



The Phenomenal Basis of Intentionality by Angela Mendelovici, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, ISBN 9780190863807, 275 Pages

Christopher M. Stratman¹

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1 Introduction

The Phenomenal Intentionality Theory (PIT) is a consciousness-first approach to intentionality. It attempts to explain intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness, rather than explain consciousness in terms of intentional or representational states. According to PIT, “all original intentionality arises from phenomenal consciousness” (p. 83). In *The Phenomenal Basis of Intentionality* (Mendelovici 2018), Angela Mendelovici defends a version of PIT dubbed “Identity PIT”, which claims: “Original intentionality is identical to phenomenal consciousness, and there is no derived intentionality, though there are non-intentional representational states that derive from intentional states” (p. 83). On this version of PIT, intentional states arise from conscious states because they are identical to them.

Mendelovici’s book is ambitious, insofar as it presents and defends a novel view of the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality. It is a first-rate contribution to the literature on PIT because it represents “a version of PIT that is not only motivated on in-principle grounds but also empirically adequate in that it can accommodate all cases of intentionality, including those that are commonly thought to pose problems for PIT” (p. xvi). At every step, Mendelovici challenges the reader to reconsider widely held, orthodox assumptions in philosophy of mind about the nature of intentionality. Many articles discussing PIT have been published but Mendelovici’s *The Phenomenal Basis of Intentionality* is the first monograph that directly defends the view. For these reasons, it should be considered required reading for anyone interested in PIT, and it will pave the way for future work on the relationship between consciousness and intentionality.

The goal of this review is to give the reader an overview of Mendelovici’s book and highlight its strengths and weaknesses throughout. I shall then introduce a general criticism of the argumentative strategy deployed throughout the book, followed by a

✉ Christopher M. Stratman
cstratman@huskers.unl.edu

¹ Department of Philosophy, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 315 Louise Pound Hall, PO Box 880321, Lincoln, NE 68588-0321, USA

question about the lasting impact the book will have on the literature regarding PIT and philosophy of mind more generally.

2 Defining Intentionality

The book begins by “fixing reference” on what we mean by intentionality. Mendelovici offers the following ostensive definition: “the feature that in paradigm cases we sometimes both (i) notice introspectively in ourselves and (ii) are tempted to describe using representational terms, such as ‘about,’ ‘of,’ ‘represent,’ ‘present,’ or ‘saying something’” (p. 6). This way of fixing reference has the advantage of avoiding controversial commitments and it helps Mendelovici argue for the unique claim that intentionality alone does not play the sorts of roles that we often attribute to it (p. 19). Alternative ways of defining intentionality that commonly appeal to the likes of folk psychological roles, behavioral explanation, neuroscience, truth and reference, and so on, might pick out something completely different than the ostensive definition (p. 9). Mendelovici then argues that the ostensive definition is preferable to these alternatives. Indeed, Mendelovici claims that our general theory-independent ways of accessing intentionality show that we can introspectively access the superficial character of our own intentional states and by considering the psychological role our intentional states play in human behavior and reasoning (pp. 26–28). But this does not mean that we have access to the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality through introspection or consideration of psychological roles. It only means that we have access to the superficial character of intentionality. But what exactly is this distinction between the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality and its superficial character?

There are several substantive theories one could endorse regarding what the deep nature of intentional states and contents really are. For example, intentional states and contents might be: (i) states that bear some form of naturalistic tracking relation to worldly entities and properties, (ii) states that bear some primitive relation to abstracta or sets of possible worlds, or (iii) states that are intrinsic states of the subject. And the deep nature of intentional mental contents have typically been understood in terms of “concrete combinations of worldly objects and properties, sets of possible worlds, or properties of intentional states” (p. 25). Mendelovici claims, however, that we can know which intentional states and contents we have without knowing the deep natures of these states. In such cases what we know is an intentional state or content's superficial character, “the set of superficial features that characterize it as the intentional state or content that it is” (p. 25). For example, according to Mendelovici, we can know whether we represent or without knowing the deep nature of our intentional state or content. What we know is its superficial character.

According to Mendelovici, introspection and considerations of psychological role can tell us about the superficial character of intentional states and contents, even if they do not tell us about their deep natures. Since theories of intentionality should be able to make predictions about which states we represent in certain cases, we can use these theory-independent methods to test such predictions. This is particularly important for the argumentative strategy deployed in the book. As will become clear, much of Mendelovici's argument in support of Identity PIT ultimately hinges on whether one

accepts her ostensive definition of intentionality and the distinction between an intentional mental state's superficial character and its deep, metaphysical nature.

3 A Refutation of Tracking Theories and Functional Role Theories

To motivate why we should adopt PIT, Mendelovici offers a refutation of three commonly accepted theories of intentionality: (i) Tracking Theories, (ii) Short-Arm Functional Role Theories and (iii) Long-Arm Functional Role Theories. The most philosophically interesting and important for proponents of PIT is Mendelovici's criticisms of (i). Let us consider this point and then briefly review the reasons why Mendelovici thinks that this refutation can be applied to (ii) and (iii).

Roughly, tracking theories of intentionality aim to explain the nature of intentionality in purely naturalistic terms by appealing to neurological detecting mechanisms that carry information or have a function to carry information between a subject and her environment—in short, to track the objects and properties of objects in a subject's environment. Accordingly, tracking theories predict what a subject tracks in her environment. As Mendelovici states: “the representation HORSE tracks the property of being a horse. Then a tracking theory taking this tracking relation to give rise to intentionality predicts that HORSE represents the property *horse*” (p.36). So, when we apply this account to a subject's perceptual experience of color, what gets represented or tracked are surface reflectance profiles (p. 39). Mendelovici claims that we notice introspectively that our perceptual experience of color represent what Chalmers (2006) calls “Edenic colors” (p.49). Mendelovici says:

...introspection upon intentional states involving SKY-BLUE reveals a content with a qualitative, simple, primitive *sui generis*, non-dispositional, non-relational Edenic-sky-blue-ish superficial character, i.e., <edenic sky-blue>. In sum, introspective considerations suggest that SKY-BLUE and other perceptual color representations represent edenic colors (p. 42).

The fact that we introspectively recognize edenic colors rather than surface reflectance profiles when we consider our own perceptual experiences of looking at a blue sky gives rise to what Mendelovici calls “mismatch cases” for the tracking theory of intentionality.

The problem is that tracking theories of intentionality falsely predict that our perceptual experiences of a blue sky represent something like surface reflectance profiles because this is what such representations track. But our perceptual experiences represent edenic colors, not surface reflectance profiles. Thus, tracking theories are empirically inadequate. And according to Mendelovici, these mismatch cases cause trouble for functional role theories of intentionality too. Here is why: Short-arm functional role accounts of intentionality cannot give an adequate account of intentional content because they are focused exclusively on functional roles internal to the subject. Thus, short-arm functional role accounts are either hopelessly underdetermined or simply unsupported, since, according to Mendelovici, there is no reason to think that internal functional roles could give rise to intentional content. But long-arm functional

role theories do not fare any better. According to these accounts, “intentionality is a matter of both a representation’s internal functional roles and its functional dispositions with respect to items in the environment” (p. 76). But, long-arm functional role accounts of intentionality must appeal to some version of a tracking relation between a subject’s internal functional roles that determine intentional content and the subject’s environment. Thus, long-arm functional role accounts should be rejected for the same reason that tracking theories should be rejected.

Mendelovici recognizes that these arguments only show that tracking theories are false, not why they are false. The real reason why tracking theories fail is not because they predict the wrong contents but because tracking relations cannot represent anything at all (p. 79). This is the real reason that tracking theories cannot tell us what the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality is. To my mind, Mendelovici’s refutation of tracking theories is the strongest part of the book; several versions of the argument are developed in great detail and various objections are considered with careful attention and thoughtfulness. This section of the book marks a significant contribution to the literature on PIT, insofar as it offers an alternative motivation for the view.

4 An Argument for Identity PIT

Having provided reasons for rejecting standard tracking theories of intentionality, we are now in a position to consider an argument in support of PIT. The main reason to favor PIT over these rival theories, according to Mendelovici, is because “PIT succeeds precisely where these other theories fail” (p. 87). And Mendelovici claims that “the most convincing argument for PIT involves showing how it can be fruitfully developed so as to handle a wide variety of cases and shed light on diverse issues” (p. 86). So, if the real reason to reject tracking theories of intentionality is because “tracking relations and functional roles are simply not the right kinds of ingredients to give rise to intentionality”, then the real reason to accept PIT is that “phenomenal consciousness arguably *is* the right kind of ingredient to give rise to intentionality” (p.90; emphasis in the original). This is Mendelovici’s “real reason” to accept PIT.

If there is a kind of phenomenal intentionality, then the view should yield successful predictions of the superficial character regarding what we represent, which can be confirmed via our theory-independent modes of testing the theory. According to Mendelovici, the intentional content predicted matches what we actually represent. Hence, we have good grounds to accept that, at least in our paradigm cases, PIT is true. This is Mendelovici’s matching argument in support of PIT. But notice that this argument does not show that PIT can give the correct prediction in all cases of alleged intentional content (p. 90). So, if Mendelovici is to show that PIT is the best theory of the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality, then it must be able explain or explain away all apparent cases of intentionality.

PIT faces several problem cases of alleged intentional content, which must be explained or explained away. Mendelovici says that such problem cases include: “thoughts, nonconscious states, and any states representing rich descriptive contents, object-involving contents, and broad contents” (p. 90). And the best way to deal with these problem cases is one that adopts “Identity PIT”—the claim that “original

intentionality is a species of phenomenal consciousness” (p. 94). The way that this gets worked out if thought is the intentional content that a subject is “immediately aware of” or the content that “runs through our minds” when we think that such and such is the case is genuine intentional content (p.97). But what about the contents of thoughts that we are not immediately aware of such as one’s belief that water is wet? Mendelovici attempts to handle such cases by proposing a kind of self-ascriptivism, whereby “we represent various contents by ascribing them to ourselves or our mental states” (p. 97). Here is how Mendelovici describes this view:

On this view, thoughts’ alleged contents derive from our dispositions to have a certain kind of thought with a self-ascriptive phenomenal content, a phenomenal content that specifies that a thought or concepts immediate content cashes out into a further content. The resulting derived contents might be thought of as capturing our best understanding of what we mean when we think a thought, or what we really intend to be getting at (pp. 97-98).

This solution to the problem of the phenomenology of cognition is “inflationist”, insofar as it claims that there is *something-it-is-like* to think a thought one is immediately aware of. It can also be viewed as a kind of eliminativism about at least some alleged intentional contents, since there are contents of thought that are not intentional contents, but only representational contents derived from genuine phenomenal intentional contents (p. 98).

Similar approaches are developed for broad object-involving contents of thought, standing states, and the alleged nonconscious occurrent states. In such cases, either the alleged intentional contents are not genuinely intentional, or they are represented derivatively by being the referent of phenomenally intentional contents (pp. 147–148). Thus, according to Mendelovici’s account, all genuine intentional contents are identical to phenomenally intentional contents that one is immediately aware of when they think a particular thought. All other alleged contents are only derivatively representational, but not genuinely intentional.

In order to show that Identity PIT does a better job of accounting for all cases of alleged intentionality than other versions of PIT, Mendelovici must show why alternative views fail. What Mendelovici says on this front is another example of why I believe Mendelovici’s book will have a lasting impact in the growing literature on PIT. Most rival versions of PIT offer a derivativist accounts of nonconscious states such as one’s belief that “grass is green” (e.g., Loar 2003; Graham et al. 2007; Pautz 2008; Bourget 2010; Kriegel 2011; Horgan and Graham 2012). There are several choice points here that the proponent of PIT could endorse. However, the idea is that all nonconscious forms of intentionality become intentional by original intentionality being passed to them. As Mendelovici says: “The potential original intentionality of phenomenally conscious states is passed around to corresponding nonconscious states” (p.163). Mendelovici admits that derivativism might be able to give the right predictions in all cases, and that Identity PIT lacks any advantage in this regard. But, there are independent reasons to reject the derivativist strategy.

The problem, according to Mendelovici, is that intentionality cannot be passed from one mental state to another. And it is not clear what mechanisms would do the passing. Here is what Mendelovici says about this worry:

Even if derivativism yields predictions that are more in line with our prior expectations...there is a fundamental concern with the view, which is that intentionality is just not the kind of thing that can be passed around as would be required. The worry is that *even if* derivativism appears to give us what appear to be the right answers in all cases, the view fails because the various derivation mechanisms are not in fact sufficient for generating new instances of intentionality (p. 165; emphasis in the original).

But Mendelovici thinks that this worry does not necessarily apply in the case of self-ascriptivism, since it is at least plausible that *we* can pass intentionality around when we ascribe ourselves as being in a certain intentional mental state. For instance, when we take ourselves to have an intentional thought, then we can pass intentionality from an original, phenomenal intentional mental state to a nonconscious or standing state. As Mendelovici says: “Taking something to have a certain content *makes* it have that content (for you)” (p. 166). However, Mendelovici claims that even self-ascriptivism’s derived representation is not a kind of genuine intentionality, since derived representational states are different in nature from paradigm cases of genuine intentionality—unlike in paradigm cases, they are relative to the ascriber and their contents can be indeterminate.

Nevertheless, for those who find that derivativism is the only game in town, Mendelovici argues that “derivativist self-ascriptivism makes the best fallback position for advocates of PIT who want to accept derived intentionality” (p. 169). Even on this fallback view, however, all other cases of alleged intentional states and contents that are not phenomenally conscious or that a subject is not immediately aware of, will not count as genuine intentionality.

Consider what Mendelovici says about nonconscious standing states, such as one’s belief that “grass is green”. According to Identity PIT, there are no genuine, intentional nonconscious standing states. Thus, the only solution available to the proponent of PIT is some form of eliminativism about standing states or dispositional beliefs. But, according to Mendelovici, nonconscious standing states do have a kind of content that allows for the sorts of folk psychological explanations that we typically attribute to beliefs and desires. These sorts of cases are not genuine intentional states, but they are derived representational states, since they get their representational content from genuine intentional states. But this sort of account gives rise to a new problem for Mendelovici’s story about nonconscious standing states.

Suppose that I have the belief that “I need to pick my daughter up from school at 3 pm”. Presumably, this belief counts as a genuine intentional state when it is formed, insofar as I happen to be immediately aware of it when it is occurrently running through my mind. But most of the day, this belief is not running through my mind—that is, throughout most of the day this belief is a standing state or a dispositional belief. Yet, it still guides my actions and plays a role in our folk psychological explanations of my behavior and reasoning. But, according to Mendelovici’s account, most of the time this

standing/dispositional belief is not genuinely intentional but only derivatively representational. However, there may be moments when the belief does run through my mind, and I am immediately aware of its content. For instance, I might lose track of time and think to myself that “I still have another hour before I need to pick my daughter up from school at 3 pm”. Indeed, standing beliefs can shift between being occurrent and standing in numerous ways. If this is correct, then throughout the day this belief can change from being genuinely intentional to being derivatively representational and back to being genuinely intentional, and so on.

Intuitively, this would be rather strange—it would be mysterious how intentionality can be turned on and off like a light switch depending on whether the relevant content is immediately present before one’s mind. One might also wonder what mechanism is responsible for turning intentionality on and off. Mendelovici is silent on these issues. But, if intentionality is not the sort of thing that can be passed around from state to state, as Mendelovici claims, then why should we think that it can be turned on and off? A simpler view would hold that nonconscious standing states, such as one’s beliefs and desires, are either always genuinely intentional, even when they are not immediately running through one’s mind, or they are never genuinely intentional but only derivatively representational. So, either we have a counterexample to Identity PIT, because there will be cases of genuinely intentional nonconscious standing states, or the view will be radically revisionary, insofar as it claims that most of a subject’s beliefs and desires are not genuine intentional states.

Mendelovici might respond to this worry by arguing that our ostensive definition of intentionality ultimately leads to the view that many of the mental states that we tend to count as intentional are not genuinely intentional but only derivatively representational. But then it is not clear why these derived representational states would not also count as a kind of intentionality. According to Mendelovici’s view, whether we count nonconscious standing states as genuine forms of intentionality ultimately depends on how we define what we mean by “intentionality”. Given that the ostensive definition rules out these sorts of states as being genuinely intentional, since they only gesture or point at the superficial characteristics of intentionality but not what the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality actually is, this definition entails that such cognitive states are only derivatively representational. One might worry that this is merely a verbal dispute. One might also worry that by defining intentionality in this ostensive manner, one stacks the deck in favor of a revisionist theory of intentionality, which may put theoretical pressure on one to abandon the *vox populi* that the vast majority of our cognitive states are genuinely intentional. I leave it to the reader to judge whether Mendelovici’s account can escape these worries or if there might be other choice points available to the proponent of PIT worth investigating.

5 A Radically Internalist Picture of the Mind

Having argued that Identity PIT provides the best solution to problem cases, Mendelovici focuses on two major problems for any account of intentionality: (i) the question of whether intentionality is relational or non-relational, and (ii) questions regarding truth and reference. By considering how Identity PIT handles these issues,

Mendelovici is able to offer an account of intentionality that she claims is a “radically internalist picture of the mind” (p. 247).

Regarding (i), Mendelovici argues that relational accounts, which hold that “intentionality is a relation to distinctly existing contents” should be rejected (p. 197). The reason is that such accounts posit the existence of ontologically suspicious entities such as Platonic forms or abstracta. Instead, Mendelovici claims that Identity PIT is a non-relational account. It says that intentionality should be understood in terms of an aspect or non-relational property of a mental state (p. 198). This allows her to argue that the superficial character of an intentional mental state might appear to be relational, while the deep, metaphysical nature of the intentional state is non-relational (pp. 196–197). It is worth mentioning that this view is consistent with other non-relational accounts of intentionality that some proponents of PIT have offered (e.g., Kriegel 2007, and Crane 2013). For this reason, I will not offer any criticism but only mention that for those who find an internalist and non-relational picture of intentionality and mental content on the right track, Mendelovici’s aspect view will likely come as an interesting additional approach available that one could endorse. However, for those who are convinced that intentionality is relational and are, therefore, uninclined to accept an internalist account of intentionality and mental content, this view will probably not be any more convincing than other similar non-relational accounts. So, let us turn to Mendelovici’s view of truth and reference in more detail.

Regarding (ii), Mendelovici offers a matching theory of truth and reference, whereby the content of an intentional mental state is true when it matches the states of affairs that obtain in the world (p. 225). This account is unique, insofar as it is a purely internalist theory of truth and reference—that is, if a subject’s intentional state is true, this is at least partly determined by the conditions of truth that *we* implicitly or explicitly endorse (p. 225). This is a fresh and bold approach to an enormously difficult issue. However, one could argue that this part of Mendelovici’s book is underdeveloped. The literature on the nature of truth and reference is vast, and externalism about mental content is widely accepted. So, even if Mendelovici’s account is on the right track and is a plausible internalist alternative to existing views, one could reasonably expect the issue to be addressed in more detail. Perhaps the issue will be dealt with at a later point as a follow-up monograph. Having said this, it is worth pointing out that Mendelovici does a nice job of signaling some of the philosophically interesting and controversial consequences that may arguably follow from Identity PIT—an internalist picture of truth and reference being a primary example.

This concludes what I want to say in overview of Mendelovici’s fantastic book. Of course, there are many other issues that could be addressed, but for our current purpose, this suffices for a brief discussion of the main themes of the book. There remains two issues that I want to consider in the rest of this review. First, I shall consider a criticism of Mendelovici’s overarching argument in the book. Second, I shall present and attempt to answer an important question regarding the expected impact of the book for the growing literature on PIT. Let us turn our attention to these remaining issues.

6 A Criticism and Question

Let us consider a criticism of the book's argument. Mendelovici gives an ostensive definition of the term 'intentionality'. This is a crucial part of the argument for Identity PIT. But this definition seems to guarantee the account PIT that Mendelovici prefers. Let me explain.

Recall that PIT is a consciousness-first approach to intentionality—that is, we can explain the nature of intentionality by appealing to the phenomenal character of a subject's experience. This reverses the order of explanation from most representationalist accounts, which attempt to explain consciousness by appealing to the nature of intentionality. So, PIT seems to presuppose that intentionality and phenomenal consciousness are not identical. But, according to Identity PIT, they are identical. Thus, it is strange that we could use consciousness to explain the nature of intentionality. Since the identity relation is symmetric, it is rather arbitrary to prefer an explanation of intentionality in terms of the phenomenal character of a subject's experience instead of an explanation of a subject's experience in terms of their intentional mental states. It is not at all clear that Identity PIT would count as a consciousness-first approach to intentionality, since, strictly speaking, the view is consistent with representationalism. If there is sufficient reason to deny representationalism, then this would also be a good reason to deny Identity PIT. Hence, it is not immediately obvious that Mendelovici's account has made any theoretical advancement in our understanding of the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality.

To Mendelovici's credit, this worry is addressed by claiming that proponents of PIT tend to accept auxiliary assumptions about the nature of intentionality, and "the resulting combination is properly considered a theory of intentionality in terms of consciousness rather than a theory of consciousness in terms of intentionality" (pp. 110–111). Still, one might think that this misses the theoretical spirit of the criticism, even if it is generally true that proponents of PIT tend to accept these auxiliary assumptions. And Mendelovici does not offer any evidence to support the claim that what makes PIT different from representationalism is not the reversal of the order of explanation but the extra assumptions that one accepts about intentionality. Here is what Mendelovici says:

Advocates of PIT hold that intentionality/phenomenal consciousness has more of the characteristics we might have previously attributed to phenomenal consciousness than the characteristics we might have previously attributed to intentionality, while, presumably, advocates of representationalism hold that intentionality/phenomenal consciousness has more of the characteristics we might have previously attributed to phenomenal consciousness (p. 112).

But even if this is true, it does not follow that PIT should be understood as an explanation of the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness any more than it follows that representationalism should be understood as an explanation of phenomenal consciousness in terms of intentionality.

On the one hand, Identity PIT seems to run against the general motivation of PIT to reverse the order of explanation, which is one of the most important theoretical and methodological parts of arguments in support of PIT (e.g., Horgan and Tienson 2002; Pautz 2013; and Kriegel 2013). On the other hand, Identity PIT trades on

terminological differences, which ultimately depend on Mendelovici's ostensive definition of intentionality. If intentionality is identical to phenomenal consciousness, then presumably representationalism is not only consistent with Identity PIT, we now have new questions regarding which versions of representationalism are consistent with which versions of PIT and so on. It is only by offering an ostensive definition of the term 'intentionality' that enables Mendelovici to argue that there is a difference in the first place. But, at that point, the view arguably collapses into a mere notational dispute.

What will be the book's lasting impact on the literature in which it exists and philosophy of mind at large. To my mind, Mendelovici's book will likely be viewed as an important critique of the existing versions of PIT, which claim that all non-phenomenal intentionality is ultimately grounded in or derived from phenomenal intentionality. A crucial step in the overarching argument or argumentative strategy presented in the book is to show why we should reject the derivativist strategy—that is, in order to show why we should accept Identity PIT, Mendelovici must show why we should reject alternative versions of PIT. Fans of derivativism might have ways to respond, and in this way, the book will not go unnoticed in the literature. And it is also worth noting that at several places throughout the book, Mendelovici offers an Identity PIT-friendly “off-ramp” for those who accept some but not all of what is argued. Consider, for example, what Mendelovici says about one version of derivativism about self-ascriptivism regarding the content of thought, which would be a kind of “fallback position for those who believe that there is something very deep in common between original intentionality and derived mental representation” (p. 153). Of course, one might also see this attempt to be ecumenical as a kind of concession that the main argument of the book hinges on mere terminological issues. We can see how the primary claim of the book—that the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality is identical to the phenomenal consciousness—depends on Mendelovici's ostensive definition of the term 'intentionality', by considering how the book fits into the broader distinction between functional and phenomenal concepts. To put this point a bit differently, when we consider a wider scope and context regarding current debates in the philosophy of mind, we will see that Identity PIT is problematic for multiple reasons, and it might even be inconsistent with some influential views of the mind.

Consider the widely accepted intuition that functional equivalent zombies are conceivable. One might think that, if intentionality is identical to phenomenal consciousness, then functional equivalent zombies should not be conceivable—that is, if zombies lack phenomenally conscious mental states, then they will also lack intentional mental states (see e.g., Smithies 2019, pp. 5–17). So, if Identity PIT is true, then zombies would not be exactly like you or me in every way except for phenomenal consciousness. But it is not at all clear that these philosophical zombies could successfully get around in the world without intentional states, or that they would be able to answer questions, tell stories, read books, believe or desire such and such—they would be different from us in more ways than what can be captured by phenomenal consciousness alone. If these philosophical zombies were to truly lack intentionality, then presumably they would be identified as such rather easily. But, then the kinds of zombies that we take ourselves to be thinking about and are conceivable would not actually be conceivable. But, if we *can* conceive of philosophical zombies that lack any phenomenal consciousness,

intentionality is *not* identical to phenomenal consciousness. As a result, we have some reason to think that Identity PIT must be false.

Of course, Mendelovici has a straightforward way to respond to this objection. Since Mendelovici's definition of the term 'intentionality' rules out all conceptual connections between it and causal-functional, folk psychological explanations of human behavior, Mendelovici could presumably argue that functional equivalent zombies that lack both intentionality and phenomenal consciousness are still conceivable because such zombies operate on non-intentional mental states. Perhaps these zombies use some kind of mere representational mental states, for instance a tracking relational view of representational mental states. If these zombies are conceivable, then we would arguably still have a hard problem of consciousness.

There are at least two problems with this hypothetical response: First, even if these sorts of zombies are conceivable, one might think that they are not the kind of zombies that philosophers are typically interested in regarding the hard problem of consciousness. We want to know if intentionality and consciousness are interconnected or not, and whether they are conceptually separable, insofar as we seem to be able to conceive of functionally equivalent zombies. Second, one might worry that Mendelovici's conjectural response hinges on defining intentionality in a way that rules out views that connect it to our folk-psychological explanations of human behavior and reasoning. Thus, Mendelovici's ostensive definition of intentionality seems to guarantee that there is an identity between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness. As a result, one could argue that the account is unsupported and that more needs to be done to motivate why all alternative ways of defining intentionality should be rejected. There may be further questions about whether these issues will ultimately lead to epiphenomenalism about consciousness and intentionality, but none of these criticisms and questions should count against the merits of Mendelovici's book, which are too many to canvas here.

7 Conclusion

To conclude, Mendelovici's approach to the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness introduces an insightful and astute view regarding the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality. It calls needed attention to the claim that there is a deep and important connection between intentionality and consciousness. Perhaps the most important point to be gleaned from the book is that there are multiple choice points in logical space available to the proponent of PIT and the understanding that each versions of PIT is richly complicated and deserves careful analysis. Those who are interested in phenomenal intentionality now have a discerning monograph that defends a clearly stated version of the view, and which they will undoubtedly find resourceful in further developing the theory. Those who have not yet accepted the claims of PIT but accept some version of a tracking theory of intentionality now must respond to Mendelovici's refutations of such accounts. For these reasons, *The Phenomenal Basis of Intentionality* is one of the most important recent contributions to the growing literature on phenomenal intentionality.

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