

THE TWO THEORIES OF INTENTIONALITY
IN BRENTANO AND CHISHOLM'S
ONTOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL THESES

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Abstract. R. M. Chisholm interprets Brentano's theory of intentionality through the lens of two theses: the ontological thesis, according to which the intentionality of the mental designates the fact that there is an immanent object in the act; and the psychological thesis, according to which intentionality consists of the direction of the mental act toward the extra-mental object. In my paper I interpret Chisholm's and Brentano's theses on intentionality from two perspectives: intentionality as the most salient distinguishing feature separating the mental from the physical (Chisholm's ontological thesis), and intentionality as a theory of the way in which mental acts with their content are related to extra-mental but theoretically-constructed objects of physics (Chisholm's psychological thesis). Thus, an important issue of my paper is also to show that Chisholm's well-known ontological and psychological theses on Brentanian intentionality rest on presuppositions that do not fit the program of Brentanian psychology.

Keywords: psychology; natural science; intentionality; R. M. Chisholm's ontological thesis; R. M. Chisholm's psychological thesis.

Pages 88–89 from Franz Brentano's *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874) are the classical *locus* of current theories of intentionality. It is here that Brentano reintroduced the problem of intentionality into contemporary philosophy, by saying that “every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object” and by what he “might call [...] the direction towards an object” and “the relation to a content”¹. In the

¹ F. Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, Bd. I (Hamburg: Meiner, 1924), ed. by O. Kraus, p. 124 f.; F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (London: Routledge, 1995), ed. by O. Kraus and L. McAlister, transl. by A. C. Rancurello et al., p. 88 f. (all parenthetical page references are to this edition). In this edition the expressions “*die Beziehung auf einen Inhalt*” and “*die Beziehung zum Objekt*” were translated by “reference to a content” and “reference to an object”. Despite this, in what follows I adhere to the

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following, I propose an interpretation of Brentano's notion of intentionality according to which the intentionality passage (IP), cited above, can be read through the lens of two different theories of intentionality, and that one of these theories performs a very important task in his 1874 work. Another important goal of my paper is to show that R. M. Chisholm's well-known ontological and psychological theses on Brentano's intentionality rest on presuppositions that do not fit the program of Brentano's psychology².

Before I present these theses, I wish to make the following observation: one of the fundamental assumptions of this study is the idea that the object to which the mental act has a relation to is, in the first instance, the immanent object³. Thus, following Brentano, when I discuss the relation to or the direction towards an object, I will be concerned, in the first stage of my analysis, with this immanent object. Only after this step, will I analyze, at the level of sensory acts, the relationship between the mental act and its immanent object, on the one side, and also the relationship between the extra-mental object and the mentally presented immanent one, on the other side.

This basic idea can also be expressed in the following way: the theory of intentionality as presented in the IP is not primarily a theory of the way in which the mental acts, together with their immanent objects, are related to the extra-mental objects presented by them. It is, rather, first and foremost, a theory about *the most salient distinguishing feature separating mental phenomena from physical phenomena* (and not extra-mental objects). For Brentano, the clarification of this aspect plays an important role in his program to establish psychology as an empirical science because (1) it allows *the delimitation* of the research domain of psychology, i.e., the world of mental phenomena, from the research domain of natural sciences, i.e., the world of physical phenomena, and (2) it allows the creation of the necessary framework for *ordering and classifying* the mental phenomena in their three fundamental classes: presentations, judgements, and emotional phenomena⁴.

way in which B. Müller translated the expression "*die Beziehung*", and I constantly replace the mentioned translations with "relation to a content" and "relation to an object"; see F. Brentano, *Deskriptive Psychologie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1982), ed. by R. M. Chisholm and W. Baumgartner; F. Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology* (London: Routledge, 1995), ed. and transl. by B. Müller, p. 23 ff. *et passim*. In the following, I shall resume my explanations on Brentano (see I. Tănăsescu, "The two Theories of Intentionality in Brentano and the Program of Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint", in *Consciousness and Intentionality. Franz Brentano's Heritage in Philosophy of Mind*, ed. by G. Fréchette [Dettelbach: J.H. Roll Verlag, 2015], pp. 211–231) and further develop them in order to critically review Chisholm's ontological and psychological thesis.

² R. M. Chisholm, "Intentionality", in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), ed. by P. Eduard, vol. 4, pp. 201–204; R. M. Chisholm, "Brentano on Descriptive Psychology and the Intentional", in *Phenomenology and Existentialism* (Baltimore: Hopkins Press, 1967), ed. by E. N. Lee and M. H. Mandelbaum, pp. 1–23.

³ F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995), pp. 180, 197 f.; F. Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology* (1995), p. 139 f.

⁴ I shall not go into the detail about this problem here. I only mention that Brentano believed that German Idealism constituted the last phase of philosophical decay in the modern era, and he considered himself as a *regenerator philosophiae*. His goal was to contribute to the inauguration of a new era of philo-

The above points show that the starting assumption of my paper, namely, that mental acts are directed, at a first level of analysis, towards their immanent objects, has a strictly methodical nature. This means that the need to establish psychology as an empirical science, through the separation of the mental from the physical domain, led Brentano to orient himself towards the specific features of the two classes of phenomena, both present in consciousness⁵. In this context, nevertheless, Brentano clearly recognizes that the physical phenomenon is a sign of the extra-mental physical cause to which it points and which it presents. But he does this without valorizing this relation from the perspective of a theory of the distinction between the content or the immanent object of the mental act and its extra-mental object, as is the case in Twardowski, for example⁶.

All this allows me to distinguish two theories of intentionality in Brentano: (1) intentionality as a theory *of the most salient distinctive feature of the Mental with respect to the Physical* (IT1) and (2) intentionality as a theory *of the relating of the mental acts to*

sophical rebirth, an era characterized by the dominance of the theoretical interest and through using a method conforming to the nature of phenomena; on this problem, see F. Brentano, *Auguste Comte und die positive Philosophie* (1869), and *Die vier Phasen der Philosophie und ihr augenblicklicher Stand* (1895), in F. Brentano, *Die vier Phasen der Philosophie* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1926), ed. by O. Kraus, pp. 99–133, and pp. 3–32; J. Werle, *Franz Brentano und die Zukunft der Philosophie. Studien zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Wissenschaftssystematik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 1989); K. Hedwig, “Vorwort”, in F. Brentano, *Geschichte der Philosophie der Neuzeit* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1987), ed. by K. Hedwig, pp. IX–XXXIX; I. Tănăsescu, “Empfindung, äußere Wahrnehmung und physisches Phänomen als Gegenstand der Naturwissenschaft in Brentanos empirischer Psychologie”, in *Revue roumaine de philosophie* (2011), no. 1–2: 103–131; I. Tănăsescu, “The Intentionality of Sensation and the Problem of Classification of Philosophical Sciences in Brentano’s empirical Psychology”, in *Axiomathes* (2017), no. 27: 243–263.

⁵ For this reason, P. Simons talks in his “Introduction” to the second English edition of Brentano’s *Psychology* about the methodological phenomenism adopted by Brentano in this work: see P. Simons, “Introduction to the second edition”, in F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995), p. XVI. This idea is also taken over and developed by T. Crane, who emphasizes both the distinction between the physical phenomenon and the reality to which it refers, and the fact that physical phenomena constitute the object of study of the science of nature: see T. Crane, “Brentano’s Concept of Intentional Inexistence”, in *The Austrian Contribution to Analytic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2006), ed. by M. Textor, pp. 20–36, 25 ff. It must be added that this “phenomenalistic” vision of science (F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, 1995, pp. 14, 72) does not focus on the problem of the real or unreal existence of the physical phenomenon, but primarily on the correlations between phenomena and on the laws governing these correlations (*ibid.*, p. 98 ff.). Brentano, influenced by Comte, had already defined the establishing of the laws of succession and co-existence of phenomena as the main task of science, an idea used as such in his 1874 work; see on this problem: F. Brentano, *Auguste Comte und die positive Philosophie* (1869), pp. 105, 111, 114 f.; F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995), p. 99; and I. Tănăsescu, “Empfindung, äußere Wahrnehmung und physisches Phänomen als Gegenstand der Naturwissenschaft in Brentanos empirischer Psychologie”, in *Revue roumaine de philosophie* (2011), no. 1–2: 103–131.

⁶ Husserl, who explicitly elaborated a theory about that, paid much less attention than Brentano to intentionality as a feature separating the mental phenomena from physical phenomena; see Vth *Logical Investigation*, §§ 9–11, and the Appendix “External and internal perception: physical and psychical phenomena” in E. Husserl, *Logical Investigations* (London: Routledge, 2001), 2. vol., ed. by D. Morand, transl. by J. N. Findlay.

*the extra-mental objects presented by the immanent objects (IT2)*⁷. In this context, one of the central theses of my paper is the following: although the account of intentionality in the 1874 work can be addressed from the perspective of both theories, it still *fundamentally* constitutes an example of IT1. This, however, does not mean that the IT1 under discussion cannot be understood and approached from the perspective of IT2. By contrast, in what follows I shall put forward arguments in favor of the idea that the 1874 version of the IT1 contains certain elements the clarification and development of which could constitute an example of IT2, namely the fact that *the immanent object is permanently conceived of by Brentano as presenting an extra-mental object*. In 1874, nonetheless, Brentano does not elaborate on the IT2 involved in his empirical psychology, and when he really questioned himself regarding the problem of the object to which, in the last instance, the psychical acts are related, after 1901, he offered a solution that entirely eliminated immanent objects as objects of primary relation of mental acts⁸. Despite these points, I shall defend, in what follows, the thesis that in the IT1 of his 1874 work, a clear distinction is made *at the level of the act of sensation* between the content of the presentation and the extra-mental object presented by it.

The expressions of Brentanian psychology constituting the language of his IT1 are: “the intentional (or maybe mental) inexistence of an object”, “the immanent objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*)”, “to exist as an object (objectively) in something”, “to exist immanently as an object”, the object is “present (*gegenwärtigt*)” in the mind, “the mental phenomena contain an object intentionally within themselves”, “the relation (*die Beziehung*) to a content”, “the relation to the immanent object”⁹.

Unlike these expressions, clearly pleading in favor of IT1, in the 1874 work one can hardly find expressions pleading just as clearly in favor of IT2. Rather, expressions that can be cited in its support are ambiguous, not least because they can be interpreted as just as easily supporting IT1. These expressions are: “the relation to an object (*die Beziehung auf ein Objekt*)”, the “direction towards an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing)”, “[...] *something* appears in consciousness [...]”, or “We speak of a presentation whenever *something* appears to us”¹⁰. On the ground of these expressions, many philosophers within the analytical tradition have read Brentano’s IP as a sort of IT2, *i.e.*, as a theory of how consciousness can or refers to non-existent objects¹¹.

In what follows, I shall present some arguments in support of the idea that in the case of Brentano’s distinction between psychical and physical phenomena there is also

⁷ Both Twardowski’s paper *On the Content and Object of Presentations* [1894] (*On the Content and Object of Presentations. A psychological Investigation* [The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977], transl. by R. Grossmann), and Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* [1900], offer theories of intentionality in this sense.

⁸ F. Brentano, *Die Abkehr vom Nichtrealen* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1974), ed. by F. Mayer-Hillebrand.

⁹ F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, 1995, pp. 81, 88 f., 197 f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. VII, 88, 81, 198.

¹¹ W. Bechtel, *Philosophy of Mind. An Overview for Cognitive Science* (Hillsdale: LEA, 1988), pp. 40–44; G. Segal, “Intentionality”, in *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford U. P., 2007), ed. by F. Jackson and M. Smith, pp. 283–309; J. Kim, *Philosophy of Mind* (Colorado: Westview Press, 2011), pp. 17–27.

implied, at the level of sensation, a distinction between its immanent object, *i.e.*, the physical phenomenon, and its physical cause as explained through natural science, *i.e.*, the extra-mental object for which the immanent object stands. In other words, Brentano's theory of the most salient distinctive feature between the Mental and the Physical from 1874 also presupposes a theory on how mental acts of sensation refer to their physical causes. In order to prove this point, I shall begin with his program for an empirical psychology, and, more precisely, with his classification of sciences. This classification is: mathematics, physics, chemistry, physiology, and psychology¹². Like Comte, who influenced Brentano in this matter to a great extent, Brentano emphasizes that each class of phenomena specific to a science is built on the previous class, and it makes possible the next one. Unlike Comte, however, Brentano admits a "break" in the classification of sciences, since for him only the phenomena of physics, chemistry and physiology can be considered as developments on those of the preceding classes. In relation to these, our mental phenomena seem to be something completely different. It is important to note here that, in my view, Brentano's IP is conceived to answer the question addressed by the following excerpt, and not the question of how consciousness refers to non-existing objects, as Chisholm and other scholars have supposed. The quote in question is:

But the result of a more careful comparison and an analysis of all pertinent facts certainly seems to us to prove that much more information about physiological phenomena is to be expected from chemical phenomena than from physiological phenomena about mental phenomena. The difference between physiological processes and chemical and physical processes really seems to be only that physiological processes are more complex [...]. We can hardly say the same thing of the concept of life when we apply it to the physiological and psychical realms. On the contrary, if we turn our attention from the external world to the inner, we find ourselves, as it were, in *a new realm*. The phenomena are absolutely heterogeneous, and even analogies either forsake us completely or take on a very vague and artificial character. It was for this very reason that *we separated the psychical and physical sciences as the main branches of empirical science* in our earlier discussion of the fundamental divisions of that realm¹³.

If we supplement this quote with what Brentano says at the beginning of the second book of his *Psychology*, namely, that "all the data of our consciousness are divided in two great classes – the class of physical and the class of mental phenomena"¹⁴, and also with the statement that "the feature which best characterizes mental phenomena is undoubtedly their intentional inexistence"¹⁵, then we are led into a wholly different direction than that of a IT2, *i.e.*, of a theory of relating the mental acts to the extra-mental objects presented by the immanent objects. According to this different direction, intentionality is the most salient feature distinguishing the mental from the physical

¹² F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995), p. 23 f.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 50 f.; my emphasis.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

realm, broadly understood as the realm of physical, chemical and physiological phenomena as investigated and explained through natural scientific endeavors. The fact that physical phenomena are conceived of as *content* of the psychological acts of sensation¹⁶ allows me to observe that, through establishing the distinctive features separating the two fields, Brentano is distinguishing between two classes of phenomena that are both placed in consciousness. The distinction, fundamental for an IT2, between *the content of the mental act* and *the extra-mental object* for which it stands, is not explicitly taken into account here. It is implied, nonetheless, in the way in which Brentano conceives of the physical phenomenon. For him, this phenomenon is not only the immanent object of the sensory act, but it is, at the same time, a *sign of the action of a physical cause upon the sense organs*¹⁷ that is productive of the existence of the immanent sensory object. The physical causes are discovered by means of natural scientific investigation, that is, through sense observation, hypothesis and laboratory experiment. Such physical causes, therefore, consist in processes of molecular vibrations, impact and pressure triggered by the physical bodies, vibrations that act on the sensory receptors, stimulate the afferent nerves, and produce certain sensations – the seen color, the felt warmth, etc.¹⁸ These sensory qualities, nevertheless, exist as such only in consciousness; they “have only a phenomenal and intentional existence”, and are, for this very reason, only signs of their physical causes, but not their accurate images. Thus, the clarification of the character of sign of physical phenomenon leads us away from the correlation *sensory act – physical phenomenon as an immanent object* of the act to the correlation *physical phenomenon – physical cause as an extra-mental object symbolized through it*¹⁹. In this way, it becomes clear how the analysis of the status of the physical phenomenon in Brentanian psychology leads from a theory of intentionality as a theory of the most salient distinctive feature of the Mental with respect to the Physical (IT1) to a theory of intentionality as a theory of the relating of the mental acts to the extra-mental objects presented by the immanent objects (IT2). The relations between the two theories can be described as follows: the Brentanian IT1 is an *incomplete and fragmentary* IT2, *i.e.*, an IT2 that neglects the relation between the immanent and the extra-mental object and that pays close attention to those elements, the mental act and its immanent object, which can serve the purpose of distinguishing the Mental from the Physical. Conversely, the Brentanian IT2 can be considered as an IT1 fully developed and clarified in the 1874 work, *i.e.*, up to the elucidation of the relation between the immanent objects of the sensory acts, the physical phenomena, and their physical causes. Neither Chisholm’s ontological nor psychological theses deal with this aspect of Brentano’s view on intentionality. A passage from the Lecture on deductive and inductive logic held by Brentano at Würzburg University in 1869/1870 shows what an important part the relation between the immanent and the extra-mental object plays for him:

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98 ff.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 98 ff.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 88 f., 19.

The name designates in a way the *content* of a presentation as such, that is, the immanent object; in another way it designates *that which is presented by the content of a presentation*. The *former* is the meaning of the name. The *latter* is what the name names. About this we say the name belongs to it. It is that which is the exterior object of the presentation, if it exists. We name by means of the meaning²⁰.

Here is not the place to go into the details of this quote²¹. I shall confine myself to notice that in this passage, Brentano says the same thing as in his explanations on sensation in his *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, namely that mental acts, be they *nominal* or *sensory* presentations, refer to extra-mental objects due to their immanent objects. As suggested above, therefore, *the famous quote of intentionality was not written for the purposes of explaining how our consciousness refers to any extra-mental existent or non-existent object, but, first and foremost, in order to emphasize the most salient distinguishing feature of the Mental in contrast to the Physical*. To put it differently, the decisive question of the IP, and generally of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, is: What distinguishes a mental phenomenon from a physical phenomenon, and *not* how does a mental phenomenon and its content relate to the extra-mental world?

Let us consider now Chisholm's two theses on the Brentanian intentionality. His ontological thesis is based on the language of the Brentanian IT1: "the intentional inexistence", "the immanent objectivity", etc. It stresses that there is an immanent object to the mental act. This object has a mode of being "that is short of actuality but more than nothingness"²². In this way, Chisholm assigns to the immanent object a certain ontological consistency that is specific for the late medieval conceptualism. This idea, however, plays no part in the Brentanian theory of the immanent object, and it is repeatedly rejected in the specialist literature²³.

The second remark is the following. At first sight, Chisholm's two theses seem to refer to the IP²⁴. All the scholars who have discussed his theses agree on that²⁵. Yet, I believe that an attentive reading of his papers can lead to a different result. Chisholm's ontological thesis is not only a theory of the intentional, *i.e.*, the immanent object of the

²⁰ Franz Brentano, *Logik* (Spring, 2011), ed. by R. Rollinger (EL 80.13.018).

²¹ See about this I. Tănăsescu, "The two Theories of Intentionality in Brentano ..." (2015), pp. 211–231, 222 f.

²² R. M. Chisholm, "Intentionality" (1967), p. 201; see also R. M. Chisholm, "Brentano on Descriptive Psychology and the Intentional" (1967), pp. 7–8.

²³ W. Sauer, "Die Einheit der Intentionalitätskonzeption bei Brentano", *Grazer Philosophische Studien* (2006), no. 73: 1–26; G. Fréchette, "Deux concepts d'intentionnalité dans la Psychologie de Brentano", in *Revue roumaine de philosophie* (2011), no. 1–2: 63–86.

²⁴ R. M. Chisholm, "Intentionality" (1967), p. 201; R. M. Chisholm, "Brentano on Descriptive Psychology and the Intentional" (1967), p. 6.

²⁵ L. McAlister, "Chisholm and Brentano on Intentionality", *The Philosophy of Brentano* (London: Duckworth, 1976), ed. by L. McAlister; M. Antonelli, *Seiendes, Bewußtsein, Intentionalität im Frühwerk von Franz Brentano* (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 2001); W. Sauer, "Die Einheit der Intentionalitätskonzeption bei Brentano" (2006); G. Fréchette, "Deux concepts d'intentionnalité dans la Psychologie de Brentano", in *Revue roumaine de philosophie* (2011), no. 1–2: 63–86.

act, but also a theory of the relation between this object and the extra-mental object presented through it²⁶. Important parts of his explanations on the ontological thesis deal with this relation that was considered above as a link between the Brentanian IT1 and IT2²⁷. But in doing so, Chisholm's ontological thesis performs an important task of his *psychological* thesis: "reference to an object is what distinguishes the mental [...] from the physical", and the object "may exist *outside* the mind"²⁸. From my standpoint, however, it is more suitable to expect an explanation on how the mental act refers to the extra-mental object on the basis of the latter psychological thesis than on the basis of the ontological thesis because (a) the immanent object does not exist on its own, but only as a dependent part of the act²⁹, and (b) the reference to the extra-mental object belongs, in the last instance, to the act as a whole and not to its intentional part, the immanent object. In other words, we can speak about an immanent object within Brentano's psychology because there is always a mental act that has a relation to it. The relation to the extra-mental object is, therefore, grounded in the relation to the immanent object, which is either a relation of mere presence of the object in consciousness, as in the case of the sensory presentation, or a judicative or emotional intentional relation that does not simply contain its object, but which, at the same time, is directed to it: I believe, or I do not believe that there is life on Mars. As I have said above, the immanent object is conceived of by Brentano as presenting an extra-mental object, and for this reason the relation to the immanent object is always a relation to the extra-mental object presented through it. Although the clarification of this relation was not an important task of his empirical psychology, Brentano cleared it up at the level of the sensory act in the 1874 work, and at the level of the nominal presentation in the *Logic* lecture from the winter semester 1869/70.

Against this background, Chisholm's interpretative decisions become clear:

(1) Chisholm never pays attention to the fact that, at least until 1901, the mental act refers, first and foremost, to the immanent object, and not to the extra-mental object, as he argues;

(2) Chisholm does not notice that there are occurrences in Brentano's psychology where this reference is only a relation of mere presence of an object in consciousness – in the sensory presentation, something only appears, or is present in the mental act³⁰; but there is no reference of the act to its immanent object that can be considered as a direction towards an immanent object³¹;

²⁶ See his comments on this issue in R. M. Chisholm: "Intentionality" (1967), pp. 201–204, 201 f.; "Brentano on Descriptive Psychology and the Intentional" (1967), pp. 11–13.

²⁷ In this way, Chisholm changes the focus of the Brentanian approach because he analyses the correlation immanent object – extra-mental object at the level of presentations of non-existent objects. This level, however, is not especially considered in the Brentanian psychology. On the other hand, he neglects the problem really dealt with in the Brentanian empirical psychology: the correlation between the sensory act – physical phenomenon – physical causes.

²⁸ R. M. Chisholm, "Intentionality" (1967), p. 201 f.

²⁹ F. Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology* (1995), p. 23 f.

³⁰ F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995), pp. 81, 198.

³¹ I. Tănăsescu, "A problem of the Intentional Relation of Presentation in Brentano's Empirical Psychology", in *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 77 (2015), no. 2: 251–271.

(3) Although Chisholm knows very well that the task of the IP is to distinguish between the Mental and the Physical, he does not focus on this distinction, but on the relation to non-existent objects³²;

(4) Chisholm's reconstruction of the Brentanian intentionality has more to do with Brentano's late reism than with the program of his empirical psychology. In his late reistic time, Brentano maintains that only real things exist and can be presented, and he deals, to a great extent, with the distinctive features of the psychical relation with respect to other relations. For example, unlike the relation of comparison that occurs between two *real* things: "John is taller than Mary", the psychical relation requires only the existence of the person who thinks; the object that is thought about does not have to exist³³. Notwithstanding this development, the task of Brentano's empirical psychology was to account for what distinguishes the Mental from the Physical, and not for what distinguishes the psychical relation from other relations. As I have pointed out above, Brentano's account is that the mental phenomenon is characterized *by a relation to an object, which is immanent* and not transcendent to the act. This remark is crucial for my aim because it shows that there are two versions of the psychological thesis in Brentano's psychology: the early version of the relation to the immanent object and the late, reistic version, adopted by Chisholm. According to the latter, the psychical relation is, from the very beginning, a relation to an extra-mental object. In his papers on Brentano's intentionality, Chisholm uses only this late version, which he also considered as valid for the IP. One main disadvantage of his interpretative decision is that it cannot be further distinguished between Brentano's early and late viewpoint on the psychological thesis, and therefore it cannot be deployed to adequately understand or accommodate the development of his thought on intentionality³⁴.

³² R. M. Chisholm, "Intentionality" (1967), p. 201; R. M. Chisholm, "Brentano on Descriptive Psychology and the Intentional" (1967), pp. 6–7.

³³ F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1995), pp. 211–212. For the late Brentano the object thought about is not an immanent object, but always a real thing: see F. Brentano, *Die Abkehr vom Nichtrealen* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1974), ed. by Mayer-Hillebrand.

³⁴ For linguistic corrections and specialized comments, I am indebted to Alexandru Bejinariu, Andreea Eșanu, Cyril McDonnell and Bianca Savu.