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Brentano and the Ideality of Time

[Brentano e a Idealidade do Tempo]

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Abstract: How is it possible to have present memory experiences of things that, being past, are no longer presently experienced? A possible answer to this long-standing philosophical question is what I call the "ideality of time view," namely the view that temporal succession is unreal. In this paper I outline the basic idea behind Brentano's version of the ideality of time view. Additionally, I contrast it with Hume's version, suggesting that, despite significant differences, it can nonetheless be construed as broadly Humean.
Keywords: Brentano. Time. Hume. Intentionality.

Resumo: Como é possível ter experiências de memória presente de coisas que, sendo passadas, não são mais experimentadas no presente? Uma resposta possível a esta pergunta filosófica de longa data é o que eu chamo de "visão da idealidade do tempo", ou seja, a visão de que a sucessão temporal é irreal. Neste artigo, esboço a ideia por trás da versão de Brentano da visão da idealidade do tempo. Além disso, eu a contrasto com a versão de Hume, sugerindo que, apesar das diferenças significativas, ela pode, no entanto, ser interpretada como humeana em sentido amplo.
Palavras-chave: Brentano. Tempo. Hume. Intencionalidade.

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In his *Parva Naturalia* (450a), Aristotle raised the following problem: "One might ask how it is possible that though the affection alone is present, and the related fact absent, the latter — that which is not present — is remembered."[1] In other words, how is it possible to have a present memory experience of something that is past, that is to say, no longer presently experienced? This paper's aim is threefold. First, I outline the basic idea behind Brentano's presentism and his view that temporal succession is unreal — a view that I call the "ideality of time view." Secondly, I construe the latter as an attempt to solve the issue raised by Aristotle. Thirdly and finally, I contrast Brentano's with Hume's version of the ideality of time view, suggesting that the former, despite significant differences, can nonetheless be construed as broadly Humean.[2]

Are dreams dreamt?

In a book published in 1861, the French psychologist and historian Alfred Maury reported a dream of his that was later widely discussed in the nineteenth century among philosophers and psychologists, including Freud. The dream is as follows: Maury is sound asleep on his bed with his mother sitting on a chair beside him. He is dreaming that, during the French Revolution, he is arrested and appears before the revolutionary court. He tries to defend himself but is eventually convicted and condemned to death. He is led on a tumbril to the Place de la Revolution where he has to be beheaded. He steps up onto the scaffold, is laid on the guillotine bed, and then the knife falls. He feels his head getting separated from his body and suddenly wakes up feeling tremendously anxious. Then, Maury says, "I feel on my neck the rod of my bed which had become suddenly detached and had fallen on my neck as would the knife of the guillotine. This happened in one instant, as my mother confirmed to me, and yet it was this external sensation that was taken by me for the starting point of the dream with a whole series of successive incidents" (MAURY, 1861, p. 133–4, Engl. trans. in MAVROMATIS, 1987, p. 24).

The reason why Maury's dream has been the subject of wide debate is that it raises a deep philosophical problem. Let us first consider how the dream process is usually depicted. First, there is

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the University of Geneva in April, 2021. I am grateful to the audience there, and particularly to Laurent Cesalli, Guillaume Fréchette, Markus Grid, and Paolo Natali for their helpful feedback.

[2] Mozersky (2011, p. 122) defines presentism in general as "the claim that that, and only that, which is present exists." The late Brentano explains his own brand of presentism as follows: "If we ask, 'What, then, is there in the strict sense of the word?,' the answer must be: 'That which is correctly accepted in the *modus praesens*'" (BRENTANO, 1985, p. 18, Engl. trans. p. 24, quoted in KRIEGEL, 2018, p. 148). See also (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 271–2, Engl. trans. p. 364; ŻEŁANIEC, 2017). In the following I restrict myself to so-called "secondary memories" and do not go into time continuity and perceptual proteraestheses, which raise different problems altogether (see KRAUS, 1930; CHISHOLM, 1981; MULLIGAN, 2004, p. 78–81; FRÉCHETTE, 2017; HUEMER, 2019).

some lapse of time — let's say t_0–t_1 — while the dream goes on: Maury is sleeping and during his sleep he dreams that he ascends the scaffold and that the executioner is getting ready to cut his head off. Secondly, at time t_1, the canopy's rod falls on his neck and he wakes up with a start. Then, during the time t_1–t_2, Maury remembers his dream.

The problem is that there is some obvious logical connection between the fall of the canopy's rod and that of the guillotine's knife. Now, there is also an obvious logical connection between Maury's decapitation and the dream as a whole, that is, the court, the cart, the walk to the scaffold, and so on. Therefore, there must be some logical connection between the fall of the canopy's rod and the whole dream. However, we know that the rod falls at time t_1, while the dream starts some time earlier, at time t_0. How can Maury have known at t_0 that the rod would fall on his neck at t_1? He needs to have known, otherwise he would not have dreamt of the court, the cart, the walk to the scaffold! To put it otherwise, if the usual depiction of the dream process is correct, then Maury must have known that the rod would fall before it fell. But this is obviously impossible. Therefore, the usual depiction of the dream process is false in that case and hence not true in any case.

This latter conclusion was drawn some years later by Edmond Goblot. In a short note published in the *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* (GOBLOT, 1896), Goblot proposed a hypothesis that is still significantly debated in neuroscience research.[3] The question asked by Goblot is, What is real or really given in dream? The dream that the sleeper supposedly undergoes while sleeping, he says, is in no way given, since the sleeper is unconscious and nothing is really given to him. What is really given, actually, is not the dream itself, but the occurring memory of the dream that he experiences after he has woken up. In other words, you never dream while you are sleeping. The dream begins to really exist only at time t_1, when you wake up and remember dreaming it. Accordingly, the belief that you were dreaming before t_1 is illusory: there is nothing actually given except your present remembering of the dream. The dream has no reality before t_1; it is produced as you wake up.

In a nutshell, the Goblot hypothesis is about dream memories. It says that dream memories are somehow deceiving, insofar as they mislead us into regarding the dream as having really existed in the past, while actually it is produced at the present moment, when

[3]Since the 1960s heated debates have opposed this and similar views (MALCOLM, 1956; MALCOLM, 1959; DENNETT, 1979, p. 141–61; HALL, 1981) to experimental research on rapid eye movement sleep and lucid dream (RECHTSCHAFFEN, 1967; BERGER, 1967).

the dreamt events are remembered in the waking state. It is not only the temporal succession of the dreamt events (the appearance before the court, the death sentence...), but also that of the sleeper's corresponding mental episodes (Maury dreams that he appears before the court, that he is convicted...) that is an illusion. Only the present memory is real; the past dream is unreal, *intentional* or *ideal* in the sense of something that has to do with ideas — a mere appearance in your mind.

Presentism and the ideality of time view

This, however, invites a further question. We have thus far confined ourselves to dream memories. But what about other kinds of memories, for example your remembering that the moon was full last night? You did not dream that the moon was full. You woke up in the middle of the night, looked at the sky through the window, saw the full moon, and fell asleep. Then in the morning you wake up again and remember that the moon was full the night before. The question is, Is there a difference in nature between your remembering the full moon and Maury's remembering his walk to the scaffold?

A possible answer to that question is that there is no difference in nature, with the consequence that the Goblot hypothesis should be generalized so as to cover all kinds of memories, including the memory that the moon was full. If you thus generalize the Goblot hypothesis to all memories, then you obtain what I will call the ideality of time view. This view has been defended, among others, by Augustine of Hippo, Hume, Kant, William Hamilton, and Franz Brentano.

Let me roughly summarize what the ideality of time view should look like, by generalizing Goblot's analysis of the guillotine dream. The claim is that memories are deceiving insofar as time relations are not real. The only thing that is really there in the guillotine dream, Goblot claimed, is Maury's present remembering his dream. More generally, we could say that all experiences are somehow present. Remembered experiences are falsely viewed as past. Actually, they are present: for example, as Hume held, they are present experiences that are of a weaker vivacity or intensity. Thus, the idea is first that presence is a basic feature of all experiences (presentism), and second that the past, the future, and succession over time are not real, that they just reflect a certain ordering of experiences that are really present (ideality of time). At the present moment, you are presented with phenomena of which some appear to you as past, but this is a mere appearance, something merely "ideal": actually all of these phenomena are present.

The most famous upholder of this view is certainly Augustine of Hippo

in Book 11 of his *Confessions* (XI, 20):

> Clear now it is and plain, that neither things to come, nor things past, are. Nor do we properly say, there be three times, past, present, and to come; but perchance it might be properly said, there be three times: a present time of past things; a present time of present things; and a present time of future things [*praesens de praeteritis*, *praesens de praesentibus*, *praesens de futuris*]. For indeed three such as these in our souls there be; and otherwhere do I not see them. The present time of past things is our memory; the present time of present things is our sight; the present time of future things our expectation. (AUGUSTINE, 1912, Vol. 2, p. 253)

The ideality of time view also had enthusiastic champions among British empiricists. William Hamilton, for example, strongly emphasizes in his *Lectures on Metaphysics* that "all that is immediately known in the act of memory, is the present mental modification," and that "properly speaking [. . .], we know only the actual and present" (HAMILTON, 1859, p. 152). It is important to note that the ideality of time view is closely connected with the critique of John Locke's theory of time by, among others, Hume, Kant, and Herbart. Locke, like Berkeley later, contended that the sense of time was acquired "from reflection on the train of ideas," that is, on the real succession of ideas in time (LOCKE, 1997, p. 174 ff.; BERKELEY, 1999, p. 67). To this, Herbart, in his *Lehrbuch zur Psychologie* of 1816, objects that "the succession in the representing is not a represented succession" (HERBART, 1850, p. 120).[4] In other words, the temporal relations that are represented are not temporal relations between representations. Like dreamt succession, the *ideal* succession of remembered events in general implies no *real* succession.

The problem

The idea I want to float here is that presentism and the ideality of time view, thus conceived, create a serious problem that is at the heart of Brentano's theory of intentionality. In some ways, the theory of intentionality could even

[4]See (HOERL, 2013) for other references. It is obviously possible to remember an earlier event after remembering a later one. Supposing a succession of events *abc*, the corresponding memories *u*, *v*, and *w* need not follow each other in the same order. That is why temporal succession has sometimes been represented not by a single line segment, but by two orthogonal segments of which one figures the (ideal) succession *abc* and the other, say, the (real) succession *vuw*. "There is thus," William James says in his *Principles* (referring to WARD, 1902), "a sort of perspective projection of past objects upon present consciousness, similar to that of wide landscapes upon a camera-screen" (JAMES, 1950, p. 630).

be viewed as an attempt to solve this and related problems.

The problem is this. Suppose you remember having a toothache yesterday. The toothache is said to be "past" in the sense of being no longer present, that is, presently experienced. Yet you remember your toothache and hence your toothache *must* be presently experienced somehow. On the one hand the toothache is no longer there; on the other hand it is presented in your present memory experience. Consequently, remembering having a toothache is experiencing a toothache without experiencing it. (Of course, this problem is only a special case of a more general issue. Your present fear of having a toothache is somehow a present experience of something that is not presently experienced. When Kant had thoughts about noumena, his thinking involved some experience of something that by definition cannot be experienced.)

The problem can be represented by a set of three propositions:

[1a] Necessarily, every experience is present (presentism).

[2a] Necessarily, every occurring memory is an experience.

[3a] Occurring memories are experiences of something that is no longer present.

Each proposition is plausible individually, but their conjunction is problematic. Propositions [1a] and [2a] entail that remembering one's toothache is presently experiencing it. An occurring memory is certainly something that occurs in the present. To remember a past pain means to presently have a memory experience of it. However, proposition [3a] says that the remembered toothache is not presently experienced. Accordingly, a person who remembers her toothache should say this: "I have a toothache, I presently experience it, but I'm not in pain at all!" Since this sounds absurd, it seems that the conjunction of the three propositions is inconsistent.

I think at least two types of solutions have been proposed to the problem at stake. First, there is Brentano's solution in terms of intentional relations. Secondly, Hume and Kant have promoted a solution in terms of (so to speak) phenomenal ordering.

Brentano's account

Let us first consider Brentano's solution. At first glance, it seems that the most straightforward way to address the issue is to draw a distinction between the memory experience and its object. The idea is that the memory experience relates you to an object that can be distinct from it. Thus, if the memory experience is distinct from its object, then it can be present while the object is not. This corresponds to pro-

positions [1b] to [3b]:

[1b] Necessarily, every experience w of x is present.

[2b] Necessarily, every occurring memory y of z is an experience.

[3b] Occurring memories are experiences of something that is no longer present.

What interests us here is that proposition [1b] in no way requires the object *x* to be present. Accordingly, the conjunction of [1b] and [2b] implies that the memory *y* must be present, but does not imply that the remembered object *z* must be present. The remembered toothache is not part of your present experience, but its object. Since both are numerically different, you can without contradiction remember your toothache and not have a toothache.

In my view, this is the very core of intentionality as Brentano conceived of it. What is key is the difference between *y* and *z*. The intentional relation is such that the act and its intentional object are numerically different. In Brentano's words, there is not merely a conceptual, but a *real* difference between the primary and the secondary object. Propositions [1b-3b] thus entail some form of dualism. Indeed, if the occurring memory really exists while the remembered toothache does not, then the two must be numerically different — otherwise one and the same thing should exist and not exist at the same time.

Thus, we could say there are two different kinds of experiences. On the one hand, intentional acts like memories, judgments, feelings, and so on, are experiences that are numerically different from their object. On the other hand, inner perception is a reflective experience, i.e., an experience that is numerically identical with its object. Brentano's idea is that the objects of inner experience necessarily exist. By contrast, the objects of other kinds of experience are phenomena that do not really exist, that is, mere "phenomenal" or "intentional" objects. When applied to occurring memories, this view is a variant of what I previously called, after Kant, the ideality of time view: only the present of inner experience — that is, that which is presently experienced — is real; the past, the future, and the time relations are not real, but mere appearances in your mind.[5]

[5]Brentano rejects Kant's view that time in general is purely ideal, but claims that the only real time is the present (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 272, Engl. trans. p. 364–5; ŻEŁANIEC, 2017, p. 151). This, however, is plausibly more of a terminological than a substantive difference. Kant's actual view is both that the form of time is unreal and that its matter — the present sensations — is real (KANT, 1904, p. 61, Engl. trans. p. 181–2). Kraus (1930, p. 3) acknowledges "a certain affinity" between Brentano's notion that temporal modes are innerly perceived, that is, presently experienced, and Kant's account of temporal relations.

Two difficulties with Brentano's account

What I would like to do now is to raise some difficulties for Brentano's approach in terms of intentional relations. In my view, a first difficulty is that it is problematic to attribute an object to inner perception. Another difficulty is that it is problematic to attribute an object to other experiences than inner perception.

I do not want to delve into the first difficulty here. I confine myself to say that, for some reasons, adverbial accounts of phenomenal consciousness may seem more convincing. It may seem odd to say that, when I feel brokenhearted, my being brokenhearted is the object of my experience of feeling brokenhearted, the question being whether the conceptual distinction between my brokenheartedness and my experience of it even makes sense.

The second difficulty is more important for our purposes here and I will discuss it a bit more in detail. This difficulty is that it does not seem always possible or plausible to describe an occurring memory as a relation to an "intentional object," that is, to something that is numerically distinct from it and does not really exist.

Suppose you close your eyes and attempt to remember a past toothache — I mean not your cry of pain or the facial expression you saw in the mirror as you are in pain, but merely your sensation of pain. The question is, What kind of experience is your memory experience? What is really going on when you remember your toothache? On the one hand, you remember a toothache you had in the past, that is, a toothache you no longer experience. Remembering a toothache is not experiencing the same toothache you had in the past. Your toothache is past insofar as it is not numerically identical with your present experience. But on the other hand, what sense would it make to remember your pain if it was not somehow experiencing it again, although with a weaker intensity? How could you remember a past pain without somehow experiencing pain again, that is, without experiencing something that is similar with the remembered pain? Personally I cannot. And the same applies to emotions such as sadness, shame, and the like. But if this is the case, then your pain is not the *object* of your memory experience. Rather, your experience of remembering your pain is itself an experience of pain with a weaker intensity. For example, the memory of a past pain sometimes makes us wince. The actor on the scene remembers a sad memory from her past in order to make herself cry.

Except for a few details, this corresponds to the view of David Hume. In Hume's view, the ideas of memory are weakened copies of sensory impressions (HUME, 2007, p. 11). Remembering having a toothache yesterday does

not mean taking one's past toothache as an object as Brentano claims, but having a toothache once again, although with a weaker intensity or vivacity. The remembered toothache is not a toothache that is no longer presently experienced, but rather a toothache that is presently experienced with a weaker intensity. Likewise, to remember seeing the Duomo in Florence last summer is not to take one's past visual perception as one's object, but to experience it again with lesser intensity (whatever this may mean; we can leave aside here the questions of what "vivacity" means and whether there are other "temporal marks" than vivacity, for example fine-grainedness).

Now, if your memory does not have the past toothache as its object, if remembering a past toothache means having a toothache again, then the remembered toothache, although experienced with a weaker intensity, is just as present as the toothache you experience when the dentist's bur cuts into your tooth. Thus, the memory problem as we have formulated it no longer arises. This view is represented by propositions [1c] through [3c]:

[1c] Necessarily, every experience is present (presentism).

[2c] Necessarily, every occurring memory is an experience.

[3c] Necessarily, every occurring memory is an experience of something present.

This Humean view has been defended by many other authors in the nineteenth century. It is at the basis of the approach in terms of "temporal marks" or "signs" promoted, among others, by Wilhelm Wundt (1896, p. 184–5), Theodor Lipps (1883, p. 588–9) or the Cambridge psychologist James Ward (1902, p. 64–5). The overall idea is as follows: all phenomena are temporally present, but they exhibit temporal signs, that is, some marks that are not really or intrinsically temporal, but qualitative or intensive — and these temporal signs, like Lotze's local signs with respect to space relations, are secondarily construed as time relations. For example, "less vivid" is interpreted as "prior" or "past," etc.

Convergences

Brentano's version of presentism has been presented above as diametrically opposed to Hume's. To conclude, I would like to highlight some similarities and suggest that Brentano's approach can also be viewed, in some sense, as Humean.

Beside the fact that, as we have seen, Hume and Brentano agree on the un-

reality of time relations,[6] there may be another similarity that is a bit more difficult to pin down. I said the main difference between the two authors is that Hume views the remembered toothache as a present experience, while Brentano describes it as the primary object of a present experience. It is not sure, however, that this interpretation should be accepted without qualification. The question is, Couldn't we legitimately say that for Brentano, in some sense, the content of the act is presently experienced just as is the act itself, that is, through inner perception? Could we not say that for Brentano, in some sense, the content of the act *really* exists? Certainly, when you remember a red thing you saw yesterday, you no longer see the red color and the red color (as a phenomenon) no longer exists. However, you must see it somehow, insofar as you remember it. The red color is presently given to you, as infallibly as is your mental act itself. It no longer *really* exists, but at the same time it is not a pure nothing: it really appears to you and you really see it presently insofar as you remember it. The Pinocchio you imagine is a fiction, but his appearing to you is not a fiction: it is really the case that you see Pinocchio in imagination, and not Geppetto or the Blue Fairy. A passage from the 1874 *Psychology* clearly suggests this reading:

> With respect to the definition of psychology, it might first seem as if the concept of mental phenomena would have to be broadened rather than narrowed, both because the physical phenomena of imagination fall within its scope at least as much as mental phenomena as previously defined, and because the phenomena which occur in sensation cannot be disregarded in the theory of sensation. It is obvious, however, that they are taken into account only as the content of mental phenomena when we describe the specific characteristics of the latter. The same is true of all mental phenomena which have a purely phenomenal existence. We must consider only mental phenomena in the sense of real states as the proper object of psychology. And it is in reference only to these phenomena that we say that psychology is the science of mental phenomena. (BRENTANO, 1973, p. 140, Engl. trans. p. 100)

In this quote, Brentano asserts, somewhat paradoxically, that the psychologist studies not only mental pheno-

[6]Oddly enough, Brentano thinks (wrongly in my view, see above) that Hume "finds nothing to object to Locke's treatment of time" (BRENTANO, 1976, p. 72, Engl. trans. p. 59).

mena in the strict sense of the word, but also physical phenomena. It is easy to find examples of this. For example, the psychologist is interested not only in imagination, but also in what is imagined. Whether you imagine Pinocchio or the Blue Fairy surely makes a difference from the psychologist's standpoint. Likewise, for Brentano and his followers (with the exception of Husserl), phenomenal colors are physical phenomena that are studied not in physics as are pigments or light waves, but in psychology (BRENTANO, 1979; MEINONG, 1903; SERON, 2019).

This quote suggests that the content of the act can be viewed from two distinct standpoints, namely either as a primary object or as a mental feature that, as such, is presently given in inner perception.[7] The physical phenomena, Brentano argues, "are taken into account only as the content of mental phenomena when [the psychologist] describes the specific characteristics of the latter." The difficulty of this view is obvious. It lies in the fact that the red color studied by the physicist and the one studied by the psychologist must somehow be identical. But how could they be identical, if one really exists and the other does not?

When applied to the case of memory experience, this view entails that temporal relations resides not in the remembered object, but in the mode in which it is presented (or judged) in present experience — a mode that, as such, is accessible to present inner perception. As Mulligan very rightly says, the late Brentano's analysis of time-consciousness "is perhaps best formulated by saying that the objects of presentations are presented-past, presented-present or presented-future. One consequence of [this view] is that our only awareness of differences in temporal modes of presentation is in inner perceiving" (MULLIGAN, 2004, p. 79; also KRAUS, 1930, p. 3; Marty in KRAUS, 1930, p. 20–1; FRÉCHETTE, 2017).

I turn now to a second parallel. There is a certain interpretation of the late Brentano's theory of intentionality that I personally tend to favor and that makes it fully compatible with Hume's presentism. This interpretation is rooted in a certain understanding of Brentano's distinction between *modus rectus* and *modus obliquus*. The meaning of this distinction is far from obvious, but suppose that it is basically not about presentations or experiences, but pu-

[7] This is central to Husserl's critique of Brentano's theory of intentionality. See (HUSSERL, 1984, p. 378, Engl. trans. p. 94): "It can be shown that not all 'psychical phenomena' in the sense of a possible definition of psychology, are psychical phenomena (i.e. mental acts) in Brentano's sense, and that, on the other hand, many genuine 'psychical phenomena' fall under Brentano's ambiguous rubric of 'physical phenomena.'" See also, on Brentano, (HUSSERL, 1979, p. 358, Engl. trans. p. 397): "By the physical phenomenon is to be understood, accordingly, not the extra-psychical object in the sense of physics, or any other thing not itself given; but rather, for example, the sensed tone as such — and thus the very content that is given, which is no less something psychical than the 'psychical' phenomena so-called."

rely about language. Thus understood, the distinction is somewhat similar with the distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. The direct mode is something that has to do with naming and reference. The oblique mode, by contrast, is characterized by the use of syncategoremata, that is, linguistic expressions that we often mistake for real names, but that actually are not real names and thus do not really refer to an object. From a psychological point of view, we could say that the direct mode corresponds to (inner) perception, and the oblique mode to other sorts of experience, that is, to the intentional relation in its various modes.

Like Russell with his theory of definite descriptions, the late Brentano conceives of the philosopher's task as one of reformulating ordinary language through (psycho)logical analysis, so as to sort out real names from syncategoremata that ordinary language erroneously treats as names. In his view, it is always possible to translate a sentence with syncategoremata into an equivalent sentence with real names in the function of subject and predicate (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 163; Brentano, 1952, p. 173). For example, the sentence "I am as strong as Hercules" refers exactly to the same objects as the sentence "I am gifted with a Herculean strength." Both sentences actually refer to me and my strength and not to Hercules, who is a fiction or *ens rationis*. Likewise, "A centaur is a poetic fiction" can be rephrased as "There is a poet imagining a centaur," where "a poet" and "imagining a centaur" are real names (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 60–1, Engl. trans. p. 218–9).[8] When you say "A centaur is a poetic fiction," it sounds as if your sentence was about a centaur, but this is an illusion induced by the surface grammar of ordinary language. Actually, it is purely about poets' mental life.

Now, what happens if we apply this view to the problem of time? It seems that we should say this: the sentence "I remember that the moon was full last night" does not refer to anything past; actually its only object is your present memory experience. You presently experience your act of remembering with its psychological property of being about the full moon — a property that you misleadingly express through oblique constructions like "I remember the full moon" or "the moon was full last night." These constructions directly refer to your present memory experience, while the moon is presented only in an oblique manner (BRENTANO, 1976, p. 156, Engl. trans. p. 132; CHISHOLM, 1981, p. 11–2; FRÉCHETTE, 2017, p. 83–4; KRIEGEL, 2018, p. 99). What is important here is that time relations only make sense at

[8] I follow Kraus's note (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 287).

a linguistic level, not at the level of immediate experience (presentism).[9] Therefore, if this interpretation holds, then Brentano's account is, at least to a large extent, consistent with Hume's.

At the first, most basic level, immediate experience can be exhaustively described in Humean terms, namely as consisting in (inner) perceptions with no temporal successions, no "train of ideas." All phenomena, even those of memory, are simultaneous: all are perceived and hence really exist in the present of experience. When I remember the full moon, all that is really given to me at the most basic level is my real memory experience and its real sensory content, for example the color of the moon. Both are present and innerly perceived. As such, as I suggested, the content is not a primary object studied in physics, but rather a real feature of the present experience, which is studied in psychology.

At a higher level, the memory experience is linguistically expressed through sentences such as "the moon was full last night," "I remember that the moon was full last night," "I remember the full moon," and the like. In these sentences, "moon" and "night" are not real names, but syncategoremata. As Brentano says in his latest dictations, "linguistic convenience" (*die Bequemlichkeit der Sprache*) pushes us to replace real names with syncategoremata, direct with oblique phrasings, just as the mathematician does when she introduces negative or imaginary magnitudes (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 246, Engl. trans. p. 345; GAUVRY, 2020, p. 178). "Language," Brentano claims, "makes use of many fictions for the sake of brevity; in mathematics, for example, we speak of negative quantities less than zero, of fractions of one, of irrational and imaginary numbers, and the like, which are treated exactly like numbers in the strict and proper sense" (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 215, Engl. trans. p. 322–3).

In my estimation, this latter view boils down to this: language misleads you into treating the full moon as the primary object of your memory experience, but I — as a psychognost — know that Hume is right and that actually experience is temporal only in the sense of being presently experienced. Temporal successions are no more than fictions constructed for the convenience of language.[10]

[9]One could raise the question whether a being without language, for example a crawfish, can have the "sense of time." But I doubt that the question makes sense. What does it actually mean? It could be more accurately rephrased as: "Would a crawfish understand and correctly use (for example) the preterit tense if it could speak English?" Thus formulated, the question boils down to asking whether a being without language would have the sense of time if it was a being with language — which is obviously meaningless. It is like asking whether orange marmalade would be as good if orange and sugar were replaced by herring and vinegar.

[10]In a note to the *Psychology* (BRENTANO, 1925, p. 307, Engl. trans. p. 344), Kraus draws attention to the close similarities between Brentano's account of *entia rationis* and Vaihinger's fictionalism, but does not find it plausible that Brentano has read Vaihinger's *Philosophie des Als-Ob*.

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