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# The Routledge Handbook of Franz Brentano and the Brentano School

Edited by Uriah Kriegel

## THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF FRANZ BRENTANO AND THE BRENTANO SCHOOL

Both through his own work and that of his students, Franz Clemens Brentano (1838–1917) had an often underappreciated influence on the course of twentieth- and twenty-first-century philosophy. *The Routledge Handbook of Franz Brentano and the Brentano School* offers full coverage of Brentano's philosophy and his influence. It contains 38 brand-new essays from an international team of experts that offer a comprehensive view of Brentano's central research areas—philosophy of mind, metaphysics, and value theory—as well as of the principal figures shaped by Brentano's school of thought. A general introduction serves as an overview of Brentano and the contents of the volume, and three separate bibliographies point students and researchers on to further avenues of inquiry.

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# **THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF FRANZ BRENTANO AND THE BRENTANO SCHOOL**

Edited by  
Uriah Kriegel

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# Introduction

Uriah Kriegel

In analytic philosophy, Franz Brentano is known almost exclusively for reintroducing the notion of intentionality into modern philosophy. In continental philosophy, he is known mostly for being Husserl's teacher. In truth, however, Brentano was a highly sophisticated thinker with contributions across all areas of philosophy. As this book attempts to show, Brentano's thought is historically rich and yet bears striking relevance to many current-day debates—and the ambit of his influence, sometimes overt but often subterranean, is striking. His style of discussion and argumentation are thoroughly analytic, and his overarching project is fundamentally phenomenological; as such, he stands at the root of both major twentieth-century philosophical movements.

The book comprises five sections divided into two parts—a long first part about Brentano himself and a shorter second one about his “school.” The first part has three sections, dedicated to Brentano's philosophy of mind (Chapters 3–12), his metaphysics (Chapters 13–19), and his value theory (Chapters 20–24). The book's second part has two sections, dedicated to Brentano's most prominent immediate students (Chapters 27–32) and to his further influences (Chapters 33–38). Each part also includes two introductory chapters, one historically accentuated (Chapters 1, 25) and one more systematic (Chapters 2, 26). Below, I describe the central thrust of each of the book's 38 chapters.

## 1 BRENTANO'S PHILOSOPHY

The book opens with a historical introduction to Brentano's life and work by Thomas Binder (Chapter 1). It is well known within the circles of Brentano scholarship that Brentano was an ordained priest who left the priesthood in the early 1870s over the introduction of the dogma of papal infallibility. But as Binder describes it, Brentano's life was in fact a lengthy process of ever-growing estrangement from Catholicism and indeed from religious faith as such, both pressed on him from an early age by his deeply pious

mother. Binder also paints a portrait of a man deeply engaged socially, politically, culturally, and religiously in his nonprofessional life.

This biographical portrait is followed by a systematic presentation of Brentano's overarching philosophical program, as I understand it (Chapter 2). Brentano's thought was always in flux—always progressing, revising, updating—but certain stable patterns can be detected virtually throughout Brentano's career. In particular, I claim that Brentano had a program for a grand philosophical system in the classical sense of a unified account of the true, the good, and the beautiful. The program is to cast the *true* as that about which it is correct or fitting to have a positive judgment, the *good* as that toward which it is correct or fitting to have a positive emotion, and the *beautiful* as that with which it is correct or fitting to be delighted. In this approach, the notions of truth, goodness, and beauty are analyzed in terms of different kinds of mental activity; hence the inordinate place of the philosophy of mind in Brentano's thought.

### 1.1 Brentano's Philosophy of Mind

Brentano does not use the expression “philosophy of mind,” of course. Rather, he develops his own framework for the philosophical study of the mind—what he calls “descriptive psychology” (Chapter 3). As Denis Seron shows, Brentano's conception of a scientifically rigorous discipline was thoroughly empiricist, requiring foundations in perceptual encounter with the relevant phenomena. In the case of psychological phenomena, this is a kind of “inner perception” that enables certain kinds of introspective appraisal of the phenomena. However, a regimented scientific inquiry also separates (i) the task of *causally explaining* the occurrence of these phenomena from (ii) the (logically prior) task of *describing* the phenomena in need of explanation. Brentano calls the explanatory project “genetic psychology” and the other, more foundational project “descriptive psychology.” Seron traces the main steps of descriptive-psychological inquiry: initial inner-perceptual encounter with the phenomena, then analysis of what is given to inner perception, and finally inductive inference from there to natural laws.

For Brentano, the two most basic deliverances of descriptive psychology concern (i) the demarcation of mental phenomena and (ii) their “fundamental classification.”<sup>1</sup> In his chapter on Brentano's notion of intentionality (Chapter 4), Tim Crane emphasizes the role the notion plays in addressing both issues. Brentano in fact identifies a number of features he claims to be common and peculiar to mental phenomena. But he also claims that the most important of those is intentionality, and it is by reference to kinds or modes of intentionality that he proposes to classify mental phenomena at the most fundamental level. Crane then presents the later developments of Brentano's conception of intentionality, in particular the move away from the idea that intentionality involves a relation to an object that may or may not exist and its replacement with the claim that intentionality is merely “relation-like” (*etwas Relativliches*).

One of the most interesting aspects of Brentano's philosophy of mind is his claim that every mental act in fact exhibits *two* kinds of intentionality: it has a *primary* intentionality directed at a worldly object, but it also has a *secondary* intentionality directed at itself. This “secondary intentionality” is the heart of Brentano's theory of consciousness, as Mark Textor shows in the following chapter (Chapter 5). But according to Textor, traditional scholarly interpretations of Brentano have misunderstood Brentano's main

*reason* to hold that conscious experiences are always intentionally self-directed. His real argument, claims Textor, is that conscious experiences are things we are aware of, but unless we were aware of them in virtue of their being self-directed, their intentional object would have to be presented *twice* in every conscious experience: once *qua* direct object of the experience itself and once again *qua* indirect object of our awareness of that experience. Yet there is no sign of such duplication of the intentional object in our stream of consciousness. Therefore, conscious experiences must involve a self-directed secondary intentionality.

In Brentano's full account of consciousness, we find substantive theories of a variety of related phenomena, including the unity of consciousness, the nature of time-consciousness, and the intentional character of sensory experience. Barry Dainton argues that Brentano's considered position on the unity of consciousness is that a subject's overall conscious experience at a time is a complex whose constituents are mere *divisives*, that is, parts that can be distinguished in thought but cannot be separated in reality (Chapter 6). As an example of such parts, Brentano mentions the different spatial parts of a fundamental physical particle: *qua* fundamental, it admits of no partition, and yet we can distinguish spatial parts in it. The crucial feature of such inseparable parts ("divisives") is that they are incapable of assuming independent existence. According to Dainton's Brentano, this is exactly the model for what happens with the parts of a subject's overall conscious experience at a time.

The unity of consciousness Brentano (and Dainton) address is unity *at a time*. But consciousness involves also the experience of the *passage* of time. Understanding this aspect of conscious experience has been a real challenge for Brentano. Indeed, according to Guillaume Fréchette, Brentano held (at different times in his career) no fewer than five different accounts of this phenomenon (Chapter 7). Brentano's final view, on which he settled in the last two years of his life, according to Fréchette, is that what makes a certain experience the experience of pastness or futureness is a certain modality of *in obliquo* presentation. If I think to myself that my friend hopes to move to Hawaii, my thought presents both my friend and Hawaii. But according to Brentano, it presents them in two importantly different ways: it presents my friend *in recto* and Hawaii *in obliquo*. By the same token, when I experience a part of the melody just past, I am aware of it precisely as having occurred *just before the present part* of the melody (the part I am experiencing *as now*), and this means—on this view—that I am aware of the present moment *in recto* and of the just-past moment *in obliquo*.

The case of sensory consciousness becomes especially interesting within Brentano's philosophy of mind. A traditionally dominant view is that sensations are nonintentional and contrast in that way with intellectual or cognitive activity. But for Brentano, all mental phenomena are intentional, so he must also provide an intentionalist account of sensations. According to Olivier Massin (Chapter 8), Brentano does so by claiming that a sensation is always directed at a proprietary secondary-quality-at-a-place and then showing that sensations (i) *individuate* by these intentional objects of theirs and (ii) have their experiential *intensity* in virtue of a corresponding intensity in these objects. This applies, for Brentano, not only to *perceptual* sensations but also to *algedonic* sensations of pain and pleasure, which are directed at *sui generis* algedonic qualities (at locations).

Recall that the second main mandate of descriptive psychology is to provide a "fundamental classification" of mental phenomena. Here, *fundamental* means something like

the following. Mental phenomena can be taxonomized according to their natural similarities and dissimilarities at various levels of abstraction. How should they be taxonomized at the *highest* level of abstraction (one that still recognizes *some* dissimilarities)? According to Brentano, at that highest level, mental phenomena should be divided into three kinds: presentations, judgments, and “phenomena of love and hate.” The grounds for this particular taxonomy, I try to show (Chapter 9), is that there are three basic kinds, or *modes*, of intentionality: judgments present their intentional objects under the guise of the true, in some sense, while phenomena of love and hate present their objects under the guise of the good; presentations, meanwhile, present their objects in a more neutral fashion—under no substantive guise. Or perhaps more accurately, that is the case with *mere* presentations. For according to Brentano, every phenomenon of the other two categories presupposes and is grounded in some presentation.

The following two chapters are dedicated to judgment and the phenomena of love and hate. Brentano’s theory of judgment is, in my opinion, one of the most creative theories in the history of philosophy (Chapter 10). Bucking an essentially exceptionless tendency in the history of Western philosophy, Brentano argues that judgment does not involve predication and does not have propositional content. Instead, judgment is an “objectual,” nonpropositional attitude akin to loving one’s child and fearing a cackle of hyenas (as opposed to loving *that* one’s child is cute or fearing *that* the hyenas will maul one). The argument for this goes through two extraordinary claims. The first is that all judgments are at bottom existential—they commit to the existence or nonexistence of something, nothing more. (For example, the judgment that all Greeks are mortal is just a judgment that there are no immortal Greeks.) The second is that an existential judgment’s commitment to the existence or nonexistence of something does not come from its content but from its intentional mode. (The negative judgment about immortal Greeks does not present immortal Greeks as nonexistent, but rather presents-as-nonexistent immortal Greeks; that which is presented is thus exhausted by immortal Greeks.) I try to show how these claims lead to Brentano’s nonpropositional theory of judgment.

Brentano’s account of “phenomena of love and hate” is taken up in Michelle Montague’s chapter on will and emotion in Brentano (Chapter 11). For the relevant category covers for Brentano a range of mental phenomena, from pleasure and pain through pride and anger to desire and decision. As Montague shows, one reason Brentano thinks there is nonetheless internal unity in this category is that one can construct “series” of mental states that exhibit a certain continuity between any two links but lead from one end of the spectrum to the other. And the other reason is that all these states present their intentional objects under the guise of the good (or bad). Thus, both (positive) emotions and desires inherently evaluate their objects positively. This in turn provides Brentano with an important claim in moral epistemology, namely, that our knowledge of value is based ultimately on experienced contrasts between different states of this category—a topic that will come up again in the book’s third section (on Brentano’s theory of value).

To close this first section of the book, Gianfranco Soldati looks into Brentano’s theory of self-knowledge (Chapter 12). For Soldati, the theory can be captured through the combination of three theses. The first is that inner perception provides each of us with a kind of knowledge of his or her conscious experiences that is unavailable to anybody else. The second is that this knowledge of one’s experiences qualifies as knowledge of *oneself* as subject (and not just as knowledge of a state or act of one). And the third thesis is that the

subject of which one thereby has this kind of knowledge is a mental substance underlying all her experiences.

## 1.2 Brentano's Metaphysics

The most important thesis in Brentano's metaphysics is one that, according to most interpreters, he reached only later in his life: reism. This is the thesis that there are only "things," where this appears to rule in only concrete particulars and rule out propositions, (merely) intentional objects, states of affairs, universals, abstract objects, and so on. Importantly, for Brentano, this does not mean that all entities are individual substances—he recognizes also individual *accidents*, though ones that turn out to be concrete particulars as well. In his chapter on Brentano's reism, Werner Sauer locates Brentano's conversion to this extremely parsimonious outlook sometime between January and October 1903 (Chapter 13). Much of Sauer's chapter is dedicated to meticulous reconstruction and careful evaluation of what in the secondary literature has come to be thought of as the master argument for reism (though see Kriegel 2015). The centerpiece of this argument is the claim that it is impossible to even contemplate, or represent to oneself, anything other than "things" in the relevant sense. Sauer's verdict is that the argument as it stands does not work, but that a certain modification casting accidents as tropes or abstract particulars (rather than concrete particulars) might.

Brentano's ontology is thus a *monocategorical* ontology, insofar as it recognizes only one category of being: things. Yet Brentano allows that there are two categorically distinct *kinds* of things: physical and mental. Indeed, he is a substance dualist who posits mental substances (and their accidents) irreducible to physical substances (and their accidents). These mental substances are moreover immortal and are thus souls in the traditional philosophical sense. Susan Krantz Gabriel reconstructs Brentano's theory of the soul as it emerges from two posthumous collections of essays (Chapter 14). The first is a metaphysically oriented collection from the last years of Brentano's life (Brentano 1933/1981a), the second a theologically oriented collection based on lecture notes from the core years of Brentano's teaching career (Brentano 1929a/1987b). In the former, the soul is cast as the paradigmatic substance, insofar as it is the only substance we have direct (inner-)perceptual encounter with. In the latter, an argument is offered for the immateriality of the mental substance: inner perception reveals a spiritual or immaterial aspect of the mental substance, but if that substance had also a material component, claims Brentano, this would undermine the unity of consciousness.

Wojciech Żelaniec presents Brentano's metaphysics of time and space (Chapter 15), topics that were dear to Brentano's heart in the final decade of his life. They open on issues such as the nature of the continuum and the foundations of topology, where Brentano made crucial contributions (see Zimmerman 1996). As Żelaniec notes, for Brentano, the fundamental metaphysical questions raised by time and space concern the status of temporal and spatial determinations of substance, the determinations in virtue of which certain temporal and spatial truths can be uttered about substances.

Such "determinations" are what properties and relations become within a reist framework. Hamid Taieb dedicates a chapter to this area of Brentano's metaphysics (Chapter 16). As he shows, Brentano treats properties as special *parts* of a thing—*metaphysical* parts (in the case of particularized properties, such as Socrates' wisdom) or *logical* parts (for

universal properties, such as wisdom as such). Only the former are “real,” for Brentano, in the sense of being causally efficacious. Taieb brings out in particular the sophistication of Brentano’s ontology of relations, where distinctions are drawn between relations, relational properties, and objects *qua* bearing relational properties—“relatives.” The latter are all that will survive in Brentano’s ontology after his reistic turn.

The question of the nature of truth in Brentano is a notoriously difficult one, with traditional interpretations attributing to Brentano the rather implausible “epistemic view” that *p* is true iff we judge that *p* with self-evidence or at least would do so if we could judge on whether *p* with self-evidence. However, Johannes Brandl argues for a much more nuanced interpretation, according to which Brentano was in effect an early deflationary theorist of truth (Chapter 17). According to Brandl, the epistemic story linking truth to self-evidence is only a story about the *acquisition* of the concept of truth. Regarding the nature of truth itself, there is a sense in which we cannot “get underneath” truth by finding something more fundamental in which it is grounded. Accordingly, only a deflationary characterization in terms of the truth schema is available.

What this means, though, is that Brentano’s theory of truth will not illuminate his conception of the relationship between appearance and reality. This is the topic of the following chapter, by Denis Seron (Chapter 18). Seron argues that Brentano’s theory of appearances is one and the same as his theory of intentionality—appearances are the intentional objects of conscious experiences, and the intentional objects of conscious experiences are appearances. Brentano’s notion of intentional inexistence is just the notion of an object *appearing in* a conscious experience.

The final chapter in this section on Brentano’s metaphysics is Alessandro Salice’s on negation and nonexistence—two delicate issues in Brentano’s work (Chapter 19). Recall that according to Brentano’s theory of judgment, all judgments are existential, and their existential commitment comes from the judgment’s attitude rather than its content. This applies also to negative existentials: the act of judging that Pegasus does not exist is just the act of rejecting Pegasus (where “rejecting” means representing-as-nonexistent). Salice points out that this treatment of negation becomes problematic for such statements as “some man is not learned,” which must be paraphrased “a non-learned man exists,” in which we find negation inside the *content* of the judgment (namely, in denying the man’s learnedness). Salice shows that this leads Brentano to his “doctrine of double judgment,” according to which sentences such as “a non-learned man exists” actually express *two* judgments: a first-order judgment that accepts (represents-as-existent) a man and a second-order judgment that rejects (represents-as-nonexistent) the accepted man’s learnedness. Brentano uses this device to address a number of difficult cases for his theory of judgment, but, as Salice argues, these quickly become increasingly complicated and inelegant.

### 1.3 Brentano’s Value Theory

One of the areas of Brentano’s thought that have the greatest resonance in contemporary philosophy is his metaethics. One way to think of the organizing question of metaethics is as follows: when we say that something is good, what exactly are we doing? And one of the “hottest” answers in contemporary metaethics is that to say that something is good is to say that it is fitting to have a pro attitude toward it. In these discussions, Brentano



is often cited as a precursor, perhaps the first precursor. According to Brentano, to say that something is good is to say that it is correct to love it. But his notions of love and correctness are such that the view is essentially the same as those of contemporary fitting-attitude theorists. In his chapter on Brentano's metaethics (Chapter 20), Jonas Olson further positions Brentano within our contemporary metaethical landscape, showing how Brentano incorporates elements of both rationalism and sentimentalism, both cognitivism and expressivism, and both motivational internalism and externalism—while being thoroughly realist and naturalist.

The following chapter, by Lynn Pasquerella, is dedicated to Brentano's first-order normative ethics (Chapter 21). Brentano's ethics is a sort of pluralist consequentialism, where things are instrumentally good when their consequences are intrinsically good, and there are a handful of different intrinsic goods. Brentano does not offer a definitive list of intrinsic goods, but he is very much definitive about knowledge, pleasure, mental activity, and correct love belonging on that list. Note that the last element listed is normatively characterized. To that extent, claims Pasquerella, Brentano anticipated the kind of "justicized consequentialism" defended more recently by the likes of Fred Feldman.

Moving from moral to aesthetic value, Wolfgang Huemer discusses in some detail Brentano's program for aesthetics with solid scientific foundations (Chapter 22). The framework is similar to the one we find in Brentano's metaethics, except that for Brentano to say that something is beautiful is to say that it is correct to be delighted with that thing. Accordingly, the study of the nature of delight, and of the laws governing correct delight, is effectively the study of beauty—but founded on scientific psychology rather than on subjective speculation.

As Huemer noted, Brentano was less interested in pursuing aesthetic questions himself than in setting up the framework within which they could be pursued. Two areas of the aesthetics of his day in which Brentano did dabble, mostly in the second half of the 1880s and the first half of the 1890s, are the question of artistic genius and the role in art of fantasy and imagination. These are the topics of the next chapter, by Ion Tănăsescu (Chapter 23). On the question of genius, Brentano argued that the so-called artistic (or scientific) genius is not qualitatively or categorically distinct from the average person—the difference is merely quantitative (a difference of degree, not of kind). The genius does not engage in mental processes unfamiliar to the average person but rather exhibits a higher capacity to engage in the same old processes. The artistic genius, for example, exhibits greater sensitivity to beauty. For Brentano, artworks divide into two kinds, depending on the mental faculties used in their production: some works involve merely imitation of nature and are thus based entirely on perception and memory, while others depend in part on the artist's creativity and imagination. To clarify the nature of the latter, Brentano goes on to develop a sophisticated analysis of the nature of imaginative presentations, which Tănăsescu reconstructs carefully.

The final chapter of this book's first part, by Richard Schaefer, concerns Brentano's philosophy of religion (Chapter 24). Brentano is an ardent defender of rational theology, and to that extent subordinates theology to philosophy. As Schaefer notes, Brentano thinks that in the history of religion appeal to "revelation" is for the most part indirect acceptance of what someone else claims about God. And he dismisses religious dogmas as a device for treating as certain that for which there is no warranted certainty. It is ultimately on the grounds of sound rational arguments that the existence, nature, and



expectations of God can be asserted. Brentano offers four arguments for the existence of God, but the one he relies on most heavily is a variant on the teleological argument that appeals centrally to probability theory.

## 2 THE AMBIT OF BRENTANO'S THOUGHT

The book's greater part is dedicated to the specifics of Brentano's own thought. But one cannot fully appreciate Brentano's significance without a proper acquaintance with the work of his followers within the so-called Brentano School. This is what the book's second, shorter part is dedicated to. It opens with a pair of chapters by Arnaud Dewalque, the first tracing the historical emergence of the Brentano School (Chapter 25) and the second attempting to identify the philosophical core that unifies the commitments of members of the school (Chapter 26). Dewalque claims that Brentano and his immediate students, notably Stumpf and Marty, started using the expression "Brentano School" from about 1873. A diagram at the end of Chapter 25 provides a useful depiction of the school's main members. For Dewalque, what unifies the school intellectually is first of all Brentano's particular version of metaphilosophical naturalism. Naturalism here is the notion that philosophy is continuous with the sciences. Indeed, according to Brentano, it is *itself* a science or a collection of sciences. Brentano's particular version holds that the science all philosophy depends upon is descriptive psychology, so that, ultimately, inner perception of mental phenomena provides an empirical foundation for the philosophical sciences. It is this conception of philosophy and how it should be done, claims Dewalque, that underlies and unifies all the research activity conducted under the heading of the Brentano School.

To impose a measure of structure on this part of the book, I have divided it into two parts. The first concerns Brentano's own students; the second, his students' students and further influences. The distinction is not entirely straightforward, as starting in 1880 Brentano lost his right to formally supervise doctoral students (after losing his professorship in Vienna), and several philosophers who had studied with him there ended up either finishing their studies with one of Brentano's students (typically Stumpf, Marty, or Meinong) or having a *pro forma* supervisor other than Brentano. Thus we have several figures who can be considered either among Brentano's own students or among his students' students; this includes Husserl, Ehrenfels, Arleth, and Höfler. In some cases, we have included special chapters for the relevant thinker *qua* direct Brentano student (e.g., Husserl, Ehrenfels); in others (e.g., Arleth, Höfler), we have included lengthy discussions within chapters dedicated to the centers of Brentanian orthodoxy in Prague and Innsbruck.

### 2.1 Brentano's Own Students

This part of the book is organized almost chronologically but opens with a chapter about Anton Marty, who was Brentano's *second* student but his most dedicated follower. Indeed, as we will see below, he may have done more than Brentano himself to further Brentano's legacy. Laurent Cesalli and Kevin Mulligan divide their discussion of the philosophical relationship between the two (Chapter 27) into (i) philosophy of mind and

(ii) philosophy of language. Regarding (i), Marty diverged from Brentano in rejecting the objectual theory of judgment and holding that judgments are directed at states of affairs, and also in rejecting a fitting-attitude theory of value in favor of reversing the explanatory order, that is, explaining the fittingness of attitudes in terms of value rather than the other way round. But Marty is best known for his contributions in (ii), where he developed a classification of linguistic acts patterned after Brentano's classification of mental acts as well as an early version of intention-based semantics.

Carl Stumpf was Brentano's very first student. As Denis Fiset tells it (Chapter 28), they met during Brentano's habilitation defense, when Brentano was only 28 and Stumpf just 18. Stumpf inherited from Brentano a penchant for classification, which he pursued vigorously to classify the sciences as a whole and the branches of psychology in particular. The classification of the latter is driven largely by Stumpf's notion of mental function and the variety of mental functions he distinguishes within his own descriptive psychology. According to Stumpf, philosophy is the ultimate science, whose proprietary scope is topic-neutral phenomena that appear in all sciences alike (hence both in the natural sciences and the "human sciences"—what in the English-speaking world are called, tellingly, simply "the humanities"). In Stumpf's work, we thus find a mixture of independence and acceptance of Brentano's framework. Their personal relationship was apparently somewhat tumultuous, marred by a number of disputes both personal and intellectual (reconstructed in some detail by Fiset!).

The student of Brentano's best known to analytic philosophers is probably Alexius Meinong, thanks mostly to his theory of intentional relations to nonexistent objects. But as Johann Marek shows (Chapter 29), many other parts of Meinong's thought address questions set within Brentano's agenda. This includes notably two areas: first, the classification of mental phenomena, where Meinong (i) rejects Brentano's assimilation of feeling and will and (ii) posits a *sui generis* category of "assumptions" or "suppositions" in between presentations and judgments; second, the self-evident character of inner consciousness, where Meinong posits a second-class kind of self-evidence that is "conjectural" rather than demonstrative.

Christian von Ehrenfels studied with Brentano from 1880 to 1883 and then finished his studies with Meinong. Maria Reicher describes an "opalescent figure" interested in an astonishing range of topics, but whose main philosophical contributions were in descriptive psychology and value theory (Chapter 30). In an 1890 paper, he defines the notion of a "Gestalt quality" as a quality that wholes have not in virtue of the character of their individual parts, but in virtue of the *interrelations among* their parts—a notion that was of course to enjoy remarkable uptake. Another interesting contribution in this area is Ehrenfels' reductive analysis of desire in terms of a combination of presentations and emotions. The notion of desire then plays a central role in Ehrenfels' value theory, as he essentially identifies intrinsic value with that which enhances desire-satisfaction, thus adopting a monistic consequentialism in contradistinction to Brentano's pluralistic variety.

Brentano's best-known student is of course Edmund Husserl, whose oeuvre had an unparalleled influence on twentieth-century philosophy on the European continent. Husserl came to Vienna to study with Brentano from 1884 to 1886 and finished his studies in Halle with Stumpf, and he claimed he would never have been a philosopher if it had not been for Brentano. It would be only a slight caricature to summarize Husserl's mature phenomenological program as nothing but Brentanian descriptive psychology

with a transcendental-idealist twist. Although the transcendental twist Husserl's thought acquired circa 1905 distanced Husserl from Brentano considerably, as Dermot Moran shows (Chapter 31) the two maintained a mostly warm relationship until Brentano's death. And yet, claims Moran, a closer examination shows that Husserl was critical of central aspects of Brentano's program more or less right from the start.

Brentano's last major student was Kazimierz Twardowski, who actually did his doctoral work with Brentano, though submitting it formally (in 1891) with Brentano's Viennese colleague Robert Zimmerman. Arianna Betti presents a systematic list of areas where Twardowski adopted Brentanian positions and areas where he diverged from Brentanian doctrine (Chapter 32). In the former category, we find the notion of descriptive psychology as first philosophy (along with the primacy of descriptive psychology over explanatory/genetic psychology and the inner-perception-cum-analysis methodology for descriptive psychology), as well as the fitting-attitude framework in value theory. Contrary to Brentano, however, Twardowski welcomed nonexistent objects in his theory of intentionality, claims Betti, and his theory of judgment diverged in central respects from Brentano's.

## 2.2 The Further Influences of Brentano's Thought

Anton Marty set up in Prague a veritable Brentanian orthodoxy—what would come to be known as the “Prague School of Brentano.” If Marty and Stumpf (who was professor in Prague early on too) represent the first generation of Prague Brentanists, the second generation consists of Marty's many students, including Hugo Bergman, Emil Arleth, Josef Eisenmayer, Oskar Engländer, Franz Hillebrand, Alfred Kastil, Oskar Kraus, and Emil Utitz. Kraus then became himself professor at Prague and “raised” a third generation of Brentanians in Georg Katkov, Walter Engel, and Eberhard Rogge. Much of these thinkers' work, discussed by Hynek Janoušek and Robin Rollinger (Chapter 33), pursued Brentano's reistic project with some sophistication, attempting to provide workable nominalist paraphrases in difficult cases. The Prague School of Brentano was a vibrant, half-century-long philosophical tradition. One of Marty's students (who even studied with Brentano himself for a year) was Tomáš Masaryk, who was later to become Czechoslovakia's first president—and who endowed the Brentano Society in Prague and the Brentano Archives. Rather tragically, this entire philosophical tradition was swept away after the Nazi invasion of 1939 and the war's communist aftermath. Thus, Georg Katkov, probably the most talented of the third-generation Prague Brentanists, could not find employment as a philosopher after the war and became a historian back in Russia.

The most tragic figure of the Brentano School, though, was probably Hugo Bergman, the “godfather” of Israeli philosophy. As Guillaume Fréchette notes (Chapter 34), as a Jewish academic, Bergman had very few career options at the time; the school's other prominent Jews, Husserl and Utitz, had converted to Protestantism in time to pursue their career. Bergman was not only fully committed to his Judaism, however—he was an ardent and active Zionist. The consequences of this, in terms of Bergman's treatment by Brentano and Marty, are recounted in Fréchette's chapter. Despite remarkable early contributions to the philosophy of physics and Brentano's descriptive psychology, Bergman was forced to work as a librarian until he moved in 1920 to Palestine (then under British mandate), where in 1935 he became the first Rector of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem

and taught the founding generation of Israeli philosophers. At this point in his career, he had moved away from Brentanian orthodoxy and became more of a neo-Kantian, developing broadly Kantian theories in epistemology and metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of mathematics and conducting seminal studies in the history of Jewish logic and philosophy.

The farthest-flung outpost of the Brentano School consisted of Twardowski's Polish students, first in Lvov (now Lviv, in the Ukraine) and then in Warsaw. Twardowski's best-known students are the logicians Jan Łukasiewicz and Stanisław Leśniewski, but his more Brentanian students are Tadeusz Czeżowski, Władysław Witwicki, and Tadeusz Kotarbiński. As Betti shows (Chapter 35), however, these thinkers show relatively little *doctrinal* continuity with Brentano (and indeed Twardowski). The main influence of Brentano's thought here is metaphilosophical, in particular the notion of descriptive psychology as first philosophy and the systematic and analytic style of philosophizing. In this respect, the Lvov-Warsaw School provides support for Dewalque's diagnosis (Chapter 26) of what the Brentano School's philosophical unity consists in.

It is in Innsbruck that the doctrinal bond with Brentano was strongest, as a result of a number of Marty students successively taking up professorships there. Indeed, Wilhelm Baumgartner describes the "Innsbruck School" as a "Brentanian franchise" (Chapter 36). Baumgartner discusses in order the main philosophical contributions (and their Brentanian core) of the four most prominent Innsbruck Brentanists: Franz Hillebrand, Emil Arleth, Alfred Kastil, and Franziska Mayer-Hillebrand. The last two have played a major role in publishing materials from Brentano's *Nachlass* (literary estate) and Mayer-Hillebrand published on Brentano until the 1960s (see, e.g., Mayer-Hillebrand 1963b). With her death in 1978, 122 years after Brentano's habilitation, comes to an end the chain of direct teacher-student links starting in Brentano and going through his students and students' students working within the Brentanian framework.

However, not all philosophical influence is mediated by personal links of the sort. Thus, Maria van der Schaar brings out Brentano's (largely unrecognized) influence on the inception of analytic philosophy in England (Chapter 37). The familiar narrative designates two Cambridge contemporaries, G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell, as the key figures in this development. What the two have in common is their 1894 tutor, George Stout. Stout published in 1896 a book titled *Analytic Psychology* (Stout 1896), which follows in its organization, and discusses at length themes from, Brentano's *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*. According to van der Schaar, both Moore and Russell read *Analytic Psychology* carefully, and Moore's work in particular engages with Brentano extensively, not only within moral philosophy but also as concerns the theories of judgment, knowledge, and part-whole relations.

Brentano's tentacles reached even the United States. In 1937, Hugo Bergman delivered a lecture on Brentano's naturalistic metaphilosophy at the Harvard Philosophical Society. In Anglo-American philosophy, such naturalistic metaphilosophy is associated primarily with Quine (see especially Quine 1951). Since Quine was already lecturing at Harvard from 1934, one could speculate about his presence at Bergman's lecture and any role it might have played in the development of naturalism. In any case, a year after Bergman's lecture, Roderick Chisholm started his doctoral studies at Harvard. There, he was first exposed to Brentano's thought in a seminar with Edwin Boring. In the book's final chapter, Dale Jacquette reconstructs Brentano's influence on Chisholm (Chapter 38). Apparently,

Chisholm was later drawn to Brentano's work on intentionality, after reading Russell's *Analysis of Mind*, and started reading Brentano himself. He would eventually publish a long series of articles and a pair of books on various facets of Brentano's philosophy, most focally Brentano's notion of intentionality and his fitting-attitude theory of intrinsic value. Several of Chisholm's students wrote their PhD dissertation either specifically on Brentano (Susan Krantz Gabriel, Linda McAlister, Lynn Pasquerella) or at least centrally addressing Brentanian ideas (Dale Jacquette, Matthias Steup, Dean Zimmerman).

## CONCLUSION

It is useful to close this book with chapters on Brentano's impact on Anglo-American philosophy, where his footprints involved no personal links. For although the School of Brentano narrowly construed (that is, in terms of a chain of personal teacher–student links) is no more, the Brentanian framework writ large can still be thought of as a live philosophical program, deserving serious consideration and indeed earnest pursuit. It is in this spirit that Brentano's various philosophical theories have been covered here—his project of descriptive psychology and its pride of place in his metaphilosophical outlook; his theories of intentionality, consciousness, self-consciousness, the unity of consciousness, and time-consciousness; his taxonomy of mental phenomena and his theories of judgment, will, and emotion; his reistic metaphysics and his treatment of substances (including mental), properties, relations, space, and time; his conception of truth, reality, and existence; as well as his theories of moral, aesthetic, and religious value. In many of these areas, I hope the chapters that follow make clear that Brentano's extraordinarily original ideas hold considerable philosophical potential for us today.<sup>2</sup>

## NOTES

1. Brentano's magnum opus, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (Brentano 1874), divides into two "books." The first concerns methodological and foundational issues with the project of descriptive psychology (though Brentano does not use that expression back then). The second concerns the pursuit of these two basic questions of descriptive psychology. In a way, Chapters 1–4 of Book II address the first question (demarcation), while Chapters 5–8 address the second (classification).
2. My editorial work for this book was supported by the French National Research Agency's grants ANR-11-0001-02 PSL\* and ANR-10-LABX-0087. I am grateful to all the authors who contributed to the volume, and who showed great commitment and flexibility in harnessing their erudition and competence to the common task of putting together as comprehensive a presentation as possible of Brentano's philosophy and its significance.



## **Brentano's Philosophy**

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## Franz Brentano: Life and Work

Thomas Binder

“Descending from a devout Catholic family I was led to dedicate myself to the priesthood; but later on I broke up with the Church. Only the desire to serve the noblest interests had directed me in the choice of a profession. But the subsequent transformation of my convictions made me realize that the path pursued so far could not possibly lead to its destination” (Brentano 1922: xv). This might be—in his own words—the shortest version of a biography of Franz Brentano, but it undoubtedly hits the central point: Brentano’s changing and problematic relationship to Catholicism and to religious faith in general overshadowed his entire career. A more detailed approach to his biography will improve our understanding of this fact.<sup>1</sup>

Franz Brentano was born on January 16, 1838, in Marienberg near Boppard on the Rhine, but shortly afterwards the family moved to Aschaffenburg, where Franz was raised. The roots of the Brentano family were in Italy, at the shores of Lake Como. Brentano’s closer family circle was part of the so-called Frankfurt branch, which produced successful merchants as well as famous intellectuals (Brentano’s uncle and aunt, Clemens Brentano and Bettina von Armin, were two of the most important representatives of German Romanticism; his younger brother, Lujo, became a famous economist and was one of the *Kathedersozialisten*). Brentano’s father, Christian (1784–1851), was a businessman and author and his mother, Emilie (1810–1882), a tutor and translator of devotional literature; both parents were strongly engaged in the Catholic movement. As Alfred Kastil (see Chapter 36) wrote later with a dramatic touch, Brentano grew up under the spell of the Catholic worldview.

After private schooling and one year in the Lyceum at Aschaffenburg, Brentano studied philosophy, mathematics, history, and theology in Munich, Würzburg, Berlin, and Münster. His most influential philosophical teachers were Friedrich Adolf Trendelenburg in Berlin, who was a leading Aristotle expert; and Franz Clemens in Münster, a fervid representative of Neothomism. In 1862, Brentano submitted his doctoral dissertation *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle* at the University of



Tübingen (Brentano 1862). Almost at the same time, Brentano finally decided to become a priest. However, the above cited formulation “I was led to dedicate myself to priesthood” supports the conclusion that his mother and her spiritual advisers were involved in this decision. Many years later, moreover, Brentano told Oskar Kraus (see Chapter 36) that religious doubts had dated back to his early university years. But for the time being, Brentano managed to silence his scruples and joined the Catholic seminary at Würzburg. On August 8, 1864, Brentano was ordained a Catholic priest by Bishop Stahl of Würzburg.

Remarkably enough, after ordination, the bishop permitted Brentano to resume philosophical studies. As a result, Brentano presented his *Habilitationsschrift* on *The Psychology of Aristotle* to the University of Würzburg (Brentano 1867). Brentano’s public “apology” of his 25 Habilitation Theses (among them the famous fourth thesis that the method of philosophy is none other than that of natural science) on July 7, 1866, was such an overwhelming success that the young Carl Stumpf decided spontaneously to give up law studies and to study philosophy instead (see Chapter 28).

Brentano’s accomplishments in the following years were amazing: in 1867, he started with a lecture course on history of philosophy, and a year later he had a course on metaphysics, adding lectures on logic and psychology from 1871 onward. Although Brentano was very popular with the students, he still was only a “private lecturer” (*Privatdozent*).<sup>2</sup> An application for the post of an “extraordinary professor” in 1870 was rejected by the faculty because its more liberal members had reservations regarding a Catholic priest dominating the chair of philosophy (the only holder of the chair, Franz Hofmann, a student of Franz von Baader, was no longer actively teaching due to health problems, which did not prevent him from plotting against Brentano).

At that time, Brentano was still a Catholic priest on the surface, but almost nobody knew that his views had already changed dramatically. First, his philosophical views changed. Supposedly in 1868 he read the French translation of John Stuart Mill’s monograph on Auguste Comte’s positivist philosophy. Brentano was so impressed with Mill’s outline that he gave a lecture course on Comte in the following year and published an article in which he himself confessed to “positive philosophy.” (In addition, this article is of special interest because it shows the first signs of Brentano’s distancing from Aristotle.) It may well be that the preoccupation with the antidogmatism of French and British Empiricism had consequences for one the most crucial episodes in his life.

In 1869, Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler engaged Brentano to write a memorandum against the dogma of papal infallibility (which was promulgated in the following year at the first Vatican Council of July 1870). It is little known that Brentano wrote two memoranda. The first argued only against the appropriateness of declaring papal infallibility. Because it failed, Brentano wrote a second one, this time attacking several dogmas of the Catholic Church directly and demonstrating their inconsistency (see Freudenberger 1979 for a detailed description). Stumpf witnessed Brentano’s definite break with religious faith at Easter 1870, describing it as a painful struggle. There is a certain irony in the fact that Brentano eventually became extraordinary professor of philosophy in Würzburg in May 1872 (primarily due to the intervention of Hermann Lotze), when Brentano was no longer able to give the appearance of being an ultramontanist Catholic priest: in March 1873, he resigned from his professorship, and in April he withdrew from the priesthood.<sup>3</sup>

Brentano's position after the resignation was quite difficult because most of the universities in Protestant Germany were barred for him. A conversion to Protestantism (as his brother Lujo suggested) was not an option for Brentano. He (unsuccessfully) applied for a post in Giessen, but it was the University of Vienna that raised his hopes: in the capital of the Habsburg monarchy, a chair of philosophy had turned vacant (its former holder was the Herbartian Franz Karl Lott) and therefore the faculty was looking for a philosopher especially qualified in psychology. Brentano postponed other projects and began immediately to work on what should eventually become his philosophical masterpiece: the *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*. Old family connections to Vienna, an emphatic recommendation by Lotze, and Karl von Stremayr, the liberal minister of cultural affairs, made it possible to overcome the influence of the Catholic clergy and the doubts of the deeply religious Emperor Franz Josef I: on January 18, 1874, Brentano was finally appointed full ("ordinary") professor of philosophy at the University of Vienna.<sup>4</sup> In April, he gave his acclaimed inaugural lecture on *Die Gründe der Entmutigung auf philosophischem Gebiete*. In May, the first volume of his *Psychology* was published. In the preface, Brentano announced a second volume, which he never delivered for reasons still discussed controversially today.<sup>5</sup>

In Vienna, Brentano continued his successful teaching career. The number of his students was increasing steadily, not least because of the lecture course on ethics he had to give for the law students (a topic that Brentano had not yet addressed in Würzburg). Among his early students in Vienna were such remarkable personalities as Thomas G. Masaryk (later president of Czechoslovakia), Alexius Meinong (see Chapter 29), and Sigmund Freud (see Merlan 1945). In his early Viennese years, Brentano was successful not only in university matters but also in the refined society of Vienna's bourgeoisie, especially in their Jewish circles; he was in fashion, as he puts it himself in a letter to Marty. Nevertheless, most of these social relationships did not satisfy his demands for friendship.

Sometime around 1878, Brentano decided to delete the last remaining marks of priesthood and to get married. In September 1880 (shortly before he had left the Church officially), he married Ida von Lieben, the sister of Richard von Lieben, an economist and a colleague of Brentano's at the University of Vienna. At that point, though, Brentano was no longer member of the faculty. This was due to the fact that, concerning former priests in the conservative Habsburg monarchy, the Civil Code adopts the regulations of Church law—and Church law denied marriage to all ordained priests, even if they have resigned from the priesthood (priesthood is a *character indelebilis*, which means that under no circumstances it can be canceled). So Brentano had been forced to renounce his Austrian citizenship in order to marry and turned Saxon instead, which automatically resulted in the loss of his full professorship. Only a few days later, he returned to Vienna and resumed his lectures as a *Privatdozent*. This new status was hardly appropriate for Brentano, as he was not entitled to supervise any doctoral theses or to participate in hiring decisions. With the unanimous support of the faculty members, Brentano tried several times to regain his former position but in vain; times had changed and turned more conservative than in his first Viennese years.

Between 1874 and 1894, Brentano was very reluctant to publish his thoughts. There was no major publication, only a small number of short lectures on various topics (aesthetics, ethics, historiography) resulting from occasional events. It should be mentioned

nevertheless that even among these writings one can find a classic: In *The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong* Brentano presented for the first time what he thought was a totally new foundation of ethics and value theory (See Chapter 20); it was also his first book to be translated into English, in 1902. Also as a private lecturer Brentano was still extraordinarily successful. In a letter to Hermann Schell, he mentioned proudly that he had more students than Robert Zimmermann, a Herbartian who held the only chair of philosophy in Vienna at this time. And Brentano's students obviously were more gifted: Edmund Husserl, Kazimirz Twardowski, Alois Höfler, and Christian von Ehrenfels (among others) joined the ranks of what nowadays is well known as the "Brentano School" (see Chapter 25). There is another aspect of Brentano's teaching that is noteworthy. Brentano was not only a charismatic teacher, he was also strongly interested in personal contact with his students; Stumpf (1919) tells of long philosophical strolls in Würzburg, and in Vienna, Brentano often invited his students to his apartment to continue the discussions that had started during his lectures and seminars. It is highly probable that the Philosophical Society at the University of Vienna initially emerged from these private discussions; the society was founded in 1888 and Brentano gave the inaugural address, *On the Method of Historical Research in Philosophy*.

In the same year, Brentano's son, Johannes Christian Michael, was born (later called by his friends only Giovanni or "Gio"). In 1887, Brentano had acquired a large old house in Schönbühel near Melk in Lower Austria, because it had reminded him of his parent's house in Aschaffenburg; it was to become his summer residence until the outbreak of World War I. But Brentano's domestic happiness was not destined to last: within a few days of visiting a hospital in March 1894, his wife Ida died unexpectedly. After a further humiliating rejection of an attempt to regain his professorship (by the Polish minister Madeyski, who was especially under the spell of the Catholic Church),<sup>6</sup> Brentano finally decided to leave Vienna. In a series of articles published in the Viennese newspaper *Die neue freie Presse*, entitled *Meine letzten Wünsche für Österreich* (my last wishes for Austria), Brentano attacked sharply the ingratitude of the Austrian government, for which he had educated so many students without any payment of salary; in these articles, it is also the first time that Brentano officially labels his psychological doctrine as "descriptive psychology or psychognosy" (see Chapter 3).

After leaving Vienna in April 1895, Brentano stayed for several months in Lausanne, where he rejected a professorship and met Alexander Herzen. In 1896, he decided to settle down in Florence and became an Italian citizen. In the following year, Brentano married Emilie Rueprecht, a young woman he had met at Aggsbach near Schönbühel. From then on, for almost two decades, Brentano's life followed more or less the same pattern: in summer and autumn he lived with his son and his wife at Schönbühel; during the rest of the year, they stayed at Florence. Public appearances became sparse: in 1896, Brentano attended an international psychological congress in Munich (organized by Stumpf) and in 1905 he took part in another psychological meeting in Rome. Around 1900 Brentano's eyesight began to deteriorate. A glaucoma operation in 1903 was only partly successful, so that Brentano depended more and more on the assistance of his wife and alternating secretaries, to whom he dictated his inexhaustible thoughts; nevertheless, he was able to write short manuscripts and letters at least until 1912 or 1913. All these problems could not prevent Brentano from intense scientific work; in 1907, he published *Untersuchungen zur Sinnespsychologie*, a collection of shorter articles dealing with perceptual psychology;

and 1911 was an especially prolific year: he presented not only *The Classification of Mental Phenomena* but also two monographs on Aristotle (Brentano 1911a, b, c).<sup>7</sup>

Disgusted with Italy's entry into the war, in May 1915 Brentano moved to Zurich, where his son, Gio, was a physics teacher at the ETH (or Swiss Federal Institute of Technology). Even in Zurich, Brentano continued to work restlessly: a manuscript on the teachings of Jesus was finished (Brentano 1922) and his last dictation on "Anschauung und abstrakte Vorstellung" (intuition and abstract presentation) was taken down on March 9, 1917. Brentano died a week later, on March 17, 1917. He was buried at the cemetery of Sihlfeld near Zurich but was later moved to the family grave at Aschaffenburg.

As it turned out in the months after Brentano's death, he had left not only a huge number of philosophical manuscripts (far exceeding what he had published in his lifetime), but also poetry and an extensive correspondence with colleagues, friends, and family members. Shortly before his death, Brentano had authorized Oskar Kraus and Alfred Kastil (both students of Marty in Prague; Kraus was professor of philosophy there, Kastil in Innsbruck) to prepare an edition of his *Nachlass* (literary estate). At first, Kraus and Kastil collected the documents that were dispersed in Zurich, Florence, and Schönbühel and transferred most of them to Innsbruck, where Kastil established a first Brentano archive and began to produce copies of the manuscripts. There is little known about this archive but much more about the second; with the financial support of Tomas G. Masaryk (who was a student of Brentano in Vienna and from 1918 to 1935 president of the Republic of Czechoslovakia), Kraus managed in 1932 to set up the Brentano archive in Prague. Due to an agreement with Gio Brentano, the archive held all of the precious original manuscripts, and typists began to produce transcriptions in a large style. But unfortunately the archive worked only for a few years; the imminent danger of war in September 1938 made it necessary to transfer the manuscripts to England and place them in the custody of their legal owner, who still was Brentano's son. When the Nazi troops marched into Prague in March 1939, Kraus himself was arrested immediately. Six weeks later, he was released and emigrated to England, which entailed the end of the Brentano archive in its original form. In 1950, Brentano's *Nachlass* was transferred from England to the United States, where Gio was teaching radiation physics at the Northwestern University (see Binder 2013 for a detailed history of the *Nachlass*).

In the years from 1922 to 1939, Kraus and Kastil managed to publish eight major works and numerous shorter articles from the *Nachlass* (most notably Brentano 1925, 1928, 1929a, and 1933). It is beyond any doubt that their efforts were meritorious and prevented Brentano's philosophy from passing into oblivion. It is also true that some of Brentano's manuscripts—especially his large lectures—are extremely difficult to edit. So Kraus and Kastil tried to transform the manuscripts into readable texts, but very often they followed editorial criteria that are hardly acceptable from a contemporary point of view. In the preface to *On the Existence of God*, Kastil summarizes his editorial methods. These involve 1) putting together different texts by Brentano (even different types of text such as dictations and letters) to produce a new text, which is strictly speaking no longer a text by Brentano himself; and 2) trying to present only the "mature" views of Brentano, which means that all obsolete arguments were omitted or corrected in terms of Brentano's late philosophy. Kraus was less permissive in rearranging Brentano's texts, but usually his introductions contain fierce attacks on disloyal students of Brentano. This prompted Husserl—who was among them—to reply to Kraus as early as 1928: "Brentano

is a timeless figure—which of course does not mean waved aside once and for all—so the edition should also be guided by a certain timelessness” (see Kraus 1928: xlviii). Later editions of Brentano’s work (e.g., by Rolf George or Klaus Hedwig) were more careful but cannot compensate for what is the most needed instrument for all future research on Brentano: a critical edition of his complete works.

## NOTES

1. Biographical literature on Brentano in English is very sparse (even *The Cambridge Companion to Brentano* offers only a short chronological table). The most comprehensive portrait is perhaps contained in Albertazzi (2006), but it is not always reliable (as is most of the biographical literature on Brentano). In German, the situation is not much better. The best portrait of Brentano to date, both as a man and a philosopher, is still Carl Stumpf’s obituary (Stumpf 1919).
2. Besides Stumpf, the most prominent of Brentano’s students in Würzburg were Anton Marty, Georg von Hertling, and Hermann Schell.
3. The name “ultramontanist” was polemically applied to all people—laymen and clergymen alike—who supported the superiority of the pope over the general council.
4. One can find different dates for the appointment in the literature. I rely here on a letter of Brentano to Carl Stumpf (see Brentano 1989: 124).
5. Kraus’ reissue of the *Psychology* in three volumes (1924, 1925, and 1928) does not correspond to Brentano’s original plans. In particular, the third volume edited from the *Nachlass* is not a work by Brentano but a scheme by Kraus himself. We shall address the editorial issues in more detail below.
6. The scene is described in detail in Brentano 1895b: 13–6.
7. Brentano (1911c) presents an overall view of Aristotle’s philosophy, while Brentano (1911b) tries to speak his last word in a decade-long debate with Eduard Zeller about the origin of the human soul.

## 2

# Brentano's Philosophical Program

Uriah Kriegel

Franz Brentano was not a systematic writer, but he was very much a systematic *thinker*. Through his manuscripts, lecture notes, letters, dictations, and occasional published writings, one can discern a systematic, unified approach to the true, the good, and the beautiful. My goal here is to articulate explicitly this approach, and the philosophical program it reflects. The exercise requires going over big stretches of terrain with some efficiency; I will go just as deep into Brentano's approaches to the true, the good, and the beautiful as is required to make explicit their structural unity.

The basic idea behind Brentano's program is that there are three distinctive types of mental act that proprietarily target the true, the good, and the beautiful. To understand the true, the good, and the beautiful, we must obtain a clear grasp (i) of the distinctive mental acts targeting them and (ii) of success in such targeting. According to Brentano, the true is that which it is correct, or fitting, or appropriate to believe; the good is that which it is correct/fitting to love or like or approve of; and the beautiful is that with which it is correct/fitting to be delighted.<sup>1</sup> The next three sections develop and (do the minimum to) motivate each of these claims.

### 1 THE TRUE AS THAT WHICH IT IS FITTING TO BELIEVE

Many things can be said to be true—notably sentences, utterances, and thoughts. However, for Brentano, truth attaches originally only to judgments; other things can be said to be true only derivatively, insofar as they are suitably related to true judgments (Brentano 1966b: 6).

There are many divisions among judgments, but the most fundamental is this: some judgments are positive and some are negative. Positive judgments are judgments that, by their nature, are committed to the truth of what is judged; negative judgments are ones committed to the falsity of what is judged (Brentano 1973a: 223). When one person



believes that the sun rotates around the earth and another disbelieves that the sun rotates around the earth, both are making a judgment about the same thing: whether the sun rotates around the earth. But one is making a positive judgment, committing to the truth of  $\langle$  the sun rotates around the earth  $\rangle$ , while the other makes a negative judgment, committing to the falsity of  $\langle$  the sun rotates around the earth  $\rangle$ .

Belief is committed to the truth of what is believed, then, whereas disbelief is committed to the falsity of what is disbelieved. In both cases, we can ask whether the commitment is built into the *content* of the judgment or the *attitude*. This is not Brentano's terminology; Brentano would put this by asking whether the commitment is an aspect of the intentional *object* or of the *mode* of intentionality. But the point is the same: either belief's commitment to truth is part of what is represented by the belief, or it is an aspect of the way belief represents what it does. Brentano's view is clearly the latter: truth-commitment is an *attitudinal* feature of belief (Brentano 1973a: 201). This makes sense, of course: we typically believe *that the sun rotates around the earth*, not that *it is true* that the sun rotates around the earth. The commitment to the proposition that the sun rotates around the earth is built into the very act of believing, not into what is believed. We may put this (though Brentano does not) by saying that for any given proposition  $p$ , believing that  $p$  is not a mental act that represents  $p$  as true, but rather a mental act that represents-as-true  $p$ . More generally:

What constitutes the distinctive feature of judgment ... can[not] be a difference in content.... [T]he distinctive feature of judgment [is rather] a particular kind of *relation* to the [intentional] object.

(Brentano 1973a: 222; my italics)

In our terminology: representing-as-true is the essential property of belief, while representing-as-false is the essential property of disbelief.

From this perspective, the answer to the question "what is truth?" is simply: the kind of thing targeted by belief (rather than disbelief or other types of mental act). More precisely, to say of any given sentence " $p$ " or proposition  $p$  that it is true is just to say that the right attitude to take toward  $p$  is that of believing it (Brentano 1966b: 122). The correct or fitting attitude to take toward  $p$ , of all attitudes in our psychological repertoire, is belief—that attitude which, by its very nature, represents-as-true.

The idea that the true is that which it is fitting to represent-as-true might seem circular. And indeed it would be if the only way to understand the notion of representing-as-true is compositionally, by understanding the meaning of "representing" and "true." But this is not what Brentano thinks. For Brentano, there is only one way to grasp the distinctive, essential property of belief. It is to encounter in introspection, or rather in inner perception,<sup>2</sup> mental acts of believing, disbelieving, contemplating, and so on; and to pay attention to the felt difference between them. Through such comparison and contrast, one can zero in on the distinctive property of belief. For Brentano, the true is that toward which it is fitting to have the kind of mental act that exhibits this distinctive property encountered in inner perception. Accordingly, a person who has never experienced an inner-perceived belief, disbelief, and so on would be unable to grasp the nature of truth: "our definition would convey nothing to one who lacked the necessary intuition" (Brentano 1966b: 25).<sup>3</sup>

So far, I have conducted the discussion as though Brentano, along with virtually every other philosopher, takes judgment to be a propositional attitude. But one of the most fascinating parts of Brentano's philosophy is his nonpropositional theory of judgment as an *objectual* attitude. This theory allows Brentano to turn his account of truth into an account of *existence*. This move is based on two central ideas.

The first is that all beliefs are existential (Brentano 1973a: 218). We do not believe that the weather is nice but rather that *there is* nice weather. We do not believe that all dogs are cute but rather that *there is no* uncute dog. Every belief report, claims Brentano, can be paraphrased perfectly into an existential-belief report. Accordingly, the truth-commitment of beliefs boils down to existence-commitment: all our beliefs and disbeliefs commit to the existence or nonexistence of something.

The second idea is that this existence-commitment is, again, an aspect of the belief's attitude rather than content. Our beliefs do not represent things as existent but rather represent-as-existent things. To that extent, belief reports are better formulated not in terms of "belief that" but in terms of "belief in." We do not believe *that there is nice weather* but rather *believe in* nice weather. We do not believe *that there is no uncute dog* but rather *disbelieve in* an uncute dog. Observe, now, that belief-in is an objectual (and not propositional) attitude: what is believed-in is nice weather, not the existence of nice weather; what is disbelieved-in is uncute dogs, not the existence of uncute dogs. As Brentano puts it,

the being of A need not be produced in order for the judgment "A is" to be ... correct; all that is needed is A.

(1966b: 85)

In a slogan: the truthmakers of existentials are not existences but existents.

What motivates this attitudinal account of existence-commitment is the (highly plausible) traditional idea that existence is not an attribute (Brentano 1973a: 229). If existence is not an attribute, (true) existentials cannot be understood as attributing existence to something (if things do not *have* such an attribute, any judgment which attributed it to them would be erroneous). How, then, can a *true* judgment involve commitment to the existence of that which it is about? The answer is that the judgment must not represent its object as existing but instead represent-as-existing its object. That is, existence-commitment must be an aspect of the judgment's attitude, not its content.<sup>4</sup>

Brentano's reasoning may be summarized in two steps. First: all (dis)belief reports can be paraphrased into existential-(dis)belief reports; all existential-(dis)belief reports can be paraphrased into (dis)belief-in reports; therefore, all (dis)belief reports can be paraphrased into (dis)belief-in reports. The fact that A-statements are paraphraseable into B-statements does not in itself guarantee that the latter capture the real structure of what those statements are about. A substantive argument is needed for taking the B-statements to be more faithful to how things are. This is provided by the second part of Brentano's reasoning: the truth of (dis)belief-in reports does not require there to be an existence attribute, whereas the truth of existential (dis)belief-that reports does; there are good reasons to reject an existence attribute, but no good reasons to think there are no true existential judgments; therefore, there are good reasons to take (dis)belief-in reports to capture the real structure of judgments.<sup>5</sup>



The upshot is that Brentano's fitting-belief account of the true effectively becomes a fitting-belief-in account of the existent. To say that a duck exists, for example, is just to say that the right or correct attitude to take toward a duck is that of believing in it. (By the same token, to say that there are no dragons is to say that the correct attitude to take toward a dragon is that of disbelieving in it.) Brentano writes:

If "the existent," in its strict sense, is a name, it cannot be said to name anything directly. It comes to the same thing as "something (*etwas*) which is the object of a correct affirmative judgment" or "something which is correctly accepted or affirmed."

(Brentano 1969: 68)

Since for Brentano all beliefs are existential, he sometimes runs his correct-attitude accounts of truth and existence together: "We call something true when the affirmation relating to it is correct/fitting" (1969: 18).

Here too, Brentano maintains that our only grip on the crucial property of representing-as-existent derives from inner perception of beliefs-in. We only truly grasp the notion of existence when we understand it as that toward which it is fitting to have a mental act with the kind of distinctive attitudinal property we encounter in comparing and contrasting beliefs-in and other mental acts in our psychological repertoire (Brentano 1973a: 210).

Crucially, the same holds of the correctness or fittingness of our (dis)beliefs-in. Actually, for Brentano, we may be able to analyze correctness in terms of self-evidence (*Evidenz*); but the notion of self-evidence itself is primitive and can only be grasped in inner perception through the same sort of contrastive exercise:

The correct method is one that we use in many other cases where we are concerned with a *simple* mark or characteristic. We will have to solve the problem by considering a multiplicity of judgments which are self-evident and then *comparing and contrasting* (*vergleichend gegenüber stellen*) them with other judgments which lack this distinguishing characteristic.

(Brentano 1966b: 125; my italics)

Thus both the distinctive property of belief-in and the property of fittingness are to be grasped originally in inner perception. Once we do, and given certain theoretical positions, we can appreciate the nature of existence and truth.

## 2 THE GOOD AS THAT TO WHICH A PRO ATTITUDE IS FITTING

Just as judgments embody commitment to the existence or nonexistence of what they are about, Brentano maintains that there are mental acts that embody commitment to the goodness or badness of what they are about. He uses the terms "love" and "hate" to denote those mental acts but uses them widely to cover any favorable or unfavorable mental act, such as loving a certain wine (Brentano 1973a: 199) or hating the weather. Indeed, he argues that under the headings of "love" and "hate," so understood, fall all pain

and pleasure, all emotions as such, and all acts of the will (Brentano 1973a: 236–7). Essentially, his “love” and “hate” are what we refer to in contemporary philosophy of mind as *pro attitudes* and *con attitudes*. Pro attitudes embody commitment to the goodness of their intentional objects, con attitudes commitment to the badness of theirs. Thus, liking ice cream involves mental commitment to the goodness of ice cream, while disliking rain involves mental commitment to the badness of rain.<sup>6</sup>

As with judgment and existence, Brentano construes the goodness-commitment of pro attitudes as an *attitudinal* property. We may put this by saying that approving of world peace is not a matter of representing world peace as good but a matter of representing-as-good world peace. The goodness is not a part of *what* is represented but a modification of the representing itself. What is approved of—the content of the approval—is just world peace. The commitment to goodness comes in only at the level of attitude. And indeed, excluding goodness from the content of a pro attitude is as intuitive as excluding truth from the content of belief: one desires ice cream, not the goodness of ice cream, or that the ice cream be good.

A more theoretical motivation for the attitudinal account of goodness-commitment parallels the motivation for an attitudinal account of existence-commitment—namely, the notion that there is no worldly goodness that inheres in the things themselves. Brentano dismisses the notion of goodness as an intrinsic attribute of ice cream, for instance, in a 1909 letter to Kraus:

What you seek to gain here with your belief in the existence (*Bestehen*) of goodness with which the emotions are found to correspond (*in einer adäquatio gefunden*) is incomprehensible to me.

(Brentano 1966a: 207; see also Chisholm 1986: 51–2)

Given that there is no such intrinsic property as goodness, if approving of world peace were a matter of attributing that property to world peace, it would be a misattribution and thus a misrepresentation. Since approving of world peace is quite appropriate, though, the mental commitment to world peace's goodness must be an aspect of the *attitude* of approval.

Accordingly, when we say that peace is good, we are not attributing anything to peace. In a sense, we are not (in the first instance) really characterizing peace. What we are characterizing is, in the first instance, the attitude it would be fitting to take *toward* peace. We are saying that, of all the attitudes in our psychological repertoire, a *pro* attitude would be the right attitude to take toward peace. In that respect, peace is a suitable or appropriate object of a pro attitude; it is the kind of thing it would be correct to like, desire, or approve of (see Chapter 20). In sum:

everything that can be thought about belongs in one of two classes—either the class of things for which love [pro attitude] is appropriate, or the class of things for which hate [con attitude] is appropriate. Whatever falls into the first class we call good, and whatever falls into the second we call bad.

(Brentano 1966b: 21–2; see also 1969: 18 and even 1973a: 247)

Our only grasp on the good, then, is as that to which a pro attitude—a mental act that by its nature represents-as-good—would be fitting.<sup>7</sup>

Since goodness is not an attribute of external items, we cannot acquire the concept of the good by outer-perceptual encounter with items that exhibit or fail to exhibit it. Rather, our competence to engage in goodness talk and thought is ultimately based on inner-perceptual grasp of the fittingness or correctness of our own pro and con attitudes:

When we ourselves experience such a love (a love with the character of correctness [*als richtig charakterisierte*]) we notice not only that its object is loved and loveable, and that its privation or contrary hated and hateable, but also that the one is love-worthy and the other hate-worthy, and therefore that the one is good and the other bad.

(Brentano 1969: 22; my italics)

Further: not only is our grasp of the distinctive and essential property of a pro attitude derived from direct inner-perceptual encounter, so is our grasp of the fittingness that sometimes characterizes a mental act with that property. (More accurately, just as a judgment's correctness can be understood in terms of self-evidence, which itself can only be grasped through direct acquaintance in inner perception, so there is a practical "analogue of self-evidence in the domain of judgment" (1969: 22) in terms of which an attitude's fittingness can be understood; but this practical self-evidence itself can only be grasped directly in inner perception.)

It is easy to see the symmetry between Brentano's approaches to the true and the good. The characterization of pro attitudes as embodying mental commitment to goodness, the attitudinal take on goodness-commitment, the fitting pro attitude account of goodness, and the inner-perceptual grasp of both the relevant attitudinal property and its fittingness echo parallel views in Brentano's account of truth and existence. Brentano himself emphasizes this symmetry:

In calling an object good we are not giving it a material (*sachliches*) predicate, as we do when we call something red or round or warm or thinking. In this respect the expressions good and bad are like the expressions existent and nonexistent. In using the latter, we do not intend to add yet another determining characteristic of the thing in question; we wish rather to say that whoever acknowledges [believes in] a certain thing and rejects [disbelieves in] another makes a true judgment. And when we call certain objects good and others bad we are merely saying that whoever loves [has a pro attitude toward] the former and hates [has a con attitude toward] the latter has taken the right stand. The source of these concepts is inner perception, for it is only in inner perception that we comprehend ourselves as loving or hating something.

(1973b: 90; see also Brentano 1969: 73–5,  
as well as manuscripts Ms 107c 231 and  
Ms 107c 236, quoted in Seron 2008)

This passage includes in an extraordinarily compressed way virtually all the elements making up Brentano's accounts of the true and the good.

It is worth noting that Brentano does recognize that the phenomena force certain disanalogies between the two cases. First, the fittingness of judgments and that of pro/con attitudes is not exactly the same feature (Brentano 1969: 144). More interestingly,

the good comes in degrees, whereas the true does not. Accordingly, while the theory of the true requires no account of “the truer,” the theory of the good does require an account of *the better*. Brentano’s account is in terms of fitting *preference*: to say that *a* is better than *b* is to say that it would be fitting or correct to prefer *a* to *b* (Brentano 1969: 26, 1973b: 92). Despite such differences, it is easy to appreciate that Brentano’s fundamental philosophical approach to the true and the good is structurally extremely similar.

### 3 THE BEAUTIFUL: DELIGHT AND AESTHETIC VALUE

Brentano’s psychology divides mental acts into three fundamental categories (Chapter 9). We have already encountered judgments (affirmative or negative) and attitudes (pro or con). According to Brentano, both of these presuppose a third, more basic type of act consisting merely in the entertaining, or contemplation, or presentation (*Vorstellung*) of an object—without committing to either its existence/nonexistence or its goodness/badness (Brentano 1973a: 198). This may suggest that just as existence and goodness are tied to judgment and attitude (respectively), so beauty is tied to presentation or contemplation. After all, it is plausible to say that a beautiful thing is worthy of contemplation in more or less the same sense in which a good thing is worthy of approval and a real thing is worthy of acceptance.

This might suggest the following account of the beautiful: to say that something is beautiful is to say that it would be fitting to contemplate it. However, this “clean” account is frustrated by the fact that while acceptance and approval carry existence- and goodness-commitment (respectively), contemplation does not by itself carry *beauty-commitment*: I am not mentally committing to the beauty of a book on my desk merely by contemplating it. In addition, there is no *standard of fittingness* for presentation (Brentano 1973a: 223), but there would have to be one if we were to appeal to fitting contemplation in accounting for beauty. Finally, while judgment and attitude come in positive and negative varieties, contemplation does not (1973a: 222), so the opposition between the beautiful and the ugly could not be captured through the fittingness of two opposing types of contemplation.

Something else must be added to contemplation, then, to capture beauty-commitment. What? Brentano notes a peculiar feature of the experience of encounter with the beautiful: it always entrains a measure of joy or pleasure. If one manages to contemplate El Greco’s *Saint Martin and the Beggar* joylessly, one cannot be said to experience it as beautiful. “Only when a presentation is in itself good and joyful (*erfreulich*) we call its primary object beautiful” (Brentano 1959: 123). Thus the account of the beautiful requires positing a special mental act composed of both contemplation and joy—a kind of joyful contemplation. In some places, Brentano calls this mental act “delight” (*Wohlgefallen*). Delight, rather than mere contemplation, is the kind of mental act that embodies commitment to the beauty of that which it is about. It is also the kind of mental act for which there is a standard of correctness and one for which a contrary is available in the form of dejected or wretched contemplation (we might call this *dismay*).

Note well: the joy component of delight is a pro attitude, so delight is a compound state with a presentation component and a pro-attitude component. More specifically, to be delighted with *x* is to be in a state which is directed contemplation-wise at *x* and enjoyment-wise at the contemplation-of-*x*. By the same token, to be dismayed with

$x$  is to be in a state which is directed contemplation-wise at  $x$  and dejection-wise at the contemplation-of- $x$ .

With this in place, Brentano can offer a “fitting delight” account of beauty analogous to his accounts of truth and value:

The concept of beauty [has to do with] a delight with the character of correctness (*als richtig charakterisiertes*) being elicited in us.

(1959: 17)

To say that something is beautiful, then, is to say that it would be fitting to be delighted by it. That means it would be fitting to contemplate it while taking joy in the contemplating—both the contemplating and the enjoyment must be fitting. Meanwhile, the ugly is that which is a fitting object of dismay. Note that since delight and dismay involve the fittingness of a pro or con attitude, the fittingness of delight or dismay is ultimately a species of fitting (pro or con) attitude. This captures nicely, within Brentano’s framework, the fact that aesthetic value is a species of value.

The motivation for, and consequences of, this account are broadly the same as those associated with the fitting belief-in and fitting pro-attitude accounts of truth and value. To start, Brentano rejects the existence of a worldly attribute of beauty, exhibited by some items and not others, just as he rejects the attributes of truth and goodness:

But it may well happen that a word which has the grammatical form of a noun or adjective actually denotes nothing at all.... For example: ... “good” and “evil,” as well as “truth” and “falsehood” and the like. Strictly speaking, there is no concept (*Begriff*) of the good, or of the beautiful, or of the true.

(Brentano 1966b: 71; my italics)

The last sentence in this passage is surely an infelicitous overstatement (of the sort one is liable to find in an unpublished fragment). Brentano does accept, after all, the existence of the *concepts* of truth and goodness (ultimately acquired, as we have seen, through inner perception). His view is rather that there are no such *attributes* as truth, goodness, and apparently beauty. Presumably, though, just as Brentano embraced existents and goods as worldly things in spite of rejecting existence and goodness as worldly attributes, so he embraces *beauties* despite rejecting beauty.

As before, this leads to a construal of beauty-commitment as an attitudinal rather than a content feature of delight. It is an aspect of *how* delight represents, not of *what* it represents. To experience aesthetic delight with an orchid is not to represent the orchid as beautiful but to represent-as-beautiful the orchid. The content of the delight is simply the orchid. The commitment to the orchid’s beauty comes in at the level of attitude. It does not appear in the delight’s content. This makes sense: we delight at the orchid, not at its beauty; the orchid’s beauty is just the *reason* why we delight in the orchid.

Since there is no attribute of beauty that some worldly items exhibit and others do not, presumably we do not acquire the concept of the beautiful through outer-perceptual interaction with external-world beauties. Instead, we grasp the notion of beauty through inner-perceptual interaction with our delights’ distinctive property of representing-as-beautiful and with its characteristic fittingness. We have no other handle on the beautiful.

The parallelism with Brentano's accounts of the true and the good is evident: beauty is accounted for in terms of the fittingness of a specific kind of attitude. At the same time, there are disanalogies here too. First, unlike the attitudes relevant to the true and the good, that relevant to the beautiful is not primitive but compound; it is therefore to be understood not through direct acquaintance but through analysis into its components. Secondly, there appears to be no *sui generis* fittingness special to delight: its fittingness reduces to the fittingness of second-order enjoyment.

#### 4 BRENTANO'S PROGRAM

In what is quite possibly the most scholarly English-language overview of Brentano's philosophy, Liliana Albertazzi writes that "It is the general opinion that Brentano's theories do not constitute a system" (Albertazzi 2006: 295). As a sociological remark, this may be unobjectionable.<sup>8</sup> But as the foregoing discussion suggests, Brentano's philosophical thought is, in reality, extraordinarily systematic. If the goal of a philosophical "grand system" in the style of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophy is to provide a unified, structurally symmetric account of the true, the good, and the beautiful, then Brentano clearly had at least a *program* for such a system. Indeed, his may well be the last grand system of Western philosophy. For a variety of reasons, twentieth-century philosophy has taken a distance from systematic thinking in this sense. Brentano, whose system reached a certain resting point circa 1915, seems to be the last philosopher to have offered a system in the sense of a structurally unified account of the true, the good, and the beautiful. One suspects it is primarily the unsystematic character of Brentano's *writings* that has encouraged the otherwise implausible notion that there is no systematicity in his philosophical *thinking*. Arguably, however, in his mind Brentano was continuously refining and chiseling away at a unified grand system, a system that harmonized and stabilized the bits and pieces in his messy literary estate.

The superstructure of Brentano's program is quite straightforward. We grasp the nature of the true, the good, and the beautiful by grasping (i) the distinctive or essential feature of three types of mental act—affirmative judgment, pro attitude, and delight—and (ii) the standard of fittingness or correctness for each. Thus, six notions are essential to Brentano's system: affirmative judgment, judgment-fittingness, pro attitude, attitude-fittingness, delight, and delight-fittingness. However, since delight is analyzable in terms of (first-order) contemplation and (second-order) pro attitude, and its fittingness is but the fittingness of pro attitudes, Brentano's account of the true, the good, and the beautiful requires only *five* basic and unanalyzable notions: affirmative judgment, pro attitude, contemplation, judgment-fittingness, and attitude-fittingness. These five notions receive no informative philosophical account in Brentano's system. They are treated as primitives. As such, we do not grasp *their* nature by appreciating some philosophical theory. We can only grasp their nature *directly*—through acquaintance in inner perception (against the background of the right contrast). At the end of an 1889 lecture on truth, Brentano says:

We have been concerned with a definition, i.e., with the elucidation of a concept ... Many believe that such elucidation always requires some general determination



[i.e., definition by *genus et differentia*], and they forget that the ultimate and most effective means of elucidation must always consist in appeal to the individual's intuition ... What would be the use of trying to elucidate the concepts of red and blue if I could not present one with something red or with something blue?

(Brentano 1966b: 24–5)

In our case, we appreciate the nature of belief-in by inner-perceiving mental acts that *are* beliefs-in alongside ones that are not; we understand what judgment-fittingness is, ultimately, by inner-perceiving judgments that are self-evident alongside judgments that are not; we appreciate the nature of a pro attitude by inner-perceiving mental acts that *are* pro attitudes alongside ones that are not; and so on. In each case, some contrast brings into sharper inner-perceptual relief the feature whose nature we are trying to grasp. We grasp that nature simply *as* that which is present in the one case and absent in the other. There is no fuller, more articulated, more informative, more theoretical account to be had.

It is a central feature of Brentano's program, then, that the ultimate basis for our grasp of the nature of the true, the good, and the beautiful is inner perception of our mental acts and their fittingness. This explains psychology's pride of place in Brentano's system:

We see that ... the triad of ideals, the beautiful, the true, and the good, can well be defined in terms of the system of mental faculties. Indeed, this is the only way in which it becomes fully intelligible.

(Brentano 1973a: 263)

Insofar as the study of the true, the good, and the beautiful is grounded in the study of the mind, philosophy of mind (or Brentano's "descriptive psychology") assumes the role of *first philosophy*. The status of philosophy of mind as first philosophy will remain a unifying theme of the Brentano School. In fact, since for Brentano, all mental life is conscious, his philosophy of mind is at bottom a philosophy of consciousness. In Brentano's thought, then, we find a rare instance of a philosophical system based ultimately on the philosophy of consciousness.

Despite this *methodological* primacy of philosophy of consciousness, Brentano's picture of the world is thoroughly realist. Brentano's world contains just so many individual objects, and nothing more (see Chapter 13). When we say of any of the concrete particulars inhabiting Brentano's world that it exists, or is good, or is beautiful, we are just saying that it would be fitting to believe in it, have a pro attitude toward it, or delight in it (respectively). It is in this way that the notions of the true/real, the good, and the beautiful make their entry into our worldview. This entry does not entrain, however, a transcendental mind that does the accepting, approving, and delighting. Rather, among the individual objects inhabiting this austere world are individual minds, including believing-minds, approving-minds, and delighted-minds, and indeed even some correctly-believing-minds, rightly-approving-minds, and fittingly-delighted-minds! It is because (and only because) each of us has on occasion *been* a correctly-believing-mind, rightly-approving-mind, and fittingly-delighted-mind, and has *inner-perceived* himself or herself to be such a mind, that each of us is able to experience the world in terms of truth, goodness, and beauty.

## CONCLUSION: THE THREE LEGS OF THE BRENTANIAN STOOL

As noted, Brentano's classification of mental acts divides them into three basic categories: presentation, judgment, and (pro or con) attitude. All three are species of a single more generic phenomenon, namely intentionality:

Nothing distinguishes mental phenomena from physical phenomena more than the fact that something is immanent [that is, intentionally inexistent] as an object in them. For this reason it is easy to understand that the fundamental differences in the way something [in]exists in them as an object constitute the principal class differences among mental phenomena.

(Brentano 1973a: 197)

The three categories correspond to three different modes of intentionality, or three different modifications of the basic intentional relation. These are the modes of representing-as-existent/nonexistent for judgment, representing-as-good/bad for attitudes, and a kind of neutral mere-representing for presentation. These are obviously different, but they are all modifications of the same underlying phenomenon of intentionality. As noted, the natures of both intentionality and the fittingness of different intentional modifications can ultimately be grasped only through inner perception. Together, intentionality, fittingness, and inner perception can be seen as the three legs of the Brentanian stool; they are the central concepts in his system. It is through their interrelations, modifications, and interrelations of modifications that we obtain philosophical illumination of the true, the good, and the beautiful.<sup>9</sup>

## NOTES

1. The term Brentano prefers in this context is *Richtig*, most naturally translated as "correct" or "fitting." But in one place he offers a number of synonyms—*konvenient*, *passend*, and *entsprechend* (Brentano 1969: 74)—which are more or less interchangeably translatable as "appropriate," "suitable," "fitting," and "adequate."
2. Brentano draws a sharp distinction between introspection and inner perception, and hangs his epistemic hopes only on the latter. On the difference between the two, see Chapter 3.
3. Plausibly, it is precisely because the only way to grasp the essential property of belief is by direct inner-perceptual encounter that Brentano does not characterize this property as "representing-as-true." But the expression is useful for bringing out that the characteristic commitment of belief is an aspect of its attitude, not its content. Nonetheless, we must treat this expression with care and keep in mind that it is hyphenated for a reason: "true" is intended as a merely morphological, and *not* syntactic, part of "representing-as-true" (just as "apple" is a merely morphological part of "pineapple").
4. In more Brentanian terminology: it is not an aspect of the *object* of consciousness but of the *mode* of consciousness (1973a: 201).
5. Brentano also has other arguments to plug into the second part of the reasoning. For example, he thinks that (dis)belief-in reports are more parsimonious than (dis)belief-that reports, since they concern only concrete objects and not propositions (see Brentano 1966b: 84). Here I focus on one particular argument Brentano employs, because it is one that recurs in the domains of the good and the beautiful.
6. Such commitment need not be all-things-considered commitment; it can be just *prima facie* commitment. In fact, it appears to be the crucial difference between emotion and will, for Brentano, that the former's value-commitment is *prima facie* and the latter's is all-things-considered (1969: 150). Both, however, qualify as pro/con attitudes.



7. This, at least, is Brentano's view of *intrinsic* goodness; *instrumental* goodness may be understood in terms of its relation to intrinsic goodness (Brentano 1969 §16).
8. There are clearly exceptions to this rule, though (see Gabriel 2013).
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