



The significance of Kazimierz Twardowski in philosophy and culture¹

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Abstract: The paper presents the academic personality of Kazimierz Twardowski (1866-1938). Twardowski was born and educated in Vienna, where he was a student of Franz Brentano. After achieving habilitation, he moved to Lvov, where he organized serious philosophical research and became the founder of the Lvov-Warsaw School of philosophy and logic. The Twardowski's achievements in three dimensions: as a teacher, as an organizer and as a scientist are briefly described.

Keywords: Kazimierz Twardowski; Lvov-Warsaw School; Polish philosophy

1 Twardowski's life

Twardowski was born in Vienna on October 20, 1866. His father, Pius, was a member of the Austrian Civil Service. Both Pius Twardowski and his wife, Malwina (maiden name: Kuhn), were Polish. Twardowski grew up in the atmosphere of moderate religiosity and fervent patriotism.

At the age of ten, Twardowski entered the Viennese *Theresianum* (Theresian Academy) where he received comprehensive education. The Academy provided him with solid secondary school level education which included many languages, i.a. classical ones (Greek and Latin). Already at *Theresianum*, Twardowski became acquainted with philosophical works and philosophical problems. Thanks to the discipline of the school, Twardowski became accustomed to systematic work.

He graduated from *Theresianum* in 1885 and in the same year he began studies at the University of Vienna. He studied law, psychology, classical philology, mathematics, physics and philosophy. The most important philosopher in Vienna at that time was certainly Franz Brentano, who became Twardowski's model of philosophical researcher and teacher. Twardowski took his doctorate in philosophy in 1891, by virtue of a dissertation on the views of Descartes (under the supervision of Robert Zimmerman).

¹ The article is supported by the project "The Significance of the Lvov-Warsaw School in European Culture" (Foundation for Polish Science). number of the projectardowski in philosophy and culture

In 1892, Twardowski wedded Kazimiera Kołodziejska. Many years later he wrote about her:

I lack the words to describe the love with which, in her infinite goodness, my wife has never ceased to surround me. As the wisest of counsels and most dependable of helpers in all of life's affairs, she had the greatest part in anything useful that was given to me to accomplish.²

The Twardowskis had three daughters: Helena, Aniela, and Maria. The youngest later became Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz's wife, the former being Twardowski's student and one of the greatest representatives of the Lvov-Warsaw School.

Thanks to the grant from the Austrian Ministry of Culture and Education in 1892, Twardowski travelled to Leipzig and Munich. After returning from Germany, Twardowski worked in mathematical bureau of the life insurance branch of the Civil Servants' Union of the Austrian Monarchy. At the same time he worked as a tutor and wrote his habilitation dissertation.

He achieved his habilitation in 1894 on the basis of the dissertation *On content and object of presentations*. This dissertation is (as yet) his most known philosophical study abroad (probably because it was written in German). After achieving habilitation, in the academic year 1894/1895 Twardowski lectured in Vienna as a *Privatdozent*.

A year later, he was already a professor in Lvov. He devoted himself to didactic work and tried to organize Polish philosophical and – more widely speaking – scientific and cultural life. Still, he remained scientifically active. Twardowski died in 1938.

Władysław Tatarkiewicz, who, by the way, admitted to having close relations with Kazimierz Twardowski and his School, classified professors into three following subclasses: professors-teachers, professors-organisers, and professors-scholars. With each professor, one of these three social roles, which needs to be adopted to a certain degree, prevails. Which role did prevail with professor Twardowski? The researchers of the history of philosophy in Poland usually find teaching and organising activities of Twardowski balanced – adding that his strictly scholarly activity was, in a way, over-shadowed after he left Vienna. Undoubtedly, there were times in Twardowski's Lvov professorship when he was almost exclusively devoted to organisational work or when he was almost exclusively focused on teaching. He simply considered organisational and teaching activities as his first and most important duties at that time. However, when one takes a closer look at Twardowski's scientific works, which were written in Lvov, as well as original theoretical ideas, formed and delivered to his students, who subsequently developed those ideas, one cannot help but get the impression that Twardowski-scholar has not been explored enough, and, *eo ipso*, he remains underappreciated.

² Twardowski (1926), p. 22.

2 Twardowski-teacher

In the courtyard of the University of Vienna, there is a bust of Franz Brentano with the following inscription: “Dem großen Lehrer der Philosophie.” If a similar inscription was found under a bust of Kazimierz Twardowski, it would be equally appropriate. What is more, one could assume that Twardowski himself would take pride in such characterization. Teaching philosophy was one of the most important roles of the lifetime to him, as it was also for his great master from Vienna. Still, the inscription should probably be extended in his case: “For the Great Teacher of Philosophy and Philosophers”.

Lecturing on philosophy in a Polish city and in Polish language was Twardowski’s great dream. However, his beginnings in Lvov, which met these conditions, were a certain disappointment to him. Both organisation of studies and students’ attitudes towards studying that he found there, were far from his expectations. Still, Twardowski set himself a goal of changing that situation and, *de facto*, it meant a total reorganisation of teaching philosophy.

One of Twardowski’s closest students, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, described the situation found in Lvov in the following way:

Twardowski said that he had intended, most of all, to build philosophy. But soon he realised that, first of all, he had to deliver contents of philosophical studies to the underinformed; but then he came to understand that he had to teach the practice of philosophy. Finally, he came to the conclusion that, above all, his students need to know how to work at all, and what good work is, which was demonstrated on the example of his good work as a professor of philosophy. He found a group of clever minds, which were simultaneously undisciplined, inclined and encouraged to indulging in fantasies, and which had general shortcomings, contrary and indispensable conditions of dexterity.³

He perceived his task not only in connection to the organisation of modern philosophical studies,⁴ but also in instilling ideas and manner of philosophical research which he encountered in Vienna and most of all, in Brentano, into Polish students in Lvov. In his autobiography, he wrote:

My mission was to make my fellow country-men acquainted with the way of philosophising that I learnt from Franz Brentano, and especially, to introduce university students to the spirit and method of this philosophy.⁵

Twardowski commenced the organisation of serious philosophical studies with preparing and delivering a series of introductory lectures aiming at acquainting students with general philosophical issues. He gave lectures on almost all systematic philosophical disciplines and the history of philosophy to the students of the Department of Philosophy. All these lectures were carefully prepared by Twardowski, who revised a particular subject of

³ Kotarbiński (1959), p. 2.

⁴ Undoubtedly, Twardowski’s vision of modern education was influenced by discussions with his friend, Hans Schmidkunz, a great reformer of academic teaching.

⁵ Twardowski (1926), p. 24.

them every couple of years. All the lectures were first written down and then read out; Twardowski made the scripts available to the students as he did not want them to consolidate knowledge on the basis of poorly taken notes. He never repeated any class – he considered it his duty to inform his students about the latest state of research in a particular field of philosophical sciences. He wrote about it:

I have been totally preoccupied with my teacher's practice. The preparation of main lectures on logic, psychology, ethics, and the history of philosophy, which should correspond with scientific advancement to the same extent as specialist occasional speeches, is very time-consuming. Even when I am about to give some main lecture again, it is against my nature to simply reuse the draft prepared four years ago as a basis for that lecture.⁶

The first students of Twardowski remembered that right after he arrived to Lvov, the lecture rooms were almost empty. Initially, few people came to the lectures – those who wanted to know who the young professor from Vienna was and how he was getting on. However, the lecture rooms gradually filled up. His manner of speaking and behaviour drew the attention of the audience and commanded respect for issues he was talking about. Eventually, there was not enough space for everyone who was interested in his lectures in the university lecture rooms. Therefore, for the purposes of Twardowski's speeches, a huge concert hall was usually rented.

That situation was unique, especially as Twardowski established iron discipline at his lectures. Below, there is another excerpt from Kotarbiński's memoirs:

What triflers they are! They do not feel like getting up early, they are late for the lectures, they keep missing deadlines, that's bad... They need to be taught not to do that. So the lecture will start at 6 AM in the summer semester; so latecomers will be reprimanded so harshly that those tardy procrastinators will die of shame. And the teacher will be strict in general, very strict, while also being demanding towards himself.⁷

Indeed, Twardowski started his lectures early in the morning and had zero tolerance for lateness. Twardowski himself was never late for a lecture and he never missed any without a very good reason. In this way, he set a good example for his students, teaching them dutifulness and responsibility.

Apart from general lectures, Twardowski wanted to, again following the example of Brentano, provide courses dedicated to a narrow circle of students, which would encourage them to think independently and philosophically. In order to achieve that, he participated in every meeting of Philosophical Club already existent in Lvov. In 1897/1898 academic year, his actions triggered the establishment of the first university philosophical seminar in Poland.

⁶ Twardowski (1926), p. 31.

⁷ Kotarbiński (1959), p. 3.

Prior to one's admission to the close circle of Twardowski's seminar students, one had to participate in an introductory seminar, where each participant (and the number of those sometimes reached one hundred!) was obliged to prepare and hand in summaries of a discussed philosophical paper every week. The chosen summary was read out and then discussed by the participants – first, in terms of faithfulness towards the original. The ideas included in a particular text were discussed as secondary issues. Admission to the seminar depended on excellent attendance record and punctuality, as well as good quality of summaries and the so-called preliminary paper.

Sophomores and students in higher years of study participated in the seminar meetings to prepare their first independent works under the supervision of Twardowski. They also analysed classical texts together (always in original languages). At the end of the year, each student was obliged to hand in their own, original work – missing a deadline by even a bit was unacceptable.

All the seminar students could use a reading room – each of them had own key for it – from 7 AM to 10 PM. In this reading room, there was a desk for each seminar student and a collection of books at their disposal that was handed over by Twardowski from his private library (in 1930, the number of volumes of this library reached 8000). Twardowski spent 8-9 hours a day at the seminar, visiting the reading room and talking with the students; there was an appointed time for his students, namely, between noon and 1 PM. In this way, each seminar participant had the right and the opportunity to contact the professor directly. The philosophical seminar of Twardowski was located at Św. Mikołaj [St. Nicholas] Street for many years. Only in 1923, when University of Lvov received a new seat in the former edifice of the Galician Sejm [Parliament], the library and the reading room were moved there. In new building, there was enough space not only for a seminar meeting room, but also for the professor's office and an assistant lecturer's room.

An experimental psychology laboratory was also established, which was at first attached to the philosophical seminar of Twardowski, which then became an independent unit in 1920, when the Psychological Institute was created in Lvov.

Thus, Twardowski taught independent philosophical work to his students. Many years later, he wrote about it:

I have always considered independence of thinking, as well as an appropriate method and a pure love for the truth, the most reliable guarantee of successful scientific work.⁸

Let us say it with emphasis: one of the most important features of Twardowski's teaching was the fact that he did not instil any definite philosophical solutions or a system of ideas in his students. Most of all, he taught his students the method of approaching philosophical problems and gaining their own research results.

Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz wrote about this 'philosophical ABC',

⁸ Twardowski (1926), p. 30.

The principal commandments [of solid scientific work] can be summarised as follows: think in a way that makes you realize exactly what you are thinking about; talk in a way that not only makes you know what you are talking about but also makes you certain that the one you are talking to will be thinking the same thing while carefully listening to you; whatever your statement is, state it as firmly as the logic power of your arguments allows you. This was the ABC of proper thinking, which could be ignored by many people who would treat it as an elementary school lesson. But unfortunately, this elementary lesson is rarely studied by high school students, and even university students. Many people who gained the reputation of great thinkers by exciting appearances of depth with cloudiness of their intellectual streams, lacked this scientific *Kinderstube*. The teaching work of Twardowski consisted in freeing oneself from cloudiness in order to see through the clear stream whether the nub of the matter constitutes the depths or the shallows, in triggering the need for clear thinking and repulsion towards a cliché, posing as the depths, in students.⁹

A similar description of ‘philosophising’ method, taught by Twardowski, can be found in Kotarbiński’s work,

Muddled, chaotic and vague texts must be interpreted co-creatively. One must go into the author’s intentions and attempt to express his thoughts better than he did, thus making the text clear... And there is a way to discover whether the author’s thought is clear enough: one should try to summarise it and put it in words commonly understood by people with secondary education... That kind of summary is simple when the ideas are not lacking in clarity, otherwise it is hard work... Needless to say, this requirement of clarity [...] can be applied not only to written or printed texts but also to oral statements. Thus, the secondary commandment, and the last one in our list: help each other to philosophise by having enlightening discussions and by forcing each other to make yourself clear with mutual requirement of unequivocal statements.¹⁰

In short: the attitude of a typical representative of Twardowski’s School was usually characterised by two postulates: of precision and of foundation. According to the postulate of precision, each statement should be expressed with maximum clarity and accuracy. According to the postulate of foundation, each thesis should be proposed with a level of certainty directly proportional to the level of justification of the thesis. Ajdukiewicz named this attitude „anti-irrationalism”.

Therefore, the essence of Twardowski’s philosophy did not lay in the contents of his opinions but in the manner of their expression and justification:

Since, most of all, I intend to show the students devoting themselves to philosophy the right way, simultaneously allowing them to find their own way even when it is totally inconsistent with my vision.¹¹

⁹ Ajdukiewicz (1959), pp. 31-32.

¹⁰ Kotarbiński (1959) pp. 3-4.

¹¹ Twardowski (1926), p. 29.

Kotarbiński interpreted these intentions correctly, as he wrote:

He propagated neither materialism, nor spiritualism, nor determinism, nor indeterminism, nor any metaphysics. He gave conceptual and methodological tools to his students, and each of them had to build a shelter independently...¹²

Ajdukiewicz's opinion was similar:

Twardowski did not establish a philosophical school that would distinguish itself with specific ideas. He created a different school which one cannot really call a philosophical school since it embraced much more – it was a school of thorough thinking.¹³

This explains the fact that Twardowski's students were not linked by any specific metaphysical ideas and especially, by worldviews. There were dualists and ontological monists; absolutists and axiological relativists; followers and opponents of multivalued logic; conservatives and socialists; priests and atheists...

Twardowski perceived his mission of a philosophy teacher broadly; although he considered establishing close a group of students to be his main goal, he wished to bring philosophy – which he identified with thorough thinking – much further along. Thanks to general university lectures he was able to show it to students of all majors. Thanks to his lectures outside the university – he reached people who were not connected with higher education and living outside academic centres. (Twardowski lectured on philosophy, psychology and education studies also within the frameworks of lectures for the general public organised by Department of Society for Popular Education [*Wydział Towarzystwa Oświaty Ludowej*] in Lvov, Scientific Circle of Mutual Aid Society of Lvov Polytechnic [*Kółko Naukowe Towarzystwa Bratniej Pomocy Politechniki Lwowskiej*], academic courses for women, teacher-training courses in the School of Maria Bielska, etc. Finally, thanks to philosophical magazines that he edited, Twardowski reached everyone interested in his thought. His publications, didactic in tone, (*Podstawowe pojęcia logiki i dydaktyki* [*Basic Notions of Logic and Teaching*] and *Sześć wykładów o filozofii średniowiecznej* [*Six Lectures on Medieval Philosophy*]) served the same purpose.

Due to these consistently undertaken activities, Twardowski was able to create his own philosophical school. He took pride in it, which was perceptible in his writings:

And thus, the University of Lvov became a point of departure for the specific philosophical thought in Poland, marked with Franz Brentano's spirit, and I can say

¹² Kotarbiński (1959) p. 4.

¹³ Ajdukiewicz (1959), p. 32.

with great satisfaction that since that time people have been referring to Lvov school of Polish philosophy in this context.¹⁴

After the First World War, the Twardowski's School spread to other Polish philosophical centres; first of all, the Warsaw branch joined the Lvov wing. This was the case because the positions of the chair of departments of philosophy and logic in Warsaw were filled in majority by the first generation of Twardowski's students. Thus, Lvov-Warsaw School was established.

Attitudes instilled in the students – and handed down to next generations by them – turned out to be the most durable work of Twardowski. Let us quote Ajdukiewicz again:

The seed he sowed in the souls of his followers, who conveyed it further, endured. Strict observance of principal rules of solid scientific work in philosophy and in any other science is a quality of Twardowski's students and the students of his students. He also influences other representatives of philosophy of different origins which has been spreading in Poland to a lesser or greater extent, and makes these and other philosophical paths attain a higher scientific level than anywhere else. Instilling a sense of thorough thinking in Polish scholars constitutes a permanent and priceless contribution of Twardowski, which justifies the feeling of deep gratitude for his him held by everyone engaged in philosophy in Poland, regardless of their position.¹⁵

This “seed” was neither destroyed by the Second World War, which otherwise wrought havoc in Polish culture, nor crushed by the post-war years of ideology, which perceived “thorough thinking” as its main threat.

3 Professor-organiser. Twardowski's public activity

Twardowski's organisational activity in the field of philosophy was not limited to establishing the modern philosophical seminar at the University of Lvov.

When *Przegląd Filozoficzny* [*Philosophical Review*] was first issued in Warsaw in 1898 on the initiative of Władysław Weryho, Twardowski established a close connection with him. Then, in 1906, Twardowski officially became the Lvov editor of the magazine. Apart from that, in 1911, he induced the establishment of *Ruch Filozoficzny* [*Philosophical Movement*] in Lvov. It was a magazine which, by definition, performed an informative and integrating function in relation to Polish scientific milieu: it provided information on philosophical life in Poland. *Ruch Filozoficzny* magazine, among others, published reports on the meetings of Polish Philosophical Society, which were extremely rich sources of information on approaches to philosophy in Lvov and the origins of ideas of leading Polish philosophers. Both *Przegląd Filozoficzny* and *Ruch Filozoficzny*, which were closed during the Second World War by the occupiers, then resumed their activities for several years and

¹⁴ Twardowski (1926), p. 30.

¹⁵ Ajdukiewicz (1959) p. 35.

were closed again by the communist regime, were eventually reactivated (*Ruch Filozoficzny* in 1958, and *Przegląd Filozoficzny* only in 1989) and have been in print to this day.

Polish Philosophical Society was brought into being by Twardowski in 1904. It was the first official philosophical society in Poland, and the most important one for many years. Already in 1910, its hundredth meeting was widely celebrated.

Another great undertaking of Twardowski was the organisation of the First Polish Congress of Philosophy in Lvov in 1923. In the opening speech of the Congress, on 10th February, Twardowski said, among other things:

There is no lack of universities for Polish philosophers, which prepare future scholars in this field, there is no lack of methods of independent creative work, there is no lack of skills of expressing their thoughts, mutual communication and addressing the society.

[Still] the point is that [...] these possibilities and skills should be taken advantage of as much as possible; philosophical studies should be reaching a higher and higher level of tension and should influence the philosophical mindset so that it spreads wider and wider. This desire does not stem from some kind of professional egoism, which forces representatives of some specialities to see it as a remedy for every shortage and deficiency; philosophy is neither one-sided, nor conceited, but it is critical and realistic enough to understand that in the whole world of human thought, each branch of thought and study has its entitlement and is beneficial in a specific way. It is precisely the fact that philosophy embraces things holistically and does not settle for fragments, that it tries to take a general stance and see further than isolated details; exactly this fact entitles philosophy to wish that this philosophical worldview will especially influence those people who want to create the shape of the world – either indirectly, as teachers of the young generation, or directly through words, writings and actions, and most of all, on the public arena. The more this desire is fulfilled, the fewer reasons for complaints about being confined to a closed circle of private, the party's, or the state's interests, doctrines and formulas, mottos and programmes. All these things, which will surely endure, will be reduced to their real significance as parts of the whole for which they have been created in the first place.¹⁶

Twardowski called the University of Lvov his “beloved university.” He devoted a lot of his time to this place as a whole, using his outstanding organisational skills when working for the benefit of the university. Twardowski's role at the University of Lvov is best described by Ajdukiewicz's words: “One could say that he [Twardowski] was the core of this university.”

Here is the list of the most important achievements of Twardowski in relation to the University of Lvov as an institution.

Between 1901 and 1903 he established the Common University Lectures in Lvov, in which he participated actively. In the 1900/1901 academic year, he was the deputy dean, and in 1905/1906, the dean of the Department of Philosophy. Finally, he was appointed vice-

¹⁶ *Księga pamiątkowa [Commemorative Book]* (1927), p. 263.

chancellor of the University for the 1914/1915 academic year, and his vice-chancellor's term of office was extended by two additional years until 1917 during the First World War. Twardowski spent this period in Vienna, where he took care of Polish students and professors who escaped from Galicia after the outbreak of the war.

In the 1908/1909 academic year, Twardowski was entrusted with a task of reorganising administration of the University. He drew up first regulations and instructions of the University for deans, officials and students, aiming at improving the activity of the institution. He improved the functioning of the university's administrative office by decentralising it, and he normalised the system of enrolment for the university. For some time, he ran the administrative office working as a member of regular office staff.

Furthermore, Twardowski demonstrated great initiative as the president and then regular member of Higher Education Teachers Association; he created a fund for professors' widows and orphans; he initiated the organisation of summer camps for high school students.

In his public activity, Twardowski followed certain principles which are worth mentioning.

Twardowski was a defender of the university's and university professorship's dignity and independence, simultaneously being an example of this dignity and independence to his surroundings.

As a professor and as a man, he treated everyone equally: regardless of religion or political views. Both in his Vienna and Lvov periods, he deliberately refrained from any public declarations on these issues. Ajdukiewicz also mentioned this matter:¹⁷

[Everyone who knew him,] would say that Professor treated everybody equally. His students and auditors were Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish. Despite the spirit of those times, which was in no way conducive to that attitude, Twardowski saw no difference between them. The students of these three nationalities showed the same respect and devotion for him in return. In this way, first of all, by being an example himself, he brought up his surroundings to worship truth and justice; he developed in them a sense of duty, consistency at work, and kindness for others.

Twardowski also exhibited that kindness in his personal contacts. He was well-known for coming to people's aid every time someone really needed his help and asked for it openly. His living conditions were unusually modest as he allocated a considerable part of his professor's salary to scholarships and aid for students in a difficult financial situation. In face-to-face relations, Twardowski was always tactful, gentle and full of personal charm. In Vienna, this attitude made him a desired guest in the salons of the Vienna intelligentsia; in Lvov, thanks to his personality, he managed to win his surroundings over to organize undertakings for the benefit of the university, the city, and the state.

He perceived his public activity just as another manifestation of his philosophical activity; it was how he executed practical philosophy:¹⁸

¹⁷ Ajdukiewicz (1959), p. 33.

¹⁸ Twardowski (1926), p. 32.

When people kindly recognised my work in many fields of practical activity, I would always honestly try to give credit for it not to myself but to the way of philosophical thinking which I was brought up in, and which I continued to develop. Study philosophy thoroughly and you will experience the same thing! That was the basic message I passed on in my response to the praises I received. I have never stopped worshipping philosophy, not only as the mother of all sciences but also as the guiding star of life.

4 Professor-scholar

4.1. To many students, and even more historians of Polish philosophy, Twardowski was, most of all, a teacher. As a matter of fact, Twardowski himself wrote in his autobiography:¹⁹

Belief and inclination coupled with certain circumstances oriented my philosophical activity in Lvov to teaching and educating, through words and actions. The result showed that this activity met the actual needs, so I stuck to it.

In his youth in Vienna, Twardowski was a very productive philosopher. Within a short period of four years, he published two comprehensive monographs as well as many small articles and reviews. His publications were and still are highly valued. However, there were relatively few publications by Twardowski concerning his own philosophical research conducted in Lvov. He admitted that the issued works were published only because of some external impetus, as a result of formal university standards or at the request of publishing houses, or at his colleagues' prompting.

There were several reasons for that situation, mentioned by Twardowski himself and related to each other.

The first natural reason was the lack of time. The area of Twardowski's activities described above was enormous.. And one must bear in mind that Twardowski treated all his responsibilities seriously and tried to carry them out, not satisfactorily (using the grade scale from *Teresianum* times) but at least excellently. There was no place for meaningless pretentiousness and idle pontificating.

The second reason was the fact that Twardowski was not really interested in publishing his own research results in Lvov. He was one of those people who derive satisfaction from obtaining results and sharing them with students during lectures or in seminar meetings. Sometimes the results were so well-absorbed by the auditors that they forgot about the source when developing them further. Twardowski was aware of that; still, he did not perceive it as something reprehensible at all:

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Although, in this way, the results of my work have not always reached wider circles under my name, I do not find it unfortunate; especially, as the printed word will sooner or later suffer the same fate.²⁰

The third reason for a lack of Twardowski's publications in the Lvov period was his attachment to the postulate of precision and accuracy. Everyone who cares about this postulate is thus aware that it hinders giving a final form to one's thoughts. Twardowski judged those who were not aware of that situation harshly:

There are many authors who publish articles, dissertations, and even extensive volumes within the scope of philosophy, which are full of equivocations, incomprehensibilities, confused thoughts, inconsistencies, vague expressions and paralogisms, and who, nonetheless, together with their publishers, are very successful, winning renown and even admiration of large number of readers! I would envy these authors this great literary productivity if I did not treat their literary products with contempt and if I were not outraged at their actions that are highly harmful to the development of strictly logical philosophical thought.²¹

Only a small part of Twardowski's philosophical views was printed within his lifetime. That is another similarity between Twardowski and his master, Brentano. f

However, Twardowski's achievements reach every area of philosophy. Let me list the most important of Twardowski's views.

4.1. In methodology, *he formulated the postulate of separation of philosophy* (which he considered to be a science) *from the problems of worldview* (which are the domain of personal convictions and attitudes). Trying to organize a worldview in the form of a theory was always only a pure speculation. As a philosopher, he has never propagated any worldview.²²

He considered lack of clarity of thoughts as one of the most important source of faults in philosophy. He was convinced that unclear thinking manifests itself in unclear speech, since discursive thinking is always thinking in language. In the reconstruction of philosophical terminology, *he advised to apply* (and he applied himself) *analytical method*. The analytical method of establishing the analytical definition of a given term has two steps: (1) considering a few typical designates of this term and taking essential features of these designates as members of definiens and (2) improving the definition by checking whether analytical theses following from it are true about other designates of the defined term.

Twardowski was against the so-called symbolomania and pragmatophobia, and advised to be especially careful in applying formal logical tools in philosophy. He argued that logical constructions, even formally correct ones, may not have any model in the domain of philosophical research. Formal constructions are not based on inappropriate intuitions.

²⁰ Twardowski (1926), p. 32.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² We learn about Twardowski's worldview only from his letters and other non-scientific writings. Two important elements of this worldview are theism and strong Polish patriotism.

*He proposed a correct classification of sciences taking the method of justification of theses as a *fundamentum divisionis* of this classification.*

4.2. Twardowski considered epistemology, understood as the theory of scientific cognition, as a part of philosophy to which the very scientific methods may be applied.

Among cognitive acts he distinguished presentations, divided into images and concepts, and judgements (convictions).

He distinguished the act of presentation from the object of presentation and its content. He justified this distinction convincingly by paying attention, i.a., to the fact that (i) the same object may be presented by different contents, (b) objects of presentation have some properties which *ex definitione* cannot be possessed by contents, and (c) every factual presentation has a real content even if its object is unreal.

Twardowski was a supporter of the idiogenetic theory of judgements. Presentations are not parts of convictions. Instead, having a certain presentation is a condition of making a judgement. Every judgement consists of accepting or rejecting the existence of the object of a given presentation.

In the domain of the theory of language, *Twardowski distinguished two functions of predicates: a determining one and a modifying one.* The predicate “imagined” in the context of “imagined man” may have two meanings: it is determining when it designates a real man that is imagined by someone, but it is modifying when this context denotes a man as a content of a given image.

Twardowski was an absolutist in the domain of the theory of truth. According to him, relativists, claiming that the logical value of sentences varies from time to time and from place to place, do not distinguish genuine, full sentences from elliptic sentences or sentential functions.

4.3. In the domain of ontology, *Twardowski proposed a classification of objects* with respect to existential categories (possible and impossible objects, existing and non-existing objects, real and unreal objects), and with respect to metaphysical category (particular and general objects, simple and composed objects, physical and psychical objects).

He contrasted acts and products of acts. He distinguished impermanent products, which end their existence when acts end (e.g. judgement as a product of judging) from permanent products, which exist after the end of acts (e.g. sculpture as the product of sculpturing). Permanent products are psychophysical objects; he considered products of human culture as examples of them. In such a way, he rejected psychologism in philosophy²³.

4.4. Similarly as in the domain of epistemology, *Twardowski was an absolutist in the domain of ethics.* He proposed a deep analysis of ethical relativism and scepticism.

From traditional domain of ethics, he separated a part which he considered to be scientific. He was convinced that the main aim of scientific ethics is to describe conditions in

²³ Twardowski rejected substantial psychologism but he remained a methodological psychologist. He claimed that philosophical investigations consist in a kind of introspection, i.e. analyzing the content of one’s psychical acts.

which desires and acts of particular people and communities may be agreed to the highest degree.

He was a precursor of the so-called independent ethics, scil. ethics which is free from assumptions taken from a worldview.

Twardowski proposed subtle analyses of many ethical concepts, such as pessimism and optimism, egoism and altruism, or patriotism. He justified the conviction that absolute prohibition of lying may not be sustained.

5 Conclusion

This short presentation of main areas of Twardowski's activity shows how influential person he was. He is also appreciated both as a teacher and as an organizer of scientific life. Barry Smith, an expert of Austrian and Polish philosophical tradition, points to Twardowski's significance for Polish philosophy:

The influence of Twardowski on modern philosophy in Poland is all-pervasive. Twardowski instilled in his students a passion for clarity, and rigour and seriousness. He taught them to regard philosophy as a collaborative effort, a matter of disciplined discussion and argument, and he encouraged them to train themselves thoroughly in at least one extra-philosophical discipline and to work together with scientists from other fields, both inside Poland and internationally.²⁴

One may say that in the beginning of the 20th century it was, without doubt, Twardowski who gave philosophical research in Poland the impulse to develop and bloom. The fast development of philosophy in Poland, initiated by Twardowski, was interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War. However, the position of Polish philosophy was strong enough to survive, to some degree, not only the difficult period of the war but also the dark times of the communist regime.

In fact, strictly scientific dimension of Twardowski's work is the less known one. There is still a need of an effort to make his views known and to indicate his appropriate position in the history of philosophy.

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²⁴ Smith (2006), p. 26.

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