

Brentano on Consciousness

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Consider a perceptual activity such as seeing a colour, hearing a tone, tasting a flavour. How are these activities related to one's awareness of them? I will use Brentano's struggle with this question to guide the reader through the development of his view on consciousness. My starting point will be Brentano's book *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles* (Brentano 1867), in which he developed an inner sense view of consciousness (§§1-2). Brentano's early view is underexplored in the literature, but crucial for understanding the development of his thought on the matter. In his major work *Psychologie vom Empirischen Standpunkt* (1874) he rejected the existence of an inner sense: the exercises of our five senses yield awareness of the world (or at least of intentional objects) as well as awareness of these perceptions. This same-level view of consciousness has been explored and developed by contemporary philosophers of mind. I will discuss the arguments that moved Brentano to change his mind, outline the view and, finally, respond to Husserl's influential criticism of Brentano's view (§§3-5).

1. Brentano on the sense of sensation

Let's start with the question that Brentano (inspired by Aristotle) wanted to answer. Imagine, for instance, that you see a green leaf in good light. If the question is raised what colour the leaf is, your perception puts you in a position to answer this question knowledgeably. Furthermore, you do not need to do anything further to be in a position to answer the further question 'How do you know this?' Seeing the green leaf provides perceptual knowledge of the colour and knowledge of the ongoing seeing itself. We would be astonished if someone – looking at a green leaf – said 'The leaf is green, but now let me find out how I

know this'. Locke aimed to capture this observation as follows:

[It is] impossible for any one to perceive, without perceiving, that he does perceive.
When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will anything, we know that we do so.
(Locke 1690, II, xxvii, 9)

If we take Locke by his word, he tried to articulate the observation about perception in terms of perceiving-that:

(PP1) Necessarily, if *S* perceives *x*, then *S* perceives *that S perceives x*.

Now, one perceives that *p* if, and only if, one judges that *p* on the strength of one's perceiving. For instance, to use one of Dretske's examples, I can see that the tank is half-empty without the tank itself looking some way to me: I just need to see the gasometer. All I need to do is to acquire the knowledge that the tank is half-empty by seeing. Locke's (PP1) is therefore a controversial philosophical thesis that goes beyond the observation we started from. *Prima facie*, one wants to credit some subjects with the ability to perceive something even though they are not able to *judge* that they themselves are perceiving.

(PP2) is not subject to this difficulty:

(PP2) Necessarily, if *S* perceives *x*, then *S* perceives *S's* perceiving of *x*.

However, what is it to *perceive* one's perceiving? Consider your seeing a green leaf again. The colour looks a particular way to you, your seeing green doesn't. Hence, if one perceives one's seeing at all, it must be perceived by a different sense than sight. In his early work *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles* Brentano developed this argument in detail:

Because we sense (*empfinden*) that we see and hear, the question arises whether we perceive this [that we see and hear] with sight and hearing, or with another sense. If we perceive by means of sight itself that we see, we must see that we see, for the activity (*Tätigkeit*) of this sense is seeing, and the seeing as seeing should therefore belong either to the distinctive object of sight or to one of the common objects of sight. (Brentano 1867: 85-6; my translation)

Brentano talked here about perceiving *that one sees*. But the point under consideration does not arise for perceiving *that one perceives*. He was not

sensitive to the distinction between perceiving an object and perceiving-that. But we can reformulate his thought in a charitable way as follows:

Extra-Sense Argument

(P1) We perceive seeing when we see.

(P2) Either we perceive seeing by sight or by another sense.

(P3) The distinctive object of sight is colour; by means of sight one can also perceive shape and size together with colour.

(P4) Seeing is not coloured, nor has it form or size that can be seen together with colour.

(C1) Hence, we don't perceive seeing by sight.

(C2) Hence, we perceive seeing by another sense.

(P5) Seeing is not a distinctive object of any of the other four senses.

(C3) Therefore, we don't perceive seeing by any of the five known senses.

(C4) Hence, we perceive seeing by an extra sense.

Brentano's Extra-Sense Argument relied on an Aristotelian principle for the individuation of senses (See Sorabji 1971: 60ff). A sense is a power of perception (*Empfindungsvermögen*) (1867: 82). Different powers of perception are exercised in different acts of perception and acts of perception are distinguished in terms of their objects, namely properties of perceptible objects. Sight is the power to perceive colours, taste the power to perceive flavours, hearing the power to perceive sounds etc. The well-known problem with this proposal is that we can see a shape as well as feel it. In order to distinguish senses in line with our intuitive way of counting senses we need at least to invoke how the object perceived is given to us: sight is the power to perceive shapes together with colours by the way they look, touch is the power to perceive shapes by the way they feel when touched etc.

If we accept the Aristotelian criterion for counting and individuating senses, the inner sense have a distinctive object. What is it? Sensation, answered Brentano. The sense under consideration is the sense of *sensation* (*Sinn der Sensation*). He wrote about this sense:

Just as the colours are the distinctive object of sight, its distinctive object are solely

sensations. But by perceiving that we see the white and taste the sweet, and distinguish these sensations, it makes simultaneously the analogous difference between the white and the sweet known to us [kennen lernen]. (Brentano 1867: 93)

What are sensations (*Empfindungen*)? 'Sensation' seems here to be nothing but a catch-all for perceptions of different senses. According to the last quote, the sense of sensation is the sense by means of which we perceive that we see, taste etc, that is, the sense of sensation provides us with propositional knowledge. If this were correct, it would be difficult to see how this sense could also make the difference between white and sweet known to us. For in order to know the difference between white and sweet I must actually see white and taste sweet, propositional knowledge about seeing and tasting is insufficient. This speaks in favour of strengthening passages in which Brentano speaks of the sense of sensations as a sense by means of which we perceive sensations (See, for instance, Brentano 1867: 95).

How does the sense of sensation make not only the difference between the *perceptions* of white and sweet, but also the difference between the *properties* white and sweet known to us? Brentano held that the perceptions of, for instance, colours stand in relations to each other that are similar to the relations that obtain between the colours perceived. Because of these analogies distinguishing between the perceptions of white and sweet is also distinguishing between the white and the sweet (Brentano 1867: 93). This has some independent plausibility. Consider experiential recall. If I can episodically recall *seeing* red and *seeing* blue, I can, *ceteris paribus*, also recall how the *red* and *blue* looked to me and can distinguish between them.

However, Brentano still owes us an informative answer to the question how this is possible. Aristotle said that when an object looks green to one, one's seeing itself is 'in way coloured'. In his theory of the sense of sensation Brentano will have had this remark in mind. Caston (2002: 790-1) spells Aristotle's remark out by proposing that when something looks green to me, my seeing is green in the following extended sense: it has a particular what-it-is-likeness property that can only be exhaustively described by mentioning green. Possessing a particular what-it-is-likeness property (phenomenal character) does not make my seeing

green visible or look a certain way, but its phenomenal character distinguishes it from other perceptions. If the sense of sensation distinguishes between perceptions in terms of their phenomenal character, we have the beginning of a story how the sense of sensation can make us aware of relations between the properties perceived. If I am, for example, aware of seeing blue and seeing red, I am aware of the phenomenal character of these acts and thereby aware of the difference between red and blue things in terms of how they look. This idea needs further development and, as far as I know, Brentano did not provide any. However, Brentano's discussion of the sense of sensation introduced an important philosophical theme: awareness of perceiving an object and awareness of the object perceived are connected. In *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles* awareness of perceiving makes distinctions between objects perceived known. In *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* an even tighter connection will emerge.

2. The Sense of Sensation = the Common Sense

The assumption of a sense of sensation seems *ad hoc* if there is no independent motivation. Brentano argued that we have independent reason to assume that there is a common sense. The sense of sensation, as it turns out, is the same sense as the common sense. Since we have independent reason to accept a common sense, we have an independent reason to believe in the sense of sensation (Brentano 1867: 87f.).

What is the common sense? The common sense is the sense by means of which we make comparisons 'across' different, more specific senses. The example of the comparison between the white and the sweet was already used in the previous section. Let us flesh it out a bit. Imagine you drink a White Russian and you try to fully appreciate all aspects of the drink. You can *perceive* the difference between the white colour and the sweetness of the White Russian. But the difference between white and sweet is perceived neither by sight nor by taste. Aquinas used observations of this kind to connect inner and common sense:

[N]either sight nor taste can discern white from sweet: because what discerns between two things must know both. Wherefore the discerning judgment must be assigned to the common sense; to which, as to a common term, all apprehensions of the senses must be referred: and by which, again, all the intentions of the senses are perceived; as when someone sees that he sees. (Aquinas 1265ff, 78, 4, ad.2)

The inner sense perceives that we see the white as well as that we taste the sweet. If the inner sense knows the perceptions *and* their objects, it can serve as the common sense by means of which one can compare qualities across sense modalities.

Brentano (1867: 87) developed this idea. Consider his sense of sensation. The inner sense has simultaneously access to perceivings that are exercises of different senses such as seeing a colour and tasting a flavour. It can distinguish between them and thereby come to know relations between their objects. Hence we get:

Sense of sensations = the power to perceive simultaneously perceivings in virtue of their phenomenal character = power to come to know relations between the qualities that are the objects of the perceived perceptions = common sense.

Hence, if there is a sense of sensation, it does what the common sense is supposed to do. Therefore evidence for the existence of the common sense is evidence for the existence of the sense of sensation.

Joint and multidimensional perception is a real phenomenon. But does it require a new sense? Why can't the joint perception of white and sweet be the simultaneous exercise of sight and taste? If the senses collaborate, no further distinct sense is needed. Aristotle himself seems to leave this possibility open:

Therefore discrimination between white and sweet cannot be effected by two agencies which remain separate: both the qualities discriminated must be present to something that is one and single. (*De Anima*, 426b1, 9-18; Hamlyn's translation)

The 'one and single' thing need not be a sense. Just as different rivers may supply the same lake, different senses may work as a team to produce joint consciousness of their respective objects.

Brentano argued that the common sense is a faculty that is distinct from the five senses. He rejects the 'sense collaboration' thesis:

[C]an we perhaps perceive the distinction between white and sweet by means of simultaneous sensations of two different senses? Certainly not. This is as little possible as it is possible for two different people to be able to recognise the difference between two objects if each of them senses one of those objects. (Brentano 1867: 87; my translation)

Brentano's analogy between different senses and different people does not support his conclusion. Different people may work together to achieve a common aim: I read the map, you steer and together we manoeuvre the car to the right destination. Why should different senses not also jointly contribute to one state of awareness? Brentano is missing a premise. Tye expresses the missing premise as follows:

If loudness is experientially 'trapped' in one sense and yellowness in another, how can the two be experienced together? (Tye 2007: 289)

Talk of being 'experientially trapped' is suggestive, but hard to spell out in a satisfactory manner.

I conclude that Brentano has not made a good case for the assumption of a distinct common sense and, in turn, for a sense of sensation. This speaks in favour of his later view. For, as we will now see, he will go on and deny the existence of the sense of sensation.

3. Brentano against the Inner Sense View

According to Brentano, Aristotle wavered on the question whether we perceive perceiving by means of a further sense or not. Sometimes Aristotle seems to say NO, sometimes YES. In his *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles* Brentano tried to work out the positive answer with his sense of sensation view. Seven years later in *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* Brentano retracted this proposal.

Looking back he wrote:

It seems that [Aristotle's] general theory of mental faculties can be more easily

reconciled with this sort of view [that there is a sense of sensation]. It is for this reason that in my *Psychologie des Aristoteles* I went along with the majority of his commentators and ascribed it to him. However, since the passage of *De Anima*, III, 2, speaks so clearly against it, and since it is highly unlikely that there is a contradiction among his different statements on this point, I adhere now to the conception presented here in the text.

(Brentano 1874: 185-6fn/1995: 102fn)

Brentano provided several considerations that strengthen the case against the sense of sensation theory which indirectly make it implausible to attribute it to Aristotle.

Consider hearing and seeing a band play. Here the scene seen and sounds heard are, as one might intuitively put it, in the foreground: *they* are seen and heard together. The mental acts are not primary, qualities like colour are; we perceive them and we do so not in virtue of relations they bear to our perceptions. However, in the theory of *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles* the joint perception of qualities was described as a product of the sense of sensation. By means of it we were supposed to perceive simultaneously seeing and hearing. We would thereby also apprehend relations between the perceived qualities. Now Brentano thinks that his former common sense/sense of sensation view singled out the wrong objects as primary. In joint perception sounds etc. are perceived, *not* our perceptions of them.

In *Psychologie* Brentano gave pride of place to Aristotelian arguments that speak *against* the inner sense theory.¹ He referred his readers to Aristotle's *De Anima* book 3.2 where Aristotle seems to reject the assumption of an inner sense:

Since we perceive that we see and hear, it must either be by sight that one perceives that one sees or by another [sense]. But in that case there will be the same [sense] for sight and the colour which is the subject for sight. So either there will be two [senses] for the same thing or [the sense] will be the one for itself.

Again if the sense concerned with sight were indeed different from sight, either there will be an infinite regress or there will be some [sense] which is concerned with itself, so that we had best admit this of the first in the series. (425^b12—17; Hamlyn's translation)

Aristotle suggested here two arguments against the inner sense theory: the

infinite regress argument and the duplication argument.

David Woodruff Smith and others take Brentano to use the infinite regress argument to argue for his view:

Reviving an ancient argument, Brentano reasoned that the secondary presentation cannot be a second presentation, a reflection or judgement upon the primary presentation. For that would lead to an infinite regress [...]. (Smith 1986: 149)

A presentation P_1 is supposed to be conscious if and only if there is a 'secondary presentation' P_2 : a presentation directed upon P_1 . If the secondary presentation is a 'second', distinct presentation, a vicious infinite regress threatens. No such regress threatens if P_1 presents, among other things, itself.

I am doubtful, however, whether this is Brentano's argument. He expected his reader to be initially inclined to take any mental act to be conscious:

Only when one calculates for him that there must a threefold consciousness, like three boxes, one inside the other (*dreifach ineinandergeschachteltes*), and that besides the first idea and the idea of the idea he must also have an idea of the idea of the idea, will he become wavering. (Brentano 1874: 182/1995a: 99-100; my translation)

The regress threat is an obstacle that needs to be removed to clear the way for accepting the view that every mental act is conscious; but it is not used by Brentano in an argument in favor of his positive view.

Brentano's argument, I submit, for his new view is a development of Aristotle's duplication argument (Brentano 1874: 176-9/1995a: 97-8). Anton Marty, a devoted follower, expounded Brentano's argument in an accessible way:

We hear some note, we have therefore a presentation of a note and are conscious of this presentation. How are these two presentations related to each other? Are these two different mental acts? If this were the case, one would have to present the note twice. For it belongs indirectly to the presentation of the note. But inner experience shows without doubt that we present the tone only once. From this follows that the presentation of the tone and the presentation of the presentation of the tone are not two, but one act. The first presentation coalesces in the second and is so intimately connected with it that it contributes to its being. Only one mental phenomenon, only one act of presenting is there, but in virtue of one [act] two things come about. (Marty 1888/9ff: 28; my translation)

In schematic form the argument is this:

Brentano's Duplication Argument

(P1) Assume for reductio that *S*'s perceiving *S* perceiving *x* is distinct from *S*'s perceiving *x*.

(P2) *S*'s perceiving *S* perceiving *x* is directly of *S*'s perceiving *x* as well as indirectly of *x*.

(C1) Hence, when *S* perceives *S*'s perceiving *x*, *x* is presented twice: once in *S*'s perceiving *S* perceiving *x*, and a second time in *S*'s perceiving *x*.

(P3) There is no double presentation of *x* when *S* perceives *S*'s perceiving *x*.

(C2) Hence, *S*'s perceiving *S* perceiving *x* is the same act *S*'s perceiving *x*.

(P1) is set up for refutation. Brentano, like Aristotle before him, took (P3) to be phenomenologically plausible. When we are aware of perceiving an object, the object is not given to us 'twice'. The crucial premise of Brentano's argument is (P2). Is it better justified and more plausible than (P1)? Brentano thought so: when we are aware of hearing a tone, it

seems evident (*einleuchtend*) that the tone is not only contained as presented in the hearing but also contained in the simultaneous presentation of the hearing. (Brentano 1874: 171/1995a: 94; my translation)

In *Psychologie* Brentano left it at that. But (P2) is in need of further argument and clarification. For Brentano's opponents hold that awareness provides us *only* with access to mental acts and not *also* with access to their objects. Further argument is needed.

How can *S*'s perceiving *S* perceiving *x* be the same act as *S*'s perceiving *x*? When we, for example, distinguish between *S*'s awareness of hearing the note *F* and *S*'s hearing *F*, we make a conceptual distinction:

The presentation of the tone and the presentation of the presentation of the tone form one single mental phenomenon, it is only by considering it in its relation to two different objects, one of which is a physical phenomenon and the other a mental phenomenon, that we divide it conceptually into two presentations. (Brentano 1874: 179/1995a: 97-8; my translation)

Let us work through Brentano's example of hearing a tone to get a grip on his positive view. 'Hearing tone *F*' and 'awareness of hearing tone *F*' express different concepts of the same act. The act has two objects, the tone and itself.² Each concept conceptualises the act with respect to one these objects: namely as awareness of the note (hearing) and as awareness of itself (awareness of hearing). The concepts are not concepts of two distinct acts that are parts of one complex act. For otherwise the note *F* were presented twice: once in the subact hearing tone *F* and then again in the subact awareness of hearing tone *F*.

If the act is atomic, how can it answer to different concepts? Compare the geometrical point *a*: it has no spatial parts, yet it may be *the left neighbour of point b* and *the right neighbour of point c*. In a similar way conscious hearing of *F* is atomic, yet related to different objects and therefore it can be conceptualised in different ways.

How can an *atomic* act have more than one object? Compare the plural demonstrative 'These'. It is syntactically simple, yet in the right context of utterance it refers to some things and not just one. If plural reference without syntactic complexity is possible, why not plural intentionality without mental complexity?

In conclusion, Brentano arrived at a distinctive version what is now termed the 'same-order view' of consciousness. Levine (2006, 190) distinguishes within same-order views between two and one vehicle views. According to the first kind of view, conscious mental acts are complex and have a part that presents the complex; according to the second kind of view one act has two propositional contents, one of them directed on the mental act. For the reasons given above Brentano's same-order view is neither a two nor a one vehicle view.

Brentano took his conclusion also to show that no vicious infinite regress ensues if all mental acts are conscious. (See Brentano 1874: 182/1995a: 99–100). If perceiving *x* is the same act as awareness of perceiving *x*, no distinct further mental act is required to make perceiving *x* conscious. However, in the German speaking literature on consciousness it is a standard complaint that Brentano's view gives rise to a 'revenge regress' because the awareness of

perceiving must present itself *as a presentation of itself*.³ Whether Brentano must accept this characterization of awareness is controversial.

4. Is all consciousness conscious?

Brentano's conceptual division view was intended by him as a contribution to the metaphysics of mind (Brentano 1874: 198-9/1995a: 109). We want our metaphysics of mind to be in harmony with what awareness reveals to us about the mind. Brentano's view is progress in this respect. If awareness of hearing and hearing are only conceptually different, then one cannot be aware of hearing without hearing actually going on. But what about the other direction? Is every mental act conscious in the sense of it being an object of a mental act, namely itself? Brentano's answer was a clear YES.⁴ He wrote, for instance, in a letter to Stumpf (8.5.1871):

No presentation (*Vorstellung*) without knowledge of the presentation [...] and no thinking without any emotion. Yesterday I found this acknowledged most determinately by a number of writers, among them Hamilton and Lotze. The feeling belongs to the act as a most intimate accessory (*acessorium*) in the same way as the cognition (*Erkenntnis*). (Brentano 1989: 49; my translation)

In *Psychologie* Brentano argued that every mental phenomenon presents itself, acknowledges itself and emotionally evaluates itself. Later he came to abandon the claim that all mental phenomena involve an emotion toward themselves (Brentano 1911a).

How does one decide the question whether all mental acts are conscious or not? Brentano took the burden of proof to lie with philosophers who hold that there are unconscious mental acts. Why should one accept this view? Because, some argued, the assumption that all mental acts are conscious leads to a vicious infinite regress. We have seen in section 3 how Brentano proposed to disarm this objection. In *Psychologie* Brentano responded also to arguments to the effect that the assumption of unconscious mental acts pulls its weight in psychological

explanation and is therefore empirically plausible. (See Brentano 1874, II, chap. 2, § 4-6.) These arguments often have the following form: The best explanation of the occurrence of or the properties of a mental phenomenon posits an unconscious mental phenomenon. Hence, there are unconscious mental acts. In response Brentano argued that the explanation proposed is not the best one. There are equally good explanations that don't posit unconscious perceptions.

According to Brentano, a number of additional and unwarranted assumptions lead to the conclusion that there are unconscious mental acts. For example, if one takes (a) consciousness to consist in judgement and (b) judgement to consist in predication, one will reject the view that every mental act is conscious. How could the sensations and pains of a baby on this view be conscious? Brentano's response is to reject (b) on independent grounds (see CHAP. 10) and keep (a) (Brentano 1874: 200/1995a: 141). Likewise, if one takes consciousness to require attention, one will also find the thesis that every mental act is conscious hard to believe. Brentano's response is to disentangle consciousness and attention:⁵

If one takes into account that being co-given in consciousness [*mit ins Bewusstsein fallen*] is different from being specifically noticed, and from being comprehended with clarity which allows a correct determination and description, then the illusion that some psychological activity can be devoid of the secondary psychological relation disappears completely and with ease. (Brentano 1982: 23/2002: 25-6. I have changed the translation.)

5. Husserl against Brentano: the objectification objection

Brentano held that every mental act is consciousness of something and of itself. *Prima facie*, it presents itself in the same way as it presents an object distinct from itself. Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, argued that Brentano was wrong about this. When I am aware of a note, it is given to me *as an object*; when I am aware of my hearing the note, it is not given to me *as an object* (see Zahavi 2004 §iv). Let us first explain and motivate the objection and then see whether it meets its target.

For Brentano, mental acts are directed towards objects. Husserl used the picture of directing something to a goal to bring out what in his view Brentano had missed. Mental acts are not only directed on objects, they aim for something and they can be fulfilled (Husserl 1913a: 379). For example, we desire food and the desire is satisfied when we have eaten and we are aware of this fact. Object perception is a further example. When I perceive the house in perceiving its front, I am aware that further perceptions of it are available: I can see the house *better*, I can see *more* of it. In order to see the house better I must have a sense of tracking it through different perceptions in which it may appear differently. For Husserl we *experience* identity of object through changes of appearance:

We experience 'consciousness of identity', that is, the presumption that one apprehends identity. (Husserl 1913a: 382; my translation)

It seems to us that we perceive *one and the same object* through changes of appearances because in perceiving an object we have expectations (in a broad sense) about how it will appear differently when we perceive it from different standpoints and in different conditions.

Husserl explains 'appearing as *an object*' with respect to object perception:

The sensations and similarly the acts that "apprehend" or "apperceive" them are here *experienced*, but they *appear not as objects* (*erscheinen nicht gegenständlich*); they are *not* seen, heard, or *perceived* by means of any "sense". In contrast, *objects* appear, are perceived, but they are *not experienced*. Obviously we exclude here the case of adequate perception. (Husserl 1913a: 385; my translation)

Something appears to us as an object, argued Husserl, if and only if we experience it as the same in changing appearances and expect such changes when perceiving it. This makes good intuitive sense if we take an object to be a mind-independent particular. According to Husserl, perception is not only of such particulars, but in perception they seem to us also to be mind-independent particulars. For example, it seems to us that there is more to such objects than their current appearance. Husserl held that this is not the case for the appearances themselves and the mental acts that 'interpret' them. There are no

changing appearances through which we are aware of the same expectation, judgement, sensation or feeling.

Husserl hit on an important distinction between those perceptions in which something is given to us as an object and other forms of awareness in which we are directed upon something without it being given to us as an object. He argued further that mental acts as well as physical objects can be given to us as objects when we reflect on them (1913b: 240-2). But crucially, only mental acts can be *experienced*, that is, not presented to us as objects. We experience mental acts when we are conscious of them and then they are not given *as objects*.

Whether Husserl's criticism is plausible depends on the plausibility of his assumptions. For instance, are there non-intentional sensations as Husserl claimed? Clearly, Brentano didn't think so (CHAP. 4). Whether Husserl's criticism hits its target depends on whether his understanding of Brentano's talk of consciousness as perceptual awareness of *objects* is right. Husserl takes Brentano to commit himself to the view that we are not only aware of a hearing, but also aware of it *as an object* in the sense explained above. However, Brentano seemed to appreciate the difference between perception in which something appears as an object and awareness that is not 'objectifying', although he framed it in a different terminology. In *Psychologie* he wrote:

It is a peculiar feature of inner perception that it can never become inner observation. Objects which one, as one puts it, perceives outwardly can be observed; one focuses one's attention completely on them in order to apprehend them accurately (*genau*). *But with objects of inner perception this is absolutely impossible.* [...] It is only while our attention is turned toward a different object that we are able to perceive, incidentally, the mental processes which are directed toward that object. (Brentano 1874: 41/1995a: 22; my translation and emphasis)

If we are aware of a mental act, we are not aware of it as an object (in Husserl's sense). For instance, hearing and tone are given together, but only the tone can be observed, it 'appears as an object' that we can explore further and seems to us to be the same in different appearances. Brentano did not articulate this distinction fully, but nothing he said seems to me incompatible with Husserl's

claim that in awareness mental acts do not appear as objects when we don't reflect on them. Brentano's theory of consciousness may be incomplete, but nothing stands in the way of completing it.⁶

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¹ For discussions of Brentano's *Psychologie* view of consciousness see Brandl 2013, Kriegel 2003 and Thomasson 2000.

² The tone is the primary object of the act, the act has also an intentional correlate – the tone heard- that exists whenever the acts exists. See Brentano 1982:21/2002: 23-4.

³ See Frank 2012 and the references given there. See also Zahavi 2006, sect. 2 and the response by Williford 2006.

⁴ For discussion see Kriegel 2013.

⁵ See Textor 2015 for a reconstruction of Brentano's view of attention.

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