same year,<sup>13</sup> Brentano had earned for himself a significant reputation as an Aristotelian scholar on the basis of two published works on Aristotle: namely, his 1862 doctoral dissertation *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, published in the same year, and his 1866 *Habilitationschrift*

*The Psychology of Aristotle, In Particular His Doctrine of the Active Intellect*, published in 1867.<sup>14</sup> Hence Brentano's familiarity with Scholastic terminology.<sup>15</sup>

By the time Husserl began to attend Brentano's lectures in philosophy in Vienna University, therefore, Brentano's thinking had undergone several changes. First, Brentano had moved away from his original interest in Aristotle's metaphysics and psychology, in the 1860s, and towards matters of concern pertaining to the new budding natural science of empirical psychology, in the 1870s. Second, he was both advancing and applying his idea of 'descriptive psychology' to the founding of the normative disciplines of Ethics, Logic and Aesthetics in his lectures in the 1880s. Since it is in the context of 'descriptive psychology' that Brentano develops his new concept of intentionality, some general remarks about Brentano's novel idea of 'descriptive psychology' will be necessary.

#### 1.4 Brentano's Distinction Between Descriptive and Genetic Psychology

According to Brentano, the natural science of empirical psychology can be divided up into two separate but component parts, namely, a 'descriptive psychology' and a 'genetic psychology'. The main task of 'descriptive psychology' is to describe clearly the phenomena for the science of empirical psychology. The main task of the 'genetic' part of the science of empirical psychology would be to then explain causally, by employing the method of the natural sciences, how such phenomena came into existence and went out of existence. Brentano borrowed this model of division from similar occurrences in the development of other natural sciences e.g. descriptive anatomy and physiology, geognosy and geogony (geology), and even coined the term 'Psychognosie' for the descriptive part of the science of empirical psychology.<sup>16</sup> Brentano takes 'psychical phenomena' to be the main subject-matter of empirical psychology, and by 'psychical phenomena' Brentano means all conscious-act experiences (*Erlebnisse*) and their features as they occur in 'the mentally active subject'. Thus the class of 'psychical phenomena in general' constitutes a very broad range of 'phenomena' for Brentano, such as, for instance, sensing, willing, thinking, judging, understanding, misunderstanding, loving, hating, fearing, hoping, taking an interest in an object, taking no interest in an object (indifference), acts of disinterest, and so forth. However, Brentano tells us in 'Book II Psychological Phenomena In General' of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* that he found do much 'confusion' and 'even self-contradiction among eminent psychologists' over their very use and meaning of the terms 'physical and psychical phenomena' that the corresponding natural sciences of physics and psychology that deal with these two basic 'classes' of phenomena could not hope to advance as separate but definitive natural sciences of 'physical and psychical phenomena' respectively unless such confusion was removed.<sup>17</sup> Thus Brentano declares at the beginning of 'Book II Psychological Phenomena in General' that 'our aim is to clarify the meaning of the two terms "*physical phenomena*" and "*psychical phenomena*", removing all misunderstandings and confusion concerning them.'<sup>18</sup> In order to address this task, Brentano believed that the only way open to him was to return to the origin of the meaning of the terms 'physical and psychical phenomena' in our experiences of such phenomena themselves and to focus on and

hopefully arrive at *a priori* evident items of knowledge about 'physical and psychical phenomena' in order to rule out any possible misunderstanding of the meaning of these two central terms. Only in this way could 'complete clarity' between psychologists and other natural scientists be reached, and the 'confusion' over the domains of enquiry for psychology and other natural sciences, in particular the science of physics that has established itself as the science of 'physical physical phenomena [as] they manifest themselves in a pure state', removed.<sup>19</sup> The method of analysis that Brentano advocates for the descriptive part of the science of psychology, then, is essentially different to the method of observation, hypothesis and experimentation that is characteristic of the method of the natural sciences. *A fortiori* Brentano's descriptive method is essentially different to the genetic part of the science of empirical psychology. Instead of seeking empirically verifiable knowledge-claims that are both generally and hypothetically true for the most part about 'matters of fact', the science of descriptive psychology seeks to establish a unified system of intuitively grounded, *a priori* self-evident knowledge-claims about pure psychical-act experiences themselves.

Sometime after 1874, however, Brentano believed that his 'descriptive method' could be used to found the meaning of basic concepts employed in the normative sciences of Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics. This becomes the second function of descriptive psychology; one that is not tied to the preparation of the subject-matter for the empirical science of psychology.<sup>20</sup> Rather, the task now is to clarify the origins of our normative concepts in and through descriptive *a priori* analyses of consciousness since the method of the natural sciences, which concerns itself with 'matters of fact', as Hume would put it, is clearly inappropriate to accomplish this task. Laws of norm, Brentano insists, are to be sharply distinguished from laws of fact. In this regard, Brentano joins in the 'back to Kant' movement that emerged in Germany in the 1880s. It was at this time, then, when Brentano was developing further his idea of applying his 'descriptive method' to matters concerning the normative disciplines of Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics that Husserl attended his lectures.<sup>21</sup>

### **1.5 Brentano's Descriptive-Psychological Modification of the Scholastic Concept of Intentional Act**

The particular 'revaluation' of the scholastic concept of intentionality, which Husserl alludes to in his 1931 Author's Preface to the first English translation of *Ideas* (1913), concerns Brentano's adaptation of the scholastic theory of the object-relatedness of acts of the will into a basic descriptive-psychological tenet regarding the object-relatedness of *all* psychical-act experiences (*Erlebnisse*) that are characteristic of human consciousness. About this adaptation, Brentano himself remarks in *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, which was a lecture that Brentano delivered before the Vienna Law Society on January 23, 1889, and which he published in the same year:

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>22</sup>

In a note about his use of the term 'intentional', which Brentano added to the published text of the above lecture, Brentano informs us: 'The expression "intentional", like many other of our more important concepts, comes from the Scholastics.'<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Brentano is correct to note that the term 'intentional', when it designates the directedness of the activity of the human will towards its objectives (*in aliud tendere*), is employed by the Scholastics in their theory of the will. This theory of *intention* is probably best captured by St Thomas in his well-known definition: '*intentio est proprie actus voluntatis*'.<sup>24</sup>

The Scholastics, however, as Brentano well knew, did not hold the view that *all* of our *acts* of consciousness (or *all* of our psychical-act experiences (*Erlebnisse*) as Brentano prefers to name them) are characteristically 'intentional' acts. In Scholasticism, acts of knowledge, for example, are not regarded *per se* as intentional acts, though clearly reliant, generally speaking, on the will of the knower to engage in such acts (though involuntary knowledge is not denied by Scholastics); rather, acts of the intellect are regarded as abstractive acts by nature. That is to say, in cognition, intelligibility is elicited from data presented by the knower through the exercise of the agent intellect. In this way, the knower becomes a knower of such things in and through his or her acts of understanding. This results in a modification of the knower's potential to know that-which-is-knowable. Thus before, during and after this process, both knower and that which is potentially intelligible retain their specific natures and their ontological integrities. The *immanent* 'striving' or 'impulse after' achieving its own ends or goals that is characteristic of the dynamic of the will, then, is characteristically *not found* in acts of the intellect. What is found characteristic of acts of knowledge, however, is the abstractive activity of its operations because of the discovery (*in-venio*) dimension in acquiring items of knowledge that is the hallmark of (genuine) knowledge in Scholastic epistemology.

The Scholastics did not regard acts of sensation as intentional acts either. Such acts occur without the will or the intelligence of a human being. Rather, when a human being comes into contact with 'physical things' in the external world, the potencies of the sensitive soul (*anima sensitiva*) of that living being are activated. This encounter between 'physical things in the external world' and 'the embodied sensitive soul of the human being', as Brentano points out in his 1866 study of Aristotle's psychology, demonstrates for Aristotle and the Scholastics the corporeal nature of the sensitive soul (in man). This also explains why the modern problematic of bridging the gap between consciousness and the external world does not appear in Scholasticism, nor in Brentano's 1866 study, for sense *knowledge* is founded in the actual sensation of *physical things in the external world*. Brentano himself both examines and defends the intricacies of the co-operation between acts of sensation and acts of cognition, that were analysed by Aristotle and the Aristotelians, in his 1866 habilitation thesis on *The Psychology of Aristotle, in Particular His Doctrine of the Active Intellect*.

Brentano's descriptive-psychological view in 1889 that *all of our* psychical-act experiences—however we are to account for their appearance (and their differences) in consciousness—can be called 'intentional acts', therefore, clearly deviates not only from Scholastic theory of cognition and from Scholastic theory of volition but also from the clear distinctions that the Scholastics drew between acts of sensation, acts of cognition (where sense-knowledge of 'physical things' is one form of knowledge, and quite a low form of knowledge at that) and acts of volition. Indeed, Brentano's expansion of the Scholastic term 'intentional act' in the elaboration of his new science of descriptive psychology and the very 'choice of the words "act" and "intentional" led 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>25</sup> Brentano, however, clearly means no such thing. Rather, Brentano's point is a straightforward point but it does require that we pay attention to the way psychical-act experiences (in consciousness) present themselves as acts specifically directed towards *their* objects. This 'thesis' or descriptive-psychological 'tenet', therefore, is verifiable and *only* visible on the *methodological* basis of inner reflection on the nature of such psychical-act experiences themselves of a mentally active subject. What this thesis concerning the 'intentionality' of consciousness amounts to philosophically, in terms of realism and idealism, however, can be set aside for the moment. One thing is certain, nevertheless, the arrow of intentionality, as understood by Brentano in his 1889 lecture, does not extend *outside* of consciousness but remains within the modern principle of immanence as defined and defended by Descartes and Locke. In other words, for Brentano, as it was for Descartes, Locke and Hume before him, access to consciousness through 'inner perception', by which Brentano really means inner reflection, is 'peculiarly direct and certain as compared with our knowledge of anything else'.<sup>26</sup>

Setting aside the major *difference* between the meaning of the term of 'intention' when it refers to the Scholastic-volitional concept of intentionality and Brentano's descriptive-psychological concept of the intentional relation of all psychical-act experiences, it is quite clear that in his 1889 lecture Brentano is stressing the point that what is characteristic of 'consciousness'—notwithstanding his reservation about using the 'misleading' term '*Bewußtsein*'—is the *peculiar kind of relation* that acts of consciousness bear to their objects, one that can be called '*intentional*'. This, then, appears to be why Brentano believes that he is justified in borrowing the term 'intentional' from the Scholastics as a way of describing consciousness because all psychical-act experiences that occur within consciousness, from within a descriptive-psychological perspective, bear an *immanent* relation (a directedness) to their objects. Thus Brentano believes that he is not deviating in any significant sense from *the meaning* of the term 'intentional' in *his use* of this term to describe the directedness (or the referential characteristic, or 'aboutness' of consciousness, as it is sometimes called) of *psychical-act* experiences towards their objects as exhibiting an *intentional* relation (*intentionale Beziehung*). Nevertheless, for Brentano, the meaning of this term, as it employed in descriptive psychology—as with all terms employed therein—must be checked against intuition itself; that is to say, in this instance, against the experience of one's own actual psychical-act experiences themselves, and not against the Scholastic

theoretical concept, or against any other theoretical construction. This is the descriptive method to which Brentano commits himself. Such a view of intentionality, then, does not mark any epistemological 'realist turn (Scholastic or otherwise)' towards the 'object'. Rather, it is a descriptive-psychological thesis about the nature of the acts themselves. In sum, for Brentano, the object-relatedness or directedness of the activity of intentional consciousness towards its objects in consciousness really depicts the (passive) possession of consciousness of *its* objects or *its* contents.

### 1.6 Brentano's Descriptive-Psychological Concept of Intentional Object

When Brentano first re-introduced the Scholastic terminology of intentionality in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874), however, he did not deploy the term 'intentional' as an adverb, qualifying the activity of the *relation* of consciousness to its objects, rather he employed the term intentional as an adjective, qualifying the *object* in consciousness. Here, in what is probably one of the most quoted passages from *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, 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, 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.<sup>27</sup>

The above 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>28</sup> Without endeavouring to unravel such controversy, it is fairly easy to grasp what *Brentano himself* believes he is saying in the 1874 passage, even if what he says is put in a somewhat cumbersome manner.

In the 1874 passage Brentano appears to say the following. The defining characteristic of 'psychical phenomena' (i.e. of actual acts of sensing, thinking, judging, desiring, loving, hating, willing, fearing, etc.), when compared to 'physical phenomena' (by which Brentano means actual sensorially perceivable qualities of outer sense perception, such as colours, sounds, odours, etc., as well as all intended objects of all psychical-act experiences i.e. thought-objects, loved objects, logical concepts! etc.) is that each and any psychical-act experience that occurs for a mentally active subject refers to that object or to that content, or is inextricably directed towards that object or towards that content, and that *that object or that content* can be described as having mental or intentional or immanent inexistence. Such an object or content is not to be understood as having any kind of real, substantial existence outside (independently) of the mind, nor, indeed, as

having any kind of real, substantial-objective existence inside the mind (or in the brain). Rather, it is to be understood as an immanent objectivity of the psychical-act experience itself, and so it can be described—and here *Brentano believes that he is concurring with Scholastic usage*—as having ‘intentional’, that is to say, ‘mental inexistence’, in comparison to any kind of ‘real’, ‘actual’, ‘substantial’ (in)existence in the mind or ‘real’, ‘actual’, ‘substantial’ existence outside of the mind.<sup>29</sup>

In the 1874 passage, then, Brentano defines psychical-act experiences, employing no less than ‘five typifying expressions’.<sup>30</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), 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>31</sup> All of these expressions, then, point to 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 psychical-act experiences towards a content or an object. In the 1874 passage, expressions (4) and (5) are understood by Brentano to be describing the same thing, namely, the object-relatedness of psychical-act experiences.<sup>32</sup> Thus Passmore is correct to note that Brentano takes ‘these phrases [i.e. (4) ‘direction towards an object’ and (5) ‘relation toward a content’] to be synonymous’.<sup>33</sup> However, according to Brentano himself, out of all the characteristics of the psychical expressed in the 1874 passage, it is the fact that a psychical-act experience *contains an object intentionally within itself* that enables us to positively identify and clearly distinguish ‘psychical phenomena in general’ (i.e. sensing, thinking, willing, hoping, desiring, fearing, understanding, remembering etc.) from ‘physical phenomena in general’ (i.e., colours, sounds, odours etc.). Brentano makes this very clear in the passage immediately following the 1874 passage, when he declares:

This intentional in-existence 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.<sup>34</sup>

What is characteristic *exclusively* of psychical-act experiences is that they contain the intentional in-existence of an object in them. In a later passage, Brentano re-iterates this claim informing us,

in the first place [...] the term ‘consciousness,’ since it refers to an object which consciousness is conscious of, 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, for which we lack a word in common usage.<sup>35</sup>

And,

we use the term 'consciousness' to refer to any psychical phenomenon, insofar as it has a content.<sup>36</sup>

In his 1874 study, it is quite clear that the intentional object is understood by Brentano to be the directly *intended* object of an actual act, and that it is an object that remains *completely within* the specific psychical-act experience for the mentally active subject. What consciousness is a consciousness of ('*von welchem das Bewußtsein Bewußtsein ist*'), then, is an immanent or intentional or mental object.<sup>37</sup> Brentano, therefore, does not write about *die intentionale Beziehung* in this 1874 publication of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, as many commentators intimate, but about '*die intentionale (auch wohl mentale) Inexistenz eines Gegenstandes*'. Thus 'intentional inexistence of an object' and 'psychical indwelling (*psychische Einwohnung*) are synonymous expressions denoting the particular mode of mental existence of the object in any given psychical-act experience of a mentally active subject. However, Brentano does speak about *die intentionale Beziehung* in his 1887 lectures on *Descriptive Psychology*. Nevertheless, in his 1874 study and in his lecture courses on *Descriptive Psychology* in the 1880s and early 1890s, the activity of the directedness of consciousness towards its objects is understood by Brentano in terms of a passive possession of intentional objects immanent to consciousness itself, and certainly not the 'sense-bestowing' activity (*Sinngebung*) of intentional consciousness that Husserl developed in his theory of constitution nor is it the theory of an 'intentional stance' that I adopt towards the real world as elaborated later by Dennett.

Nevertheless, after 1874, Brentano came to stress intentional consciousness as the direction of consciousness towards its object. This second thesis gained widespread dissemination through Husserl's deployment and elaboration. Indeed, *this* thesis of intentionality became so well known, that we find Heidegger both instructing and maintaining to his students in his 1927 lecture courses on *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* that,

Compartmentments have the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed-toward. Annexing a term from Scholasticism, phenomenology calls this structure *intentionality*. Scholasticism speaks of the *intentio* of the will, of *voluntas*; it speaks of intention only in reference to the will. [...] 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.<sup>38</sup>

While it is philosophically true that Brentano emphasised the point that all psychical-act experiences could be and had to be arranged following *the way in which* such acts directed themselves towards their objects, the Scholastic term that Brentano actually annexes from Scholasticism in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* is not the term

of '*intentio voluntatis*' but (a version of) the Scholastic metaphysical-epistemological concept of the abstracted form existing intentionally in the intellectual part of the knower's soul. The above Heideggerean reading of Brentano's thesis of intentionality, following the emphasis laid on it by Husserl in terms of intentional *act*—and one followed by several commentators today—omits and overlooks, however, the extensive re-working of the Scholastic metaphysical-epistemological concept of 'intentional (in)existence of an object'—and thus the implications of that re-working—in Brentano's *first thesis* of intentionality.

### 1.7 Brentano's First Thesis of Intentionality

About Brentano's 'first thesis' of intentionality, Herbert Spiegelberg, in his very influential article 'Intention and Intentionality in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl', remarks that,

'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, with which Brentano had concerned himself a good deal.<sup>39</sup>

It is true, historically speaking, that in his early student days of philosophy, Brentano had concerned himself a good deal with Thomistic-Aristotelian theory of knowledge, as evidenced by his 1866 *Habilitationschrift* on *The Psychology of Aristotle*. Again, it is true, textually speaking, that Brentano appended a footnote to the 1911 re-issued edition of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, re-iterating what he took to be a point of agreement between his use of the concept of intentional inexistence in his 1874 passage and the original Scholastic epistemological doctrine of the intentional inexistence of an object *qua abstracted form* in the soul of the knower. In this footnote (which Spiegelberg draws our attention to, as do many commentators), Brentano complains about the reception, misinterpretation, and misunderstanding of the meaning of the concept of the intentional inexistence of an object immanent to consciousness which he had re-introduced. Brentano remarks,

This expression 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'.<sup>40</sup>

Brentano is quite correct to insist that, as he uses the Scholastic concept of the 'intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object' in the 1874 passage, the term intentional does not carry with it any connotation *whatsoever* of the meaning of the term intention when used to denote the conscious pursuit of a planned end. The characteristic feature of all psychical acts is not that they are purposive or aim at something. Such a meaning of intention, which is employed in Scholastic theory of the will and in ordinary everyday discourse, is clearly *not the one* that Brentano uses *at all* in the 1874 passage. Rather, the stress, as Brentano tells us himself, lies on his deployment of the Scholastic metaphysical-epistemological concept of intentional (or objective) being in thought. And Brentano uses this term in order to distinguish the way objects thought, sensed, desired, willed, known, or shunned exist in some manner (i.e. intentionally, mentally) in the consciousness of a mentally active subject (as subjective appearances) in contrast to the way objects really exist independently of consciousness, or extra-mentally as the Scholastics had held. In another footnote to his use of the term 'intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object' in the 1874 passage, Brentano confirms for us that here he believes himself to be in agreement with Aristotle.

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.<sup>41</sup>

The above self-interpretation and specific emphasis by Brentano concerning both his use of and adherence to the Scholastic epistemological concept of 'intentional in-existence of an object' in the consciousness of a mentally active subject would seem to corroborate and confirm Spiegelberg's interpretation that the concept is being employed by Brentano to mark primarily an ontological characteristic of immanence of objects known in the knower, in an analogous fashion to the way in which the *intentio* or *species* is used in Scholastic theory of knowledge. The objects of immediate sense and of thought do not have real existence but intentional existence (in the mentally active subject).<sup>42</sup> Indeed, Chisholm's characterisation of this part of Brentano's doctrine of intentionality as an 'ontological thesis' reinforces such an interpretation. According to Chisholm, what Brentano's doctrine emphasises is that any object of thought, or of sense, or of whatever, when considered as such, has 'a mode of being (intentional inexistence, immanent objectivity, or existence in the understanding) that is short of actuality but more than nothingness'.<sup>43</sup>

Brentano's self-interpretation, Spiegelberg's commentary and Chisholm's explication of Brentano's use of the Scholastic concept of intentional inexistence, however, overlook significant differences between the way in which the intentional object of sense-knowledge, *qua species*, is said to be intentionally present in the soul of the knower in Thomistic-Aristotelian epistemology and the way in which Brentano in the 1874 passage now regards the presence of the intentional object of sense (and *a fortiori* of any intentional object) as an immanent content residing in consciousness. For brevity, I will draw attention only to two main points of difference between Brentano's 'new' concept of 'intentional (in)existence of an object' and its original birth certificate concept in

Scholastic philosophy. This should lead one to recognise, beyond any doubt, the 'originality' of Brentano's first thesis of intentionality.

First, in Thomistic-Aristotelian theory of sense knowledge, the *intentio* or *species*, or *imago*, when considered as the abstracted form of sense residing intentionally and immanently in the soul of the knower, is precisely *not the object that is directly known as such*.<sup>44</sup> Rather, it is through such 'instruments' that we know the real object. In Scholastic epistemology, it is 'physical things in the external world', to use Brentano's terminology from his previous 1866 study of Aristotle, which are the direct and real objects of acts of sense knowledge. From an Aristotelian-Thomistic perspective, what the knower knows first and foremost is not the immanent contents (or activities) of one's own outer perceptual-sense experiences, the 'sensed object as such' as Brentano puts it in 1874, but 'physical things in the external world' as he had put it in 1866. And in Scholasticism, 'abstracted forms', *qua phantasmata*, are not 'physical phenomena'. Brentano's new view that the object of outer perceptual-sense experience is an intentional object agrees with the original Scholastic concept of *species* as abstracted form in the sense that it is mind-dependent for its very existence on the actuality of consciousness, and this intentional object of sense *as such*, as Brentano stresses, *must not be confused with the real thing (res) existing outside of the mind*. However, unlike the Scholastic account, this intentional object of outer sense perception is *the end term* of outer sense perception for Brentano. For Brentano, then, 'physical phenomena' (colours, sounds etc) exist intentionally (mentally) and only intentionally (mentally) in relevant acts of sensation and are known as such in these acts. This is a completely unScholastic-Aristotelian position. And since, according to Brentano, we take colours and sounds to be existing 'naturally' in 'real objects' that are given to outer sense perception but such colours and sounds do not *in fact* 'really and truly' exist like that at all when we are not aware of them, as demonstrated by natural scientists, because they exist as atoms, light-rays, light particles, sine waves etc. then outer sense perception is *literally and inherently mis-leading (Falsch-nehmung)*. Brentano's view that outer sense perception is naturally and indelibly misleading is a completely unScholastic-Aristotleian epistemological position. All of this, however, is to be explained by the fact that by 1874 Brentano has relinquished *entirely* any Aristotelian theory of abstraction and, in its stead, adopted some version of direct mental (Cartesian) representationalism against a background acceptance of the 'facts' discovered by the theoretical standpoint adopted by the natural sciences. The crucial link in scholastic-epistemological theory between the intention (understood as the abstracted form of sense) and the real object existing extra-mentally, therefore, is completely severed in Brentano's account. Brentano's 1874 doctrine on the immediate object of outer sense perception as that-which is *known* as such and as existing intentionally in the consciousness of the knower marks a significant deviation from any Thomistic-Aristotelian Scholastic epistemological realist theory of *adaequatio rei et intellectus* or of *adaequatio intellectus ad rem*.

For Brentano, then, the phrase 'intentional inexistence' in his 1874 passage means one thing and one thing only, namely, the mental indwelling of objects immanent to acts of consciousness. Like the Scholastics, Brentano uses this metaphysical designation to *oppose* the way such intentionally (mentally) existing objects are in consciousness in

comparison to the way things are naturally and really exist as independent substances outside of one's actual powers of sensation and cognition. In scholastic theory of knowledge, 'physical things', such as matches, match-boxes, water and jugs, really exist in the world independently of our actual conscious activity and of our particular powers and capacity for knowledge. And such things can really exist in each other, e.g., 'matches in a match-box', 'water in a jug'. However, in the 1874 passage, Brentano does not quite follow the distinction and opposition that is set up in Scholastic theory of metaphysics between the intentional order of (in)being, *(in)esse intentionale*, and the natural order of one real substance existing really in another real substance, *esse naturale* or *esse naturae*.

For the Scholastics, the order of *(in)esse intentionale* is opposed to the real order *esse naturale* and is thus a general metaphysical distinction. The way a real thing can be said to be in another real thing—a match in the matchbox—denotes how one real thing can be in another real thing. On the other hand, the way one thing exists fluidly and incompletely in another thing but not really in that thing—the Sun is intentionally present in the light of day—denotes *(in)esse intentionale* (and not 'inexistentia intentionale'). However, 'intentional (in)existence' (as Brentano calls it), is discernible throughout the cosmos, for the Scholastics, e.g., daylight contains the Sun intentionally within itself, all cases of instrumental causality, where the agent is present in the instrument used, involves intentional union.<sup>45</sup> For the Scholastics, however, *(in)esse intentionale* is not an exclusive feature of the psychical. In Scholastic epistemology, the intentional in-dwelling of the abstracted form or intelligible species residing intentionally, as opposed to really, in the soul of the knower is *just one instance* where an 'intentional union' takes place between knower and real object that is known in the world, as Stein, Hayen and De Boer have all correctly reminded us. Indeed, the Scholastics appealed to this concept of intentional union in their theology as a way of 'understanding' the mystery of the triune God where the love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father is manifested in and through the intentional indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Such an account retains the notion of 'three persons' 'in' the 'one substance' (but not three real substances in one substance or in one another). Brentano himself draws our attention to this very deployment of the concept of intentional in-dwelling by St Augustine and the Scholastics in an extended footnote, explaining the historical origins of the concept of 'intentional inexistence of an object' which accompanies the 1874 passage. In sum, in Scholasticism, 'intentional indwelling' denotes a relationship of incomplete identity between the object and the object in which the object is present, and it is a feature discernible throughout the cosmos.<sup>46</sup>

If we turn to Brentano's actual 1874 passage, however, we find that Brentano declares 'intentional inexistence' to be *exclusively* a characteristic of the indwelling of an object in any given psychical-act experience of a mentally active subject. Since such 'intentional (in)existence of an object' is understood by Brentano to be exclusively a feature of objects of consciousness, that is to say, of mental objects or mental contents, then the expressions 'intentional inexistence', 'psychical indwelling', 'mental existence', 'immanent objectivity' are all synonymous expressions for him. Such is not the case in Scholasticism. For the Scholastics, the way the sun is contained intentionally in daylight is not a 'psychical phenomenon', nor is the intentional indwelling of the woodcutter in

the axe used to cut down the tree a mental phenomenon. In the 1874 passage, therefore, Brentano *literally modifies and reduces* the scope and application of the Scholastic cosmic-metaphysical concept of intentional inexistence in an effort to describe the contents of acts of consciousness. Intentional inexistence in the 1874 passage means one thing and one thing only for Brentano, namely, the possession of immanent contents in psychical-act experiences. (Some modern philosophers of mind think that this is the only concept of intentional being in Scholasticism too.) With this *modification*, the feature of intentionality noted in the Scholastic general metaphysical concept of *esse intentionale* drops out in the elaboration of Brentano's modern philosophy of mind in the 1870s and from thereon. However, part of the *original* scholastic-metaphysical distinction that opposes intentional indwelling of abstracted forms (mind-dependent-existence) to the *actuality* of things existing really and truly in their own right, is still present in Brentano's 1874 passage, and most notably this opposition continues in Husserl's celebrated reduction of the natural standpoint to the transcendental-phenomenological standpoint in *Ideas* (1913) where the world that is given (known) to acts of outer perceptual-sense experience is famously, or infamously described by Husserl as having *only an intentional* mode of being (mind-dependent-existence) *for* consciousness in comparison to one's own actual consciousness which has absolute existence in its own right.

Part of the *new* meaning that Brentano attributes to the intentional object of sense in his descriptive psychology, and one that is *not found at all* in Scholasticism, nevertheless, is as the directly *intended* object of sense perception. Indeed, since all objects of any acts are regarded by Brentano as the intended objects *of those acts*, then all of the *actual* objects of sensation, volition, cognition, love, hate etc, from a descriptive-psychological perspective, are to be regarded *analytically* by Brentano as the *intentional* objects of those experiences, and *vice versa*, the intentional (intended) objects are the actual objects, something that is not possible in Scholastic philosophy but something that is not only possible but actual in all of Husserl's writings, and in Heidegger's coupling of '*intentio*' and '*intentum*' in his early lectures on phenomenology in the 1920s. This is also, however, something that invited both realist and idealist and 'neutral' interpretations of 'Brentano's thesis'.

### 1.8 Conclusion – The Scholastic Thesis and Brentano's First Thesis

The main purpose and function lying behind the Scholastic epistemological concept of '*intentio*' as the abstracted form of sense residing intentionally in the soul of the knower is to explain how the human being could know, i.e. abstract and possess, or take in the form of real objects existing extra-mentally, without becoming those objects. When I touch a stone lying on the beach and become cognoscent of the fact that it is a stone (and not a sea-shell as I originally believed), I do not thereby become a real stone because the abstracted form of sense, *through which* I know the stone, resides intentionally, and not really, in the intellect of the knower. Nevertheless, this transparent '*intention*' or '*representative*' makes possible an inner bond between the knower and the thing (the stone) in the external world, without either of these two terms in the relation losing their respective ontological identities and natures in the process of *adaequatio rei et*

*intellectus*. The knower thus becomes what he knows, *in a manner of speaking*, through an intentional union, not through a real union. In the 1874 passage, however, Brentano is clearly not attempting to defend or to elaborate upon any such Scholastic epistemological position, however much his own self-interpretation and historical allusions intimate.

Although Brentano would like us to believe that he concurs with the original meaning of the medieval-scholastic concept of 'intentional in-existence of an object' in the 1874 passage, this, in fact, is not the case. He deviates considerably from the meaning that this concept occupies in Scholastic metaphysics and epistemology. Indeed, the more commentators draw our attention to original the meaning which this concept of '(in)esse intentionale' and of 'intentio' (*qua* abstracted form) may have had in ancient Greek and Medieval-Scholastic philosophical traditions, and the more we compare such accounts to the meaning that Brentano subscribes to in his employment of the concept of 'intentional inexistence of an object' in his 1874 publication of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, the more we see a lack of agreement between Brentano's *concept* of the intentional in-existence of a object in the mentally active subject and the original Scholastic *concept*.

We cannot agree, therefore, with Sorabji's general approach to Brentano's thesis of the relatedness of the mind to intentional objects that 'it was the work of commentators, whether Christian, pagan, or Muslim [...] who made possible Brentano's interpretation and who lent authority to his important new proposal for the philosophy of mind'<sup>47</sup> because Brentano employs the term in a different context from that which it occupied in medieval scholasticism. The testimony of 'inner experience' and 'inner perception' is the final court of appeal for Brentano and for the meaning that he gives to the term intentional object in his 1874 psychology. Nor can we agree with Caston's alternative suggestion that if Brentano had read (properly) what the ancient Greeks had to say about intentionality, then he would have discovered that 'the ancient Greeks did have something to say about this topic, and their differences are both philosophical and relevant'.<sup>48</sup> Nor can we agree with Moran's suggestion that 'Brentano's views as a whole are best understood as a continuation of the Scholastico-Cartesian tradition', unless we prise apart exactly which features are Cartesian and which features are Scholastic-Aristotelian.<sup>49</sup> Rather, as Husserl had noted and re-iterated several times throughout his career, '(H)e [Brentano] presented to the modern era the idea of Intentionality, which he derived out of consciousness itself in immanent description.' Thus 'I [Husserl] see in the [Brentano's] transformation of the Scholastic concept of Intentionality a great discovery.'<sup>50</sup>

The 1874 passage, therefore, wherein Brentano re-introduces 'what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object', is best understood and better interpreted as an attempt by him to engage in descriptive-psychological analysis, that is to say, it reads like this: if we pay attention to any object that arises immediately within one's own intuitive sense of consciousness, one can evidently see that the object that is given or presented to such an experience is the intended object of such an actual psychical-act experience. Whether the intended object of a given psychical-act experience is a real object existing in like manner outside of the

mind is to be 'bracketed', to use Husserl's metaphor, in any descriptive-psychological investigation into the nature of psychical acts and their intended objects.<sup>51</sup> From a descriptive-psychological perspective, therefore, by the intentional inexistence of an object Brentano really means the intended object of any actual psychical-act experience that arises for a mentally active subject. All of this, as Husserl quite rightly points out, is 'derived out of consciousness itself in immanent description', and marks a major 'transformation [by Brentano] of the Scholastic concept of Intentionality.' And all of this, as Husserl also realised, though much later in his own career, *evades* rather than addresses any epistemological viewpoints on the question of either realism or idealism.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to Herbert Spiegelberg: 'It is true that when he [Brentano] uses the adjective "intentional" [in his 1874 *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, qualifying the kind of existence characteristic of the objects of consciousness, as is evident from the context] he still betrays traces of the scholastic doctrine about the immanence of the object known within the soul. But it was this very doctrine about the immanence of the object of knowledge in the soul which Brentano came to reject during what Brentano scholars call the crisis of immanence ("*Immanenzkrise*") of 1905.' *The Phenomenological Movement: a Historical Introduction* (3rd revised and enlarged edition, with the collaboration of Karl Schuhman, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), p. 48, note 19. Thus it is possible for Brentano, whilst rejecting the immanent object theory of intentionality, to still defend the 'intentional acts' of consciousness after 1905, though 'as far as I [Spiegelberg] can make out, even the term "intentional" disappears from Brentano's psychological vocabulary (ibid.)'

<sup>2</sup> *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—henceforth abbreviated as *PES* in notes; *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* (Leipzig, 1874).

<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 (p. 16–17); *Ideen I*, (1913), Husserliana vol. III/1; III/2 (1977). The significance of Brentano's initial discovery of the intentionality of consciousness, therefore, clearly cannot be underestimated, at least in Husserl's eyes, in any evaluation of the elaboration of his idea of phenomenology.

<sup>4</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).

<sup>5</sup> For a defence of the Scholastic credentials of Brentano's 1874 thesis, see Ausonio Marras, 'Scholastic Roots of Brentano's Conceptions of Intentionality', in *The Philosophy of Brentano*, ed. by Linda L. McAlister (London: Duckworth, 1976), p. 128, note 4. What Marras successfully defends in his paper, however, is the Scholastic account, and not Brentano's account. Thus the major discrepancies between the Scholastic account and Brentano's 'new' thesis are not noted or discussed in his paper. Cf. also, 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. The merit of this more recent account is that it focuses on Brentano's Scholastic notion of 'immanent objectivity', however, no discussion of its scholastic credentials and the modification in meaning that Brentano actually makes to this concept is addressed in Jacquette's account. Jacquette seems to approve of Marras' treatment of Brentano's thesis. Cf. Jacquette, note. 5, p. 125. Thus the actual modification that Brentano introduces to the scholastic meaning of intentionality does not feature in Jacquette's paper.

<sup>6</sup> 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 modern day commentators who follow R.M. Chisholm's 'influential account' (p. 2).

<sup>7</sup> In his new 'Introduction' to the re-print of the English translation of Brentano's *PES* (Routledge, 1995), Peter Simons is of the opinion that it is Brentano's students, rather than Brentano himself, who are responsible for the unScholastic conception of 'intentional act' in modern late-nineteenth and early twentieth century philosophies of consciousness. Spiegelberg makes a similar judgement in the 1960s in his famous and widely consulted and re-issued study *The Phenomenological Movement: a Historical Introduction* (first edition, 1960, second edition, 1968, 1971 and 1976, third revised and enlarged edition,

Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994) that 'it was certainly none of Brentano's doing that this new wholly unscholastic *conception* [of intentional act] came to sail under the old flag of "intentionality" (1994, p. 37).' 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 (p. 97).' This is not our view. See note 22 *infra*.

<sup>8</sup> After quoting in full Brentano's famous 1874 passage from *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, Moran, in his paper on 'Brentano's Thesis', immediately quotes a passage from Twardowski's 1894 study *On the Content and Object of Presentations*, as a gloss on Brentano's passage, and then proceeds to discuss and unpack Brentano's 1874 passage in light of elements that Twardowski distinguishes in his 1894 book between 'relation to a content' and 'direction to an object', a distinction which Brentano does not operate in his 1874 book, and in light of Twardowski's 1894 *interpretation and understanding of intentionality*. Thus it is not 'Brentano's Thesis', as the title of this author's paper suggests, that is being elaborated and evaluated by this commentator, as it is Twardowski's thesis, which, in effect, returned Brentano's new thesis to its original Scholastic mould, as de Boer has remarked.

<sup>9</sup> Husserl tells us that these lectures led him to choose philosophy as 'my life's career'. Edmund Husserl, 'Reminiscences of Franz Brentano', in *The Philosophy of Brentano*, ed. by Linda L. McAlister, (London: Duckworth, 1976), pp. 47–55, (p. 47).

<sup>10</sup> Originally, Brentano had intended to write six books for *PES* but he only completed and published the first two 'Book I Psychology As a Science' and 'Book II Psychical Phenomena in General', in 1874. Nor did he return to writing the other four books. This incompleteness is significant, however. It marks Brentano's development of his idea of descriptive psychology towards clarifying the basis of concepts employed in the normative sciences of Ethics, Logic and Aesthetics, a task which he did not foresee in the mid 1870s as part of his new science of descriptive psychology.

<sup>11</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). Brentano first delivered this lecture-course in Vienna in 1887–1888, and in the following two years 1888–1889 and 1890–1891. Hence Husserl never actually attended a lecture-course called 'Descriptive Psychology'. Müller informs us 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, Holland *viz* [Belgium] (call number Q10).' Introduction, Part I, *Descriptive Psychology*, p. xiii, footnote 14. Husserl does tell us in his 'Reminiscences of Franz Brentano' that the lecture courses wherein Brentano was developing descriptive-psychological analyses of concepts employed in Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics were the most memorable.

<sup>12</sup> Husserl, 'Reminiscences of Franz Brentano', p. 50. This explains the many reputations that followed Brentano, some of which were far from complementary. It also explains the various, different groups of students that departed from Brentano's teaching at different times in its evolution. The same can be said of Husserl's own thought. Different students and 'followers' developed his ideas at different times and in different directions in its evolution. However, few, if any of Husserl's students, actually followed Husserl on *his* path of thinking towards and in transcendental idealism.

<sup>13</sup> Brentano (1838–1917) had secured a full professorship of Philosophy at Würzburg University, in 1872, where he had been teaching philosophy since 1866. Disputes over papal infallibility and personal religious doubts about his vocation in the Roman Catholic priesthood in the 1870s, however, resulted in Brentano leaving the priesthood and his teaching post. He found it difficult to obtain a teaching post but he managed to obtain one in Vienna University in 1874, where he remained actively teaching for some 20 years. He retired as Privatdozent from the University of Vienna in 1895 but continued active in research and publication, up to the time of his death on March 17, 1917.

<sup>14</sup> Franz Brentano, *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, trans. by Ralph George (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975); *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles*, (Freiburg, 1862), (doctoral dissertation, 1862); *The Psychology of Aristotle, In Particular his Doctrine of the Active Intellect*, trans. by Ralph George (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1977); *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles, insbesondere seine Lehre vom νοῦς ποιητικὸς* (Mainz, 1867), (*Habilitationsschrift*, 1866)

<sup>15</sup> Husserl informs us that when he arrived at Vienna University in 1884, he went to Brentano's lectures 'at first merely out of curiosity, to hear the man who was the subject of so much talk in Vienna at that time, but whom others (and not so very few) derided as a Jesuit in disguise, as a rhetorician [*viz*], a fraud, a Sophist,

and a Scholastic' ('Reminiscences of Franz Brentano, p. 47). However, Husserl tells us that he was 'soon fascinated and then overcome by the unique clarity and dialectical acuity of his explanations, by the so to speak cataleptic power of his development of problems and theories. [...] (M)ost impressive was his effectiveness in those unforgettable philosophy seminars. (I remember the following topics: Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, and *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*; Helmholtz's lecture *Die Tatsachen der Wahrnehmung (The Facts of Perception)*; and Du Bois-Reymond's *Über die Grenzen des naturerkennens (On the Limits of the Knowledge of Nature)*' (p. 48). This is why John Passmore can remark, and all in the same breath, that 'Brentano was an Aristotelian, a scholastic-trained priest, as well as the continuator of Hume's *Treatise*; and his *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874) reinstated the objectivity characteristic of Aristotle and certain medieval philosophers.' *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1957; Penguin Books, 1968; 1980) p. 176. Brentano, Passmore also notes, 'was an admirer of the British psychologizing tendency in philosophy, of Mill in particular, and a warm advocate of the view that psychology is the fundamental science' (p. 175–176).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology*, Section 1 'Psychognosy and Genetic Psychology', pp. 3–11, and Brentano's letter to his friend and former student Oscar Kraus' in 1895, published in Appendix to *PES*: 'My school distinguishes between a *psychognosy* and a *genetic psychology* (in distant analogy to geognosy and geology).' (pp. 369–370, trans. mod.) Cf. also, Spiegelberg *The Phenomenological Movement* (1994), p. 34.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *PES*, Bk II, Section V 'A Survey of the Principal Attempts to Classify Psychological Phenomena', p. 77.

<sup>18</sup> *PES*, p. 77.

<sup>19</sup> *PES*, p. 77 and pp. 98–99.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Theodore de Boer, '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. 101–107.

<sup>21</sup> The significance of this development in Brentano's thought for Husserl's initiation and formation in philosophy is lucidly presented in de Boer's short but excellent article mentioned above.

<sup>22</sup> Brentano, *On the Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, trans. by Roderick M. Chisholm & E. Schnierwind (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969) p. 14; *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis* (Leipzig, 1889). Towards the beginning of an earlier lecture in his lecture-course on 'Descriptive Psychology', courses that he first delivered in Vienna University in 1887–1888 and repeatedly in the following two years, Brentano made the same point to his students, remarking, and this time without any reservation about the term consciousness: 'the peculiarity which, above all, is generally characteristic of 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'. To every consciousness belongs essentially a relation.' *Descriptive Psychology*, p. 23.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14, note 19.

<sup>24</sup> The term 'intentio' is also, however, employed in Scholastic theory of knowledge and has an entirely different meaning to the one employed in their theory of the will. H. D. Siminon has undertaken a meticulous research of both uses of this term in St Thomas, and notes that St Thomas himself never confuses the two meanings of the one term when employed in either the cognitive or conative order. Cf. H. D. Siminon, 'La Notion d'"intentio" dans l'oeuvre de S. Thomas d'Aquin', *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 19 (1930), 445–463.

<sup>25</sup> John Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 178.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *PES*, p. 88.

<sup>28</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), 213–245 (p. 217).

<sup>29</sup> According to one recent commentary, '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).’ Dermot Moran, *An Introduction to Phenomenology*, (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 57. This formula misconstrues Brentano’s view, however. Whatever about the controversial issue concerning the ontological status of such mental immanent objectivities or, indeed, the very existence of such objectivities in the mind, Brentano never considered them to be ever ‘real things’. Nevertheless, this model of understanding Brentano’s thesis is still prevalent, as the following example illustrates. ‘In its simplest form, Brentano’s intentionality thesis describes an intentional relation projected from an act of thought to its intended objects. [...] An act of thought about an apple is directed toward an apple. The desire for a houseboat aims at or is directed toward a houseboat [...] built or yet to be built.’ Dale Jacquette, ‘Brentano’s Concept of Intentionality’, in *The Cambridge Guide to Brentano*, (2004) pp. 98–130 (p. 101).

<sup>30</sup> De Boer, *The Development of Husserl’s Thought*, p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 178. This blurring of the distinction was both a subject of dispute and a point of departure between Kasimir Twardowski’s later version of intentionality elaborated in his 1894 publication *On the Content and Object of Presentations. A Psychological Investigation* (trans. R. Grossman) and Brentano’s 1874 position.

<sup>34</sup> *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, p. 88–89.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>37</sup> Such an intentional object, in Brentano’s understanding, can be a ‘physical phenomenon’, such as a colour (as presenting in an act of outer sense perception) or a psychical-act experience (such as, an act of thinking, sensing, willing, hoping etc.). Hence all such relations are clearly understood by Brentano to be intra-psychical.

<sup>38</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. by A. Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982) (*Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, Summer Lecture Course, Marburg, 1927), p. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Herbert Spiegelberg, “‘Intention’ and ‘Intentionality’ in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl”, in *The Philosophy of Brentano*, ed. by McAlister, (1976), pp. 109–127 (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 was revised without major changes in 1969, and translated into English in 1976 as ‘Intention and Intentionality in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl’. It is referred to as ‘the classic article’ by Sorabji in his paper, ‘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 (p. 247–248, note 116, though unfortunately, it is mis-titled in this note as “‘Intention’ and ‘Intentionality’ in the Scholastics, Brentano and [viz.] Hegel”). Caston, in his paper ‘Towards a History of the Problem of Intentionality among the Greeks’ (1993) refers to Spiegelberg’s article as ‘a pathbreaking article of 1936’ and that ‘His [Spiegelberg’s] results have so far been challenged only on points of detail; his overall approach, to the best of my knowledge, has not.’ (p.218) I would like to draw attention, once again, to De Boer’s study *The Development of Husserl’s Thought* (1966 in Dutch, 1978 in English) 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.

<sup>40</sup> *PES*, footnote, p. 180–181 Cf. Spiegelberg, “‘Intention’ and ‘Intentionality’ in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl”, p.120–121.

<sup>41</sup> *PES*, p. 88, footnote, (English trans. modified: footnote on p. 125 of German text).

<sup>42</sup> According to Brentano in *PES*, there are two, and only two classes of phenomena, namely, physical and psychical phenomena that are given to two and only two corresponding forms of perception, namely, inner and outer perception. Psychical-act experiences are objects of inner perception (he really means the direct content of inner reflection) and physical phenomena (colours, sounds, odours etc.) i.e. sensorially perceivable qualities are objects of outer (sense) perception. Hence Brentano has no option, in his scheme of things, but to regard ‘The thinking of a general concept’, to use Brentano’s example, as a ‘physical phenomenon’ because the concept cannot be an act itself. Setting this matter aside, I will confine my remarks to the Scholastic theory on intentional objects of sense because Brentano himself argues that all objects of psychical-act experiences, such as, for instance, colours, sounds, odours, as well as putatively grasped objects, such as, ‘the thinking of a general concept’ (p. 79), willed objects, shunned objects, loved

objects, and so on, exist univocally in consciousness in the same way as abstracted forms of sense are said by the Scholastics to exist intentionally or objectively in the intellectual part of the human soul in the process of obtaining knowledge about physical things in the external world. Husserl, however, prefers to distinguish the two types of phenomena that Brentano identifies as the 'primary object' and the 'content of reflection'. Cf. De Boer, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, p. 18–19 note 2.

<sup>43</sup> R. M. Chisholm, 'Intentionality', *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (1967), p. 201. 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 (p. 201).

<sup>44</sup> I will confine my remarks to their theory on intentional objects of sense for reasons outlined in note 42 *supra*.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. James S. Alberston, 'Instrumental Causality in St. Thomas', *The New Scholasticism*, 28 (1954), 409–435.

<sup>46</sup> Cf., A. Hayen, *L'Intentionnel dans la philosophie de St. Thomas*, (Paris, 1942). Quoting St Thomas, 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 (p. 98).' Intentional indwelling, then, denotes both a flowing and incomplete presence of the nature of one being in another being. The woodcutter who uses the axe to cut down the tree, for example, does not exist solidly, or naturally, or really 'in' the axe. Nor does the axe in use exist solidly, or naturally, or really 'in' the woodcutter, in the same way in which water exists naturally and really in a glass tumbler. Both the woodcutter standing beside the tree and the axe lying on the ground, in their natural order of being, are really distinct and separate realities. However, when the woodcutter picks up the axe and fells the tree, there is an intentional union (*unio intentionalis*) of both woodcutter and axe in each other. 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 but this volitional concept of *intentio* as *tendere in aliud* is completely different and unconnected to the metaphysical concept of intentional (in)being.

<sup>47</sup> Sorabji, 'From Aristotle to Brentano: The Development of the Concept of Intentionality', p. 248.

<sup>48</sup> Caston, 'Towards a History of the Problem of Intentionality among the Greeks', p. 245.

<sup>49</sup> Moran, 'Brentano's Thesis', p. 27.

<sup>50</sup> Husserl, *Ideen III*, p. 59, quoted by J.C. Morrison, 'Husserl and Brentano on Intentionality', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 31 (1970), 27–46 (p. 27).

<sup>51</sup> This descriptive-psychological *epochē* must not to be confused with or identified as the transcendental-phenomenological *epochē* i.e. the cancelling of an erroneous belief in the thesis of the natural standpoint in Husserl's celebrated reduction.

<sup>52</sup> See previous note.