Thought and Thing: Brentano's Reism as Truthmaker Nominalism

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Introduction

The ontological theory of the later Franz Brentano is often referred to as 'reism.' But what exactly is reism, and how is it related to modern-day nominalism? In this paper, I offer an interpretation of Brentano's reism as a specific variety of nominalism. This variety, although motivated by distinctly modern concerns about truthmakers, adopts a strategy for providing such truthmakers that is completely foreign to modern nominalism. The strategy rests on proliferation of coincident concrete particulars. For example, 'Socrates is wise' and 'Socrates is Greek' are made true, respectively, by wise-Socrates and Greek-Socrates, where wise-Socrates and Greek-Socrates are two coinciding but numerically distinct concrete particulars (which also coincide with Socrates).

1. Reism and Nominalism

The curious term 'reism' is associated with the parsimonious ontology of Franz Brentano and Tadeusz Kotarbiński. At least starting 1904, Brentano maintained that 'there is nothing other than things' (Brentano 1930: 68), where 'things' (*Dinge* or *Realia*) is supposed to exclude propositions, states of affairs, abstracta, possibilia, ficta, merely intentional objects, and more.[1] Brentano's positive characterization of a thing is as an individual

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[1]   There is some scholarly debate as to when exactly Brentano held this view. His student Alfred Kastil has popularized the notion that Brentano's ontology has gone through several phases (see the introduction to Brentano 1930), with reism constituting the final or penultimate phase. (Some scholars maintain that Brentano had one last change of heart, circa 1915—two years before his death—whereby he replaced material concrete particulars with spacetime regions potentially *filled* with concrete particulars (see Brentano 1976).) Personally, I am very skeptical of Kastil's reading and tend to think Brentano was *always* a reist. This is supported by both textual and philosophical considerations. Textually, unpublished lecture notes of Brentano's 1867 Würzburg course on metaphysics (see, e.g., manuscripts 31451, 31535, and 31985 in the Würzburg archives) show relatively clear commitment to

object: 'If one conceives of something in individual terms, then one is also conceiving a thing' (Brentano 1933: 19). Brentano never published his reistic writings, but two collections of relevant essays, letters, and lecture notes were edited and published posthumously by his devoted students Oskar Kraus and Alfred Kastil (Brentano 1930, 1933).

It is Kotarbiński who coined the term 'reism,' to name the view he developed in the 1920s and defended most fully in his 1929 book *Gnosiology* (Kotarbiński 1929).[2] He then retroactively applied the term to Brentano's later views (Kotarbiński 1966).[3] Kotarbiński formulated reism as the conjunction of two theses: (i) that every entity is a thing and (ii) that no entity is a state of affairs, property, or relation. Although there is some debate over the ultimate degree of similarity between Brentano's and Kotarbiński's views (see Smith 2006), they are clearly in the same spirit.[4]

This paper focuses on Brentano's reism. Its goal is twofold: to get clear on what the view is, and to make a prima facie case for its plausibility. I will not argue that Brentano's reism is *the one true ontological theory*, but rather for the following more nuanced thesis: *if* one is antecedently attracted by (i) a nominalist ontology and (ii) a truthmaker approach to ontological theorizing, *then* whereas the current literature showcases three theoretical options to choose among, Brentano's reism represents a fourth viable option (no less prima facie plausible than the other three).

One might wonder whether 'reism' is just an odd name for what we know today as nominalism. There are, however, two reasons to keep the

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reism (Baumgartner 2013: 236). Philosophically, Brentano's theory of judgment, articulated explicitly already in Brentano 1874, fits a bit too perfectly with reism for this to be a coincidence—more on this in §4 below.

[2] The book's Polish title translates into *Elements of the Theory of Knowledge, Formal Logic and Methodology of the Sciences*; it is the English translators who thought to bestow on it a pithier title.

[3] Kotarbiński was a student of Kazimierz Twardowski's in Lvov (now in the Ukraine), after the latter returned from Vienna, where he worked with Brentano from 1885–1889. Despite this history, Kotarbiński was unaware of Brentano's later ontological views until Twardowski wrote him a letter about this *after* the publication of Kotarbiński 1929. Kotarbiński then started to apply the term 'reism' to Brentano's views in the early thirties.

[4] There is one straightforward respect in which the two views differ: Kotarbiński was a materialist, and therefore held that every thing is a material thing, whereas Brentano was a substance dualist (though one who accepted that mental processes are lawfully grounded in neurophysiological processes—see Brentano 1874 I Chap. 3), who therefore held that there are both material and immaterial things. What Smith (2006) argues, however, is that Brentano's very notion of a thing is a formal notion that is supposed to cover anything we might think about. But while there are some passages that may suggest this reading, as we already saw many others indicate unequivocally that a thing is an individual object (see the quote from Brentano 1933: 19).

term 'reism.' First, as I will show in the remainder of this section, modern nominalism is usefully divided into three different types, only one of which dovetails with reism. More importantly, as I will show in the rest of the paper, reism's strategy for 'saving the appearances'—read: producing truthmakers for all the pre-philosophical truths we would like to philosophically ratify—is radically different from modern nominalists.'[5]

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The term 'nominalism' is commonly used in two relatively independent areas of philosophy. It is used in the philosophy-of-mathematics literature to designate the rejection of abstract objects such as numbers. In the literature on the metaphysics of properties, meanwhile, it is used to designate the rejection of universals. Thus the term 'nominalism' is used ambiguously in modern philosophy (Rodriguez-Pereyra 2011). We should therefore distinguish three views that go by 'nominalism': rejecting abstracta, rejecting universals, and rejecting both.

A nice way to appreciate this is through Donald Williams' (1953) scheme for a four-way classification of putative entities. The scheme is the product of two cross-cutting distinctions: between particulars and universals and between concreta and abstracta. These yield a matrix of four ontological categories: concrete particulars, abstract universals, abstract particulars, and concrete universals (see Figure 1). Apparent examples of concrete particulars include Beyoncé and my laptop. Apparent examples of abstract universals include fame and grayness. Apparent examples of abstract particulars include Beyoncé's-fame and my-laptop's-grayness. Apparent examples of concrete universals include Beyoncé-ness and my laptop's haecceity.[6]

How to draw the concrete/abstract and particular/universal distinctions in a principled but extensionally adequate manner is a controversial matter we need not resolve here. What matters for our purposes is that Williams' four-fold categorization allows us to divide nominalistic ontologies into three types. The first is *anti-universals nominalism*:

(N$_1$)   There are only particulars (concrete and abstract).

We may call the second *anti-abstracta nominalism*:

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[5]   This is the case with Brentano's reism at least; Kotarbiński's will be set aside here.

[6]   The qualification 'apparent' in the last four sentences is needed because proponents of each view can be sparse about what *kinds* of entities of the relevant categories there are. For example, according to nihilists (Rosen and Dorr 2002, Sider 2013) there are no composite concrete particulars, so no such thing as Beyoncé; according to sparse theorists of abstract universals (see Lewis 1983), there are no such properties as fame; and so on.

	Concrete	**Abstract**
Particular	Kant	Kant's wisdom
Universal	Kant-ness	wisdom

Figure 1. Williams' Categorization

(N_2) There are only concreta (particular and universal).

Finally, we may call *strict nominalism* the view that frowns on both universals and abstracta:

(N_3) There are only concrete particulars.

Brentano' term 'thing' is intended to capture Williams' concrete particulars.[7] To that extent, Brentano's reism should be identified with strict nominalism.[8]

As we will see, Brentano's version of strict nominalism is thoroughly heterodox. Yet his case for it is remarkably modern, and is driven by considerations of parsimonious truthmaking. Earlier commentators have often pinned Brentano's case for his reism on a single argument, to do with the univocality of 'something' in such statements as 'S thinks of something'—an argument that has been dismissed as inconclusive (Woleński

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[7]   Brentano is explicit in many places on his rejection of abstract universals and abstract particulars, especially states of affairs. As for concrete universals, Brentano discusses them less often. Still, in one undated dictation, about Duns Scotus on substance, he speaks of 'the wholly imaginary fiction of an haecceity.' (Brentano 1933: 112).

[8]   Smith (2006 §14) argues that Brentano's notion of a thing is a formal one and is supposed to cover anything that can be the object of a presentation (*Vorstellung*). But although Brentano does stress that only things can be objects of presentation, he takes this to be a substantive rather than trivial claim, something that requires argument and does not simply fall out of the meaning of words. For example, in a 1914 letter to Kraus he writes: 'I shall begin at once, today, by giving you what I believe to be a simple and rigorous proof of the fact that only things can be objects of our presentations...' (Brentano 1930: 94). Such a proof would presumably be unnecessary if the claim were intended to be tautological.

2012) and even 'extraordinarily bad' (Simons 2006: 89). But this argument merely makes a move at a relatively advanced stage of the dialectic.[9] To properly understand the source of Brentano's attraction to reism, we must start from much more basic considerations pertaining to the truthmakers of simple declarative sentences.

2. Reism and Truthmakers

A traditional and rather commonsense ontology admits not only things (in the sense of concrete particulars), but also (i) properties and (ii) states of affairs comprising things and properties. Such an ontology is straightforwardly suggested by our language and thought. This can be appreciated through the demand for *truthmakers*. Consider the following truth:

(T$_1$) Beyoncé is famous.

Since T$_1$ is true, something in the world must *make* it true; it must have a truth*maker*. The truthmaker, it is natural to suppose, is the *state of affairs* of Beyoncé being famous. This state of affairs is a structured entity, involving as constituents a particular thing, Beyoncé, and a property, fame, connected in a specially intimate way ('instantiation' or 'exemplification'). Although intimately connected in this state of affairs, the two constituents can come apart and combine with other entities to compose different states of affairs. Consider the following truth:

(T$_2$) Beyoncé is two-legged.

Its truthmaker appears to be the state of affairs comprised of the particular Beyoncé and the property of two-leggedness (intimately connected). It is the same Beyoncé from the truthmaker of T$_1$ but intimately connected to a different property. Or consider the following truth:

(T$_3$) Chalmers is famous.

Here the truthmaker appears to be the state of affairs comprised of Chalmers and fame, again intimately connected. Thus the selfsame fame appears to be a constituent of two different states of affairs. Following Armstrong (1978), most contemporary ontologists would prefer theorizing it

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[9] Moreover, the argument is clearly accompanied by two further arguments (Brentano 1930: 108) which are supposed to address the same stage in the dialectic. It is true, however, that several letters to Kraus from the same period highlight the argument from univocality. The univocality argument appears most prominently in an essay dictated by Brentano toward the end of his life (Ibid.).

as an Aristotelian *in re* universal rather than a Platonic *ante rem* universal, but still as a universal.[10]

This kind of ontology, admitting not only particular things but also (*in re*) universals and states of affairs, has become quite popular over the past three decades. Truthmaker considerations have been essential in the case for it (see Armstrong 1997, 2004). Thus strict nominalism has been strongly undermined by what we may call the *truthmaker challenge*: the challenge of identifying truthmakers for such truths as T_1–T_3 featuring concrete particulars exclusively. What strategies are available to the strict nominalist in trying to meet the truthmaker challenge? In the modern literature, two broad strategies can be discerned; we may call them *ostrich nominalism* and *paraphrase nominalism*.

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According to ostrich nominalism (Devitt 1980), in a standard subject-predicate sentence only the subject term is ontologically committing; predicates are not. (This is supposed to fall directly out of the Quinean criterion of ontological commitment: to be is to be the value of a variable, that is, something we quantify over.[11]) Consequently, the truth of T_1 and T_2 does not require positing anything beyond Beyoncé, and the truth of T_3 anything beyond Chalmers. There is no need to posit further entities, such as fame, which would be shared by Beyoncé and Chalmers (nor states of affairs that have these further entities as constituents).

It is not immediately clear how the ostrich nominalist proposes to address the truthmaker challenge. She might claim either (a) that truths such as T_1 do not *require* truthmakers, or (b) that they have concrete particulars such as Beyoncé as truthmakers. The problem is that both are highly problematic.

Consider first (a). It has sometimes been claimed that certain special truths—notably negative existentials—require no truthmakers. For example, 'There are no dragons' is true but nothing *makes* it true.[12] It is much harder,

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[10] An *in re* universal is an immanent universal that inheres in the particulars that instantiate it. What makes it a universal, then, is not the fact that it is 'outside spacetime' (as an *ante rem*, transcendent universal does), but the fact that it is *fully* present at different places at the same time. My green car is fully present in a single place at a time; the state of Hawaii is present in different places (different islands) at the same time, but is only *partially* present in each distinct place; the *in re* universal Greenness, by contrast, is present at the same time in all places occupied by green things, and moreover is *fully* present in each such place.

[11] See Quine 1949.

[12] See Mulligan et al. 1984, Simons 2000, 2008, and Lewis 2001. A friend of states of affairs or facts might posit 'absence facts,' such as the fact that there are no dragons. It would then be the presence of an absence that makes true truths of the form 'there are no Fs.' But many ontologists understandably find it distasteful to posit presences of absences as genuine chunks of the world.

however, to accept that such positive truths as T_1–T_3 have no truthmakers.[13] For that would mean that the truth of even the simplest positive truths is inexplicable, brute, and groundless. On this view, we are to smile on T_1 and frown on $\sim T_1$, but there is no *reason why*; some sequences of symbols are true and some are false, and nothing explains why the ones are favored and the other disfavored. This is hard to believe.

Consider next (b): the view that T_1 is made true by Beyoncé herself. This is triply problematic. First, it is unclear why Beyoncé's existence, on its own, makes true 'Beyoncé is famous' rather than 'Beyoncé is unfamous'—the subject term is the same in both sentences, after all. Secondly, when presented with a truthmaker, one expects to be able to infer a truth. Presented with rain, I can infer that 'It rains' is true. Likewise, when presented with Beyoncé, I can infer that 'Beyoncé exists' is true. However, I *cannot* infer that 'Beyoncé is famous' is true. Thirdly, (b) has the untoward consequence that T_1, T_2, and all other Beyoncé truths have the same truthmaker.

Let me expand somewhat on the last problem. It has sometimes been held that different truths can have the same truthmaker, in particular when one is more fundamental than the other. For example, 'Beyoncé is famous' and 'Beyoncé is famous or eight-foot-tall' are both made true by Beyoncé's being famous; 'Beyoncé is a homo sapiens' and 'Beyoncé is a mammal' are both made true by Beyoncé being a homo sapiens; and so on. Arguably, however, atomic truths at the fundamental level should each have its own distinct truthmaker.[14] Consider three truths about Tony the lepton: 'Tony has mass m,' 'Tony has electric charge C,' and 'Tony exists.' It is implausible to hold that all these truths about Tony have the same truthmaker. After all, they say different things about the world, so we should expect different aspects of the world to make them true. One way to think of this is in terms of the connection between a statement's truthmaker and its truth-conditional content. To a first approximation, and at least as restricted to fundamental truths, one would expect the following connection: if entity E is the truthmaker of (true) statement T, then T's truth-condition is the condition that E exist. Insofar as T's content or meaning is captured by its truth-condition,

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13 An atomic truth is a truth no part of which is a truth. Some might object that truths such as T_1 are not all that simple, since the property of being famous is rather complex. But this is a distracting feature of the example, which we could replace with a truth about some particle P having mass M.

14 It is a separate question how to best characterize the ideas of one truth being more fundamental than another and of a truth to being fundamental *tout court* (that is, have no other truth more fundamental than it). This issue is actively debated in current ontology—see Williams 2010 for recent discussion. Here I will assume that even if we do not yet have any consensus on the nature of fundamentality, typically we know it when we see it.

then, T's content is given by the condition that E exist. Likewise, at least as restricted to atomic fundamental truths without co-referential terms, when T_1 and T_2 have *different* contents, they have different truth-conditions. That is, there are different entities E_1 and E_2, such that E_1's existence is T_1's truth-condition and E_2's existence is T_2's truth-condition. Therefore, E_1 should be T_1's truthmaker and E_2 should be T_2's. Thus we should expect T_1 and T_2 to have different truthmakers

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Most nominalists have adopted a more flexible strategy with respect to truth-makers, whereby truths such as T_1 are *paraphrased* into statements whose ostensible truthmakers are comprised entirely of concrete particulars. Perhaps the best-known version of this is *class nominalism* (see Lewis 1983). Call the class of all famous things 'Jimmy.' Then T_1 can be paraphrased into:

(P$_1$)   Beyoncé is a member of Jimmy.

What this means is that T_1's truthmaker consists in Beyoncé's membership in the set of all famous concrete particulars.[15] Another version of this strat-egy is *mereological nominalism* (see Quine 1950). Call the mereological fusion of all famous concrete particulars 'Johnny.' Then T_1 can be para-phrased into:

(P$_2$)   Beyoncé is a part of Johnny.

A third version is *resemblance nominalism* (Rodriguez-Pereyra 2002). Con-sider Chalmers, Obama, the Eiffel Tower, and every other famous concrete particular. According to this view, the truthmaker of T_1 is just Beyoncé's resemblance to all these things. That is, T_1 can be paraphrased into:

(P$_3$)   Beyoncé resembles Chalmers, Obama, the Eiffel Tower, . . .

The full sentence here would have to be closed with the complete list of metaphysical celebrities. The basic idea is to invert the intuitive direction of constitution between Beyoncé's fame and her resemblance to other famous things: it is not that she resembles them because she too is famous, but rather she is famous precisely because she resembles them.

Much of the current debate over what I have called strict nominalism concerns the question of whether any of these versions can provide the

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[15]   To make the example more precise, we might replace reference to the property of being famous with reference to a much more precise property, such as being heard of by 55% of humans over the age of 6.

requisite truthmakers without smuggling in universals or abstracta. For example, it is sometimes claimed that P_1–P_3 appear to invoke not only concrete particulars, but also some illicit relation between them: P_1 invokes a membership relation, P_2 a parthood relation, and P_3 a resemblance relation.[16] Proponents of class, mereological, and resemblance nominalism, meanwhile, attempt to show either that the invocation of the relevant relation is *merely* apparent or that it is real but innocuous. For example, Rodriguez-Pereyra (2002: 115) develops a form of resemblance nominalism that posits resemblers without resemblance relations among them.

It would nonetheless be nice if we could devise a version of nominalism that offered different truthmakers for different fundamental truths without even *appearing* to invoke illicit relations. This is where Brentano's work becomes interesting: his reism is combined with an original and surprising account of the contents of sentences and judgments that provides a *fourth* paraphrase strategy for nominalism.

3. Brentano's Reistic Paraphrases

Sentences such as T_1 lend themselves to state-of-affairs truthmakers mainly because of their subject-predicate structure: it is natural to think that the subject term refers to a concrete particular, the predicate term to a universal, and the copula to the intimate connection between them. According to Brentano, however, the subject-predicate structure is an accidental feature of public-language sentences. Ultimately, sentences derive their meaning from the mental states they express. In particular, indicative sentences derive their meaning from *judgments*. But crucially, judgments do *not* have a subject-predicate structure. They do not involve predication at all.

Brentano's case for this proceeds by showing that all four types of categorical proposition in Aristotle's square of opposition can be 'transformed' into existential propositions (Brentano 1874 II Chap. 7):

(A) 'Every singer is famous' can be transformed into 'There is not a non-famous singer.'

(E) 'No singer is famous' can be transformed into 'There is not a famous singer.'

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[16] On the face of it, these relations would appear to be universals, fully present in different places at the same time. For example, the membership relation holds not only between Beyoncé and Jimmy, but also between Chalmers and Jimmy, Obama and Jimmy, and so on. Similarly for the parthood relation. As for the resemblance relation, it holds not only among all famous things, but also among all two-legged things, all long-haired things, and so on.

(I) 'Some singers are famous' can be transformed into 'There is a famous singer.'

(O) 'Some singer is not famous' can be transformed into 'There is a non-famous singer.'

These categorical propositions are the atomic propositions in Aristotelian logic; hypothetical propositions are molecular but can also be paraphrased into existentials: 'If a singer is famous, then she is rich' can be paraphrased into 'There is not a non-rich famous singer' (see Brentano 1874: 218, 1911: 299).[17]

Brentano does not explicitly consider how to paraphrase particularized propositions, such as expressed by T_1, whose apparent form is $<a$ is F$>$. But it is clear from some of his remarks in other contexts that he treats them as having the (I) form.[18] If so, T_1 would be paraphrased into:

(P$_4$) There is a famous Beyoncé.

Some other renderings may be more expressive: 'There is a famous Beyoncé-thing,' 'There is a famous Beyoncésque concrete particular,' or some such.[19] But the point is that Brentano's paraphrase offers an alternative to the standard modern nominalist paraphrases P_1–P_3. Given that for Brentano every categorical is paraphraseable into an existential, this sort of paraphrase is available for *every* indicative with a subject-predicate surface structure.[20]

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[17] Brentano writes: 'The proposition, "If a man behaves badly, he harms himself," is a hypothetical proposition. As far as its meaning is concerned, it is the same as the categorical proposition, "All men who behave badly harm themselves." And this, in turn, has no other meaning than that of the existential proposition, "A man who behaves badly and not harm himself does not exist," or to use a more felicitous expression, "There is no such thing as a man who behaves badly and does not harm himself."' (1874: 218) Presumably, this applies not only to the conditionals Brentano considers, but also to other truth-functional composites of atomic propositions. Chisholm (1976) works this out in some detail, though not unproblematically.

[18] See, e.g., Brentano's (1982 Chap. 2) discussion of mereological relations among colored spots in lectures from around 1890.

[19] As for relational particularized statements, such as 'John loves Mary,' they would presumably have to be paraphrased into 'There is a Marry-loving John(-thing).' Identity statements such as 'John is identical to John' would be paraphrased into the likes of 'There is a self-identical John' or 'There is a John-identical John,' while informative identity statements, such as 'Tully is Cicero,' would be paraphrased into the likes of 'There is a Cicero-identical Tully.'

[20] Brentano states his commitment to this explicitly in his conclusion of the discussion of the apparently predicative structure of judgment: 'The reducibility of all categorical propositions, indeed the reducibility of *all* propositions which express a judgment, to existential propositions, is therefore indubitable' (Brentano 1874: 218; my italics).

The real question is how exactly to understand the paraphrase—a question we will return to shortly.[21]

If all atomic judgments have existential content of the form 'There is an A,' then to a first approximation, their truthmakers always consist in the existence of some sort of concrete particular (an A). Thus, once T_1 is paraphrased into P_4, we can appreciate that its truthmaker is simply the existence of a famous Beyoncé. Here famous-Beyoncé is a concrete particular, so the truthmaker of T_1 can be seen to require nothing more than the existence of some concrete particular. No illicit relation even *appears* prima facie to be involved.[22] Furthermore, it is clear why this concrete particular makes true T_1 and not $\sim T_1$. The latter would be made true by the existence of an unfamous-Beyoncé, not a famous-Beyoncé. Moreover, T_1's is a different truthmaker from T_2's: the latter's is two-legged-Beyoncé, which is a concrete particular numerically distinct from both Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé (more on this in §4). It is true, at the same time, that Brentano's reism posits many more concrete particulars than we are accustomed to recognizing: in addition to Beyoncé, it posits famous-Beyoncé, two-legged-Beyoncé, long-haired-Beyoncé, and so on. We will consider this apparent liability in §5.

The question that arises immediately is of course this: What kind of entity is famous-Beyoncé, and how is it related to Beyoncé (and to two-legged-Beyoncé)? I address this question in the next section.

4. Substance and Accident in Brentano's Ontology

Brentano (1933) makes some very puzzling remarks on such relationships as between Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé: that (a) Beyoncé is a substance while famous-Beyoncé is an accident, but (b) both are things,[23] and (c) Beyoncé is *proper part* of famous-Beyoncé,[24] though (d) an

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[21] Another question, which I bracket here, is how plausible Brentano's view that all judgments are existential is.

[22] Brentano (1933) does maintain that in addition to such concrete particulars as Beyoncé and Chalmers, there are also their parts and certain fusions of them. It does not follow, however, that there also exist parthood relation between them—though Brentano certainly expresses himself carelessly in this regard in many texts. (It should be remembered, at the same time, that these texts were not prepared for publication, but were mostly lecture notes.)

[23] In particular, the accident is a thing, a concrete particular (see Brentano 1933: 19, 22, 47–8). Thus 'accident and substance are things in the same sense' (1933: 48).

[24] Brentano's mereological account of the substance/accident distinction, casting the substance as a proper part of its accident, is developed most focally in an undated dictation entitled 'Derivation of the concept of a Substance' (Brentano 1933: 111–5). Since it is a dictation, we can know that it dates from the last ten years of Brentano's life (1907–17), when Brentano was already blind.

unsupplemented proper part.[25] (How) can we make sense of these claims? In this section, I present a model of the relationship between Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé that illuminates these claims (and their motivation). The first part of the section expounds the model, the second part shows how it illuminates the four puzzling claims.

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It is clear that on Brentano's view, entities such as famous-Beyoncé are things in the very same sense in which Beyoncé is a thing. This means that famous-Beyoncé is a *fully determinate concrete particular*: one that has two legs, long curly hair, is a singer, is from Houston, has a daughter named Blue Ivy, and so on.[26] It, or rather *she*, extends in all three spatial dimensions, just as Beyoncé does. In these respects, famous-Beyoncé is very unlike a trope or abstract particular such as Beyoncé's-fame: the former is something you can bump into, the latter is not; the former has two legs and long hair, the latter is legless and hairless.

Speaking carelessly for the sake of exposition, we might say that famous-Beyoncé has all the same properties as Beyoncé. This is doubly careless. First, for the reist, strictly speaking there are no properties, since there are only things. So any claim about properties must be understood metaphorically or fictionalistically (as in: 'in the fiction of properties, famous-Beyoncé has the same properties as Beyoncé'), as a ladder to be thrown after its use. Secondly and more importantly, even within the property fiction, it would be inaccurate to say that Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé share *all* their properties. Rather, Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé share all their *non-modal* and *non-temporal* properties, but differ in their modal and temporal properties. Thus, Beyoncé has the property of being *possibly-unfamous*, whereas famous-Beyoncé does not. Likewise, Beyoncé has the property of existing in 1986, whereas famous-Beyoncé does not. But for any non-modal, non-temporal property F, Beyoncé has it iff famous-Beyoncé does. (The reason for excepting modal and temporal properties is

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[25] An unsupplemented part is one that has no other part to supplement it and make up the whole. There is no question that this is something Brentano is committed to: 'How, then, is this differentiation [of a whole from its logical part] occurs? One is supposed to say: by adding a second logical part. But this is not the case. When we compare "red thing" and "colored thing" we find that the latter is contained in the former, but we cannot specify a second thing that could be added to the first as an entirely new element.' (Brentano 1933: 112) This unsupplemented parthood characterizes the relationship between substance and accident: 'Every accident contains its substance as a part, but the accident is not itself a second, wholly different part that is added to the substance' (Brentano 1933: 19; see also 1933: 47, 115).

[26] Brentano writes: 'Everything that is, is fully determinate, but we often conceive of a thing without conceiving it in all its determinations' (Brentano 1933: 22). This is precisely why 'accident and substance are things in the same sense' (1933: 48).

that they interact with the identity and existence conditions of their bearers in a way other properties generally do not. We can see this from the way identity talk often leads to talk of identity *across worlds* and *across times*.)

Suppose for the sake of exposition that the essential properties of people are their biological origins (Kripke 1972). What, on this view, are Beyoncé's essential properties? Call the relevant sperm Mathew and the relevant egg Tina. Then Beyoncé's only essential properties are (i) originating-from-Mathew and (ii) originating-from-Tina. Beyoncé could not fail to have these properties without failing to be altogether. Now, Beyoncé *also* has the property of being famous, but she has it *accidentally*: she could become utterly unknown without ceasing to exist. On the model I want to propose, this is the crucial difference between Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé in Brentano's ontology. Unlike Beyoncé, famous-Beyoncé could not cease to be famous without ceasing altogether. So famous-Beyoncé has *three* essential properties: (i) originating-from-Mathew, (ii) originating- from-Tina, and (iii) being famous.

Now, it may well be that biological origins are not essential to human beings, contrary to Kripke. Perhaps some other property F is, such that F determines Beyoncé's identity and persistence conditions. We would then say that, on Brentano's view, Beyoncé's essential property is being F, whereas famous-Beyoncé's essential properties are (i) being F and (ii) being famous; two-legged-Beyoncé's essential properties are (i) being F and (ii) being two-legged; famous-two-legged-Beyoncé's essential properties are (i) being F, (ii) being famous, and (iii) being two-legged; and so on. I will continue to conduct the discussion assuming the essentiality of origins, but do so merely for ease of exposition.

On this way of understanding the relation between Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé, the two are simply *coincident objects*, somewhat as the statue and the clay are often claimed to be.[27] A minority of philosophers holds that the statue and the lump of clay are numerically identical; this is 'one-thingism.' But most philosophers are 'two-thingists,' holding that the statue and the clay happen to be collocated but are nonetheless distinct entities. Typically, this is motivated precisely by citing differences in modal (or temporal) properties: the statue could not (or did not) survive shuttering to pieces, but the clay could (or did) (see Baker 1997).

My suggestion is that we understand Brentano's view on substance and accident on the model of the statue and the clay. Call this the *coincidence model*. In a way, Brentano's reism can be seen as a sort of 'many-thingism'

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[27]   What is coincidence? When the coincident concrete particulars are material, this coincidence amounts to collocation. But the notion of coincidence must be wider than that of collocation: in Brentano's ontology, there are also a-spatial concrete particulars—mental substances—and those would coincide, but would not be collocated, with their mental accidents.

that posits a great multitude of coinciding concrete particulars. It recognizes not only the statue and the clay, but also the shapely-statue, the beige-statue, the hard-clay, and so on. Still speaking metaphorically, or within the property fiction, we may say that these many things coincide and have the same non-modal and non-temporal properties, but differ in their modal and temporal ones.

To repeat, this talk of difference in properties is metaphorical (or fictionalistic) in the coincidence model. For Brentano, strictly speaking there are no properties. Literally, then, Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé are simply brutely numerically different things.[28] Ultimately, there is nothing *in virtue of which* they are different, nothing that *accounts for* their difference. More generally, Brentano takes the individuation of things as an inexplicable primitive: things are just different, nothing *makes* them different. This may seem initially puzzling, but of course every ontology must take *something* as primitive. For *each* candidate 'something,' we naturally prefer some metaphysical explanation over primitivism. Yet we cannot give a metaphysical explanation for *all* of them. Somewhere in our ontology we must accept a primitive. Brentano's primitive is the individuation of concrete particulars—they are primitively different, without anything *making* them different.

Upon reflection, the identity and difference of concrete particulars is a perfectly reasonable spot to go primitivist. For it may well be independently plausible. It is commonly thought that *properties* are not powerful enough to individuate particulars: there could be a world with relativistic space in which there is nothing but two qualitatively indistinguishable spheres floating about (Black 1952). This has motivated some to posit *haecceities* to account for the individuation of particulars. But it is hard to see what this buys us. The idea is that John and Mary are different because (i) John's-haecceity and Mary's-haecceity are different and (ii) the difference between John's-haecceity and Mary's-haecceity is brute and inexplicable. But how is this better than saying simply that (iii) the difference between John and Mary is brute and inexplicable? Brute individuation of haecceities is no less brutal than brute individuation of concrete particulars. Given that we have no independent handle on what haecceities actually *are*, introducing them into our ontology appears entirely epidialectic.[29] Thus brute individuation of concrete particulars may well be independently plausible (see also Hazlett 2010). But even if it were not so plausible, and represented a cost, it would

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[28] We can speak literally only if we use a fictionality operator, saying something like this: in the fiction of properties, Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé have different modal or temporal properties; they share properties $F_1, \ldots, F_n$, but while in Beyoncé $F_i, \ldots, F_k$ are essential and the rest are accidental, in famous-Beyoncé $F_i, \ldots, F_k$ *plus F_m* are essential and the rest are accidental.

[29] This is probably why Brentano unequivocally rejects 'the wholly imaginary fiction of an haecceity' (Brentano 1933: 112).

not be a pointless cost. For it buys us a fourth option for a strictly nominal-ist ontology.[30]

It might be objected that the analogy with the statue/clay case is too weak to render intelligible the present interpretation of Brentano's reism. In the statue/clay case, there is an asymmetry between the two things, insofar as the clay *constitutes* the statue (but the statue does not constitute the clay). Coincidence is a symmetric relation, observes the objector, but we can make sense of it only in conjunction with the asymmetric relation of consti-tution. There are no cases of coincidence without constitution. In contrast, Brentano's reism involves many coincident things with no asymmetric rela-tion between them: famous-Beyoncé, two-legged-Beyoncé, long-haired-Beyoncé, and so on are all on a par, with no constitution relations obtaining among them.

My response is twofold. First, coincidence without constitution is nowise *excluded* by the statue/clay case. Suppose Sculp and Tor are sculptors com-missioned by City Hall to collaborate on a new clay statue for the city square. Through a misunderstanding, Sculp is under the impression that they are to sculpt a duck, while Tor is under the impression that they are to sculpt a rabbit. Improbably, the misunderstanding is never discovered, and their collaboration results in a duck-rabbit contraption. On the reasonable assumption that sculpture individuation is sensitive to sculptor intentions, it is not implausible to hold that the city square ends up hosting *three* coinci-dent objects: the clay, the duck sculpture, and the rabbit sculpture. Although the clay asymmetrically constitutes both the duck sculpture and the rabbit sculpture, the coincidence relation between the two sculptures is perfectly symmetric. At the very least, then, we can use the relationship between Sculp's and Tor's sculptures as a model for famous-Beyoncé and two-leg-ged-Beyoncé.

Admittedly, in this case both sculptures individually depend asymmetri-cally on a third item, in that neither could exist without the clay but the clay could exist without either. But we find this feature in Brentano's reism as well: famous-Beyoncé, two-legged-Beyoncé, long-haired-Beyoncé, and the like all depend asymmetrically on Beyoncé: none of the former could exist without the latter but the latter could exist without any of the former. It is for this reason, in fact, that Brentano considers Beyoncé a *substance* and famous-Beyoncé, two-legged-Beyoncé, and long-haired-Beyoncé *accidents*.

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[30]   Arguably, this cost is not special to Brentano's reism, but must be accrued by any ontol-ogy that buys us a strictly nominalist ontology *without* illicit relations and *with* distinct truthmakers for distinct fundamental truths. For if there are no illicit relations and prop-erties posited, then we cannot appeal to such properties and relations to *characterize* concrete particulars and thereby account for their difference in terms of their different characteristics. It then becomes hard to see what else we could appeal to in order to explain their difference.

The coincidence model makes sense of Brentano's four puzzling claims.

Start with Claim (a): Beyoncé is a substance, famous-Beyoncé an accident. The traditional notion of a substance is that of an entity enjoying independent existence; an accident is an entity whose existence depends on another's. To say that famous-Beyoncé is an accident of Beyoncé whereas Beyoncé herself is a substance, then, is to say that famous-Beyoncé's existence depends on Beyoncé's whereas Beyoncé's existence does not depend on anything else's. The first part of this falls out of the coincidence model straightforwardly. In the model, Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé have all the same (non-modal, non-temporal) properties, but different subsets of these are essential. For Beyoncé, the essential subset is

S_2: {originating-from-Mathew, originating-from-Tina}.

For famous-Beyoncé, it is

S_3: {originating-from-Mathew, originating-from-Tina, being famous}.

Note that every member of S_2 is also a member of S_3, whereas not every member of S_3 is a member of S_2. It follows that there is a possible circumstance in which all members of S_2 are co-instantiated but not all members of S_3 are (namely, the circumstance in which Beyoncé exists but is not famous), but no possible circumstance in which all members of S_3 are co-instantiated but not all members of S_2 are.[31] The instantiation of all S_2's members is thus a *precondition* for the instantiation of all S_3's members (but not vice versa). Within the coincidence model, this means that Beyoncé's existence is a precondition for famous-Beyoncé's (but not vice versa). That is, famous-Beyoncé's existence depends on Beyoncé's, which means that the former is an accident of the latter. More generally, we may say that for any concrete particulars x and y, x is an *accident of y* iff the set of y's essential properties is a proper subset of the set of x's essential properties.[32] We may then say that x is a *substance* iff there is no y such that x is an accident of y.

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[31] I speak of set members being instantiated because the members in this case are *properties*.

[32] This implies that two-legged-famous-Beyoncé is an accident of famous-Beyoncé, hence an accident of an accident, which may be thought implausible. However, it is hard to see in this implication a major liability for the view—upon reflection it is not all that surprising: just as ontologists are generally comfortable with higher-order properties (e.g., the property of being Jimmy's favorite property), they should be comfortable with higher-order accidents. In any case, Brentano explicitly accepts such higher-order accidents (see Brentano 1933: 49, 114).

Since S_3 is not a proper subset of S_2, Beyoncé is not an accident of famous-Beyoncé. For Beyoncé to be a substance, there would have to be no *other* thing Beyoncé is an accident of. Now, one might claim that there clearly does exist proper subsets of S_2, for example

> S_1: {originating-from-Mathew}.

This appears to imply that Beyoncé, whose essential subset of properties is S_2, is an accident of the thing whose essential subset is S_1—call it 'Mathew-originating-Beyoncé.' If Beyoncé is an accident of Mathew-originating-Beyoncé, then Beyoncé is not a substance after all.

One could defend Brentano here by claiming that S_2 misrepresents the doctrine of the essentiality of origins, and should be replaced with

> S_2*: {originating-from-Mathew&Tina}.

The idea would be that while S_1 is a proper subset of S_2, it is not a proper subset of S_2*. More deeply, however, we should remember that the essentiality of origins is not Brentano's view, but simply one we have used to *illustrate* how his nominalism works. Brentano's own view, as we saw above, is that things individuate brutely. There are no specific characteristics in virtue of which Beyoncé is the thing she is; she is what she is and that is all there is to it. Thus, there is a difference between the truthmakers of the following two truths:

> (T$_4$) Beyoncé originates from Mathew and Tina.

> (T$_5$) Beyoncé exists.

Only the truthmaker of T$_5$ is Beyoncé herself. At most, then, we could say that the essential subset of Beyoncé's properties is

> S_0: {Beyoncé-ness}.[33]

Clearly, S_0 has no proper subset. Accordingly, there is no thing of which Beyoncé is an accident. In other words, Beyoncé is a substance.

Consider next Claim (b): both Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé are things. It might seem odd that Brentano should use the term 'accident' to describe concrete particulars, since traditionally accidents were thought of as properties. But if the crucial feature of accidents is that (unlike substances) they

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[33] In truth, we cannot even say this, if it is taken to suggest that for Brentano what makes Beyoncé the thing she is is some individual nature or haecceity special to her. For as noted, Brentano rejects haecceities.

are incapable of independent existence, it is perfectly reasonable within a reistic framework to consider concrete particulars incapable of independent existence to be accidents. Since famous-Beyoncé's existence depends on other existents, it is an accident—despite being a concrete particular. Beyoncé is a substance not simply because she is a concrete particular, but because she is a concrete particular whose existence depends on no other's. This appears to entitle Brentano to say that there is only one substance in one place at one time, thus respecting the old principle of the 'impenetrability' of substance.[34] There may be many concrete particulars in the same place at the same time, but only one substance in a place at a time.

Particularly perplexing is Brentano's claim that (c) Beyoncé is a proper part of famous-Beyoncé. More generally, for Brentano a substance is always a proper part of each of its accidents. This otherwise odd claim makes sense, however, in the coincidence model. Suppose again that Beyoncé's essential properties are S_2 and famous-Beyoncé's are S_3. Thinking of S_2 and S_3 as *sets* of properties, we said that the former is a proper *subset* of the latter. But if we think of S_2 and S_3 as *sums* of properties, we can say that the former is a proper *part* of the latter. Now, since in the reistic framework there are forsooth no properties, literally we can only speak directly of the objects, saying that Beyoncé is (primitively) a proper part of famous-Beyoncé. But the metaphor or fiction of essential properties of coinciding objects helps us see why we should say this.

Brentano's most perplexing claim is doubtless (d): although Beyoncé is a *proper* part of famous-Beyoncé, famous-Beyoncé has no *other* part that supplements Beyoncé. More generally, every substance is an unsupplemented proper part of each of its accidents. This is an extremely bizarre claim. Given that the table-leg is only a proper part of the table, we can be certain that the table has some other part that supplements the leg, that 'makes the table whole' so to speak. But Brentano insists this is not the case with Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé: the latter has no other part but the former. It is natural to dismiss this as straightforwardly incoherent (Simons 2006: 92); it certainly contravenes classical mereology's axiom of supplementation (if x is a proper part of y, then there is a z, such that z is part of y and z does not overlap x). However, although there may be better ways to put it, the idea is not unmotivated, and the coincidence model can help us see why. Let us continue to indulge the supposition that in Beyoncé's location there is one thing whose essence is originating-from-Mathew&Tina and a second thing whose essence is originating-from-Mathew&Tina + being-famous. For there to be something that supplements the first thing and makes whole the second thing, there would have to exist, in the same location, also a thing

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[34]   Brentano is clearly sympathetic to the impenetrability principle (see Brentano 1933: 154).

whose essence is *just* being-famous. This would be a thing with all the same (non-modal, non-temporal) properties as Beyoncé, but whose only essential property is being famous—call it 'The Famous.' If The Famous existed, then it could supplement Beyoncé and make whole famous-Beyoncé. But Brentano evidently thinks there simply is no such thing as The Famous. And for good reason: The Famous would have to reappear elsewhere to make up the difference between Chalmers and famous-Chalmers, at which point The Famous no longer looks like an irrepeatable concrete particular.[35] Furthermore, The Famous would have to be something that can change every property but its fame; it could in principle be a famous singer one moment, a famous rock the next, and a famous concept the moment after—an odd entity to welcome into one's ontology. The upshot is that since The Famous does not exist, it cannot supplement Beyoncé and 'make up the difference' with famous-Beyoncé. Accordingly, Beyoncé is an unsupplemented proper part of famous-Beyoncé.[36]

The coincidence model helps us see, then, how Brentano ends up with unsupplemented parts. His terminological choice may have been infelicitous. Chisholm, in an exemplary exercise of interpretive charity, tries to defend him by suggesting that he simply 'takes the term "part" somewhat more widely than it is ordinarily taken' (Chisholm 1978: 202). Nonetheless, it might be wiser to devise a new term for the wider relation ('dependence' would not be bad!) and reserve the term 'parthood' for the relation that obeys the axiom of supplementation.[37]

5. Objections and Replies

In this final section, I consider a variety of objections to Brentano's reism, in the hope of showing that it is truly a viable fourth option for truthmaker nominalism.

The first objection to consider is that Brentano's reism is unacceptably counterintuitive: it contravenes the intuitions that (i) it is rare to have more than one concrete particular in one place at one time and that (ii) there are entities shared among different concrete particulars—universals. However,

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[35] Brentano makes this point in the following passage: 'Suppose an atom were capable of thinking: then the thinking atom would be a while which, if the atom ceased to think, would be reduced to one of its parts. But one could not at all say that its thinking could be preserved if the atom ceased to exist…If another atom were to think the same thing, it would differ from the first not only qua atom but also qua thinking thing; as thinking thing it would be individuated by the individuality of the atom' (Brentano 1933: 115).

[36] As before, all this property and essence talk must be understood metaphorically or fictionalistically.

[37] This would involve giving up on the mereological construal of dependence, but that does not seem so much worse than keeping the mereological construal at the price of changing the meaning of 'part.'

Brentano can readily *explain away* these conflicts with intuition. First, the intuitive pull of (i) is largely inherited from the principle of impenetrability, which is frequently and mistakenly conjoined with the idea that only substances are concrete particulars (itself a philosophical dogma rather than a folk intuition). Once we reject this second idea, we see that the principle of impenetrability can be respected without commitment to (i). Furthermore, Brentano is not alone in feeling the need to posit such curious coincident particulars as famous-Beyoncé and two-legged-Beyoncé; he fits squarely in an Aristotelian tradition stretching from Aristotle's own discussion of the relationship between the man and the musical man (in *Physics* I.7) to Kit Fine's more recent discussion of 'qua objects' (Fine 1982) such as the man-qua-musical and Beyoncé-qua-famous. Meanwhile, the explanation for (ii) is that although the psychological reality of judgments is such that they are all existential, public-language sentences have a subject-predicate surface grammar that misleads us into parsing the world into entities that correspond to subject terms and entities that correspond to predicates (namely, universals).[38] Once we realize the real structure of judgments, and tailor our ontology to provide truthmakers to them (rather than to public-language sentences), the pull to universals ought to dissipate.

It may be objected that positing so many things in Beyoncé's spacetime is not only unintuitive but also egregiously unparsimonious. There might well be infinitely many Beyoncé truths, in which case Brentano would have to posit infinitely many concrete particulars sharing Beyoncé's spacetime—a crowded ontology indeed. However, Brentano's ontology cannot be worse off here than the currently popular 'Armstrongian' ontology discussed in §2. After all, that ontology faces just as many truths, to which it too wishes to provide truthmakers. It is just that *its* truthmakers tend to be states of affairs rather than concrete particulars. Still, they are ontological posits/entities/quantifiabilia/ontoids all the same.[39]

Admittedly, Armstrong (2004: 10) makes a number of moves that allow for economy in truthmakers, mostly using his 'entailment principle': if E makes true *p*, and *p* entails *q*, then E makes true *q*. However, nothing prevents Brentano from adopting the entailment principle (but with E ranging over concrete particulars rather than states of affairs), and accordingly incorporating parallel economies in his reism. Just as Armstrong rejects the state of affairs of Beyoncé-being-famous-or-eight-foot-tall and lets Beyoncé-

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[38] On the misleading structure of language, see Brentano 1930: 71–3 (a fragment from 1905).

[39] To regard an ontology as more extravagant only because its posits are concrete particulars rather than states of affairs would be to regard concrete particulars as somehow 'more real' than states of affairs. But even if we could make sense of the expression 'more real,' it would be quite ironic for the opponent of nominalism to rely on the greater reality of concrete particulars!

being-famous make true 'Beyoncé is famous or eight foot tall,' Brentano could reject the concrete particular famous-or-eight-foot-tall-Beyoncé and let famous-Beyoncé make true 'Beyoncé is famous or eight foot tall.'[40] By adopting Armstrong's entailment principle, Brentano can guarantee his reism will be just as economical as Armstrong's ontology. The only difference, to repeat, is that it appeals to unusual concrete particulars to do a job that Armstrong assigns to states of affairs.[41]

The Armstrongian ontology may in fact be at a disadvantage in this area. For although it posits the exact same number of *token* entities as Brentano's, in the process it invokes a *greater* number of *types* of entity. It posits not only concrete particulars but also states of affairs, as well as such constituents of states of affairs as properties and relations (construed as universals).[42] By contrast, reism posits only concrete particulars. So however it scores on token-parsimony, reism certainly outscores the Armstrongian ontology on type-parsimony. This is especially significant if, as some philosophers have argued (Lewis 1973), only type-parsimony matters in philosophy. On this view, two ontologists can sensibly argue over whether there are ducks or only particles arranged duck-wise, but how many token ducks there are is the zoologist's rather than ontologist's business. (It is not a virtue of an ontological theory that it posits 173 ducks rather than a million.) If this is right, then reism's commitment to a great number of concrete particulars does not inflate its ontology in a relevant way.[43]

It may be objected that Brentano's reism involves other ontological extravagances. Most notably, Brentano admits into his late ontology not

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40 More generally, Brentano could shun 'disjunctive things' just as Armstrong shuns disjunctive stats of affairs. Importantly, if reism does not posit disjunctive things, it becomes rather unlikely that it would have to posit infinitely many things where Beyoncé is.

41 In fact, Brentano presents an explosion argument against state-of-affairs ontologies (Brentano 1930: 108). If in addition to such concrete particulars as Beyoncé, there are also such states of affairs as Beyoncé's-existence, says Brentano, then it is unclear why there should not also be such states of affairs as Beyoncé's-existence's-existence, Beyoncé's-existence's-existence's-existence, and so forth.

42 This consideration will bear only against any state-of-affairs ontology that takes states of affairs to be structured entities involving things, properties, and relations as constituents. This is of course the commonsensical and traditional picture, but there are also views that treat states of affairs as simple and unstructured, and that on the contrary attempt to assay things, properties, and relations in terms of certain collections of states of affairs (see Skyrms 1981). Such a 'primitivist' state-of-affairs ontology would *not* be at a type-parsimony disadvantage relative to reism.

43 Personally, I am somewhat skeptical of Lewis' view here. It seems to me that reism's proliferation of concrete particulars, though limited to one type of entity, is nonetheless driven by philosophical rather than empirical considerations, and therefore is very much the philosopher's business (see Nolan 1997). However, it is still worth noting that *if* one holds the view that only type-parsimony matters, this certainly casts reism as greatly superior to its more traditional competitor.

only substances and accidents (as two kinds of concrete particular), but also every plurality (*Mehrheit*) of substances and every part of a substance (see Brentano 1933: 19). However, it is clear that none of these ontological 'additions' is *needed to meet the truthmaker challenge*. To that extent, they seem 'optional.' Given Brentano's concern for parsimony, and given that these pluralities and parts do not seem to render any explanatory services to him, one might wonder why he did make room for them in his ontology. And one suspects the answer is that he considered them, in today's jargon, an 'ontological free lunch.' They are, in Armstrong's (1997: 12) apt phrase, 'no addition of being.' On this line of thought, the only beings in Brentano's ontology that 'cost something' are the substances and accidents—both concrete particulars. The rest 'comes for free.'[44]

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

If there are harmful objections to Brentano's reism, then, they probably target the specifics of the theory rather than general issues of intuitiveness and parsimony.

One such objection might be that Brentano's paraphrases fail to get rid of states of affairs. Even if we paraphrase T_1 into P_4, and hold that what makes 'Beyoncé is famous' true is simply the existence of famous-Beyoncé, that famous-Beyoncé exists is a state of affairs in its own right. It is a *fact* that famous-Beyoncé exists, just as it is a fact that Beyoncé does. After all, the judgment that famous-Beyoncé exists is a propositional attitude, whose truthmaker is the Russellian proposition, or state of affairs, that famous-Beyoncé exists. We may distinguish between *predicative* and *existential* states of affairs, and note that paraphrasing T_1 into P_4 moves us from the former to the latter as our ostensible truthmaker, but it is not enough to rid us of states of affairs altogether.

However, Brentano clearly rejects this view of existentials' truthmakers, holding that T_1 and P_4 are made true not by the *existence* of famous-Beyoncé, but *famous-Beyoncé herself*. Brentano is explicit on this, writing in a 1906 letter to Marty that 'the being of A need not be produced in order for the judgment "A is" to be…correct; all that is needed is A' (Brentano 1930: 85). That is, it is concrete particulars themselves, rather than some states of affairs or facts regarding their existence, that make true existential judgments. In a

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[44] A more friendly objector might suggest that Brentano missed out on a potential economy. Once we have in place famous-Beyoncé, two-legged-Beyoncé, long-haired-Beyoncé, and so on, it is unclear why we need to admit Beyoncé *in addition*: the former could collectively make true 'There is a Beyoncé.' The result would be a sort of 'reductive reism,' whereby Beyoncé is *nothing but* the collection of all F_i-Beyoncés. In response, I only wish to say that I am open to the possibility that this would indeed be a reistic improvement on Brentano's ontology.

slogan: The truthmakers of existentials are not existences but existents. To support this position, Brentano argues that existential judgments are in fact *not* propositional attitudes. They are *objectual attitudes* in the sense in which loving *x* and liking *y* are often claimed to be. While it is true that existential judgments involve mental commitment to the existence of something, for Brentano this commitment is not part of the judgment's *content*; it is an aspect of its *attitude*.[45] We may put this by saying that a judgment accepting the existence of *a* does not represent *a*-as-existent, but instead represents-as-existent *a*.[46] The existence-commitment is a modification of the *manner* in which the judgment does its representing. It is not part of *what* the judgment represents, but of *how* it represents.[47] Accordingly, when we judge that famous-Beyoncé exists, the psychological reality of our mental act is again not as plain as the surface grammar of the corresponding report suggests. Rather, the psychological reality is this: the judgment's content is exhausted by famous-Beyoncé; the commitment to her existence comes in only at the level of attitude. Since the judgment's content is exhausted by famous-Beyoncé, famous-Beyoncé constitutes its entire truthmaker. There is no need to posit a state of affairs of famous-Beyoncé-existing.

Importantly, it is only at this late stage of the dialectic that Brentano adduces his aforementioned argument from the univocality of 'something.' The burden of the argument is to show that existential judgments are directed at something in the same sense in which objectual attitudes such as loving and liking are directed at something. Thus it is inaccurate to represent Brentano as expecting that argument to carry the burden of proving reism. It carries a much more limited burden: to prove that once the existential paraphrases are available for truths in need of truthmakers, it is the thing itself that functions as their truthmaker, not the (fact of the) thing's existence.[48]

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[45] In more Brentanian terminology: it is not an aspect of the *object* of consciousness, but of the *mode* of consciousness (1973a: 201).

[46] Meanwhile, a judgment rejecting the existence of *a* represents-as-nonexistent *a*.

[47] What motivates this to Brentano, among other things, is his conviction that existence is not an attribute (1874: 229). Since existence is not an attribute, (true) existentials cannot be understood as attributing existence to something: if things do not *have* such an attribute, any judgment which attributed it to them would be erroneous. Therefore, existence cannot be part of the judgment's content.

[48] We can appreciate this by noting that the opening paragraph of the 1914 essay in which the argument appears sets the essay's agenda precisely in terms of the threat of existential states of affairs supplanting things as truthmakers: 'There are even those who would say that, if a certain thing does not exist, then there is the non-being of that thing, and that, if a certain thing does exist, then there is, not only the thing, but also the being of the thing, as well as the being of the being of the thing. (Brentano 1930: 107) This impression is reinforced by considering Brentano's statement of his argumentation's conclusion in Paragraph 8 of the essay, which opens as follows: 'Strictly speaking, then, it is obvious that there is no thought of the being of A. We think only of the A itself' (Ibid.: 109).

Another objection might target Brentano's account of the substance/accident distinction in terms of unilateral dependence.[49] Consider the following two truths:

(T$_5$) Beyoncé exists.

(T$_6$) Beyoncé is spatially extended.

Presumably, T$_5$ is made true by Beyoncé, whereas T$_6$ is made true by extended-Beyoncé. Within the reistic framework, it is plausible to consider Beyoncé and extended-Beyoncé two numerically distinct things. It is also plausible, now, that Beyoncé cannot exist without extended-Beyoncé existing (she is incapable of disembodied, extensionless existence).[50] To that extent, Beyoncé's existence depends on extended-Beyoncé's. If so, Beyoncé is *not* a substance after all, since her existence depends on something else's. The same reasoning can be repeated with obviously fundamental truths, such as 'Tony the lepton exists' and 'Tony the lepton has mass.' Presumably, Tony cannot exist without massy-Tony, but intuitively Tony is the substance and massy-Tony the accident.

To my knowledge, Brentano nowhere addresses this objection. There are several options open to him, however. One is to accept that Beyoncé and Tony are not substances, offering the status of a substance to fewer things than expected. The cost here is that he may well end up with no substances at all, as this kind of example reproduces quite easily. A second option is to hold that, appearances to the contrary, Tony and mass-Tony are one and the same thing (as are Beyoncé and extended-Beyoncé). The cost here is that we end up assigning the same truthmaker to different fundamental truths, which makes Brentano vulnerable to a *tu quoque* from the ostrich nominalist. A third option for Brentano is to modify his account of substance so a substance's existence is allowed to depend on another thing's existence, provided the dependence is not unilateral. Thus, since extended-Beyoncé's existence depends on Beyoncé's just as much as Beyoncé's does on extended-Beyoncé's, Beyoncé comes out a substance after all. The cost here is that extended-Beyoncé seems to come out a substance as well (as does

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[49] Recall that on Brentano's account, *x* is an accident of *y* iff *x* depends for its existence on *y*, and *x* is a substance iff there is no *y* such that *x* is an accident of *y*. Thus what makes one entity an accident of another is the unilateral ontological dependence of the former upon the latter.

[50] Responding that Beyoncé is in the first instance a soul perfectly capable of disembodied existence would be exploiting a distracting feature of the example, namely, that it has to do with a person. The objector could run the same objection with something else, say my old car Mia. Mia had no soul, and could certainly not exist unextended. But intuitively it was a substance in the same sense Beyoncé is.

massy-Tony), thereby violating the impenetrability principle. A fourth option is to simply rid reism of the substance/accident distinction and give all concrete particulars equal status. The emerging view is still strictly nominalist, though there is something unintuitive about it, and there is a sense that it leaves out an important metaphysical distinction: Beyoncé and Tony certainly *seem* in some sense ontologically prior to famous-Beyoncé and massy-Tony.

A final option—most plausible, it seems—is to go beyond dependence relations and appeal to something like the modern notion of *grounding*. More accurately, we need to envisage a grounding-like relation R that holds between *concrete particulars* (rather than between facts or states of affairs), such that Beyoncé bears R to extended-Beyoncé but extended-Beyoncé does not bear R to Beyoncé (and Tony bears R to massy-Tony but not conversely). Brentano does speak sometimes of substances *sustaining* (*erhalten*) accidents, and we may use this term for the relation R. The claim would be that Beyoncé *sustains* extended-Beyoncé but extended-Beyoncé does not sustain Beyoncé (similarly for Tony and massy-Tony). To be sure, we would then need to show *why* this grounding-like sustaining relation is unilateral even though the dependence is bilateral. However, some story should be possible to devise here, given that Beyoncé is (as we saw above) associated with {Beyoncé-ness}, whereas extended-Beyoncé is (presumably) associated with {Beyoncé-ness, extendedness}, and the former is a proper subset of the latter. In any case, appealing to the notion of sustaining does not mean positing a relation in addition to concrete particulars. Although it is true that

(T_7)   Beyoncé sustains extended-Beyoncé,

T_7 can be paraphrased into

(T_8)   There is an extended-Beyoncé-sustaining—Beyoncé.

Ultimately, it is the existence of this strange concrete particular that ensures Beyoncé's status as a substance.

Conclusion

Brentano's reism is a form of nominalism, but one distinguished by (i) being strict in the sense of shunning both universals and abstracta and (ii) opting for an unusual strategy of thing-proliferation to meet the truthmaker challenge. I have argued that this view, though requiring some time to get used to, is a perfectly viable fourth option for truthmaker nominalism (in addition to the more familiar class, mereological, and resemblance nominal-

isms). Two costs associated with it are the brute individuation of concrete particulars and the need for a grounding-like notion of sustaining. But every ontological theory has its costs and liabilities, including the modern forms of strict nominalism (as is clear from the extant literature). In addition, *all* forms of strict nominalism are equally vulnerable to certain general objections (see, notably, Jackson 1977). It has not been my purpose here to suggest that Brentano's reism is The Ontological Truth. Rather, my goal has been to show that any ontologist with nominalist predilections and a sensitivity to truthmaker considerations in ontological theory-choice should seriously consider Brentano's reism as a viable option—an option at least as prima facie plausible as the more familiar forms of nominalism.[51]

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