

Intentionality and God's mind: Stumpf on Spinoza

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Stumpf's *Spinozastudien*

After the fortunate discovery of the *Short Treatise on God, Man and His Well-Being* around the middle of the nineteenth century, philosophers became increasingly interested in Spinoza. This process, marking the beginning of a Spinoza-scholarship in the modern sense, is particularly impressive in the German area. One should not forget that the famous *Spinozismusstreit*, arising from Jacobi's unveiling of Lessing's Spinozistic pantheism and from Mendelssohn's consequent reaction, had taken place only about a century before. Later, contrasting Hegel's interpretation of Spinoza, many German scholars abandoned any religiously oriented polemics concerning the great Dutch philosopher and eventually faced the sober historical problem of granting him a position within the mainstream of modern philosophy, among thinkers like Descartes, Leibniz and Kant.

Carl Stumpf's *Spinozastudien*, published in the Proceedings of the Berlin Academy of Sciences in 1919, can be understood against the background of this debate. Although he had devoted himself to wholly different questions during his career, Stumpf competently contributed to two capital questions: parallelism and the infinity of attributes. My present aim, however, is neither a discussion of the adequacy nor of the influence of Stumpf's exegesis¹. Rather, *Spinozastudien* are helpful in understanding Stumpf's own philosophical position. They show that he adopted an original interpretation of intentionality, clearly and consciously different from the well-known theses of both Brentano and Husserl on this topic.

In his *Autobiography*, published in 1924, Stumpf explains his interest in Spinoza's thought in the following terms:

"[...] after much experimental work, I wrote a treatise on Spinoza, not because of any special sympathy with his philosophizing, but rather because I thought that I might say something new concerning one of his main points, the parallelism of the attributes. I believe I have demonstrated that his theory, both in form and in thought, is fundamentally different from modern psychophysical parallelism and is only an outflow of the old Aristotelian-scholastic theory of the parallelism of acts and contents of consciousness". (Stumpf 1930, 415)

Stumpf avoids the usual interpretation of Spinoza's parallelism as a kind of psychophysical parallelism *ante litteram*. His alternative interpretation is centered on the Aristotelian-scholastic tradition of the correspondence between acts and contents, i.e. the theory of intentionality. Spinoza, Stumpf shows, is indebted to this tradition. To illustrate this heritage, Stumpf first provides a detailed historical account of the history of intentionality from Aristotle to the late Scholastic, thus integrating the general indications given by Brentano in his *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*. Stumpf's *Autobiography* illustrates then another important question:

"The second study discusses the infinite number of the attributes and endeavors to elucidate the terse suggestions of the philosopher and to carry them out, hypothetically at least, on the basis of the theory of parallelism; and to explain how the author, in spite of the vast number of

¹ To some extent, I did this in Martinelli 2001.

objective attributes which constitute substance, could maintain their unity". (Stumpf 1930, 415-416)

Because of Spinoza's peculiar radicalism in applying this philosophical heritage, his theory of infinite attributes implies a hypothetical extension, disclosing some surprising insights in metaphysics. Actually, Stumpf's plans were even more ambitious:

"A third study was to discuss the «geometrical method», and find for the first propositions of the Ethics, and their proofs which Leibnitz justly condemned, the unconscious assumptions which made them seem formally necessary to Spinoza himself. Criticism so far has approached too much from the outside. The tasks of interpreting most clearly Spinoza's extreme conceptualistic realism and at the same time his dependence on scholasticism we recommend to those who delight in logical studies". (Stumpf 1930, 416)

Unfortunately he did not accomplish this task. Nevertheless, the two published studies provide important explanations concerning some of Stumpf's most important philosophical opinions. This helps by contrasting some commonplace views about his work. It has been suggested that Stumpf can be scarcely considered a philosopher (Fano 1992, 9; Münch 2002, 14); that he progressively abandoned philosophy and switched to experimental psychology (Sprung 2006, 15 f.); or that, inasmuch as he still pursued philosophical interests, he did it only in a quite orthodox Brentanian vein (Schuhmann 2001, 71). An analysis of his *Spinozastudien*, published no earlier than 1919, shows that such theses are either untenable or at least partial. Stumpf was a fine and original philosopher. He always showed a deep interest in philosophy, constantly interwoven with his psychological and experimental work; moreover, his own contribution to philosophy is no more dependent on Brentano than that of many other philosophers of the so-called *Brentanoschule*.

In the following sections I will first consider Stumpf's interpretation of Spinoza's parallelism, then his hypothesis concerning the theory of infinite attributes, and finally some aspects of Stumpf's idea of intentionality and its difference from those of Brentano and Husserl.

Immanent parallelism as intentionality

In the first study, entitled *Der Parallelismus der Modi innerhalb der Attribute Ausdehnung und Denken*, Stumpf shows that Spinoza's parallelism has no kinship with psychophysical parallelism. According to this psychological doctrine, the physical and the mental correspond to each other because they represent nothing else than different expressions of the one and same reality. Although with different accents, a similar view was defended by men like Friedrich Albert Lange, Gustav Theodor Fechner, Ewald Hering, Wilhelm Wundt, Ernst Mach². In fact, if compared with Descartes' dualism, Spinoza's monist doctrine of substance could appear at first glance essentially consistent with this hypothesis.

Let us now consider Stumpf's arguments against this interpretation. Spinoza's parallelism is formulated in the famous seventh proposition of the second part of the *Ethics*:

² As I shall discuss later, Stumpf strongly opposed this view. In a certain sense, his first study consists in the attempt of freeing Spinoza from the suspect of having defended such an untenable and vulgar doctrine.

“The order and the connection of ideas is the same as the order and the connection of things”. (Spinoza 2000, 117)³

In the relative demonstration, Spinoza refers to the axiom I.A4: “Knowledge of an effect depends on the knowledge of the cause, and involves it” (Spinoza 2000, 76)⁴. In II.Dem7 he explains: “For the idea of each thing that is caused depends on the knowledge of the cause of which it is an effect” (Spinoza 2000, 117).

Stumpf insists on the mere analytic nature of this demonstration, which is a direct consequence of Spinoza’s rationalist conception of causality. He notes that “as in similar cases of very short demonstrations, resolving in a mere reference to some previous passage”, the beloved QED (*Quod Erat Demonstrandum*) is omitted (not forgotten, on Stumpf’s account) by Spinoza at the end of the demonstration (Stumpf 1919, 4).

Since the demonstration adds very little, if anything, to the Axiom upon which it relies, any interpretation must essentially refer to I.A4. In Stumpf’s analysis, Spinoza’s assertion of parallelism in II.P7 has a *positive* and a *negative* meaning, respectively corresponding to the *first* (“Knowledge of an effect depends on the knowledge of the cause”) and the *second* (“and involves it”) part of I.A4.

Stumpf begins with the *negative* aspect. From this point of view, he notes, parallelism implies the impossibility of mutual interaction between two attributes. Properly speaking, this already followed from Proposition I.P3: “Of things which have nothing in common with one another, one cannot be the cause of another” (Spinoza 2000, 77), which is, again, demonstrated by Spinoza by means of I.A5⁵ and of the causal axiom I.A4, with particular regard for the end clause “*et eandem involvit*”. For this reason, the role of Proposition I.P3 is carefully analyzed by Stumpf.

As Stumpf points out, Spinoza does not refer to attributes or substances, but quite generally to “things”, *res*: the same term used in the proposition II.P7 under discussion. Stumpf devotes several pages to the analysis of the meaning of *res*. One can summarize his results as follows: by means of *res* Spinoza does not think of a specific “individual corporeal things”, but to “something” in the broadest possible sense (Stumpf 1919, 5). As a matter of fact, he observes, the term *res* in Proposition I.P3 applies to substance (I.P6)⁶, attributes (I.P10)⁷ and modes (II.Dem6)⁸.

³ “*Ordo et connexio Idearum idem est ac ordo et connexio rerum*” (II.P7). I refer to Spinoza’s *Ethica* using the following abbreviations: II. = second part, P = proposition (Def = Definition, A = Axiom, D = Demonstration, S = Scholium) number 7.

⁴ *Effectus cognitio a cognitione causae dependet, et eandem involvit* (I.A4).

⁵ “Those things which have nothing in common with each other cannot be understood through each other, or, the conception of the one does not involve the conception of the other”. (Spinoza 2000, 76). “*Quae nihil commune cum se invicem habent, etiam per se invicem intelligi non possunt, sive conceptus unius alterius conceptum non involvit*” (IA5).

⁶ “One substance cannot be produced by another substance”. (Spinoza 2000, 78)

⁷ “Each attribute of one substance must be conceived through itself”. (Spinoza 2000, 81)

⁸ “[...] So the modes of each attribute involve the concept of their own attribute, but not of another”. (Spinoza 2000, 117)

Thus, Spinoza had no need of introducing proposition II.P7 in its negative sense. The impossibility of a causal interaction between the two attributes of thought and extension (and the respective modes) was already well established in the *Ethics*. To be logically justified, Stumpf argues, proposition II.P7 must then add some new *positive* content.

As we have seen, this positive content depends on the first part of the causal axiom (I.A4), i.e. "Knowledge of an effect depends on the knowledge of the cause". Now, if we follow the common interpretation and substitute the term "idea" with "knowledge" (*cognitio*) in II.P7, Spinoza's parallelism would come to mean that the order and connection in our knowledge follows the same order and connection of things (Stumpf 1919, 6).

From a purely formal point of view, Stumpf admits, this is not inconsistent with the demonstration II.Dem7. However, this correspondence holds for Spinoza only in the case of *adequate* knowledge, proceeding from causes to effects. His parallelism would then express the correspondence between ideas and states of the *human body*, since Spinoza states in II.P36 that "inadequate and confused ideas follow with the same necessity as adequate, i.e. clear and distinct, ideas" (Spinoza 2000, 144). However, this is not enough to meet the onerous conditions imposed by the proposition II.P7. Consequently, Stumpf concludes, "the proud *QED* would have been omitted not only for formal reasons, rather, it would be also really out of place" (Stumpf 1919, 7).

Another solution is then necessary for the problem of a positive interpretation of the parallelistic principle. To this purpose, Stumpf suggests, one must consider the Scholium (II.S7) to II.P7, where Spinoza writes:

"Here, before we proceed any further, we must recall what we showed above: namely, that whatever can be perceived by an infinite intellect as constituting the essence of substance belongs to a unique substance alone, and consequently that thinking substance and extended substance is one and the same substance, which is understood now under this and now under that attribute. So also a mode of extension and the idea of that mode is one and the same thing, but expressed in two ways – which some Hebrews appear to have seen as if through a cloud, in asserting that God, the intellect of God and the things understood by him are one and the same". (Spinoza 2000, 118)

Spinoza unfortunately leaves the identification of these "Hebrews" open⁹, so that this passage always posed an amount of problems to scholars. Be that as it may, Stumpf argues, if one considers the Scholium seriously, any interpretation in terms of a psychophysical parallelism is clearly misleading, because Spinoza speaks here of *God's mind* and his ideas, and not of *our knowledge*. As he notes, Spinoza refers to the "divine intellect", stating that both the attributes and their modes behave according to one single law, because of the unity of the divine substance (Stumpf 1919, 7).

Stumpf points out a double aspect in Spinoza's theory of substance: on the one hand, he follows the tradition and gives a "formal" definitions of substance (I.Def3)¹⁰; on the other hand, he is remarkably modern and can almost be regarded as a forerunner of David Hume:

⁹ He probably refers to Moses Maimonides. For a discussion and further references, see Martinelli 2001, 404.

¹⁰ "By substance I understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself" (Spinoza 2000, 75).

“Substance is not, as for earlier philosophers, something that pervades, affects and dominates the attributes, making up their unity and thereby forcing them to behave consistently, but only the totality [*Gesamtheit*] of attributes”. (Stumpf 1919, 8)

As to this crucial question, Stumpf notes, Spinoza allows for an “inner essential relationship [*innerer Wesenszusammenhang*] between the attributes”; this relationship can only exist “in the closest reciprocal inherence [*Zusammengehörigkeit*] within one single reality” (Stumpf 1919, 9).

We can now illustrate Stumpf’s interpretation of the *positive* meaning of the parallelistic principle that the order and the connection of *things* and *ideas* are one and the same (II.P7). Stumpf’s thesis is that the correlation between the two attributes is shaped after the *intentional* relationship between act and content. As those wise Hebrews already saw, this intentional relationship is the one occurring *within God’s mind*, and in this sense “God, the intellect of God and the things understood by him” (II.S7) are one and the same. Thus, the true meaning of Spinoza’s parallelism becomes clear in Stumpf’s eyes:

“The proposition *ordo et connexio idearum idem est ac ordo et connexio rerum* means that the order and connection of the divine acts of presentation is the same as that of the divine content of presentation. It is the parallelism of Aristotelian psychology, transposed to the deity, whose modes are our individual minds and bodies, and their states”. (Stumpf 1919, 24)

Stumpf introduces some very interesting historical explanations on the development of this theory. Its origin can be traced back to Plato’s correlation between degrees of being and degrees of knowledge. Accordingly, Stumpf explains, “differences of immanent objects proceed parallel to differences in cognitive faculties”. Plato’s distinction between *epistēme* and *doxa* in the Republic, as well as the distinction between *noēsis* and *dianoia*, *pistis* and *eikasía*, Stumpf observes, “root in the difference between what is contemplated directly and what is observed merely in image” (Stumpf 1919, 10).

However, as Brentano already underlined, the principle of “specification of acts by the objects” found the largest implementation in Aristotle. Stumpf summarizes: “The differences in the immanent object therefore determines that of the acts directed towards them” (Stumpf 1919, 11). Aristotle generalized this principle and applied it throughout his psychology. Different objects (*antikeimena*) determine different acts in the subject (*hypokeimenon*), and differences in acts allow us to in turn to determine the different faculties of the human soul: the vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual¹¹. The core of this doctrine has been later transmitted to Scholastic philosophers, as Stumpf shows by quoting Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae* on human and divine knowledge¹².

Scholastic philosophy is furthermore responsible for introducing a new element, namely God’s *ideas*. Through the mediation of Neoplatonism and Augustine, a looser version of Plato’s theory of ideas comes back into play. As a result, a correspondence is established between the entities (real or potential) and the ideas in God’s mind. The following series results:

¹¹ *De An.*, II, 415a, 20-22.

¹² “Intellectus noster vel sensus informatur in actu per speciem sensibili vel intelligibili”; “Oportet quod ratio potentiae diversificetur ut diversificatur ratio actus. Ratio autem actus diversificatur secundum diversam rationem objecti” (*Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 14, a. 2; I, q. 77, a. 3.)

“1. Subjects; 2. Faculties; 3. Acts; 4. Contents = mental objects; 5. Real objects; 6. God’s Ideas”. (Stumpf 1919, 13)

Accordingly, Scholastic philosophers used to say that a certain object is given *intentionally or objectively* in our minds [*im Geiste intentionaliter oder objektiv*], *formally* in reality and *eminently* in God. Descartes and the young Spinoza, notes Stumpf, still made use of these expressions. The mental object (# 4 of the above series) is also called "species" (*sensibilis vel intelligibilis*), and is linked to the real object (# 5) by means of causality and similarity. In perceiving and thinking, we are not addressed to mental objects (# 4), but to real objects (# 5): the species are only that by which we know, not what we know. So far, at least, the Thomistic scheme. In presenting such a general survey, Stumpf is clearly aware of the deep differences and the sharp disputations among scholastic philosophers. He recognizes that the nominalists refused to adhere to this doctrine. Yet, he notes, even Duns Scotus, Aquinas' great opponent in many other issues, essentially adhered to this scheme (Stumpf 1919, 15).

In the XVI and XVII century, this doctrine still influenced late scholastic philosophers, no matter whether catholic and reformed: in Spain (P. Fonseca, F. Toledo and F. Suarez), as well as in Germany, where Ch. Scheibler influenced the Dutchmen J. Martini, F. Burgersdijck and his pupil A. Heereboord, whom Spinoza certainly knew. This is obviously no positive evidence that Spinoza also knew this doctrine; yet also the contrary cannot be proved. Spinoza, Stumpf concludes, could easily have had some direct access to those ancient and medieval doctrines (Stumpf 1919, 16).

To sum up, the introduction of parallelism by means of proposition II.P7 is justified in the *Ethics* by the need of configuring the simultaneous independence and interrelationship (*not* interaction) of the two attributes, extension and thought. To this aim, is it was quite natural for Spinoza to use the *scholastic* doctrine of parallelism. As a result of his general point of view in philosophy, he simply considered the traditional scheme inversely. He started from God’s mind (# 6), the last element in the above-mentioned "scholastic scheme", but the first according to the nature of the thing itself.

Moreover, Spinoza’s particular philosophical approach introduces a “powerful simplification” in this scheme:

“As a result of his pantheistic view, there is only one subject of all states: God. Spinoza eliminates the faculties of the soul, because the only things that we know are ultimately just real acts [...]. At the other end of the series, real things and God’s ideas merge into one, because things exist only as contents of divine thought, in the same manner that acts of thought exist only as acts of this divine thought. This leaves only the central terms of the entire pattern: the distinction between the immanent acts and objects, but referring to God, whose modes they are”. (Stumpf 1919, 19)

Following Stumpf’s lecture, Spinoza’s parallelism is then – in its origins and its meaning – wholly independent of modern psychophysical parallelism. Relying upon an accurate historical analysis, Stumpf unveils it as the intentionality theory originally defended by Aristotle and held until the late Scholastic. In his plain words:

“Parallelism between the modes of the extension and those of thought is thus nothing else than parallelism between the immanent objects and the acts directed upon them, which has been taught since Aristotle”. (Stumpf 1919, 19)

The infinity of attributes

If one accepts this suggestion, parallelism is the expression of the intentionality of God's mind, while the human mind (together with its intentionality), is just one of the modes of God's thought. In the Scholium II.S7, Spinoza writes:

"So whether we conceive Nature under the attribute of extension, or under the attribute of thought, *or under any other attribute whatsoever*, we shall find one and the same order, or, one and the same connection of causes; that is, we shall find that the same things follow reciprocally". (Spinoza 2000, 118, italics added)

By this, Spinoza introduces a remarkable shift in the usual understanding of the intentionality principle. Even though the human mind can only conceive of thought and extension, God's attributes must indeed be infinite in number. As a result, intentionality must be understood as an "intimate essential relationship" applying to any infinite attribute that one must ascribe to God's power. Properly speaking, intentionality is then not anymore a special property of the *mental*. From Spinoza's point of view, the intentional relationship of (divine) thought and extension counts as an example – though obviously a very special one, being the only example that a human mind could mention.

The above-mentioned Scholium ends with the following words:

"[...] as long as things are conceived as modes of thinking, we must explain the whole of Nature, i.e. the connection of causes, through the attribute of thought alone. Again, in so far as things are considered as modes of extension, the order of the whole of Nature must be explained through the attribute of extension alone; and I understand the same for the other attributes. So God is truly the cause of things as they are in themselves in so far as he consists of infinite attributes – something which I cannot explain more clearly at present". (Spinoza 2000, 118)

Because of the infinity of attributes, the parallelistic principle undergoes what Stumpf calls a tremendous expansion (Stumpf 1919, 7). For this reason, the problem is attentively considered in the second study, entitled *Die unzähligen Attribute*. In this respect, the two published *Spinozastudien* form a cohesive whole, whose thesis corroborate each other.

Of course, the main problem is that of explaining how one should conceive of, and describe, these infinite attributes, since a human mind cannot have any idea of what they might be. Stumpf widely discusses the main scholarly interpretations of his time concerning this point. First, he explains, the infinity of attributes is not a mere *potential* one. This followed from the idealistic interpretation inaugurated by Hegel and supported among others by J.E. Erdmann. In their opinion, attributes are just subjective characteristics of the human mind, insofar as it knows the substance. Yet, this cannot be admitted: the reality of all attributes is independent of the human mind knowing them, and is rather grounded in the nature of God himself. Their infinity is therefore properly actual. Stumpf also denies that the infinity of attributes is the result of a recursive process conducted *in infinitum* from the idea, the idea of the idea, and so forth, resulting in progressively higher levels of thought (Stumpf 1919, 43-44).

What kind of presentation does Stumpf propose then? He admits that the available textual evidence does not allow a definite and final solution for the problem. In spite of this, one can provide a set of hypotheses, consistent with the doctrine of the infinite attributes: "the philosopher must be allowed to penetrate the systems of philosophy a bit deeper than the documents allow, taken for themselves" (Stumpf 1919, 39).

Stumpf first introduces the mathematical notion of "multiplicity" (*Mannigfaltigkeit*) (Stumpf 1919, 47). This concept, borrowed from Riemann's theory, forms the core of Stumpf's theory of space. Space is not directly bound to our intuition, but represents a

rationalistic construct, bound to certain general formal rules. Since his first published book in 1873 Stumpf had refused both the Kantian approach and Lotze's solution in terms of local signs. Presentations of space originate from what we perceive, but in an indirect way. Space is neither a priori, nor empirically constructed. One needs a certain experience to perform all the abstraction needed to achieve a spatial presentation. Accordingly, geometry does not need to be intuitive in Stumpf's view: its objects are rather constructed by means of mere definitions, given within a continuous multiplicity.¹³

Anyway, space is not the only kind of multiplicity recognized by Stumpf. Also the timeline, musical pitch, the intensive degrees of sensation, multiple colors systems like black/white or red/yellow, and so on, can be considered as multiplicities of different kind (Stumpf 1919, 47). As in the case of space, these multiplicities are obtained by means of abstraction from the sensory world; yet, in these cases we perform our abstractions from other properties of the sensorial continuum. Doing so, we find special conditions and restrictions for each new multiplicity. Stumpf's arguments on these matters are among his most interesting contribution to the theory of sensation, both in the beloved field of tonal perception and in that of visual experience¹⁴.

Let us now go back to Spinoza's infinite attributes. The notion of an unknown attribute, analogous to spatial extension but provided with different features, appears now more conceivable. Rather, ordinary experience provides us with several similar analogs of spatial extension.

One could also apply a similar methodology starting from the attribute of thought and obtain new, different "multiplicities", resulting in infinite mental-like attributes. Besides presentations, which we know empirically through introspection, and more generally besides any thought, there might be then

"innumerable other forms of the so-called immanent existence of objects, i.e. of the intentional relation, of that peculiar, indefinable relationship between act and object, belonging to all conscious functions". (Stumpf 1919, 47)

There might be also infinite thought-like states (*psychoide Zustände*, as Stumpf calls them), whose characteristic would be, again, intentionality.

Interestingly, Stumpf suggests to generalize the scholastic terminology and proposes to speak here of "intentions" (*Intentionen*) (Stumpf 1919, 48). Even in this case, experience offers some example: in a clear Aristotelian vein, animal psychism or vegetative activity could be understood as analogs of human psychical life. As for all previous analogies drawn from experience, these are clearly only heuristic examples, which do not rigorously define additional attributes.

These infinite "intentions" (analogous to thought), would be well distinct from the previously indicated "multiplicities" (analogous to space) – which are not at all intentional. In force of the very idea of intentionality, however, all members of these infinite series would be connected to each other to form pairs. Each "multiplicity" would be the object (*Gegenstand*) of a certain "intention", thus corresponding to it.

"Thought and extension, as we know them, and all their modes, and therefore also our minds and our bodies are just a special case of this universal correlation [*Zuordnung*]" (Stumpf 1919, 49)

¹³ Cf. Stumpf 1873; 1906a, 78 ff.

¹⁴ Cf. Stumpf 1883, 1890; 1917.

Stumpf's concludes that Spinoza's use of the general terms *idea* and *res* in the proposition II.P7 "the order and the connection of *ideas* is the same as the order and the connection of *things*" may allude to *these* regularly paired series. This explains why, in the Scholium II.S7, Spinoza says "*et idem de aliis attributis intelligo*": the two known attributes of thought and extension would be "the prototypes for all others". (Stumpf 1919, 49).

A confrontation with Brentano and Husserl

As far as Stumpf's interpretation of Spinoza is concerned, there is little more to be added. Yet, in the *Spinozastudien* Stumpf introduces some interesting remarks concerning some of his contemporaries. His observations deserve special attention. In the section devoted to the reconstruction of historical vicissitudes of Aristotelian parallelism, i.e. of the specification of all acts by their objects, Stumpf reminds us that this principle is still defended today:

"So Franz Brentano, who took his first steps from Aristotle, has taken up again his distinction of psychic activity (of the act) by the immanent object and has employed it as the main distinguishing feature of psychic phenomena if compared with physical ones, and has based his classification of psychical activities upon this «relationship to an object» [*Beziehung auf ein Objekt*]. (Stumpf 1919, 17)

This is the actual meaning and contest of Brentano's doctrine of intentional inexistence, as expressed in his *Psychology from an empirical standpoint* (Brentano 1997, 88). Brentano admits the intentional parallelism of the two series of acts and mental contents, consistently recognized in philosophical tradition. Stumpf explains: "according to Brentano, a fully parallelism holds between the immanent object and the act directed towards it, first in terms of their intensity". Arguing against the hypothesis of unconscious mental states, Brentano observed that the intensity of mental presentation is always equal to the intensity of the represented content. This holds, notes Stumpf, also for internal conscience "i.e. the presentation, whose object is a psychical activity (Spinoza's *idea mentis*)" (Stumpf 1919, 17). Also Brentano's explanation of the sensed spatial extension, and then of multiple qualities, is a consequence of the Aristotelian theorem of specification of the act by the object. Lotze also adopted the same principle concerning sensations, though he denied – as Stumpf notes – any difference in intensity as far as presentations (*Vorstellungen*) are concerned¹⁵. The "principle of parallelism in the ancient sense" thus reappears within the theories of some of the shrewdest psychologists of the time. With this, its correctness "is certainly not proven"; at least, it can be assumed that it appeared in this light even to Spinoza (Stumpf 1919, 18). Because of a generalized discredit of the scholastic way of philosophizing, this principle had been forgotten thereafter. Yet, its

¹⁵ Stumpf thinks that Brentano, in spite of many other changes, still held this doctrine in his later writings. He quotes a passage from his *Untersuchungen zur Sinnpsychologie* where the equal intensity of sensation and the sensed is asserted. Actually, at least after 1911 Brentano maintained the parallelism of intensity for sensations alone whereas, in an Appendix to the second edition of his *Psychology from empirical standpoint*, he asserts that intellectual presentations (e.g. that if the number three) totally lack intensity, thus correcting his previous error (Brentano 1997, 151). Yet, Stumpf credits Lotze and not Brentano of having denied intensities to all presentations, allowing for it only within sensibility. Anyway, Lotze had formulated these views in the *Microkosmos* and the *Metaphysik*, many years before the second edition of Brentano's *Psychology*. Stumpf also says (1919, 18) that he once heard Brentano refer to Lotze concerning this point.

non-dogmatic rediscovery by Lotze and Brentano yielded a great renewal in philosophy.

In particular, it helps fighting the modern, vulgar version of parallelism, exemplarily illustrated by Fechner's psychophysics. Stumpf sharply distinguishes the *transcendent* parallelism of psychophysics from the *immanent* parallelism of Spinoza. The former should be regarded as a mere hypothesis correlating two sets of facts: conscience on the one hand, physical processes on the other. In Spinoza's view, both members of these two groups, as well as their relationship are rather "immediately given to consciousness: the *res* as intuitive contents of consciousness, the idea as the corresponding acts of consciousness". In this sense, Stumpf adds:

"His law of parallelism is purely a matter of *descriptive psychology* (Husserl would say a matter of phenomenology, since that law is based a priori through «intuition of essence»)". (Stumpf 1919, 34)

This opens the question of Stumpf's idea of phenomenology and his relationship with Husserl¹⁶. As he had already done previously (Stumpf 1906a, 26 ff), in his *Erkenntnislehre* Stumpf allows for a "regional phenomenology", establishing a priori "eidetic laws", while Husserl's "pure phenomenology" is sharply labelled as a mere illusion, a "phenomenology without phenomena" (Stumpf 1939, 192). One can actually aim at establishing a science of "universal axioms", yet these axioms are the well-known "logical axioms". Accordingly, there is no special phenomenological work to be done concerning them (Stumpf 1939, 189-190). Insofar as phenomenology remains a "regional" and then legitimate discipline, its principles coincide with those of descriptive psychology.

Still, one could argue that phenomenology, unlike descriptive psychology, devotes itself to "the infinitely rich research field of eidetic noemata, and the axioms related to that". However, Stumpf objects, Husserl himself insists on the *parallelism* between noesis and noema. Clearly, the Spinozian problem of parallelism becomes here relevant to the discussion of Husserl's phenomenology. In support of this observation, Stumpf (1939, 195) quotes from § 88 of Husserl's *Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and to a phenomenological philosophy*, where Husserl affirms

"Corresponding in every case to the multiplicity of Data pertaining to the really inherent noetic content, there is a multiplicity of Data, demonstrable in actual pure intuition, in a correlative «noematic content», or, in sort, in the «noema» [...]". (Husserl 1983, 214)

Accordingly, the description in the noetic sphere must be *eo ipso* valid in the noematic sphere.

Regarding this point, attention must be drawn to a very interesting footnote in Stumpf's *Erkenntnislehre*:

"According to Husserl, the noetic and the noematic are related to each other like the attributes thought and extension in Spinoza: «*una eademque res, sed duobus modis expressa*». As for Spinoza all laws of nature are also laws of the mind, the same happens for noetic laws, which are also noematic. One could even show that this is something more than a mere analogy, i.e. that thought and extension are conceived by Spinoza as acts and contents of the divine thought, and that the doctrine of parallelism between acts and contents of consciousness dates back to a rule constantly recurring in psychology since Aristotle: a rule that Spinoza, like many other things, derived from his scholastic studies". (Stumpf 1939, 196)

¹⁶ See Rollinger 2000, Fisette 2009.

With this, Stumpf clearly summarizes in the *Erkenntnislehre* the main results of his essays on Spinoza. No doubt that this is significant as to his position towards Husserl. However, one must carefully interpret the sense of this passage.

At a first glance, Stumpf's last quoted reference to Spinoza in the *Erkenntnislehre* might seem to weaken his severe criticism of Husserl. It could sound as an appeal to a common philosophical tradition, i.e. the "intentional" parallelism in the Aristotelian-scholastic tradition, recently renewed by Brentano. The simultaneous insistence on a possible reading of Husserl's phenomenology as descriptive psychology (already present in the *Spinozastudien*) might then suggest that Stumpf, while denouncing Husserl's heterodox developments, would also allow for a possible reconciliation on account of the common matrix¹⁷.

Yet, a closer view shows quite the opposite to be true. Stumpf clearly rejects the traditional doctrine of intentionality and the consequent rigid parallelism between act and content. In the *Spinozastudien* he outlines his position as follows:

"The author himself actually favored the distinction between phenomena and psychical functions, which is essentially tantamount to the difference between act and content [...]. Yet, a parallelism of the two elements did not seem acceptable to me. Instead, I could establish this distinction only upon their reciprocal (within certain limits) independent variability [...]". (Stumpf 1919, 36-37)

Stumpf clearly refers to his essay *Erscheinungen und psychische Funktionen* (1906). Far from subscribing parallelism, Stumpf asserts here the "logical separability" and the "mutual independent variability" of phenomena and psychical functions (Stumpf 1906, 10 ff, 15 ff). Since these two elements are separable by means of abstraction (like e.g. extension and color), there is no logical contradiction in assuming a phenomenon that is not the content of some psychical function: in short, being-represented is not a characteristic of phenomena. Stumpf adds:

"Spinoza saw this [...] clearer than Berkeley and taught that each of both attributes, extension and thought, «must be conceived through itself»¹⁸. Instead of extension and thought we just say more generally (but conform to Descartes' and Spinoza's intentions) phenomena and psychical functions" (Stumpf 1906, 14)¹⁹

Stumpf goes on:

"Actually, on this point, neither Spinoza nor anybody thereafter really dropped Descartes' dualism. Any actual material given to us exhibit at root a double face. Whatever one may say about the unity of substance and of reality, on panpsychism on idealism and universal: *that* duality cannot be canceled". (Stumpf 1906, 14)

To be sure, Stumpf is not a Spinozian philosopher. He endeavors to circumvent *metaphysical* dualism, yet without abandoning the necessary bipolarity of phenomena and psychological functions, which he doesn't submit to a parallelistic principle in the sense of Spinoza. Stumpf's position could be labelled as a *phenomenological* or

¹⁷ Husserl commented on *Spinozastudien* in the draft of a unsent letter addressed to Stumpf in 1919 (Husserl 1994, 174 ff). As D. Fisette (2009, 188) has pointed out, Husserl's own interpretation of Spinoza could mitigate some aspects of Stumpf's criticism. Given its importance, the question deserves a separate analysis.

¹⁸ Stumpf quotes from I.P10 (Spinoza 2000, 81).

¹⁹ In a footnote, Stumpf explains that he does not consider here the unity of substance: since Spinoza knows only one substance, this is not a condition for the principle under discussion.

intentional dualism. This explains his interests in the philosophy of Spinoza and justifies his abandonment of the principle of intentionality. At least, Stumpf refuses both Brentano's and Husserl's version of intentionality. The former is unacceptable because of the postulate of the evidence of internal perception. Since the first volume of the *Tonpsychologie* Stumpf refused this postulate (Stumpf 1883, 22), although his personal devotion towards Brentano keeps him far from a direct polemic on this point (and so even later, despite increasing divergencies concerning feelings, tonal fusion and other important topics). Nevertheless, both Meinong in his review of Stumpf's work and later a true orthodox Brentanian like Kastil clearly recognized this divergence²⁰. As we have seen, Stumpf also refuses the approach of Husserl, who leaves the door open to an unacceptable comeback of speculative attitudes.

Turning finally back to Spinoza, Stumpf completely absolves him from the charge of inaugurating the naive monism of modern parallelism. At the same time, Spinoza escapes dualism because of his adoption of the traditional, immanent parallelism between acts and contents. However, on Stumpf's view, this is scarcely a gain:

"Thus, if one can acquit Spinoza of dualism on account of his Aristotelian-Scholastic psychology, however, the difficulties return on a different and deeper place". (Stumpf 1919, 37)

In short, Stumpf refuses the scholastic heritage of Spinoza's thought, i.e. intentionality as immanent parallelism, insofar as it purports a rigid correspondence of the two terms and then a tendency to monism. Nonetheless, after his reading in the *Spinozastudien* he credits Spinoza not to have suppressed dualism, but rather to have *infinitely multiplied* it by means of the hypothesis of the infinite attributes. On the contrary, if one reads Spinoza more traditionally as a consistent monist, Stumpf radically diverges from him.

Stumpf's phenomenological dualism means that the duplicity we perceive within reality cannot ever be suppressed (rather, perhaps multiplied). In the opening speech to the Congress of psychologists in München in 1896, after a sharp attack on Ernst Mach, whose "sensualist monism" finally "resolves into nothing" (Stumpf 1896 85), Stumpf leaves no doubt on this general philosophical attitude:

"According to our previous considerations, we cannot avoid a dualism in the characteristics of reality: it would always reoccur somewhere, in some other form. For those who incline to nourish keen dreams, one could think to overcome it insofar as one admits, besides the two only forms of reality which are given to us, infinite other forms: maybe simultaneously existing, maybe generating one another in a temporal development, just like the spiritual already emerged from the physical. Spinoza already conceived the two attributes not as the only ones existing, but simply as the only ones accessible to our knowledge among the infinite attributes that make up the essence of God, or the World. After all, if one is diffident towards such high-ranging metaphysic speculations, the mere name *dualism* should not bother us too much. For many people, this name seems to sound as the worst invective, by which that they would never like to be hit: they like the most pitiful confusion better than a dualism. I can find in it nothing so horrible, provided that the unity of the common effect and of the supreme laws is granted". (Stumpf 1896, 92-93)

Insisting on the discrepancies between the two terms of the intentional relation as well as on its formal character, potentially allowing applications of intentionality even outside psychism, Stumpf's quite original intentionality theory perfectly supports this philosophical tenet, showing his independence as a philosopher from both Brentano and Husserl.

²⁰ Meinong 1885, 130; Kastil 1948, 198. On the whole question see Martinelli 2009, xxii-xxiii.

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