



The Lvov-Warsaw School

The Lvov-Warsaw School (LWS, hereafter) was established by Kazimierz Twardowski (1866–1938) at the end of the 19th century in Lvov, a city belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire at that time. Twardowski was a student of Franz Brentano and shared his view that the method of philosophy is the same as that of science, and intended to introduce scientific philosophy to Polish intellectual life. Two stages in the history of LWS can be distinguished. The first begins in 1895, when Twardowski became professor in Lvov. As a charismatic teacher he very soon trained several philosophers: Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz (1890–1963), Tadeusz Czeżowski (1889–1981), Tadeusz Kotarbiński (1886–1981), Stanisław Leśniewski (1886–1939), Jan Łukasiewicz (1878–1956) and Zygmunt Zawirski (1882–1948). This stage of the history of LWS ends in the years 1915–1918. The reopening of the University of Warsaw in 1915 was a significant event – Kotarbiński, Leśniewski and Łukasiewicz were appointed as professors in this university.

After restating Polish independence in 1918, Warsaw became the second center of LWS. The rise of the Warsaw Logical School was the most significant fact in the history of LWS, not only in its second stage. This school became a common creation of philosophers and mathematicians. Leśniewski, and Łukasiewicz, appointed as professors of logic, would very soon find gifted students, such as Alfred Tarski (1901–1983), Adolf Lindenbaum (1904–1941), Mordechaj Wajsberg (1902–1943?), Stanisław Jaśkowski (1906–1965), Jerzy Śłupecki (1904–1987), Andrzej Mostowski (1916–1975), Bolesław Sobociński (1906–1980), and Czesław Lejewski (1913–2001). Kotarbiński was another important teacher in Warsaw and trained, among others, Janina Hosiasson-Lindenbaum (1899–1941), Edward Poznański (1901–1976), Dina Szejnabrg (later – Janina Kotarbińska; 1901–1997) and Aleksander Wundheiler (1902–1957). Twardowski and Ajdukiewicz remained in Lvov; their students included Izydora Dąmbska (1904–1983), Maria Kokoszyńska (1905–1980) and Henryk Mehlberg (1904–1978). To complete the picture, Czeżowski taught in Vilna, Zawirski – in Poznań, later in Cracow.

LWS also influenced catholic philosophy. Fathers Józef M. Bocheński (1902–1995) and Jan Salamucha (1903–1944) tried to modernize neo-scholasticism by using logical tools. In general, LWS was an analytic movement, similar to the Vienna Circle, although not so radical in criticism of traditional philosophy. It favored investigations in formal logic, philosophy of

language and philosophy of science, but also used logical methods in analyzing classical philosophical problems.

World War II finished the history of LWS. Twardowski and Leśniewski died before 1939, the Lindenbaums, Wajsberg (they were Jews) and Salamucha – were murdered by the Nazis, Zawirski died in 1947, Lejewski, Łukasiewicz, Mehlberg, Sobociński and Tarski left Poland. Although many members of LWS became active as professors in Poland and found many students after 1945, LWS was not revived and existed only through the individual activities of its former members. The communist regime did not favor the resurrection of analytic philosophy. Yet one should note that high standards of doing philosophy by LWS essentially contributed to preserving the quality of philosophizing in Poland after 1945, perhaps more successfully than in other countries of the Soviet bloc.

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Further readings

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