

## In Memory of Kazimierz Twardowski\*

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When, in the early spring morning, the golden rays of the sun began to illuminate the old building of the Jan Kazimierz University in Lvov, one could see, before 7 o'clock, a characteristic figure approaching those former monastic walls. A man in a long navy-blue coat, military cut, with a black hat adorned with large bristles, and a red beard. It was Kazimierz Twardowski heading to his lecture. In the spring he started it at 7 a.m. In the fall and winter, he also lectured early, at 8 a.m. Yet despite the early hours, the lecture hall was always overcrowded. And when this impressive figure entered the lecture hall, with his long frock coat, tie and black plastron, giving him a peculiar appearance, everyone listened intently to his always clear, accessible and classically precise lectures.

Twardowski's teaching individuality and his – one could say without exaggeration – pedagogical genius, truly manifested itself during the seminar exercises when analysing texts of philosophical authors, when identifying and discussing problems. Soon after taking over the chair in Lvov, Twardowski organized the Philosophical Circle at the Academic Reading Room. This circle, of which the undersigned had the honour of also being president for a year, always held its meetings in the presence of Twardowski, and from this circle, that is, from its members who had completed their studies, emerged the Polish Philosophical Society in Lvov. Its founder and creator was also Kazimierz Twardowski. He was also the founder of the journal "Ruch Filozoficzny" [Philosophical Movement] and one could say without exaggeration – a great organizer of the philosophical movement in Poland.

Kazimierz Twardowski studied in Vienna under the supervision of Franz Brentano, whose students included the greatest philosophers of the past era in

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Germany. Of them, only one is alive today, the most famous one, Husserl. Twardowski's activity was analogous to Brentano's. Neither Brentano nor Twardowski created any system. However, they developed a certain method and a particular style of philosophical thinking. Franz Brentano's students, each in their own way, refined this method. It involved a thorough analysis of concepts and mental experiences.

Twardowski immediately, in one of his first works, entitled *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* [On the Content and Object of Presentations], provided a classic example of applying this method and, through this work, influenced the emergence of the phenomenological method that is so powerful today. His Polish works, such as one of the first ones, titled *Wyobrażenia i pojęcia* [Images and Concepts], analysing the essence of our representations, or other treatises, such as *O czynnościach i wytworach* [Actions and Products], were also examples of applying this method, employing subtle analysis of experiences and mental creations.

Each of Twardowski's works had an extremely clear and transparent disposition and, starting from facts and phenomena that were easily accessible and graspable, they gradually moved on to complex and intricate issues, revealing their structure and presenting the proper appearance and content of the problem.

It was classical philosophical style in the fullest sense of the word.

It's not the place here to list a whole range of his major and minor treatises and works. It is worth emphasizing that a man who thought so clearly and wrote so classically must have exerted an extraordinarily positive influence on the mentality of his students and – it must be stressed with all emphasis, that this is not a cliché – on the intellectual culture of his era. Twardowski was in every sense of the word a “praeceptor Poloniae” as a teacher of thinking.

He respected the individuality and passions of each of his students. He never imposed his own views on any of them. He only taught them to think, taught them to clearly articulate their views, to skillfully organize their arguments, and above all, he instilled in them a sense of responsibility for every word, of course, especially the printed word. And that is why out of the Twardowski School could come excellent logicians, and psychologists, and ethicists, and aestheticians, and representatives of all philosophical currents. They form the Twardowski School – and such a school undoubtedly exists – not because they profess similar views, as they are often very different individualities, [but because] they all think honestly in terms of logic and they express their thoughts clearly and orderly.

The history of spiritual culture in Poland will one day assess how much of Twardowski's most diligent pedagogical effort contributed to its content – or rather, to its form. Twardowski influenced his students not only as a philosopher but [also] as a professor and as a personality.

This man was the epitome of conscientious and punctual fulfilment of all duties – and he did not limit himself merely to those imposed by his profession. For many years, he served as the president of the Society of Teachers of Higher Schools in Lvov and in this position, he developed an immensely fruitful activity, almost epoch-making for the development of the Society. During the Russian occupation of Lvov, he organized something akin to the University of Lvov in Vienna, and when later, during the war, he assumed the position of rector in Lvov, he spared no effort to ensure that Polish youth could study and learn at the university even during wartime. Therefore, not only his students and listeners, but the entire society respected him as a true model of civic virtues. He, who set high standards for others, especially his students, was the most demanding and strict with himself.

And probably this heavy and strenuous way of life, full of toil and exertion, relatively early and in the prime of his strength, brought him to his sickbed and forced him to heroically struggle with a serious illness during the last years of his life.

The death that put an end to his suffering took from Polish life a great scholar: one of the greatest teachers in the field of philosophy known in the annals of this queen of sciences.