

Memorial of the Polish Philosophical Society in Lvov on the Guidelines of the Curriculum of Propaedeutics of Philosophy in High Schools*

Manuscript by Kazimierz Twardowski

Translator's Note

At the 31st Ordinary General Meeting of the members of the Polish Philosophical Society, held on 15 February 1936, in Lvov, it was announced that based on the conclusions prepared by a special commission established in 1932, the Polish Philosophical Society in Lvov had submitted a memorial to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education (MWRiOP) in Warsaw in January 1935, relating to the implementation of the propaedeutics of philosophy programme in high schools.¹

Kazimierz Twardowski's materials deposited in the IFiS PAN Library in Warsaw include an envelope (T.16,56) with a handwritten annotation by Twardowski: "Protocols and materials (projects) of the commission and subcommittee selected for propaedeutics of philosophy in high schools" (letter, memorandum, and draft programme in files L. 4/935 of 5.I.935).

The envelope contains, among others: a sketch of the *Memorial*... handwritten by Twardowski. It fits on six A4 sheets, written on both sides with a pen (in places with a pencil), including one typewritten page. The draft contains several fragments, individual sentences, and words – underlined. For example, the entire page 6 was crossed out several times, and most of its content appeared on page 7, where the text is typewritten.

* K. Twardowski, *Memoriał Polskiego Towarzystwa Filozoficznego we Lwowie w sprawie wytycznych programu „propedeutyki filozofii” w liceach ogólnokształcących (rękopis Kazimierza Twardowskiego)*, ed. R. Jadczyk, "Edukacja Filozoficzna" 1988, Vol. 5, pp. 491–496.

This text deserves to be recalled. The form in which it has been preserved proves that it contains the views of Twardowski – the chairman of the Polish Philosophical Society in Lvov. The content of the *Memorial*... sketch once again highlights the elements of Twardowski's scientific and didactic programme, especially his views on the important role of philosophical education of young people, the method of teaching logic and psychology, and the need to be critical and at the same time cautious in propagating one's *worldview*.

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The programme of propaedeutics of philosophy in high school should take into account the keen philosophical interests of young people, taking into account, in addition to logic and psychology, the most critical issues from those fields of philosophy that are most closely related to the development of the so-called worldview, namely, the theory of knowledge, metaphysics, sociology, ethics and aesthetics.

The study of logic and psychology should form the core of philosophical education in high school.

The following reasons support the provision of logic to a fairly significant extent:

1. Through the teaching of logic, the student is acquainted with terms that are living components of the standard measure of intellectual generalities, such as, for example, *definition*, *scope of a concept*, *content of a concept*, *logical division*, *proof*, *deduction*, *conclusion*, *premises*, which correspond to concepts necessary for anyone who wants to discuss any intellectual product, whether it be a scientific dissertation, a political article, or generally an official one, etc. The ability to properly use these terms and concepts is needed in every intellectual profession.
2. Thanks to logical education, acquiring knowledge of the requirements of logical correctness will not replace a developed logical sense but will help sharpen it. It will be indispensable in doubtful and controversial cases, just like knowledge of grammar in cases where the linguistic sense fails.

3. Logic, and in particular methodology, namely the division of sciences, their foundations, their importance, and significance, seems quite essential for including logic among the sciences necessary for general education.
4. The conceptual apparatus of logic and its fundamental theorems constitute the basis on which many philosophical issues are based, and without knowledge of which, the assessment of these issues cannot be achieved.

Similar arguments support the inclusion of psychology in the compulsory propaedeutics course in high schools. Namely:

1. Psychological terms are an essential component of the vocabulary of an enlightened person.
2. Knowledge of the structure of mental life, the laws governing it, the wealth of possibilities inherent in the human psyche, mental types and differences corresponding to age differences, etc., is necessary in every profession (doctor, teacher, judge, priest, engineer, in social life and the private life of future fathers and mothers).
3. Psychology is one of the sciences that most actively engage young people.
4. The concepts and theorems of psychology provide an indispensable basis for addressing a wide range of issues related to the philosophical worldview.

The following arguments support the expansion of propaedeutics teaching beyond the fields of logic and psychology:

1. Young people's interests in matters belonging to the so-called worldview are very strong. Failure to satisfy their interests at school causes young people to look for philosophical nourishment elsewhere and – as experience shows – they often find inappropriate nourishment.
2. By familiarizing young people with metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical themes, we introduce them to concepts that play an important role in every field of cultural life. These include idealism, realism, rationalism, empiricism, materialism, monism, and utilitarianism.
3. Moreover, the importance of considering issues related to ethics and social life should be emphasized in education.
4. Aesthetic issues should also not be neglected since learning other subjects often leads to them.

However, although propaedeutics of philosophy should surpass logic and psychology, the emphasis in teaching this subject should not be transferred from

logic and psychology to other areas of philosophy. As already emphasized above, the study of logic and psychology should constitute the basis of the entire propaedeutics of philosophy course.

Such a programme of propaedeutics, in which worldview issues and discussions on them would constitute the central core of teaching, would require from the teacher both first-class qualifications in terms of scientific preparation, as well as a rare talent for facilitating the discussion, and, finally, remarkable pedagogical tact that would allow him to maintain discipline in the classroom.

In the absence of properly prepared teachers, a programme of propaedeutics, limited to worldview issues, could degenerate in the hands of an insufficiently qualified teacher and thus do more harm than good. It would also not provide young people with extremely important elements of general education inherent in logic and psychology.

Therefore, the following guidelines for the programme of propaedeutics in high school should be adopted: the core of teaching constitutes a systematic course in logic and psychology (and individual chapters from both of these sciences could be intertwined): from logical and psychological issues, one would occasionally move on to issues belonging to other branches of philosophy.

The attached programme draft, which contains a detailed material layout, can be an example of implementing these guidelines. This sketch may require, upon closer examination, some changes, taking into account, first of all, the amount of time devoted to propaedeutics of philosophy in high school.

In the form presented here, the programme will require an increase in the number of hours previously devoted to propaedeutics in gymnasium.

The programme of propaedeutics of philosophy should be the same in all types of high schools. It is impossible to strictly define which information from philosophy will be helpful in different professions. Moreover, philosophical issues concern themes that are important for every person, regardless of their profession and special studies. Finally, the task of propaedeutics should be to prevent one-sidedness, not to deepen it.

However, the teacher may be granted the liberty to place more emphasis on this or that side of the material, depending on the interest and preparation of the students. It is desirable that propaedeutics teachers who have studies in mathematics or natural sciences in addition to philosophy be sent to the mathematics and science high school; and to the humanities high school, humanities teachers.

Also, in antique languages high schools, the propaedeutics programme (if such a type exists) should not differ significantly from the programme in other types. In particular, the study of the history of ancient philosophy should not be introduced, if it would be done at the expense of time devoted to studying material common to all types of high school.

The teaching method should be mixed. Lecture, heuresis, discussion, depending on the subject and time available. The lecture method should be used when defining technical terms and when presenting philosophical positions related to the history of philosophy and some classical issues. Heuresis is suitable for teaching logical and psychological parts, but in psychology, it should be combined with experiments according to the time available. Discussion will be advisable, for example when discussing specific psychological, ethical, and sociological issues, etc. During the hours devoted to discussion, the teacher should teach students to logically correct and loyally deal with the opponent's opinion.

Reading together during lessons should be limited because the loss of time is disproportionate to the benefits. Only in exceptional cases excerpts from classic works can be used as texts for shared reading. Texts written by contemporary authors, especially for schools, are better suited for this purpose. Young people should read under the guidance and supervision of a teacher at meetings of philosophical clubs and as voluntary and obligatory reading at home.

Propaedeutics of philosophy should necessarily be the subject of the final exams (if the exams are to be held). Otherwise, students will treat propaedeutics as a secondary subject that does not require much attention. Philosophical preparation may also be one of a student's life and intellectual maturity tests. Finally, questions in the field of philosophy can largely contribute to the implementation of the requirement of accumulating questions in the final exam, mentioned by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education in the guide on teaching and upbringing.

Translated by Ewelina Grądzka

Translator's Endnote

In response to the *Memorial...* sent in January 1935, the MWRiOP replied that its demands "would be considered during programme work." However, since in the course of these works, the Ministry allocated only two hours a week for propae-

deutics in the second grade, instead of three hours in each of the two grades, as envisaged in the draft of the Polish Philosophical Society programme, the Society sent a second memorial to the Ministry in September 1935, demanding an appropriate multiplication of the hours dedicated for propaedeutics of philosophy. In response, the Ministry declared that “it would consider the issues raised in the memorial before finally establishing guidelines for programme authors.”

However, the issue of propaedeutics of philosophy in high schools, especially the programme and the number of hours allocated for teaching it, was not resolved at that time, and it was reconsidered in the next attempt to reform the last two grades of high school.

Kazimierz Twardowski’s materials deposited in the IFiS PAN Library include fragments of correspondence (K-19) indicating that, on 16 January 1936, the MWRiOP asked Twardowski to develop a philosophy teaching programme for high school. In a letter dated 21 January 1936, Twardowski replied, accepting the proposal to prepare, together with Prof. Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, a philosophy programme for all high school departments.

The correspondence shows that the draft programme sent by the authors in April 1936 did not fully meet the Ministry’s desiderata, so it was decided to continue improving until the end of 1936. Unfortunately, there is no sufficient data on the further fate of these programme works.