

Moral Aspects of Instruction and Education in the Lvov-Warsaw School

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Abstract: This article presents the educational and culture-forming impact of the Lvov-Warsaw School as a specific scientific and educational environment focused not only on shaping its scientific and research programme, but also on the moral aspects of upbringing and education. At the School, special attention was given to the precision of expression by emphasizing the postulate of clarity in thought and word, logical correctness, and methods of doing science in an objective, impartial, reliable and critical manner. Tolerance and freedom were two key principles respected by members of the School in conducting and publishing scientific research. The most important element of the relationship between the founder of the Lvov-Warsaw School, Kazimierz Twardowski, and his students was the teacher's charisma combined with camaraderie, which resulted in the pedagogical success of both the founder of the School and his students. However, Twardowski did not impose any specific philosophical doctrine on his pupils; rather, he taught them, above all, clear and critical thinking. This specific philosophical minimalism became an essential element of the concept of philosophy practised in his school.

Key words: Lvov-Warsaw School, criticism in science, tolerance and freedom in science, dignity of the university

1. Introduction

The Lvov-Warsaw School of Philosophy was founded on 15 November 1895, when Kazimierz Twardowski became associate professor of philosophy at Jan Kazimierz University in Lvov. The School's development spanned several stages. The initial period, which lasted about seven years, ended with the defence of the first doctoral theses written under Twardowski's supervision, and led to the formation of a group of his academic collaborators. The second period, spanning from 1916 to 1918, was marked by the formation of the views and interests of Twardowski's students. The third period, from 1918 to 1930, saw the crystallization of

the School's views. At that time, a logical school was founded in Warsaw, formed by students mentored by Twardowski, and the name "Lvov-Warsaw Philosophical School" came into common use. The School flourished in the 1930s, when it achieved its major academic successes and gained worldwide reputation, primarily thanks to the Warsaw School of Logic. The Lvov period may be seen as a kind of prelude to the mature stage of the Lvov-Warsaw School of Philosophy. A characteristic feature of the School was the emphasis it placed on academic collaboration, the expansion of international contacts, the publication of its own professional journals, and the creation of non-university academic institutions. Twardowski devoted a lot of time and attention to his students, and his goal was to educate and promote competent philosophers. He himself represented a moral attitude towards philosophy and passed it on to his disciples, convinced that philosophy was a true school of character in that it forged important moral ideals. The most important element of Twardowski's relationship with his students was the charisma of the teacher combined with camaraderie, which resulted in the pedagogical success of both the founder of the Lvov-Warsaw School and his students. Twardowski, however, did not impose any specific philosophical doctrine on his pupils; first of all, he taught them clear and critical thinking. This peculiar philosophical minimalism became an essential element of the concept of philosophy practised in his School.

The educational and cultural impact of the Lvov-Warsaw School as an academic and educational community was based not only on the development of a scientific and research programme, but also on the moral aspects of instruction and education. The School attached particular importance to the precision of expression by emphasizing the postulate of clarity of thought and language, logical correctness, and methods of doing science in an objective, impartial, reliable and critical manner. A very important principle upheld in the Lvov-Warsaw School was freedom in conducting scientific research and the publication of findings.

Kazimierz Twardowski and his students, including Tadeusz Kotarbiński, Tadeusz Czeżowski, Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, among others, proposed a number of improvements and solutions to enhance the efficiency of instruction and successfully incorporated them into academic practice. Many representatives of the Lvov-Warsaw School performed important organizational functions in higher education, and three of them were university vice-chancellors. An important goal of their activities was to firmly establish the belief that academic schools are to create

a tradition of disseminating general knowledge at a higher level, and that the curriculum of studies in the humanities should include a mandatory course in the history of philosophy and logic.¹ In the Lvov-Warsaw School, the issues of instruction and education were closely linked to the personality of the academic teacher, and thus with their pedagogical talent and expertise. Only a teacher who commanded respect as a scientific and moral authority could earn the title of Master.

2. The Main Tenets of Ethics in the Lvov-Warsaw School

To analyse the moral aspects of instruction and education in the Lvov-Warsaw School, which were crucial to its functioning, it is necessary to present the most important ethical views developed by the philosophers of this formation, despite the fact that ethics was not their primary area of research.

Twardowski, the School's founder, was a cognitivist² in ethics, believing that judgements and moral norms result from cognitive activity. He had little confidence in the argument about the self-evident nature of judgements derived from heartfelt conviction and intuitive cognition. Twardowski's views underwent a kind of metamorphosis from apriorism and intuitionism³ to empiricism.⁴ He proposed that theoretical propositions in ethics should be derived from a generalization of facts provided by experience. He therefore regarded the commandment to love one's neighbour as an excessive demand on the moral subject, and proposed justice as a rational minimum that is achievable by applying the principles of scientific ethics. One may note, however, two epistemological and methodological arguments converging in Twardowski's ethical views. According to the first argument, based on induction, one arrives at beliefs that influence human moral choices through experience. The second argument, on the other

¹ T. Kotarbiński, *Funkcje społeczne* [Social Functions], in: T. Kotarbiński, *Wybór pism* [Selected Writings], Vol. 2, PWN, Warszawa 1958, pp. 481–483.

² The opposite of cognitivism is noncognitivism, which denies cognitive value to judgements. Non-cognitivism most commonly appears in the forms of subjectivism and nihilism. Cf. R.B. Brandt, *Etyka. Zagadnienia etyki normatywnej i metaetyki* [Ethics: Issues in Normative Ethics and Meta-ethics], PWN, Warszawa 1996, pp. 456–460.

³ K. Twardowski, *Etyka wobec teorii ewolucji* [Ethics in Relation to the Theory of Evolution], "Przełom" 1896, Vol. 1, No. 18, pp. 551–563.

⁴ K. Twardowski, *O zadaniach etyki naukowej* [On the Tasks of Scientific Ethics], "Etyka" 1973, Vol. 12, pp. 125–155.

hand, says that there are intuitively knowable just principles that influence the degree and direction in negotiating interests between people. This reveals some inconsistency in his theory, which nevertheless makes these ethical views an interesting set of propositions, including intuitive as well as empirical and rational elements. Twardowski believed that in order to be able to effectively moderate, reduce, or eliminate the aporias, the contradictions that exist between the interests of individuals and associations of individuals, it is necessary to combine people's empirically treated aspirations with moral principles recognized as axioms. This view probably stemmed from Twardowski's conviction that, though the world has an objectively organized structure, the moral subject can only gradually discover it through empirical experience.

Tadeusz Kotarbiński, one of Twardowski's students, is known as the originator of the concept of independent ethics.⁵ The postulate of the independence of ethics had already been advocated earlier by Twardowski himself. Ethics, at its starting point – that is, at the moment of experiencing morality – should be methodologically independent of other sciences. However, an analysis of ethical principles, whose content is determined by moral obligations, and a closer examination of the methods used to formulate these principles, reveal the dependence of ethics on philosophy. One such principle is, for example, that of respect for the human being as the basis of all moral obligations. Kotarbiński does not create a metaethical theory in which he critiques relativism, subjectivism or absolutism. However, he declares an aversion to utilitarianism and thus takes a position in axiology and, to an extent, in metaethics. This is because he assumes the cognitive character of ethics, since in ethics there is room for rational argumentation, and consequently there should be a common understanding of the terms and principles involved. When, for example, we evaluate an act in moral terms by stating that it is honourable or dishonourable, these are statements about persons, and such statements, according to Kotarbiński, have the feature of objectivity just like statements about things. Independent ethics, also called the ethics of practical realism or the ethics of a trustworthy protector, tries to answer the following question: how should one live and what should one do with their life in order to avoid feeling remorse, understood as a specific kind of shame? Kotarbiński believed this required moral knowledge, dialogue, and a figure of true authority as a role model in one's life.

⁵ T. Kotarbiński, *Zasady etyki niezależnej* [Principles of Independent Ethics], in: *Pisma etyczne* [Ethical Writings], Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1987.

Tadeusz Czeżowski, like Kotarbiński, was a proponent of autonomous ethics. He believed that the ways of constructing ethics, both inductive and deductive, must be methodologically autonomous. Ethics must fulfil the conditions of rational knowledge and be based on premises provided by science, but should nevertheless minimize dependence on scientific authorities. According to Czeżowski, the application of rationalized methods of reasoning in ethics makes its autonomous character possible.⁶ He believed that any ethical system must always be in touch with moral experience, which constitutes for ethics both a starting point and a kind of verifier. For we can never be sure whether the value system we have chosen is true, since a complete and absolute truth about what is good and what is evil is not attainable. We cannot arrive at it through speculation; we can only approach it. The moral experience on the basis of which we create our system of values is also a kind of test case for moral intuitions, which Czeżowski treats as a particular, personal, individual experience of what is good. Consequently, judgements on the value of a thing may be justified directly, that is, by appealing to the obvious. And even though such judgements are often false, we can eliminate and correct these errors. The art of skilful judgement should, according to Czeżowski, be practised and perfected, just like the art of observation. Developing and perfecting excellence in ethical observation provides the opportunity for increasingly effective human communication and thus the elimination of elitist value systems based on egotism.

However, Czeżowski also claimed that it is not always true that moral experience is the starting point, because the starting point may be the assessment of an already existing act, and experience in the form of an emotional reaction appears after the assessment.⁷

3. Implementation of the Ethos of the Lvov-Warsaw School

When Kazimierz Twardowski was appointed professor at Lvov University in 1895, he was only 25 years old. Upon taking up the Chair of Philosophy in Lvov, he in-

⁶ L. Gumański, *Tadeusz Czeżowski*, in: *Księga pamiątkowa ku czci Profesora Tadeusza Czeżowskiego* [Commemorative Book in Honour of Professor Tadeusz Czeżowski], ed. L. Gumański, Wydawnictwo UMK, Toruń 1980, pp. 5–8.

⁷ T. Czeżowski, *Czym są wartości – wprowadzenie do dyskusji* [What Are Values: Introduction to the Discussion], in: T. Czeżowski, *Pisma z etyki i teorii wartości* [Papers in Ethics and Value Theory], Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1989, p. 118.

tended to carry out a very ambitious yet seemingly modest plan: to create a new style of doing philosophy in Poland.⁸ His philosophical talent and pedagogical imagination led him to analyse philosophical problems using strict methods of research. This involved defining the method of scientific inquiry in philosophy, achieved by applying the criteria of clarity and validity of claims. Philosophy as a science was to be clear and properly substantiated. The renewal⁹ of Polish philosophy should begin, according to Twardowski, with teaching the subject at an appropriate level already in high school.

For philosophy to be taught at university level, it needed to be preceded by preparatory work which consisted in becoming familiar with scientific methods used in individual disciplines of science. In addition to all these postulates aimed at the revival of philosophy in Poland, Twardowski added yet another, and a very significant one. He claimed that practising philosophy consisted not only in solving theoretical problems, but was also a way to improve morally and gain practical wisdom, independence, and self-mastery.¹⁰

He was able to bring this plan to fruition thanks to his undeniable pedagogical talent and organizational skills. For example, already in his third year in charge of the Philosophy Department, he established the first philosophy seminar in Poland, and in 1901 his students had the opportunity to participate in experimental psychology classes, also held for the first time. In 1904, he founded the Polish Philosophical Society.

In 1911, in order to facilitate the publication of research papers by Lvov philosophers, Twardowski established the periodical “Ruch Filozoficzny” [Philosophical Movement]. It should be noted, however, that the purpose of founding the journal was not to make the Lvov community independent of the Warsaw-based “Przegląd Filozoficzny” [Philosophical Review], but to complement the latter with the most extensive information possible, above all on the philosophical “movement” in Poland and beyond.

⁸ H. Skolimowski, *Polish Analytical Philosophy*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1967, p. 128.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁰ A. Drabarek, *Etyka umiaru. Ideał człowieka i jego szczęście w poglądach filozofów ze Szkoły Lwowsko-Warszawskiej* [The Ethics of Moderation: The Ideal of a Person and Their Happiness in the Views of Philosophers from the Lvov-Warsaw School], Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2004, p. 26. Unless stated otherwise, all translations of citations are my own.

Twardowski's inexhaustible academic, pedagogical, organizational and popularizing activities "infected" his students as well. Not only did he act as a teacher delivering lectures in philosophy, or as the editor of the journal he founded, but he also gave talks and translated philosophical works into Polish.¹¹ Thanks to Twardowski, Poles had the opportunity to study the philosophical thought of antiquity, as he persuaded his student Władysław Witwicki, among others, to translate Plato's dialogues into Polish. Not surprisingly, Twardowski's students saw their teacher as a modern-day Socrates, not only because of the clarity of his thought and language, but also because of his uncompromising commitment to putting moral principles into practice. He impressed them with the moral courage with which he proclaimed his views, and that helped him enlist numerous followers from among whom he was able to select the most talented ones, those most useful to philosophy. Therefore, the high level of education, so characteristic of the Lvov-Warsaw School, was founded, among other things, on the fact that it placed very high substantive and moral demands on both teachers and students, who had to demonstrate independent and creative thinking. Not all of Twardowski's students reached such a high level of creative activity; those who met these demands, however, thanks to the pedagogical imagination of their teacher, were very well prepared to pursue independent exploration in philosophy. Twardowski's teaching activity encompassed the ideal of philosophical education, the method of instruction, and the manner of its implementation. He believed the ideal of a philosopher consisted of both intellectual and moral moments, strength of thought and strength of character modelled on the ancient sages. In the teaching method he used, he supplemented curricular work with other forms of intellectual encounter, reaching far beyond the university. An important part of this method was the example he set with his own life and work. This approach to implementing his teaching method addressed the fundamental issues of pedagogy, as it maintained a proper balance between instruction and education. Twardowski educated through teaching. He shaped character by developing moral principles in his students – specifically, a belief in the existence of the absolute values of truth and goodness.¹²

¹¹ For example, he translated *Nietzsche's Philosophy* by Hans Vaihinger, and, together with his student Jan Łukasiewicz, David Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*.

¹² A. Drabarek, *Etyka umiaru*, op. cit., p. 29; K. Sośnicki, *Działalność pedagogiczna Kazimierza Twardowskiego* [Kazimierz Twardowski's Pedagogical Activities], "Ruch Filozoficzny" 1959, Vol. 19, Nos. 1–2, pp. 24–29.

3.1. Integrity and Criticism in Science

Specific rules of procedure in the pursuit of scientific truth were not only developed, but also followed by Twardowski and his students of the Lvov-Warsaw School. In order to adhere to the principle of scientific integrity, it was necessary to demand high competence and to respect the limits of such competence, and not to succumb to the temptation of presenting less substantiated claims as better justified ones, or even as dogmas. Tadeusz Czeżowski, a student of Twardowski's, explicitly criticized such an attitude, stating that integrity in science was:

the opposite of shoddy workmanship, sloppiness, all kinds of fraud – but also negligence and disregard for duty, chasing advantage at the lowest cost.¹³

Integrity in science is primarily founded on methodological reliability. To meet its demands, according to Czeżowski, it is necessary to formulate the claims that make up a theory accurately, clearly and precisely, and to properly substantiate them. Such substantiation may be presented both in the form of axioms, definitions, proven theses, and in the form of conjectures which are more or less probable.

It is also worth quoting a statement made by Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz regarding the postulate of integrity in science. He wrote:

[T]hink in such a way that you know well what you are thinking about; speak in such a way that you not only know well what you are talking about, but also that you can be sure the one to whom you are speaking, listening to you attentively, will be thinking about the same thing as you; whatever you assert, assert it with as much firmness as the logical force of your argument allows.¹⁴

According to philosophers of the Lvov-Warsaw School, the integrity required in scientific proceedings should further be supported by the principle of critical thinking. Twardowski aptly describes the pathologies in doing science and presenting the truth that critical thinking shields us from, and says that this is precisely what is taught by philosophy, for:

¹³ W. Tyburski, *Etos uczonego w Szkole Lwowsko-Warszawskiej* [Ethos of the Scholar in the Lvov-Warsaw School], in: *Polska filozofia analityczna. W kręgu Szkoły Lwowsko-Warszawskiej* [Polish Analytical Philosophy: In the Circle of the Lvov-Warsaw School], eds. R. Wiśniewski, W. Tyburski, Wydawnictwo UMK, Toruń 1999, p. 131.

¹⁴ K. Ajdukiewicz, *Pozanaukowa działalność Kazimierza Twardowskiego* [Non-Scientific Activities of Kazimierz Twardowski], "Ruch Filozoficzny" 1959, Vol. 19, Nos. 1–2, p. 31.

it awakens in us a criticism that protects us from blindly yielding to authorities, from comfortably indulging in nice little intellectual habits, and from putting too much trust in our human reason, which is so very limited; it makes us demand clarity and exactness wherever the scientific argumentation is to be applied, and fight against all kinds of muddles of thought that strive to replace with their intoxicating vagueness the grasp of details and overall clarity.¹⁵

The criticism, not judgementalism, so desirable in science should be based on a sound analysis of the views being evaluated. This attitude requires courage, therefore, rather than conformism and bias. Such an attitude of particular diligence should be developed by the scholar first of all in relation to their own views, because self-criticism and an uncompromising attitude to one's own errors in scientific reasoning gives us the right to criticize others; otherwise, it becomes morally suspect. However, the criticism so desirable in the work of a scholar must not turn into a conviction of one's own infallibility and the rightness of one's judgement, as this often leads to conceit and pride. An attitude lacking humility, contrary to that Socratic "I know that I know nothing," generates an unreasonable complacency that prevents the scholar from acknowledging the possibility of being wrong. And error, according to Czeżowski, is a kind of "sanction that warns us against the sin of pride, laziness and passion."¹⁶

3.2. Tolerance and Scientific Freedom in the Lvov-Warsaw School

Did the philosophers of the Lvov-Warsaw School not contradict the principle of tolerance, which was one of the important virtues of this School, in following the principle of reliable criticism in science? No, they did not, for Twardowski's students argued that despite his absolute respect for the principle of criticism in science, their master did not impose any substantive views on them and was a tolerant person.¹⁷ This was because tolerance in the Lvov-Warsaw School was understood as both acceptance of every view and the freedom to advocate for it. It was a rational tolerance, founded on respect for human intellectual effort.

¹⁵ K. Twardowski, *O dostojęństwie uniwersytetu* [On the Dignity of the University], Uniwersytet Poznański, Poznań 1933, par. 16.

¹⁶ T. Czeżowski, *Pożyteczność błędu*, [The Usefulness of Error], in: T. Czeżowski, *Odczyty filozoficzne* [Philosophical Lectures], 2nd ed., PWN, Toruń 1969, p. 208.

¹⁷ T. Kotarbiński, *Funkcje społeczne*, op. cit., p. 205.

It could also be described as “reasonable” tolerance, supported by the demand for reliable justification, which, in turn, led to the rejection of error or baseless claims. When speaking of tolerance, Twardowski was primarily concerned with views on issues for which there was no satisfactory solution, or at least none that had been proposed thus far.

Consequently, unfair means in a discussion, imposing one’s opinion in an arbitrary manner, and applying undue pressure were eliminated in favour of dialogue with the discussion partner. The School upheld the belief that everyone should be able to advocate their own views, while having the right to criticize ideas which they disagreed with if they considered them to be wrong and insufficiently substantiated. Czeżowski, who advocated a benevolent tolerance even for opposing views, made a very interesting point on the matter. He believed that respect for dissenting views was perfectly illustrated by the maxim *victus sed non convictus*:

The formula *victus sed non convictus* – defeated but not convinced – expresses a psychological truth, which is applicable at times. For it is not enough to show the truth to someone in order to win him over; it must be assimilated by his own effort; he must become familiar with it, so that it becomes his truth – and this takes time, sometimes years, to achieve.¹⁸

The model of tolerance pursued by members of the Lvov-Warsaw School was possible only on the premise of freedom to practise science and scientific research. This was understood, first, as personal, internal resilience that prevented one from succumbing to “any motives leading to a betrayal of the postulate of integrity,”¹⁹ and second, as external freedom that guaranteed autonomy in conducting scientific research and criticism. Twardowski distinguished these two dimensions of freedom as the scholar’s freedom of research and the institutional freedom of science. At this point, it is worth citing a statement by Czeżowski, who wrote about freedom in science in his *Odczyty filozoficzne* [Philosophical Lectures], published after the war, criticizing the process of making science partisan, which threatened its autonomy:

¹⁸ T. Czeżowski, *O dyskusji i dyskutowaniu* [On Discussion and Debating], in: T. Czeżowski, *Odczyty filozoficzne* [Philosophical Lectures], 2nd ed., PWN, Toruń 1969, p. 194.

¹⁹ T. Czeżowski, *O rzetelności, obiektywności i bezstronności w badaniach naukowych* [On Reliability, Objectivity and Impartiality in Scientific Research], in: T. Czeżowski, *Odczyty filozoficzne* [Philosophical Lectures], 2nd ed., PWN, Toruń 1969, p. 209.

One of the greatest dangers which threaten the taking of such an independent, unbiased attitude towards objective truth, is internal adherence, rather than mere formal affiliation, to organizations which order their members to profess certain beliefs, or at least to behave as if they professed them. Whoever wishes to serve such an organization faithfully relinquishes their spiritual independence and will resent anything that opposes such beliefs; they will easily be tempted to disregard arguments for the acceptance of facts or opinions that are incompatible with such beliefs – and if they are nevertheless forced to recognize them, they will be prepared to do so only in the secret of their thoughts; they will not want to boldly profess them, even though as a professor, which literally means “one who professes,” they are obliged to do so. Such danger is not, as we know, equally great for all fields of scientific research. There are directions in the search for objective truth so far removed from all matters of life, and methodically so developed that there is no fear that any non-scientific considerations could distort them. Other scientific issues, on the other hand, are so intertwined with current interests and so closely connected with our emotional life that one who wishes to consider them exclusively in terms of objective truth must make a truly heroic effort not to let oneself be pushed off the only right path, the one defined by the scientific method.²⁰

Ajdukiewicz, on the other hand, claimed that freedom of science is the freedom of the scholar to choose the subject of their research and the method of substantiating it, which is guaranteed by the freedom of thought and speech.

[F]reedom of thought consists, first of all, in that one has the right to believe and is able to believe in anything and only that which is supported by factual arguments, and there is no obligation or necessity to believe in anything that is not supported by rational arguments, much less in something against which such arguments speak.²¹

Arguing in favour of freedom in science, Czeżowski also draws attention to the concepts of objectivity and impartiality, which, when used in scientific discourse, are not identical. Objectivity is understood here as refusing to succumb to

²⁰ T. Czeżowski, *W sprawie deontologii pracownika naukowego* [On the Deontology of the Researcher], in: T. Czeżowski, *Odczyty filozoficzne* [Philosophical Lectures], 2nd ed., PWN, Toruń 1969, p. 245.

²¹ K. Ajdukiewicz, *O wolności nauki* [On Freedom of Science], “Nauka Polska” 1957, No. 3, p. 10.

sympathies and antipathies both in judging oneself and others, and being guided primarily by the principle of scientific criticism. Thus, it is possible, Czeżowski believes, to remain objective by joining one of the arguing sides, the one which, according to the objective researcher, is in the right. As for the principle of impartiality, he understood it differently. He wrote:

We have distinguished between impartiality in the narrower and in the broader sense, impartiality of the arbitrator and impartiality of the observer. A researcher remains an impartial observer when he publishes his findings even if they can be used to support an opposing view, as long as the researcher remains solely on the scientific position and does not use his findings to draw any practical consequences entering into the subject of the dispute. This is because the responsibility for these consequences rests solely with the one who draws them. A researcher remains an impartial arbiter, on the other hand, even when based on his findings he enters into a dispute, but in doing so does not go beyond the limits of his scientific competence. This way of understanding impartiality is related to the demand for the autonomy of science and makes a case against any subordination to political or other considerations of its right to be guided solely by the directives of logic and scientific methodology. This entitlement, in turn, flows from the premise that what is true is also right. The righteous pursuits of politics and other spheres of activity in life do not need to fetter science in its pursuit of truth following the right paths, as they do not need to fear the truth; on the contrary, the shackling of science by the powers that be leads to the conclusion that these powers are not backed by the truth and are not pursuing righteous goals. The claim that science is not objective and impartial is therefore untenable with this understanding of objectivity and impartiality. However, it has other aspects as well. In one of them, it insinuates that researchers holding certain views have intentions directly incompatible with scientific integrity. Such an allegation, in order to be justified, would have to be based on a thorough analysis of the argumentation of the author being criticized and on a demonstration that such argumentation does not satisfy the precepts of scientific integrity. In the absence of such an analysis, it must be rejected as unacceptable.²²

²² T. Czeżowski, *O rzetelności*, op. cit., p. 211.

Impartiality and objectivity in science must coexist with the virtue of responsibility, which should be treated as a moral value. These principles of discipline in scientific inquiry are not just general methodological rules that complement reflection in research; they become axiological principles that are essential to the research process. Czeżowski rejects arguments that demonstrate the impossibility of applying the principle of objectivity and impartiality in science, citing social, economic and political determinism that makes scientists dependent on the external conditions in which they live. He believes this argumentation points to the relativity of cognition, which may ultimately overcome relativism, but only in favour of a worldview considered to be the expression of the highest form of evolution. However, according to Czeżowski, any such justification can be subjected to the test of critical analysis, where only those assumptions that are most substantiated are accepted. When it becomes apparent that a scholar is being forced to accept such a view, they may consider this type of pressure to be “a weapon of militant dogmatism.”²³ Giving in to this pressure contradicts the principles that should guide a scholar.

This attitude was primarily exhibited in the Lvov-Warsaw School by Twardowski, who considered the independence of science from ideological pressures a priority. He insisted that the university must renounce prejudices arising from traditions and customs, peer pressure, or subjective preferences that interfere with the pursuit of objective knowledge.²⁴

3.3. The Dignity of the University

In his seminal work *O dostojęństwie uniwersytetu* [On the Dignity of the University], Twardowski wrote:

[T]he task of the University is to pursue scientific truths and probabilities and to cultivate the ability to inquire into them. The very core and nucleus of academic work is thus scientific creativity, both in terms of content and method. [...] From these efforts grows the edifice of scientific knowledge, objective knowledge which demands recognition solely on the basis that it is, according to the laws of logic, substantiated, and which imposes itself on the human mind solely but irresistibly by the force of argument. The objective nature of

²³ Ibid., p. 212.

²⁴ K. Twardowski, *O dostojęństwie uniwersytetu*, op. cit., par. 3.

scientific inquiry is highlighted in that it does not take orders from any external factors, and that it does not want to serve any incidental considerations, but recognizes only experience and reasoning as its masters, and that it only has one task: to pursue properly substantiated judgements that are true or, at least as probable as possible. Serving this purpose, the University is indeed radiant with dignity, flowing down to it from the momentous significance of the function it performs. After all, it brings man the light of pure knowledge; it enriches and deepens science, it discovers ever new truths and probabilities – in a word, it creates the highest intellectual values that man may ever achieve.²⁵

In writing these words, Twardowski expressed his belief that excessive interference of state authorities and politics in matters of the university was an impediment not only for reasons of prestige, undermining, as it were, the independence of scientific institutions, but also because it restricted their scientific and moral development. Therefore, the goals and tasks of universities and schools that he considered to be most important should not be restricted either by the state or the Church. Twardowski and his students realized that the strength of the newly created Polish society after 123 years of captivity lay in the wisdom and knowledge of its individual citizens, and that only through instruction and education could a rationally understood patriotism be promoted within the nation. Twardowski's students were similarly critical of the university's dependence on the state.²⁶ The independence of the university was also discussed by Czeżowski in his treatise *O stosunku nauki do państwa* [On the Relation of Science and the State].²⁷ In his view, schools were, of course, state institutions and as such served the purposes of the state. And the state made it the goal of schools to teach and educate citizens to perform their civic duties to the best of their ability. Such citizens should display an appropriate degree of mental development as well as moral and patriotic

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ In his treatise entitled *Idea wolności* [The Idea of Freedom], T. Kotarbiński wrote: "The authorities must not exert pressure on the beliefs of teachers in general. Beating minority students at universities should not be tolerated. The introduction of a law to remove professors from universities for their beliefs and views is a glaring example of the lack of freedom or tolerance in a country that has fought for them for so long" (in T. Kotarbiński, *Wybór pism* [Selected Writings], Vol. 1: *Myśli o działaniu* [Thoughts on Actions], PWN, Warszawa 1957, p. 119).

²⁷ T. Czeżowski, *O stosunku nauki do państwa* [On the Relation of Science and the State], Komisja Jubileuszowa Kasy im. Mianowskiego, Warszawa 1933.

principles consistent with the good of the state and their fellow citizens. And yet, Czeżowski claimed, the school could contribute to the fulfilment of these important goals only if science was not subordinated to the partisan interests of those in political power. It was imperative that university and school authorities, along with teachers and students, placed science at the forefront and recognized education as the main means of instruction. He wrote:

Understood this way, school instruction not only teaches, but also educates. For by requiring diligence and perseverance, it trains the will and teaches one to overcome difficulties and obstacles. It points to the ideal that is the most lofty, the most pure, because it is higher than all particular struggles and desires – the all-human ideal of truth. And by instilling selfless love of truth, it builds the foundation of ethics in souls, since all ethical action is selfless. A school that loses its proper scientific character, however, is a bad school not only from a scientific point of view, but also from the state's point of view. It becomes like a rudderless boat, tossed about by waves of interests and political compromises – such a school will be regarded by any party that comes to power as an instrument for educating the youth in the spirit of its ideology.²⁸

Thus, Czeżowski's beliefs concerning truth and the role of the university in its proclamation resonate with Twardowski's view when he states, unequivocally, that the primary task and ethical obligation of scholars and teachers is the diligent pursuit of truth, as this is their duty to society. This obligation is further reinforced by the moral imperative, emphasized by Czeżowski, in the form of a connection between methodology and ethics. Related to this postulate is the principle of integrity, which is the basic criterion for the validity of logically substantiated beliefs and scientific judgements. Therefore, no considerations other than those mentioned above can determine which claims a scholar should defend and which should be rejected. Such an attitude also prepares one to falsify a previously adopted view and abandon it, if it turns out to be wrong or insufficiently substantiated. Indeed, the possibility of error is an opportunity in the scholar's work, provided that they are prepared to accept valid criticism and review an erroneous position.²⁹

²⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

²⁹ T. Czeżowski, *Pożyteczność błędu*, op. cit., p. 208.

4. Conclusions

Kazimierz Twardowski, Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, and Tadeusz Czeżowski, as teachers and educators of the younger generation, were well aware of the responsibilities and duties that come with being a teacher. A teacher and educator must be truthful and must be convinced of the correctness of what they claim. For, as Kotarbiński wrote:

In the aura of half-truths, untruths or anti-truths, the teacher's function becomes disabled. Polarized light transforms into a laser that may serve to cut, but can no longer serve to enlighten.³⁰

Therefore, intellectual improvement should go hand in hand with moral improvement, for only together can they produce a positive outcome – wise individuals who act prudently, effectively and are guided in life by the principles of kindness and justice. The relationship between teacher and student must not be based on falsehood or equivocation, for the resulting harm extends beyond one person inflicting damage on another. This evil is much broader in scope, undermining faith in the authority of the teacher, the very person who is supposed to teach others how to arrive at truth and goodness. A society deprived of teachers with steadfast moral principles and extensive knowledge will inevitably degenerate, losing the opportunity to develop and improve itself.

Through their publications, lectures, scientific and didactic work, Twardowski and his students made a significant impact on the cultural development in Poland. World War II interrupted the activities of the Lvov-Warsaw School, but after the war, the vast majority of its representatives worked at Polish universities. Thanks to Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, Ajdukiewicz and many others, a new generation of scholars emerged, raised in the good old traditions handed down to them by Twardowski's students.

It must be said that the approach to doing philosophy pursued by the Lvov-Warsaw School, together with its principles of ethics, remains valid and operational, as it enables comparing alternative concepts by contrasting their characteristic features. In the concept of moral instruction and education proposed by

³⁰ T. Kotarbiński, *Moje marzenie* [My Dream], in: T. Kotarbiński, *Myśli o ludziach i ludzkich sprawach* [Thoughts on People and Human Affairs], Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Warszawa 1986, p. 333.

Twardowski and his students, I can see elements of Aristotle's virtue ethics, which serve as a natural ally for those involved in education. The need to revitalize the moral principles proposed by the Lvov-Warsaw School aligns with contemporary theories of virtue ethics as presented in the works of Alasdair MacIntyre and Martha Nussbaum, and others.³¹

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³¹ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, IN, 1981; M.C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1997.

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