

The Origins of Phenomenology in Austro-German Philosophy: Brentano and Husserl

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1. Historical Background. Brentano and 19th-Century European Philosophy

The development of phenomenology in 19th-century German philosophy is that of a particular stream within the larger historical-philosophical complex of Austro-German

philosophy. It finds its origins even before Hegel's death in 1831, in the teachings and works of Bernard Bolzano, and develops into a structured whole through the works of Franz Brentano and his school. This main current in its development includes other parallel Austrian influences from Johann Friedrich Herbart, Richard Avenarius, Ludwig Boltzmann, Ernst Mach, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and the members of the Vienna Circle; and contributions from its natural allies in German philosophy, especially Friedrich Trendelenburg, Rudolph Hermann Lotze, and Gottlob Frege. It has had further ramifications in economics, notably in the works of Carl Menger and Ludwig von Mises, in literature, in the works of Franz Kafka and Robert Musil, and in many other fields.¹

Brentano is the backbone of Austro-German philosophy for many reasons. He came to Austria in 1874, which he considered to be a favorable context to found a philosophical school;² he was instrumental in reintroducing Bolzano, the grandfather of Austro-German philosophy, to Austrian philosophers; he trained or contributed to the training of many generations of Austro-German philosophers, ranging from Carl Stumpf and Anton Marty to Alexius Meinong, Thomas Masaryk, Christian von Ehrenfels, Alois Höfler, Edmund Husserl, Kazimierz Twardowski, Oskar Kraus and Schmucl Hugo Bergman; and he was an acknowledged influence on many philosophers ranging from Stout, Moore, and Heidegger to the Vienna Circle (the authors of the *Manifesto*) and many other late 20th- and early 21st-century philosophers, on both sides of the analytic vs. continental divide. As the “grandfather of phenomenology”³ resp. the “disgusted grandfather of phenomenology,”⁴ but also as the key figure on the “Anglo-Austrian Analytic Axis” (Simons 1986; Dummett 1988:7), Brentano is at the source of the two main philosophical traditions in 20th-century philosophy. In this article, I will focus mainly on his place in 19th-century European philosophy and on the central themes and concepts in his philosophy that were determinant in the development of the philosophy of his most gifted student: Edmund Husserl.

¹ Cf. other similar definitions of Austrian and Austro-German philosophy in Haller (1979), Simons (2000), Smith (1981, 1989, 1994, 1996), and Mulligan (1989, 1990, 1997, 2001, 2012).

² On his philosophical appreciation of Austria, see for instance his inaugural lecture “On the Causes of Discouragement in the Philosophical Domain”, in Brentano (1929, pp. 85ff). See also his recollections in his letter to Bergman from 1909, published in Bergman (1946, p. 125). On his project to found a school as such, see Brentano (1895, p. 34), Husserl (1919/1976, pp. 156ff/48ff), and Fiset and Fréchette (2007, pp. 14ff) for further sources.

³ See Baumgartner (2003).

⁴ Ryle (1976).

Aristotle's Heir

Brentano's interest in philosophy was doubtless largely conditioned by the great philosophical and literary talents in his family, and its role in the development of German Romanticism. His uncle Clemens Brentano and his aunt Bettina von Arnim marked the history of German Romanticism, and are among the direct successors of Goethe and the *Weimarer Klassik*. His father, Christian Brentano, was well known as a Catholic writer. He took a great interest in philosophy, and was instrumental in publishing the *Nachlass* of his brother Clemens. He supposedly attended Schelling's first lectures in Jena, which left him with a terrible impression.⁵

The young Franz started his studies in Munich in 1856, under the supervision of Ernst von Lasaulx, who was also a friend of his uncle and on whom he had previously made a very good impression.⁶ He spent two years in Munich, after which he went to Berlin to study Aristotle under the supervision of Trendelenburg. Later, Brentano would write that he did not always consider Trendelenburg's method of closely studying text appropriate, and that it was in fact Aquinas who was his foremost guide to Aristotelian philosophy.⁷ In Münster, he spent an academic year working under the supervision of Franz Jakob Clemens and Christoph Bernhard Schlüter, who not only trained him in medieval philosophy, but also introduced him to Neo-Scholasticism.⁸

⁵ See his biography in Christian Brentano (1854, XIV).

⁶ From Lasaulx's correspondence as quoted in Stöltzle (1904, p. 231): "Franz is in fact a subtle man, whom I like very much" ("Franz ist in der Tat ein feinsinniger Mensch, der mir sehr wohl gefällt.")

⁷ See his letter to Hugo Bergman of January 22, 1908, published in Bergman (1946, p. 106). "I am far from denying that he [Trendelenburg] was once my master. It was indeed he who guided me to Aristotle. And as I was attending his lectures on Aristotle, I compared in the library the commentaries of the great schoolman [Aquinas] and found there some passages favorably explained, which Trendelenburg was not able to make comprehensible." See also Brentano's letter to the Prussian Academy of Sciences in 1914: "With Trendelenburg, I shared all my life the conviction that philosophy is capable of a truly scientific approach, but that it is incompatible with such an approach when, without any reverence toward the ideas transmitted by the great thinkers of earlier times, it aims to insert them anew in every head. Therefore, I followed his example when I dedicated some years of my life to the study of the works of Aristotle, which he taught me to consider as an unexploited treasure trove. The same conviction that there are no prospects for true success in philosophy when one does not proceed as in other scientific disciplines brought me to the conviction not to embrace everything at the outset, but rather to concentrate my whole energy on a few relatively simple tasks, as did Archimedes, Galilei, and according to his own report, Newton, who allegedly compared his work with that of a child fishing out a few shells from the sea. Here, not only does the old saying that the half is greater than the whole obtain, as it seems to me: even for a minuscule part, one can say that it is better to tackle it than wanting to embrace the whole for then, in reality, one embraces nothing." Letter quoted in Oberkofler (1989:IXf.) Husserl famously adapted Brentano's motto using a monetary metaphor: "Not always the big bills, gentlemen: small change, small change!" quoted in Gadamer (1987, p. 107).

⁸ Brentano's third habilitation thesis (see Brentano 1866/1929, p. 137) was partly inspired by Clemens, who published a well-known book (Clemens 1856) on philosophy as a servant to theology. For some time, Brentano first planned to write his dissertation on Suarez under the supervision of Clemens, who was famous for his scholarship on Suarez. First drafts of this dissertation are deposited in Brentano's *Nachlass* at the Houghton Library of Harvard University.

From 1860 to 1862, Brentano spent most of his time working on his PhD dissertation on the various meanings of being in Aristotle (Brentano 1862). Shortly after his doctorate, he entered the Dominican convent in Graz as a novice, but left only a few months later. He took holy orders in the Catholic seminary in Würzburg in August 1864.

Brentano's dissertation made a good impression on Trendelenburg, who suggested to Ernst Mach in 1865 that he be appointed to a chair in philosophy in Graz.⁹ The same year, Brentano submitted his *Psychology of Aristotle* (published later as Brentano 1867/1977) as habilitation thesis in Würzburg.¹⁰ The 25 theses defended in his habilitation examination in 1866 (Brentano 1866) attest to the continuity of Brentano's philosophical programme. He defended most of them later in his career. In this, he followed his masters Trendelenburg, Clemens, and Lasaulx in their critical stance toward Kant and Hegel and their interest in a scientific philosophy, along with influences from French positivism, empiricism, Aristotle, and Aquinas.

The set of particular positions taken by Trendelenburg, Clemens, and Lasaulx is complex, but a quick look at their basic philosophical views shows that they complement each other in a way which Brentano was obviously aware of, with a decisive impact on his philosophical education. The renewal of Catholic philosophy proposed by the Neo-Scholastic stream propounded by Clemens was directed, among other targets, against Günther's Hegel-inspired speculative theology.¹¹ Analogously, Trendelenburg's efforts to return to Aristotle's theory of categories was also directed against Kant's deduction of the categories and the kind of systematic philosophy that emerged from it via Hegel and Schelling. On another level, Lasaulx's *Kulturpessimismus* and his theory of the history of philosophy as a *Verfallsgeschichte* was also directed against the so-called modern and progressive tendencies represented by the bourgeois philosophies of Kant and Hegel. In this respect Brentano's philosophy of history (even in its earliest form: see Brentano 1867a) shares many similarities with Lasaulx's *Philosophie der Geschichte* (1856), which defends a historical positivism close to Comte's view of the three stages of history – an approach that was influential in the conservative German circles to which Brentano's family, including Brentano himself, belonged.¹²

⁹ On this, see the correspondence between Mach and Trendelenburg published in Thiele (1978, p. 205).

¹⁰ On these dates, see Stumpf (1922, p. 29).

¹¹ On Clemens as the main German representative of Neo-Scholasticism, see Stöckl (1870, p. 836).

¹² On Lasaulx's cyclical *Verfallsgeschichte*, see Schnabel (1937, p. 168) and in particular Schoeps (1953, pp. 62ff.).

Brentano started lecturing in Würzburg as a *Privatdozent* in philosophy in 1866. His first lectures dealt with the history of philosophy, followed soon after by metaphysics. His early Würzburg lectures were attended by Carl Stumpf, Anton Marty, Carl van Endert, Ernst Commer, Ludwig Schütz, and Hermann Schell.¹³ Not only did Brentano have a strong philosophical influence on them at the time, he was also their main reference in religious affairs.

The school of Brentano might have developed quite differently if Brentano had not been commissioned in 1869 by the Bishop of Mainz, Ketteler, to draught a memorandum on papal infallibility in preparation for the first Vatican Council, which started in December of that year. In this document (Brentano 1969), Brentano relies mainly on philosophical arguments to argue against papal infallibility. The work on this memorandum was the beginning of his crisis of faith,¹⁴ and led him to the conclusion that all dogmas are based on real and insoluble contradictions.¹⁵

Even before writing this memorandum, however, Brentano was already very optimistic about the possibility of a theistic version of positivism in the philosophy of the sciences, which would be supported by an Aristotelian metaphysics. His discussions of the works of Helmholtz, Mill, Comte, and Whewell in his 1867/68 lectures on metaphysics already show that he was well acquainted with positivism at the time. The connection between his views on the natural sciences, metaphysics, and theology became clear in a lecture he gave in Würzburg in 1869 (and in 1879 in Vienna), where he argued that the second law of thermodynamics formulated by Clausius and Thomson (Lord Kelvin) offers a support for the cosmological proof for the existence of God, as Thomson (1855) and Clausius (1865) had argued before him.¹⁶

With the proclamation of the papal infallibility in July 1870, Brentano progressively abandoned his Catholic convictions, but maintained his position as a priest (and his position as professor of philosophy at Würzburg) until April 1873. His official defection came only a few weeks before he became involved in discussions for the appointment of a replacement for the chair of Franz Lott in Vienna, which he obtained with the support of Lotze.

¹³ See Stumpf (1919/1976, p. 103/19).

¹⁴ See Fels (1926/27), Utitz (1954, p. 77), Hertling (1919, pp. 208ff), Freudenberger (1969, pp. 148ff), Fisetto and Fréchette (2007, pp. 25ff)

¹⁵ See Stumpf (1922, p. 71).

¹⁶ See Brentano (2016).

As his position in Würzburg became increasingly uncomfortable after his “inner break” with the Church, in the spring of 1872 he took a sabbatical term, traveling to England where he met with other opponents of infallibilism – most notably William Robertson Smith, Cardinal Newman, Herbert Spencer, and George Jackson Mivart. He returned to Würzburg in the late summer of 1872, and gave his last semester of lectures there in 1872/73.

The 1872/73 lectures on psychology bear the influence of British empiricism, which Brentano studied intensively during his stay in London. They were also the basis on which he started work on his *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, particularly during the summer and fall of 1873. His *Psychology* was conceived as a six-volume project, which would cover investigations on 1) Psychology as a science; 2) Psychological phenomena in general; 3) Presentations; 4) Judgements; 5) Acts of love and hate; and 6) The immortality of the soul. Ultimately only the first volume and the first part of the second were published, in Brentano (1874). Brentano continued with work on the third volume in spring 1875, but abandoned the project shortly thereafter.¹⁷

Brentano and his School

Brentano came to Vienna with the project of founding a school and encouraging Austrian youth to enter philosophy,¹⁸ and found immediate success. The most prominent among his first Vienna students were Tomáš Masaryk (who would later be instrumental in introducing Husserl to Brentano), Sigmund Freud, Alexius Meinong, Alois Höfler, Benno Kerry, Alfred Berger, and Christian von Ehrenfels.

However, Brentano’s academic career in Vienna took an unexpected turn in 1880, when he decided to marry Ida Lieben. At the time, as a former priest he was not eligible to marry under Austrian law. He thus repudiated the Austrian citizenship that he had acquired through his appointment, which also forced him to resign from his chair; he acquired Saxon citizenship and married in Leipzig in September 1880. He then continued to lecture in Vienna as a *Privatdozent*. Although the ministry promised to reinstate him in his chair on multiple occasions, this never happened. This, along with other difficulties with the authorities, as well as the death of his wife, led Brentano to

¹⁷ Even before the first book was published on Easter 1874, Brentano wrote to Lotze about his doubts on the project. Years later, in a diary entry from 1904, he detailed the motives of his decision not to continue the project on the basis of his view that psychology was not yet ready at that time for such comprehensive works. See Falckenberg (1901, p. 112) Fréchette (2012, pp. 104ff), and Rollinger (2012, p. 301).

¹⁸ See Bergmann (1946, p. 306).

leave Vienna in 1895. He made the decision public and explained it in detail in a public lecture in 1894, and the story soon came to be known in Vienna as the *Affaire Brentano*.¹⁹

His later teaching in Vienna was particularly fruitful. Among his most important students from the post-1870 Vienna period, we find Franz Hillebrand, Emil Arleth, Kazimierz Twardowski, Hans Schmidkunz, Josef Clemens Kreibitz, and Edmund Husserl.

Brentano's last years, between 1895 and 1917, were spent mostly between Schönbühel, his summer residence on the Danube, and Florence, where he elected domicile. His former students visited him regularly in both places, and sent their own students to study Brentano's philosophy with the master himself. Marty's students were particularly receptive to this offer: Hugo Bergman, Alfred Kastil, Oskar Kraus, Emil Utitz, and Josef Eisenmeier all came from Prague and visited Brentano regularly, assisting him in dictations and readings, which became necessary after 1903, when he underwent an eye operation that left him almost completely blind. In particular, Oskar Kraus and Alfred Kastil played an important role in publishing some of Brentano's lectures in the 1920s and 1930s.

Husserl

Not only did Brentano fulfill his desire to found a philosophical school, but he also transmitted this desire to many of his students. This was the case of Meinong (Graz), Marty (Prague), Stumpf (Berlin), Twardowski (Lemberg), Hillebrand (Innsbruck), and of course Husserl (Göttingen/Freiburg). His phenomenology influenced several generations, starting from the Munich and Göttingen phenomenologists and extending to the later generation of Freiburg phenomenologists after 1919. But first a few more remarks on Husserl in this specific context.

Two years after Brentano was appointed in Vienna, he sent one of his first doctoral students, Tomáš Masaryk, to spend some time in Leipzig studying psychology under the supervision of Wundt.²⁰ It was on this occasion that Masaryk met a fellow Moravian, the young Edmund Husserl, who attended Wundt's lectures as a first-year undergraduate. Masaryk suggested to Husserl that he go to Vienna to study under

¹⁹ See for example Anonymous (1894, 1894a, 1895).

²⁰ This was also the case of Twardowski: see Twardowski (1991/1999).

Brentano, but the young Husserl was in Leipzig to study under Weierstrass. He later continued his studies in mathematics in Vienna, completing his doctorate in 1883.

Husserl was heading for a career in mathematics, and accepted a position as assistant to Weierstrass in Berlin, where he spent a semester. In autumn 1883 he enrolled in military service, during which his interest in philosophy grew considerably. After having spent the last part of his military service in Vienna, he decided to begin attending Brentano's lectures after completing his service.

Husserl spent two years in Vienna attending all of Brentano's lectures and seminars: on practical philosophy, elementary logic, Hume's *Essay on Human Understanding*, psychology and aesthetics, and *The Limits of our Knowledge of Nature* by Du Bois-Reymond (1872/1874).²¹ Husserl left a positive impression on Brentano, who invited him to spend his summer holidays with him on Lake Wolfgang near Salzburg, and even, together with his wife Ida, painted a portrait of him.²² Since Brentano himself, acting at this time only as a *Privatdozent* in Vienna, was not in a position to habilitate Husserl, he suggested that he go either to Prague, to habilitate under Marty, or to Halle, to habilitate under Stumpf.²³ Husserl left for Halle, and a year later obtained his Habilitation with a thesis on the concept of number. The work was expanded a few years later into the *Philosophy of Arithmetics* (1891/2003), Husserl's contribution to a Brentanian philosophy of mathematics, which he dedicated to Brentano.

Husserl spent 14 years in Halle as a *Privatdozent*. The publication of his magnum opus, the *Logical Investigations*, in 1900-01, was a turning point both in his career and his philosophical development. The good reception that the work received from Dilthey, the Neo-Kantians, and the Göttingen mathematicians facilitated his appointment in Göttingen. Philosophically, Husserl's views evolved considerably between his *Philosophy of Arithmetics* and the *Logical Investigations*. Many different factors contributed to this evolution, including among others his correspondence with Frege and his studies of the philosophical works of Bolzano in the mid-1890s. These led him to his critique of psychologism in the *Logical Investigations*, whose epigraph was Goethe's proverbial remark that "one is against nothing more stridently than the errors one has first set

²¹ See Husserl (1919, p. 155/1976, p. 48).

²² According to Spiegelberg (1981, pp. 119-122) the painting was destroyed in the bombing of Antwerp in 1940.

²³ On April 8, 1886, Brentano wrote to Marty: "Dr. Husserl and Hillebrand are thinking about going to Prague this summer. Unfortunately, I could not tell them what you plan to lecture on." On October 22, 1886, he wrote again to Marty: "Husserl has now left for Halle. I recommended him to Stumpf with the reserves that seemed appropriate: I want to see what Stumpf thinks of him."

aside.” We will return later (section 3) to the critique of psychologism, which played a central role in the development of phenomenology.

2. Some General Principles of Brentano’s Philosophy

Insofar as phenomenology is originally a specific branch of Austro-German philosophy, Brentano and Husserl should be taken equally as its founders. Like Christianity, phenomenology underwent schisms that divided the original territory into different subterritories. One of the first schisms occurred after Husserl’s sudden discovery of his Ego in 1913.²⁴ This discovery slowly brought Husserl onto the path of Southwestern Neo-Kantianism, a philosophy that is directly opposed to the original thrust of phenomenology. From the perspective of Brentano’s students, his philosophical heirs, and their contemporaries, another important schism became manifest with the publication of Heidegger’s *Being and Time* in 1927 and his 1929 inaugural lecture *What is Metaphysics?*²⁵

However, since this article is concerned with the *origins* of phenomenology, we will only deal here with themes and concepts which are central to phenomenology as a branch of Austro-German philosophy: i.e., those which were in place before the various schisms described above. The focus is on these themes and concepts as they relate directly to the basic principles of Brentano’s philosophy, or their determinant role in the development of further Austro-German streams that originated in phenomenology: Gestalt psychology, the theory of objects, Munich-Göttingen phenomenology, and many other movements in 20th-century philosophy.

As mentioned earlier, Brentano’s 25 habilitation theses from 1866 document his programme in philosophy. This set of 25 propositions, characterizing the correct methodology for philosophy, the connection between language and thought, drawing the line between good and bad philosophy, and stating the core principles of ethics and metaphysics, present some of the most fundamental and durable ideas in Brentano’s philosophy. Following the inner structure of these propositions,²⁶ it is reasonable to

²⁴ Husserl announced the discovery in a rather discreet manner, as a footnote in the second edition of the *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 2001, p. 353). On Husserl’s discovery of the self, see Fréchette (2013a).

²⁵ On the reactions of the Brentanians, see for instance Kraus (1931, p. 140) and Stumpf (1930). Carnap (1931, pp. 230-1) and Ryle (1931, pp. 230-1), who were otherwise both sympathetic to some aspects of early phenomenology, also noticed the change of perspective.

²⁶ Contrary to the work that it prefigures, there has been little study of the inner structure of Brentano (1866). Kraus categorized the themes of the theses: methodology, ontology and metaphysics, continuity, psychology,

isolate five general principles among them, which can serve here as a guide to Brentano's conception of philosophy:

five general principles form Brentano's philosophy

- a) *Philosophy is a science*: philosophy should be practiced as a science in the unitary sense of the term, which excludes a distinction between speculative and exact sciences, and which means using the same methods as the natural sciences (see theses 1 and 4);
- b) *Anti-Kantianism*: Kantianism, including its views on the proofs of the existence of God, is false (see theses 1, 6, 7);
- c) *Empiricism*: philosophy starts from experience (see theses 12, 13, 14, 15);
- d) *The mereological nature of substance*: the accident contains its substance; there are ultimate specific determinations of the substance, but since we do not have an intuition of an individual substance in all its determinations – we only have intuitions of an individual substance through the accidents given in intuitive perception – we cannot properly know it²⁷ (see theses 16, 17).
- e) *Correctness principle*: something has value just when it is correct to love it; a judgment is true just when it is correct to acknowledge (*anerkennen*) the existence of its object (see theses 24, 25).²⁸

Further principles of Brentano's philosophy, which are formulated in the 25 habilitation theses, also played an important role in his intellectual development, although for various reasons they do not share the privileged position of the five basic principles in his system:

philosophy of language, freedom of the will, ethics, and aesthetics (Brentano 1929, p. 165). Detailed discussions of some of the theses can be found in Gilson (1955), Ingarden (1969), and Sauer (2000).

²⁷ The idea behind theses 16 and 17 is that the accident contains the substance and, analogously, that our concepts (e.g., the concept of redness) contain in themselves the intuition of something red. Like accidents, concepts are one-sidedly detachable from the intuition at their base (resp. from substance). See the quote in Chrudzimski (2004, p. 142). Thesis 16 is about the logical parts of a whole, which stand in a line of predication and which constitute, as a whole, the individual of a kind. Thesis 17 is about the metaphysical parts of a whole: every metaphysical part is different.

²⁸ Cf. also Brentano (1889/1902, p. 17/15f).

- f) *Metaphysical continuism*: space is a finite, non-empty continuum (theses 8, 9, 10);
- g) *Linguistic empiricism*: language was developed as an auxiliary tool for thought (theses 18, 19). This is a corollary of principle (c).
- h) *Logical reductionism*: Some judgments, like disjunctive judgments, are simply linguistic formulations of other, more fundamental, forms of judgments (theses 20, 21);
- i) Indeterminism is not a challenge to free will (thesis 23);²⁹
- j) Philosophy should not be considered a servant to theology, although theology might sometimes serve as a guiding star³⁰ (theses 2 and 3).

Among the various reasons why principles (f) to (j) do not count as basic principles, it may be helpful to stress a few in particular: changes in Brentano's views at different stages of his development (e.g., principle i); insights that would be substantially developed only later (e.g., principle h); the limited application of certain insights to a specific domain of philosophy (principles f and g); and having metaphilosophical significance chiefly outside philosophy, and therefore not being directly relevant as a *philosophical* principle (principle j).

Some of these five general principles are deliberately formulated here so as to be interpretable in more than one way, for two reasons. First, there is no documentation, besides cryptic marginal notes by Brentano himself, on how he actually defended the theses during his *disputatio*. Second, and consequently, Brentano's later philosophy must be used to substantiate the principles. Since he changed his mind more than once on many philosophical matters, the five general principles are illustrated differently depending on the particular view discussed.

Principle (a): Philosophy as a science

²⁹ This position differs from Brentano's later compatibilist position on free will, from the 1870s onwards, for instance in *Grundlage der Ethik*, where he rejects indeterminism and argues for a compatibilist account. Kraus argues in Brentano (1929, p. 180) that the early Brentano was an indeterminist, but besides principle (i) and a small remark by Stumpf (1919, p. 106/1976, p. 21) there is no clear evidence that he has been an indeterminist in his early years.

³⁰ On the guiding star (*stellae rectrices*), see Werle (1989, p. 134) and Sauer (2000, p. 128). On the guidance of theology, see particularly Brentano's teacher Clemens (1859, p. 15ff), on the "guidance of theology." The rejection of papal infallibility expressed in 1869 (reproduced in Freudenberger 1969) seems to articulate a clean break with this idea behind principle (j). For an alternative reading of the connection of principle (j) to the core principle (a), see Brandl (forthcoming).

According to principle (a), philosophy must oppose the distinction between exact and speculative sciences, since this opposition is its condition of existence (thesis 1) and the methods of philosophy are none other than the methods of the natural sciences (thesis 4). The first thesis was directed among other things against speculative idealistic projects like that of Schelling;³¹ but it was equally directed against a restricted understanding of the “exact” sciences as consisting only of studies involving quantitative measurements.³² Brentano’s ideal of philosophy as a science combines the idea that there is a sense of “speculation” according to which metaphysics is a speculative, and yet exact, enterprise – even more so than “exact physics” (in a sense i akin to Comte’s positive method a positive speculation)³³ – with the idea that true science must also allow for this kind of “speculative exactness,” and not only for the kind of exactness required by quantitative measurements.

Given this reading of thesis 1, it is easier to understand the sense in which Brentano considers that philosophy be understood as a science, and his claim that it shares its methods with natural sciences. Like the natural sciences, philosophy uses methods such as observation, deduction, and induction, insofar as they are applicable to the objects of their investigation. However, this does not mean that all philosophical investigations should be conducted with the methods of the *natural* sciences, which would amount to naturalism. Rather, as suggested in thesis 1, there is a sense in which philosophical investigations can be speculative and yet exact and scientific in the true sense.³⁴ Principle (a) therefore allows for a unitary sense of science by virtue of the identity of methods between philosophy and natural sciences (insofar as they deal with the same objects, i.e., physical phenomena), while leaving room for a kind of exactness in philosophy which makes it scientific in a broader sense than that implied by the strict commonality of methods referred to in thesis 4.³⁵

³¹ In particular, it is directed against Schelling’s view that philosophy should cut itself off from all domains of “ordinary knowledge” (*gemeines Wissen*), as programmatically announced in the first issue of his *New Journal for Speculative Physics* (Schelling 1802, p. 34; 1859, p. 262). This passage has often been quoted in the school of Brentano as the example *par excellence* of the dangers of speculative idealism in philosophy. See Brentano (1929, p. 104) or Stumpf (1908, p. 17).

³² See Brentano (1987, p. 6) and Oberkofler (1989:5).

³³ See Brentano (1968:127) and (Sauer 2000, p. 124)

³⁴ See Brentano (1987:303)

³⁵ See also Haller (1993) for a similar reading, which makes it possible to draw a direct connection between Brentano’s fourth thesis and the Vienna Circle’s project of a unitary science. In his introduction to the philosophy of sciences that is much influenced by the Vienna circle, Richard von Mises (1939/1956) quotes Brentano’s thesis 4 as an epigraph. On exactness as a method in descriptive psychology, see Mulligan (1989).

Principle (b): Anti-Kantianism

Principle (b) follows to some extent from thesis 1, which supports principle (a), insofar as the rejection of speculative idealism is concerned. It is also a correlate of principle (c). In 1866, Brentano argued against Kantianism, albeit only an aspect of Kant's ideas, namely his philosophy of religion. Thesis 6 is a nice example that Brentano used to disclose the weaknesses of Kantianism. In it he negates Kant's idea that the design argument for the existence of God can only prove an order of the world, but not an author of the world. In Kant's view, the hypothesis of a creator of the world on the basis of observed causal relations between phenomena is not justified because the gap between empirical data and their relations and the absolute determinations of the highest cause of the world is unbridgeable.³⁶ Brentano argues, against this view, that Kant's conclusion simply stands square with his own conception of synthetic a priori truths: after all, if Kant holds the law of causality to be a synthetic a priori truth, then the fact that we do not experience God as a primary cause cannot possibly be an obstacle to the design argument.³⁷ Besides, Brentano argues, the assumption of a creator is reasonable simply on the basis of the probability calculus, and does not involve reliance on the cosmological or ontological arguments, as Kant contends.

Thesis 7 deals with Kant's discussion of God as *ens realissimum* in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (B 604ff). Brentano argues that Kant is wrong in saying that the existence of God as a creator does not imply God's infinite perfection. The argument supporting the thesis can be deductively construed: supposing that a creator exists, we can deduce the creator's infinite perfection, since to "create out of nothing" means to have an unconditioned effect; having such an unconditioned creative effect is incommensurably superior to having a conditioned effect, and having an unconditioned effect is not possible by simply adding conditioned and finite effects; therefore, if God exists, by deduction, he must have infinite perfection.³⁸

The argument behind thesis 6 is a central element in Brentano's anti-Kantianism: if synthetic a priori truths are truths that obtain independently of experience, and if temporal and spatial determinations are forms of our understanding, then any synthetic a priori truth about temporal or spatial determination is simply made true by our understanding, which is a standard to which even Kant himself cannot live up to.

³⁶ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (B: 651-658).

³⁷ See Brentano (1968, p. 86) and Hoppenstedt (1933:64).

³⁸ See also Brentano (1929:171).

Therefore, excluding experience as one of the foundations of knowledge gives us at best “blind prejudices,” Brentano’s epithet for Kant’s synthetic a priori truths.³⁹

In Brentano’s opinion, Kant and Reid adopt the same basic idea that there are common sense judgments – judgments which, though they are not evident, appear to be certain and likely to found a science. On Brentano’s view, Kant goes too far in his fight against skepticism by asserting that the objects of knowledge are given to us in blind judgments. Brentano therefore rejects synthetic a priori judgments not because they are a priori, but because their correctness cannot be “seen” – i.e., because they are “blind.” For him, accepting blind judgments (*blinde Vorurteile*) as the basis of our knowledge, and establishing the existence of God, the immortality of the soul and free will as postulates of practical pure reason, is a symptom of the utmost decay.⁴⁰

Brentano spent considerable energy arguing against all aspects of Kantian philosophy, for instance in a posthumously published work against Kant written in 1903 and entitled “Down with Prejudices! A Warning to the Present in the Spirit of Bacon and Descartes to Free Itself from All Blind A Prioris.”⁴¹ Even the construction of his lectures on metaphysics from 1867/68 is utterly anti-Kantian: he begins, as Kant does in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, with the “transcendental philosophy,” but concludes this opening section in direct opposition to Kant:

We have concluded our apology of what Kant would have called the transcendental part of metaphysics. We now proceed to investigate what might be called, in his language, transcendent. He stops here. From the standpoint of his conclusions, he forbids us to carry on. However, his conclusion is not ours. He ends up with a skeptical attitude [that maintains] the unknowability of the thing in itself and the subjectivity of our principles. We, in contrast, have seen that we do have indubitable principles.⁴²

Principle (c): Empiricism

As in the case of principle (a), the general principle (c) has two different domains of application in Brentano’s philosophy. In metaphysics, his empiricism takes the form of a critique of skepticism towards the possibility of knowledge and of a rejection of dogmatism. Brentano argues for two kinds of immediately evident knowledge:

³⁹ See Brentano (1926/1998, p. 26/99).

⁴⁰ Brentano (1926, p. 22)

⁴¹ In Brentano (1925).

⁴² Quoted and translated in Baumgartner (2013, p. 233).

- 1) axioms, which include tautologies, universal predications (e.g., “red is a color”), predications of a basis for some being (e.g., “everything which is colored is extended”), the truth of a correlative (e.g., “if a is bigger than b, then b is smaller than a”), mereological truths (e.g., “if a lion exists, then the heart of a lion exists”, or “if there is a body, there is a surface”), the determinateness of that which is incompletely presented (e.g., “a color is either red, blue, white, etc.”), essential relations (e.g., “10 metres is twice as long as 5 metres”), the necessity of a position, form, or ordering in a continuum (e.g., “3 p.m. is earlier than 4 p.m.), and double negation.⁴³
- 2) Inner perceivings (e.g., the knowledge that I am presently hearing (when I do), the knowledge that I want to sleep (when I do), etc.).

Metaphysics is not only based on immediate evident knowledge, but also on *mediate* (and thus only probable) knowledge, which is obtained through induction from repeated observations. This kind of knowledge is what Brentano calls a “physical certainty” of what is given in external perception.

Being built on these two sources of immediate evident knowledge and on the “physical certainty” of mediate knowledge of outer perception secures the empirical grounds of metaphysics. Of course, physical certainty is not evidence: this is why the beings Brentano investigates are not simply the table out there, and also not the “things heard” or the “things seen,” but rather the “hearer-of-a-tone” or the “seer-of-a-bird.” Only in this form are substances accessible to inner perception.⁴⁴

The second domain of application of principle (c) is psychology per se. For Brentano, psychology relies on the same two sources of knowledge as metaphysics: “physical certainty” obtained by induction from observation via outer perception, and evident knowledge, based either on inner perception or on the self-evidence of axioms. Psychology is therefore an empirical science with respect to the laws of succession between phenomena, the explanation of their causes, and the prediction of further phenomena – which are laws obtained by induction – but also regarding innerly perceived phenomena, which are subject to self-evident laws.

Principle (d): The mereological nature of substance

⁴³ See Brentano (1867b: 31766).

⁴⁴ Smith (1987) aptly calls Brentano’s beings “augmented substances.”

As we have seen above, Brentano defends a conception of beings as substances that are augmented by their attributes or accidents. There are no isolated substances: substances are not separable from their accidents. Rather, substances with their accidents, that which he also calls “things,” are to be taken as metaphysical wholes.

This conception of substances as wholes is called a “mereological” conception, with reference to Twardowski’s student Leśniewski, who coined this name for the theory of the formal relations between a whole and its parts. The basic principle (d) is supported by Brentano’s homonymic reading of Aristotle’s concept of being. In Brentano’s view, all senses of Being – being in the sense of accidental being, in the sense of the true, in the sense of being possible and in the sense of the categories – are derivative from the fundamental meaning of being according to the categories.⁴⁵ To put it differently, the first substance is included in the focal meaning of all the ways in which we speak of being, all of which express “modes of existence in the first substance” (Brentano 1862/1975: 178/118).⁴⁶

Principle (d) suggests, in the line of Aquinas and Aristotle, that *accidentis esse est inesse*, i.e., that the being of accidents is an *inexistence* (*inwohnen*) in the substance. “The substance which has a quality is neither the quality nor the possessing of the quality, but still the possessing of the quality is not for the substance a further quality. Rather, the possessing of a quality is *essentially* identical with the substance” (See Brentano 1867b: 31792).⁴⁷ In his 1874 *Psychology*, Brentano steps back on this mereological relation of *inwohnen* and characterizes intentionality as the ‘inwohnen’ of an object in a mental act.

Principle (e): the correctness principle

Brentano’s conception of value in terms of desire-worthiness (1866) or love-worthiness (1889) is already set out as one of the 25 theses in 1866. Although some elements of the theory are present in his Vienna lectures on practical philosophy,⁴⁸ the account was first presented in print in 1889: “We call something good, if love of it is correct. What is to be loved with correct love, what is worthy of love, is the good in the widest sense.” (Brentano 1889: 17, translation modified). This is the basic fitting attitude account of

⁴⁵ Brentano relies here on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, 1003b6-10.

⁴⁶ On this interpretation of Brentano’s reading of Aristotle’s homonymic conception of being as substance, see for instance Owen (1960) and Shields (1999:217ff).

⁴⁷ The same idea is discussed in Brentano’s first project of a PhD dissertation on Suarez from the early 1860s. See Brentano (frühe Schriften: 1000054)).

⁴⁸ Brentano (1952/1973).

value that Brentano proposed – years before Ewing (1947) and Scanlon (1998) – in which evaluative categories are accounted for in terms of deontic categories. Brentano defended two variants of the theory. According to the first (Brentano 1889; Brentano 1930), some of our emotions are correct because they are in harmony with the value of the object (Brentano 1930:25). The second view has sometimes been characterized as the orthonomy view (Kraus 1937): to say that our emotions are correct is just to say that they are experienced or known as correct (Brentano uses here “characterized as correct”, *als richtig charakterisiert*).⁴⁹ In this context, love is a higher mode of taking pleasure in something.⁵⁰ It should be added also that principle (e) holds not only for emotions, but also for judgments. The judgment expressed by “a exists” is true, Brentano argues, if and only if acknowledging (*anerkennen*) the existence of a is correct.⁵¹ We will return to the correctness principle in section 3 below.

3. The phenomenology of Brentano and Husserl

Despite the variety of stances which Brentano expressed on ontology, metaphysics, and psychology over the course of his career, these five principles remain central to his whole philosophy throughout: they have an important place in what could be called Brentano’s philosophical worldview or system.⁵² By extension, they also are essential to his conception of phenomenology. Since Husserl’s phenomenology grew out of Brentanian soil – although other influences, from Bolzano and Frege, are essential to understanding its specificities (see below) – let us now turn to the central issues in the two thinkers’ accounts of phenomenology, and to their respective applications of the principles mentioned above.

Phenomenology, Phenomena, and Experiences

Brentano introduced phenomenology as a philosophical discipline in his first lectures on metaphysics in Vienna in 1877/78.⁵³ He first used the term ‘phenomenology’ to characterize research into the contents of mental states, only later (in Vienna) expanding the lexicon of the discipline with the expressions “descriptive psychology,”

⁴⁹ Brentano (1889/1902, p. 19-20/18).

⁵⁰ On Brentano’s orthonomy view, see Kraus (1937, pp. 165ff) and Mulligan (forthcoming).

⁵¹ On Brentano’s theory of judgment, see Brandl (2014).

⁵² On Brentano’s worldview, see Fréchette (forthcoming-a). On Brentano’s philosophical system, see Kriegel (forthcoming).

⁵³ See Masaryk’s notes on Brentano’s metaphysics lectures in Masaryk (1877/78), where phenomenology is described as a “part of metaphysics.”

“psychognosy,” or “phenomenognosy.” As a part of metaphysics, phenomenology was then introduced as a form of investigation that precedes ontology but follows the so-called “transcendental philosophy,” the part of metaphysics that deals with skepticism and the arguments against it. In this context, phenomenology was introduced as an “investigation on the contents of our presentations” (Brentano 1867b: 31739), dealing with the ways substance appears, in opposition to the ways substance is.

The motivation behind Brentano’s introduction of phenomenology as a sort of preliminary to ontology is not very well documented. Whewell’s (1847) *History of Inductive Sciences* made a strong impression on the young Brentano, and may have influenced him in this context.⁵⁴ Notably, Whewell’s proposed distinction between explicative-causal (ætiological) and descriptive (phenomenological) sciences is palpable in Brentano’s early manuscripts on the classification of the sciences.⁵⁵ This distinction also played a role later on, in Brentano’s explanation of the role of descriptive psychology in his Viennese lectures, when he used an analogy with the distinction between geognosy and geology to illustrate the distinction between phenomenology and psychology more generally.⁵⁶

Introducing phenomenology into metaphysics allows Brentano to distinguish a field of investigation on the ways substance appears, as opposed to the ways substance is (ontology). Principles (a) and (c) in particular establish the possibility of a scientific investigation of phenomena as the first step in gaining knowledge of the nature of substance. This also follows from principle (d), insofar as we have intuitions of individual substances only through their perceived accidents. In this sense, phenomenology is not simply a preliminary to ontology, but also provides it with its tools of analysis and its epistemic security. As inner perception, which is phenomenology’s field of investigation, shows us mental phenomena as really existing, so is the existence of their parts, especially the logical and metaphysical parts, also

⁵⁴ Brentano had an annotated copy of the *History of Inductive Sciences* in his library, as well Mill’s book on Comte (Mill 1868) in a French translation.

⁵⁵ See for instance Brentano (EL75, 12921–12), where the distinction between descriptive (*beschreibende*) and causal (*nach Wirkungen*) sciences. This distinction also played a central role in Schlöder (1852), another work that the young Brentano received as a prize and annotated. The distinction between the science of objects and the science of phenomena is discussed in Schlöder (1852, xxv); Brentano refers to it in the aforementioned manuscript.

⁵⁶ See Brentano (1982/1995, p. 6/7-8) and Brentano (1895, p. 34).

secured by inner perception.⁵⁷ Phenomenology therefore makes authentic metaphysical knowledge possible.

The introduction of phenomenology into metaphysics coincides more or less with Brentano's more intensive research in psychology, and as such is an application of principle (d) to the empirical study of the mind. Psychology as a science of the mind investigates nothing other than the qualities of the substance, i.e., in this specific case, the qualities of soul. This is also why Brentano often speaks positively of Lange's "psychology without a soul,"⁵⁸ although for him it merely means that psychology can only investigate the phenomena through which the soul is given to us – what Brentano calls *psychical phenomena*, which are only perceivable innerly. But psychology is not only an investigation of soul through its phenomena: it also involves a study of their origins and their succession, an explanation of their causes, and the prediction of further phenomena. This part of the psychological investigation is what Brentano sometimes calls "genetic psychology." Since the causes of phenomena, their succession, and their prediction involve physical processes existing in the natural world, psychology must follow the same methods as natural sciences: observation, deduction, and induction, insofar as they are applicable to the objects of their investigation, as formulated in principle (a). Psychology, and more particularly genetic psychology, is therefore involved with the same phenomena as the natural sciences. These are called *physical phenomena*. Here we see the full consequences of thesis 4: a subset of philosophy (which includes metaphysics and psychology) shares the same objects as the natural sciences (physical phenomena) and must therefore apply the same methods to their investigation.

Within this strict framework, Brentano considers psychical phenomena the main object of the part of psychology he calls phenomenology or descriptive psychology. What are the essential features of psychical phenomena? After all, a natural scientist, or physiologist, could well argue that they are reducible to physical phenomena. This is one

⁵⁷ See Brentano (1867a: 31739): "When it is formulated in general, the question of the existence of realities belongs to ontology. If we would call everything that is not intentional an external thing, the question of the existence of external things would be the first question of ontology. But this is not the usage. We do not use to call our own mental phenomena in this way... The question about what is real is thereby already partially answered. The existence of phenomena of inner perception, and thereby the existence of their parts, in particular of the logical and metaphysical parts".

⁵⁸ Brentano (1874/2015, p. 27/22).

of Brentano's most patent concerns in his *Psychology*, and it is also the motivation behind his arguments on the irreducibility of the mental to the physical. He offers different arguments – on the absence of extension of psychical phenomena, on their inner perceivability, and so on. But what he considers to be the “most excellent” trait of mental phenomena over physical phenomena is their intentionality, i.e., the fact that they are directed toward something as their object.

In Husserl's view, it was this feature of psychical phenomena that was the most important. Early enough, however, Husserl was dissatisfied with Brentano's concept of psychical phenomena. His main concern was that calling both these mental acts and their objects “phenomena” is misleading, since it gives the impression that the apparent things (e.g., the red spot I am seeing) “only appear as analogues of sensations” (Husserl 1901a/2001: 235/342), and not as properties of the corresponding objects. Husserl did not formally accuse Brentano of this confusion, but his way of avoiding the confusion is also a rejection of Brentano's view:

“If an external object (a house) is perceived, presenting sensations are experienced in *this* perception, but they are not perceived. When we are deluded regarding the existence of the house, we are not deluded regarding the existence of our experienced sense-contents, since we do not pass judgment on them at all, do not perceive them in this perception (Husserl 1901a/2001, pp. 237/344-5).

Therefore, we should distinguish between my *experiencing* (*Erleben*) of sense-contents (my having physical phenomena) and my *perceiving* the house. The color spots I am experiencing may be called physical phenomena, but it would be wrong, according to Husserl, to call such an experience a *perception*, and a fortiori a *delusive* perception. Although experience may involve position taking (*Wahr-Nehmung*), the position taking is not constitutive of what an experience (*Erlebnis*) is.⁵⁹

At least since Gadamer (1985, pp. 157ff) and Heidegger, the conceptual history of *Erlebnis* has usually been traced back to Dilthey and the philosophy of life (*Lebensphilosophie*), a movement to which the early Husserl has been associated.⁶⁰ In fact however, Husserl's term, concept and use of *Erlebnis*, or *das Erlebte*, was already

⁵⁹ Husserl's concept of experience is in some way similar to Dretske's “non-epistemic seeing” (Dretske 1969), since these two concepts describe a level of sensory experience which doesn't involve conceptual structure. However, *contra* Dretske, Husserl rejects the idea that epistemic seeing is only a “seeing that”.

⁶⁰ On similar views, see Cohen and Moran (2012, p. 195) and Carr (2014, pp. 20ff)

present in Brentano's lectures on psychology in 1887 and 1891. A discussion of the experienced (*das Erlebte*) can be found in the few pages of Husserl's notes on this lectures which are still extant.⁶¹

The basic reason for Husserl's preference for *Erlebnisse* over phenomena is to avoid the confusion between two kinds of phenomena, physical and psychical, considered as the respective objects of two kinds of perception, outer and inner, where only the former can lead to delusion. Up to this point, Brentano would still agree. The difference is that for Husserl, perceiving is not experiencing: perception involves interpretation (*Auffassung*), whereas experiencing is just access to sensory data prior to any interpretation. Brentano indeed often seems to overlook this difference, since for him experiencing is perceiving, and perception itself is a judgment and therefore a position-taking. Furthermore, Husserl's use of the broader concept of *Erlebnisse*, instead of the narrower concept of mental phenomena, allows him to isolate a category of mental acts which are not intentional. Distinguishing between experiencing and perceiving allows him to reserve intentionality for perceptions and for some lived experiences. For Husserl, intentionality is not the mark of lived experiences.

Description and its tools

Exactness. Brentano's descriptive psychology and Husserl's phenomenology have in common the search for exactness, both in the descriptions themselves and in the analysis used. Brentano's descriptive psychology lectures, for instance, develop at length on possible arguments in the debate between empiricism and nativism on space perception. Brentano and most of his students defended the nativist account according to which space is not deduced *from* experience, but is a concrete element *of our* experience. This obsession with exactitude in argumentation and description is also attested by Stumpf (1924/1930, p. 210/394), and manifest in many other works from the school of Brentano.⁶² Husserl also expresses a similar concern in his argument in the fifth logical investigation (Husserl 2001, pp. 146-170), in which he explores different

⁶¹ Husserl had a large collection of lecture notes from Brentano's lectures, which he donated to the Brentano Society in Prague in 1930. These were obviously destroyed during the war since no traces of them are left. A fragment of Husserl's lecture notes on the 1887 descriptive psychology lectures (copied from the notes of Schmidkunz) does give evidence of the Brentanian origin of *Erlebnis* and *Erlebte*: "When I say that descriptive psychology describes what is experienced in immediate experience (*das in unmittelbar Erfahrung Erlebte*), I am not talking about an enumeration of individual cases, but about what is generally characteristic about the elements that remain while the composition changes." On "experiencing", see also Brentano (1982/1995).

⁶² On exactness in the School of Brentano, see Mulligan (1986).

alternative interpretations of the thesis that every act is a presentation or has a presentation as a basis.

Examples. Another central element of the methodology of descriptive psychology is the use of examples. All of the descriptive cases in Brentano's descriptive psychology start from examples: this is a principle which Bolzano called an explication (*Verständigung*) in the narrow sense, for cases where a conceptual analysis is not available. Brentano uses the same technique for descriptive psychology:

A very specific technique [i.e., of descriptive psychology] often makes it necessary to bring someone else to pay attention to something which he at the outset simply cannot find, which he even puts decisively and literally into question. 1. Demonstration of examples, where [something] is [there] and is not. 2. Exposition of the consequences. 3. Evidence (*Nachweis*) from experimentations.

Furthermore, the technique necessitates a specific practice (*Übung*) whose most essential preconditions are still missing, as long as experiments are conducted no less than unmethodically or following poor methods. Finally, it requires in particular a certain division of labor, which is almost never practiced in the philosophical domain. (Brentano-forthcoming) [1887: 157-8]

Husserl too presents phenomenology as a philosophy that begins with examples. Large parts of the *Logical Investigations* are built on what Husserl calls "analyses of examples" (*Bespielsanalysen*), which are an essential part of any argument. This practice is drawn directly from Brentano's descriptive psychology. In the preface to his *Philosophy of Arithmetics* for instance, Husserl stresses the fact that he does not use any terminology which is not introduced by examples or definitions.⁶³

Eidetic variations: Eidetic variations build on the *Beispielsanalysen*: their aim, in Husserl's method, is to gain knowledge of necessities. For example, seeing a white coffee cup, we may ask "What holds up amid such free variations of an original...as the invariant, the necessary, universal form, the essential form, without which something of that kind... would be altogether inconceivable?" (Husserl 1962/1977, p. 72/54). At some point, in imaginatively varying the coffee cup, we come up with features that cannot be

⁶³ Husserl (1891/2003, p. VII/6): "I have made sparse use of philosophical terminology, which is rather indeterminate in any case. In particular, I have used no terms not sufficiently clarified through definition or examples."

varied without making the object itself inconceivable (as a coffee cup), e.g., that it is not a receptacle for liquid.

Husserl's use of what he calls eidetic variations is reminiscent of Bolzano's use of the logic of variation in his *Wissenschaftslehre* (Bolzano 1837/2014), a book Husserl knew very well.

Reduction: In fact, when Husserl first introduced the phenomenological reduction in a Seefeld manuscript from 1905, he began with the example of a beer bottle:

“I see a beer bottle that is brown, and I restrict myself to the brown in its extension, ‘just as it is actually given’ ... I perceive – *this brown content*. It is *something that endures*. It is constantly the same. It covers a certain phenomenological extension. I saw it yesterday; I remember it today. It has lasted until today. Transcendence!” (Husserl 1966/1991, p. 238/245-246).

For Husserl, the focus on what is “actually given,” bracketing all further assumptions on the nature or existence of the objects perceived, has the function of neutralizing our dogmatic attitude towards reality – what he also calls a naïve metaphysical attitude – in order to make us aware of our active contributions in our commerce with the world, as in our apprehension of objects. Bracketing the natural attitude towards the beer bottle allows us to “see” how this object is constituted through meaning-bestowing acts, i.e., how its “sense” (*Sinn*) is constituted, and how this sense determines our apprehension of the object.

After 1913 Husserl developed this idea in detail in vast analyses of how the most diverse aspects of reality are constituted: meaning, time-consciousness, the experienced body, intersubjectivity and intersubjective reality, and even the world itself as we experience it: our life-world (*Lebenswelt*).

The mechanism at work, the “bracketing” that is characteristic of the phenomenological reduction in the works that Husserl published after 1913, is at bottom quite similar to the stance he defended in the *Logical Investigations*, and which he called there the “metaphysical neutrality” of phenomenology. In this context, he argued that questions concerning the possibility of knowledge or on whether there is an external reality should be rejected as metaphysical questions, which have no place in

phenomenology (see for instance 1901/2001a, p. 26/pp. 177-8). Many other similar affirmations can be found throughout the *Logical Investigations*.⁶⁴ Like phenomenological reduction, metaphysical neutrality is a methodological device which defines the domain of phenomenological research, namely “phenomena”: i.e., what is directly given to us. In both cases, we refrain from metaphysical assumptions on the nature of perceived colors, tones, and even on the nature or existence of consciousness.

Despite this important similarity, phenomenological reduction differs in two fundamental aspects from the stance of metaphysical neutrality. First, the former is a generalization of the latter, which ranges not only over the objects of perception, but over all possible objects *tout court*. Second, while metaphysical neutrality is a descriptivist stance – it aims only to provide a phenomenologically plausible analysis of our experiences and their contents – the motivation behind phenomenological reduction is foundational, which makes it a typical idealist (and neo-Kantian) device: it aims to isolate the conditions of possibility of things “just as they are actually given.” In a Kantian-Cartesian fashion, Husserl comes to the conclusion in the *Ideas* that since I cannot imagine the world being annihilated without imagining being myself conscious of this annihilation, then subjectivity must be considered as the condition of possibility for the appearance of the world. This is Husserl’s ‘discovery of the I,’ which provides the foundational basis of his analysis of constitution.⁶⁵

There is no consensus on how exactly the significance of the foundationalist project Husserl pursued in the *Ideas* should be understood. After the publication of the *Ideas* in 1913, Husserl’s own students and close collaborators and colleagues – Adolf Reinach, Johannes Daubert, Max Scheler, Theodor Conrad, Alexander Pfänder, Edith Stein, Jean Héring, Moritz Geiger, and Roman Ingarden (to name only a few) – reacted in different ways to Husserl’s foundationalist project, but in general they had one of two reactions: either they dismissed it as a whole or they remained indifferent, considering it as an optional and therefore inessential way of understanding phenomenological analysis. Although some of Husserl’s later students in Freiburg were sympathetic to the foundationalist project – among them Jan Patočka, Eugen Fink, Alfred Schütz, Ludwig Landgrebe, and Theodor Celms – the project itself only survived Husserl’s death in the

⁶⁴ See also 1901/2001a: pp. 6/166, 129/249, 201/296; 1901/2001: pp. 401/106, 413/113, 729/317, 732/319.

⁶⁵ Relevant passages on the reduction are to be found in Husserl (1913/1983, pp. 61-62/68-70; 73-74/85-87; 202-204/236-239).

form of the Gabelsberger manuscripts, which have been progressively published since the 1950s.

Even today, after more than 60 years of intensive publication of Husserl's manuscripts, there is still no consensus on the nature of the project. One widespread interpretation among Husserl scholars has it that the project is fully foundationalist and that phenomenological reduction is in essence a refined device for transcendental idealism, which gives phenomenological descriptions their validity for knowledge. Another interpretation, inspired by Føllesdal (1969) and developed further by Smith and MacIntyre (1982), is similar in spirit to the 'indifferent' reaction of early phenomenologists: either with or without foundationalist concerns, phenomenology essentially gives a theory of our meaning-bestowing activities. Therefore, the foundationalist project is optional.

Intentionality

These two takes on the foundationalist project of post-1913 phenomenology are best illustrated by the different conceptions of intentionality, intentional object, and intentional content which have been defended by phenomenologists since then. Here, Brentano's theory of intentionality is of central importance. This theory is one of the most lasting influences of his thought, not only on Austro-German philosophy in general, but also on 20th-century philosophy, both in the post-Husserlian phenomenological tradition and in analytic philosophy.

The basic theory of intentionality. Brentano proposed many different descriptions of intentionality. Common to all of them is the claim that intentionality is a characteristic property of something mental (an act, or a subject in the reistic phase), which serves as a means to classify what belongs to the domain of the mental and what to the domain of the physical. This characteristic property is what Brentano also calls "direction towards an object" or the "immanent objectivity" of an act, which makes the basic theory a relational theory of intentionality. However, these two further appellations do not help much, since they seem to point at features that are not obviously identical: the fact that intentionality is aboutness – e.g., desiring an ice cream is an intentional state which is about an ice cream – and the fact that the object of an intentional act is "contained" or "intentionally inexists" in the act. In fact these two features do not even seem to be compatible, at least *prima facie*: if my desiring an ice

cream is intentional and if intentional objects are contained in the act, it seems that I cannot reasonably desire an ice cream if the ice cream is already ‘contained’ in my act.

It has been usual since Chisholm (1957, p. 169) to consider these two appellations as expressions of one and the same feature. On Chisholm’s reading, Brentano is committed to the view that intentional objects are some kind of intra-mental entities enjoying some diminished kind of existence. In this case, my desiring an ice cream has an intentional object, the “ice cream represented and desired,” which is distinct from the dairy product that I may subsequently enjoy.⁶⁶

It is questionable, however, whether the account of Brentano’s concept of intentionality that Chisholm sketches is a faithful reconstruction of Brentano’s ideas about intentionality. To be sure, Brentano himself is not very careful in his description of intentionality in the *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874/2015, p. 106/92-93), where “content” and “object” are used interchangeably. This may be explained in many ways. Perhaps the most important to mention is that the ontology of intentionality is not Brentano’s primary concern in the *Psychology*: he focuses instead on the dualism of the mental and the physical that intentionality grounds, and with the task of psychology as a science of phenomena. In the latter case, it indeed makes no important difference whether the phenomena described are called “contents” or “objects,” since they are simply phenomena. This is why, in this context, the ontological implications of intentionality play no significant role in the project conducted in the *Psychology*.

Despite its apparent limitations and the mainly psychological motivations behind the basic theory, it has the advantage of ranging over all mental phenomena and explaining their common core, notwithstanding the fact that we sometimes make perceptual errors or think of objects which do not exist. This advantage should not be underestimated, as it allows Brentano to offer an account of the intentional nature of our phenomenal experiences. What it’s like for me to enjoy an ice cream is something which, on the face of it, does not have much to do with a state of the world, and yet it seems that the experience of tasting an ice cream has an intentional object which is the content of the experience, its phenomenal features, which seem to be distinct from the physical properties of the dairy product perched on the cone in my hand. This is the gist of the formulation we find in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* concerning the contents

⁶⁶ Chisholm (1967, p. 201); (1960, pp. 4-5.) I argue against this account in Fr chet te (2013) and (2016a).

of experience, i.e., physical phenomena: “Knowledge, joy, desire, exist actually; colour, tone, warmth only phenomenally and intentionally.”

The enhanced theory. The basic theory offers a unified relational account of intentionality which takes seriously the fact that our experience has phenomenal content that is constitutive of the intentionality of our acts. However, it does not say much about experiences which are not strictly sensory experiences. My disappointment about winter coming too soon is clearly linked in a significant way to sensory contents, but such contents are obviously not all there is to say about the content of my disappointment. The basic theory displays a similar shortcoming with regard to judgment, e.g., my act of meaning as expressed by “ $2+2=4$ ”.

In the *Psychology* of 1874, such cases were presented as more or less analogous to sensory experiences, leaving many questions open as to how abstract presentational contents or the contents of emotions and judgments are to be considered in some important sense as sensory and yet constituted through acts which are essentially distinct from sensings.⁶⁷ Brentano considered these cases in more detail in his lectures on logic in the 1870s and 1880s, and also in his lectures on descriptive psychology in the 1880s and 1890s. At least for the case of acts of meaning, but plausibly for all mental acts, he proposes an alternative account of the intentional relation. Since these texts are still unpublished, it may be worth quoting some of the passages detailing his account of acts of meaning at length here:

Like names, assertions too have a double reference: (a) to the content of a psychical phenomenon as such; (b) to a putative external object. The first is the meaning. (EL80: 61-62)... The name manifests a mental phenomenon, [it] means [*bedeutet*] the content of a presentation as such (the immanent object?), [and] it names that which is presented *through* the content of a presentation. We say about this: the name is attributed to it. What one names are the *real objects* of the presentation which – if they exist, are the *external objects of the presentation*. (One names through the mediation of meaning) (EL81:13528)... I call the presented as presented *the content of the presentation*. I call *object of the presentation* the presented under the guise through which it is presented (if it exists). There always is a content when something is presented. But the presentation often lacks an object. Many different objects can correspond to one single content of presentation. And one single object can correspond to many different contents of presentation (PS48)... The name ... expresses the presentation in such a way that it names that which is presented by

⁶⁷ Brentano and his early students – Stumpf and Marty – made many attempts in lectures and correspondence to account for this fact, particularly through sophisticated conceptions of abstraction. See Fréchette (2015a) and (forthcoming-b) on these various attempts.

the presentation, and it names it under its mediation and for this reason completely or incompletely determined (or undetermined) in the same way as it presents it. In this way, the presentation is the *sense* (Sinn) of the name; the thing is that which is named by the name and in the most proper sense that which is designated through it...(EL72, 12578-9).

It is thus fair to suppose that the basic account was not Brentano's last word on intentionality. Between the 1870s and the beginning of the 20th century, Brentano developed the enhanced view that at least some mental acts, namely meaning acts, involve a distinction between the content and the object of the presentation, the judgment, or the act of desire. Especially in the 1880s and afterward, this distinction was popularized in print by Twardowski (1894/1977) and Meinong (1899/1978).

According to the enhanced theory, when I utter "The Sun exists," the content of my judgment is the state of affairs, or the 'Sun's existence,' and the object is the Sun. When I use the name "table" to express some mental content, this content is different than the object I am referring to, since the object may or may not exist, although the content (the Presented as such) necessarily exists.

In this theory, the intentional content plays the role of a mediator, what Brentano calls sometimes a sense (*Sinn*), sometimes a meaning (*Bedeutung*). Brentano's *Sinne* are mental entities of a special kind: they mediate objects, more or less determinately, similarly to the way in which names more or less determinately name an object. The *Sinne* are not the content of intuitive presentations, since intuitive presentations are by nature presentations of fully determinate content. Rather, they are the content of abstract presentations. To some extent, Brentano's conception of *Sinne* in the enhanced theory of intentionality prefigures Frege's concept of sense in Frege (1892).

The reistic version. What kind of entities, then, are the physical phenomena (also called 'contents' or 'objects') according to the basic theory? On the account that Brentano offered in his later self-criticisms, he conceived them as entities with a lesser kind of existence, sometimes described as their "intentional inexistence." On this view, they were considered as *irrealia*, in opposition to real existing entities. In the basic theory, intentionality was thus a relationship between a real entity and an unreal entity.

Since it is not systematically developed in his manuscripts, it is hard to see exactly what kind of entities stand as targets in the enhanced theory. Since Brentano accepted objectless presentations back then, then it would make good sense to see

external objects as the target of intentional acts, mediated by the act's correlate: the intentional content. But even in this case, the enhanced theory does not provide a comprehensive account of intentionality, which would be relational in cases of existing objects, although allowing for non-relational cases, e.g., in the cases of the presentation of the god Jupiter or of a golden mountain.⁶⁸

Brentano shifted his view on the nature of intentionality around 1904. The first two theories described intentionality in terms of a two- or three-term relationship. The last theory, which is often called reism, is based on the contrary on the idea that intentionality is a special kind of relation (in fact, not a relation in the proper sense of the term), which in all cases requires a foundation (*Fundament*), but which does not require an existing terminus of the relation. According to the basic theory, my desire for an ice cream is a relation between an act and an internal entity; on the enhanced theory, it is a three-term relation between my desire, the represented object, and the ice cream (which may or may not exist). In reism, intentionality is spelled out in terms of a foundation (e.g., "ice-cream-Wisher" that I present *in recto*) which has a terminus *in obliquo* (e.g., an ice cream). The "terminus *in obliquo*," however, has no ontological power: it is simply an aspect of the Wisher or the way in which the Wisher wishes (e.g., as wishing ice-creamily).⁶⁹ In this way, Brentano can avoid an ontological commitment to intentional entities by providing a theory of intentionality that holds equally for all presentations.

Husserl's accounts of intentionality. Let us return now for a moment to Brentano's enhanced theory. More than its connection with Frege, it is the link to Husserl's theory of intentionality that seems most interesting. The enhanced theory that Brentano developed mostly between the 1870s and the 1890s strongly emphasizes the distinction between content and object in cases where names or statements are asserted, and clearly states that in some cases, a name expresses a presentation's content but does not name any object. This does not necessarily mean that the distinction between content and object only holds for acts of meaning,⁷⁰ but it is at least true that acts of meaning are the cases that most clearly disclose this distinction. In this

⁶⁸ The lack of comprehensiveness of the enhanced theory also affected his account of truth from the same period, which has been characterized recently as a "deflationist account" (Brandl 2017).

⁶⁹ This is also why Brentano's reistic theory is often described as an adverbial theory of intentionality. See Chisholm (1957) and Chrudzinski and Smith (2004).

⁷⁰ Münch (2004, p. 222 fn) suggests such a view.

respect, Husserl's idea that directedness toward an object is nothing but a property of acts of meaning, as developed in the *Logical Investigations* and in line with Husserl (1991a/1999), follows and radicalizes Brentano's enhanced theory wherein acts of meaning simply highlight the distinction between content and object. Building on both Brentano and Bolzano, Husserl defended the thesis in Husserl (1991a/1999) that there are objectless presentations (like the presentation of the god Jupiter, or of a golden mountain). Intentionality in this context is a property of the content of *meaning* (*Meinen*) something, and is not conceived as a relation at all. As Husserl puts it in the *Logical Investigations*, I do not present Jupiter differently than I present Bismarck: since intentionality is a property of the content of meaning something, both acts are intentional in the same sense. As a consequence of this view, it seems that the non-existence of the god Jupiter has nothing to do with intentionality. Generalizing this consequence would lead to the view that acts of meaning are quite distinct in kind from acts of reference.

Another important component of Husserl's early account of intentionality, which is absent from Brentano's enhanced theory, is that meaning acts instantiate ideal species. This relationship of instantiation is what allows for the objectivity of meaning.

Around 1908, Husserl's views on the theory of meaning changed considerably. In his lectures on this topic (Husserl 1986), he introduces the distinction between "phansic meaning" [*phansische Bedeutung*], which is the *Bedeutung* of meaning acts (*Meinungsakte*) in terms of species, and the "ontic" or "phenomenological" meaning, which is "the intentional object as meant." This distinction seems to remediate to the consequences of the earlier theory exposed above. In acts of meaning (*Meinen*), expressed for instance by my utterances about Jupiter, there is a *Bedeutung* which is instantiated in my act; but prior to this there is an ontic correlate of the act, the "thought-of Jupiter", which is the object-as-intended. Husserl sometimes calls this type of entity a "noematic sense," and later, in 1913, simply the "noema."

If Husserl's theory of intentionality in the *Logical Investigations* has often been described as an adverbial theory, for its rejection of the relational interpretation of intentionality (wherein there are objectless presentations) and its characterization of intentionality as a property of acts of meaning (*Meinen*), the noematic theory of the *Ideas* seems to bring back a relational conception of intentionality, independently of whether we conceive of the noema as an object from a perspective (Drummond 1990) or as some kind of Fregean sense (Føllesdal 1969; Smith and MacIntyre 1982). In either case,

however, the noema plays the role of the correlate in a sense which is reminiscent of Brentano's intentional correlates in the enhanced theory.

Consciousness

Besides the intentional thesis, the second most important thesis in Brentano's psychology is based on a further constitutive characteristic of mental phenomena, namely the fact that only mental phenomena are innerly perceived (Brentano 1874/2015: 118f/95f). The gist of this idea is clearly expressed in the *Psychology*:

“the presentation of the sound and the presentation of the presentation of the sound form a single mental phenomenon, it is only by considering it in its relation to two different objects, one of which is a physical phenomenon and the other a mental phenomenon, that we divide it conceptually into two presentations. In the same mental phenomenon in which the sound is present to our minds we simultaneously apprehend the mental phenomenon itself.” (Brentano 1874/2015: 167/132).

The “apprehension” (*Erfassen*) of the mental phenomenon itself is what Brentano calls consciousness or inner consciousness. As the sound is co-present (with the mental phenomenon itself) in our apprehension, consciousness implies intentionality, which means that there is no consciousness of an act which is not already directed towards an object. But since intentionality and consciousness are both essential features of mental acts, the implication works the other way around as well: there is no intentional directedness of an act which is not itself conscious. This also explains Brentano's particular position on the unconscious: since, in our experience, there are no intentional acts which are not conscious, and since there is no consciousness of an act which is not already intentional, then there is no “unconscious consciousness,” although the idea of an non-conscious intentional act involves no contradiction. Nevertheless, intentionality and consciousness are co-extensive.

Brentano's “apprehension” is double: in every mental phenomenon, we apprehend the object of the mental phenomenon and, incidentally (*en parergo*) the mental phenomenon itself. It would be wrong, however, to consider the apprehension as an element distinct from the mental phenomenon itself: in presenting the table, the primary object of my act is the table, and the secondary object is the presenting itself.

An objection that might be raised to such a theory is that it may involve an infinite regress. If my presentation of the sound is conscious because of my presentation

of the presentation of the sound, what makes the presentation of the presentation of the sound itself conscious? Brentano himself reacted to this objection by underlining the fact that a) both belong to one single and indivisible mental act, and that b) through its existence, the presentation of the sound 'inwardly contributes' to the existence of the presentation of the presentation of the sound (Brentano 1874/2015: 167/132). Therefore the regress does not even begin, since the presentation of the sound is "intertwined" (*verwoben*) with the presentation of its presentation. And since the existence of the former contributes to the existence of the latter (but not the other way around), the objection, according to which the latter makes the former conscious, does not seem to apply.

The intimate intertwining between the presentation of the sound and the presentation of that presentation evoked by Brentano is an essential part of his conception of the unity of consciousness and of the various mereological dependency relations among parts of the mental. The relationship between the presentation of the sound and the presentation of the presentation of the sound is a one-sided *distinctional* separability: you may have, theoretically or "distinctionally," a presentation of the sound without a presentation of the presentation of the sound, at least insofar as this notion does not involve a contradiction. But the reverse is not the case. Here, "distinctional" means that the one-sided separability is not found in the acts themselves, but in our description of them. In contrast, *real* one-sided detachability is involved in the relation between a presentation of the sound and a judgment acknowledging the existence of the sound or a feeling of pleasure on hearing the sound. You may have a presentation of the sound without feeling pleasure about the sound, but you cannot take pleasure in the sound without presenting it. These different dependence relations between parts of the mental are the basis of what Brentano describes as the "unity of consciousness," i.e., the fact "that all mental phenomena which occur within us simultaneously such as seeing and hearing, thinking, judging and reasoning, loving and hating, desiring and shunning, etc., no matter how different they may be, all belong to one unitary reality only if they are inwardly perceived as existing together" (1874/2015: 126/101).

In an influential objection to Brentano's account of consciousness, Husserl points out that it seems implausible to say that when I see a house, what I am aware of is my presentation of sensory contents (Husserl 1901a, 237). To be sure, sensory contents are experienced, but they are present to consciousness only to the extent that they serve as a vehicle for the perception of objects, not *as* objects of inner perception. This is in line

with Husserl's critique of Brentano's concept of intentionality according to which sensations are not intentional, since they do not provide us with objects (see above). This does not mean, however, that Husserl considers sensory contents not to be part of consciousness: rather, the idea is that sensory contents are experienced as intrinsically subjective, and in fact not as 'contents' at all, but as phenomenological and real (*reelle*) constituents of experiences.

It must be said, however, that Husserl's objection is not completely fair to Brentano's account, as Brentano never argued that the inner perception of a mental phenomenon (say a presenting) takes this presenting as an object in the same sense as the presentation itself has an object. Calling them 'primary' and 'secondary' objects is definitively a suboptimal choice. Nevertheless, in this context Husserl's point has the merit of forcefully stressing this difference: the subjective constituents of experience do not stand before us as objects.

Another interesting feature of Husserl's concept of consciousness that contrasts with Brentano's account is the distinction between the epistemic authority of inner perception and its adequateness. Following Brentano, Husserl holds that only inner perception is evident and can thereby provide the grounds for secure knowledge. Outer perception, in contrast, can only give us probable knowledge. Brentano sees the epistemic authority of inner perception as constitutive of consciousness: on his view, since only mental phenomena are given as they are, I am only conscious of (i.e., I can innerly perceive only) mental phenomena, and not, e.g., of physical happenings in my body, houses, or chairs. An important consequence of this account is that I am conscious only of whatever mental phenomenon is occurring now: there is no proper consciousness of a temporally extended object, temporally extended mental processes, or simply past experiences. For Husserl, in contrast, the alleged epistemic authority of inner perception constrains our analyses of conscious experiences far too much, requiring us to discard a huge variety of experiences which are obviously conscious in a phenomenologically relevant sense, such as hearing a song, thinking about a mathematical problem, remembering one's child's first footsteps, seeing a train pass by, enjoying a cigar, feeling the urgent need to sneeze, etc. These experiences, Husserl contends, do not have the same epistemic authority as those involving a mental phenomenon that is occurring now, but they still display some adequacy to what is given in them, what he also calls their "presentness."

There are different ways of spelling out what “presentness” means. Based on the examples mentioned above, one practical way to illustrate this idea is the description of time-consciousness. On Brentano’s account, there is no time-consciousness properly speaking, but rather a continuum of mental phenomena related to one another by “originary association.” This does not belong as such to the realm of the mental, but is an innate associative feature which relates the contents of outer perception at different times to each other, and which gives us the impression that we perceive a motion, a figure, or any temporally extended entity. On this account, time-consciousness is only consciousness at a time, but thanks to originary association, we “retain” past contents at a given time. This is the basic idea behind Brentano’s account of time-consciousness.⁷¹

Husserl’s account of time-consciousness (Husserl 1966/1991) preserves the gist of Brentano’s account – its retentional structure – but also adds an idea introduced in Stern (1897/2005), namely that “mental events that play themselves out within a certain stretch of time can under circumstances form a unified and complex act of consciousness regardless of the non-simultaneity of individual parts. That stretch of time over which such a mental act can be extended I call its presence time (*Präsenz-Zeit*)” (Stern 1897/2005, pp. 326-7/p. 315). Husserl’s analysis of time-consciousness combines Brentano’s and Stern’s accounts in the following way: while hearing *c* now (at t_3) after having heard *b* at t_1 and *a* at t_0 , I have i) a primal impression (*Urimpression*) of *c* accompanied by ii) retention of *b* and *a* and iii) protention of what I am about to hear. The three elements (i) to (iii) are as such merely a refinement of Brentano’s retentional model. The difference with Brentano’s account is that the structure depicted by (i) to (iii) is itself not a “now-point,” as Brentano has it, but should be considered itself as a flow, along the lines of Stern’s account: “the retention that exists ‘together’ with the consciousness of the now is not ‘now,’ is not simultaneous with the now, and it would make no sense to say that it is” (Husserl 1962/1991: 333/345-6). Husserl’s presentness therefore proposes an account of the unity of time-consciousness: namely, of the intuitively plausible idea that our experience of succession is a unitary (and fully conscious) phenomenon, and not a succession of separate experiences. This idea would go on to play a central role in his later transcendental phenomenology.

Emotions and values

⁷¹ See Fréchette (2017a) for a more detailed account of the different features of this account.

Brentano distinguishes between three classes of mental phenomena: presentations, judgments, and acts of love and hate. The last class encompasses emotions, volitions, desires, and feelings. Emotions (but this also applies by extension to the other phenomena in this class), like judgments, have two polarly opposed types: either we love or we hate Wiener Melange, in a manner that is similar to the way in which we either acknowledge or reject something's existence. The polarly opposed types of judging (acknowledging/rejecting) and emoting (loving/hating) are similar because in both cases, correctness resp. incorrectness are constitutive of the definition of what is true (correct acknowledgement) and what is good (correct love). This makes Brentano's account of emotions an evaluative account of the following sort: i) emotions are mental acts which constitutively involve a valuing of their intentional object (as good or bad), ii) the value of an emotion is fixed by its correctness or incorrectness, and iii) the correctness of an emotion is nothing but its 'fittingness' with respect to the object intended as valuable. My love of coffee is a valuing, a position taking, a positive emotion towards coffee: my emotion is valuable iff it is correct to love coffee and it is correct to love coffee iff the loving *fits* the coffee (or in other words: iff coffee is worthy of love).⁷²

How do we come to know that coffee, or anything, is worthy of love? Before answering this question, let us return to principle (e). As mentioned above, Brentano seems to have defended two basic theories of the nature of correctness. The first theory fully embraces feature (iii): it describes correctness as a genuine relation, the relation of fitting (*Angemessenheit*). In some places, Brentano holds that the relationship involves a deontic norm (for my love of coffee to be is for my love of coffee to be as it ought to be⁷³); but in most texts, he maintains that it holds with an object as valuable: "in cases where our behaviour (*Verhalten*) is correct our emotion corresponds to the object, is in harmony with its value, and that, on the other hand, in cases where our behaviour is wrong (*verkehrt*) it is opposed (*widerspreche*) to its object, is in a relation of disharmony with its value" (Brentano 1930/1966: 25/14-5, translation modified).

The second, later theory of the nature of correctness proposes an important amendment to feature (iii), namely (iiia): that the correctness of an emotion is not a relation of actual

⁷² Brentano (1889/1902, pp. 75-7/pp. 69-71; p. 17/pp. 11-2; 1930/1966, p. 25/pp. 14-5; 1959, p. 169; 1968, p. 141).

⁷³ See Mulligan (forthcoming) for this specific account of fittingness exposed by Brentano in 1906. See also Fr chet te (2015) on Kraus' interpretation of this account.

fitting, but rather it is simply experienced as such, it manifests itself *as* correct:⁷⁴ “the concept of correctness is made manifest to us in precisely the way in which other concepts are made manifest to us. We consider a multiplicity of things each of which exemplifies the concept and we direct our attention upon what these things have in common. Whenever I perceive that I judge with evidence I am aware of myself as someone who is judging correctly.... And now, so far as the correctness of our emotive attitudes is concerned, we find that the situation is completely analogous.... One can never find the criterion of correctness in an *adaequatio rei et intellectus vel amoris*: it can be found only in those attitudes which we know with immediate evidence to be correct.”⁷⁵

Like Marty and Meinong, Husserl accepted all the components of Brentano’s account of emotions and values already mentioned but rearranges them in a significantly different way, amending feature (iii) in (iiib): the correctness of an emotion is *grounded in* a state of value (*Wertverhalt*). This amended feature was also the one preferred by Marty, but also by many early realist phenomenologists such as Reinach and Daubert. In analogy with states of affairs which are the correctness-makers of true judgments, states of value are ‘value-makers’ of correct emotings.⁷⁶

Psychologism and Anti-Psychologism

In considering the specificity of Husserl’s phenomenology with respect to Brentano’s philosophical programme in general, and its contrast with Brentano’s five principles described above in particular, the importance of Husserl’s strong realism regarding the objects of intentional acts – exemplified here in his account of value – should not be underestimated. In order to capture more precisely this specificity, here we will look at his critique of psychologism in the *Logical Investigations*. This critique largely shaped discussion on phenomenology in the school of Brentano at the beginning of the 20th century. It was also determinant in the later positioning of phenomenology as a

⁷⁴ Chisholm (1986, p. 53) uses precisely Brentano’s late theory to show that Brentano’s account of emotion is an account of fitting attitudes. We might indeed reword (iiia) in order to keep the fitting relation, for instance by saying that an emotion is correct iff “it is appropriate, or fitting, for me to feel this strong pro-attitude toward this experience” (see also Feldman and Feldman 2015, and similarly Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen 2004). Mulligan (forthcoming) makes a convincing case that attributing a fitting attitude theory to the late Brentano is “wrong or highly misleading.” The main reason is that Brentano’s late realism aims to reject the relational conception of intentionality. Since emotions are intentional acts, it is reasonable to think that their correctness should not be considered in relational terms.

⁷⁵ Letter from Brentano to Kraus (1916), quoted in Chisholm (1966, pp. 399-400)

⁷⁶ See Husserl (1988). On Husserl and normative grounding, see Mulligan (forthcoming-b).

“pure philosophy,” along with Neo-Kantianism and *Lebensphilosophie*, and in opposition to the newly emerging experimental psychology.

As mentioned earlier (section 1), it was initially his exchange with Frege, but also Frege’s review of his *Philosophy of Arithmetics*, which convinced Husserl of the shortcomings of his Brentanian account of arithmetics. In a nutshell, Frege argued that Husserl’s lack of a distinction between concept and object made it impossible for him to distinguish between the subjective and the objective, and between the marks of an object and the properties of a concept. If numbers are subjective contents of presentation, then Husserl’s Brentanian account of arithmetics would fail to give a proper account of identity, which challenges not only the objectivity of arithmetic, but also the idea that the distinction between sense and reference is objective.

In 1928, Husserl conceded to his student Boyce-Gibson that Frege’s critique “hit the nail on the head,”⁷⁷ which recalls the quote from Goethe at the beginning of the *Prolegomena*. Another important influence in Husserl’s early critique of psychologism is to be found in Bolzano, who Husserl credits for showing him the importance of objective ideas (*Vorstellungen an sich*) and propositions in themselves (*Sätze an sich*) for the development of a pure logic (Husserl 2002: 298-99). Lotze was also an important influence on the development of Husserl’s pure logic (see Husserl 1979, p. 156).

Husserl’s critique of logic as a practical and normative discipline (a sub-discipline of psychology) in the *Prolegomena* is based on the idea that normative disciplines are in any case at least partly grounded in theoretical disciplines: “Every normative proposition of, e.g., the form ‘An *A* should be *B*’ implies the theoretical proposition ‘Only an *A* which is *B* has the properties *C*’, in which ‘*C*’ serves to indicate the constitutive content of the standard-setting predicate ‘good’ (e.g., pleasure, knowledge, ...) The new proposition is purely theoretical: it contains no trace of the thought of normativity” (Husserl 1900/2001a: 48/38).

The *Prolegomena* also offers a detailed critique of the consequences of psychologism in logic, most notably on the problematic interpretation of logical principles (like the law of non-contradiction) and of the laws of syllogistics in psychological terms, as well as the relativism implied by psychologism. The book had a central influence on the development of anti-psychologism in German philosophy

⁷⁷ See Spiegelberg (1971, p. 66) and (1982, p. 151). A similar affirmation is reported in Føllesdal (1982, p. 53) who mentions a discussion he had with Ingarden: “He [Roman Ingarden] told me that he once asked Husserl whether Frege had influenced him, and Husserl answered ‘Freges Bedeutung war entscheidend’.”

between 1901 and 1920, with reactions from Schlick to the Neo-Kantians Kroner, Windelband, and Rickert.

In the school of Brentano, Husserl's critique of psychologism was received with mitigated feelings. In 1904, Meinong openly agreed with Husserl in his *Theory of Objects*: "the entire tenor of the *Logical Investigations*, as well as many of the particular statements that are contained in it, convinces one that, despite certain differences in detail (at present unavoidable), the author's goal is the same as our own" (Meinong 1904/ 1960: 22/94). Some years later, in *Functions and Products (Funktionen und Gebilde)*, Twardowski (1914/1999a) also followed Husserl's critique of psychologism in his theory of *Gebilde*, as did Husserl's own mentor in Halle, Carl Stumpf, in *Erscheinungen und psychische Funktionen* (1907).

Brentano himself remained highly critical of Husserl's charge against psychologism, seeing himself as the target of unjust accusations. The main motivation for Brentano's reaction lay in Husserl's arguments against the conception of logic as a technique (*Kunstlehre*), as a practical subdiscipline of psychology, which is the account of logic that Brentano defended in his lectures. Husserl corroborated this reaction in his reminiscences of Brentano, in which he recalls that despite many efforts, he and Brentano "did not reach any agreement [on Husserl's former fight against psychologism]" (Husserl 1919/1976, p. 166/p. 54). But the charge and its reception by Brentano, and thereby the disagreement between Brentano and Husserl on psychologism, is based on a double misunderstanding.

On the one hand, Brentano did not see the motivation (or did not acknowledge the legitimacy) of Husserl's attempt to ground the laws of logic in a discipline of mathematical form (Husserl 1900/2001a: 222/138-140), what Husserl calls, in reference to his colleague from Halle Cantor, the pure theory of multiplicities (*reine Mannigfaltigkeitslehre*). This is similar to the relationship of Leibniz's combinatorics to the foundation of arithmetics, which would lead to the foundation of pure logic and with it to a unified theory of science (*Wissenschaftslehre*) inspired by Bolzano, encompassing pure grammar (i.e., the theory of the a priori forms of meaning and the laws of logical validity, which allows for a formal ontology – i.e., a science of objects in general), and pure theory of probabilities. In Brentano's view in 1905, such a strategy inevitably leads to a theory of "objects of thought and their combinations" (Husserl 1994, p. 31). He himself defended this theory at some point in his career (see above: the enhanced theory), but abandoned it in his reism as implausible.

On the other hand, Husserl did not really do justice to Brentano's descriptive psychology, which he associated in many places to psychology as a science of facts, even accusing Brentano in this respect of being a naturalist (Husserl 1962/1977, p. 37/p. 26). To the contrary, it is clear that the laws of Brentano's descriptive psychology are a priori laws, and that in his account descriptive psychology is to serve as a basis for a *characteristica universalis* (Brentano 1895: 34). In this respect, Husserl's phenomenology and Brentano's descriptive psychology are equally anti-psychologistic. The only difference in their approach lies in Husserl's advocacy of a Platonistic strategy in the *Logical Investigations*, which Brentano considered unnecessary, granted the distinction between causal laws (e.g., of genetic psychology) and essential laws (e.g., of descriptive psychology).⁷⁸

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