

not finished two greater works: I. Language of the village Derenk (Monography of the dialect of the Polish village in North-Hungary), II. the dissertation Infinitival and participial constructions in the Udmurt language. Lately he prepared a textbook of Sanskrit on the grounds of his didactic work. All these works are noticeable by their precision and originality of conclusions.

He was twice married. From the first marriage he had a son and a daughter, from the second one two sons. His premature demise is a great loss for the Polish research work in Finno-Ugrian and Indian philology.

Tadeusz LEWICKI

THE CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE LATE
PROF. DR. TADEUSZ KOWALSKI

The internationally famous Prof. Tadeusz Kowalski, one of the most outstanding Polish orientalists, a man of great nobility of character and kindness was born a hundred years ago on the 21st of June 1889. All his life he was connected with Kraków where he lived, worked and died on the 5th of May 1948. There are not many of his colleagues or even pupils left now, and so it seems proper to remind the new generation of orientlists of him.

Following his death his achievements were fully reported in numerous articles. Today I shall deal with his private life.

Tadeusz Kowalski was born in Châteauroux in France. His father, Teofil Kowalski, a Polish emigrant, was an analytical chemist, working in the French textile industry. His mother Kazimiera, née Kuszpecińska was a daughter of a High Court judge in Kraków. In 1894 Teofil Kowalski returned to Kraków with his wife and children. Tadeusz Kowalski was then 5 years old. The father died shortly afterwards and the mother brought up the two boys (Tadeusz and four years older Ludwik - later to become an analytical chemist and geologist). Already at school (eight years followed by matriculation in the grammar school of Nowodworski in Kraków) Tadeusz Kowalski was greatly interested in the Muslim Orient and this became the main subject of his University study. He met his future wife, the late Zofia Medwecka while still at school. They were both very active in organisations of progressive youth. They were also interested in rambles, mountaineering and skiing - this last in its infancy then. They remained active in these sports almost to the end

of their lives. After matriculating in 1907 Kowalski went to Vienna to read Oriental studies, there being then no such faculty in Kraków. At that time the three principal languages Arabic, Turkish and Persian and Islamic culture were the main subjects. Tadeusz Kowalski studied in Vienna under the eminent prof. R. Gayer, expert in old Arabic poetry. Under his influence Kowalski became interested in this branch of knowledge and it was to be the subject of his doctor's thesis. He received his doctorate in 1911 at the age of 21 years. Wishing to acquaint himself with methods and views of other orientalists he spent the next university session in Strassburg where he studied under the world famous prof. T. Nöldecke and E. Littman and later in Köln under prof. G. Jacob. Prof. Jacob introduced him to the problems of mediaeval Arab geography, which led eventually to a thesis on the travels in Slavonic countries of Ibrahīm ibn Jā'kūb, an Arabic writer of the 10th century. Tadeusz Kowalski habilitated at the Jagiellonian University at the age of 25 years in the Spring of 1914 - shortly before the outbreak of World War I.

In 1911, after receiving his doctorate, Tadeusz Kowalski married Zofia Medwecka then a student of medicine in Vienna. They were a perfect couple. Apart from mutual affection, they shared ideals, beliefs and a passion for learning. Right from the beginning they used to spend all their free time in Kościelisko, near Zakopane, where they lived in a peasant cottage. Several friends (often dating since school days) like the two brothers Goetel (Ferdinand and Walery), Helena Dłuska, Mieczysław Śwież joined them in excursions and discussions, chiefly around the Dłuskis, both doctors and social workers, founders of the first sanatorium for tubercular patients. The Sanatorium in general and the Dłuskis in particular were in the pre first War years the hub of intellectual life in Zakopane. Their regular visitors were Maria Curie-Skłodowska and family (sister of Mrs Dłuska), Paderewski (friend of Dr. Dłuski since student days), Henryk Sienkiewicz, Helena Modrzejewska and many other writers, painters, musicians, actors and men of science.

During the first World War the Kowalskis lived for a year in their beloved Kościelisko and later in Kraków and Vienna but returned frequently to the Tatra mountains. Tadeusz Kowalski was called up to the Austrian army, but was soon discharged and was able to continue his work.

In 1918 they settled permanently in Kraków. In 1919 the endeavours of prof. Jan Rozwadowski and Kazimierz Nitsch resulted in the creation in the Jagiellonian University in Kraków of a chair of Oriental philology - Arab, Turkish and Iranian. This chair was offered to Tadeusz Kowalski with the title of "special professor". He became a full professor two years later.

Enormous erudition apart, Tadeusz Kowalski was also an excellent teacher and a real friend of young people. He tried to teach his pupils to think independently and methodically. It was high class teaching. The present writer got his doctorate at the University of Jan Kazimierz in Lwów in 1931, followed by two years at the Sorbonne and College de France and then attended regularly in 1934-39 the supremely interesting and very learned seminars, lectures and consultations of prof. Kowalski. Prof. Kowalski made some very useful comments on my thesis on the subject of Poland and neighbouring countries as described by the Arab geographer al-Idrīsī (1154). During my frequent visits in Kraków, lasting sometimes a few weeks, I not only learned a lot, acquired often a new viewpoint of problems but gained the enormously valuable friendship of the professor who was less than 20 years older than I. He persuaded me to spend part of my holidays in 1935-39 in Kościelisko and take part in long trips in the mountains. The Kowalskis house was always open to all young adepts of Oriental studies. Receptions in that house and rambles around Kraków were justly famous among students. Besides myself and others, visitors in Kościelisko were also Ananiasz Zajączkowski (later professor of Turkology at the University in Warsaw) and Włodzimierz Zajączkowski (later professor of Turkology at the University in Kraków).

Teaching duties and frequent trips to the Tatra mountains did not interfere with intensive research work. Prof. Kowalski's main interest were Arab philology and Turkish dialects. He published several articles and textbooks on Arabic, of which especially noteworthy are treatises on two Arab poets: Kays ibn al-Hatim (1914) and Ka'b ibn Zuhayr (1950). A separate chapter are works on mediaeval Arab geographers leading to the publication of a report on the travels to Slav countries of Ibrahīm ibn Jakub (1946). This publication marks the beginning of a new trend in Arabic historical studies in Poland, giving historians priceless sources.

on the culture in early Middle Ages in Poland and other slavonic countries.

Equally important and much more numerous are the Turkological treatises. Here we observe two main interests of prof. Kowalski. The first resulted in a world pioneering study of dialects based on research carried out during frequent visits to Turkey and Bulgaria. Prof. Kowalski visited almost all of Asia Minor by car, cart and on foot. In the Balkans he worked mainly with Turkish minorities in Bulgaria. His first journey to Turkey was in 1923 and the last in 1947. The crowning of this work is Osmanisch-türkisch Dialecte (Enzyklopaedie des Islam, vol. 4, 1931). Tadeusz Kowalski also pioneered studies on the language and culture of Turkish speaking Polish Karaites. His largest work in this field is Karaimische Texte im Dialect von Troki (1929), which contains also an exhaustive study of the history and culture of Karaites.

Tadeusz Kowalski left fewer treatises on Persian philology or strictly speaking literature. Among the earliest ones is an excellent treatise on the Persian poet Omar Khayyam (1934). Among the last treatises are Studies on Šah-name, prepared during the war and published posthumously in 1952 (2 vols).

A collection of essays published in book form in 1935 On the trail of Islam bears testimony not only to wide interests and enormous erudition but also to literary talent. It is written in beautiful Polish.

The Polish Academy of Science (Polska Akademia Umiejętności - PAU) could not fail to notice the excellent work of the then young orientalist Tadeusz Kowalski and in 1927 at the age of 38 years he was elected member and in 1932 Fellow of the Academy. In the Academy he showed his gift for organisation. Even before becoming Fellow of the Academy, he created the Commission for Oriental studies PAU and a new publishing venture: "Theses of the Commission for Oriental Studies" of which he edited 38 volumes. In all in this series there were 40 volumes, published up to 1952 (when the Polish Academy was wound up by the government) and containing theses by Polish and foreign scientists. In 1939 Kowalski was elected general secretary of the Academy, a position which he held until his death in 1947. He rebuilt the Academy after the war and was preparing the celebration of its 70 year jubilee, but did not live to

see it. He was President of the Polish Orientalist Society from the end of the war until his death. Tadeusz Kowalski was a member of many learned Societies both at home and abroad. To mention a few: Académie Arabe en Syrie in Damascus (hon. member); Suomalais-Ugrileinen in Helsinki; Societé Kőrösi Csoma in Budapest; Orientalist Institute in Prague.

The second world war and the German occupation of Poland form a special chapter in the life of prof. Kowalski. On the 6th November 1939 he was arrested together with other professors of the Jagiellonian University in what the Gestapo called "Sonderaktion Krakau". After a short stay in prison in Wrocław he was sent to the concentration camp in Sachsenhausen where he spent the very cold winter of 1939-40. Following intervention by the whole civilised world, he was released with a group of older professors (aged 50 years or more), who managed to survive in the inhuman conditions. He returned to Kraków and until the end of the war worked in the Jagiellonian Library, cataloguing orientalist works, especially those in Arabic alphabet. He took part in underground activities and at the same time studied. It should be explained that the Jagiellonian Library was one of the important points for the Home Army, especially in propaganda. This was where Allied radio was listened to and illegal press edited; this was where illegal documents and papers were stored.

I would like to relate the following little known episode, not mentioned by prof. Kowalski's biographers. After his return from the concentration camp, the professor received from Turkey via Berlin an invitation to a chair of Turkish dialects in Istanbul. As we learned later, a former pupil of the professor, David Lazer, managed to escape to Palestine, where he worked in the Polish Information Centre East. On hearing about the fate of Kraków professors, he decided to help his teacher out of the occupied country. He had a good chance of success because the foreign secretary of neutral Turkey was prof. Köprülü Zadeh Fuad, professor of Turkish language and literature at the Istanbul University and a good friend of Prof. Kowalski. Lazer sent the news of the arrest of prof. Kowalski by diplomatic bag, suggesting an invitation to Istanbul. This was passed on to the Turkish embassy in Berlin and finally to prof. Kowalski. Unfortunately, the Germans demanded that the professor

leave all his property to the German Reich including also his library collected since student days and without which the professor could not continue to work. He therefore did not accept the invitation .

Another little known episode is also connected with Mr. Köprülü Zadeh Fuad. It was after the war, in 1947, the then Polish foreign Secretary, Zygmunt Modzelewski, knowing prof. Kowalski's popularity in Turkey, offered him the position of Polish Ambassador in Turkey. Prof. Kowalski decided to find out first what the real duties of an Ambassador of a socialist country were. He went to Turkey, met old friends, observed the functioning of the Embassy, and refused to accept the position. This was to be the last of his many journeys to Turkey.

The death of Tadeusz Kowalski in his 58th year, interrupted too early his activities, leaving a sad gap in Polish Oriental studies and probably sealed the fate of the Academy of Sciences. Having lost its advocate of such moral prestige the Academy was soon afterwards closed by the government without any voices being raised in protest.

T. Kowalski was humane, of sterling character, highest moral principles and a world authority in his chosen sphere. His death brought to an end a whole era in the development of Oriental studies in Poland. He organised the first chair of languages and culture of the Muslim Orient, he initiated on a world scale the study of Turkish dialects, he acquainted the world of science with the culture of Polish Karaites, he was the teacher of a whole new generation of orientalists (after the war, four of his pupils became professors of oriental studies in Kraków and in Warsaw). I am not going to write about his publications, amounting to 210 important items. The bibliography was published by Włodzimierz Zajaczkowski in the "Oriental yearbook", vol. 17, 1951-2, Kraków. Nor shall I repeat his merits at the rebirth of Polish science and culture after the two world wars.

Tadeusz Kowalski had also a very happy private life. An exceptional marriage, a group of devoted friends and finally the achievements of both his children (although he was not to live to see them). The elder daughter, Anna, is an ethnographer, and the son, Kazimierz, is a zoologist and Fellow of the Polish Academy of

Science.

All those who were fortunate to have known prof. Tadeusz Kowalski, retain a vivid and grateful memory of an exceptional man.

(Translated by Lila Farren)

