

Arkadiusz Chrudzimski / Dariusz Łukasiewicz (Eds.)
Actions, Products, and Things
Brentano and Polish Philosophy

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Introduction

For a long time Franz Brentano has been widely perceived almost exclusively as the re-discoverer of intentionality and the founder of the continental phenomenology. It was only during the last 30 years that his immense importance for the development of analytic philosophy (and also the arbitrariness of the very division between analytic and continental philosophy) became clear. This volume is devoted to Brentano's influence on the Polish Analytic Philosophy better known under the name of: "Lvov-Warsaw School".

The founder of this school – Kazimierz Twardowski was himself a student of Brentano. He took over Brentano's intentionality thesis as well as many other elements of his philosophy (e.g. his non-propositional theory of judgement or the conviction that psychology is the only acceptable basis of any scientific philosophy), but at the same time, as early as in his doctoral dissertation *On the Content and Object of Presentations*, he severely criticised Brentano's central idea of an 'immanent object'.

The first three papers in this volume centre on this important Brentano-Twardowski connection. Dale Jacquette addresses the aforementioned critique by Twardowski and elucidates his important distinction between content and object. Maria van der Schaar analyses Twardowski's later development of the notion of content, which remained influenced by Husserl, and Arianna Betti argues that many aspects of Polish analytical philosophy could be better understood, if we focus rather on the traces of Bolzano's thought in Twardowski's philosophy.

The next two essays concern the philosophy of Stanisław Leśniewski, who is (beside Alfred Tarski and Jan Łukasiewicz) probably the most important Polish philosopher. Peter Simons traces important parallels between Brentano and Leśniewski, focusing mainly on reistic or particularist ideas which are relevant for the late Leśniewski, but beginning with his early critique of Brentano's non-propositional theory of judgement in "A Contribution to the Analysis of Existential Propositions". While Simons writes that "[t]he paper on existential propositions is [...], apart from some of its incidental features, a complete mess" (p. 87 in this volume), Arkadiusz Chrudzimski tries to concentrate on these incidental features and make some sense of them.

Various facets of the reistic approach are also investigated by Barry Smith. He focuses mainly on Tadeusz Kotarbiński but also outlines some systematic relations between several kinds of reism.

In the next paper Dariusz Łukasiewicz describes the evolution of Tadeusz Czeżowski's views concerning the concept of existence, which are closely connected with the Brentanian non-propositional theory of judgment.

If we were to choose the single most important and influential achievement of Polish philosophy, then the choice would most probably be the semantic definition of truth formulated by Alfred Tarski. In the last article of this volume Jan Woleński argues that Tarski's discovery of semantics may have been influenced also by his remotely Brentanian background.

First and foremost, we would like to thank all of the contributors who have made this collection possible. Our particular thanks go to Phillip Meadows for his valuable help with proofreading the English contributions. Most papers were written for this volume. Barry Smith's article "On the Phases of Reism" was previously published (in: J. Woleński (ed.), *Kotarbiński: Logic, Semantics and Ontology*, Dordrecht / Boston / London: Kluwer, pp. 137–184). We would like to thank *Springer Verlag* for the kind permission to reprint this material. The work of Arkadiusz Chrudzinski was supported by the Austrian *Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung* (FWF).

This book is dedicated to the memory of Artur Rojszczak (1968–2001).

The editors

Salzburg and Bydgoszcz
February 2006

Twardowski, Brentano's Dilemma, and the Content-Object Distinction

DALE JACQUETTE

1. The Brentano School

The students of Franz Brentano were independent-minded thinkers who found inspiration in Brentano's teachings for their own tangential philosophical pursuits. Kazimierz Twardowski, the leading and first member of the Polish branch of Brentano's school, is a prime example of the combination of partial loyalty to and dissent from certain of Brentano's doctrines by philosophers who nevertheless considered themselves to be true Brentanians.¹

Twardowski adopts Brentano's central thesis of intentionality as the distinguishing feature of mental phenomena.² At the same time, he is one of the outstanding ringleaders of the early breakaway group of descriptive psychologists within the Brentano circle who took exception to Brentano's doctrine of immanent intentionality.³ The theory of immanent intentionality or intentional in-existence expresses Brentano's insight that the intended objects of thought belong to and are contained within the thoughts by which they are intended. Intentional in-existence is not nonexistence, but rather existence *in* the psychological state by which an object is intended. Twardowski led his generation in advancing a distinction between the immanent content of thought and its mind-transcending intended objects that went beyond and in some ways contradicted Brentano's original concept. If Brentano's (1874) *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* set the agenda for turn-of-the-century scientific psychology and phenomenology, it was Twardowski's (1894) treatise, *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* (*On the Content and Object of Presentations*), that most dramatically freed Brentano's concept of intentionality from its implausible insupportable commitment to immanentism.⁴

2. *Psychological Investigations in Philosophy*

Contrary to some popular histories of the early Austrian phenomenological movement, Twardowski was not absolutely the first to challenge Brentano's theory of immanent intentionality.⁵ Indeed, in *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*, he acknowledges Alois Höfler and Alexius Meinong in their (1890) *Logik* as having first proposed distinguishing between the content and object of presentations, and he draws on prior arguments to the same conclusion by Benno Kerry.⁶

Twardowski nevertheless rightly deserves credit as having been the first to make the content-object distinction the focus of a full-length study that upholds a qualified contra-immanentist version of Brentano's intentionality thesis. Whatever implications have been attributed to Twardowski's study for logic, metaphysics and phenomenology, Twardowski himself evidently thought of his project as a contribution to psychology, as the subtitle of the work, *Eine psychologische Untersuchung* (*A Psychological Investigation*), often omitted from its references in subsequent philosophical literature, makes abundantly clear. It is only as a psychological investigation, moreover, that the conclusions of Twardowski's essay can be properly understood.⁷

Thus, when Twardowski turns to consider his famous four arguments for distinguishing between the immanent contents and thought-transcending objects of presentations, he does not merely appeal to the fact that it is in some way untenable to regard all intended objects as belonging immanently to the thoughts by which they are intended. Rather, he offers specific reasons from within a psychological, introspective or proto-phenomenological standpoint, providing inferences that can be reached internally concerning the direction of psychological acts with specific contents upon particular intended objects.⁸

The psychological perspective of Twardowski's investigations into the act-content-object distinction is especially important within the context of his relation to Brentano. It is not merely the fact that Brentano was a pioneer in scientific thinking about the nature of psychological phenomena, nor that he and his students were associated with a new approach to long-standing philosophical problems of psychology. The importance of psychology for Twardowski as a member of Brentano's school has more to do

with a deep commitment to the limitations of empiricism as the only justifiable methodology for discovering truths of fact. The emphasis on psychology in Brentano is combined with a particular attitude toward the possibilities of justifying commonsense beliefs that go beyond the limits of a strict philosophical empiricism. Whether in David Hume and George Berkeley's day or in Brentano's time or even today, it is the contents of thoughts with which the empiricist is most intimately and properly concerned as a source of truth concerning the nature of the world. What, if anything, exists beyond what occurs within experience, understood as a stream of immediate sense impressions, is a problem to whatever extent a philosophy aspires to a purely empirical metaphysics and epistemology. Empiricism is a methodology fundamentally based on the contents and limitations of experience as a psychological occurrence, and on what can and cannot be learned from the resources of perception.⁹

3. Scientific Philosophy and the Content-Object Distinction

Brentano's revolution in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in a philosophical milieu dominated by post-Kantian idealism and transcendentalism in the German-speaking world, fostered a return to Aristotle and Hume, in which the methods of natural science would be recognized also as the only proper methods of philosophy.¹⁰ Twardowski is in sympathy with Brentano's scientific orientation.¹¹ It is largely for this reason, in the interests of sustaining a genuinely scientific psychology, that Twardowski opposes Brentano's immanence theory of intentional in-existence. He draws a sharp distinction that Brentano was not prepared to recognize between the psychological act, its immanent content, and its thought-transcending intended object.¹²

Like others of Brentano's students, Twardowski came to believe that there was a tension in Brentano's scientific empiricism. Insofar as Brentano sought to make philosophy scientific, he was proposing to follow the patterns of inquiry that had been successful in the natural sciences. As a latter-day adherent, moreover, of Aristotle's ('naïve') realist metaphysics, Brentano ought to have acknowledged the commonsense existence of entities outside the mind as the intended objects of thoughts. Hence, he ought

to have avoided at all costs the proposition that intentionality relates psychological acts to immanently in-existent intended objects that belong to and exist only in the thoughts by which they are intended. As we know from the clear testimony of the *Psychologie*, Brentano did not recognize the conflict. Insofar as he was also deeply committed to a methodology of strict philosophical empiricism, he no doubt felt that, like Hume before him, the only responsible attitude to take toward the ontic status of intended objects is to consider them merely as they are presented to experience, as something found in thought as an internal part of immediate consciousness. To venture speculatively beyond the limits of phenomenal psychology would have been a betrayal of Brentano's Humean methodological empiricism in the interests of an Aristotelian metaphysical realism that is also, in a distinct, non-Humean way, empiricist.¹³

Such a deep conflict needed to be admitted and resolved. Scientific psychology and philosophy was drawn in two opposed directions. Its allegiance to natural science and common sense inclined it toward accepting the existence of intended objects as transcending the contents of thought. Twardowski eventually makes the argument in *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*, as other mutineers from the immanent intentionality thesis also came to see. On the other hand, the demands of a strict methodological empiricism implied that philosophy could not compromise with the purely experiential limits of what can be known to exist.

It is a historical puzzle that has long provoked Brentano scholars as to why Brentano did not see the difficulty posed by his dual devotion to both the metaphysics of Aristotle as a foundation for the methods of natural science and the strict empiricism that owes its origins more directly to eighteenth century proponents in the writings of John Locke, Hume, Berkeley, and J.S. Mill. The fact remains that it was left to his students, Twardowski chief among them, to recognize that what Brentano had referred to as the immanently intentional in-existence of the intended object was really more appropriately designated the thought's content [*Inhalt*], and that its object [*Gegenstand*] was generally something else again. The importance of Brentano's insight that all psychological occurrences were intentional, that presentations, judgments and emotions were the key to understanding the natural history of consciousness and the science of the activities of mind, made it important for Twardowski to disengage the intentionality thesis as

such from its unfortunate connection with the immanent intentionality thesis in Brentano's original exposition of empirical psychology.

As necessary as Twardowski's distinction between content and object may have been to the progress of scientific psychology and phenomenology, it remains part of Brentano's indelible legacy to have honestly set forth the implications of accepting the principles of a strictly empiricist philosophical methodology. The problem remains for the philosophy of science generally, and for the philosophy of psychology in particular when it aspires to be both faithfully empiricist and in harmony with the ontic expectations of the natural sciences as they are actually practiced. As reflected in Brentano's choices in *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, these opposing implications of Aristotelian empirical science, common sense, and a radical Humean and Berkeleyan philosophical empiricism could only play themselves out in later critical interaction on the part of thinkers like Höfler, Meinong, Kerry, and Twardowski. Each of these philosophers had both a strong empathy for Brentano's empiricism and sufficient distance from the direct authorship of his theory to be able to see its limitations. It was the capacity to understand what was essential to Brentano's scientific psychology and where its extreme philosophical empiricism had led the theory astray that induced the followers of Brentano in the decades after the publication of his masterwork to draw a sharp distinction where Brentano had conflated psychological content and intended object, in the greater interests of a new less strictly empiricist psychology that could take its rightful place among the other natural sciences.

4. Twardowski's Perception of his Task and Purpose

Whether Twardowski succeeds in demonstrating a distinction between thought content and intended object within a sufficiently robust philosophical empiricism is perhaps another question. It all rather depends on what we mean by and what we expect from a 'sufficiently robust philosophical empiricism', and on what, for that matter, we mean by and expect from the concept of empiricism.

There are many possibilities for specific formulations of empiricism in the marketplace of ideas, as there have been since ancient times. Brentano

throws in his lot with an extreme form that, like Hume, discourages him from thinking of reference and knowledge as extending beyond the contents of thought – in Hume’s terminology, the mind’s ideas and impressions – to the ‘external’ or ‘outside’ world.¹⁴ For Hume, this is the point where philosophical justification gives out and there is only commonsense psychological compulsion to explain the belief we have that something beyond thought may positively correspond with the contents of immediate sense experience.¹⁵

Since Brentano’s mission is to undertake the empiricist investigation of psychology itself, he does not quite have the same range of options as Hume. Yet he is faced with the same division between what can and cannot be empirically known. We are left to conjecture whether Twardowski in superimposing a distinction between content and object, however intuitive and attractive in other ways it may be, has lost sight of the deep commitment to a methodological empiricism that in many ways first motivated Brentano’s efforts to articulate the principles of a scientific psychology. We may then want to question whether Twardowski weakens the empiricist strand in Brentano’s original system to the point where it no longer supports the standards of epistemic justification, the cautious agnosticism concerning the existence of things that arguably are not directly experienced but only inferred from the contents of experience. The larger issue is not whether Twardowski’s distinction between content and object is true to Brentano’s vision of a scientific psychology, but whether philosophy can ever be adequately validated in its acceptance of the existence of objects outside the mind, and, in particular, outside what Brentano and Twardowski agree in referring to as the contents of presentations.

The only way to decide the question is to look in detail at the arguments Twardowski gives for distinguishing between the immanent content and thought-transcending intended objects of thoughts. We may see no reasonable alternative but to admit that the objects of most states of mind exist outside of thought, as when we think of the Eiffel Tower or the square root of 2. No matter how forceful we may find these considerations, if we are classical empiricists in the spirit of Hume, as Brentano certainly seems to be, then we will regard such considerations as no more than the psychological compulsion which Hume acknowledges is with us whenever we inquire into the existence of an external world that seems to be revealed

in sensation, but which he also and with equal conviction asserts drives us to accept beliefs for which we lack any adequate philosophical justification.

If science, including psychological science, is content to proceed without its epistemic credentials in good order, that in one sense is entirely its own business. We cannot expect philosophical empiricism of the most rigorous sort to which Hume and Brentano subscribe simply to fall in line with whatever practice prevails if there is not also a sound circumspect rationale for a science's metaphysical commitments. Thus, we must ask whether Twardowski provides good enough reasons for breaking down the barrier between mental content and intended objects that purportedly exist outside and independently of the mind. We must furthermore ask whether the arguments Twardowski gives are in keeping with roughly the kind of radical Humean philosophical empiricism that Brentano had hoped to weld together with the actual practice and commonsense metaphysics of the natural sciences, or whether Twardowski violates the requirements of the philosophical empiricist framework that Brentano seems to have wanted to preserve. If, finally, it turns out that Twardowski has bent or snapped the bounds of philosophical empiricism in the sense Brentano may have meant to endorse for the new science of psychology, then we may at last be in a position to ask whether Twardowski was right to do so. We shall then be asking in effect whether the specific kind of philosophical empiricism that Brentano seems to have inherited from Hume is supportable as a basis for natural science, or whether Twardowski inadvertently demonstrates that the empiricist tradition from Sextus to Hume, Berkeley, Thomas Reid, and others, finally breaks on the shoals of Brentano's empirical-scientific psychology.

Turning to Twardowski's four arguments, we first summarize each and then consider the categories to which they belong as compatible or incompatible with a radical philosophical empiricism, before assessing their strengths. It is worth remarking that Twardowski begins his discussion of the distinction between content and object with a straightforward appeal to commonsense considerations concerning thoughts about the external existence of things, or, to use Berkeley's expression, 'without the mind'.¹⁶ The appeal to pretheoretical 'naïve' realist commitments to the existence of intended objects outside of thought is a natural one to offer to an audience

that need not be assumed to have any prior commitment to Brentano's Humean brand of philosophical empiricism. It is nevertheless revealing when Twardowski opens his treatment of the topic with these anti-Humean sentiments:

That the content and object of a presentation are different from each other will hardly be denied when the object exists. If one says, 'The sun exists,' one obviously does not mean the content of one's presentation of the sun, but rather something which is totally different from this content.¹⁷

Twardowski contrasts this case with the intentionally very different situation in which the intended object of thought is ostensibly something that does not exist. What he has in mind here is evidently the prelude to a *Gegenstandstheorie* or object theory of the sort that Meinong and Ernst Mally among others were later to develop.¹⁸ The very fact that Twardowski is willing to countenance mental acts directed toward nonexistent intended objects indicates that he is in sympathy with Brentano's proto-phenomenological intensionalist and intentionalist standpoint in logic, semantics, and philosophy of mind. He lays the groundwork for such considerations in previous chapters of the text. He is notably not limiting the scope of his arguments to the kind of extensionalist presuppositions associated with Gottlob Frege's philosophy of language, or with Bertrand Russell's Fregean extensionalism, manifested after 1905 with the publication of his stridently anti-Meinongian essay 'On Denoting' (Russell 1905).¹⁹ Twardowski continues:

The case is not so simple for presentations whose objects *do not* exist. It is tempting to believe that in this case there is no real difference between content and object, but only a logical one; that in this case content and object are really one; and that this one entity appears sometimes as content, sometimes as object, because of the two points of view from which one can look at it.²⁰

Previously, on the preceding page, Twardowski had anticipated Meinong's categories of incomplete and impossible nonexistent intended objects (*unvollständige, unmögliche Gegenstände*), both types of which are treated phenomenologically as on a par with existent entities insofar as they can also properly stand as the intended objects of thought:

Hence nothing stands in the way of asserting that to every presentation there corresponds an object, whether the object exists or not... But there are many presentations whose objects do not exist, either because the objects combine contradictory determinations [*Bestimmungen*] and hence cannot exist, or because they simply do in fact not exist. Yet in all such cases the object is presented, so that one may speak of presentations whose objects do not exist, but not of presentations which are objectless, of presentations to which no object corresponds.²¹

What is significant in the first two paragraphs of Twardowski's Chapter 6, on 'The Difference Between Content and Object', is that the commonsense distinction between content and object and the non-immanence of existent entities like the sun plays no role in any of the four arguments by which Twardowski proposes to distinguish between the content and intended object of presentations. He introduces his topic to the reader by appealing to ordinary beliefs about the existence of things outside the mind, observing that in presentations involving existent objects the distinction between content and object is clearcut, whereas for presentations that ostensibly intend nonexistents more penetrating arguments are required. He states:

On the contrary, a brief consideration shows that the differences between content and object of a presentation which can be ascertained when the object exists also are present when the object does not exist. We shall list the most important of these differences and try to show for each one how it occurs for existing as well as nonexistent objects.²²

Twardowski thus aims at a fully general distinction between the content and object of every presentation. His target is not merely of presentations that intend existent objects, but of presentations generally, regardless of whether or not they happen to intend existent entities. In this, Twardowski may have tried to go too far, since there seem to be presentations that intend their own contents, as when in a self-referential presentation we think about the contents of the presentation itself, in which the contents and objects of thought are identical, and hence phenomenologically indistinguishable. Self-referential and self-applicational thoughts in a number of categories can be invoked to raise doubts about the full generality of Twardowski's effort to distinguish between the content and object of any and all presentations.²³

5. *Four Arguments for the Content-Object Distinction*

Twardowski's analysis of psychological presentations into act, content, and object, falls squarely in the ambit of Brentano's scientific descriptive psychology, in what Brentano later referred to as *Psychognosie* (*Psychognosy*) or phenomenology.²⁴ Twardowski's reasons for wanting to extend the distinction between content and object from existent to nonexistent intended objects are easy to understand, especially in retrospect with the needs of object theory in mind. If there is no distinction between content and object in the case of ostensibly nonexistent objects in mind, then there is no basis for advancing a theory of intended objects that is indifferent to their ontic status and that respects the independence of the determinations or so-being (*Sosein*) of an intended object from its being (*Sein*), as Meinong was later to maintain.²⁵ These anticipations of Meinong's object theory are most definitely out of keeping with Brentano's metaphysics and theory of meaning, since he never countenanced nonexistents as the intended objects of presentations, judgments, or emotions. As to whether Twardowski's distinction between content and object is consistent with Brentano's radically Humean philosophical empiricism now remains to be seen.

Twardowski's arguments in summary are these. He concludes that presentational content and intended object must always be distinct because:

(1) Otherwise it would not be possible for the same presentation content to present the object of a true as of a false judgment concerning the object's existence. Since it is possible for the object of a presentation not to exist, but the content of the presentation exists whether or not it presents an existent object, content and intended object cannot be the same; and since this is true of any judgment concerning the existence of any contingently existent or nonexistent object, the distinction holds generally for the content and object of any presentation.

(2) The properties of presentational content and intended object are different. For example, an impossible object cannot exist, but the content of the presentation of an impossible object evidently exists. The same is also true with respect to more ordinary or constitutive properties. Thus, in the case of a presentation of a golden mountain, the property of being golden and a mountain holds true of the intended object even if no golden mountain exists. However, the property does not hold true of the presentation's

content, which, again unlike the intended object, is something psychological, not made of gold and not a mountain [attributed to Benno Kerry].

(3) Thoughts can be directed toward the same intended object by means of different psychological contents, so that the object cannot possibly be identical to several distinct contents. Since there is no basis for concluding that the object is identical to one content rather than the other, it follows that the object must be distinct from any of the contents by which it is presented to thought.

(4) The contents of general thoughts are unitary things but can sometimes present a plurality of objects. This is true, for example, of such presentation contents as those related to the judgment that ‘All cats are mammals’. The content is one unitary entity, but it seems to intend all cats, a multiplicity of things, which consequently cannot be identical to the presentation’s content [also attributed to Kerry, and with reservations as to its legitimacy].²⁶

Twardowski does not accept argument (4), but considers it rather for the sake of completeness. He denies without argument that a plurality of objects falls under a unitary presentation content. He may have in mind an alternative account of the meaning of general terms and general contents as referring to or intending a totality or aggregate of things possessing the requisite combination of properties, rather than the individuals belonging to such collectivities.²⁷ The idea is undeveloped in Twardowski, but it is easy to see that if such a view were to be preferred it would obviate Kerry’s argument for the distinction between content and object. Twardowski concludes that the previous arguments (1)-(3) are sufficient to uphold the distinction between content and object, ‘even without this argument, the reasons listed above seem to show sufficiently that one has to distinguish between content and object of a presentation’.²⁸

As a general comment on the orientation of Twardowski’s four arguments, we may consider their relation to Brentano’s immanent intentionality intentional in-existence thesis. We ask whether each of the arguments would have any persuasive effect on someone like Brentano. Could Twardowski’s reasoning convince Brentano that even though intended objects are in some sense contained immanently within the thoughts by which they are intended there nevertheless remains a distinction between the contents and intended objects of thought? The question in other words is whether or

not Twardowski's four (or first three) arguments considered only in and of themselves are sufficient to prove that intended objects are mind-independent. There might then be a sharp distinction between thought contents and intended objects even if both contents and objects possess at most what Brentano refers to as immanently intentional in-existence. The run-down of Twardowski's arguments indicates that they can be readily interpreted as internal considerations offered from within the standpoint of Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis, in keeping with Twardowski's own description of his inquiry as a psychological investigation.

Argument (1) is supposed to distinguish between the content and intended object of a presentation regardless of whether or not the object exists. Let us suppose that an intended object does not exist, but that the thought content by means of which the object is intended exists as a feature of a real thought. Thus, content and object cannot be identical, even without supposing that intended objects are necessarily mind-independent. The trouble with this first argument of Twardowski's is that it is open to the complaint that the intended object exists in precisely the same sense as the content, and that according to Brentano's descriptive psychology it then has what Brentano expressly refers to as intentional in-existence. This is the same sense in which the content of thought exists, so that the argument does not go far if any distance at all toward proving that the content and object of a presentation must be distinct. There is nevertheless an essential difference, when, for example, we say that the intended object of a thought ostensibly about a golden mountain does not exist, that there is no golden mountain, but that the content of the thought exists. We mean that in real space and time there is no golden mountain, even if space and time should themselves turn out to be only something mental, but that the content of the thought exists at least in time. If this is the meaning and import of Twardowski's first argument, then as an internal argument aimed at proponents of Brentano's intentional in-existence thesis, it can at best demonstrate that some thought contents are distinct from some intended objects. The argument may nevertheless serve a vital function in opening up the theory of intentionality to the possibility of a more generalized distinction between content and object as the thin edge of a maximally dispersive wedge.

Argument (2) presses the distinction somewhat further by recognizing distinctions among the properties of contents and intended objects. This is

clear already in the first argument if we consider the property of existing in real time as a property of the thought content but not of the intended object in the case of a thought ostensibly about the golden mountain. Twardowski wants to extend the reasoning to include other kinds of properties as well. Limiting attention for the moment to the golden mountain as an intended object, the possession of distinguishing properties apparently goes in the opposite direction, where it seems intuitively more correct to say that the golden mountain is in truth both golden and a mountain even though the golden mountain does not exist. The content of a thought about the golden mountain as something existent, a psychological occurrence in real time, in contrast, is itself neither golden nor a mountain. If the distinction among the properties of the contents and objects of thoughts can be fully generalized, then Twardowski has directly in hand the basis for a distinction between the content and object of every presentation. We have already suggested that this might not be the case where content and object coincide, as in thoughts that intend their own contents, including some of the thoughts we must inevitably entertain in considering Twardowski's four arguments. We can safely conclude that if Brentano would not recognize a distinction between thought contents and intended objects on the grounds of Twardowski's second argument, then it is for a purely internal reason to which he and his followers who accept the doctrine of immanently intentional inexistence ought to have been more sensitive. It is the argument, namely, that a close phenomenological scrutiny by means of inner perception reveals that contents as a rule are different from intended objects because they do not typically share all of their properties in common. The argument works to the extent that it does as the kind of reasoning that ought to carry weight without simply assuming that intended objects exist outside of thought as mind-independent or mind-transcending, and therefore once again as a friendly internal refinement rather than external refutation of Brentano's thesis of intentionality as the distinctive mark of the psychological.

Argument (3) is in some ways the most interesting of Twardowski's proofs for the distinction between the contents and objects of thoughts. It also clearly involves an internal phenomenological kind of distinction that does not bluntly presuppose that intended objects transcend thought while thought contents are immanently contained within them. We can judge

merely by reflecting on the inner structures of various thoughts that the same object can be intended by different thoughts with different contents. Twardowski considers the example of thinking about the same city alternatively as the birthplace of Mozart and the site of the Roman Juvavum (Salzburg, Austria). These are evidently altogether different thought contents, and it could come as a kind of revelation to discover that thoughts with these contents as a matter of fact intend the same object. The situation would then be much the same as Frege says in his essay '*Über Sinn und Bedeutung*' with respect to thoughts about, or the coincident denotation of the proper names, 'the evening star' and 'the morning star' (Venus).²⁹ The generality for the distinction between content and object that Twardowski seeks is afforded in this argument by the fact that in principle it is always possible to have different thoughts with distinct contents directed upon the very same intended object. Thus, it does not matter if it should happen to be true that in the psychological life even of a great number of given thinkers there is an exact one-one correlation of specific thought contents and specific intended objects, since it is clear from a single case that it is always at least logically possible for there to be a many-one relation between contents and objects. Since, however, the contents in question are distinct, they must also be distinct from their correlated intended objects, so that contents and objects are once again distinguished. If we take note of the general exception for thoughts that are about their own contents, it appears that in normal cases Twardowski has an internal phenomenological reason in his third argument for distinguishing between the contents and objects of thoughts. The argument does not simply assume that intended objects are mind-independent or mind-transcending, or that they have some ontic status that places them beyond the immanent contents of presentations. It is instead the kind of justification for the distinction that ought to hold sway with Brentanians who accept some form of the doctrine of the immanent in-existence of intended objects to convince them that even so there is a distinction between the content of thought and its intended object.

Turning, finally, to argument (4), we find Twardowski offering a reason for the distinction that is equally internal or phenomenological. Introspectively, it is easy to understand why someone like Kerry would want to hold that a single thought content can be correlated with multiple intended objects, without supposing that intended objects exist outside the mind.

Twardowski seems to limit the argument to generalizations of the type found in quantificational logic, as when we think of ‘All cats’, thereby putatively intending a plurality of distinct individual animals. The same consideration ought to apply in any case to such evidently unitary thought contents as ‘the Karamazov brothers’ that seem intuitively to be related to a plurality of intended objects, to Dimitri and his siblings Ivan and Alexei (Alyosha); or, say to ‘the Allies’, intending thereby Great Britain, Russia, Canada, Australia, China, and the United States. Twardowski appears to include Kerry’s argument only grudgingly for the sake of completeness, while not accepting the inference that a single general content can be correlated in thought with many different intended objects. He does not offer a reason for doubting Kerry’s conclusion, however, which in some ways is more in line with Brentano’s later reism, although it is possible that he imagines in such cases that the intended object is really also a unitary set, totality or collectivity of things rather than the individuals belonging to its membership considered individually. Even if the argument were accepted, it does not afford a fully general distinction between the contents and objects of all presentations, but at most only of those general thoughts that happen to involve unitary contents directed toward a multiplicity of intended objects.³⁰

6. Content-Object and the Mind-Independence of Intended Objects

The moral of this review of Twardowski’s four arguments for the content-object distinction is, first, that none of the justifications he presents are external challenges that merely assume what the arguments are meant to prove, that the contents and objects of every psychological presentation are distinct. They are friendly amendments to Brentano’s intentionality thesis, or should be considered as such, as far as Brentanians committed to the immanently intentional in-existence of intended objects are concerned. Second, however, and perhaps equally important, is the fact that for this very reason, Twardowski’s arguments, contrary to what is often said about their implications for an object theory or ‘transcendental’ phenomenology (not in the later Husserlian sense), at their best do not actually establish the mind-independence of intended objects, but only their distinction from

thought contents. As far as any of Twardowski's four arguments go, it could still be the case that both contents and intended objects, admittedly as distinct from one another in all but exceptional self-referential or self-applicational cases, are alike immanently in-existent, existing only within or contained as distinct parts of particular psychological presentations. This is a remarkable limitation of which Twardowski himself seems completely unaware. For, in the first chapter of his work, 'Act, Content, and Object of the Presentation', he declares:

It is one of the best known positions of psychology, hardly contested by anyone, that every mental phenomenon intends an immanent object. The existence of such a relation is a characteristic feature of mental phenomena which are by means of it distinguished from the physical phenomena...But if a confusion between a mental act and its content is thus prevented, an ambiguity – pointed out by Höfler – still remains to be overcome. After having discussed the characteristic relation of mental phenomena to a content, he continues: "(1). What we called 'content of the presentation and the judgment' lies just as much completely within the subject as the act of presentation and of judgment itself. (2) The words 'thing' and 'object' are used in two senses: on the one for that *independently existing* entity...at which our presentation and judgment aim, 'picture' of that real entity which *exists 'in'* us. This quasi-picture (more accurate: sign) is identical with the content mentioned under (1). In distinction to the thing or object, which is assumed to be independent of thinking, one also calls the content of a presentation and judgment (similarly: of a feeling and willing) the '*immanent or intentional* object' of these mental phenomena [*Logik*, paragraph 6]."³¹

The tribute to Brentano in the first sentences of the paragraph is unmistakable. Twardowski does not mention Brentano by name in the body of the text, but only in the accompanying footnote, perhaps out of respect for a teacher whose central contribution to descriptive philosophical psychology he is soon to criticize. The repeatedly emphasized contrast between immanent content of thought on the one hand, and the thought's intended object on the other, makes it clear in Höfler as in Twardowski that the goal of a demonstrated distinction between content and object is to set off intended objects as other than immanent, indicating that they are to be understood as non-immanent or thought- or mind-transcending. This is clear also when Twardowski continues, after the completion of his quotation from Höfler above: 'One has to distinguish, accordingly, between the object at which