

BRENTANO STUDIEN

Internationales Jahrbuch der Franz Brentano Forschung

Band 8 (1998/99)

DAS ERBE BRENTANOS
AKTEN DER KONFERENZ
„THE LEGACY OF BRENTANO“
IN KRAKÓW



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DAS ERBE BRENTANOS
AKTEN DER KONFERENZ „THE LEGACY OF BRENTANO“
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Herausgegeben von Wilhelm Baumgartner (Würzburg)
unter Mitwirkung von Alexander Kraus (Würzburg)

Mitherausgeber dieses Bandes
Artur Rojszczak und Jan Woleński (Kraków)

Im Auftrag der Franz Brentano Gesellschaft e.V. (Würzburg)
in Verbindung mit der Franz Brentano Foundation (Boston)

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Würzburg

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Franz Brentano Forschung, Institut für Philosophie
Julius Maximilians Universität Würzburg
Residenzplatz 2, D-97070 Würzburg
Germany

Lektorat: Elisabeth Baumgartner

Hg. dankt dem Österreichischen Generalkonsulat
zu Kraków für die Unterstützung
in gebührender Weise

Die Deutsche Bibliothek — CIP-Einheitsaufnahme
Das Erbe Brentanos : Akten der Konferenz „The Legacy of Brentano“ in
Krakow / Hrsg.: Wilhelm Baumgartner – Dettelbach : Röhl, 2000
(Brentano Studien ; Bd. 8)
ISBN 3-89754-161-0

© 2000 Verlag J.H. Röhl GmbH, Dettelbach
P.O. Box 9, D-97335 Dettelbach, Germany
Phone +49 (+9324) 99 77-0; Fax +49 (+9324) 99 77-1

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Gedruckt auf chlorfrei gebleichtem und alterungsbeständigem Papier
Umschlaggestaltung: Axel Weiss, Obernbreit
Gesamtherstellung: Verlag J.H. Röhl GmbH

Printed in Germany
ISSN 0935-7009
ISBN 3-89754-161-0



Dieser Band ist Roderick M. Chisholm (1916-1999) gewidmet

Inhalt/Table of Contents

I. Aufsätze zum Thema

DAS ERBE BRENTANOS AKTEN DER KONFERENZ „THE LEGACY OF BRENTANO“ (KRAKÓW)

JAN WOLEŃSKI:

- Twardowski and the distinction between content and object15
The content/object distinction was the main philosophical result achieved by Twardowski. However, he had predecessors. This paper discusses the development of the mentioned distinction from Bolzano to Twardowski. Views of Zimmermann, Brentano, Meinong, Höfler, are taken into account; also some objections of Husserl against Twardowski are discussed and evaluated. The paper also stresses the general philosophical significance of Twardowski's work.

JACEK JULIUSZ JADACKI:

- On Tadeusz Czeżowski's Semiotic Views37
Czeżowski belongs to the "Chorps" of the most representative members of the Lvov-Warsaw School. In his Logic and Semiotics, he refers to Brentano's interpretation of Aristotelian logic, as well as in his class theory, in his theory of propositional functions, and in his theory of syllogistics.

ION TĂNĂSESCU:

- „Der Vorstellungsgegenstand“. Zu Twardowskis Rezeption
der Psychologie Brentanos53
Twardowskis Habilitationsschrift entwickelt Brentanos Problem des Gegenstandes von psychischen Akten weiter. Der vorliegende Aufsatz versucht die Veränderungen zu analysieren, denen die psychologische Terminologie Brentanos ausgesetzt wurde, um Twardowskis Unterscheidung von Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen zu rechtfertigen.

ARTUR ROJSZCZAK:

- Einige Bemerkungen zur Gegenstandstheorie
in der polnischen deskriptiven Psychologie67
Im Text werden einige deskriptiv-psychologische Arbeiten der Lemberg-Warschauer Schule bezüglich der Gegenstandstheorie dargestellt. Die Darlegung stützt sich auf zwei repräsentative Texte der Gegenstandstheorie: „Was ist der Gegenstand?“ von Marian Borowski und „Über die vertretenen Gegenstände“ von Salomon Igiel, die den Bereich der Untersu-

chungen bezüglich der Gegenstände in dieser Schule bestimmen. Der eine betrifft den Terminus „Gegenstand“, seinen Umfang und seinen Inhalt; der zweite führt eine neue Art von Gegenständen ein, und damit betrifft er die Einteilung von Gegenständen in ihre Arten und Weisen des Seins.

BALÁZS M. MEZEI:

Brentano and Husserl on the History of Philosophy81

A particular subject-matter in Franz Brentano's philosophy is his approach to the history of philosophy. I shall consider the evolution of his concept of the history of philosophy, the sources of this concept, and, finally, its relationship to Edmund Husserl's understanding of the history of philosophy. Brentano's scheme of the four phases of the history of philosophy can serve as a principle of evaluation of what comes after Brentano's era in the history of philosophy.

WŁODZIMIERZ GALEWICZ:

Brentano und der epistemologische Fundamentalismus.....95

Brentanos Erkenntnistheorie gilt als eine Version des epistemischen Fundamentalismus, da sie auf basalen, den „unmittelbar evidenten“ Urteilen beruht. Brentanos Theorie der Urteilevidenz wird einer Interpretation unterzogen.

BARRY SMITH:

Boundaries: A Brentanian Theory107

According to Brentano's theory of boundaries, no boundary can exist without being connected with a continuum. But there is no specifiable part of the continuum, and no point, which is such that we may say that it is the existence of that part or of that point which conditions the boundary. — An adequate theory of the continuum must now recognize that boundaries be boundaries only in certain directions and not in others. This leads to consequences in other areas, too.

JOSEF BROŽEK & JIŘÍ HOSKOVEC:

Psychology, T.G. Masaryk and Franz Brentano,
with special reference to their correspondence115

When in the fall of 1874 Thomas G. Masaryk, a student at the University of Vienna met the new Professor Franz Brentano, psychology was still a part of philosophy. Brentano had just published his magnum opus *psychologicum*, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkte*, and chose the topic for his four-hour course. Masaryk thought highly of the book. This is documented by the fact that, as a young teacher of philosophy at the

Czech university of Prague in the 1880s, Masaryk used Brentano's "Psychologie" as the basis for a seminar.

Masaryk did not write much on psychology and in his writings on psychological topics there are few traces of the impact of Brentano's thought. By contrast, Brentano is mentioned frequently in Masaryk's "Swan song" — his conversations with a philosopher turned littérateur, Karel Čapek, of the "Rossum's universal Robots" fame.

A fresh light is thrown on the personal relationship between the two men — Brentano (b. in 1838) was only twelve years older than Masaryk (b. in 1850) — by their early, be it fragmentary correspondence that became available recently.

JÁN PAVLÍK:

- Franz Kafka and Franz Brentano.....121
 Some documents which directly confirm the influence of Brentano's philosophy on Kafka's thought make possible a hypothesis according to which Kafka's well-premeditated writings form a code which can be effectively deciphered with the aid of basic concepts of Brentano's psychology and ethics. A high degree of the probability of the validity of his hypothesis can be derived from the fact that the Brentanian interpretation of Kafka's diaries, novels, and short stories seems to provide a more consistent understanding of their sense and structure than any other interpretation.

ARKADIUSZ CHRUDZIMSKI:

- Die Theorie des Zeitbewußtseins Franz Brentanos
 im Licht der unpublizierten Manuskripte149
 Die Theorie des Zeitbewußtseins Brentanos wird üblicherweise nach dem Schema der zwei Phasen seiner Philosophie periodisiert. Nach diesem Bild vertritt der frühe Brentano die Theorie der zeitlich modifizierten Objekte, während der späte Brentano zur Theorie der zeitlichen psychischen Modi übergeht. Dieses Schema ist jedoch sehr vereinfacht. Aufgrund der unpublizierten Manuskripte kann man in der Brentanoschen Theorie des Zeitbewußtseins mindestens sechs Phasen unterscheiden, wobei die frühen Ideen in den späteren Entwicklungen mehrfach wiederkehren.

LILIANA ALBERTAZZI:

- The Phenomenon of Time in the Brentanist Tradition:
 Enzo Bonaventura163
 Descriptive Psychology is usually considered as a theoretical discipline totally distincted from experimental psychology. However, following a mainstream of positivistic experimental research, among whom were

Wundt, James, Schumann, Stern, and Meumann, some of the Brentanians also investigated in laboratories of psychology which they had set up, e.g. Stumpf, Meinong, and in particular Benussi. Their experiments in the laboratory at Graz commanded great respect among the experimental psychologists of the time. It is therefore of interest to see how the descriptive psychology of Brentano and his followers integrates with the experimental strand of originally positivist stamp.

The experiments on the perception of time clarify at least three basic features of Brentano's theory, that is, the origin and the nature of inner time, the duration of the act of presentation, and finally the structure of the presentation.

Among the Brentanians, in Italy, we can count also Francesco de Sarlo, whose school of philosophy and psychology had many features in common with Meinong's school at Graz.

The extent of Brentano's direct influence on the type of research conducted in the Florence laboratory (founded in 1903) has yet to be established; what is certain, though, is his evident influence on De Sarlo who, from a committed positivist, came to share most of the tenets of the descriptive psychology, which were analysed also through experimentation. De Sarlo's pupil and follower as the head of the Florence psychology laboratory, Enzo Bonaventura, demonstrates striking similarities between Brentano's descriptive psychology and the (new) experimental psychology.

MATJAŽ POTRČ:

- Brentano and Veber193
 Similarities are pointed out between Brentano's reism and ecologism. This makes it possible to see Veber's late philosophy of reality sharing the same basic structure with Brentano's phenomena.

DANIEL ALBUQUERQUE:

- Machian Positivism versus Brentanian
 Psychological Descriptivism.....211
 The discourses between Brentano and Mach on *Erkenntnis und Irrtum* is reconstructed literary.

VALERIJ ANAŠVILI:

- Rezeption Franz Brentanos in Rußland (einleitende Materialien).....219
 Brentanos Werke wurden, wenn auch in relativ geringer Anzahl und wenn auch nur fragmentarisch, schon sehr früh ins Russische übersetzt. In jüngster Zeit läßt sich so etwas wie eine Brentano-Renaissance in Moskau beobachten.

ROBERTO POLI:

- Brentano In Italy233
 The paper confirms that Brentano's presence in Italy was very influential, from 1895 onwards, much more than some generally believe today.

THOMAS BINDER:

- Die Prager Brentano-Gesellschaft.....259
 Die vorliegende Darstellung rekonstruiert auf Grund verstreuter Berichte die Geschichte der Prager Brentano-Gesellschaft und ihre Rolle im Zusammenhang mit dem Nachlaß Brentanos.

II. Besprechungsteil

- Rezensionen289
 DIETER MÜNCH: Intention und Zeichen. Untersuchungen zu Franz Brentano und zu Edmund Husserls Frühwerk. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 1993.
 PETER KUNZMANN: Dimensionen von Analogie. Wittgensteins Neuentdeckung eines klassischen Prinzips. Düsseldorf/Bonn: Parerga Verlag, 1998. 245 S.
 VOLKER GOTTOWIK: Konstruktionen des Anderen. Clifford Geertz und die Krise der ethnographischen Repräsentation. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag 1997. 373 S.
 HANS G. KIPPENBERG: Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne. München: C.H. Beck 1997. 342 S.

- Die Autoren dieses Bandes309

I. Aufsätze zum Thema

DAS ERBE BRENTANOS
AKTEN DER KONFERENZ
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(KRAKÓW)

JAN WOLEŃSKI

Twardowski and the distinction between content and object

1. Introduction

The distinction between content and object (COD, for brevity) of presentations and other mental phenomena is a very characteristic feature of Brentanism. Twardowski is a central figure in the development of this idea. However, not every philosopher, even from the Brentano school, considered the matters this way. For example, Marty says:

Die Distinktion zwischen etwas wie einem immanenten Gegenstand unseres Bewußtseins und einem Gegenstand *schlechtweg* oder einem *wirklichen* ist alt, wenn sie auch mannigfach verschiedenen Ausdruck gefunden hat.¹ (Marty (1908), 385)

Then Marty mentions the Ionians, Aristotle, Anselm of Canterbury, Thomas of Aquino, and Wilhelm of Ockham as the representatives of this view. For Marty, COD proper appeared in Bolzano, Zimmermann, Twardowski, Höfler and Stumpf, but it was only an extended way of speaking but nothing particularly original.

Husserl also says that COD was well-known before Twardowski:

In more recent times one often hears it proclaimed as a great step in advance that now at last the basic distinction between act, content, and object has been achieved. The three words in this setting have almost become catchwords, especially since the publication of Twardowski's fine treatise [...] Meanwhile, though the author's merit in having discussed in a penetrating way certain current confusions, and exposed their latent fallacies, is indoubtedly a great one, it must still be said that in regard to the clearing up of the essential concepts involved he has not taken (and we do not impute any blame to him on this account) any considerable step beyond what was well known (despite their carelessness and confusion) to the philosophers of former generations. Prior indeed to a systematic phenomenology of consciousness no radical progress was possible. (Husserl (1931), 361f.)

If we think about COD in very general categories, Marty and Husserl are right. Considering cognitive activities in terms of subjects, objects, acts, etc. is so natural, that it had to appear very early in philosophy. Marty and Husserl could refer also to Reid who described perception, remembrance and imagination in his *Essay on Active Powers of Men* (1788) in terms of the distinction between the operating mind, the operation of the mind, and the object of the mind operation, stressing particularly the difference between the act of mind and its object, real or imaginary. This sounds very similar to Twardowski and other philosophers' later work on COD.

A very patronizing tone of Husserl speaking about Twardowski is not surprising, because it is very common among phenomenologists to minimize achievements of other philosophers. Much more surprising is the fact that Marty does the same, because in doing so, he blames his own philosophical camp. himself. Leaving aside reasons of Marty's attitude, let me try to explain why Marty's claims that COD goes back to the Ionians is not correct. As I have already noted, the distinction between subject and object of cognition is very natural. In fact, we can reconstruct almost the whole epistemology as a game between the subject and the object. We can for example say that epistemological idealism is a view by which the object is a part of the subject. Or, epistemological realism is a view by which the object transcends the subject. Or, that so called naive realism is a view that to acquire knowledge is to produce a photographic picture of the object. Or, that so called critical realism is a view by which cognition pictures only primary qualities, but secondary are the subject's addition. However, an essential theoretical context which gives a special importance to COD is formed by the thesis of intentionality of mental acts. Generally speaking, this thesis has two aspects: (a) psychological-epistemological-semantic: every psychic act is directed toward an object; (b) ontological, concerning the nature of intentional objects.

It is clear that without the intentionality thesis, COD simply collapses into various old distinctions, whereas when intentionality is assumed various new important matters can be stated and further analyzed, for example, the correctness of the view about the primacy of the intentional in thinking and language. This is why Marty is wrong. Of course, I do not suggest that the thesis of intentionality did not appear before Brentano. The Schoolmen formulated it and Brentano was perfectly aware of that, he explicitly refers to the medieval conceptions of intentionality and immanent objecthood. Neither do I suggest that the distinction was completely disregarded by philosophers working independently of brentanism. It is known that Bolzano, Zimmermann, and Kerry strongly influ-

enced Twardowski. We also should remember Benno Erdmann, although his *Logik* (first edition, 1892) provides a clear evidence that he was influenced by Brentano and his students. However, I claim that if the intentionality thesis is dropped, then the distinction is either too general or something secondary.

Even if we restrict the COD distinction to the heritage of Brentano, there is too much material to be discussed in one talk. I will concentrate on Twardowski and his results. Certainly, Twardowski's *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* (1894) is the most important work on COD in the whole Brentanian Tradition. This justifies my choice. Speaking of the Brentanian Tradition, I mean its strict sense. So I will leave aside Husserl and his account to COD, however I will refer to some of his critical remarks on Twardowski. On the other hand, since even the strict Brentanian Tradition is very rich in particular as well as general ideas concerning the concepts of act, content, and object of mental activities, I will disregard works of Meinong, Marty, Stumpf, Witasek, and Kreibitz. Some of them, especially views of Meinong, deserve separate attention. I will also disregard, except minor remarks, another Tradition, namely that of Frege. His conceptual distinction between *Sinn and Bedeutung* is a logical or semantic counterpart of COD. However, Frege exerted no influence until Russell recalled and popularized his ideas in *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903). Finally, let me note that I restrict my remarks only to one kind of mental activities, namely to presentations. There is another line of looking at COD, perhaps even a more important one, connected with contents and objects of judgements. But even my discussion of COD in the context of presentations is not complete, because I omit some special problems (for example, the objectless presentations) and issues concerning the theory of objects involved in the distinction in question. My plan is as follows. First, I will speak about Bolzano, Zimmermann and Kerry and their contributions to COD. Then, I will very briefly touch upon Brentano's famous intentionality thesis and problems raised by it. The next section is devoted to Höfler. The rest of the paper is devoted to Twardowski and some reactions to his ideas. Also I would like to show one important application of Twardowski's ideas to philosophical problems.

2. Bolzano

Bolzano distinguishes in his *opus magnum* (1837) presentations-as-such or objective presentations and subjective or possessed presentations:

Jeder weiß doch, oder wir können es ihm wenigstens leicht verständlich machen, was eine *Vorstellung* in der gewöhnlichen Bedeutung heiße. So oft wir nämlich irgend etwas sehen, hören, fühlen, oder durch was immer für einen äußeren oder inneren Sinn wahrnehmen, so oft wir uns auch nur etwas einbilden oder denken, — ohne doch über dieß Alles zu urtheilen, und etwas davon zu behaupten: so läßt sich allemal sagen, daß wir uns etwas vorstellen ... Jede Vorstellung in dieser Bedeutung des Wortes setzt irgend ein lebendiges Wesen als das *Subject*, in welchem Sie vorgehet, voraus; und deßhalb nenne ich sie *subjectiv*, oder auch gedacht. Die subjective Vorstellung ist also etwas *Wirkliches*; sie hat zu der bestimmten Zeit, zu der sie vorgestellt wird, in dem Subjecte ... ein wirkliches Daseyn. ... Nicht also die zu jeder subjectiven Vorstellung gehörige *objective oder Vorstellung an sich*, worunter ich ein nicht in dem Reiche der Wirklichkeit zu suchendes Etwas verstehe, welches den nächsten und unmittelbaren *Stoff* der subjectiven Vorstellung ausmacht. Diese objective Vorstellung bedarf keines *Subjectes*, von dem sie vorgestellt werde, sondern bestehet — zwar nicht als etwas *Seyendes*, aber doch als ein gewisses *Etwas*, auch wenn kein einziges denkendes Wesen sie auffassen sollte, und sie wird dadurch, daß ein, zwei, drei oder mehrere Wesen sie denken, nicht vervielfacht, wie die ihr zugehörige subjective Vorstellung nun mehrfach vorhanden. Daher die Benennung *objektiv*. (Ebd., § 48)

On this view, there are many subjective presentations correlated with one objective presentation, and the latter constitute the material for the former. Moreover, there is a deep ontological difference between both kinds of presentations. Bolzano says:

Wenn ich ... aus Mangel eines besseren Wortes den Ausdruck gebrauchte, daß eine Vorstellung an sich der *Stoff* desjenigen *sey*, was eine Vorstellung in der gewöhnlichen oder subjectiven Bedeutung heißt: so könnte dieß bald so ausgelegt werden, als ob ich unter der Vorstellung an sich nichts Anderes, als den *Gegenstand*, auf den sich eine (gedachte) Vorstellung bezieht, verstände. Dieß meine ich aber nicht, sondern den Gegenstand, auf den sich eine Vorstellung beziehet, oder (wie man ihn kürzer nennen kann) den *Gegenstand einer Vorstellung* will ich gar sehr von ihr selbst, nicht nur von einer gedachten, sondern auch von der ihr zu Grunde liegenden Vorstellung an sich, unterschieden wissen ... Ich verstehe aber unter dem Gegenstande einer Vorstellung jenes (bald existirende, bald nicht existirende) Etwas, von dem wir zu sagen pflegen, daß sie es *vorstellte*, oder daß sie Vorstellung *davon* sey. (Ebd., § 49)

Thus, for Bolzano, subjective presentations are acts of presenting but objective presentations function as contents of subjective ones. Further, objects of presentations are something that is presented. Bolzano, as usual, made, at the point, general and clear distinctions. In contrast to his other fundamental insights, his theory of acts, contents and objects had direct and almost immediate influence. He inspired Zimmermann and Kerry, but they considered only some special cases of the problem, probably without a proper understanding of its importance. For Twardowski, Bolzano was the very originator of COD, though not all ideas of *Wissenschaftslehre* were accepted in his (1894). In particular, Twardowski rejected objectless presentations.

3. Zimmermann

Zimmermann's introductory book in philosophy (1860) has a chapter on concepts and a chapter on presentations. The distinction of content and object is introduced just in the chapter on concepts. Zimmermann writes:

Um uns durch den Inhalt unserer Gedanken im Denken leiten zu lassen, müssen wir zuerst wissen, *was* wir denken. *Was* im Begriffe gedacht wird, als Dieses und kein Anderes ist sein *Inhalt*; Dasjenige, worauf sich derselbe bezieht, sein Gegenstand. (Ebd., 19)

For Zimmermann, concepts have content and object. With respect to concepts, he considered COD as obvious and elementary and warned against its neglecting. But what about presentations? The answer is not easy, because it is not clear how Zimmermann relates concepts and presentations. He says:

Was ist ein Begriff? Dasjenige, was eigentlich gedacht werden soll, wenn man eine gewisse psychische Vorstellung z.B. diejenige hat, welche man mit den Worten „Baum“ bezeichnet.

And he adds:

... der logische Begriff ist ein *Ideal*, nach welchem die psychische *Vorstellung* sich bequemen soll, aber nicht umgekehrt, wenn man sie deshalb auch wie jedes Ideal nur annäherungsweise erreichen sollte ... Dasselbe ist sonach für Alle *dasselbe* und nur *einmal* vorhanden, der logische Begriff wird dadurch, dass er mehrmals gedacht oder ..., nicht selbst vervielfältigt ... (Ebd., 18)

This sounds very Bolzanian which is not surprising if one remembers that Zimmermann's booklet was written to propagate Bolzano's philosophy. Anyway, contents as well as objects are attributed by Zimmermann to

logical concepts. On the other hand, concepts are considered by him, contrary to Bolzano, very psychologically. Zimmermann also accepts a sort of the picture theory of cognition. He says:

Der Name des *Vorstellens* kommt von „vor uns Hinstellen“, worin eine Hindeutung auf das Vorgestellte ... und uns als Vorstellende liegt ... die Vorstellungen lassen sich daher betrachten als *blasse geistige Bilder*, ohne Rücksicht darauf, ob diesen etwas entspricht, entsprach oder entsprechen wird. (Ebd., 182)

Speaking about kinds of presentations, Zimmermann remarks that presentations can also be classified on the basis of what they present by their contents. Thus, presentations have content. However, Zimmermann does not use the German counterpart of ‘the object presentation’. Yet, he says that there is something that corresponds (*entspricht*) to, or not to presentations. It is obvious that what corresponds (or does not) to a presentation can be interpreted as its object. Certainly, Zimmermann’s language is very ambiguous. It makes estimating the exact scope of COD as used by him very difficult. There are three possible interpretations: (a) COD is applicable to concepts and presentations in the same sense, (b) COD is applicable to concepts but not to presentations, (c) we have two different distinctions, one for concepts and another for presentations. In spite of these difficulties, Zimmermann’s considerations were historically important, for he was the supervisor of Twardowski’s PhD dissertation who mentioned him in (1894) as one of the inventors of COD. In particular, Twardowski used Zimmermann’s terminology in some of his crucial arguments.

4. Brentano

As for many other discussions concerning Brentano’s theory of intentionality, the following famous fragment is also crucial for the problem considered in this paper. Brentano (1973, 88) says:

Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not always do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is

affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated in desire desired and so on.

What is important here for our problem may be schematically summarized in the following points:

- (1) every presentation is directed to an object;
- (2) the object in a question is not a thing;
- (3) the object in a question is a content;
- (4) the object in a question is a part of a given presentation;
- (5) due to (3) and (4), contents are something that can be called ‘immanent objects’.

It should be strongly stressed that Brentano himself was a realist. Thus, the fact that he recognized immanent objects does not mean that he reduced things to intentional objects. What he clearly distinguishes is the mental act and its object. However, immanent or intentional objects may be interpreted in various ways, once as objects, but another time as contents. This situation caused that his students, notably Höfler and Twardowski, decided to get into the problem more deeply. In order to complete the remarks on Brentano, I will mention, that he, due to his reistic predilections entirely abandoned the concept of content or immanent object. For Brentano later conceived, acts of presenting (judging, loving, etc.) as activities of individuals. They and their concrete objects, existing or not, are everything which the needed for the correct description of mental phenomena.

5. Kerry

Kerry (1886) restricts his analysis only to concepts. He considers COD for a special case, namely for the concepts applied to numbers. However, it leads him to three quite general arguments supporting the distinction:

Allgemein gesprochen: die Verschiedenheit, d.h. Nicht-Identität von Begriff einer Zahl und der Zahl selbst leuchtet schon daraus ein, dass die Zahl Eigenschaften besitzt und die in Relationen verwickelt ist, die ihrem Begriffe völlig fremd sind. Ferner: man kann Begriffe der Zahlen concipiren, unter die kein Gegenstand fällt ... *Ersteres* dürfte sowohl dann stattfinden, wenn man dafürhalten muss, dass die Einfachheit eines Begriffes der Auffindung noch einfacherer Begriffstheile weichen und hiermit der Begriff einen wieder per Definitionem angebbaren Inhalt gewinnen könne — es liegt diesfalls näher, diesen durch Veränderung eines schon vorher dagewesenen hervorgehen, als ihn neu entstehen zu lassen —, als

auch dann, wenn es sich um keinen Individual-, sondern um einen Allgemeinbegriff handelt, wie z.B. der von „roth“ einer ist, — zu einem solchen gehört eine *Mehrzahl* von Begriffsgegenständen, man kann also Begriffsinhalt mit Begriffsgegenstand identifizieren. *Letzteres* aber ist auch dann möglich, wenn man es mit einem einfachen Individualbegriffe, wie es derjenige der 1 war ..., zu thun hat: man hat diesfalls nur in einer schon früher dargelegten Weise *Gleichheit* von Begriffsinhalt und Begriffsgegenstand anzunehmen. (Ebd., 248)

Thus, for Kerry, firstly, numbers to which concepts refer have properties that are not possessed by numbers themselves, secondly, there are empty concepts which do not refer to any object, and, thirdly, general concepts have only one content, but they refer to many objects. According to Kerry, these arguments sufficiently show that we should distinguish contents and objects of concepts.

Kerry was also aware that the name ‘presented object’ is dangerous, when it is left without further comments:

Nur über ein Vorgestelltes kann man urtheilen, aber man muss nicht über Vorgestelltes *als solches* urtheilen ... Und ebenso wenig brauchen *Anzahlen*, wiewohl sie (direct oder indirect) vorgestellt werden, darum nicht als vorgestellte für verschieden erklärt zu werden; die von mir jetzt vorgestellte Anzahl fünf und die von mir zu einer anderen Zeit oder von Anderen vorgestellte Anzahl fünf unterscheidet nur *als vorgestellte* Anzahlen: aber daneben existiren eben noch andere Unterschiede, deren die Anzahlen nicht bloss als vorgestellte fähig sind. Dies ist der wahre Sinn der Aussage, dass irgendwelche Anzahlen „an sich“ verschieden seien. Und so hätte, wie mir scheint, auch *Bolzano* die Sache gewendet, wenn er nicht, befangen in der fatalen Zweideutigkeit des Wortes „Vorstellung“, geglaubt hätte, von Vorstellung an sich sprechen zu müssen, wo es genügt, vom Vorgestellten oder vom Vorstellungsinhalt, aber nicht *als* Vorgestelltem und *als* Vorstellungsinhalt zu sprechen. (Ebd.)

Disregarding whether Bolzano was aware or not of the ambiguity connected with the ‘presented’, one must note that the problem touched in the last quotation is of the utmost importance for COD. In fact, the phrase ‘so and so is presented’ can refer to a thing independent of the presentation in question or to something presented qua presented. As I will argue, Twardowski essentially contributed to this question. He considered Kerry’s device (the distinction between presented as such and simply presented) as insufficient, but his debt to Kerry’s ideas is obvious and fully documented in (1894). By the way, Kerry is now almost entirely

forgotten, although he exerted some influence on the development of philosophy.

6. Höfler

Certainly, nothing in Brentano suggests that he confuses real and intentional objects. However, as I already have noted, his terminology was perceived among his students as not quite natural. Probably, this was a reason that Höfler decided to clarify the matter in an elementary booklet written (in collaboration of Meinong) as a textbook for secondary schools. The discussed distinction made in this book is traditionally attributed to Höfler alone, and I follow this course in my further remarks. It is very interesting that §6 which contains the relevant considerations was changed in the second and later editions.² Originally, it was as follows:

Wie immer ich *vorstellen* oder *urteilen* mag, so muss ich Etwas vorstellen oder beurteilen. Mit anderen Worten: Jedem *Vorstellen* und *Urtheilen*, oder *Vorstellungs-* und *Urteils-*Akt, entspricht ein *Vorgestelltes* und *Beurteiltes* oder ein *Vorstellungs-* und *Urtheils-**Gegenstand*, auch *Gegenstand* oder *Objekt* der *Vorstellung* und des *Urtheiles* genannt. Kurz: *Jedem Denken entspricht ein Gedachtes*. ... Das Wort „*Vorstellung*“ (analog „*Urtheil*“) wendet der gewöhnliche Sprachgebrauch vorwiegend für das *Vorstellen* nicht selten aber auch das *Vorgestellte*, endlich auch für beides zusammen an ... 1. Was wir oben „*Inhalt der Vorstellung und des Urtheiles*“ nannten, liegt ebenso innerhalb des *Subjectes*, wie der *Vorstellungs-* und *Urtheils-*Act selbst. 2. Die Wörter „*Gegenstand*“ und „*Object*“ werden in zweierlei Sinn gebraucht: einerseits für dasjenige *an sich Bestehende*, „*Ding an sich*“, *Wirkliche*, *Reale* ... worauf sich unser *Vorstellen* und *Urtheilen* gleichsam richtet, andererseits für das „in“ *uns bestehende* psychische, mehr oder minder annähernde „*Bild*“ von jenem *Realen*, welches quasi-*Bild* (richtiger: *Zeichen*) identisch ist mit dem unter 1. genannten „*Inhalt*“. Zum Unterschiede von dem als unabhängig vom Denken angenommenen *Gegenstand* oder *Object* nennt man den *Inhalt* eines *Vorstellens* und *Urtheilens* [...] auch das „*immanente oder intentionale Object*“ dieser psychischen Erscheinungen. (Höfler (1891), 6-7).

In the further editions, the fragment which begins with 1. is omitted. Instead, Höfler puts a short explanation:

Von dem Vorstellungsgegenstand ist zu unterscheiden der Vorstellungsinhalt ... insofern u.a. Vorstellungen verschiedenen Inhaltes auf denselben Gegenstand gehen können ... (Höfler (1904), 4)

For the latter development, the first edition of *Logik* was important. Twardowski (1894) quotes *in extenso* in the fragment omitted in the next editions. Surely, Höfler's statements were the starting point of Twardowski's analysis. Höfler's thesis can be summarized as follows: (a) contents are within subjects and mental acts, (b) the term 'object' is ambiguous, because it can refer either to act-independent entities or to pictures (or: signs) of real entities existing "in" us, (c) in order to avoid the ambiguity, one can call objects existing in us 'immanent or intentional objects'. It is still a problem how far Twardowski's analysis goes beyond Höfler's remarks.³

7. A summary of the situation before Twardowski

- (1) Most philosophers did not distinguish between act, content and object of mental acts.
- (2) The authors who recognized the distinctions mentioned in (1) did it in two ways: (a) like Brentano, by distinguishing act and content (immanent object); (b) like Bolzano, Zimmermann, Höfler, and Kerry by supplementing the distinction between act and content distinction by COD. It is to be noted that Bolzano was perfectly conscious that both distinctions should and could be combined. On his view, we can discriminate: subjective presentation (act), objective presentation (content), object.
- (3) COD was introduced in various ways: (a) like in Bolzano, — contents are objective presentations; (b) like in Höfler — contents are psychic entities (mental pictures or signs). The second manner as psychologistic and prevailing. It is also true that most authors, for example Zimmermann and Kerry were not quite explicit about the status of contents.

8. Twardowski I (generalities)

Brentano recommended to Twardowski the classification of sciences in Aristotle as a topic of *Habilitationschrift*. However, Twardowski wanted to write something more systematic, not merely historical, and decided to concentrate on COD. He stated his task in the following way:

The present investigation is concerned with a detailed separation of the presented, in one sense, where it means the content, from the presented in the other sense, where it is used to designate the object — in short, of the content of the presentation from the object of presentation — and with the mutual relationship between the two. (Twardowski (1977), 2)

About thirty years later, Twardowski made an interesting evaluation of his *Habilitationschrift*, its motives, historical context and significance. He wrote:

Mein Bestreben, die Begriffe der klaren und deutlichen Perception und der klaren und deutlichen Idee bei Descartes in möglichst klarer und deutlicher Weise zu erfassen, hat mich auf die Frage nach dem Wesen des Begriffes überhaupt geführt. Da aber der Begriff eine besondere Art der Vorstellung ist, mußte ich auch mit der Vorstellung überhaupt und den verschiedenen Weisen, in welchen wir uns etwas vorstellen, befassen. Auf diesem Gebiete hatte ich eine gedankliche Unordnung jener Art vorgefunden, wie sie mir den Anlaß zu meiner Dissertation gegeben [hatte]. Ich hatte gesehen, daß selbst hervorragende Denker dank einer ungenauen Ausdrucksweise die Grenzen zwischen dem Vorstellen und dem Vorgestellten verwischen: ich hatte bei verschiedenen Autoren von Inhalten und Gegenständen der Vorstellung gelesen, ohne daß es mir immer klar geworden wäre, ob diese Ausdrücke gleiche oder verschiedene Bedeutung haben und was überhaupt mit ihnen gemeint sei; mit diesen Ausdrücken hing wieder aufs engste der bei Brentano eine so grosse Rolle spielende Terminus „immanentes Objekt“ zusammen, und eine richtige Auffassung der Bedeutung dieses Terminus erschien mir von größter Bedeutung für Brentanos Lehre vom Urteil, da nicht wenige der gegen diese Lehre vorgebrachten Einwände meiner Überzeugung nach eben in gewissen das Objekt der Vorstellung und somit auch des Urteils betreffenden Mißverständnissen ihren Ursprung hatten. Kurz und gut, ich fühlte, daß es hier viel zu klären und zu präzisieren gab und daß die Behandlung des Problems vom Wesen des Begriffes eine Reihe von Voruntersuchungen auf dem Gebiete der Lehre von den Vorstellungen überhaupt erfordere, wobei die Ergebnisse dieser Voruntersuchungen nicht nur der Theorie des Begriffes, sondern auch jener des Urteils zugute kommen könnten.

Aus diesen Erwägungen heraus entstand meine Arbeit „Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen. Eine psychologische Untersuchung“ ... Ich war bemüht, dieselbe im Geiste Franz Brentanos und — Bernard *Bolzanos* zu schreiben, dessen „Wissenschaftslehre“ ich eifrigst studierte, seit mich *Kerrys* Abhandlung

„Über Anschauung und ihre psychische Verarbeitung“ ... hierzu angeregt hatte. Meine Arbeit stellte sich die Aufgabe, in Anknüpfung an eine Äußerung in A. Höflers, unter Mitwirkung von A[lexius] Meinong, verfaßten Logik ... die Trennung des Vorstellungsinhaltes von Vorstellungsgegenstand im einzelnen durchzuführen und das gegenseitige Verhältnis beider zu betrachten. Die Durchführung dieser Aufgabe erforderte sowohl eine Reihe terminologischer Feststellungen als auch eine Analyse der Struktur dessen, was ich als Inhalt und was als Gegenstand der Vorstellung bezeichnen zu müssen glaubte, was wiederum auf eine Erörterung der Begriffe „Merkmal“, „Eigenschaft“ u.dgl. führte. Die Untersuchung des Verhältnisses von Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen brachte die Notwendigkeit mit sich, zum Schlusse auch die Frage des Gegenstandes der allgemeinen Vorstellung ins Auge zu fassen. (Twardowski (1991), 10f.⁴)

Twardowski begins his (1977) in a fairly orthodox Brentanian way:

It is one of the best known positions of psychology, hardly contested by anyone, that every mental phenomenon intends an immanent object ... On the basis of this relation to an “immanent object”, which is characteristic of mental phenomena, one has become accustomed to distinguish for every mental phenomenon between act and content, and thus each of them appears from two sides. When one talks about “presentations”, one can understand by this expression sometimes the act of presenting; sometimes, however, one can mean by it what is presented, the content of the presentation. And hence it has become customary to use instead of the expression ‘presentation’ one of the two expressions ‘act of presenting’ and ‘content of presentation’ whenever the smallest possibility of a misunderstanding exists. (Twardowski (1977), 1)

This fragment of course alludes to Brentano’s distinction made by him in *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkte*. Then, Twardowski mentions another ambiguity which he identifies as “pointed out by Höfler”, and claims:

One has to distinguish, accordingly, between the object at which our idea “aims, as it were”, and the immanent object or the content of presentation ... Language facilitates here, too, as so often, our mistaking one thing for another in that it lets the content as well as the object be “be presented”. It will also turn out that the expression ‘the presented’ is in a similar fashion ambiguous as is the expression ‘presentation’. The latter serves just as much to designate the act and the content as the former serves to designate the content,

the immanent object, and also the non-immanent object, the object of presentation. (Ibid., 2)

9. Twardowski II (details)

Twardowski offers the following arguments for COD:

- (1) If we issue a true negative judgement which denies the existence of an object and this judgment is true, this object must be presented in the act of judging. It is presented by its content. Then, the object and the content of this presentation cannot be identical, because the content exists, but the object does not.
- (2) Contents have properties which objects lack, and reversely (one of Kerry's arguments; Twardowski however, did not agree with Kerry that plural reference induces COD).
- (3) There are equivalent contents of presentations which refer to the same objects, for example: the city located at the site of the Roman Juvavum, the birthplace of Mozart (a similar argument was formulated by Frege for his distinction between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*; the corresponding distinction between contents and designata of concepts or names was of course well-known in elementary logic before Frege and Twardowski).

An important point observed by Twardowski is that names and presentations are parallel. Names perform the following functions: (a) they indicate acts of presentation occurring in speakers; (b) they cause mental contents in listeners (Twardowski identifies these contents with meanings), (c) they designate objects which are presented through contents. Since names are linguistic signs of presentations, this parallelism was, for Twardowski, a heuristic motive for COD for presentation. On the other hand, it provides also a reason for an extension of COD to names, more precisely for the meaning / reference distinction. However, Twardowski basically worked upon mental phenomena, not elements of language.

The analysis of the expression 'to be presented' constitutes the most fundamental part of Twardowski's analysis. In order to explain and overcome the ambiguity already noted by Kerry and Höfler, Twardowski employs an analogy between 'to be presented' and 'to be painted':

As is well known, one says that the painter paints a picture, but also that he paints a landscape. One and the same activity of the painters is directed toward two objects; the result of the activity is only one. After the painter has finished the painting of the picture and of the

landscape, respectively, he has before him a painted picture as well as a painted landscape. The picture is painted; it is neither engraved nor etched, etc.; it is a painted, real picture. The landscape, too, is painted, but it is not a real landscape, only “painted one”. The painted picture and the painted landscape are in truth only one; for the picture depicts a landscape, hence it is a painted landscape; the painted landscape is a picture of the landscape.

The word ‘painted’ plays therefore two roles. If used for the picture, it appears as determination. It determines more closely the nature of the picture, according to which it is a painting, not an engraving ... On the other hand, when one says of the landscape that it is painted, then the determination ‘painted’ is modifying, because the painted landscape is ... no longer a landscape, but a picture.

But this painted landscape, the picture, portrays a real landscape. The landscape which is painted by the painter — be it from nature or by using his imagination — is depicted by the picture, hence painted by the painter. It does not cease to be a landscape just because it has been painted by the painter. When I point at a landscape and add: “I remember this landscape, there was a picture of it at the art exhibition, it has been painted by the painter X”, then I talk — calling the landscape in this sense “painted” — about the real landscape which has been painted, not about the painted landscape as it adorns a wall at the art exhibition. The addition ‘painted’, attached in this sense to the word ‘landscape’, does not modify the meaning of the word ‘landscape’ in the slightest. It is genuinely determining addition ... (Ibid., 12)

Thus, the adjective ‘painted’ performs three roles in the context ‘the painted landscape’. Firstly, it can indicate that we have to do with a picture which was painted by someone, but not, for example, engraved. If we mean by ‘the painted landscape’ the same as ‘the painted picture’, the word ‘painted’ is a determinator. It includes the piece of art in question into a class of paintings. However, the word ‘landscape’ does not refer to a landscape but to a picture. Secondly, ‘the painted landscape’ can refer to a piece of nature which happened to be painted by someone. ‘Painted’ in this sense is also a determinator, because some landscapes happened to be painted, but others were not; ‘landscape’ in this case refers to a landscape. Thirdly, consider once more the first case, namely ‘the painted landscape’ as referring to a painted picture. Since the word ‘landscape’ does not refer to a landscape but to a picture, the adjective ‘painted’ is a modifier; it changes the customary meaning of the word ‘landscape’.

Twadowski then applies this analysis to ‘to be presented’:

What we said about the word ‘painted’ as applied to picture and landscape holds *mutatis mutandis* for the determination ‘presented’ as it applies to the content and the object of a presentation. ...

To the verb ‘to present’, there correspond — in a similar fashion as to the verb ‘to paint’ — first of all two things: an object which is presented and a content which is presented. The content is the picture; the object, the landscape. The result of the activity of presenting which moves in two directions is again only one. The presented object, in the sense in which the painted landscape is a picture, is the content of the presentation. The content which is presented in a presentation is truly a content; when applied to the content, the addition ‘presented’ is a little modifying as the addition of ‘painted’ is in regard to the picture. The presented content is just as much a content as the painted picture is a picture. Just as a picture can only be painted or created through some other activity, a content of a presentation can only be presented; no other activity can here replace the presenting. The content of a presentation and the presented object are one and the same thing. The expression ‘presented’ is a modifying determination of the object; for the presented object is no longer object, but is merely the content of a presentation. The painted landscape, too, as we pointed out, is no longer a landscape, but a picture. (Ibis., 12f.)

On the other hand, ‘presented’ in ‘presented object’ can also function as a determinator:

But we saw that the painted landscape, the picture, depicts something which is not in this very same sense something painted. Similarly, the content of a presentation aims at something which is not a content of a presentation, but which is an object of this presentation, in analogy to the way in which the landscape is the “subject” of the picture which depicts it. And just as the landscape is copied in this picture, just as it is depicted by it and, hence, “painted” in a sense different from the earlier one, so is the object which corresponds to a presentation pictured mentally, as one says — that is, presented through the content of this presentation. When one says of the object that it is presented in this last sense, then the meaning of the word ‘object’ is not at all modified; “the object is presented” says then only that an object has entered into a certain relationship with a being capable of having presentations. But thereby it has not ceased to be an object.

Hence, if one speaks of a “presented object”, one can mean two different things. That an object is presented can mean that an object stands — among many further relations to other objects — also in

a certain relation to a cognizant being which forms one of the relations two terms. In this sense, the presented object is a genuine object just like the extended, lost, etc. object. In another sense, however, the presented object is the opposite to genuine object; the presented object is then no longer an object, but a content of a presentation, and it is something entirely different from the genuine object. It is the presented object in the first sense which can be affirmed or denied through a judgment. In order to be judged, the object has to be first presented; what is not presented can as little be affirmed or denied as it can be loved or hated. Yet the affirmed or denied object, the desired or detested object, is a presented object only in the second of the two mentioned meanings. The presented object in the first mentioned sense of the word 'presented' is not what is affirmed or denied; one does not have *it* in mind when one says that an object exists or does not exist. The presented object in this sense is the content of the presentation, the "mental picture" of an object. (Ibid., 13f.)

Twardowski modestly says that his analysis exhibits the ambiguity involved in the expression 'to be presented' and consisting in applying this phrase sometimes to contents, sometimes to objects. He proposes, Zimmerman's following terminology, to speak about contents presented *in* presentations and objects presented *through* contents of presentations. However, I think that Twardowski's analysis has far reaching consequences for philosophy. The main point of Twardowski's considerations can be summarized in this way. Let P be a presentation, C its content and O its object, we read the inscription $P(x)$ as ' x is presented'. The main thesis is:

(*) $P(O) = P(C)$ if and only if 'presented' in $P(O)$ is a modifier and 'presented' in $P(C)$ is a determinator.

Thus, the thesis (*) points out not only an ambiguity, but also a fundamentally different logical behaviour of the philosophically important word 'presented'.

Everybody has favourite philosophical pieces written by others. Twardowski's analysis of 'to be presented' belongs to my set of favourites. Although Twardowski himself seems not to ascribe a proper importance to the distinction of 'presented' as a modifier and a determinator, it has a very fundamental application. Assume that we analyze an argumentation supporting the view that objects in the ordinary sense are in fact contents of our presentations. Certainly, ordinary objects are genuine objects in Twardowski's sense. So, if one claims that ordinary objects are contents of our presentations, because they are presented, one confuses

two logical roles of the word ‘presented’. This is a mistake made by Berkeley. Another interesting point is that Twardowski outlined, in the domain of the mental, a distinction which is very similar to Frege’s idea of direct and indirect reference in *oratio recta* and *obliqua*.

There are several other points in Twardowski’s analysis which should be noted. Cf. Ajdukiewicz (1978, 182-191)⁵ Following Kerry, he admits that contents are genuine objects, when they are presented in presentations. In this case, we have to do with higher-order presentations. However, Twardowski, contrary to Bolzano and Kerry, does not recognize object-less presentations. For him, every presentation has the object and the content. It raises the problem: what is an object? Twardowski’s answer is orthodox (according to Brentanism): an object is everything which can be presented. In particular, objects, except of the case of higher-order presentations, are never psychic entities. For Twardowski, the act and its content form the unity: we cannot extract contents from acts really, but only through abstraction. Twardowski, of course, assumes the validity of the intentionality thesis. On the other hand, he changes its meaning, because, on his view, mental acts are directed toward external (transcendent) objects. Cf. Jacquette (1990/91, 177-202)⁶

10. Some early reactions to Twardowski and interpretative problems

The later Höfler returned to COD in his self-presentation:

Ebenso hatte ich ... unterschieden [in *Logik* — J.W.] zwischen *Inhalt* und *Gegenstand*, hatte mich aber damals allerdings durch *Brentanos* mündliche Einsprüche irre machen lassen an dem Festhalten und Herausarbeiten dieses Unterschiedes. An jene Andeutung hatte dann *Twardowski* in einer so betitelten Monographie 1894 angeknüpft. (Höfler (1923), 17)

The negative evaluation of COD explains why Höfler limited the relevant remarks in the later editions of his *Logik* to very elementary, partly terminological, explanations.⁷

Twardowski is often mentioned in Höfler’s other book which was in fact a much enlarged version of *Logik* written together with Meinong. Höfler, beside some criticism of certain ideas of Twardowski (1894) which I omitted in this paper, suggests that Twardowski only developed what was stated by him in his *Logic* from 1891. Twardowski (see section 8 above) clearly was influenced by Höfler (and other authors as well).

However, Twardowski did much more than only a precization of the concept of immanent object. As I tried to argue in the last section, the distinction between the determining and modifying role of 'presented' is the crucial and original point of Twardowski's analysis. But even if we disregard this moment, it is sufficient to observe, in order to justify the opinion that Twardowski achieved more than Höfler did, that presentations have their objects even in cases when objects in questions do not exist.

In the last section I mentioned some of Twardowski's views concerning contents of mental acts. However, some interpretative problems remain. Blaustein (1928, 13-15) considers three possible interpretations of the notion of content in Twardowski:

- (a) contents are immanent objects; it is essentially the interpretation suggested by Höfler;
- (b) contents are images, mirrors or pictures, contents, if pictures are understood as mirrors;
- (c) contents are objective presentations in Bolzano's sense; this interpretation was proposed by Linke (1918, 80f.)

The second interpretation was rejected by an explicit statement of Twardowski himself:

A primitive psychology replied readily that the presentation (in the sense of the content) is simply a mental picture of the object and assumed that the question was thereby answered. Now, surely, there must be a relation between the content and the object by virtue of which an object belongs to this particular content, and a content is the content which corresponds to one particular, and no other, object. However, whether it is to be assumed that there is a kind of photographic resemblance between content and object is a question which receives nowadays generally a negative answer.

People have become convinced that the relationship between the presentation and its object is an irreducible, primary relationship which can as little be described as, say, the relationship of incompatibility between two judgments. (Twardowski (1977), 64)

However, the third interpretation is also difficult to defend with respect to Twardowski, because contents in Twardowski's sense are mental items attached to concrete presentations but considered as mental unities: contents are logical parts of presentations. It also excludes the first interpretation. What remains? It is difficult to decide, because one can develop the following set of views shared by Twardowski in various directions:

- (a) contents are logical parts of mental acts as unities;
- (b) contents are not real in themselves;
- (c) contents are extracted through abstraction;
- (d) contents are not simple mirrors;
- (e) the relation of preventing through contents is primitive;
- (f) contents are meanings of names.

Certainly, Twardowski was not quite explicit in his views on contents, but he is in a good company, because philosophical psychology did not solve this question until now. There are also some doubts concerning Twardowski's understanding of objects. As Blaustein remarks, there are two conflicting views in Twardowski: (a) objects are items to which mental acts are directed, independently of their ontological status (real, possible, etc.), and (b) objects are real phenomena. (Cf. Blaustein (1928), 17) Probably (a) is more coherent with Twardowski's other views developed in (1894), but (b) is also plausible to some extent. Also at that point, Twardowski is in a good company. Anyway, Twardowski did not give any synthesis of Bolzano and Brentano: he was too anti-Platonic in order to follow Bolzano, but too realistic with respect to intentional objects in order to follow Brentano. Bolzano, having the concept of objective presentation, could introduce objectless presentations, but Twardowski, starting with (early) Brentano's concept of object, had to reject objectless presentations. We encounter here an old and stable ontological dilemma: either a rich ontology of contents and a poorer ontology of objects (Bolzano) or a poorer ontology of contents and a rich ontology of objects.

Husserl admired Twardowski's (1894), but he became very soon its critic. (Cf. Husserl (1979), 303-348 & 349-356; cf. also Schuhmann (1991), 137-176)⁸ The main objections of Husserl against Twardowski are these: (a) psychologism, (b) the twofoldness of acts of presentations in the sense that they are directed toward objects as well as contents, because it leads to the erroneous theory of two objects of intentional acts, and (c) the mirror theory of cognition. Husserl was, of course, right that Twardowski was a psychologist. Twardowski himself (1991, 19f.) recognized it and explicitly said that he rejected psychologism after reading *Logische Untersuchungen*. Twardowski's later theory of actions and products was for him a way to overcome psychologism.⁹ Husserl's two other objections mentioned above are not right. The objection (b) disregards the crucial thesis (*) (see section 8 above) which implies that O is generally different from C if two roles of 'presented' are not confused. The objection (c) is not justified. See Twardowski's remark on the picture theory of cognition

quoted in §9. However, I repeat once more that Twardowski's account raises several questions.

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Notes:

- 1 I reproduce the stressings of particular words in quotations by underlining, independently of styles originally used by the quoted authors.
- 2 This book was very popular in Poland. Twardowski recommended it as the first introduction to logic. It was translated (from one of the later editions) into Polish in 1927 as a propaedeutic textbook for secondary schools. In the next editions, Meinong is not mentioned as the co-author. I employ the third edition which appeared as *Grundlehren der Logik*. Wien: Tempsky, 1904.
- 3 See section 10 for an explanation of this situation.
- 4 See section 10 for this question.
- 5 This analysis was further mastered by K. Ajdukiewicz. See his paper Epistemology and semiotics. In Ajdukiewicz, K. (1978). — The Polish original appeared in 1948.
- 6 However, I do not agree that Twardowski practically abandoned the intentionality thesis. At most, he rejected one of its versions.
- 7 We can also speculate that Brentano was not happy with Twardowski's choice of COD as the subject of his *Habilitationsschrift*.
- 8 Husserl, E. (1979a&b) Both texts were written before 1900, not published until 1979. — Cf. also Schuhmann's (1990/91) „Husserls Abhandlung ‚Intentionale Gegenstände‘. Edition der ursprünglichen Druckfassung“. Husserl repeated his objections in his *Logische Untersuchungen* and added some new. Let me note that I mention only those of Husserl's objections which are closely connected with my presentation of Twardowski's view.
- 9 Twardowski, K. (forthcoming). Actions and products. In Twardowski K. (forthcoming). *Selected Papers*. Ed. by J. Brandl and J. Woleński, Amsterdam: Rodopi. The Polish original appeared in 1912.