

= Stanisław Staszic =

Stanisław Wawrzyniec Staszic [sta-?iswaf -?sta-?it -? s] (6 November 1755 - 20 January 1826) was a leading figure in the Polish Enlightenment : a Catholic priest , philosopher , geologist , writer , poet , translator and statesman . A physiocrat , monist , pan -@-@ Slavist (after 1815) and laissez -@-@ fairist , he supported many reforms in Poland . He is particularly remembered for his political writings during the " Great (Four @-@ Year) Sejm " (1788 - 92) and for his support of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 , adopted by that Sejm .

He co -@-@ founded the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning (precursor to the Polish Academy of Sciences) , of which he became president . He served as a member of the State Council of the Duchy of Warsaw and as minister of trade and industry in Congress Poland . Staszic is seen as the father of Polish geology , statistics , sociology , Tatra Mountains studies and exploration , mining and industry .

= = Life = =

= = = Early life = = =

Stanisław Staszic was born into a burgher family in the town of Piśa on 6 November 1755 , the youngest of four siblings . His father , Wawrzyniec Staszic , was mayor of Piśa and a royal secretary .

Staszic attended secondary school at Wałcz . He studied theology and graduated from a Jesuit school at Poznań in 1778 and was ordained a Catholic priest (he took lesser Holy Orders in 1774 , and higher orders about 1778 - 79) . Between 1779 and 1781 he continued his studies in France at the Collège de France , where he took classes in physics and natural history .

On returning to Poland in 1781 , he accepted a position as tutor in the house of Grand Crown Chancellor Andrzej Zamoyski . In 1782 he received a doctorate from the Zamojski Academy . He translated several works from French into Polish and briefly worked at the Academy as a teacher of French language .

= = = Reformer = = =

His Remarks upon the Life of Jan Zamoyski (Uwagi nad Życiem Jana Zamoyskiego , 1787) , published anonymously on the eve of the Great Sejm , transformed the little @-@ known tutor into one of the chief political thinkers of the late 18th @-@ century Commonwealth . It became a model for other similar works and began a flood of political books and pamphlets unprecedented in the Commonwealth 's history . It was reprinted numerous times , including in unauthorized editions .

Within his Remarks , Staszic did not portray the life of Jan Zamoyski (1542 - 1605 , one of the most prominent statesmen in Polish history) ; rather , he argued that reforms are needed , and that Zamoyski had already proposed or supported many of them two centuries before . Staszic was a strong partisan of reforms and an ardent advocate for the interests of the lower classes . He advocated the abolition of the serfdom and improvements of the peasants ' fate (by granting them land and private rights) . He criticised the szlachta (Polish nobility) for inefficient governance , and argued that it showed itself too inept to be allowed to govern alone . He argued for a slight increase in taxes , which should allow the Commonwealth to create an army of 100 @, @ 000 that would at least stand a chance against the still @-@ larger armies of its neighbours . Although he preferred republicanism in theory , in the Commonwealth context he agreed that a strengthening of the central (royal) power was the most practical solution for reforming the country , in line with the similar developments elsewhere in Europe . In Remarks he even supported the introduction of an absolute monarchy in Poland .

Staszic was a keen observer of the proceedings of the Great Sejm , spending much time in Warsaw since the Sejm began its deliberations in 1788 . He continued publishing new books and pamphlets .

His Warnings for Poland , coming from the current European politics and natural laws , by the writer of the remarks upon the life of Jan Zamoyski (Przestrogi dla Polski z teraźniejszych politycznych Europy związków i z praw natury wypadające przez pisarza uwag nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego , 1790) , together with his previous Remarks , are considered among the most influential works of the Polish Enlightenment . In Warnings , he criticised the magnates of Poland and Lithuania , monastic orders and serfdom , and supported the enfranchisement of the townsfolk . Although he was not a participant of the Sejm , he was an influential onlooker , and through his widely read and discussed writings of the time is recognized as one of the founding fathers of the Constitution of May 3 , 1791 .

During 1790 ? 1791 he accompanied Zamoyski 's family on a trip abroad , and continued to serve as an adviser to the family , although his relations with the sons (Aleksander August Zamoyski , Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski) had become strained ; he would eventually align himself with the daughter of the family , Anna Zamoyska (Anna Jadwiga Sapieżyńska) . He supported the 1794 Kościuszkowski Uprising , a failed attempt to liberate Commonwealth from foreign influence following the events of the 1793 Second Partition of Poland , donating money to the insurgents ' cause . Upon the defeat of the Uprising , he accompanied the family on their trip to Vienna . He also made some successful financial investments , including in the stock market . He then served as an economic adviser for the Zamoyski and the Sapieha families , invested in their estates , and lent them money .

== = Late life == =

After the partitions of Poland , in which Russia , Prussia , and Austria seized all of the Commonwealth 's territory , Staszic was active in many scientific and scholarly initiatives . He studied the geology of the Carpathian Mountains . In 1800 he co -founded the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning ; from 1802 he was one of its most active members . In 1804 he went to France , where he observed the changes wrought by Napoleon . On return to Poland in 1805 , he spent some time in the Tatra Mountains , where he continued his geological studies and conducted ethnographic ones . He worked with Jan Chrystian Hoffmann on a geological map of Poland . In the Duchy of Warsaw he worked with the Ministry of Education (Izba Edukacyjna Królestwa Warszawskiego) and was involved in numerous educational reforms and initiatives . He also briefly worked with the Ministry of Treasury .

From 1808 he was president of the Society of Friends of Learning (Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk , or TPN) , forerunner to the Polish Academy of Sciences (Polska Akademia Nauk) ; he would be elected repeatedly as the society 's president until his death . In 1808 he also became referendary to the State Council (Rada Stanu) of the Duchy ; in 1810 he became a full member . In the Council , he was active in regard to questions of education and the economy . As TPN president he was active in many initiatives which supported and popularized science in Poland . He oversaw the construction of a headquarters for the TPN , which came to be known as the " Staszic Palace " .

From 1814 he supported the Russian Empire , seen as a Pan -Slavist ally of Poland , and favored the idea of a great Slavic monarchy . After the fall of the Duchy of Warsaw in 1815 , he became a member of the government of the newly created small state of Congress Poland (in personal union with Russia) , initially in the new Ministry of Education and Religion , in 1816 serving as deputy minister . In 1815 he was decorated with the Order of Saint Stanislaus . In 1819 he endorsed a controversial censorship law , damaging his reputation .

His 1815 Polish translation of Homer 's Iliad met with a negative reception . In 1816 ? 20 he published many of his writings in a 9 -volume Works (Dzieła) . Volumes 7 ? 9 comprised his Humankind : A Didactic Poem (Ród Ludzki . Poema Dydaktyczne) , a gigantic philosophical essay and poem that is regarded as an important contribution to the history of Polish philosophy . However , the work ran afoul of the new censorship law and was not distributed , much of the edition eventually being destroyed .

He also carried out studies on education and on human behavior , in a social -science tradition . Some of his views and theories made him a precursor of evolutionism in the natural and social sciences . In his essays on human nature , he declared for the primacy of science and was relatively

critical of the influence of religion . These views gained him some critics , as he was seen as a priest who had abandoned religion .

From 1816 he was involved in mining research and projects . He also actively supported industrial development in Poland . He was one of the first to see the importance of coal , and supported the development of metallurgy @-@ related projects , from mines to zinc and steel mills . He was also involved in the development of ceramic and textile industries , and improving the transport infrastructure (roads , canals) . He discovered coal deposits in Dębrowa Górnicza , where he initiated the building of a coal mine . Between 1816 and 1824 he was the de facto minister of industry of the Congress Poland (styled officially the " director of the Department of Trade , Crafts and Industry ") and initiated construction of the Old Polish Industrial Area (Staropolski Okręg Przemysłowy) . As his projects did not result in quick returns , he incurred increasing criticism , and eventually resigned from his position in 1824 .

In 1816 he founded the Hrubieszowskie Towarzystwo Rolnicze (Hrubieszów Agricultural Society) , seen by some as the first Polish cooperative .

He died in Warsaw on 20 January 1826 , most likely due to a stroke . His funeral gathered 20 @, @ 000 people , including the viceroy of the Congress Poland , Józef Zajczek . He was buried in the cemetery of the Camaldolese Hermit Monastery in Kraków . His testament left his property at Hrubieszów to its tenants , and much of his wealth went to various philanthropic initiatives .

= = Private life = =

Staszic was remembered by his contemporaries as a loner and not a person who was quick to make friends . He has been described as somewhat miserly ; despite acquiring significant wealth , he was said to wear old clothes and use an old carriage . He was nonetheless widely respected by his contemporaries . He was seen as stern but honest , and had a tendency to speak in a fashion that some found amusing .

= = Remembrance = =

He is seen as one of the chief representatives of the political activists and writers of the Polish Enlightenment . He is also seen as the father of Polish geology , statistics , sociology , Tatra Mountains studies and exploration , mining and industry . He is one of the figures immortalised in Jan Matejko 's 1891 painting " Constitution of May 3 , 1791 " . He was also the protagonist of the Charles Dickens ' novella " Judge Not " (1851) , and of Hanna Muszyńska @-@ Hoffmanowa 's novel " Pucharek ze srebra " (Little chalice of silver) . Wacław Berent published a biography of Staszic , but it is now lost . In 1926 , on the 100th anniversary of his death , he was celebrated in the Second Polish Republic with several studies , articles and publications .

In April 1951 , he was honoured on a postage stamp of the People 's Republic of Poland as part of the set issued for the First Congress of Polish Science . His figure was popular among the Marxist scholars of the People 's Republic , who stressed his materialist , determinist and anti @-@ clerical views . The 150th anniversary of his death in 1976 was also celebrated , with many works dedicated to him , including poems by Jan Ciecnot and Jan Lohmann . He has been made a patron of over 200 schools , including the AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków . There are statues of Stanisław Staszic in Łódź , Kielce , Hrubieszów and Dębrowa Górnicza . Several geographical landmarks , minerals and a bacterium bear his name as well . In Piła , there is a Museum of Stanisław Staszic , which has gathered various artifacts related to him , and publishes a journal , " Zeszyty Staszicowskie " (Staszic Notebooks) .

= = Awards = =

Order of Saint Stanislaus
Knight of the Order of the White Eagle

= = Works = =

His best @-@ known works include the following :

" Remarks upon the Life of Jan Zamoyski " (Uwagi nad ?yciem Jana Zamoyskiego , 1787)

" Warnings for Poland " (or Warnings to Poland , Przestrogi dla Polski , 1790)

" On the Origin of Mountains in Former Sarmatia and Later Poland " (O ziemoródtwie gór dawnej Sarmacji , potem Polski , 1815)

" On the Reasons of Jewish Noxiousness " (O przyczynach szkodliwo?ci ?ydów , 1818)

" Humankind " (Ród Ludzki , 1820)

A Polish translation of Homer 's Iliad (1815) .