

works. No less outstanding, however, was his interest in and contribution to civic and social affairs. He showed this as an energetic member of the Bishops' Committee for Relief in Cracow during the World War, and by his presence as a delegate at the Peace Conference just after it. Those who knew him found him as near as any one could be to a living example of the qualities expressed in the Latin proverb *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*.

This brief notice can only mention his contribution to the field of science, which he loved so loyally and in which he won distinction. His first scientific work was published in 1895, a general book on Java appeared in 1912, and a notable work, the *Treasures of the Sea* found its second edition in 1928. Another, called *The Deepes*, reached a second edition the following year. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences from 1903, permanent delegate of Poland to the International Council for Marine Research, and was honored by the University of Strasbourg with a doctorate in 1919, and of Wilno 10 years later. Not only was he a tireless traveller in the interests of research, but he insisted on his younger colleagues following in his footsteps in this respect. As a result, the atmosphere of the zoological laboratory in Cracow was always a serious one, though the kindly spirit of the Chief made everyone feel at home.

I met Siedlecki first during the Peace conference days of 1919. I next found him engaged in the difficult task of restoring something of the body and the spirit of Polish learning in Wilno, after it had been wiped out by the agents of the Tsar for nearly 100 years. On his return to Cracow he became an esteemed adviser on the Council of the local YMCA, which was an entirely new experiment in social service in Poland. In 1936 I had the privilege of a longer conversation with him in which we reviewed 15 years of friendship. At 67 he can be said to have finished his work, but the cruel injustice, not to say the brutality of the fate which overtook him, has robbed his country before his time of a still useful servant.

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MARIAN ZDZIECHOWSKI¹
1861-1938

IN spite of the fact that, for obvious historical and political reasons, Pan-slavism and even Slavophile ideas never had any chance of developing in Poland, the achievements of Polish scholars in the field of Slavic studies have always been noteworthy. Especially in linguistics, such great philologists as Baudouin de Courtenay, Jan M. Rozwadowski, A. A. Kryński,

¹ Born in 1861 on his family's estate, Raków, in the district of Minsk. Studied in Petersburg and Dorpat; in 1894 docent at Cracow; in 1899 professor of the history of universal literature at the Jagellonian University, Cracow. Member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters in the same year. In 1919, professor at the University of Wilno; in 1926 rector of that University. Died at Wilno in 1938.

Jan Łoś, K. Nitsch, H. Ułaszyn, St. Szober and, among younger scholars, T. Lehr-Spławiński, Kuryłłowicz, W. Doroszewski, W. Taszycki, Słoński, and Małecki, give proof of a solid and brilliant Polish tradition in this field.

But even in the sphere of research in the history of Slavic literatures — I am not thinking for the moment of Polish literature, which always engaged an immense and diversified crew of researchers — the role of Polish scholars until the war was valuable and, in some cases, highly original. Everybody remembers the fantastic achievements of Alexander Brückner, that Polish encyclopedia of Slavic culture and letters. The studies of Włodzimierz Spasowicz on Russian poets and writers are even now full of interest and weight. The works of Jan Łoś, J. Ptaszycki, and J. Krzyżanowski on Russian popular poetry and on old Russian literature won distinguished rank. The investigations of Józef Tretiak on *The Tale of Igor*, in the field of Ukrainian literature, and especially on Pushkin and Mickiewicz were in the nature of a revelation before the World War. The comparative studies on Bohemian and Polish literatures by Marian Szyjkowski, as well as those of the anthropologist J. Czekanowski and the historian J. Kucharzewski are not less important. It would be just to cite here also that distinguished Polish Slavacist J. Gołąbek, who was killed during the bombardment of Warsaw, and Rafał Blüth, author of original and perspicacious studies on Russian literature, who was executed by the Germans in the Polish capital. The brilliant critiques and reviews of K. W. Zawodziński, Czesław Jankowski, K. Czachowski, J. Stempowski, L. Okołów-Podhorski, and L. Piwiński on Russian subjects, the most recent Polish translations of Russian authors by J. Tuwim, J. Iwaszkiewicz, C. Belmont, Wl. Słobodnik, and Broniewski, and the research work of many younger scholars prove that modern Slavic studies possessed a great tradition and a brilliant future in Poland.

To the same group of scholars and critics belonged Marian Zdziechowski, one of the greatest among European Slavic scholars. He was a peculiar personality and a peculiar scholar. Moved by powerful religious and moral convictions, constantly active in his soul, gifted with a brilliant talent of expression, he was a great writer. Full of passion, wonderfully courageous in his opinions, independent and energetic, deeply interested in social and political problems, he stood out among his colleagues as their ideologist, their philosopher, and their thinker, and in the whole country he became, during the last years of his life, a sort of national conscience.

A perfect gentleman of distinguished Polish noble stock, brilliantly educated, possessing a full command of both spoken and written French, German, Italian, Russian, and several other Slavic languages, and in Polish a great stylist, Zdziechowski during his whole life enriched his knowledge not only with the help of books but through personal contacts with men.

He spent much time in travel, and everywhere, in Western Europe or

in Russia, he always met the outstanding personalities of his day: Tolstoi, Solovyov, Pypin, Chicherin, Merezhkowski, Masaryk, and Sarrazin, among others. Every one of his books was a subjective expression of his personal thought and feeling. This lyrical attitude also constituted its peculiar charm. Zdziechowski never felt any timidity in saying what he thought and believed, and he always gave ethical values and estimates to philosophical, political, and literary facts. Thus every one of his books is a judgment and a dialogue, a dialogue between the author and the man about whom he wrote. As I have remarked, Zdziechowski was not an ordinary man, but an uncommon and rare man; in some aspects he was unique. He was deeply religious, a deeply religious Catholic. His religiosity was the most essential substance of his soul, and this substance was binding. Religion not only granted him its eternal help, thanks to which he was able to bear the enigma of existence. Religion was for him a factor which formed the whole of his personal existence, and which lent meaning to the national life about him. Zdziechowski did not accept confessional formalism, impotent against ethical conflicts; he turned away from it. The mind of Zdziechowski was not speculative. There lay his weakness as a thinker. But therein also lay his power as a man: the categorical imperative of morality destroyed in him every speculative synthesis like a stone thrown among crystals.

His apocalyptic temper and eschatological style of thought made him extremely impressionable and sensitive to every sign of the approaching end, to every ill-boding omen of catastrophe. In the atmosphere of the Apocalypse and of eschatology his innate pessimism lived and developed. No man becomes a pessimist; he is born one. Zdziechowski was born with pessimism in his heart and soul. But his pessimism did not lead him to despair, because it was creative and active, nourished with the pathetic will to moral perfection. He had nothing of negation, scepticism, or nihilism. His was an active pessimism. With courage he went against danger. His sensitiveness and perspicacity made him see and feel danger behind the façade of happiness and prosperity, so that he often sensed evil where the majority saw good. His ear was much more keen than the ears of the majority. For him *vox populi* was seldom *vox Dei*. And God spoke to him differently than to anyone else. God needed no trumpets of Archangels to speak to Zdziechowski, who heard the divine whisper with ears of heart and soul.

These faculties and these characteristics of his personality made Zdziechowski from the beginning of his work a classic and ideal representative of the spiritual élite of the nation. With others he built this gifted and superior class of society. Here must be accentuated another trait of his personality: the independence of his thought and the courage of his opinions. In that sense he was an ideal representative of the élite, because to it belong only those who know that a man may avoid a decision and may even act against the commands of his conscience, but he is not able to think otherwise than his individual faculty of thought

commands him. In this fact lies the real inaccessible freedom of the élite, and here is hidden the peculiar privilege of the élite, which primarily represents independent thought and serves nothing else. But only those may belong to it who biologically, by tradition, by education, are immanently peaceful. They know that the mind is not merely independence, but a prison as well. They know that this prison is only a flimsy tent, but they are also conscious of being able and bound to leave this tent with only one goal before their eyes: goodness. And such was Zdziechowski.

A born moralist, gifted with faith in the immanence of morality in the human being, he was a racial knight of ethics and honor. In public and private affairs, his interpretation of this beautiful "religion" — of the "religion of honor," as the poet has said — was in the first place an unwritten code of behavior, excluding every act which would be opposed to honor. He was less absorbed in the defense of honor against danger from without than in the concern that no one should disturb his own honor with unchivalrous and ungenerous gestures. Prince Joseph Poniatowski was his beloved hero, cultivated in his imagination. "God confided to me the honor of the Poles and I shall give it back only to God" — these are the words which Zdziechowski held deep in his heart, and which sustain those of us who are infinitely attached to the continuity and the tradition of the Polish historical type.

Zdziechowski was, as I have noted, a professor-gentleman. He was a European. The immense range of his scientific and spiritual interests is brilliant proof of that. He spent fifty years of his life in contact with every thing that was most beautiful and most sublime in European literature, because he himself had noble ideas and a lofty spirit. A Roman would say: *animi magnitudo*, a Greek: *megalopsychia*. And at the same time there was in him an extraordinary delicacy, an exceptional subtlety of conscience, a neatness almost childlike. This man breathed in an air clean and neat — like a child's prayer, to use the metaphor of his beloved Lermontov. A sense of comprehension and tolerance, a magnanimity united with fearless moral constancy and energy in his fight against evil, made of him, in the last years of his life, a sort of national conscience. There was no national exclusivity and nothing provincial about him. He spent his life in Cracow and in Wilno — but he lived in the *Civitas Dei*, in universality.

He was not only a Slavist — he was one of the first and one of the most brilliant students of comparative literature. His best works were done on that plane: *Messianists and Slavophiles*, *Byron and his Century*, *The Principal Problem of Russia*, *Pessimism*, *Romanticism and the Bases of Christianity*, *The Russian Influences on the Polish Soul*, *The Dualism of Russian Religious Thought*, as well as his great monographs on Cha-teaubriand and the Bourbons, Napoleon III, his study *On Cruelty and his Europe*, *Russia*, and *Asia*, and his sketches on Polish literature.

All these basic characteristics of his personality are manifest in his

works on Slavic subjects. Such are his studies on Byronism in the Slavic literatures (in connection with Byronism in Western Europe), on Bohemian Romanticism, on the Croat renaissance, and his numerous works on Russia, as well as his studies in connection with Polish letters.

Perhaps the most important part of his achievement is that which he devoted to Russia. He was a man of love and devotion, but also of idiosyncrasies. His pen glowed with a flame and a splendor of peculiar brilliancy when it touched the glittering surface of Russian intellectual speculation. But *quod petit, spernit; repetit quod nuper omisit*. During the greater part of his life he gave himself to the Russian temptation and at the same time defended himself and Poland from this temptation. When Russia was dominated by Bolshevism, he turned away with abomination and dismay. That was not, however, his final attitude towards Russia. Behind the repulsive and ignominious features that he discerned in Bolshevism, Zdziechowski with faithful and sincere sympathy perceived the nobler faces of his old "Muscovite friends" — Lermontov, Pushkin, Tolstoi, the brothers Trubetzkoï, Solovyov, Chicherin, and the Slavophiles — and he wrote about them often with admiration and always with respect.

He was a *kresowiec*, i.e., a Pole from the eastern Polish borderlands, which insures a personality and a type of peculiar historical formation. His was the mentality and the character of a Pole built on the tradition of eastern Polish nobility, in which were united elements of national Messianism and of cultural imperialism, of peaceful command and leadership, and of the gift of coexistence and collaboration, of respect for the rights and customs of the international community.

He was a Jagellonian Pole. He brought all his qualities to the Jagellonian University, in which he taught for a quarter of a century, and he covered this oldest Polish academy with the brightness of his own renown, for Zdziechowski was one of the best professors of that illustrious institution, now laid low and mutilated by the oppressors of Poland. To his lectures came generations not only of students, but of all Cracow, in order to be initiated into the most essential and the most intimate substance of European culture.

With sincere regret Cracow yielded him to Wilno — with regret, but also with comprehension both for his longing as of a Pole attached to those eastern lands of the Republic and for the great role he was called to play there.¹

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¹ I have published a more complete portrayal of Zdziechowski as a Russicist and Dr. W. Bobek has characterized his merits as a Slavist in a book dedicated to Zdziechowski in 1933 on the occasion of his fiftieth jubilee: *Z Zagadnień kulturalno-literackich Wschodu i Zachodu* (Cracow, 1933-1934), pp. XLVI+358 (*Prace Polskiego Towarzystwa dla Badań Europy Wschodniej i Bliskiego Wschodu* pod red. Dra W. Lednickiego, No. IV), where the reader may find the complete bibliography of Zdziechowski's publications up to 1934 (more than 30 books and nearly 200 articles).