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KASIMIERZ TWARDOWSKI'S ANALYSIS OF THINKING AND RATIONALISM

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Abstract

In this article, the author considers Kazimierz Twardowski's conception of thinking and his rationalism. The author argues that rationalism of Kazimierz Twardowski is atypical, because it is a combination of inductive and deductive methods of cognition and acquisition of knowledge. Beside this, his rationalism has constructive tendencies. Kazimierz Twardowski was an analytic philosopher, who paid big attention to the process of thinking and analyzed the forms of thinking, i.e. notions and judgments. Polish philosopher and the founder of Lviv-Warsaw School was convinced that a specialist in philosophy in order to do good philosophy must understand the specificity of thinking process, its forms and how to construct them. Therefore psychology of thinking is very important for philosopher, because it can help to understand the nature of thinking. Beside psychology of thinking, logic is also very important tool for doing philosophy. Logic is very helpful for philosopher, who takes care about the strictness and clearness of thinking, about formation of strict and clear judgments. Logical analysis of notions and judgments provides strong protection against linguistic mistakes which are connected with linguistic inaccuracy and obscurity.

Key words: *Kazimierz Twardowski, analysis, rationalism, thinking, judgment.*

Аналіз мислення Казимира Твардовського та його раціоналізм

Анотація

Автор статті розглядає концепцію мислення польського філософа та засновника Львівсько-Варшавської школи Казимира Твардовського й аналізує його раціоналізм. Оскільки Казимир Твардовський був аналітичним філософом, то не випадково, що він багато праць присвятив мисленню, його зв'язку з мовою і тому, як досягти чіткості й точності у вираженні філософських думок — саме вони є ознакою науковості філософського мислення. Тому для філософа, який хоче створити наукову філософію важливі психологія мислення та логіка. Автор також розкриває особливості раціоналізму Казимира Твардовського. Раціоналізм польського філософа можна назвати нетиповим, оскільки у ньому поєднується індуктивний та дедуктивний методи, а також присутні конструктивістські тенденції.

Ключові слова: *Казимир Твардовський, аналіз, раціоналізм, мислення, судження.*

Introduction

In Europe, Ancient Greek philosophy became the basis for the majority of sciences; it was there that the transition from myth to logos took place. The ancient Greeks discovered the ability of a human being to express him or herself reasonably and, in fact, through rational argumentation, the strength of which lies in provability and a detailed analysis of concepts, as Socrates¹ did. European philosophy and science are based on this discursive and logical thinking, which is aimed at knowing the truth.

Since such thinking is important for European civilization, or, as Edmund Husserl puts it, for “European humanity”, it is necessary to find out what this thinking is, what its basic characteristics are, what its essence is, what its functions and forms are, and what it matters for human existence². These are the issues which Kazimierz Twardowski, a Polish philosopher, scholar, and the founder of Lviv-Warsaw School, tries to consider in a number of his works, which will be analyzed in this article.

In order to answer these questions, Kazimierz Twardowski refers to the psychological analysis of thinking, because psychology is able to directly “look into the eyes of the thinking process” [Twardowski 2013a: 27].

What is thinking?

Thinking is a psychological process. According to Kazimierz Twardowski, we can understand thinking in two ways, namely, broadly and narrowly. A broad understanding of thinking presupposes that it contains all the acts of mental life. Such acts of mental life include not only ideas, images, concepts and judgments, but also will, desires, wants and emotions. That is, a broad definition of thinking includes in its content not only mental products (thoughts), but also emotional and volitional states. Descartes was one of those who understood thinking in such a broad way³.

The narrow understanding of thinking is that we can reduce it to the development of thoughts, to purely mental formations that can break away from the emotional and volitional sphere, the sphere of the senses, and become abstract⁴. For Kazimierz Twardowski, abstract thinking is “the kind of thinking which can only be carried out with the use of speech. This meaning is used to state that man (as opposed to animals) is a thinking entity” [Twardowski 2014e:134]. A man speaks through language, and language for Twardowski is an instrument of thinking: “Human language is not a system of conventional signs, and above all it is not only an external manifestation of thinking,

¹ Kazimierz Twardowski was often compared to Socrates. For example, his student and representative of Lviv-Warsaw School Izydora Dąmbska states that: “Twardowski had the ideal of an ancient sage in front of him, his representative figure was Socrates. And he himself had something from Socrates, both in the desire to teach, and in the postulates of linguistic accuracy, together with the struggle against relativism...” [Dąmbska 1969: 886]. And Kazimierz Twardowski in his opening lecture at the University of Lviv on November 15, 1895, noted that he was “inspired by Socrates” [Twardowski 2014a: 36]

² This is especially important in our time of “information explosion”, the spread of political populism and fake information that affect the decisions of citizens and, accordingly, their behavior. The use of information technology is aimed at weakening a person’s ability to critically assess the situation for distinguishing the truth from falsehood; distinguishing the truth and falsehood and also criticism are the goals of human discursive and logical thinking.

³ Descartes puts: “But what therefore am I? A thinking thing. What is that? I mean a thing that doubts, that understands, that affirms, that denies, that wishes, to do this and does not wish to do that, and also that imagines and perceives by the senses” [Descartes 2008: 20].

⁴ Here we can see that psycho-volitional and psycho-emotional states do not belong to thinking, apart from the case when they are accompanied by verbalized thought, which means that a person can express their intentions, desires and emotions through language, and if they can speak about them, then they can think about them in a detached, abstract way. Using the ability to abstract from specific volitional and emotional states, a person creates abstract concepts of these volitional and emotional states, such as will, sadness, joy etc., which are no longer tied to the states of specific individuals.

Therefore, Twardowski stresses that abstract thinking is thinking that is studied by the psychology of thinking, and not just the thinking that we understand very broadly. Interestingly, Kazimierz Twardowski argues that abstract thinking is based on concrete, i.e. broadly understood thinking, and this unity of the two types of thinking is explored by the psychology of thinking: “Since abstract thinking is based on the concrete one and it is constantly intertwined with it, the psychology of thinking must necessarily take into account both concrete and abstract thinking; thus, its subject is thinking in more general, psychological sense” [Twardowski 2014e: 134].

but its tool by which we can think abstractly; thinking, we think in words, and therefore in language” [Twardowski 1999a: 258]. Therefore, as Anna Brożek argues, Kazimierz Twardowski, asserting the close connection between language and thinking, held the view that the one who speaks clearly also thinks clearly, and this, in turn, means that “practice in clear speech (and writing) is, in a sense, a means of forcing oneself to clarity of thought”⁵ [Brożek 2020: 38].

Psychology of thinking deals with the actual, everyday thinking of people who can imagine what does not exist. Such everyday thinking is vague and can contain fantastic, erroneous and contradictory representations. Instead, logic explores not the process of thinking, in which various mental phenomena joined by certain connections arise, but the product of thinking, namely, thought, that is, “not a mental function but rather its product” [Twardowski 2014e: 135]. Kazimierz Twardowski distinguishes the functions of thinking on its products. Among the functions of thinking he distinguishes such mental acts as imagination, representation and judgment, and its product in the most general sense is thought, as well as imagination or visual image, concept or invisible representation and judgment.

Psychology of thinking describes the process of thinking, classifies the phenomena of thinking, and formulates certain laws of thinking, which govern the phenomena of thinking. For Kazimierz Twardowski, psychology is an empirical science, along with other empirical sciences (chemistry, biology, etc.), which, based on empirical data and experience, summarizes them to formulate the laws that govern the phenomena of thinking. Therefore, as the founder of the Lviv-Warsaw School stated, “there is no guarantee that future experience will not influence a change of generalizations derived from previous experience, generalizations are not certain in the

strict sense of the word; they are instead more or less, or sometimes even extremely probable” [Twardowski 2014e: 134]. Generalizations based on empirical data and experiments cannot claim complete certainty. This certainty comes from mathematics, which is not an empirical or experimental science; mathematics is an a priori, i.e. pre-empirical science. Its methods are deduction and analysis of concepts that help it to explore abstract objects and the relationships between them; they do not depend on empirical facts and experience. Therefore, mathematical generalizations have complete certainty. This is the nature of logic: its conclusions are a priori, necessary and clear, not based on experience or facts, which means that logic has nothing to do with the empirical psychology of thinking [ibid.: 135].

It has already been said that thought is closely connected with language, and we can organize thoughts and make judgments or suppositions based on it; with the help of language we judge the state of things, what exists and what does not, what is true and what is false, and so on. Therefore, the subject of logic is judgments that can be either true or false. Judgments are detached from the mental functions of thinking, but still dependent on the mind: “Although ultimately suppositions originate from the mental act, or from the mental function of thinking, they can be analyzed in isolation from this function; what is more, it is possible to construct judgments which have never been issued” [ibid.: 136]. As we can see, judgment is a specific form of thinking which is not purely mental, that is, subjective.

Kazimierz Twardowski also draws attention to the constructivist aspect of thinking. In view of logic, judgment is considered not as a psychological product of an individual, but its “typical forms, which can be detected in judgment issued by various entities, or artificially constructed” [ibid.: 136].

⁵ Due to a close connection between thought and language, we can suggest that the task of philosophy as a science is to clarify the meaning of our concepts through which we understand the world and ourselves in this world, as well as to clarify the mechanisms of creating our representations of the world and reality. This task is set by analytical philosophy, so Kazimierz Twardowski was one of the first analytical philosophers in Eastern Europe, who believed that the logical and semantic analysis of our philosophical concepts and representations leads to a clearer and more rigorous formulation of philosophical judgments. By the way, Kazimierz Twardowski has achieved great clarity in presenting his views, so the texts of his works are clear, understandable and well-structured. I can confirm this as the translator of Kazimierz Twardowski's works into Ukrainian.

A person can present something or someone, that is, make them presented in thinking. What happens in the mind during such omnipresence is called imagination. Man realizes either what he or she imagines really exists or exists only in his or her mind. And this function of thinking, which is to assess the existence or non-existence of something or someone, Kazimierz Twardowski calls “judging” [ibid.: 137].

Kazimierz Twardowski considers two rules to be the main psychological laws of thinking:

“1. Any of our acts of presentation and judging concerns an object (somebody or something).

2. A necessary condition for issuing a judgment on an object by us is to present this object to ourselves” [ibid.: 137].

There may be a situation when we do not issue a judgment, but have a certain idea of the object, but, as Kazimierz Twardowski says, there can never be a situation of judging without an idea of a certain object. This object is called “being”, “existence”. Kazimierz Twardowski divides ideas into images and concepts, which are based on representations.

Mistakes of thinking and how to eliminate them

Human thinking is not perfect and therefore can be fallacious. Based on the analysis of the texts of Kazimierz Twardowski’s lectures, namely, “On Prejudice” (March 18th, 1906, Lviv University) [Twardowski 2014b], “Independence of Thinking” (November 4th, 1906, Lviv University) [Twardowski 2014c], “On Mistakes of Thinking” (1900) [Twardowski 2014d], it can be stated that the founder of Lviv-Warsaw School singled out external and internal factors that lead to mistakes in thinking, thus making it fallacious.

Kazimierz Twardowski considers the influence of the environment in which a person lives to be external factors, this usually including society, family, upbringing, reading books, authorities followed by people, etc. And the internal factors comprehend the mental tendency of a man to make hasty generalizations, to hypostatize one’s beliefs, i.e. to turn them into a system of dogmas; there is also the influence of emotional and volitional sphere of the psyche on thinking, lack of attention, i.e. distraction, use of

ambiguous words, and also words the meaning of which is unknown or little known to us, inability to apply logical analysis due to lack of logical education, tendency to adhere to prejudices, i.e. to have such unfounded beliefs, which we adhere to before making any analysis and insight into the essence of the case. We are going to analyze these factors in more detail.

Kazimierz Twardowski states that erroneousness does not depend on our will, whether we recognize the existence of the object or not. We are guided by the object of representation or the concept of this object, or we are convinced of the existence or non-existence of the object from other judgments. It would be very good if the judgments were always fixed in the objects that exist, then people would not be wrong. But this is not the case. We very often make judgments based on vague, unclear ideas. Therefore, it is better to refrain from such judgments than to make them. But why do we still make such judgments? Because people have a great desire to judge; they just can’t help it. This desire to judge must be curbed. According to Kazimierz Twardowski, this can be done through scientific work, which would combine this desire to judge with the highest patience, which will deter a person from such vague judgments. This is the first issue.

And secondly, according to Kazimierz Twardowski, our errors in thinking also arise from the imperfection of our memory, the tendency to hasty generalizations, when people combine different phenomena with their own representations about them. For example, someone blushed and people think that this someone is insincere or deceiving. Another example of a hasty generalization: the appearance of a comet in the sky means that war will soon begin.

These combinations of representations lead to erroneous judgments. Also, a person is very often not able to change views on things, because in their thinking there is a very close connection between ideas and judgments; this is what is called the “power of the habit of judging” something or someone. Critical guidance on one’s own views and perceptions can be useful here, it makes it possible to realize the lack of arguments and facts

in favor of such judgments.

Another mistake of thinking is the desire of a human to simplify things, to make them unambiguous, that is, not to think and analyze for a long time; this error of thinking is called “economy of thinking” when we want to use one concept or some law to cover the largest possible class of phenomena and objects.

Inattention, distraction, inability to concentrate, also cause errors in thinking. When I am distracted, I do not notice the details. For example, I am a student who is present at the lecture, but I do not understand the material of the lecture, the relationship of ideas expressed by the lecturer. I am, in fact, physically present, but mentally absent, at the lecture. After the lecture is over, I will not be able to say what was said at the lecture, what conclusions can be drawn from the material that was presented by the teacher after this lecture. In short, I do not have a clear idea of the lecture, so I can not give a true judgment of this lecture. If I kept a synopsis during the lecture, i.e. wrote down the main points of what the teacher said, I would be able to give judgments after the lecture about the content of the lecture and what I learned from it: new knowledge, some new ideas and so on. I was constantly distracted and ignored what the lecturer was saying. After the lecture, I had only a fragmentary, approximate, idea of the lecture and such will be the judgment about it. Due to inattention and distraction, we create vague and fragmentary representations and so are our judgments based on them.

How can these errors of thought be corrected? What does one need to do for this? In his lecture “On Prejudice”, Kazimierz Twardowski calls for teaching people to think independently, critically and with proof of whether their beliefs are justified or not. Therefore, only science and education can protect us from blind prejudices, unjustified beliefs and convictions ensuring the development of the individual and society [Twardowski 2014b]. In the lecture “Independence of Thinking” [Twardowski 2014c] the Polish philosopher considers the possibility of independent thinking. Independent of whom and what? Environment, family traditions, friends, company, upbringing, reading books, etc. We cannot completely get rid of the burden of these influences on the

formation of our thoughts. But there is another kind of dependence of our thinking, a more subtle one, and this is language. The influence of language on our thinking has a higher influence, that is, the influence that makes our mind work. The direction of our thinking, our thoughts and the words we use to express our thoughts are determined by language. Words become things. Cognition is conditioned by words: words denote things, but they are not things themselves. Worldview consists of words that have become certain symbols, and we believe in these symbols, even if they are empty.

Our thinking and the course of our thoughts depend on our emotions and the temperament that governs them. One can give us arguments, prove something, but we do not hear anyone because we are guided by emotions.

Due to all these dependencies and conditions of thoughts and thinking itself, we can say that the independence of thought and thinking is ideal, unattainable, it is impossible to realize. However, there is a science that can help us realize this ideal, this independence of thinking and thought. And this is logic. An opinion is worth something only if it is true and logically correct. And this is exactly the opinion that is independent. The sciences must be based on logic, which is a tool that helps to formulate and make true judgments.

In his series of lectures “On the Mistakes of Thinking” [Twardowski 2014d], Twardowski notes that errors concern only judgments. Judgment is true if it corresponds to reality, i.e. the current state of affairs; if it does not correspond to reality, then it is wrong. But there is one nuance, which is, it is necessary to distinguish between erroneous judgment and ignorance. If I do not know something, but I am talking about it, then I am not wrong. My judgments of what I do not know are not judgments in the strict sense of the word. I am just making up an answer, but I am not judging what I do not know. Therefore, lack of judgment is not a mistake.

Thus, we can classify the errors of thinking, according to Kazimierz Twardowski, as follows: 1) errors that arise on the basis of imperfections of sensory perception; 2) errors that arise on the basis of the imperfection of our memory, when we reproduce something with its help the idea

is incomplete, partial; when we “extract” from our memory the ideas that are already vague, “erased”; 3) errors that arise on the basis of hasty generalizations, which leads to the simplification of things; 4) errors that arise on the basis of the influence of emotions on our thinking; 5) errors that occur on the basis of inattention and distraction.

Specific rationalism of Kasimierz Twardowski

Kasimierz Twardowski's devotion to clear and distinct thinking is well-known, and we have already written about this above. The founder of Lviv-Warsaw School demanded to think clearly and distinctly, and accordingly, demanded to speak also clearly and distinctly, because “the author who is unable to express his thoughts clearly also does not know how to think clearly, that his thoughts therefore do not merit the effort we exert to desypher them” [Twardowski 1999a: 259]. In addition, Kasimierz Twardowski constantly reminded of the importance of logic⁶ not only for philosophical research, but also for everyday life: “The lack of logical training not only reduces, from a theoretical point of view, the intellectual level, but also brings ignorance and inaccuracy into the practical application of our thoughts. And that practical application is our whole life” [Twardowski 1927a: 193]. According to Kasimierz Twardowski, mental activity is the basis of cognition; human cognition cannot be based on experience, because experience can only be a stimulus to mental cognition: “The so-called experience gives us to some extent only an impetus to mental activity, which is carried out in accordance with the laws, the truth of which no experience tells us, but which we believe ... by virtue of our instinct of reason” [Twardowski

1992: 308]. If its focus is constantly on reason, thinking, and logic, which helps to formulate clear and unambiguous judgments (true), then this is the basis for recognizing it as a representative of rationalism.

Kasimierz Twardowski was a rationalist and advocated in some way modified/atypical rationalism, which differs from classical rationalism⁷. We can formulate these features of Kazimierz Twardowski's modified/atypical rationalism. These features are as follows:

1) use in philosophical and scientific research, both deduction and induction; and he calls this method inductive-deductive: “... laws are derived only by induction... When induction, by deriving certain laws, fulfills its task, deduction will begin to draw certain conclusions from these laws, which may be able to state something in the problem under consideration” [Twardowski 2014f: 190]. That is, we can use both induction and deduction to establish the truth, we just need to know when they can be justified and at what stages of the study;

2) denial that the experience can be a reliable source of knowledge; on the contrary, it contains uncertain and variable statements, which can be confirmed by more definite and less variable ones, which in turn will require even more definite and even less variable ones, and thus we will not be able to achieve definitive and stable knowledge in the field of experience. This changeability, uncertainty and variability in the field of experience can be overcome through mental activity. But, as we know, Kasimierz Twardowski, as well as his teacher Franz Brentano, adhered to the methodological unity, that is, that the method of studying the natural sciences and humanities, in particular philosophy, is the same: inductive. And induction is a method of natural sciences that

⁶ Kasimierz Twardowski was not specially engaged in logical research and therefore was not a logician in the strict sense of the word. He was more interested in psychology and its relation to philosophy and other philosophical sciences; he paid more attention to the discussions between psychologists and anti-psychologists, which was quite popular in the 19th century. In addition, he believed that logic should deal with judgments, and for him judgments are mental phenomena, as well as abstract thinking. And, of course, we should not forget his work “Symbolomania and Pragmatophobia” [Twardowski 1999b], in which he opposes the overuse of symbolic language in mathematical logic, because it leads to the loss of meanings and contents, to substitution of the subject of research: instead of exploring real things and their essence, one is engaged in an insignificant analysis of meaningless symbols for which there are no things; things are replaced by empty symbols.

⁷ There are four features of classical rationalism: 1) acceptance of the existence of innate ideas; 2) emphasis on certainty in cognition itself by reason and reasoning, and, accordingly, 3) a prioritization of knowledge (rejection of experience as a source of knowledge); 4) recognition of the principle of sufficient reason [see Dyck n.d.]

is based on experience. “I have tried to prove that there is no such striking contradiction between the natural sciences and the philosophical sciences; on the contrary, one branch of philosophy, namely metaphysics, deals with the same questions as the rest of the philosophical sciences and the natural sciences. I also tried to prove that the methods used by the philosophical sciences together with metaphysics do not differ from those used for the study of nature” [Twardowski 2014a: 41-42]. The use of induction in rationalism is problematic, because induction is incomplete and therefore with its help it is possible to achieve only probable knowledge, and not definitively certain. Kazimierz Twardowski solves this problem of induction as follows: we can consider inductive conclusions valid until they are refuted by other conclusions on the basis of other experiences that will contradict the previous ones. Therefore, a scientist should not be a dogmatist, but critical of inductive conclusions;

3) recognition that there are “laws of reason” that “play a greater role than the objects themselves” [Twardowski 1992: 307]; this means that Twardowski prefers reason to experience in empirical research. Experience can only give us an impetus to “mental activity”, but not replace it. Mental activity is based on laws, “the truth of which no experience tells us, but which we believe, again, by virtue of our instinct of reason” [ibid.: 307-308].

The concept of “instinct of reason” is new to rationalism, because rationalism rejects everything instinctive as irrational, changeable, fluctuating and unconscious, which is impossible to understand. But Kazimierz Twardowski uses this concept to indicate that mind contains some irresistible belief, for example, that all phenomena have their causes; and this belief is innate and goes beyond any experience. One can even assume that the “instinct of reason” is equivalent to obviousness or certainty (Descartes), when a person, bypassing experience, can assert a priori truth; or to intuition (Husserl), with which you can directly capture the essence of things. Kazimierz Twardowski acknowledges the existence of “laws of reason”, which are due to one of our feelings or another often deceptive and lead us to such and not other assumptions about the causes

of our feelings, generally telling us to look for the causes of our intellectual impressions in the outside world; these laws of reason are the true basis of our knowledge” [ibid.: 313];

4) empirical and constructive tendencies of Kazimierz Twardowski’s studies in history of philosophy. The founder of Lviv-Warsaw School states that an empirical-constructive method “tries to obtain the general laws of philosophy from the very historical facts” [Twardowski 1927b: 229]. He thus interprets one of the works of his teacher Franz Brentano “The Four Phases of Philosophy and Its Current States” to explain the essence of this method [Brentano 1998]. In other words, it is about inductive or, one might even say, “field work” of the history of philosophy, that goes beyond speculative historical and philosophical stereotypes, which are very often taken as a real and objective historical and philosophical process. If we extend this method to science and philosophy, the mind that uses it can make a holistic picture of their development and the laws to which they are subject, based on the historical facts of the formation of science and philosophy. Kazimierz Twardowski stressed, that this is a matter of the future, because this method is new and “too early” to convince scientists of its effectiveness [ibid.: 230]. Logic can also use a constructive method to make judgments that have never been made before. This is possible because thinking can be detached from its psychological function of making judgments. Then our mind constructs such types of judgments that have not yet been issued and which are detached from the psychological function of making judgments, that is, constructed judgments are abstract ones.

Conclusion

Philosopher and scholar Kazimierz Twardowski deals with thinking, which consists in the development of thought from indistinct to clear by providing clear and precise meanings to words and concepts. Such thinking is a temporal, mental phenomenon that can be improved through logical and linguistic analysis of concepts and judgments that are forms of thinking. The task of thinking, according to Kazimierz Twardowski, is to form concepts and make true judgments. Systematic analytical work and logical training

of the mind develop thinking and allow us to express yourself accurately (clearly) and direct it to the truth. For Kazimierz Twardowski, the thinking subject is a source of clear thinking, but provided that he or she practices thinking, honing it with logical and linguistic analysis and, thus, gradually eliminating errors, ambiguities, contradictions, doubts, that is, everything that brings confusion to it; this is the way one can gradually become rational. To be a rational means to think clearly and therefore clearly express thoughts; one thinks with the help of the reason, and expresses their thoughts through language.

Kazimierz Twardowski can be considered a representative of (atypical) rationalism, which uses a combination of inductive and deductive methods of cognition and acquisition of knowledge, allows the construction of knowledge based on inductive research and the formulation of certain laws, much attention here is paid to psychology of thinking (even abstract thinking is based on concrete thinking) and judgment in order to identify those possibilities of thinking, the implementation of which allows you to know the truth.

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