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ТВАРДОВСЬКИЙ ТА РАССЕЛ ПРО НЕІСНУЮЧІ ПРЕДМЕТИ, ІСТИНУ ТА ПЕРЕДБАЧЕННЯ. ПОРІВНЯЛЬНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

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Реконструйовано та порівняно погляди двох відомих філософів, які є засновниками аналітичної філософії, а саме: Казимира Твардовського та Бертрана Рассела. Порівняльний аналіз ґрунтується на їхніх поглядах на істину, передбачення і природу неіснуючих предметів. Автор стверджує, що Казимир Твардовський зосереджується на критиці кореспондентської теорії істини Бертрана Рассела та її реалізації в його книжці "Проблеми філософії". Автор доходить висновку, що Казимиру Твардовському вдалося знайти серединний шлях між психологізмом і платонізмом у логіці та епістемології.

Ключові слова: *Майнонґ, Твардовський, Рассел, неіснуючі предмети, "інтенціональний зв'язок", точні описи, кореспондентська теорія істини.*

TWARDOWSKI AND RUSSELL ON NON-EXISTENT ENTITIES, TRUTH AND PREDICTION. A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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My aim in this paper is to offer a historical reconstruction of two alternative theories about truth and predication starting from the topic of non-existent entities. Following Brentano, Twardowski has developed, just as Husserl and Meinong did, a theory of intentionality based on the assumption that in a presentation the idea (the content) from the mind is related to its object by the so-called "intentional nexus" (this expression was proposed by Grossmann) without an ontological commitment regarding the existence of the object. The intentional nexus is able to put into a close relation a mental entity, the content and the object (something without an ontological statute).

Russell was explicitly concerned to find an alternative to Meinong's argument starting from his epistemological preference for direct realism and a correspondence theory of truth. He has developed initially a theory about denoting concepts but without expected results. Russell accepted that some concepts have a denotative meaning although they don't denote anything. Then he turned from mind to language and proposed the theory of definite descriptions. He extracted the deep logical structure from linguistic expressions which seem to denote something, and he developed a logical theory which was able to solve the problem regarding denotative expressions as "the present king of France".

Twardowski claims that the definition of a truth presupposes a particular perspective on the essence of judgment. Therefore, Twardowski's critique is centered both on Russell's correspondence definition of truth and on multiple realization theory proposed in *The Problems of Philosophy*. He argues that judging isn't a relation, but only something which occurs in our mind, more exactly, judging is an activity. In Twardowski's terms, the decision to take a trip is not a relation between the mind that decides and the taking of the trip. Twardowski asserts that judgments, not the sentences which express them, are truth bearers. He found a middle way between psychologism and Platonism in logic and epistemology.

Key words: *Twardowski, Russell, Meinong, non-existent entities, "the intentional nexus", definite descriptions, correspondence theory of truth.*

"The intentional nexus" as basic assumption

Twardowski claims that we have to distinguish between the act, the content (idea), and the object of presentation[1]. We are conscious of the fact that it is

[1] I'll use the translation made by Grossmann. He follows the translation common practice and uses "presentation" for the term "Vorstellung", "content" for "Inhalt" and "object" for "Gegenstand". He also mentions that in his view the best translation for "Vorstellung" is "idea", a word which was loaded in English with a fixed meaning by British empiricism. Therefore, Grossmann speaks in his "Introduction" about an idea, the act of having an idea and the object of an idea where Twardowski speaks about content of a presentation, the act of presentation and the object of a presentation [Grossmann 1977: VII–VIII].

possible to have in our mind ideas of nonexistent objects, for example, that of a round square. How is better to analyze them and the judgments about them?

Twardowski suggests firstly that every mental act has an intention and secondly that objects as such have properties whatever are their ontological statute [Woleński 2016]. Therefore, a theory of entities is a theory of intentions. Twardowski argues that if somebody denies the existence of a round square because this entity has inconsistent properties, he denies, in fact, the existence of a round square and not the idea of a round square. In order to deny the existence of something, this something has to be before the mind.

In Twardowski's view, we have to distinguish between two different questions and their answers. The first question is if any given idea intends something. The answer will be always affirmative. The second question is if any idea intends or not an entity that has being. The answer may or may not be affirmative because some intentions have no being. From the fact that an idea has an object we can't imply that this object has being. Therefore, between every idea and its object we have an indefinable relation named by Grossmann "the intentional nexus": "We must distinguish between the questions of whether or not the intentional nexus holds between an idea and its object, on the one hand, and the question of whether the object has being, on the other" [Grossmann 1977: XII].

The key passage is in § 5, "So-called 'objectless' presentations": "If someone uses the expression 'oblique square', then he makes known that there occurs in him an act of presentation. The content, which belongs to this act, constitutes the meaning of this name. But this name does not only mean something; it also designates something, namely, something which combines in itself contradictory properties and whose existence one denies as soon as one feels inclined to make a judgment about it. Something is undoubtedly designated by the name, even though this something does not exist. And what is so designated is different from the content of the presentation; for, firstly, the latter exists, while the former does not, and, secondly, we ascribe properties which are indeed contradictory to what is so designated, but these properties, certainly, do not belong to the content of the presentation. For, if the content had these contradictory properties, then it would not exist, but it does exist" [Twardowski 1977: 21].

Essentially, Twardowski's set of theses is this:

1. Any presentation has an object because without an object we cannot judge.

2. But we distinguish the object and the content.

3. The object is presented, the content is judged.

4. A name has content as its meaning and it denotes an object.

4. The content of a judgment is about the existence or non-existence of the object.

Russell's alternative

Russell offered an alternative solution to the problem of nonexistent entities and argued implicitly against Twardowski's basic assumption [Russell 1904][2].

Russell wrote in his book *My Philosophical Development* about his reasons to develop his theory of descriptions, and he accredited the idea that he did it because he tried to avoid Meinong's argument: "If you say that the golden mountain does not exist, it is obvious that there is something that you are saying does not exist – namely the golden mountain; therefore the golden mountain must subsist in some shadowy Platonic realm of being, for otherwise, your statement that the golden mountain does not exist would have no meaning. I confess that, until I hit upon the theory of descriptions, his argument seemed to me convincing" [Russell 1959: 84].

It seems that Russell's idea is based on an assumption which consists in his epistemological commitment for the correspondence theory of truth. Russell has developed a structural and isomorphic version of it. This characteristic will be defined later by Russell as a structural one. I'll talk later about his book, *The Problems of Philosophy*, wherein the chapter about truth Russell gave a famous example about Othello, Desdemona and Cassio in order to explain the relationship between a fact and a judgment.

Russell asserts that a false belief intends a state of affairs just as a true belief. He makes the next deductive step in his reasoning and asserts that if a false belief intends a state of affairs just as a true belief, then this state of affairs intended by a false belief must also subsist [Russell 1904: 510-515].

Russell argues that we'll have to admit that the golden mountain has being since it is a constituent of a state of affairs which has being, even if we have previously accepted that it is a fact that golden mountain has no being. Generally speaking, Russell asserts that a non-factual state of affairs must subsist if it is a constituent of complex states of affairs which subsist. Therefore, if we admit Russell's theory about complexes, then we have to reject Twardowski's view that the golden mountain has no being.

If we take into account both theories, then we'll grasp that we are confronted with a philosophical dilemma [Grossmann 1977: XV]. On the one hand, if we agree with the commonsensical idea that non-factual

[2] Even if Russell's critique is explicitly focused against Meinong, we can apply it to Twardowski's theory. The problem remains the same in Twardowski's work and he will refer to Russell, as we'll see later in this article.

states of affairs have no being, then we may admit the peculiar relation named "the intentional nexus". Twardowski did it. On the other hand, if we reject "the intentional nexus", then we reject also the commonsensical idea about the non-existence of non-factual states of affairs, and we are constrained to accept that they subsist. Russell did it initially, in his critique focused on Meinong's theory.

The question is if we really have a dilemma and if it is logically impossible to escape from it. Later, in his lectures about logical atomism, Russell invokes a criterion regarding our attitude towards such strange entities as the round square or the golden mountain [Russell 2009: 55–56]. He mentions the so-called "the sense of reality" or "the instinct of reality" and he rejects again Meinong's theory.

Russell puts the question about the status of *p* in "I believe that *p*" in the framework of a debate about beliefs, truth and facts. He asserts that we cannot say that we believe facts, but only that we perceive facts because perceiving is not liable to an error we know that we have true and false beliefs. If we could argue that we believe facts, then it will become impossible to explain true and false judgments because when is implied a fact as such the error becomes impossible.

Russell's theory of descriptions and the non-existent objects

Russell's theory of descriptions could be considered an attempt to escape from the horns of the dilemma mentioned above. Although we don't have an explicit reference to the reasons for the theory of description, we can suggest the hypothesis that Russell's main motivation was to reject Meinong's theory. Russell already has noted in his *Principles of Mathematics*: "A concept may denote although it does not denote anything" [Russell 1937: 73]. He spoke in his article, "The Existential Import of Propositions", published in *Mind* in 1905 about definite descriptions which describe nothing and names that name nothing: " 'The present king of England' is a denoting concept denoting an individual. 'The present king of France' is a similar complex concept denoting nothing. The phrase intends to point out an individual, but fails to do so: it does not point out an unreal individual but no individual at all. The same explanation applies to mythical personages, Apollo, Priam, etc. these words all have a meaning, which can be found by looking them up in a classical dictionary; but they have not a denotation; there is no individual, real or imaginary, which they point out" [Russell 1994: 487].

Let's sketch Russell's theory of description. Russell shows that a state of affairs described by the sentence "The golden mountain does not exist" does not contain a constituent described by the expression "the golden mountain". Then, we are forced to ascribe being to this constituent even we ascribe being to the whole state of affairs.

With the help of contextual definitions and the existential quantifier, Russell shows that the cause of this mistake is in language. By a "denoting phrase" Russell means a phrase, which denote in virtue of its form, as the following: a man, some man, any man, every man, all men, the present King of England, the present King of France, the center of mass in the solar system at the first instant of the twentieth century, the revolution of the earth round the sun, the revolution of the sun round the earth.

Russell distinguishes three cases:

1. A phrase may be denoting, and yet not denote anything; e.g., "the present King of France".

2. A phrase may denote one definite object, e.g., "the present King of England" denotes a certain man.

3. A phrase may refer to many objects, e.g., "a man" has many designates in its one meaning.

Russell discusses the object which is the subject of denoting. The epistemological distinction between *acquaintance* and *knowledge about* is defined by Russell as the distinction between the things we have presentations of, and the things we only reach by denoting phrases.

Russell's aim is to extract the deep logical form from the linguistic phrases which denote an object. These phrases contain the word "the" which involves uniqueness. For example, when we say "x was *the* father of Charles II" we assert not only that *x* had a certain relation to Charles II, but also that this relation is unique, namely, that nobody else had this relation. This relation is expressed by "*x* begat Charles II". But we have to add the assumption of uniqueness and we do this with the help of the sentence "If *y* begat Charles II, *y* is identical with *x*". The sentence "*x* was the father of Charles II" becomes equivalent with " *x* begat Charles II' and if *y* begat Charles II, *y* is identical with *x* is always true of *y*".

If we use ‚C(x)' for a propositional function in which *x* is a constituent and where *x*, as a variable, is wholly undetermined, then we can form the most primitive denoting phrases:

C(everything) means ‚C(*x*) is always true';
C(nothing) means ‚"C(*x)* is false" is always true';
C(something) means, it is false that"C(*x*) is false" is always true'.

According to this interpretation, we may have a statement about the father of Charles II with the logical form, C(the father of Charles II)' which implies:

It is not always false of *x* that "if *y* begat Charles II, *y* is identical with *x*" is always true of *y*.

This is expressed in common language by "Charles II had one father and no more". If this condition fails, *every* proposition of the form, C(the father of Charles II)' is false. Thus, every proposition of the form, C (the present King of France)' is false.

In Russell's view, his theory solves difficulties which are unavoidable if we regard denoting phrases which are grammatically correct as standing for objects. In Meinong's theory, "the present king of France" or "the round square" are supposed to denote genuine objects even if we accept that they do not subsist. Moreover, the chief objection is that this theory is confronted with the law of contradiction. Consequently, Russell asserts, we admit that the existent present King of France exists and also does not exist, that the round square is round and also not round, etc., but is intolerable to accept this. We have to prefer Russell's theory. All the phrases like "the round square" are denoting phrases which do not denote anything.

It is obvious that Russell's theory of descriptions affects Meinong's argument regarding the non-existent objects. Russell was confronted with a tension between his epistemological preference for a direct realism and his critique of Meinong's theory, but his own theory of description dissolved this tension. We know that in Meinong's view a proposition is meaningful if we have a direct relation with the object of the proposition and this means that the object has to exist even if we assert a proposition about its non-existence. Russell's theory about denoting concepts offers an alternative to this constraint and gives meaning to a proposition about an object even if the object doesn't exist. Russell's theory of descriptions made a difference which escapes us from this ontological trap. This difference in theory of denoting concepts is that the so-called object of the proposition mustn't be a constituent of it: "instead of containing an object (A), the proposition is now said to contain a denoting concept which, as it happens, does not denote anything" [Hylton 2005: 198][3]. The theory of descriptions goes further, eliminates the representational ingredients from the theory and find the solution in language and its logical structure.

Twardowski's critique against Russell

Twardowski claims that the definition of a truth presupposes a particular perspective on the essence of judgment. Therefore, Twardowski's critique is centred both on Russell's correspondence definition of truth and on multiple realization theory proposed in *The Problems of Philosophy*. Russell asserts that truth consists in the correspondence of a belief with a fact. But Russell rejects the theory that when we judge we have a two-term relation between our mind and a fact because this theory cannot explain the false judgments (if the fact doesn't exist we have nothing to judge).

Therefore, for Russell, judging is a relation which connects several terms. If Othello judges that Desdemona loves Cassio, we have four terms: Othello, Cassio, *love*, Desdemona. When we judge we connect these terms and give them a sense or a direction (we place them in an order). Let's explain this.

Russell claims that "the necessity of allowing for falsehood makes it impossible to regard belief as a relation of the mind to a single object, which could be said to be what is believed" [Russell 1980: 72]. If a belief would be regarded as a single object then we would have to be always true as in the case of acquaintance and the opposition of truth and falsehood won't be conceived. If we return to Russell's example about Othello who believes that Desdemona loves Cassio, then we have to assert that this belief cannot consist in a relation with a single object, "Desdemona's love for Cassio". If there were such a complex object, then the belief would be true. But there isn't such an object and, as a consequence, Othello cannot have a relation to such an object and his belief cannot consist in the relation between his mind and the so-called single object "Desdemona's love for Cassio" (or to a different object as "that Desdemona loves Cassio").

Russell claims that "the relation involved in judging or believing must, if falsehood is to be duly allowed for, be taken to be a relation between several terms, nor between two" [ibid.: 72]. This means that when Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio, he hasn't in mind a single object as "Desdemona's love for Cassio" or "that Desdemona loves Cassio", because this would require the independent subsistence of objective falsehoods and this theory have to be avoided. Gottlob Frege tried to follow this way, and he conceived these strange entities which are denoted by true and false propositions.

Therefore, in Russell's view, it is easier to explain falsehood if we conceive a judgment as a relation between a mind and several objects. In our case, when Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio we have four terms, namely, Othello, Desdemona, loving and Cassio, and a relation between Othello and all the other three terms together. Generally speaking, in Russell's terms, we'll admit this definition: "What is called belief or judgment is nothing but this relation of believing or judgment, which relates a mind to several things other than itself. An act of belief or of judgment is the

[3] Hylton distinguish between two stages in Russell's thought, the first, that of denoting concepts, when he try to find a way out form the difficulties of direct realism, and the next, when he abandoned the theory of denoting concepts and the theory of descriptions was ready.

occurrence between certain terms at some particular time, of the relation of believing or judging" [ibid.: 73].

In every act of judgment, there are a ***subject***, the mind which judges, and an ***object***, the terms concerning which are judged by the mind. These two, the subject and the object, are the constituents of the judgment. In our example, Othello is the subject, while the objects are Desdemona, loving and Cassio. The relation of judging also has a "sense" or a "direction" that put the objects in a certain order. These relations make the difference between judgments with the same constituents. Othello's judgment that Desdemona loves Cassio differs from Othello's judgment that Cassio loves Desdemona.

It is obvious that in Russell's view the act of judging has a relational nature because it puts into connection at least two terms, namely, the so-called constituents, into a complex whole. In our example, the cement of whole is the act of judging (or believing) as a relation between Othello, the subject, and objects, the three constituents named with terms "Desdemona", "loving" and "Cassio".

Russell's definition is the final result of this analysis: "Thus a belief is true when it corresponds to a certain associated complex, and false when it is not. Assuming, for the sake of definiteness, that the objects of the belief are two terms and a relation, the terms being put in a certain order by the 'sense' of the believing, then if the two terms in that order are united by the relation into a complex, the belief is true; if not, it is false" [ibid.: 74].

Twardowski rejects this theory. He argues that judging isn't a relation, but only something which occurs in our mind, more exactly, judging is an activity. In Twardowski's terms, the decision to take a trip is not a relation between the mind that decides and the taking of the trip. We can't explain the activity to judge which produce a judgment as a relation between this activity and its product[4].

Brandl asserts that Twardowski's distinction between actions and products could be analysed at two levels: an ontological level, if we think that actions and products are two kinds of entities, and a conceptual one, if we think that we have two ways of conceiving the same entity: "Help us to steer a middle course between psychologism and Platonism in logic and epistemology; it should support a non-relativistic conception of truth and it should provide a theory of linguistic meaning as a special kind of psycho-physical product" [Brandl 1998: 23].

In "On So-Called Relative Truths", Twardowski claims that proposition, not the sentences which express them, are truth bearers. Twardowski argues that a sentence like "It is raining now" expresses different judgments when is uttered on different occasion or by a different person and, for this reason, it may be true on one occasion and false on a different occasion. Proposition "Now it's raining at Castle Hill in Lvov" is restated as "At 12 noon, Central European time in March 1900 according to the Gregorian calendar it is raining in Lvov on the Castle Hill." In Twardowski's view, relativism which is implied by such examples could be refuted if we consider that propositions, not sentences, are truth bearers. Only sentences can be relatively true or false.

Is one of his courses at the Lviv University, Twardowski gave lectures about Russell's theory of truth and the correspondence theory of truth [Woleński 2016: 76]. In his view, Russell's theory is based on a peculiar and non-intuitive understanding of propositions as having real items as their constituents. Twardowski, as a follower of Brentano and Aristotle, suggests that truth consists in affirming or denying the existence of an object that exists or does not exist. We recognize here the correspondence theory of truth. But he understood the correspondence relation differently, especially if we take into account Russell's theory of truth and belief. Twardowski explains Russell's theory of correspondence in Aristotelian terms. The judgment has a relational and structural nature in the sense given by Aristotle: a true judgment is one which put together what is really together or put apart what is really apart. But Twardowski mentions also that the fact and the judgment have different structures because in a judgment we add something to the constituents of the fact[5].

Twardowski rejects Russell's theory idea of correspondence because it implies a strange relation between mind and reality, between our beliefs as representations and the object which is given to us. Twardowski returns to "what he calls idiogenic theory of Brentano according to which judgments consist in the acceptance or rejection of the object or objects intended

[4] Van der Schaar mention that even Twardowski acknowledges initially an object of judgment, that such a relation isn't defining for the judgment. The judgment has a content and this is constitutive for the relation mentioned and prior to the relation to the object [Van der Schaar 2015: 114].

[5] Simons considers that Twardowski made a unique comment regarding Russell's theory of truth: "Twardowski treats the correspondence theory principally from the point of view of Russell's Problems of Philosophy. Apart from showing his awareness of contemporary British philosophy and some grasp of English, he makes a perceptive comparison that I do not recall finding elsewhere. In a Russellian fact, a universal and one or more particulars are together in a certain way. In a judgment to this effect, the judgment and the constituents of the fact are together in another way (he is describing Russell's multiple theory of judging)" [Simons 2009: 11–12]

by a simple or complex idea, and where existential and so-called impersonal (e.g. meteorological) judgments clearly lack the subject-predicate form of the tradition" [Simmons 2009: 12].

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