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Roman DAROWSKI, S.J., *Studia z filozofii jezuitów w Polsce XVII i XVIII wieku [The Studies on the Jesuit Philosophy in Poland in the 17th and 18th Centuries]*, Kraków 1998, Wydział Filozoficzny Towarzystwa Jezusowego, pp. 372.

The subject of Prof. Roman Darowski's book is the philosophical heritage of Polish Jesuits in the 17th and 18th centuries. Darowski, who is himself a priest from the Jesuit Order, is a representative philosopher-historian, engaged in historical research of the Jesuit philosophy in Poland. The author tells us also about his own experiences in this field (pp. 347-360). His study is an abundant synthesis of his own investigations into the subject.

The author starts his monograph with a presentation of the actual state of the investigations in Jesuit philosophy in Poland and Lithuania in the 17th and 18th centuries (pp. 9-60). In this part of the book he addresses the new questions in the subject and possible perspectives of future research.

The philosophy of the Polish Jesuits in these two centuries was strictly connected with the development of teaching programs in the schools and colleges led by this order. The proper point of reference in

the philosophical legacy of Jesuits is their system of education, called „Ratio Studiorum”, and in this case, the system of education which the order developed in Poland and Lithuania. Jesuit philosophy has to be analysed in the context of the achievements and the failures of this system. Another topic in that research on the state of philosophy in the past centuries is the social, mental, cultural and religious character of the epoch; and the author considers exactly this. Darowski examines different historical factors present in those times in the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. He also investigates activity of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, and particularly, its confrontations with the Reformation. The flow of new intellectual tendencies in theology, philosophy, politics, as well as the achievements of modern natural science, has been introduced a new picture of the universe in these centuries to Poland and Lithuania. All these ideas were different from the traditional vision of man and the world present in Catholic theology and philosophy of the former and even present epoch. Jesuit philosophers perceived their scientific and academical activity in the context of all those changes.

Those Jesuits who were teaching philosophical subjects in the colleges of their Order were interested in the philosophy of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. Their frequent subject of the research was the study of the scholastics according to the interpretation of St. Thomas. Jesuits in Poland and Lithuania lectured on traditional philosophy, which is independent from the natural sciences. Many historian criticize this point of view, but the very question is present also today. Actually, the concept of philosophy as independent, in a special sense, from the sciences is acceptable to many contemporary philosophers. Polish Jesuits of the 17th and 18th centuries were convinced that such a philosophy is able to explain natural reality better than the sciences, better even than physics itself.

Historical judgements on the Jesuit philosophy of these times are different and even contradictory. Darowski differentiate here two groups of opinions: those judgements were very negative, above all, in the past (p. 57), but many recent researchers underline the positive aspects of Jesuit scholastics of the 16th and next two centuries. Evaluating those judgements Darowski asserts that authors who wrote on Jesuit philosophy were mostly historians or professional philosophers. Those who belonged to the first group had not been properly prepared to study philosophical texts. For that reason their judgements were rather general and certainly limited. Unfortunately, some of their opinions were subsequently transferred to academic handbooks. Darowski mentions here such authors as Henryk Struve (pp.14-16) and Wiktor Waśnik (p.21).

The second group of writers, the professional philosophers, was far better equipped for their work, so their evaluation of Jesuit philosophy consists in a rational argumentation rather than pure opinions. As an example, a well known polish philosopher, Prof. Władysław Tatarkiewicz, in his elaboration on philosophy in the Jesuit Academy of Vilnius, Lithuania, remarks that the works of Jesuit lecturers at that Academy are precious source of our knowledge of scholastic philosophy in the period of Renaissance. He maintains that contemporary philosophers can find a helpful aid in these works, for self-studies and development, especially in the domain of logic (pp. 40-41).

In the main part of his work, Darowski discusses the philosophical activity of Polish and Lithuanian philosophers from the 16th to 18th centuries (pp. 61-311). He investigates the philosophical legacy of every Jesuit philosopher in context of his life in the order and of the mental trends of that epoch. Darowski's approach to this question shows us the role of a man in the making of knowledge, his full existence within the context of his efforts and dilemmas. This personal perspective is a significant method of his investigations. Darowski points out, that the history of Jesuit philosophy displayed dynamism in its process of developing human knowledge of the world and humanity. His reflections show that the members of the Jesuit Order developed and modernized Aristotelian metaphysics and scholastics of St. Thomas Aquinas. They lectured on some parts of scholastic philosophy according to an expression of a Jesuit philosopher, Francis Suárez, S.J. For example, the philosophy of Marcin Łubieński, S.J., and Stefan Sczaniecki, S.J., represents fundamental Aristotelian metaphysics, but one would find in their lectures some notions from Suárez combined with their own concepts (p. 98 and pp. 195-196).

The philosophy of René Descartes came to the Polish Kingdom in 18th century. His works were known by the Jesuits in Poland and Lithuania at that time and they explored the philosophical concepts of the french philosopher from the scholastic point of view. The attitude of the Jesuits towards Cartesian philosophy was very critical. We can see this in the reactions of Stanisław Jaworski, S.J., to the philosophical achievements of Descartes (pp. 230-234). Jaworski studied the philosophical theses of Descartes in order to recognize the method in his philosophy of the perception of truth. Jaworski pointed out that Descartes is inconsistent in his epistemology. He quoted also some of the Cartesian theses in his book that shows he personally knew the works of the French philosopher.

Darowski's elaboration on the reception of Cartesian philosophy in Poland will be very helpful for everyone who is interested in the Cartesian philosophy of the consciousness. The Jesuits reaction to the

Cartesian concept of philosophy was to dialogue with it from the Aristotelian point of view. This part of the Jesuit philosophy – as well as the whole philosophy of the Jesuits in Poland and Lithuania at this time – is not sufficiently known today and needs to be worked out in the future. Jaworski's opinion on the foundations of Cartesian philosophy is very important to the contemporary philosophers, because this French thinker and his philosophical ideas have had a significant impact on the history of European philosophy, especially on the modern rationalism. The questioning of the Cartesian philosophy by Jesuits is profoundly elaborated in Darowski's monograph.

The Jesuit philosophers at the same time were interested in the problems of social life in the countries within the Polish Kingdom. They developed the philosophical concepts about the state, economy and law, duties of the citizens, and political system of the Polish state (pp. 339-342). These concepts were inspired by the Jesuit thinkers: Francis Suárez and Robert Bellarmine. This kind of philosophical activity by the Polish Jesuits is not enough known. It is a great task for the „future” research in the field of Jesuit philosophy in Poland and Lithuania in the 16th and next centuries. Darowski precisely defines the questions to guide the future investigations (p. 342). His work is a good and interesting introduction to the philosophical legacy of the Jesuits in Eastern Europe during those two fruitful centuries.

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