Chapter 6.

Ontology: The Existents

As we have seen, Brentano's formal answer to the question 'What is there?' is simply: that which it is fitting to believe in. But in what *is* it fitting to believe? Brentano's considered answer to *that* question is decidedly nominalist, accepting only concrete particulars, such as Socrates, Beyoncé, and the Eiffel Tower in his ontology. However, Brentano's specific version of nominalism is very different from versions familiar from current-day debates, and involves also very unusual concrete particulars, such as wise-Socrates, famous-Beyoncé, and tall-Eiffel-Tower. The purpose of this chapter is to try to make the contemporary reader see what kind of ontology Brentano had in mind and what drew him to it. I will not quite *defend* Brentano's ontology, but I will argue that it is considerably more attractive than may initially appear.

1. Introduction: Reism and Nominalism

At least starting September 1904, Brentano maintained that 'there is nothing other than things (*Reales*)' (Brentano 1930: 79 [68]), where 'things' is supposed to exclude propositions, states of affairs, abstracta, possibilia, ficta, merely intentional objects, and more.[1] Brentano scholars refer to this ontological theory as *reism* ('thingism'). The term was coined by Brentano's *Enkelschüler* ('grand-student') Tadeusz Kotarbiński, who retroactively applied it to Brentano (Kotarbiński 1966).[2]

One might wonder whether 'reism' is just an odd name for what we know today as nominalism (see Bergman 1966: 366). To some extent, it is. But there is

also a good reason to preserve the name. The term 'nominalism' is commonly used in two relatively independent areas of philosophy (Rodriguez-Pereyra 2011). 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. 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 crosscutting 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 Table 6.1). Concrete particulars are unrepeatable individual objects such as Beyoncé and my laptop. Abstract universals are entities that can be wholly present in more than one place at one time, notably properties such as fame and grayness. Abstract particulars are entities such as individual events, states of affairs, and property-instances (e.g., Beyoncé's-fame and my-laptop's-being-gray) – unrepeatable entities that tend to cohabit in large droves. Finally, concrete universals are haecceities or 'individual essences,' for example Beyoncé-ness.

	Concrete	**Abstract**
Particular	Kant	Kant's-being-wise

Universal	Kant-ness	wisdom

Table 6.1. Williams' Categorization

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' fourfold categorization allows us to divide nominalistic ontologies into three types. The first is *anti-universals nominalism*:

(N₁) There are only particulars (concrete and abstract).

The second *anti-abstracta nominalism*:

(N₂) There are only concreta (particular and universal).

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

(N₃) There are only concrete particulars.

Brentano's term 'thing' is intended to capture Williams' concrete particulars. His is thus a *strict* nominalism.

Barry Smith (2006 §14) has argued that Brentano's notion of a thing is actually a completely formal one, intended to cover anything that can be the object of a presentation. If this is right, then in claiming that 'there is nothing other than things,' Brentano is not advocating nominalism at all. However, although Brentano does stress that only things can be objects of presentation, he takes this to be a substantive rather than definitional claim, something that requires argument and does not simply fall out of the meaning of words.[3] More importantly, even where

Brentano takes the concept of a *Reales* to be the most generic concept, as in the following 1905 fragment, he also adds that its extension is exhausted by individuals:

> Everything that is is a *Reales*, or – what comes to the same – an entity (*Wesen*)… Here we have the most general/generic (*allgemeinste*) concept. Yet to it correspond only individual entities (*Einzelwesen*). (Brentano 1930: 82 [72])

It is a substantive claim, it would seem, that all *Wesen* are *Einzelwesen*. Thus the multitude of terms used by Brentano with slightly different inflections certainly creates confusion; but there is no doubt that he was a strict nominalist in the substantive sense. We can see this very clearly by considering his remarks on the three other categories of putative entity in Williams' fourfold division.

Brentano's distaste for abstract universals is evident already in a 1901 letter to Marty:

> In the things (*Dingen*) nothing is universal. The so-called universal, as such, is only in the thinker… I know full well that [this] is far-reaching, for now all abstracta join the class of delusions/phantasms (*Wahngebilde*). (Brentano 1930: 74 [64]).

As for abstract particulars, Brentano discusses mostly states of affairs, which he finds multiply problematic (1930: 92 [82-3], 122-5 [108-110] *inter alia* – see §4 for details) and accordingly rejects:

> … we should always paraphrase (*substituieren*) a statement accepting something as a state of affairs (*Tatsache*) into an equivalent statement in which a thing (*Ding*) in the proper (*eigentlich*) sense is accepted or rejected. (Brentano 1917b: 234-5 [337])[4]

Meanwhile, he dismisses tropes, or particularized properties, as 'curious intermediates (*Mitteldinge*) between the absurd universals and the real individuals' (Brentano 1933: 60 [52]). It is true that he sometimes discusses 'individual accidents,' which he does accept in his ontology, but as we will see in §3, these are *not* tropes, but rather a special kind of concrete particulars. As for concrete universals, Brentano virtually never discusses them. Still, in one undated dictation on the concept of substance, he speaks of 'the wholly imaginary fiction of an

haecceity' (Brentano 1933: 147 [112]). Clearly, then, in claiming that 'there is nothing other than things,' Brentano restricts his ontology to concrete particulars.

As we will see, Brentano's version of strict nominalism is thoroughly heterodox. Yet his case for it is driven by remarkably modern considerations. 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 1994, 2012) and even 'extraordinarily bad' (Simons 2006: 89). However, this 'argument' merely makes a move at a relatively advanced stage of the dialectic.[5] To properly understand the source of Brentano's attraction to reism, we must start from much more basic considerations pertaining to the ontological import of simple declarative sentences.

2. Nominalism, Truthmakers, and Paraphrase

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. It is in this sense a universal. Following Armstrong (1978), most contemporary ontologists would prefer theorizing it as an Aristotelian *in re* universal rather than a Platonic *ante rem* universal, but still as a universal.[6]

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 featuring concrete particulars exclusively for such truths as T$_1$-T$_3$.

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*.

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 Quine's quantificational criterion of ontological commitment.[7]) 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

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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 implausible.

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.[8] It is questionable whether this is ultimately acceptable. It would be much harder, in any case, to accept that such simple positive truths as T_1-T_3 have no truthmakers. For that would mean that the truth of even the simplest positive claims 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 herself, independently of her properties, would make 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 this 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

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homo sapiens; and so on. Arguably, however, at the fundamental level each atomic truth should have its own distinct truthmaker.[9] 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 three 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, 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. Yet on the view under consideration, 'Tony has mass m,' 'Tony has electric charge C,' and 'Tony exists' all have the same truthmaker – Tony.

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Most nominalists have adopted a more flexible strategy with respect to truthmakers, whereby truths such as T_1 are *paraphrased* into statements whose truthmakers are manifestly 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. [10] Another version of this strategy is *mereological nominalism* (Quine 1950). Call the mereological fusion of all famous concrete particulars 'Johnny.' Then T_1 can be paraphrased into:

(P$_2$) Beyoncé is a part of Johnny.

A third version is *resemblance nominalism* (Rodriguez-Pereyra 2002). Consider 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 insofar as she resembles them.

Each of these paraphrases faces its own special difficulties, but there is also one (arguably insurmountable) difficulty they all share. This is that they fail to deliver truthmakers that genuinely do away with universals and abstracta. In particular, there is always a *relation* that figures in their truthmakers. Thus, P$_1$ invokes not only Beyoncé and Jimmy, but also a membership relation between them;[11] P$_2$ invokes not only Beyoncé and Johnny, but also a parthood relation between them;[12] P$_3$ invokes not only all famous things, but also a resemblance relation among them. 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.

The nominalist has some moves available for handling these relations, but they are all unsatisfying. One move is to go struthious with respect to just the one relation she needs; but it is unclear why it is so much better to be struthious with respect to just one apparent universal than with respect to many. Another option is

to recursively apply the same paraphrase strategy to the relevant relation, for example reconstrue the membership relation as the set of all ordered pairs whose first item is a member of the second; but this would appear to involve infinite regress, without the explanation ever bottoming out. There may be other moves, but it is hard to imagine that any might be very plausible.

The upshot is that nominalism has a real problem with such positive atomic truths as T_1 and T_2. It would be nice if we could have different truthmakers for these two truths, but ones that involved no illicit relations. This is where Brentano's work becomes interesting: the combination of his reism and his theory of judgment, discussed in Chap. 4, paves the way to a fourth and genuinely relation-free paraphrase strategy.

3. Brentano's Reism: The Coincidence Model

In this section, I present Brentano's reism as though it were a response to the truthmaker challenge. I start with the ingenious paraphrase strategy that Brentano's theory of judgment allows him to field, which meets the truthmaker challenge but admittedly involves several bizarre-sounding claims (§3.1). I then present a model that makes sense of Brentano's reism (§3.2) and show how the model illuminates and motivates Brentano's bizarre-sounding claims (§3.3). The upshot is that the nominalist has in her arsenal an all-things-considered plausible view that seems to overcome the truthmaker challenge. (I will consider objections in §4.)

3.1. 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. As we have seen in Chap. 4, however, for Brentano this subject-predicate structure is an accident of public language.

Ultimately, such indicatives derive their meaning from the judgments they express, and those do *not* have a subject-predicate structure. They do not involve predication at all, and are in fact objectual rather than propositional attitudes. Indeed, as we have seen in Chap. 4, a sentence such as 'Beyoncé is famous' simply expresses a belief in a famous Beyoncé. That is, T_1 should 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,' and so on. But the point is that P$_4$ seems to simply assert the existence of a certain individual, though a somewhat strange one (more on that momentarily). Importantly, P$_4$ offers an alternative paraphrase strategy to the standard modern nominalist paraphrases P$_1$-P$_3$. And the strategy generalizes: given that for Brentano *every* categorical is paraphraseable into an existential, a paraphrase of P$_4$'s form is available for *every* indicative with a subject-predicate surface structure.

Now, Brentano himself would never state his ontological project in terms of providing truthmakers for such truths. As we saw in Chap. 5, for Brentano truth is a matter of correctness and correctness a matter of actual or counterfactual self-evidence. So to the question 'What makes truth T true?,' his answer will be 'The self-evidence that attaches, or would attach, to the judgment expressed by T.' At the same time, there is a sense in which Brentano thinks that a certain ontology can be read off from the statements we assent to, so these statements must be *ontologically responsible*. This is the only way to make sense of the considerable efforts he puts into paraphrasing so many kinds of statement we unreflectively assent to in everyday life. Indeed, this is why Brentano insists on paraphrasing 'Beyoncé is famous' into 'famous-Beyoncé is' – he is worried that the former in some way commits to an ontology of entities corresponding to predicates. So although Brentano would not put his project in terms of truthmaking, the underlying ontological anxiety motivating his project is very similar to that fueling standard truthmaker nominalism. In what follows, then, I will speak freely as though

Brentano addresses himself to the truthmaker challenge – even though, strictly speaking, he does not.

Brentano's approach to the challenge, then, is to claim that the truthmakers of our judgments are always individual objects, namely, the putative individual objects that the relevant beliefs are beliefs *in*. What makes a belief in famous-Beyoncé true, or correct, is that which this belief-in is about – the individual famous-Beyoncé. In virtue of being the truth/correctness-maker of this belief-in, famous-Beyoncé is also the truthmaker of T_1. So on Brentano's view, there is a certain individual, famous-Beyoncé, that makes true 'Beyoncé is famous.'

The advantages of Brentano's paraphrase should be evident. Clearly, no illicit relation even *appears* to be involved. No membership, parthood, or resemblance is invoked – just an unusual concrete particular called famous-Beyoncé! Furthermore, it is clear why this concrete particular makes true T_1 and not $\sim T_1$. The latter would be made true, if anything, by *un*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 §3.2). Thus the problems attending modern forms of paraphrase nominalism are entirely avoided by Brentano's reistic paraphrase.

The question that arises immediately is this: What kind of entity is famous-Beyoncé, and how is it related to Beyoncé (and to two-legged-Beyoncé)? On this, Brentano says some very strange things indeed. They may be summarized through two 'surprising' claims:

(C_1) Beyoncé is a substance whereas famous-Beyoncé is an accident, though both are concrete particulars.

(C_2) Beyoncé is a proper part of famous-Beyoncé, though an unsupplemented proper part.

The traditional view is that Beyoncé is a substance and fame is one of her accidents. Brentano is happy to preserve the substance/accident terminology, but recasts the

accident as famous-Beyoncé, an individual on a par with Beyoncé. In a 1908 essay, he writes:

> Plato took the concept of thing (*Ding*) to be unitary, surely correctly, whereas Aristotle was misled by his view of accidents to reject the unity of the concept of thing. An accident, he said, is not a thing in the same sense as a substance… For our part, we designate accident and substance a thing in the same sense… (Brentano 1933: 53-5 [48])

Given that accidents are individuals just like substances, Brentano plumps for a peculiar mereological relation between them:

> Every accident contains its substance as a part, but does not add to it a second part, something entirely new. (Brentano 1933: 11 [19])

Thus every connection between a substance and an accident is a counterexample to the axiom of supplementation of Classical Mereology. Recall from Chap. 1 that according to that axiom, if *x* is a proper part of *y*, then there is a *z*, such that (i) *z* does not overlap *x* and (ii) *z* is a proper part of y. Since the table-leg is a proper part of the table, the table must have some other, distinct proper part that supplements the table-leg and 'makes whole' the table. The table itself, however, is for Brentano a proper part of the brown-table, and yet there is no brownness that supplements the table and makes the brown-table whole. Or so Brentano claims. What to make of all this?

3.2. The Coincidence Model

As noted, on Brentano's view famous-Beyoncé is a thing 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.

> Every existent (*Seiendes*) is fully determinate, but we think a thing in multiple ways, without thinking the totality of its determinations. (Brentano 1933: 15 [22])

Since an accident such as famous-Beyoncé is an existent, in itself it is as fully determinate as a substance such as Beyoncé; indeterminacy attaches only to the way we think of famous-Beyoncé, not to famous-Beyoncé herself. (Note that famous-Beyoncé is a woman, just like Beyoncé!) Both Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé extend in all three spatial dimensions. In that respect and others, famous-Beyoncé is very unlike a trope or abstract particular such as Beyoncé's-fame. You can bump into famous-Beyoncé, but not into Beyoncé's-fame; the former has two legs and long hair, the latter is legless and hairless; and so on.

Indeed, 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, strictly speaking there are no properties according to the reist, since there are only things. So any claim about properties must be understood metaphorically or fictionalistically, or as a ladder to be thrown after its use. (Perhaps talk of 'determinations' can be understood as an attempt to express similar ideas without mentioning properties.) Secondly, 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 to except modal and temporal properties is that they interact with the identity and existence conditions of their bearers in ways that 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 (or determinations) 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.

Obviously, it may well be that *pace* Kripke, biological origins are not essential to human beings. Perhaps some other (potentially conjunctive) property F is, such that F determines Beyoncé's identity and persistence conditions. We would then say that, on Brentano's view (when expressed using the property fiction), Beyoncé's essential property is being F whereas famous-Beyoncé's essential properties are (i) being F and (ii) being famous. Likewise, 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. We will shed this assumption in §3.3.

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.[13] 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 their differences in modal (or temporal) properties: the statue could not (or will not) survive shuttering to pieces, but the clay could (or will) (see Baker 1997). My suggestion is that we understand Brentano's theory of 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' 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.

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To repeat, this talk of difference in properties is merely instrumental in the statement of the coincidence model. Strictly speaking, on this view there are no properties. Accordingly, Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé are simply brutely numerically different things. 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 fundamental: things are just different, nothing *makes* them different.

This may seem initially puzzling, but of course every ontology must take *something* as fundamental. For *each* candidate 'something,' we naturally prefer some metaphysical explanation over fundamentalism. Yet we cannot give a metaphysical explanation for *all* of them. Somewhere in our ontology we must accept inexplicable fundamentals. Brentano's 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 place to go fundamentalist. 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 saying that the difference between John's-haecceity and Mary's-haecceity is brute and inexplicable better than saying that the difference between John and Mary is brute and inexplicable? Brute individuation of haecceities

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is no less brutal than brute individuation of concrete particulars. And given that we have no independent handle on what haecceities actually *are*, we might as well go fundamentalist at the level of concrete particulars. (Perhaps this is why Brentano dismissed haecceities, as we have seen, as 'wholly imaginary fictions.') Thus brute individuation of concrete particulars may well be independently motivated (see also Hazlett 2010).[14]

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 constitution, which is asymmetric. There are no cases of coincidence without constitution. In contrast, Brentano's reism involves many coincident things with no asymmetric relation between them: famous-Beyoncé, two-legged-Beyoncé, long-haired-Beyoncé, etc. are all on a par, with no constitution relations obtaining between them.

My response is twofold. First, coincidence without constitution is nowise *excluded* by the statue/clay case. Suppose Sculp and Tor are sculptors commissioned 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* coincident 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-legged-Beyoncé.

Admittedly, in this case both sculptures individually depend asymmetrically 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 mere *accidents.*

3.3. The Coincidence Model and Brentano's Theory of Substance and Accident

Recall (C_1): Beyoncé is a substance whereas famous-Beyoncé is an accident, though both are concrete particulars. The coincidence model makes sense of this surprising claim. 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 there is no possible circumstance in which all members of S_3 are co-instantiated but not all members of

S_2 are. 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 asymmetrically on Beyoncé's. So 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.[15] We may then say that x is a *substance* iff there is no y such that x is an accident of y.

Since S_3 is not a proper subset of S_2, Beyoncé is not an accident of famous-Beyoncé. But this does not yet guarantee Beyoncé the status of a substance. For Beyoncé to be a substance, there must 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. Intuitively, this is an uncomfortable consequence: Beyoncé is the substance and Mathew-originating-Beyoncé the accident.

However, this apparent problem is an artifact of imposing on Brentano a doctrine not his, namely the essentiality of origins. Brentano's own view, as we saw above, is that things individuate *brutely* – not in virtue of their origins and not in virtue of anything else. There are no specific *characteristics* in virtue of which Beyoncé is the thing she is; she just is what she is and that is all there is to it. On this view, 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. If anything, a better approximation of Brentano's view (still within the property fiction) would cite in the essential subset of Beyoncé's properties only her individual essence (the right concrete universal):

   S_0: {Beyoncé-ness}.

Clearly, S_0 has no proper subset. Therefore, there is no thing of which Beyoncé is an accident, so Beyoncé comes out a substance. In truth, however, even S_0 cannot really be assigned to Beyoncé , since she individuates brutely, without the aid of *any* characteristics.[16]

Brentano's use the term 'accident' to denote concrete particulars might still seem odd. But if the crucial feature of accidents is that, unlike substances, they are incapable of independent existence, then it is perfectly reasonable within a reistic framework to call concrete particulars incapable of independent existence 'accidents.' Insofar as famous-Beyoncé's existence depends on other existents', then, famous-Beyoncé 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 *impenetrability principle*, the notion that 'no two substances can interpenetrate (*durchdringen*) spatially' (Brentano 1933: 212 [154]). There may be many concrete particulars in the same place at the same time, but only one substance in a place at a time.

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Recall next C_2: Beyoncé is a proper part of famous-Beyoncé, but an unsupplemented proper part. The first part of this makes perfect sense within the coincidence model. Suppose again that Beyoncé's essential properties are S_2 and famous-Beyoncé's are S_3. Since S_2 and S_3 as *sets* of properties, we may note that the former is a proper *subset* of the latter. But if we think of the *sums* of properties corresponding to S_2 and S_3, 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. This is what Brentano does. But the metaphor or fiction of essential properties is helpful for seeing why we should say this.

Brentano's most perplexing claim is doubtless that although Beyoncé is a *proper* part of famous-Beyoncé, famous-Beyoncé has no *other* part that 'makes whole' Beyoncé. More generally, every substance is an unsupplemented proper part of each of its accidents. This is an extremely bizarre claim, and it is natural to dismiss it as straightforwardly incoherent (Simons 2006: 92); certainly it is incoherent if we take the axiom of supplementation to be definitional of parthood. However, although Brentano could have chosen a more judicious way of putting things, the idea is not unmotivated, and the coincidence model can help us see why.

Let us revert to indulging 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, there would have to exist, in the same location, also a thing 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. We may call this putative thing '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.

Why not? Brentano's argument for this is presented in this quite difficult passage from 1912 or 1913:

> Suppose an atom were capable of thinking: then the thinking atom would be a whole which, if the atom ceased to think, would be reduced to one of its parts. But one could nowise say that this thinking (*Denkens*) could survive 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 thinker (*Denkendes*), in that the second thinker would be individuated qua thinker through the individuality of the atom. (Brentano 1933: 152 [115])

The curious focus on a thinking atom is intended to purge the thought-experiment of any distracting features: we are to imagine a partless entity – an atom in the mereological sense – engaging in the simple activity of thinking. Brentano's starting point is that this atom, Bobby, is a proper part of thinking-Bobby. For Bobby to be supplemented within thinking-Bobby, the supplementer would have to be a third object, The Thinker, such that thinking-Bobby = Bobby + The Thinker. We may represent Brentano's argument as a dilemma. Either The Thinker is a substance or it is an accident. But on the one hand, it cannot be a substance. For the thinking would not survive the destruction of Bobby. If Bobby goes out of existence, not only thinking-Bobby does, but the thinking does as well. So the thinking does not have the kind of independent existence characteristic of a substance. So The Thinker could only be an accident. If it is an accident, however, then it depends for its existence on some substance, which therefore must be a proper part of it: 'just as absolutely no whole can subsist (*bestehen*) without one of its parts, no real [accident] can exist without its substance' (Brentano 1925: 29).[17] But if The Thinker has some proper part, the same question arises again: is there something else that supplements that proper part within The Thinker? The ensuing regress of questions will bottom out, presumably, in *some* substance involved in the supplementation of Bobby within thinking-Bobby. Yet as we have seen, there can be no such further substantive part of thinking-Bobby, since all such parts cannot survive the destruction of Bobby.

The argument is difficult, but strikes me as cogent: there is simply no such substance as The Famous that might supplement Beyoncé within famous-Beyoncé. In addition, two further arguments line up on Brentano's side. First, if there were such an entity as The Famous, it would have to be something that could in principle be a famous singer one moment, a famous rock the next, and a famous concept a moment later. That is an odd entity to welcome into one's ontology. Secondly, consider that if there *were* such an entity as The Famous, it would have to reappear elsewhere in the world to make up the difference between Chalmers and famous-Chalmers, Messi and famous-Messi, and so on. At that point, however, The Famous

would no longer be an irrepeatable concrete particular. It would be a recurring universal. So there could be no place for The Famous within Brentano's reistic framework.

The upshot is that since The Famous does not exist, it cannot supplement Beyoncé and 'make whole' famous-Beyoncé. Accordingly, Beyoncé is an unsupplemented proper part of famous-Beyoncé. In this way, the coincidence model helps us see how Brentano ends up with unsupplemented proper parts. His terminological choice may have been infelicitous. Chisholm, in an exemplary exercise of interpretive charity, tries to defend Brentano by suggesting that he simply 'takes the term "part" somewhat more widely than it is ordinarily taken' (Chisholm 1978: 202). Nonetheless, it might have been wiser to devise a new term for the wider relation – Chisholm himself proposes 'constituency' (Ibid.) – and reserve the term 'parthood' for the relation that obeys the axiom of supplementation. We might then say that in Brentano's ontology, Beyoncé is a constituent of famous-Beyoncé but (still surprisingly) famous-Beyoncé has no *additional* constituent.[18] If Beyoncé and famous-Beyoncé are coinciding individuals which simply have (within the property fiction) different essential properties, we can see why that would be: because the additional constituent would have to have only fame as its essential property, and that, as we have seen, is multiply implausible.

4. Objections and Replies

I close the discussion of Brentano's reism by considering four objections to it: that it is unintuitive, that it is unparsimonious, that it has untoward consequences, and that it is unmotivated.

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, Brentano can readily *explain away* these conflicts with intuition.

The intuitive pull of (i) is largely inherited from the impenetrability principle, the notion that there can be only one substance in one place at the same time. This principle is frequently (and, for Brentano, 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 impenetrability can be respected without commitment to (i): although there are many concrete particulars in a place at a time, only one of them is a substance. 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). As noted in Chap. 4, Brentano holds that the original function of language is to facilitate communication, a task success at which need not involve accurate representation of the structure of reality (Brentano 1956: 25-6). 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.

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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 entities/quantifiabilia/ontoids all the same.[19]

Admittedly, Armstrong (2004: 10) makes a number of moves that allow for economy in truthmakers, mostly using his 'entailment principle': if entity 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). He would thereby incorporate parallel economies into his reism. Just as Armstrong rejects the state of affairs of Beyoncé-being-famous-or-eight-foot-tall and lets Beyoncé-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.'[20] In this way, Brentano would guarantee his reism will be just as parsimonious 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.

The objector might press that all this shows, at most, that Brentano does *no worse*, parsimony-wise, than Armstrong; it does not show that he does any *better*. If the two do equally well, and Armstrong has the advantage (such as it is) of appealing to entities whose structure reflects the structure of sentences, perhaps we should prefer his ontology after all.

In reality, Armstrong's ontology is in fact at a disadvantage relative to Brentano's. 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. 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.[21]) But even if *both* type- and token-parsimony are relevant to the assessment of ontological theories, Brentano's fares better than Armstrong's: it wins on type-parsimony and ties on token-parsimony!

One way to curtail Brentano's advantage in the type-parsimony department is to deny that states of affairs have concrete particulars and properties/relations as constituents. According to Skyrms' (1981) 'factualism,' for example, states of affairs are simple, unstructured entities with no parts or constituents. Indeed, Skyrms attempts to assay individuals and properties in terms of different types of state-of-affairs collection: Beyoncé is nothing but the collection of all Beyoncé facts (Beyoncé's-being-famous, Beyoncé's-being-two-legged, etc.); fame is nothing but the collection of all fame facts (Beyoncé's-being-famous, Chalmers'-being-famous, etc.), and so on. Such 'factualism' would *not* be at a type-parsimony disadvantage relative to reism. In a way, it parallels reism very closely but simply replaces truthmakers such as famous-Beyoncé and thinking-Bobby with truthmakers such as Beyoncé's-being-famous and Bobby's-thinking (that is, Bobby's-being-in-the-process-of-thinking).

Brentano does have an 'explosion argument' against a state-of-affairs ontology. Here it is:

> If where A is, there also were (in the full sense of the word), as something distinct from A, the being of A, as well as the being of that being of A, and so forth, the endless complication and proliferation would already be disconcerting (Brentano 1930: 122 [108]).

Consider the truth 'The Higgs boson exists.' What is its truthmaker? For Brentano, it is the boson itself.[22] The factualist, however, would cite the state of affairs of the *Higgs-boson's-existence* as the truthmaker of 'The Higgs boson exists.' But then the

following would also be a truth in need of truthmaker: 'The state of affairs of the Higgs-boson's-existence exists.' *Its* truthmaker would presumably be the state of affairs of the Higgs-boson's-existence's-existence; this would in turn underlie a new truth: 'The state of affairs of the Higgs-boson's-existence's-existence exists'; and so on ad infinitum.[23]

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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. Let me now consider two objections to the effect that the theory has embarrassing consequences. Although I will argue that the first objection can be overcome, I think the second one represents a genuine problem for Brentano.

The first objection is that it is not only the individuation of concrete particulars that must be brutal in Brentano's reism; their similarity and dissimilarity will be as well. Intuitively, for instance, famous-Beyoncé resembles Beyoncé more than she does Messi. Also intuitively, there is *an explanation* of this. The standard explanation is that famous-Beyoncé shares more properties with Beyoncé than she does with Messi. This explanation is obviously unavailable to a strict nominalist like Brentano, who does not countenance properties. So it would seem Brentano must also resemblance brutal resemblance in his ontology.

In truth, this problem is not special to Brentano. Any strict nominalist must provide a truthmaker for such truths as 'The Eiffel Tower resembles the Empire State Building more than it resembles the moon.' The case of 'Famous-Beyoncé resembles Beyoncé more than she does Messi' is special to Brentano's theory, but it does not involve a new and distinct difficulty. The real question, then, is how to provide a truthmaker for such resemblance truths without citing a relational universal of resemblance.

According to Rodriguez Pereyra (2002 Chap. 6), the only serious option for the nominalist is to hold that the truthmaker of such resemblance truths is simply

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the plurality of the individuals involved. Thus, 'The Eiffel Tower resembles the Empire State Building more than it resembles the moon' is made true by the Eiffel Tower, the Empire State Building, and the moon – end of story. This suggestion raises many difficulties, however, not least of which the difficulty of understanding how 'The Eiffel Tower resembles the Empire State Building more than it resembles the moon' manages to say more than 'The Eiffel Tower, the Empire State Building, and the moon exist,' given that their truthmaker is one and the same.

However, it seems to me that Brentano can offer an alternative and more satisfying truthmaker for 'The Eiffel Tower resembles the Empire State Building more than it resembles the moon,' namely, that strange concrete particular we might call the resembling-the-Empire-State-building-more-than-the-moon Eiffel Tower – a concrete particular collocated with, but numerically distinct from, the Eiffel Tower. By the same token, Brentano's truthmaker for 'Famous-Beyoncé resembles Beyoncé more than she does Messi' would be resembling-Beyoncé-more-than-Messi Famous-Beyoncé. The strategy here is to deploy the paraphrase of asymmetric-relational truths proposed in Chap. 4 to 'translate' resemblance claims into existential claims about single individuals, then identify the relevant unusual individual in Brentano's ontology that makes those claims true.[24]

A different objection is that Brentano's notion of unilateral dependence cannot account for the substance/accident distinction. 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 if there is no y such that x depends for its existence on y). The problem is that there seem to be pairs of entities $\{E_1, E_2\}$, such that intuitively E_1 is not an accident of E_2, but E_1 does depend for its existence on E_2. Consider my old car Mia, and the following two truths about it:

> (T$_5$) Mia exists.
> (T$_6$) Mia is spatially extended.

Within Brentano's framework, T$_5$ is made true by Mia, while T$_6$ is made true by spatially-extended-Mia. These are two numerically distinct things. It is also

independently plausible, now, that Mia cannot exist without extended-Mia existing: a car is incapable of disembodied, extensionless existence. To that extent, Mia's existence depends on extended-Mia's. If so, Mia is *not* a substance, 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 issue. There are several options open to him, but none is entirely comfortable. One is to accept that Mia 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 massy-Tony are one and the same thing (as are Mia and extended-Mia). The cost here is that we end up assigning the same truthmaker to different fundamental truths, opening Brentano up to a *tu quoque* from the ostrich nominalist. A third option is to modify the account so a substance's existence is allowed to depend on another thing's existence, provided the dependence is not unilateral. Thus, since extended-Mia's existence depends on Mia's just as much as Mia's does on extended-Mia's, Mia comes out a substance after all. The cost here is that extended-Mia seems to come out a substance as well (as does massy-Tony); this is a problem insofar as it violates the impenetrability principle. A fourth option is to allow that Mia is not essentially a car, in fact could still be the very same Mia and yet be altogether an aspatial entity. The cost here is simply the admission of entities so strange. A fifth 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 a sense that the resulting 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 is to decree that it is a brute fact that massy-Tony is an accident of Tony and not the other way round, just as it is a brute fact that Tony has just the mass *m* it does. The

cost here is the brutality. That contingent facts at the fundamental level of reality are brute is understandable; but intuitively, massy-Tony is an accident of Tony in *every* possible world in which both exist, so this is not a *contingent* fundamental truth.

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A completely different kind of complaint is that Brentano nowhere tells us clearly why we should *want* to be reists. Even if his reism were *the best* version of strict nominalism, what motivates strict nominalism to begin with?

According to Kraus, Brentano's basic motivation has to do with the ultimate intelligibility of putative entities. In his final footnote to Brentano's 1889 lecture on truth, Kraus writes:

> It is the principle that any conceptual investigation must ultimately go back to intuition [i.e., direct grasp] that finally led Brentano to the critique and withdrawal of the doctrine of *irrealia*. (Brentano 1930: 176 [154])

As we have seen in previous chapters, for Brentano appreciating the nature of a putative type of entity requires that it would either (i) be directly graspable or (ii) admit assay in terms of *something* which is directly graspable. This is a fundamental working principle throughout Brentano's philosophy, so it is not a bad hypothesis that Brentano reached his reism through application of this principle.

At the same time, it is not clear that the principle really delivers strict nominalism. Russell (1912) claimed that we have direct acquaintance with universals (see also Chudnoff 2013). Campbell (1990) argued that tropes are precisely what perceptual experience presents us with. Looking up, you see the sky's blueness, that is, the 'sky-based' individual blueness-instance. The factualist could make a similar claim, suggesting that what you directly perceive is the *sky's being blue* – and what you directly *inner*-perceive is *your experience's being as of blue*.

More importantly, it is not clear that concrete particulars are better candidates for direct grasp (or assay in terms thereof) than abstract particulars, such as tropes and facts. Consider that for Brentano, only *inner* perception enables direct grasp. But do we really inner-perceive concrete particulars? Given Brentano's subjectist account of intentionality (see Chap. 2), inner perception of immanent intentional objects is not in the cards. The only concrete particular inner perception is in a position to acquaint us with is *the self*. Now, Brentano does think that inner perception presents you with your self. But he insists that it never presents you with the naked self, so to speak. It only presents the self *as in some particular mental state*:

> ... when we grasp ourselves as thinker, we do not grasp our substance on its own (*für sich allein*), but rather with an accident, which in its manifold changes our substance sometimes exhibits and sometimes not. (Brentano 1933: 155 [117])

Thus the phenomena, as Brentano himself conceives of them, seem friendlier to the notion that in inner perception we grasp directly individual facts (of the form our-substance-having-a-temporary-accident) than concrete particulars (such as our substance). It is true, of course, that ultimately Brentano takes accidents to be concrete particulars as well; but we are looking for something to *motivate* precisely this view. It is hard to see how the direct-grasp principle, by itself, could motivate a strict-nominalist ontology.

As a rival hypothesis, I would suggest that Brentano's reism is motivated simply by the fact that, once the belief-in theory of judgment is in place, it becomes *possible* to rid one's ontology of all entities but concrete particulars. For it becomes *possible* to paraphrase every truth into a statement about concrete particulars only, and *possible* to take every true judgment to require for its truth only the existence of some concrete particular. I suspect in the background is an assumption shared by many ontologists: that *if* it is possible to have a monocategorial ontology, then we should certainly go for it. That is, if we can bring ultimate unity to our ontology, by assaying all reality in terms of a single category of existent, then we should do so. From this perspective, philosophers who end up with pluricategorial ontologies do

so only because they take monocategorial ontologies to be unworkable. What the belief-in theory of judgment buys us, then, is the *viability* of monocategorial ontology. More specifically, it shows how one monocategorial ontology – Brentano's – *could* provide truthmakers for all and only truths.

If this is how we think of the basic motivation for reism, then at bottom it simply has to do with a premium on parsimony (and unity). A monocategorial ontology is elusive, but is an ontological ideal: if a monocategorial ontology can be shown to be adequate to the phenomena (that is, provide truthmakers for all truths), no further justification is needed for adopting it. To the question 'What would it be fitting to believe in?,' it answers: this concrete particular, that concrete particular, and so on.

Obviously, Brentano's reism is not the only coherent monocategorial ontology. There are also class nominalism, mereological nominalism, resemblance nominalism, Skyrms' aforementioned factualism, the kind of trope theory that assays all reality in terms of tropes (Williams 1953), and more. Presumably, what Brentano thinks is that these monocategorial ontologies face independent problems that makes them *incapable* of producing a truthmaker for all and only truths. In other words, reism is the only monocategorial ontology *adequate to the phenomena*.

To my mind, this is quite a compelling motivation for reism. Even if it is not Brentano's after all, it is a strong motivation *for us* to consider positively Brentano's ontology.[25] It is a separate question whether there might be independent liabilities accruing to reism. As we have seen, reism faces some tough decisions when it comes to the substance/accident distinction (think of Tony's dependence on massy-Tony), ones that are sure to render the view ultimately less attractive. In addition, *all* forms of strict nominalism are equally vulnerable to certain general objections (see, notably, Jackson 1977). And as we have seen in Chap. 4, the belief-in theory of judgment that underlies the reistic paraphrases has own issues. Still, reism appears to be a viable fourth option for truthmaker nominalism, worth considering.

5. From Reism to Monism

Suppose the motivation for reism is that it is an adequate monocategorial ontology. Can the push for parsimony be taken any further? Clearly, it is not possible to have fewer categories of existent than one! Still, it might be possible to have fewer elements within the relevant category. Consider Horgan and Potrč's view – known as 'blobjectivism' or 'existence monism' – according to which there is only one concrete particular, the cosmos (Horgan and Potrč 2000, 2006, 2008). On this view, the universe exists, but it has no parts. It is the *only* concrete particular in existence. If one combined this view with reism, one would probably reach the most parsimonious ontology possible (setting aside Gorgias' view that *nothing* exists!).

Brentano never held quite this view. For one thing, his acceptance of a multitude of world-accidents collocated with the world-substance would preclude it. For another, as a substance dualist he took each of us to have a distinct soul, which is a concrete particular in its own right.[26] However, Brentano could still hold consistently with all this that *there is only one physical substance* – the material universe as a whole. And indeed, at least for one heady afternoon, on 30 January 1915, Brentano seems to have adopted precisely this view. In this final section, I present Brentano's view as expounded in the relevant text (§5.1) and his argument for it (§5.2). I should note that this section is entirely 'optional,' in that it is not needed for an understanding of Brentano's overall system. (It is hard to know, in fact, how seriously Brentano took his monist ruminations, and what credence he placed in them over the final twenty-six months of his life.)

5.1. Brentano's One-Day Monism

To my knowledge, the dictation from 30 January 1915 is the only place in the Brentano corpus where (material-substance) monism is floated.[27] The manuscript is archived at Harvard's Houghton Library under the title 'The Lorentz-Einstein Question' (Brentano MS N7). Kastil showed remarkable insight in including his

edited version of the piece, retitled 'The Nature of the Physical World in Light of the Theory of Categories,' as an appendix in the *Kategorienlehre* (Brentano 1933: 296-301 [208-211]).[28]

> Brentano's very first statement of his monism is this:

>> … one might go as far as to conjecture that the totality of physical matter (*Gesamtheit des Körpliches*) constitutes a single stationary physical substance (*einzige ruhende Körpersubstanz*), which would be littered (*da und dort behaftet*) with certain particular accidents… [O]ur mechanical laws, as well as everything physics, chemistry, and physiology have established, would pertain to these accidents and their changes and mutual interactions. (Brentano 1933: 298 [209])

Imagine a big, quivering, translucent ball, under the surface of which appear, disappear, and reappear various vaguely glowing color patches. If the color appearances evolve in sufficiently systematic ways, we might be tempted to posit colorful 'things' or entities that 'travel' just below the ball's surface, 'bump into' each other, change directions, and so on. And we might wish to formulate the natural laws that govern these patches' behavior and interactions. But for all that, there may be no 'things' under there – there may just be undifferentiated *stuff* that exhibits different colors in different places at different times. We could study the laws that govern changes in the colors exhibited, but we should resist the temptation to think of these as laws describing the persistence and interaction of a multitude of independent entities. Brentano's universe is of course very different from this ball: it does not quiver, but is strictly immobile, and it is probably not spherical, but has some arbitrary, brutely contingent shape (Brentano 1933: 301 [211]). Nonetheless, like this ball it does not host any independent things or objects, but instead seems to be a single unitary 'blobject' that simply exhibits a certain (spatial and temporal) qualitative *structure*.

In some respects, the picture Brentano presents very much reminds of Horgan and Potrč's blobjectivism. On the other hand, in accounting for the world's qualitative heterogeneity, Brentano avails himself quite insouciantly of locations and indeed parts:

> In place of the ether there would be the stationary, unitary substance (*ruhende*, *einheitliche*
>
> *Substanz*). In place of what had formerly been regarded as the substances of physical matter,
>
> there would be accidents inhering in (*haftend an*) the [stationary unitary] substance, which
>
> would be transmitted from one part (*Teil*) of it to another. The laws of mechanics would
>
> pertain to the interchange and persistence of these accidents. (Brentano 1933: 298 [209])

Here Brentano speaks explicitly of the universe's parts. In another passage, he speaks of the universe's portions/parcels (*Parzellen*) (Brentano 1933: 299-300 [209-10]; quoted in §5.2). But if the universe has parts, strictly speaking it cannot be the *only* material object, as blobjectivism requires.[29] Instead, we appear to have on our hands the kind of so-called *priority monism* defended by Jonathan Schaffer (2007/2015, 2010a, 2010b). According to Schaffer, the world does have parts, but is nonetheless ontologically prior to them. Schaffer is thus a pluralist about material objects; he is only a monist about the number of *fundamental* material objects.

This may well be Brentano's ultimate view. After all, he is a monist only about material *substance*. He is perfectly happy to accept a plurality of material objects, as long as only one of them is a substance. The others are *accidents*. As Brentano writes in the passage just quoted, instead of 'the substances of physical matter, there would be accidents inhering in the [cosmos], which would be transmitted from one part of it to another.' Here a substance's accidents are still construed as concrete particulars, but ones which need not be perfectly collocated with the relevant substance; instead, they may be *proper parts* of that substance. In any case, since for Brentano accidents depend ontologically on their substances, a substance is always ontologically prior to its accidents. So the view really does resemble priority monism more than existence monism. Perhaps we could summarize the view by saying that it combines priority monism about (physical) concrete particulars and existence monism about (physical) substance.

There is another question to consider, though, regarding what exactly 'the (material) cosmos' is supposed to be. Three main approaches present themselves: (i) the cosmos as spacetime; (ii) the cosmos as the totality of matter filling up spacetime; (iii) spacetime *plus* the matter filling it up. Schaffer, for example, seems

to support the first option (Schaffer 2009). Brentano, though, would presumably go for the second option, given that he treats 'empty space' as a syncrategorematic (pseudo-referential) expression akin to 'the hole in the wall' and 'lack of enthusiasm.' In a 1915 dictation, he writes: 'An empty space needs to be something positive just as little as does the absence of a sound when a sound is skipped in playing a scale' (Brentano 1976: 178 [150]; see also 1930: 79 [68]) – a remark he repeats in different variations throughout the piece. If our ontology can countenance only regions of space filled with matter, it would seem that it is really only the relevant 'material filling' that is real.

Brentano's monism about the physical world can thus be characterized through the conjunction of the following three theses: (1) There exists only one material substance, the cosmos as a whole; (2) this substance is just the totality of physical matter ('*Gesamtheit des Körpliches*'); (3) it has parts, which however (i) are not themselves substances and (ii) depend for their existence on the one material substance.

5.2. Brentano's Argument for Monism

Interestingly, just as modern monism is motivated by considerations drawn from physics – more specifically, the phenomenon of quantum entanglement (see Schaffer 2010a: 50-55, Calosi 2014) – Brentano motivates monism by appeal to one of the burning questions of the physics of his day, the null result of the Michelson-Morely experiment. Let me explain the result, then Brentano's inference from it.

Suppose you sit in a small room and watch your friend tap dancing. If all the air is instantaneously sucked out of the room, you will no longer be able to hear those taps. The reason is that without the air, the sound waves bringing the sound to your ears will be unable to travel. Sound waves are waves *of* or *in* something – in this case air (hence 'airwaves'). Sound does not need air to travel through, it can also travel through water, helium, and so forth. But it does need *some* kind of medium – some substance must be undulating if sound waves are to occur.

This might be thought to raise a question: how can light travel from faraway stars and reach our eyes *through empty space*? Do light waves not need some undulating medium of their own? Many nineteenth-century physicists thought so, arguing that the space between us and those faraway stars cannot be real vacuum; instead, it must be filled with some unusually unimposing substance, a kind of pervasive foam-stuff, through which light waves travel.

On this picture, the earth does not revolve in a void, but rather 'swims' through this foam-stuff. Now, just as when you swim in otherwise motionless water, you create a current around you, one would expect the earth to produce its own extraordinarily light 'current' as it swims through the foam-stuff. And in the normal go of things, this should mean that light waves would travel faster 'downstream' than 'upstream,' that is, against the earth's motion than along it. This speed difference is precisely what the 1887 Michelson-Morely experiment failed to find. Try it any way you like, it seems light travels through the foam equally fast in all directions, regardless of what and how bodies are moving in it.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, physicists were preoccupied with trying to explain this striking null result. Michelson himself thought it showed that the foam – better known as *ether* – was not actually stationary, but was 'dragged along' by bodies as they moved about space (a hypothesis aired already in the 1840s by George Stokes). Lorentz insisted that the foam was stationary, conjecturing that as bodies swam through it they contracted in the direction of their movement, thus producing a weaker current behind them than they would otherwise – exactly as much weaker, in fact, as would be needed to perfectly cancel out the speeding up of light's downstream travel! Einstein's special relativity, however, made room for the simplest explanation of the null result – the explanation that there simply *is* no ether, so naturally it has no effect on the behavior of light. Einstein reverted to Newton's old idea that light does not travel in waves at all, and thus does not depend on the existence of an undulating substance or medium. Instead, light is corpuscular – there are tiny particles of light that move through empty space in just the same way, say, the Earth does. These light particles are of course the photons. As is well

known, ultimately photons (and soon thereafter electrons) came to be thought of as something in-between particles and waves, exhibiting properties of both.

It is in this context, of trying to explain the Michelson-Morely null result, that Brentano offers up his monist hypothesis. He writes:

> I believe that only through such a [monist] recasting (*Umbildung*) of our conception of the physical world (*Körperwelt*) do certain paradoxes, which face our physicists [Lorentz and Einstein] due to the results of Michelson's and related experiments, resolve themselves easiest. This recasting would pave the way to a somewhat deeper grasp of the physical world; the notion of the unitary substance (*einheitlichen Substanz*) taking the ether's place would make much more sense than what we have been taught about the ether's peculiarities (*Eigenheiten*), especially its impenetrability, and would also cast so-called Matter (*Materie*) in a totally new light.[30] (Brentano 1933: 299-300 [210])

How does monism help with Michelson-Morely? Brentano is a tad telegraphic on that; the only comment of relevance seems to be this:

> As for light and electricity radiation, it is not impossible to conjure up a plausible story (*geeignet Vorstellungen bilden*) that bears some analogy to both the [particle] emission theory and the [wave] undulation theory, which would do justice to the phenomena just as well as them, if not better. It would not be concerned with oscillations or relocations of parts of the substance underlying the rays … but only with the relocation of qualities, which may be thought of as dividing into very small parcels/portions (*Parzellen*). In this way everything remains in essence unaltered… (Brentano 1933: 299-300 [209-10])

The idea seems to be this. Light radiates neither in waves nor in corpuscles. In fact, there *are* neither waves nor corpuscles – there is no undulating medium like Lorentz's ether and there are no light particles like Einstein's photons. Instead, there is a single, immobile substance with undifferentiated, homogeneous constitution that simply exhibits different properties in different places. That is, there is qualitative variation in the world, but no quantitative variety. Accordingly, the transmission of light from A to B involves neither traveling particles nor an undulating medium; it is just a matter of the universe exhibiting the relevant light properties in A at one time and in B at a later time. The laws of mechanics describe the regularities governing such changes in properties across the single substance

that is the universe, not some processes that might involve the interaction of separate objects. The Michelson-Morely null result simply tells us something about what these regularity laws are; it raises no deep puzzle once we stop expecting there to be an undulating medium through which light travels.

It is doubtful that Brentano's argument is a cogent reason to go monist. Presumably there are other ways to accommodate the Michelson-Morely result, notably Einstein's special relativity (see Einstein 1920 §16). At the same time, it is striking that Brentano suggested that the underlying physical reality is more fundamental than either particles or waves a decade before de Broglie hypothesized essentially the same (which earned him the 1929 Nobel prize). Perhaps the deep thrust of Brentano's argument for (material-substance) monism is this idea: only if the cosmos is in reality a single unitary substance can we make sense of the idea that matter is neither fully corpuscular nor fully wavy.

Conclusion

In a 1914 dictation, Brentano succinctly presents his considered ontological inventory:

> An existent (*Seiendes*) in the proper sense is not only any substance, any plurality (*Mehrheit*) of substances, and any part of a substance, but also any accident. (Brentano 1933: 11 [19])

In a way, existents come in four varieties: substances, accidents, substance-parts, and substance-pluralities. However:

> … every plurality of things and every part of a thing is itself a thing (Ibid.)

Since we have already seen that accidents are also things, it turns out that all existents are things, that is, concrete particulars. This is what I have called strict nominalism. Brentano's specific version is reism – strict nominalism with a special strategy for paraphrasing simple positive truths about our world that do not *seem* to cite only concrete particulars.

I have not argued 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 plausible, upon consideration, than the other three.

In addition, I have considered favorably a late attempt by Brentano to produce further economies in his ontology by admitting in it only one material substance – the cosmos as a whole. This leaves of course many other concrete particulars, including every part and every accident of the cosmos, as well as every soul in it. Nonetheless, one would be hard pressed to find a more parsimonious ontology in the history of Western philosophy. Consider that while Horgan and Potrč admit in their ontology only one concrete particular, they also require properties as a second ontological category. Schaffer may posit only one concrete particular at the fundamental level, but supplements it there with fundamental tropes and resemblance (and spatiotemporal) relations (Schaffer 2001: 247). Importantly, Brentano's substance dualism is logically independent of his reism and limited monism. A materialist could therefore adopt Brentano's reism and monism – and obtain a monocategorial, monosubstantival ontology on which there is only one ontologically independent existent: the world.[31]

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[1] According to Sauer (2017), Brentano came to adopt reism sometime between January and September 1903. In September 1903, Brentano writes to Marty that he 'is making a new attempt to understand all *entia rationis* as fictions, that is, to deny that they are' (1966: 108). My own sense is that Brentano's 'new attempt' is not the first one, but reflects a long-held wish to be able to adopt a nominalist ontology with a clear conscience.

[2] Kotarbiński was a student of Kazimierz Twardowski's in Lvov, after the latter returned from Vienna, where he worked with Brentano from 1885-1889. Kotarbiński was apparently unaware of Brentano's ontological views until Twardowski wrote to him a letter about them *after* Kotarbiński had published his main reistic work (Kotarbiński 1929).

3 For example, in a 1914 letter to Kraus he announces: 'I shall begin at once, today, by bringing forward a proof, in what I believe is a very simple and rigorous manner, that nothing other than things can at all be objects of our presenting and therefore of our thinking...' (Brentano 1930: 105-6 [94]).

4 The reason a statement *accepting* a state of affairs may need to be paraphrased into a statement *rejecting* a particular thing is that there ostensibly are *negative* states of affairs (but no *negative particulars*). For example, acceptance of the state of affairs of there being no dragons would have to be replaced by rejection of a dragon.

5 Moreover, the argument is clearly accompanied by two further arguments (Brentano 1930: 122 [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.

6 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.

7 According to Quine's criterion, an assertion '*a* is F' ontologically commits to *a* because it is a law of logic that from '*a* is F' we can infer 'There is an *x*, such that *x* is F,' which is an explicitly existential assertion. It is not a law of logic, however, that from '*a* is F' we can infer 'There is an X, such that *a* is X,' so asserting '*a* is F' does not commit us ontologically to the existence of something that is picked out by 'F.'

8 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.

9 An atomic truth is a truth no part of which is a truth. 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, having 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 truth-fundamentality, typically we know it when we see it.

10 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.

11 In addition, Jimmy seems to be an abstract object (insofar as classes generally are), hence ruled out by strict nominalism.

12 In addition, it is controversial whether the mereological fusion of all famous things exists. Mereological universalists (Lewis 1991, Van Cleve 2007) think so, but many do not, including mereological nominalists (Rosen and Dorr 2002, Sider 2013), mereological restrictivists (Markosian 1998, Smith 2005), and existence monists (Horgan and Potrč 2008).

13 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.

[14] Furthermore, even if it were not so plausible, and represented a cost, it would not be a pointless cost. For it buys us a fourth option for a strictly nominalist ontology Arguably, this cost is not special to Brentano's reism, but must be accrued by any ontology 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 properties 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.

[15] This implies that two-legged-famous-Beyoncé is an accident of famous-Beyoncé, hence an accident of an accident. This may be thought implausible. Brentano, however, is nowise perturbed by this implication and insists on it on many occasions: e.g., '... just as a substance may be the subject of an absolute [i.e., non-relational or intrinsic] accident, so too an absolute accident may be the subject of another absolute accident' (Brentano 1933: 122 [95]). And indeed it is hard to see here a major liability for the view: 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.

[16] In any case, recall that Brentano's strict nominalism commits him to denying the existence of such concrete universals as Beyoncé-ness. We are speaking here of citing Beyoncé-ness only within the property fiction. Doing so is the best approximation of Brentano's view, I claim, but is still not quite his view, even within the property fiction. The literal view is that there is nothing we can cite as essential to Beyoncé – she is just herself and that is all there is to it. This is brutal individuation in action. It may be worth noting that already in his 1866 habilitation defense, Brentano claims explicitly (in his seventeenth thesis) that a substance cannot be defined (Brentano 1866: 139).

[17] A quick reminder on the structure of the dialectic: we are assuming here Brentano's framework, and our question is whether such a thing as The Thinker could be admitted within that framework. The question is *not* whether the existence of such a thing is independently plausible (except insofar as that second question affects charity considerations).

[18] One would have to accept here that the constituency relation does not require its own supplementation principle. Interestingly, it has been recently argued that *grounding* does not obey a supplementation analog (Dixon 2016). If so, it would not be a major cost to think that the same is true of Chisholm's constituency. After all, for we have said here, constituency might just *be* grounding.

[19] 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!

[20] Note also that if reism shuns 'disjunctiva,' it becomes exceedingly unlikely that it would need to posit *infinitely* many concrete particulars in Beyoncé's location.

[21] 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.

22 Recall 1906 letter to Marty mentioned in Chap. 4: 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: 95 [85]).

23 Skyrms might respond by suggesting to stop the regress at the second step, letting the Higgs-boson's-existence make true both 'The Higgs boson exists' and 'The Higgs-boson's-existence exists.' But in addition to being ad hoc and inelegant, this move puts factualism in the same tension with truth-conditional semantics that we encountered with ostrich nominalism. Perhaps the better option would be for Skyrms to simply bite the bullet and accept infinitely many states of affairs implicated in the very existence of each object. The cost here is evident.

24 One might press further, asking why there should be such an individual as the resembling-the-Empire-State-building-more-than-the-moon Eiffel Tower. But I think this kind of question is misplaced. One might as well ask why the Eiffel Tower exists. There are of course *causal* answers to this question, but in wanting an explanation of resemblance truths, we are not seeking a *causal* or explanation; we seek a *metaphysical* explanation. And while it is an important question what metaphysical explanation is, that is not the topic here. It is clear that the friend of universals provides such a metaphysical explanation when she claims that what makes true '*a* resembles *b*' is the fact that there are sufficiently many universals which inhere in both *a* and *b*. What I have claimed is that Brentano has his own truthmaker to offer for '*a* resembles *b*,' namely, the *b*-resembling *a*. And while there are *causal* explanations for this individual's existence, there are no *metaphysical* explanations to be had for *any* individual's existence.

25 I confess to having no evidence that this line of thought was operative in Brentano's original pull to reism. In his 1901 letter to Marty, which seems to be the first place where Brentano voices his account of the substance/accident distinction (see Brentano 1930: 74-5 [64]), the attraction is presented as emanating from technical problems with Brentano's previous view rather than with the application of some general principle (that is, as flowing from the bottom up rather than from the top down, from the phenomena themselves rather than from an independently attractive theory). Nonetheless, the phenomena produce pressure toward a certain theoretical account only against the background of a certain conception of what counts as adequately accounting for the phenomena. In the present case, the technical problem Marty presented to Brentano has to do with a certain lack of symmetry between the model Brentano's previous account offer and what it is modeled on (1930: 73 [63]). It would seem, then, that in Brentano's eyes such symmetry is crucial for the adequacy of the account. This need for symmetry clearly does not come from the phenomena themselves.

26 However, although Brentano's monism is restricted to physical substance, it has been argued that it creeps up again in the mental domain, namely, as a theory of the unity of consciousness at a time. According to Giustina (2017), Brentano was a monist in this area as well, holding that the whole conscious state of a person at a time is ontologically prior to the various parts (visual, auditory, mnemonic, intellectual, etc.).

27 Although Brentano does not develop the idea anywhere else, it often seems to constrain, and sometimes to irrigate, his speculations on space and matter in the last two years of his life (see Brentano 1976).

28 As was his style, Kastil took considerable liberties in editing Brentano's original text. Having inspected the manuscript, I can say that in this instance Kastil's 'creative' editing did not involve any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of Brentano's thought. In any case, I am indebted to Laurent Iglesias for making me appreciate the significance of this dictation (see Iglesias 2015).

29 Clearly, Brentano *needs* the world to have parts in order to account for its qualitative structure. Blobjectivism denies that the world has parts, but it can avail itself of *properties* in accounting for the world's structure. These must be special properties, exhibited only by the world – properties of the form being-F-in-L-at-t – but pending special difficulties with such properties, it is legitimate for the

blobjectivist to appeal to them. Brentano, however, rejects properties, so he must account for the world's qualitative structure in terms of concrete particulars, which would presumably be parts of the world.

[30] It should be noted that the first sentence of this passage is rather heavily edited by Kastil. Large parts of Brentano's text are modified or ignored, while other parts are introduced, though often imported from other parts of the manuscript, skipped over elsewhere in Kastil's 'transcription.' However, I do not find that Kastil's 'creative editing' has changed the meaning of Brentano's original text in this instance.