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**Understanding and Assessing “Brentano’s Thesis”
in Light of His Modification
of the Scholastic Concept of Intentionality**

I

Introduction

Though the language of ‘intentional act’, ‘intentional object’ and ‘intentional indwelling’ is of medieval-scholastic origin, the contemporary view that consciousness is intentional is a recent arrival in philosophy of mind. And it is generally well known and accepted that it was Franz Brentano who is initially responsible for this when, in his study *Psychology From an Empirical Standpoint (PES)*, first published in 1874, he re-introduced and appealed to ‘what the Scholastics of the Middle-ages called the intentional in-existence of an object’ to describe what he took to be the kind of existence that distinguishes the objects of our consciousness from things that exist extra-mentally (Brentano 1995, 88). Regardless, therefore, of later disputes among his followers over whether their respective versions of ‘Brentano’s thesis’, as commentators often call it today (Moran 1996), were genuine heirs to Brentano’s original concept, or not (Bartok 2005), at the time of his writing of *PES* Brentano believed that he had not discovered anything new about consciousness, professing instead his concurrence with Medieval-Scholastic thinkers, and he re-affirms this agreement in a note which he added to a re-issue of part of *PeS* in 1911.¹ No-one, however, is an authority in the interpretation of a text; and this includes the interpretation of one’s own text. Behind the terminological agreement on intentionality that exists between Brentano and the Scholastics there are major and real

substantial differences in their respective concepts of intentionality (De Boer 1978, 40–51). Thus Bartok's (2005, 454) reiteration that '(H)e [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', is just that, a reiteration of Brentano's own and often misleading self-interpretation. Yet Brentano clearly subscribes to at least part of the meaning of the original Scholastic concept in his understanding of the objects of consciousness in *PES*. Unless we can ascertain, therefore, both which part of the original meaning of the Scholastic concept that Brentano adheres to and what new meaning he gives to the concept of 'intentional inexistence' in his 1874 study, it will be difficult to understand and assess 'Brentano's thesis' of intentionality; or, at least, so shall I argue in this paper.²

A complicating factor, however, in both understanding and assessing 'Brentano's thesis' of intentionality in *PeS* is that sometime *after* the publication of *PES* Brentano (1995b) begins to use the term 'intentional' to describe not only the objects of consciousness but also the *relation of the acts of consciousness* to their objects in his lecture-courses on *Descriptive Psychology (DP)*, which he delivered at Vienna University from the mid-1880s and into the early 1890s, stressing *this* as the defining feature of consciousness, for, as he *now* instructs his students,

the 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*, 23)

During this period, then, Brentano held not one but two theses of intentionality, one concerning the 'intentional relation' of the acts of consciousness to their objects and another concerning the 'intentional inexistence' of objects in consciousness. Brentano, nevertheless, claims no originality for this view of the 'intentional relation' of the acts of consciousness to their objects either. Again, he attributes it to Aristotle, saying,

as 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*, 24)

Brentano, alas, does not tell his students where exactly he found this notion of the ‘intentional relation’ of the acts of consciousness to their (intentional) objects in Aristotle. In the ‘Editors’ Notes’, however, to Brentano’s allusion to Aristotle’s source in these lectures, Baumgartner and Chisholm (*DP* 180, n. 9) remark that here, ‘Brentano is evidently referring to *Metaphysics*, 1021 a, 30’. This indeed is in keeping with a similar citation given by Brentano for his use of the concept of ‘intentional relation’ in a public lecture which he delivered around this time (on 23 January 1889) before the Vienna Law Society entitled ‘The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong’, and which he published later in that year (Brentano 1969, 14, n. 19). In this lecture, he tells his audience,

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. (*Ibid.* my emphasis)

In a note added to the published text of this lecture about his use of this term ‘intentional’, Brentano remarks that ‘(T)he expression “intentional”, like many other of our more important concepts, comes from the Scholastics’, citing Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, Book V, Chapter 15, 1021a 29. This Aristotelian reference, however, is to the concept of the abstracted form of sense that resides intentionally in the intellectual part of the human soul, that is to say, about the ‘intentional object’, and not about an ‘intentional relation’ of the acts to that object which *is the thesis that Brentano is emphasizing* in his 1889 lecture and in *DP*. By glossing over the thesis of the intentional relation of the act (of consciousness) with the thesis concerning the mode of being of the intentional object of consciousness Brentano, therefore,

elides the difference between both of these tenets. Furthermore, there are major *conceptual* differences between Aristotle's account of this 'relation' in the *Metaphysics* 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 actual Aristotelian passage to which Brentano alludes in order to follow *Brentano's understanding* of the 'intentional relation' of the acts of our consciousness to their (intentional) objects. This, nevertheless, probably explains why commentators and critics (Tancred-Lawson 1986; Sorabji 1991) of 'Brentano's thesis' cannot find and have not found any direct textual clues in *the actual* passage from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, or in any other similar passages from Aristotle's *De Anima* to which Brentano also alludes in *PES* (1995, 88–89, n.), that would assist them in understanding *Brentano's understanding* of the 'intentional relation' which he claims *Aristotle to hold* between acts of consciousness and their objects.

Brentano's use of the term 'intentional', therefore, both as an adverb qualifying the activity of the relation of *the acts* of consciousness to their objects in consciousness and as an adjective qualifying the mode of being that *the objects* of consciousness enjoy in consciousness complicates considerably the view of 'Brentano's thesis' of intentionality as *one* thesis. It also adds extra hermeneutic difficulties to the story about its Scholastic heritage that is already complicated enough in the 1874 study.³

In his lectures on *DP*, nonetheless, Brentano would like us to believe that both of these features, the intentional relation of consciousness to its objects and the intentional objects of consciousness, express one thing about our consciousness, and that *both of these features* — the 'intentional relation' of the acts of consciousness to their objects and the 'intentional inexistence of an object' in consciousness — are doctrines that are originally found in Aristotelian-Scholastic philosophy with which he is in entire agreement. This, nevertheless, is not the case as there are many divergences between *Brentano's thesis* of intentionality and the way in which the Scholastics held that a human act can be said to be intentionally related to an object and the way in which an object can be said to have an intentional mode of existence (as opposed to a real mode of existence) in another object. In this paper, I will not attempt any comprehensive analysis of both of these original Scholastic concepts in relation to 'Brentano's thesis', but focus only on some of the major points of similarities and differences between 'Brentano's thesis' and the Scholastic concepts that are of most relevance to an understanding

and evaluation of 'Brentano's thesis of intentionality'. Even within these limits, this issue admits of impressive intricacy and complexity.

II

Similarities and Differences Between Brentano and the Scholastics in Concepts of the Intentional Relation of Acts to Objects

The Scholastics did not (and could not) hold the view that all of 'our psychological phenomena' or 'conscious acts' bear an intentional relation to their objects in the way in which Brentano suggests in his 1889 lecture and his lectures on 'Descriptive Psychology'. The Scholastics, for example, did not regard our acts of sensation as bearing an intentional relation to their objects. Aristotle and the Scholastics, rather, argued that when a human being touches a 'physical thing' 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.⁴ This encounter between 'physical things in the external world' and 'the embodied sensitive soul of the human being' demonstrates for Aristotle and the Medieval 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*, but one to which he no longer subscribes in his 1874 *PES*. Through his reading of 'English empiricists' and 'modern English philosophers', Brentano (1995a, xxviii, 11), now in agreement with Locke, takes sensation to be acts of sense judgement that have *their own particular objects*, such as, for instance, *a sound* I hear, *a colour* I see, *an odour* I smell, warmth felt, and so forth. These objects, he calls 'physical *phenomena*' (not 'physical things') in *PES* and *DP*, and these 'objects' of sensation have a subjective mode of existence only, for,

John Locke once conducted an experiment in which, after having warmed one of his hands and cooled the other, he immersed both of them simultaneously in the same basin of water. He experienced warmth in one hand and cold in the other, and thus proved that neither warmth nor cold really existed in the water. (Brentano 1995a, 6)

By the time Brentano had undertaken his study of empirical psychology in the 1870s, therefore, it is fair to say that he had jettisoned *philosophically* much of his earlier Aristotelian-Scholastic view of psychology and appropriated, in its place, a Lockean-Humean approach to ‘psychology’, where the twin sources of all our knowledge-claims, as Locke argued, come from ‘sensation’ and ‘reflection’, or, as Brentano puts it in *PES* (1995a, 77), from the ‘outer [sense] perception of our physical phenomena’ (what Locke calls ‘sensory ideas’ and Descartes calls ‘adventitious ideas’) and the ‘inner perception of our own psychical phenomena’,⁵ a position that Brentano never subsequently gave up, but re-iterates in the last year of his life in 1917.⁶

For the Scholastics, however, only acts of the will are characteristically directed towards *their* own objects (*tendere in aliud*). As St Thomas says, ‘*Intentio, sicut ipsum nomen sonat, significat in aliud tendere*’.⁷ From an Aristotelian-Scholastic point of view, then, it is only those acts over which I have some degree of control in bringing about and which I execute with at least some degree of foresight that can be acts that ‘consist in a relation that we bear to an object’. The opposite of an intentional act, for the Scholastics, therefore, would be an act performed by an agent that had unintended outcomes, or an act that is related to an outcome that has no intrinsic relation to the agent’s actual intention, such as, for instance, an act of sensation experienced when hitting one’s shin bone in tripping over a low table, or to use Brentano’s own example, taken from 1907, an act of wishing (*velle*) ‘that the weather be good tomorrow’.⁸ Indeed this example of Brentano’s, for the sake of comparison with the Scholastic concept of an ‘intentional act’, is worth quoting in full. It 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’ (ibid.)

Having *no* choice in that matter — i.e. in weather conditions — would be suffice to rule out such wants as intentional acts of the will for St Thomas and the Medieval Scholastics. That Brentano, therefore, considers this, ‘wanting the weather to be good tomorrow’, an intentional act because

the wish *is directed towards something* indicates a major difference between Brentano's concept of an 'intentional act' of consciousness and what the Scholastics taught in relation to intentional acts of the will.

Part of the very meaning and understanding of an intentional act of the will for the Scholastics, then, is that the end in view (*intentio finis*) is executable by the agent.⁹ The intended goal (*finis intentus*) is an integral part of the 'intentional activity (*in-tentio*)' itself.¹⁰ Thus in this context, to say 'I have an intention in mind' simply means, for St Thomas, that 'I intend to do something', or to 'refrain from doing something'. The crucial point in this 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. Thus it is only in the completion of the intended outcome of an action that the intention itself is fully revealed for what it is, and that the intention as such can be properly inferred and knowable either by me or by others, however difficult such 'intent' might be to prove or disprove in a court of law.¹¹ Whether I manage to reach my objective, or are thwarted, for whatever reason, in reaching my objective, the intention (to do so) still exists. This is why, for Aquinas, the responsibility and morality of our 'intentions' extends to and includes what resides inside and outside of the mind. Thus wishing someone ill (but not wishing that the weather to be good) and helping a person cross a busy road are both instances of 'intentional acts' for Aquinas.

For Aquinas, then, it is only in those acts that are chosen and undertaken by a free rational being that such activity is regarded '*principaliter et proprie*' as intentional because it is only in those acts that the '*intentio*' or intentional activity contains *within itself* its own causal efficacy, i.e., *its* self-directedness.¹² When the Scholastics employed the term 'intentional' to describe the 'relation we bear to an object', it depicts the particular kind of self-directedness that characterizes exclusively the immanent striving of the activity of the will of a doer of an action towards her objectives (and the outcome of that action). 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*.'¹³ Such intentional activity, then, is not a property of acts of sensation or of *our acts of cognition*. 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. Thus before, during, and after this process, both the knower and that which is potentially intelligible retain their specific natures and their respective ontological integrities.¹⁴ The immanent ‘striving’ or ‘impulse after’ in achieving its own ends or goals (*tendere in aliud*) that is characteristic of the dynamic of the individual will, therefore, is *not found in acts of the intellect*. What is found, instead, is the abstractive action of its operations in discovering (*in-venire*) the truth of its knowledge-claims regarding whatever it is that is under consideration.

Brentano’s expressed view throughout the 1880s, 1890s and into the first decade of the 1900s, that *all* of *our* psychical-act experiences — acts of sensation, cognition and volition etc. — bear an *immanent* intentional *relation* to their respective objects deviates considerably, therefore, from the way in which the Scholastics both used and confined the meaning of the term ‘intentional’ to designate the directedness or object-relatedness that is characteristic of acts of the will only. Not surprisingly, Brentano’s expansion of the term ‘intentional’ to include *all* psychical-act experiences that are discernible within human consciousness ‘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’.¹⁵

Brentano, nevertheless, clearly means no such thing. His view, rather, is quite a straightforward one; but it does require that we confine our attention to a description of the way in which psychical-act experiences present themselves as acts that are specifically directed toward their objects. In other words, Brentano ‘thesis’ on the directedness of the acts of consciousness towards their immediate objects is a strictly intuitive item of knowledge that is discoverable about consciousness itself from within reflection upon the nature of conscious acts themselves. This doctrine, in turn, presupposes a commitment to some version of what commentators today call ‘the transparency doctrine of ideas’ in that it holds that the way in which we can know anything about our consciousness is by direct reflection on the activities of consciousness itself. This is the proposed avenue or approach to knowing anything about our experiences or conscious acts, terms that Brentano now accepts (following Locke) as ‘synonymous expressions’ in *PES*.¹⁶ And he continues within this approach in his 1889 lecture, re-assuring his audience that ‘(I)nnner 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.’¹⁷

What Brentano acknowledges here, then, is that whilst we can attempt to order and classify our experiences (acts of sensation, cognition and volition etc) by *the way in which* these acts present their objects, naturally, in terms of acts of presentation, acts of judgment, and acts that take an interest in an object or that value something, we cannot call our experiences to order.¹⁸ This is why, for Brentano, the intentional activity that marks the directedness of a conscious act towards its object primarily depicts, as it did for Hume before him, the passive possession of the acts of its contents by the ‘mentally active subject’.¹⁹ And in following this position, Brentano is also following Descartes and the latter’s empirical foundationalist starting point in *Meditation II*, where he maintains,

I am the same [one] who feels, that is to say, who perceives certain things, as by the organs of sense, since in truth I see light, I hear noise, I feel heat. But it will be said these phenomena are false and I am dreaming. Let it be so; still [*and here is the important passage to note*] it is at least quite certain that *it seems to me* that I see light, that I hear noise, and that I feel heat. That *cannot* be false [doubted].²⁰

It is *from within* this Cartesian frame of reference, of what commentators now-a-days refer to as ‘basic empirical beliefs’ — and not *from outside of this frame of reference* — that Brentano distinguishes the ‘physical phenomenon’ (a sound) from the ‘psychical phenomenon’ (the act of hearing). In the reality of the ‘actual experience’, then, Brentano identifies an immediately discernible ‘natural’ and ‘real’ unity between the act of hearing and its (intended) object within the particular experience itself.²¹ Thus it turns out to be the case, for Brentano, that ‘the object of an *inner* perception is simply [the existence of] a psychical phenomenon, and the object of an *outer* [sensory] perception is simply [the existence of] a physical phenomenon, a sound, odour or the like’.²² None of this, nevertheless, points to what resides outside of the actual experiences of the ‘mentally active subject’. It is a distinction that occurs *within* the experiencing itself. And this is why Brentano can (famously) say in *PES* that what characterises ‘psychical phenomena’ is the ‘intentional’ or ‘mental’ or ‘immanent objectivity’ that is present in ‘psychical acts’ or ‘psychical phenomena’, where ‘intentional’, ‘mental’ and ‘immanent objectivity’ are synonymous expressions indicating the passive possession of the actual acts of consciousness of *their objects*.

Because all *psychical-act* experiences evidently bear an intuitively demonstrable structural relatedness (a directedness) to their objects, Husserl, therefore, is correct in his assessment of 'Brentano's thesis' that Brentano is justified, from a descriptive-psychological methodological point of view, in borrowing and revaluing the term 'intentional' from the Scholastic theory of the object-relatedness of acts of the will to describe the '*relation* we bear [in consciousness] to an object' as a way of defining the activity of consciousness itself — though *Brentano himself 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.* In this 'revaluation' (*Umwertung*) and 'discovery' of the 'object-relatedness' of experiences, nonetheless, Brentano becomes 'the pathfinder' (*Wegbereiter*) in instigating a new descriptive-psychological science of intentional consciousness and its objectivities (Husserl 1977, 31–35). In this regard, therefore, it is fair to conclude that Brentano, unbeknownst to himself, is not deviating from the Scholastics in either the *meaning* or *use* of the *well-known Scholastic* term 'intentional' (when it is used to qualify acts of the will) to describe the immanent self-directedness of *psychical-act* experiences toward their objects, or the referential characteristic, what commentators today call the 'aboutness' of consciousness. 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, nevertheless, *still* figures contentiously in the dispute among Brentano's critics about both the proper interpretation and the correct evaluation of 'Brentano's thesis'. Whether, for example, that which is intended through acts of outer perceptual-sense experience is an existing extra-mental physical thing, or an immanent so-called sensorially perceivable sense quality, or whether we should (or can) methodologically 'bracket' all hypothetical-metaphysical assumptions about the existing 'thing-in-itself', outside of one's own actual experiencing, in any phenomenological description of 'the thing itself' are problems that dogged both the interpretation and the elaboration of the thesis of intentionality concerning the 'intentional relation' of acts to their objects. To address this issue in *Brentano's thesis*, however, we have to return to and assess the thesis on intentionality that Brentano elaborates in his 1874 study, the one concerning the immanence of objects in consciousness.

III

Similarities and Differences Between Brentano and the Scholastics in Concepts of the Intentional In-existence of an Object

In his famous and often-quoted 1874 passage of *PES*, Brentano writes:

Every psychical phenomenon is characterised by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the [1] intentional (and also [2] mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, [4] relation to a content, [5] direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or an [3] immanent objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*). 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 [as true] or denied [as false], in love [something is] loved [correctly or incorrectly], in hate [something is] hated, in desire [something is] desired and so on.²³

Commentators have found any number of theses defining the psychical in this passage, from one to four, and some critics (Caston 1995, 217) suggest that Brentano is not offering us any definition of intentionality at all, but '(I)ntead, 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.' In the 1874 passage, nonetheless, Brentano, employs no less than 'five typifying expressions' in his definition of psychical-act experiences: every psychical phenomenon is characterised by the (1) 'intentional inexistence of an object', (2) 'mental inexistence of an object', (3) 'immanent objectivity', (4) 'relation to a content', and (5) 'direction toward an object'.²⁴ Expressions (1), (2) and (3) are, as de Boer remarks, 'fully synonymous' in that they all point to the fact that psychical-act experiences 'include a content', and that '(T)his content is more precisely defined as intentional or immanent or mental'.²⁵ Expressions (4) and (5) are different aspects of psychical-act experiences. They are concerned with the directedness (*Richtung, Beziehung*) of a psychical-act experience toward an object or a content. Twenty years later, one of Brentano's students, Kazimierz Twardowski (1894), would distinguish 'relation to a [mental] content' and 'direction towards an [extra mental] object' in the

presentations (*Vorstellungen*) of consciousness as a double intentionality in his *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* — hence the plural *Vorstellungen* in this title — but in Brentano's 1874 passage in *PES* Brentano understands these expressions of (4) 'relation to a content' and (5) 'direction toward an object' to be describing the same kind of thing; namely, the relatedness that is characteristic of the activity of psychical-act experiences themselves toward their objects.²⁶ Thus Passmore (1957, 178) is correct to note that in the 1874 passage Brentano takes 'these phrases [(4) and (5)]' concerning the directedness (*Richtung, Beziehung*) of a psychical-act experience toward an object or a content 'to be synonymous'.

Spiegelberg (1994, 37), therefore, is correct to point out that in the 1874 passage Brentano identifies not one, as he says, but *two* distinguishing features of the psychical, the immanence of objects in consciousness and the directedness of psychical-act experiences towards objects. And this explains why Brentano could retain the second thesis of intentionality, denoting the directedness or relatedness of consciousness to its objects (however the latter are to be understood) after he rejected the first thesis of intentionality denoting the immanence of objects in consciousness 'during what Brentano scholars call the crisis of immanence (*Immanenzkrise*) of 1905' (Spiegelberg *ibid.*, 48, n. 19).²⁷

At the time, however, of his writing of *PES* and in his lecture-courses on *DP* at Vienna University, Brentano held both of these theses together as expressing the same thing, namely, that the 'intentional relation' that exists in conscious acts both contains and bears the objects that exist intentionally in those acts, for, as he elucidates in *DP* (24), 'A person who is being thought (*ein gedachter Mensch*) is as little something real as a person who has ceased to be.' When Brentano declares that the 'correlates [of the acts of consciousness and *its objects*] display the peculiarity that the one alone is real [= the psychical act], [whereas] the other [the intended object of consciousness] is not something real (*nichts Reales*)' (*ibid.*), this distinction is about the experience itself. From a strict descriptive-psychological point of view, the only things that really and truly exist as they actually are and actually are as they are perceived in consciousness are one's own actual psychical-act experiences and *their intentional objects*. The relation between consciousness and its objectivities, as far as Brentano is concerned in his *DP* lectures, is *entirely* intra-psychical *just as it was earlier in his 1874 passage from PES*.

In 'Brentano's thesis' of intentionality, therefore, the arrow of intentionality, as the metaphor would have it and that many commentators use to elucidate 'Brentano's thesis', does not reach outside of my actual consciousness itself but extends to and includes only my own actual experiences themselves and the merely phenomenal existence of 'physical phenomena' (*qua* sensorially perceivable qualities of an actual experience, e.g., a colour I am seeing, a sound I actually am hearing, warmth I am feeling, etc.) and all other intended mental objects of all other acts of consciousness from love and hate, to logical judgements and ethical evaluations and so forth (Brentano 1995a, 155–76). What this thesis of intentionality emphasizes 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 his reservations in his 1889 lecture about using the misleading term of 'consciousness' (*Bewußtsein*) — to their objects and in particular the peculiar ontological status that those objects enjoy as the directly intended objects of the actual acts themselves.²⁸ What this account of 'intentionality' holds is 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. Later Husserl (1913) in his elaboration of his idea of transcendental phenomenology would present a (in)famous apodictic argument demonstrating the relativity of the very existence of the entire world of things given to our acts of outer perceptual-sense experience on the harmony of one's own *actual* intentional consciousness.

The adaptation and extension of the Scholastic concept of the object-relatedness of acts of the will to the object-relatedness of all of our experiences or conscious acts is probably 'the thesis' of intentionality that is most stressed by followers and critics alike in 'Brentano's thesis'. This, nevertheless, is not the Scholastic concept of intentionality that Brentano actually uses (and modifies) in his 1874 psychology. Brentano is rather quite clear in which concept from the Medieval-Scholastic tradition he is borrowing in his 1874 study; it is 'the intentional in-existence of an object' in consciousness, and not the relation of the act to its object or the object-relatedness of the acts of consciousness, that best captures the essence of

consciousness, for, as he writes in the immediate paragraph following the famous 1874 passage,

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.²⁹

And again, he tells us later in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* that, ‘we use the term “consciousness” to refer to any psychical phenomenon, insofar as *it has a content*.’³⁰

In his 1874 study Brentano is thoroughly aware of the fact that *this particular Medieval-Aristotelian Scholastic concept of ‘intentional in-existence’* is one that is *not well-known* in everyday discourse, or one with which contemporary psychologists, lawyers, or natural scientists are familiar, for, as he explicitly remarks, later on in *PES*, in relation to the difficulty of settling disputes over both the meaning and the referent of the term ‘consciousness’ (*‘Bewußtsein’*),

In 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 [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*.³¹

Whatever about Brentano’s remarkable attempt both to see and to find literal corroboration of the defining feature of consciousness, ‘the intentional in-existence of an object’, *in the German word itself* — in this instance he clearly means that the state of being aware *qua content is* what consciousness is a consciousness of, as the term *‘Bewußtsein’*, *being conscious*, indicates³² — Brentano is quite correct to note that this terminology of ‘intentional in-existence of an object’ is one that is *not* ‘in common usage’.

Regarding his own use and understanding of this concept of ‘intentional in-existence’, Brentano believes that he is in agreement with Aristotle’s position on this matter, explicitly indicating to his reader in the extended note which he added to the 1874 passage,

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.³³

And in another note, added this time by Brentano to a re-issue of part of his *PeS* In 1911, he explicitly complains about his critics' confusion and misunderstanding of the meaning of *this concept* of the abstracted form residing intentionally in the soul of the knower, which he had re-deployed in the 1874 passage, with the more commonly accepted concept of 'intention' of the will and the associated striving after a goal (*tendere in aliud*) that is characteristic of intentional *acts*, remarking that,

This expression ['the intentional 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 [natural scientists] use this expression to refer to what really exists [*qua* the theoretical object of physics, e.g., molecular movements] as opposed to 'mere subjective appearances' [i.e., phenomenal colours, sounds, etc.].³⁴

Brentano, therefore, would lead us to believe, both in the 1874 passage and in the 1874 and 1911 notes, 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 in the soul of the knower in his depiction of the way in which objects of consciousness exist as objects 'in some manner' in consciousness.³⁵

This self-professed 'similarity' between Brentano and Aristotle's doctrine of 'intentional indwelling' has been re-echoed by many commentators on this 1874 passage since, and has been favourably compared, for instance, to 'St Thomas Aquinas's commentary on the relevant passage in Aristotle's *De Anima*,' where 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 [or spiritual] being.³⁶

There are, however, major differences between Brentano and the Scholastics on this issue, in particular regarding the knowability of the abstracted form of sense, to which attention needs to be drawn.

First, Aristotle did not hold the view that ‘the sensed object without its matter’, when this is taken as a reference 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 the 1874 passage (and in his lectures on *Descriptive Psychology*). The immediate objects of sense knowledge for Aristotle and the Medieval Aristotelians are ‘physical things’ that exist ‘in the external world’ and *their* accidental modifications and properties that also exist ‘in the external world’, as Brentano had *previously* defended in *The Psychology of Aristotle*.³⁷ The immediate objects of sense knowledge for Aristotle are not sensorially perceivable qualities (e.g. a colour, or a sound) that exist *only as long as* the actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience exist, as Brentano now, following Locke, understands them in his 1874 study.³⁸ This is why Hugh Lawson-Tancred (1986, 101–103) is correct to point out that *for Aristotle* the psychical 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 extra-mentally in potentiality as accidental modifications of substances in the world. In this regard, Tancred-Lawson (*ibid.*, 104) is also correct to conclude that 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’.³⁹

For Brentano, however, outside of the sense object as such, which is *now* understood by Brentano to be a Lockean secondary quality of outer perceptual-sense experience, such ‘physical phenomena’ (colours and sounds) do not exist like that at all ‘objectively’ in any real sense, as Aristotle and the medieval Aristotelians would have it, as accidents inhering in substances. They exist in actuality as light rays and sine waves; that is to say, they exist as the theoretically constructed and discovered objects of pure physics. This is stressed by Brentano throughout his 1874 study (and in the added

note in 1911 and in his lectures on *Descriptive Psychology*). Unlike Aristotle, therefore, Brentano can maintain in his new descriptive-psychological scheme of things that 'the intentional (or mental) in-existence of an object', the sensed object *qua* physical phenomenon, in this instance, a colour or a sound as it occurs in its respective psychical-act experience, is an exclusive property of our actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience.⁴⁰

The comparison, then, that Brentano operates in his 1874 passage is between the kind of existence that is characteristic of mental objects (*qua* abstracted forms of intelligibility) and what is characteristic of extra-mental real objects (whether the latter are treated as real accidental modifications of Aristotelian substances in the world, or as the theoretically constructed objects of physics). 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. They have, rather, '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 as maintained in Scholastic theory of knowledge (Spiegelberg 1936; 1976, p. 122). And since it is on account of the abstractive ability of human intellectual soul that the abstracted *species* has *their* existence *at all*, such intentional existence is entirely dependent on the activity of the individual's intellectual soul just as Aristotle and the Aristotelians held (even if Brentano no longer subscribes to Aristotle's particular view of abstraction and the active intellect). Thus the intentional objects *qua* the directly intended objects of experience, for Brentano, have the same kind of *mental* existence *only* as the abstracted forms of sense-knowledge are said to have in the intellectual soul of the knower.

Unlike *St Thomas and the Scholastics*, however, in his 1874 psychology Brentano regards this abstracted form of sense *qua* mental object of consciousness, as *the end term* of outer perceptual-sense experience (that is, for Brentano, of sense judgement). Outside of the perceptual experience of immanent colours and sounds, there exist light rays and sine waves. From a descriptive-psychological point of view, then, this means for Brentano that colours and sounds have '*only* phenomenal and intentional [= mental] existence' in comparison to the actual extra-mental existence of 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 thus now follows for Brentano in *PES* that our everyday normal acts of outer perceptual-sense experience of physical phenomena (e.g., of colours, etc.) are inherently and naturally misleading (*Falschnehmung*) because these acts take their objects (colours) to be existing 'out there' as, say, accidents of hylomorphically constituted substances, just as Aristotle and the Aristotelians would have it, when these objects (colours) do not exist like that at all, or as such, 'out there', extra-mentally. 'For this reason,' Brentano concludes, '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.'⁴¹

Brentano's view that our acts of outer perceptual-sense experience, such as seeing colours or hearing sounds in the external world, are inherently deceptive acts indicates just how unAristotelian and unScholastic Brentano's views are in *PES* and in *DP*. In fact Brentano's characterisation of our *normal* acts of outer perceptual-sense experience as being inherently deceptive is closer to St Thomas's views on *abnormal* sense knowledge, for, as St Thomas writes, '(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'.⁴² At any rate, in *PES* Brentano now holds that in our everyday normal and wakeful experience we think we are seeing colours and hearing sounds as features of an extra-mental reality when, in fact, these things themselves really and truly exist as light rays or light particles and sine waves, that it to say, as established by natural-scientific-theoretic investigation. Here, then, there is a realism to Brentano's philosophy of mind, but it is not based upon his views on 'intentionality' or on any Aristotelian-Medieval realist philosophy; it is, rather, based upon his acceptance of some form of natural-scientific materialism.

Brentano's self-interpretation in the *notes* to the 1874 passage and the 1911 re-issue of his *PES*, indicating his concurrence with the Thomistic-Aristotelian epistemological concept of the intentional indwelling of the 'sensed object without its matter' (or impressed *species*) in the soul of the knower, and Spiegelberg's and many other commentators' re-iteration of this affinity, overlook major epistemological differences between the way in which 'the intentional *species*', *qua abstracted form*, is said to be present in the soul of the knower in the Thomistic-Aristotelian account and the way in which Brentano in the *actual 1874 passage* regards the direct knowability

of the intentional object of sense. This, nevertheless, is to be explained by the fact that in his 1874 study of psychology Brentano is not defending, or developing a Scholastic realist epistemology, but confining his attention *methodologically* to a descriptive-psychological view of the things themselves, that is to say, to what occurs in the experiencing of an object given to an actual psychical-act experience. And he thinks that natural science has demonstrated to us just how such things really and truly exist (as light rays etc.), when we are not directly aware of them. Hence, in taking colours to be real features of substances we are being ‘mis-taken’ in our ‘perceptions’.⁴³ By 1874, therefore, Brentano has relinquished *entirely* any Aristotelian-epistemological theory of abstraction — with which, as Spiegelberg (1976, 122) correctly notes, ‘Brentano *had concerned himself* [my emphasis] a good deal’ in the mid 1860s — and, in its place, adopted a version of direct mental (Cartesian–Lockean–Humean) representationalism against a background acceptance of the dominant natural-scientific worldview as expressed in his time. These are Brentano’s (new) concerns in *PES*, as Bartok (2005, 443–4; 448–9) correctly reminds us.

Where Brentano *does agree* with St Thomas and the Scholastics of the Middle Ages in his 1874 passage, nonetheless, is with the general distinction that the Scholastics drew in their metaphysics between the intentional and natural orders of being — for Brentano, the (intended) objects of consciousness have intentional, not real being. To understand this part of ‘Brentano’s (first) thesis’ we need to understand that metaphysical distinction.

In their metaphysics the Scholastics opposed the intentional order of being, (*in esse intentionale*), to the natural order being, *esse naturale* or *naturae*.⁴⁴ Things, for example, can naturally 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 being denotes a flowing and incomplete presence of the nature of one being in another being, such as, for instance, the presence of the sun in daylight, or of a user of an instrument in the instrument used.⁴⁵ This concept of ‘intentional indwelling’ denotes the way one thing exists in another thing not ‘really’, or ‘solidly’, or ‘totally’, but flowing incompletely (*fluens et incompleta*). It is this concept of ‘intentional indwelling’ (or ‘intentional in-existence’ as Brentano refers to it in the 1874 passage) that is deployed in the Scholastic epistemological theory of the abstracted intelligible form or species. This abstracted form resides intentionally, as opposed to really, in the soul of the knower.

What this theory tries to explain, then, is how I can become a knower of physical 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* I know the physical thing resides intentionally, not really, in the intellectual soul of the knower.⁴⁶ Just, then, as we are usually unaware of the words we use to discuss the reality of things around us, so too, according to the Scholastics, we are usually unaware of the abstracted intentions in our knowledge of things in the world. This is why Augustine likens such abstracted forms or images as ‘signs’ and as ‘*Verbum Mentis*’, and to which Brentano draws our attention in the note accompanying the 1874 passage in *PES* (1995a, 88 n.). For the Scholastics, the abstracted forms of sense are transparent ‘instruments’ used in the knowing process of which *we are directly unaware*. Thus the Scholastics regarded such abstracted forms of sense are ‘blind instruments’ used in that process. Brentano completely deviates from this position in *PES* by making the ‘intentional object’ the directly *intended object* of *perceptual* experience. Sorabji (1991), therefore, is correct to conclude, 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, indeed, still maintains in *PES* that intentional objects of outer sense perception (e.g., colours) are ‘signs’, but they are not signs of physical things and their properties in the external world, they are rather signs of a theoretically constructed reality as determined *via natural-scientific interpretation* (e.g., as light rays or light particles).

In Scholastic epistemology, then, this intentional mode of 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 many commentators have remarked, and as Brentano himself clearly reminds his reader in the extended footnote that he appended to the passage in 1874 upon its re-introduction.⁴⁷ Such a mode of ‘being intentionally present in another’, nonetheless, whether this refers to the abstracted form residing intentionally in the soul of the knower or the intentional presence of sun in day light, is indeed a spiritual form of being.⁴⁸ Yet it would be quite absurd for Aristotle or Thomas to consider such a spiritual (*spiritalis*) mode of being as mental (*mentale*) existence (let alone as reducible exclusively to ‘the mental in-existence of an

object', as Brentano would have it in the 1874 passage) precisely because such intentional indwelling (*inesse intentionale*) is a distinct mode of being from *both* the bodily or corporeal kind *and* the intellectual or mental kind.⁴⁹

Intentional indwelling of an object in another object, for the Scholastics, then, simply denotes a different order of being to the natural order of being of things, namely, a flowing and incomplete spiritual presence of the identity of one being in another being. And indeed this is why the Scholastics could appeal to this very same concept, in their theology, as a way of trying to understand their faith (*fides quaerens intellectum*) in the mystery of the triune God, where the love of the Father for the Son and the 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 retains the notion of 'three persons' 'in' the 'one substance', whilst dispelling the notion of three substances really existing in one substance (i.e., three Gods in one God), or the notion of one substance comprising three real distinct parts of one thing, with three interlocking real relations, making up a total of three real parts of the one God (i.e., each member of the Triune God being 'really' a third-part 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 note that accompanies the 1874 passage.

If we turn to what Brentano says in the actual 1874 passage, however, *here* we find Brentano declaring 'intentional inexistence' to be *exclusively* a defining feature of our actual psychical-act experiences. Such is not the case in Scholasticism. 'Intentional being' or 'intentional in-dwelling' is a feature that is discernible in the relationship between many things throughout the cosmos. The intentional presence of the sun in daylight is not a 'psychical phenomenon', nor is the presence of the woodcutter in the axe used to fell the tree (Alberston 1954), nor is the intentional indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father.

In the 1874 passage, therefore, Brentano *literally modifies* the entire scope and application of the 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. Thus Brentano now understands the concept of 'intentional inexistence' as picking out an exclusive property of the (directly intended) 'mental objects' of one's own actual acts of consciousness

and that does not designate real substantial existence of one object (the intended object of an experience, e.g., a sound I hear) and another object (the psychical-act experience itself, i.e., the act of hearing). Because the intentional object *qua intended object* of any actual psychical-act experience, univocally speaking, does not have real, substantial existence, Brentano thinks he is justified in appealing to ‘what the Scholastics of the Middle ages called the intentional (or mental) in-existence of objects’ as the defining feature of psychical-act experiences themselves. In effect what Brentano has done, without knowing it, is to add a new meaning to the Scholastic concept of ‘intentional indwelling’. It now means ‘the mental in-existence of an object’ or ‘immanent objectivity’ in consciousness which is not to be understood as an object existing either really inside or really outside of the mind, yet as an object that is dependent for its spiritual existence on the activity of one’s own actual consciousness itself. This is why *Brentano* can take the terms (1) ‘intentional inexistence’, (2) ‘mental inexistence’, and (3) ‘immanent objectivity’ all to be synonymous expressions describing the content of psychical-act experiences (something not possible for the Scholastics). Brentano, indeed, appears to have been so successful in this re-deployment and reduction of the original Scholastic metaphysical concept of ‘*(in)esse intentionale*’ to an exclusive descriptive-psychological principle designating the mode of being of the contents of a ‘mentally active subject’ in *PES* that this is probably why some commentators in the philosophy of mind today believe, incorrectly, that this is what the original Scholastic concept means, or even ‘part of one well-known medieval account of intentionality’ (Lyons 1995, 1).

From an ontological point of view, nevertheless, *Brentano’s descriptive-psychological thesis* of intentionality in the 1874 passage relies entirely upon the Scholastic metaphysical insight into ‘intentionality’ as a mode of being that *must not be metaphysically confused with, nor identified to the actual natural mode of being of any real thing (res) existing inside or outside of the mind*. Remarkably, this scholastic metaphysical distinction *still* continues to play a critical role in Husserl’s celebrated reduction of the natural attitude to the transcendental-phenomenological attitude in *Ideas I* (1913) where the entire world of things that are given (known) to acts of outer perceptual-sense experience is (in)famously described by Husserl as having ‘*only*’ an ‘*intentional*’ mode of being ‘*for a consciousness*’ *in opposition to* the way in which the person living in the natural attitude naively and erroneously understands

the world of things given to outer perception as having real, actual, independent existence and meaning in themselves, whether one's attention is directed toward them or not. Thus it turns out to be the case that what the Scholastics of the Middle-Ages distinguished in their general metaphysical reflections between the intentional and natural orders of being not only determines a significant part of Brentano's thesis of intentionality in the 1874 passage but this distinction is *also still* alive and well, teaching the later Husserl *how to see*, properly, from a phenomenological point of view, the mode of being of the entire world of things given to our actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience for what it is, namely, as an *intentional* correlate of experience. What is, however, problematical with 'Brentano's thesis' is not the 'spooky' ontological implications of what consciousness is a consciousness of, nor its scholastic terminology, but the dualistic metaphysics of human subjectivity comprising a lucid mind and an opaque body underpinning *Brentano's* elaboration of his discovery of the intentionality of consciousness.⁵⁰ A successful elaboration of this tenet of consciousness in philosophy of mind, then, lies outside of natural science, Cartesian-Lockean metaphysics, and naturalistic conceptualizations of what it is to be a human being.

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Notes

- 1 Brentano 1995a, 180–181 n.
- 2 This paper was first read at the Conference on ‘Consciousness and Intentionality: Franz Brentano’s Heritage in Philosophy of Mind’, held at the University of Salzburg, on 8 Feb., 2013. I would like to thank the participants of the Conference for their questions and, in particular, conversations that I had with Johannes Brandl, Mark Textor, Barry Dainton and Ion Tănăsescu. I hope this revised and slightly extended version of the paper goes towards addressing some of the questions and issues they raised.
- 3 Cf. Hedwig 1979.
- 4 Brentano 1975a, 14.
- 5 Hence Bartok’s (2005, 443) remark, ‘(T)o a surprising degree, Brentano’s empiricism [in *PES* and *DP*] is recognizably a descendant of Locke’s’, and of Hume’s, too, we must add, for, Brentano follows Hume’s lead that perception can be understood as that which is perceived (the ‘impression’ in Hume’s sense) in the mind as well as the act of perceiving: ‘(N)othing is ever present to the mind but its perceptions; and [...] all the actions of seeing, hearing [...] fall under its denomination. The mind may never exert itself in any action which may not be comprehended under the term of perception’ (Hume 1967, p. 456). Before Hume and Locke, Aquinas did remark: ‘Our mind knows itself not by its own substance but by its activities — and through a consideration of those activities man can come to a general understanding of the mind’s nature — but that requires diligent and subtle investigation’ (*Summa Theologiae*, 1a. q. 87. a.1). Unlike Locke and Hume, however, for Aquinas, the mind can only know itself *secondarily* and not immediately or directly through such considerations. Brentano in fact *did* hold this position in his 1866 habilitation thesis *The Psychology of Aristotle*: ‘(A)lthough it [the intellect] knows itself, it does not know itself either always or in the beginning, but *only secondarily*’ (1975a, 88, my emphasis). In *PES*, then, Brentano follows Locke and Hume’s approach, and not Aquinas and Aristotle’s.
- 6 Brentano 1995a, 311–314 (Appendix XII ‘Thinking is Universal, Entities are Individual [Dictated 1917]’).
- 7 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 12, 1c., quoted by Marras (1976, 135, n. 26). What Marras does not point out to the reader 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 this author intimates.

- Cf. Simonin (1930). What Marras, nonetheless, defends in ‘Scholastic Roots of Brentano’s Concept of Intentionality’ is the Scholastic epistemological position, and not Brentano’s account. Thus the major conceptual discrepancies between the Scholastic view and Brentano’s ‘new’ thesis of intentionality are neither noted nor addressed in his paper. A similar absence is present in Runggaldier’s (1989) ‘On the Scholastic or Aristotelian Roots of “Intentionality” in Brentano’ and in a more recent article by Jacquete (2004), who seems to approve of Marras’ treatment of Brentano’s thesis (cf. *Ibid.*, 125, n. 5). Hence the changes that Brentano actually makes to the scholastic meaning of intentionality do not feature in this paper either.
- 8 Brentano 1969, 151 (Appendix IX ‘Loving and Hating’, Dictation, May 19, 1907).
- 9 Simonin 1930, 452.
- 10 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*’ (*Ibid.*, 447).
- 11 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.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 453.
- 13 Simonin 1930, 452.
- 14 See, *infra*, n. 38.
- 15 Passmore 1957, 178.
- 16 Brentano 1995a, 102.
- 17 Brentano 1969, 19–20, my emphasis.
- 18 See, *PES*, Book II, §§ 5–9.
- 19 See, Hume, 1896 [1739], 2n., 8, 60, and 73.
- 20 Descartes 1997, 143 (my emphasis).
- 21 Brentano 1995a, 155–176, esp., 162–164.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 209–210.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 24 De Boer 1978, 6.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 Twardowski’s account has been very influential. One commentator, for example, after quoting Brentano’s 1874 passage of *PeS* in full, immediately quotes a passage from Twardowski’s 1894 study as a gloss on Brentano’s 1874 passage, and then proceeds to elucidate Brentano’s 1874 passage in light of elements that Twardowski distinguishes between ‘relation to a content’ and ‘direction to an object’ (Moran, ‘Brentano’s Thesis’, 1996, 2) — a distinction which Brentano does not operate in his 1874 *PES*. This is not to suggest that Twardowski’s version is not a better version than Brentano’s, in many respects it is; but it is not ‘the actual views of the historical Brentano’ which this commentator says he wishes to address (*ibid.*). This, nonetheless, probably explains why Moran (2005, 57) *attributes* to Brentano the view that ‘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 [a] real thing).’ According to this commentator (Moran 1996, 2), 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’ elaborated in the 1960s.
- 27 According to Spiegelberg (1994, 97), ‘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’. This repeats his point from his earlier 1936 article, “‘Intention” and “Intentionality” in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl’ (in McAlister, 1976, 122). Simons (1995a, xix) exercises a similar viewpoint, in his ‘Introduction to the Second Edition’ of the re-print of the English translation of Brentano’s *PES*, 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. Moran (2000, 482, n. 80) agrees with Spiegelberg and Simons, noting that, ‘(T)he 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’. Brentano, however, does refer to ‘intentional relation’ in his lectures on *DP* in the 1880s. Husserl, at any rate, credits Brentano with the discovery of the object-relatedness of acts of consciousness and himself with working out the theory of the ‘constitution’ of the meaning of objects in consciousness which Brentano does not elaborate. See Husserl 1968, ‘§ 3d Brentano als Wegbereiter für die Forschung in innerer Erfahrung — Enkdeckung der Intentionalität als Grundcharakter des Psychischen’, 31–35.
- 28 Because there is a ‘real’, ‘natural unity’ of ‘acts’ and *their* ‘[intended] objects’ in consciousness, a descriptive science of *the way in which the acts of consciousness present those objects* is possible. Thus Brentano’s account of the ‘unity of consciousness’ in *PES* Book II, Chapter IV ‘On the Unity of Consciousness’ (1995a, 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 on this matter, agreed with Brentano (1995a, 163) that ‘this tenet [of the unity of consciousness] has been *misunderstood* [my emphasis] by both its supporters and its opponents’ in modern philosophical and natural-scientific psychology.
- 29 Brentano 1995a, 88–89. By ‘physical phenomena’ Brentano means the sensorially *perceived* qualities (e.g. sounds, colours, odours etc.) of actual acts of outer perceptual-sense experience (ibid., 79–80; 92–94; 112–113; 175–176). Brentano, however, *also* uses the term ‘physical phenomena’ for the theoretically constructed objects of natural science, e.g., ‘molecular movements’ and ‘forces’ discovered in pure physics that exist ‘really (*wirklich*) and truly’ outside of intentional consciousness (ibid., 98–100). These objects, nonetheless, are not

directly experienced, and so, strictly speaking, are not ‘phenomena’. Because his use of the term ‘physical phenomena’ is ambiguous, it is of importance to identify which meaning he is appealing to when interpreting his views on ‘physical phenomena’.

30 Ibid., 138, my emphasis.

31 Ibid., p. 102, my emphasis.

32 Heidegger will unravel the etymology of this same German word differently, emphasizing the awareness of *being* – like others before him, such as Karl Marx – and find support and corroboration therein *also in the same term* for an *alternative definition and conception* of ‘phenomenology’, one that privileges *my* understanding of *being* as determining what my intentional consciousness is ‘a consciousness of’. As Heidegger (1956, 215) rhetorically raises and answers the question in ‘My Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics’ (originally composed and published in 1949 as an ‘Introduction’ to the fifth reprint of ‘What is Metaphysics?’ (1929): ‘What else could be the meaning – if anybody has ever seriously thought about this – of the word *sein* in the [German] words *Bewußtsein* and *Selbstbewußtsein* if it did not designate the existential nature of that which is in the mode of existence.’ This, however, would be to *miss* the point that *Brentano* wishes to make in *PES* about the term ‘*Bewußtsein*’, namely, that *consciousness* cannot but exist for the being who is conscious – the latter is ‘the wonder of all wonders’ as *Husserl* would later stress in his phenomenology. Such word-support of course does not work for the English term ‘consciousness’; the latter expression stems from the Latin, ‘*con*’ (together) and ‘*scire*’ (to know), as in having shared knowledge with others, and so, is linked to ‘moral conscience’ (*conscientiae*). In a court of law, for instance, when one is charged with ‘being conscious of the fact’, or of being ‘an accessory after the fact’ (*factum*), one is being charged with being an accomplice, or with being a witness to the deed done (*factum*) by somebody else. Thus the Latin phrase ‘*consciis sibi*’ is translated into English as ‘conscious to oneself’, and it is with such an ‘internal court testimony’ that *Descartes* uses the term ‘*conscientia*’ in his starting-point of his philosophical analysis of the mind. *Brentano* follows *Descartes*. Heidegger (1927), in *Sein und Zeit*, affirms the priority of my actual individual ‘existence’ (in the strong *Kierkegaardian* existentialist sense) as being-in-the-world and the significance of that being’s understanding and concern for its own individual being. Thus Heidegger follows *Kierkegaard*, not *Brentano* (or *Husserl*).

33 *Brentano* 1995a, 88 n. English translation of ‘mental inexistence’ for ‘*psychische Einwohnung*’ changed to ‘psychical indwelling’.

34 Ibid., 180–181 n. Cf., *Spiegelberg*, 1976, 120–21.

35 In his paper on “‘Intention’ and “Intentionality” in the Scholastics, *Brentano* and *Husserl*’, *Spiegelberg* agrees with *Brentano*’s self-interpretation on this issue and thereby misses the significant changes that *Brentano* actually makes to this concept of ‘intentional indwelling’ (*[in]esse intentionale*) in Scholastic metaphysics.

- 36 McAlister 2004, 153.
- 37 See, Brentano (1975a), esp., 'Part III. Of the Sensitive Soul', 54–74, and compare this to any passage in *PES* where Brentano talks about 'physical *phenomena*'.
- 38 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, *supra*, n. 4.
- 39 In his earlier 1862 doctoral dissertation *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, Brentano defends this realist underpinnings of things in nature (in terms of their accidental modifications of substances) in his treatment of 'being in the sense of the true' in the Scholastic-Aristotelian account of *adequatio rei et intellectus*. Quoting Aristotle from *Metaphysics* IX. 10, 1051b6–8, Brentano (1975b, 19) writes: 'You are not white because we believe truthfully that you are white. Rather because you are white, we, who say it, speak the truth.' Brentano, however, no longer subscribes to this position in his 1874 *PES* as outer (sense) perception is now regarded as inherently mis-leading (*Falschnehmung*). See, *infra*, n. 43, and corresponding reference in *PES* and my comment.
- 40 Brentano's stress on the intended object of outer perceptual-sense experience as an exclusive property of one's *own* psychical-act experiences leads to the question of the reducibility or irreducibility of the physical to the psychical in Brentano's account that has either occupied or vexed many analytic commentators on 'Brentano's thesis'. Cf., Moran's (1996, 27) conclusion that 'those who invoke Brentano as guardian of mental irreducibility are just plain wrong'. Brentano, however, does not equate the brain with the mind (*PES* 1995a, 36; *DP* 1995b, 4) and holds the view that access to our consciousness is peculiarly direct, clear and certain by comparison to anything else (especially the awareness of one's own body). Thus Brentano admits some mode of being of (conscious) experience that is qualitatively irreducible to physical reality, however incorrect his views on incarnate consciousness are or his implicit dualistic metaphysics of human subjectivity as comprising a lucid mind and an opaque body is.
- 41 Brentano 1995a, 91.
- 42 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1, 54, 5, quoted by Marras (1976, 134), my emphasis.
- 43 Husserl was sharply critical of Brentano's use and appeal to knowledge from natural science as 'evidence' *against* immediate descriptions in Brentano's elaboration of his novel idea of a science of descriptive psychology which requires one, methodologically, to turn away from all hypothetical theories and give due attention to 'the things themselves' of experience.
- 44 Cf., Simonin 1930, 456, and de Boer 1978, 44.
- 45 Quoting Aquinas, Hayen (1942, 98) remarks, 'Instrumentalis virtus [...] est fluens et incompleta in esse naturae.' Hence, as Hayen (*ibid.*) 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'. Cf., also, James S. Alberston 1954.
- 46 Marras (1976, 131) puts this point well for the Scholastics, when he notes, '(T) o say an object *exists formally* (immaterially, intentionally, etc.) in the subject 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*].' This, however, is *not* the philosophical position that *Brentano actually holds* in the 1874 *PES* passage because the intentional object is now regarded by Brentano as that which is directly known.
- 47 Cf., Hayen 1942, 35–7.
- 48 Ibid., 98.
- 49 See, Watson 1988, 141.
- 50 Brentano's modification of the Scholastic concept of *esse intentionale* in *PES* to mean the spiritual indwelling of an object in consciousness and *its* peculiar ontological status of mind-dependent-existence is one of the major sources of criticism that is laboured against 'Brentano's thesis', especially from some analytic philosophers who believe that 'a successful analysis of intentionality will show such *spooky* ontological talk to have been unnecessary' (Bartok 2005, 441, my emphasis).

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