

Kazimierz Twardowski as a Teacher*

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Kazimierz Twardowski served at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Lvov for 35 years – from 1895 to 1930. To understand the results of his teaching activity, let's look at the image of philosophy in Poland at the end of the 19th century. It was developing in disconnected foci. The tradition of Romantic philosophy had died out, with no other emerging in its place. Polish philosophical workers, mostly educated in foreign environments, transplanted ideas taken from outside onto our soil; there was a lack of internal continuity in the development of philosophical research because there was no native philosophical school. Such a school was created by Twardowski. It was ready upon regaining independence and was so strong and healthy that it not only dominated the newly established philosophical institutions throughout Poland but also influenced philosophers not directly associated with it. Not because they abandoned their own views or changed their interest, but because the methodological requirements, the approach to philosophical issues that characterized Twardowski's school, became widespread in Polish philosophical works. Terminological precision, accuracy, clarity, one might even say sobriety of philosophical thinking, a unique kind of rationalism and realism typical of Twardowski's philosophical activity – all this became a requirement of correctness applied far beyond the reach of Twardowski's direct and indirect students.

Thus, the influence of Twardowski's philosophical activity expanded spatially across Poland, creating a certain style of philosophical work and thereby uniting the *disiecta membra* of philosophy in Poland. This influence also created unity over time. For over 20 years, Twardowski's students have been working in philosophy departments, almost for the duration of a human generation; conse-

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quently, a new generation of their students has undertaken philosophical work, and many of them are already working as academic teachers. They continue to foster the philosophical thought which Twardowski once instilled in the minds of their teachers and his students. This is undoubtedly not just a repetition of the Master's words. Twardowski's most outstanding students have gone their own ways, taking responsibility for the teachings they proclaim on their own shoulders. However, the continuity of development remained intact, along with the unity of philosophical work. No longer the unity of a school, but the unity of Polish philosophy with its own distinct character, standing on an equal footing with the philosophies of other European nations, internationally known and recognized, and confidently looking to the future, because it is based on solid foundations.

This is Twardowski's work as a teacher, but what was the activity that produced it?

Kazimierz Twardowski, according to his own words, considered himself primarily a teacher out of an inner vocation, and like every great teacher, he was creative in his teaching. There are three components of his creative teaching activity: the ideal of philosophical education, the teaching method, and its implementation.

A philosopher is, according to Twardowski's understanding, a person who strives for objective truth through scientific work in the field of philosophical sciences, free in their pursuit from the prejudices of everyday life, from the views imposed by the prevailing social and political trends, and controlling inclinations that could cloud scientific impartiality. In scientific research, strict and precise, they weigh every word, because they take responsibility for each one; they never lose sight of the connection between word and thing; always critical, they only consider statements to be important if they can clearly formulate and scientifically justify them. The knowledge constituting philosophical education, that is, knowledge of issues, understanding of their various solutions along with arguments *pro* and *contra*, and orientation in philosophical currents and directions, is distinguished from the philosophical view of the world, which in its scientific form cannot be finished as long as science develops. In the name of the scientific nature of philosophy, Twardowski condemned not only the lack of precision in philosophical work, but also symbolomania and pragmatophobia (i.e., the mistake one makes when seeing only symbols and not the things they signify), as well as the one-sidedness that comes from rejecting previous achievements of philosophical research and claiming sole possession of objective truth.

Such an ideal of a philosopher comprises both intellectual and moral elements. Twardowski demanded in philosophical work not only intellectual effort, but also integrity and sense of duty that one takes on and is responsible for fulfilling. While educating philosophical workers, he envisioned the spirit of the ancient sage as a model of both the strength of thought and the strength of character.

Pedagogical and didactic work aimed at such goals required a consistent teaching method. Here again, one must realize that the teaching methods we use today, as something ordinary, were received from him, and that he largely developed them himself. His meticulously prepared lectures, in both content and form, were excellently tailored to his pedagogical goals. He organized the first philosophical seminar and the first psychological laboratory in Polish lands; he quickly divided the seminar into two stages: preliminary exercises and the actual seminar. In seminar work, he introduced a system different from the generally accepted one; through oral and written exercises, he introduced participants to intensive and effective cooperation. Programmatic lectures and seminars were complemented by other forms of intellectual interaction with students, which – being an integral part of his teaching method – evoke vivid memories of the figure of Socrates. Similarly, he was always eager to converse with young people, knowing how to listen to what they came to him with, guide their thoughts without restricting them, and encourage them with apt remarks. This contact took on an organized form in a student philosophical circle, of which he was always the most diligent and active participant. He also remained a professor and intellectual leader for the members of the Polish Philosophical Society, mostly his former students. The founding of the Society and chairing it until the end of his life are also a part of Twardowski's teaching activity.

However, the most important component of Twardowski's teaching method was the example he set with his own life and work. All the elements that constituted the ideal of his pedagogical activity were combined and embodied in him, thereby exerting a tremendous suggestive influence on his surroundings – the power that a perfect example of achieving set goals possesses.

There was no discord in Twardowski's approach between the programme and its implementation, the method and its application in practice. Execution was inevitable – leaving no room for doubt, driven by exceptional pedagogical intuition, carried out with unwavering willpower. When we ponder upon the effectiveness of Twardowski's teaching activity, the influence he exerted on students, binding them to him with unbreakable bonds, the sources of this state of affairs

should be sought primarily in the suggestive power of his consistently firm personality and in the inevitable fate-like functioning of his teaching method. He was not a teacher who tried to win over his students with softness, leniency or flattery. Twardowski's school was a tough one, eliciting opposition and rebellion from many. But whoever did not falter, did not succumb to discouragement, and successfully endured the trials, remained faithful to the Master for life.

Twardowski's teaching activity points the way to solving one of the fundamental issues among the difficulties faced by today's education, namely the proper relationship between teaching and upbringing. Twardowski educated through teaching. He educated, which means he shaped characters, instilling in his students ethical principles and dispositions of will. Ethical principles – faith in the existence of absolute values of truth and goodness as goals of selfless pursuit; dispositions of will – dutifulness, conscientiousness, thoroughness, reliability. Twardowski proved through the results of his teaching work that this is the right way to solve the problem; and as long as there is no similar proof for any other way of solving this issue, we must assume that this is the only way.

I said at the beginning of my speech that we owe today's unity of Polish philosophy, despite its diverse currents, to Twardowski. If we inquire about the deeper reasons for this, we find that Twardowski's philosophy shares a common feature with the philosophy of the Śniadecki brothers, with our entire Romantic philosophy, and with the later endeavours of Polish positivists. This common feature is the connection of philosophy with life, considered by many to be a characteristic trait of Polish philosophical thought in general. Each of the aforementioned currents in Polish philosophy viewed the connection between philosophy and life in its own way. Twardowski contributed his own share to the legacy of his predecessors by shaping the ideal of a philosopher in the image of a Stoic sage, to whom reason and strength of character give mastery over life. We can therefore assume that Twardowski's influence in Polish philosophy is not a foreign or accidental factor, but harmoniously aligns with the old, though repeatedly disrupted tradition. This allows us to further conclude that this influence will prove lasting and fruitful.

Twardowski closed his teaching testament in the last speech he delivered in this hall, on the dignity of the University. In the speech, he stated that he valued his teaching vocation above all else. In other words, uttered earlier, he spoke of the happiness he experienced as a reward for his teaching activity. These human feelings bring him closer to us; and at the same time they complete his image for us – the image of a Man and a Teacher in the most beautiful sense of the word.