



Professor Adam Podgórecki, Ph.D. (Law), LL.D., Ph.D. (Sociology)

(1925 – 1998)

Born 16 December 1925 in Krakow, Poland, and died 18 August 1998 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. A world-renown sociologist of law, creator of the modern sociotechnics as a separate domain of social sciences, author of the in-depth analytical studies of the Polish society, lawyer, academic teacher in Poland, England and Canada. He was a continuator of ideas introduced by Professor Leon Petrażycki, and a student of Professor Maria Ossowska.

Adam Podgórecki grew up in Katowice in a Polish intelligentsia family of nobility origin, Polish coat-of-arms Topór. He was a son of Franciszek, an officer of the Polish Army, and Olga neé Godwug.

Education

He was 13 years old when the WW2 broke out. He continued his schooling at the underground courses, acting at the same time as a messenger for the local resistance cell. In 1945, he graduated with a high school diploma from the The King John the Third Sobieski High School (II Liceum im. Króla Jana III Sobieskiego) in Krakow. During the years 1945 – 1948, he completed a law degree at the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, where he also defended, in 1951, a doctoral dissertation *Związki zawodowe w rozwoju społeczeństwa angielskiego XIX wieku*. (English: *Trade Unions in the development of the English society in XIX century*) .

During the university years, he belonged to the academic youth circles that often gathered at St. Florian's Church, a hub near the Kleparz in Krakow. It was the place where he met a young vicar, Fr. Karol Wojtyła. He also took part in the activities of the informal debating societies in

Krakow, one of them being the Club of Logophagoi (*Towarzystwo Logofagów (pożeraczy słów)*) for which he was invigilated and subjected to harsh interrogations. In 1952, he earned Master of Sociology from the Jagiellonian University for his thesis *Socjologia zakładu naukowego (The Sociology of an Academic Department)*.

In 1963, Adam Podgórecki presented his habilitation thesis *Charakterystyka nauk praktycznych (The Characteristics of Practical Sciences)* at the University of Warsaw, Poland. Later he became Full Professor (*profesor zwyczajny*) at that University and after emigrating to Canada, became Full Professor and, eventually, Distinguished Research Professor in Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University in Ottawa.

Scientific Activities in Poland

After a few years of working as a small-town lawyer, he was in 1956, upon the relaxation of the Stalinist terror, accepted as an assistant by Professor Tadeusz Kotarbiński at the Department of Logic, Institute of Philosophy at the University of Warsaw (UW).

In 1958, he was appointed as an Assistant Professor at the Centre for History and Theory of Ethics, chaired by professor Maria Ossowska at the Institute of Sociology, UW.

After the habilitation in 1963, he served as Vice-Dean, Faculty of Philosophy and Sociology, UW from 1965 to 1967, and from 1968 as Chair of the Centre for the Study of Social Norms and Social Pathology, Institute of Sociology, UW. He earned the rank of Associate Professor (*Profesor Nadzwyczajny*) in 1972.

In 1969, he conceptualized and co-founded the interdisciplinary Instytut Profilaktyki Społecznej i Resocjalizacji (IPSiR) (*Social Prevention and Resocialization Institute*) at UW, where since 1973 he chaired the Centre for Sociology of Norms and Social Pathology.

Three years later, his work was deemed politically subversive and the Centre was closed. As a result, Professor Podgórecki was ordered to transfer to the Institute of Philosophy at UW and was forbidden to have contact with students or publish; his colleagues were either forcibly transferred or expelled. It may be worth pointing out that none of the eighteen members of his Centre, including himself, was a member of the communist party.

By that time he had already been given respect and recognition by his peers from the academic and intellectual circles. He was elected Secretary of the Board of the Polish Sociological Association (PSA) (*Polskie Towarzystwo Sociologiczne*) from 1963 to 1966; Chairman of the Warsaw Section of the PSA, from 1963 to 1967; he was also a founder and a long-time president of the Sociology of Law Section of PSA from 1962 to 1978, and the Sociotechnics Section from 1969 to 1978. These were pioneering efforts as at that time neither of those disciplines was institutionally recognised anywhere else in the world.

Professor Podgórecki was also active on the international academic arena. Working within the framework of the International Sociological Association (ISA), he founded, together with William M. Evan, the Research Committee on the Sociology of Law (in 1962), which Podgórecki co-chaired. In 1972, he established and chaired for some time the Research Committee on Sociotechnics ISA. Despite the systemic limitations and frequent refusals to grant him a passport (exit visa), Professor Podgórecki was able to undertake several international trips as either Visiting Professor or Fellow. He was a recipient of fellowship provided by the Ford Foundation in New York, NY shortly after the onset of political thaw of 1956. He was also a

Fellow at the All Souls College at Oxford University in 1971 and at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University in 1972. As Visiting Professor, he lectured at the Northwestern University, Evanston in the United States, in 1971 and Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, in 1973.

In his research in Poland, Professor Podgórecki focused primarily on the issues related to legal policy, sociology of law, and the methodological specifics of practical sciences. Drawing on the ideas of Professor Leon Petrażycki and the fundamentals of praxeology introduced by Professor Tadeusz Kotarbiński, he developed his own innovative theories.

In exile

The imposed restrictions on his creativity and the scope of research were too agonizing for such a great intellect and scholar as Professor Podgórecki. For a scientist who had already gained the high status of scientific authority recognized by the international scientific community, the conditions of his professional life in Poland under the constant pressures of the communist ideology became unbearable.

Holland

Being denied the opportunities to teach and conduct research, Professor Podgórecki accepted the long-standing invitation from the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities, and was eventually allowed to go to Holland in 1977. During that time, he fell seriously ill and underwent a life-saving surgery. After a period of recuperation, he went to Great Britain.

Great Britain

In 1978, he was a Research Professor at the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies in Wolfson College in Oxford. After a year, he left for the American continent.

Canada

In 1979, Professor Podgórecki was offered the position as Full Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University in Ottawa. His teaching and academic achievements in the disciplines of sociology of law and sociotechnics, both in Poland and Canada, earned him international acclaim and recognition. Apart from being active in Canada, he continued his engagement with various institutions abroad, for example: the Wilson Centre in Washington, from 1985 to 1986, Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften 1993, Stanford Law School in California in 1994, and the Center for Study of Law and Society, University of California at Berkeley in 1994. During the twenty-year period in Canada, Professor Podgórecki maintained his interest in sociology of law, sociotechnics, and sociology of science. In addition, he continued work on synthesising his long-term research and observations on Polish society.

In his rich intellectual life Professor Podgórecki had many friends, students and co-workers. They were forming in some sense, his extended family.

Awards

1978 - Award from Alfred Jurzykowski Foundation in New York.

1997 – Professor Bronisław Malinowski Memorial Award, Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, N.Y.

1998 – Honorary Member of the International Institute for the Sociology of Law, Oñati, Spain.

2004 - In recognition of his scientific contributions, the ISA Research Committee on Sociology of Law established the Adam Podgórecki Prize.

Family

Professor Podgórecki is survived by his wife Professor Maria Łoś, a life-long friend and companion.

Publications

In addition to the selected publications listed below, Professor Podgórecki authored, co-authored and edited a great number of academic articles and edited collections of papers published mainly in English and Polish. He also wrote dozens of epigrams in an adopted form of ancient Chinese tales in which the author's reflections are expressed by a fictional Chinese sage Si Tien. These collections were published in London, UK, by the Poets and Painters, e.g. *Si Tien's Last Day*, and later also by Carleton University.

Below is the list of his main academic books published in Poland and outside of Poland in 1957-2016.

Podgórecki, A. (1957). *Założenia Polityki Prawa*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Prawnicze.

Podgórecki, A. (1962). *Charakterystyka Nauk Praktycznych*. Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna.

Podgórecki, A. (1962). *Sociologia Prawa*. Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna.

Podgórecki, A. (1964). *Zjawiska prawne w opinii publicznej*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Prawnicze.

Podgórecki, A. (1966). *Prestiż Prawa*. Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza.

Podgórecki, A. (1966). *Zasady Sociotechniki*. Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna.

Podgórecki, A. et al. (1971). *Poglądy Społeczeństwa Polskiego na Moralność i Prawo*. Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza.

Podgórecki, A. (1971). *Zasady Socjologii Prawa*. Warszawa: PWN.

Podgórecki, A. et al. (1974). *Knowledge and Opinion about Law*. Oxford: M. Robertson.

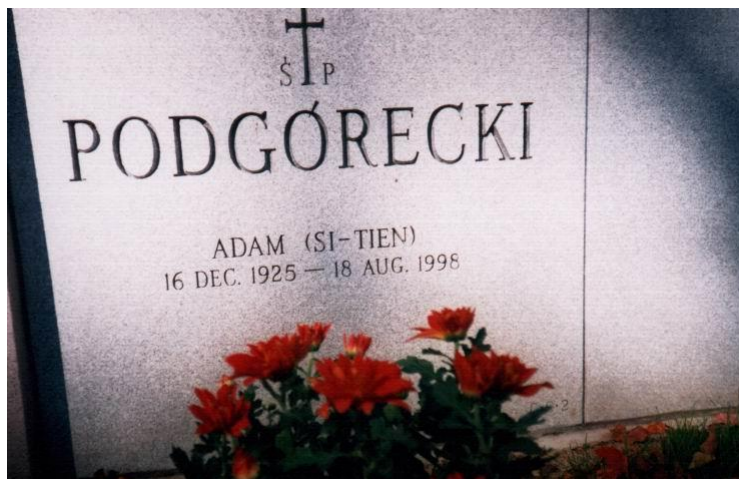
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Podgorecki, A. & Łoś, M. (1979) *Multi-Dimensional Sociology*. London: Routledge & Kegan & Paul.

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- Podgórecki, A. (1991). *A Sociological Theory of Law*. Milan: Giuffrè.
- Podgórecki, A. (1993). *Social Oppression*. Westport: Praeger.
- Podgórecki, A. (1994). *Polish Society*. Westport: Praeger.
- Podgórecki, A. (1995). *Spoleczenstwo Polskie*. Rzeszow: Wydawnictwo Wyzszej Szkoły Pedagogicznej.
- Podgórecki, A. & Olgati, V. (1996). *Totalitarian and Post-Totalitarian Law*. Aldershot: Dartmouth Publ.
- Podgórecki, A. (1997). *Higher Faculties*. Westport: Praeger.
- Podgórecki, A. (1998). *Socjologiczna teoria prawa*. Warszawa: Interart (Prace IPSiR UW).
- Podgórecki, A. (2016). *Mega-Sociology*. Warszawa: Uniwersytet Warszawski (IPSiR).



The grave of Professor Adam Podgórecki in Ottawa

Bibliography

- Aleksander Maciej Jabłoński, *Pożegnanie Profesora Adama Podgóreckiego*, manuskrypt, Ottawa 1998 (in Polish)
- A Search for Knowledge and Freedom*, praca zbiorowa, Polski Instytut Naukowy, Oddział Ottawski, „Promyk”, Ottawa 1995
- Idee naukowe Adama Podgóreckiego*, red. Jerzy Kwaśniewski i Jan Winczorek, Prace Katedry Socjologii Norm, Dewiacji i Kontroli Społecznej Instytutu Profilaktyki Społecznej i Resocjalizacji Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego (IPSiR UW), Polskie Towarzystwo Socjologiczne, Sekcja Socjologii Prawa, Warszawa 2009 (in Polish)

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Photos from the private archives of Podgórecki Family

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