

well-reasoned views to agree or disagree with in follow-up discussions. Judson not only sheds light on Λ but illuminates many other notoriously difficult discussions from the *Metaphysics*, *Physics* and *De Anima*. Judson's book has so much more to offer worthy of a longer discussion than I can provide here but I hope I have given a representative peek into this insightful and challenging study, a welcome guide to the complex and demanding *Metaphysics* Λ . It also serves as a well-rounded introduction into Aristotle's metaphysical thoughts overall. It will help graduate students and experienced scholars alike to better grasp not only the central themes but also the intricate details of the sometimes so very obscure arguments in Λ . Judson has done an excellent job at bringing Λ back into a spotlight it deserves. The commentary has set the bar very high for any future publications in the series.⁶

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Notes

1. While Judson is also the general editor of the series, on this occasion his hands were of course tied in order to allow for an anonymous reviewing process.
2. 325 pages of commentary for 20 pages of translated text or 7 Bekker pages!
3. Λ 1: substance in *Categories*; Λ 2: opposites, underlying thing, matter, form, privation, change; Λ 3: substance in *Metaphysics* Z; Λ 4–5: principles, particular forms; Λ 6–7: cosmology, unmoved movers, heavenly spheres, arguments in *Physics* VIII; Λ 8: astronomy, astrophysics; Λ 9: nous, perception and thought in *De Anima*; Λ 10: cosmic good, Presocratic and Platonistic principles.
4. Apart from topical matter to which Aristotle alludes to briefly in Λ 2, 1069b24–26. Judson's commentary *ad loc* proves insightful.
5. Although it is possible to conceptualise self-motion of the heavenly spheres in *Physics* VIII differently than in Λ and offer a more subtle and complex interpretation of what 'self-motion' amounts to in Λ .
6. Many thanks to Betsy Everett for proofreading.

Hamid Taieb (2018), *Relational Intentionality: Brentano and the Aristotelian Tradition*, in: *Primary Sources in Phenomenology – Franz Brentano Studies*, Springer Nature: Chams, Switzerland. xii (frontmatter) + 233 pages. ISBN: 9783319988863. 83.19 Euro (Hardcover).

Brentano's Thesis

Franz Brentano is known today for 'Brentano's thesis': that intentionality is the mark of mental life – and that nothing physical has the intentional directedness of mind. The thesis is renowned, but its

historical background and storied career is lore confined mostly to a handful of specialists in ancient philosophy and another intrepid group in the fledgling field of the history of analytic philosophy. Brentano himself thought he was taking a cue from Aristotle; and as Victor Caston 1998 has shown, he was right (though not in quite the way Brentano himself thought). Hamid Taieb's admirable first book picks up the thread of Brentano's Aristotelianism and puts Brentano's thesis in a *longue durée* perspective, including Alexander and the Neoplatonic commentators after him, St. Thomas, Duns Scotus, Peter Auriol, and Suarez, and also members of Brentano's school, in particular Marty and Husserl. Taieb's selection criteria and line of sight for this array of authors is based not on the presumption of 'tradition' in some vague sense, but on their relevance as witnesses for a systematically motivated distinction between three contexts in which intentionality has been and is discussed: as the 'aboutness' of mental life, the pure 'aiming at the object'; as the result of a causal relation between the world and the subject of an intentional state; and as the relation of reference which obtains when the subject of an intentional state is directed to an existing object. This tripartite distinction of intentional relations is reflected in the argument and architecture of the book and its three main chapters. Taieb begins (in Chapter 1: 'Introduction', 1–13) by establishing the intentionality in the *proper* sense as the primitive, non-reducible relation of a cognizing subject to some content, and distinguishing this from the relation between a being in an intentional state and the cause of that state on the one hand (the causal context), and on the other hand the referential relation which arises when I refer to objects in thought (not to be confused with linguistic reference; this is the reference context). The first main chapter (Chapter 2: 'Psychic Causality', 15–62) treats the way in which cognition is initiated. Beginning with Brentano's reading of Aristotle's *De anima* and its reception in contemporary scholarship, and continuing with later ancient and medieval theories of active cognition, Taieb lays the ground for understanding the later Brentano's distinction between causality and intentionality – *pace* a tendency in Burnyeat 2002 to run causality and intentionality together. In the second core chapter (Chapter 3: 'Intentionality as a Relation', 63–134), Taieb considers a key text for his book as a whole, *Metaphysics* Δ15, which would become the *locus classicus* for the distinction between three types of relation in medieval philosophy and for the later Brentano. In the third main chapter (Chapter 4: 'Reference', 135–170), Taieb discusses the later Brentano's notion of reference as 'correspondence' (*Übereinstimmung*), 'concordance' (*Entsprechung*), and 'similarity'

(*Ähnlichkeit*), and traces the conception of reference in terms of similarity back as far as Scotus. In a final chapter on 'Intentionality and History' (171–180), Taieb steps back to make some methodological observations about the specific philosophical and historiographical commitments involved in the story he has to tell. In an Appendix (181–182) Taieb provides a transcription from a c. 1908 manuscript entitled 'On relations', among the Brentano papers in Harvard's Houghton Library.

This book is not for those without *Sitzfleisch*. Its original form as a heavily documented dissertation in French has been rendered into an English which often bears the mark of translation. But the effort required to read the book is richly rewarded. Besides providing many penetrating interpretations of Brentano's theories in all the complexity of their context and development against the background of ancient and medieval texts (including control of the relevant secondary literature in both periods), the author manages to show something more than all these many fine parts. Taieb gives a composite picture of how Brentano's thesis evolved from a wide horizon of ancient and medieval theories concerning mind, mental objects, and their relation to the world. The result is significant and even exemplary, for it reveals specific features of the Aristotelian tradition in the theory of intentionality and offers a precise philosophical framework for understanding how they are related. For those interested in understanding the Aristotelian tradition (and not just invoking its authority, or thinking within whatever limits we assume it imposes), this is a watershed study which shows how this might be done with profit for both historical and philosophical purposes.

It also raises some delicate questions. To what extent is the Aristotelian tradition in intentionality based on Aristotle's texts? And in what way did Aristotle himself anchor his theory of cognition in existing theories and their 'tradition'? In the following I will take these questions as an occasion to briefly consider two Aristotelian *loci* for the Aristotelian tradition that emerges from Taieb's study: the account of cognition in *De anima* 2.5, and *Metaphysics* Δ15, where Aristotle distinguishes the several senses of 'relatives' (πρός τι).

Aristotle and the Aristotelian Tradition

In the beginning there was Aristotle and *his* tradition, i.e. the context of thinking about perception (which I shall include in 'cognition') that he

himself identifies in terms of converging 'views' (δόξαι) and the 'difficulties' (ἀπορίαι) which follow from them. On his account, an almost unanimously held view (and one which he treats with some reverence) was the 'like by like' theory of cognition. But there is a problem here which Aristotle runs through for an Empedoclean version of the theory: if the perceptual faculty is composed of elements and by this composition perceives other elements of like kind, why doesn't it perceive itself? (*De an.* 2.5, 417a2–6) Aristotle's solution, famously, is to say that in the change involved in an act of perception the perceptual faculty becomes like the object it perceives (417a6–20; 418a3–6).

There is much dispute about what the Stagirite means here, and this is where Taieb's account begins. With the still echoing debate between Sir Richard Sorabji and the late Myles Burnyeat concerning the causal relation involved in Aristotle's account of cognition (18–22). Sorabji argued that perception for Aristotle is a special type of being causally affected through a physiological process, but one with something extra – 'awareness' in the actualized state of perception. For Sorabji, the elimination of physiological change in the causal account of perception was an innovation of Alexander of Aphrodisias, later to be elaborated on by Neoplatonic commentators and medievals; its issue in Brentano's thesis was just the culmination of a series of distortions (Sorabji 1991). Burnyeat would argue with recourse to this very tradition (and to the young Brentano in particular) that 'form's presence in the sense-organ without matter' is 'as physical a fact as its presence with matter in the object perceived', and that Aquinas and Aristotle were of a mind in construing perception as both mental and physical (Burnyeat 1995). The surprising upshot of this, on Burnyeat's interpretation, was the elimination of efficient causal relations ('our' causality) from the theory of perception, with the subsequent re-description of acts of perception in terms of pure phenomenal awareness (Burnyeat 1995).

As Taieb rightly points out (21), the complete elimination of efficient causality in favour of formal causation for the explanation of perception goes well beyond anything Brentano would have defended. Brentano took a much different tack when he sought a solution to the problem of non-existent intentional objects in *Metaphysics* Δ15, where Aristotle distinguishes comparative and causal relatives, on the one hand, with a third class of relations illustrated by 'what is measured in relation to the measure, what is known in relation to knowledge, and what is perceived in relation to perception', on the other (*Met.* Δ15, 1020b30–32;

Brentano refers to the passage as Aristotle's *Relationslehre* in a 1916 letter to his student Franz Hillebrand: see the posthumously published *Wahrheit und Evidenz*, Brentano 1930, 117). The theory of relations would thus become the privileged point of departure for the theory of intentionality.

But is this last class of relations properly understood as 'intentional'? It is not so clear how the relation of the measured to the measure can be construed in this way. However, another Aristotelian tradition enters the story at this point: Alexander and the ancient commentary tradition, in which *Metaphysics* $\Delta 15$ would become the locus of a theory of κρίσις, which Taieb (following Ebert 1983) has us understand as 'discrimination' (not: 'judging'). On Alexander's interpretation of the passage from *Met.* $\Delta 15$, the common element in the relation between measure and the measured, knowledge and the object of knowledge, and perception and its object, is that all come under the power of discriminating (*In Ar. Met.*, 402.8–13, discussed in Taieb 23–24). For Alexander, to sense and even to think involve the act of discrimination. This active dimension of cognition as a force of 'selective attention' is where Taieb – following various scholars in ancient philosophy – finds the distinction between causation (the 'being affected' by an object) and intentionality (our capacity to focus on it).

With the rise of *Met.* $\Delta 15$ as a *locus* for the ontology of mind, it seems that Aristotle and Aristotelianism would part ways. On the standard (and in my view, correct) interpretation of this text, Aristotle's meaning in framing cognition in terms of what is measured and what measures is to state that it is reality that sets the standard for our thoughts, not *vice versa* (whatever Protagoras may say). This takes the relation to be one of reference. Taieb (70–71) rejects this and opts for a reading in which there are not two *relata* (e.g. the knowable and knowledge), but just one *relatum* in one relation: in the example, a knower intentionally directed in an act of knowledge. This seems to fail to capture just what is happening in the specific relation of known and knowledge, where the act 'to know' requires an object.

As Taieb shows, the Aristotelian tradition developed a theory of intentional relations in this passage anyways, and in a (seemingly) parallel one on relatives, *Categories* 7. But also other passages in Aristotle made thoughts about intentionality come to a commentator's mind. In commenting on Porphyry's introduction to the *Organon* (the *Isagoge*), Ammonius tells us that there are certain objects which are found 'only in bare thought', and which exist only when they are in thought, and cease to exist when they are not (CAG 4.3, 39.14–40.2,

quoted by Taieb, 73). This pops up in explanation of Aristotle's goat-stag. Scotus entertains the idea that the objects of intellection have a specific albeit 'diminished being', this in reaction to the statement in *De int.* 11 that something does not get a claim to existing by being opinable (21a32–33). Aquinas is an outlier in this particular Aristotelian tradition, it seems: he adopts the reference reading of the third class of relations in *Met.* Δ15, and thus interrupts the chain of reception which Taieb seeks to make between this passage and relational intentionality as conceived by late Brentano. Taieb's defence of the Alexandrian reading of *Met.* Δ15, which resonates throughout the history of its late ancient and medieval reception down to Brentano, is perhaps best understood as a spirited defence of this particular tradition. The defence is connected with a particular interpretation of Brentano, who (on Taieb's discontinuist interpretation) would later come to reject the immanent object of the intentional relation and thus needed to think of intentionality as a relation with one *relatum* (91–97). Though one might disagree about the correctness of this particular interpretation, the important thing to take away from Taieb's account here is how Brentano draws on the Aristotelian tradition in the evolution of his own thought, and how the tradition even helps him come to terms with the criticism of his theory from the likes of Husserl. It would be a gross misunderstanding of this innovative tradition to require it to correspond too closely with Aristotle himself.

Lessons learned

One lesson learned in the course of Taieb's study is that the Aristotelian tradition on relations and intentionality includes a large and diverse family of views, sometimes all sprouting like so many branches from one single Aristotelian text. Its members don't often agree with one another, and sometimes in their discussions they fail to talk about the same thing. Understanding precisely what they are talking about and how their various diatribes relate, both to each other and to Aristotle, is no mean accomplishment. This book succeeds in doing just this, through careful exegesis and circumspect reflection.

Another lesson we can learn from Taieb concerns the notion of a tradition for historiographical purposes. When, at the end of the book, Taieb takes a moment to reflect on the methodological presuppositions of his *longue durée* approach to relational intentionality, he frames the notion of 'tradition' in this way:

... the same problems sometimes appear at different historical moments, and all the responses accompanying them become useable concurrently, regardless of the particular eras in which they appeared. These 'epistemic continuities' (*continuités épistémiques*) do not necessarily entail a 'factual historical relation' (*relation historique factuelle*). However, they can sometimes be based on such a relation. When they are, one author counts as a 'precursor' for another... when they are not, that author counts as a 'precedent'. And when several authors who are either precursors or precedents to one another with respect to a certain topic all claim to follow one and the same position, text, or thinker on this topic, they form a *tradition*. (175–176, emphasis as in the original)

Pledging allegiance to a tradition is one thing, but showing how a tradition gets formed through a specific set of texts is quite another. Hamid Taieb convincingly does both, and in so doing makes a valuable contribution to the still evolving movement which is Aristotelianism.

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