

24.400: Proseminar in Philosophy I

Fall 2013

Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint (bk. II ch. 1)

0. (a) What does Brentano mean by ‘presentation’?

(b) In *Word and Object* Quine famously wrote:

One may accept the Brentano thesis as either showing the indispensibility of intentional idioms and the importance of an autonomous science of intention, or as showing the baselessness of intentional idioms and the emptiness of a science of intention. My attitude, unlike Brentano’s, is the second.

Without peeking at *Word and Object*, what do you think “the Brentano thesis” is?

1. What are “mental phenomena” and “physical phenomena”? What does Brentano mean by saying that “intentional in-existence...is a distinguishing characteristic of all mental phenomena” (74-5)? Is it? Is it true that “[n]o physical phenomenon exhibits anything like it” (68)?

2. Mental phenomena, according to Brentano, are “the exclusive *object of inner perception*...possess *actual existence*...[and] always appear to us *as a unity*” (75). Explain what Brentano means by this, and evaluate his reasons.

Logical Investigations (vol. II, V, §§9-14)

1. How does Husserl characterize the insights he finds in Brentano? What is the point of the example of seeing a box in §14?

“The Philosophy of Logical Atomism”

0. Explain what Russell means by ‘fact’, ‘proposition’, ‘name’, ‘particular’ and ‘symbol’. Why does Russell think that facts cannot be named?

1. Why does Russell think that the only names “in the logical sense” are ‘this’ and ‘that’? Is he right?

2. Explain and assess Russell’s treatment of belief.

3. What does Russell mean by ‘logical fiction’? What does Russell take to be logical fictions? Assess his reasons.

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

24.400 Proseminar in Philosophy I  
Fall 2013

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.