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THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY IN LITHUANIA (I)

The academic History of Philosophy in Lithuania in three volumes will be published by the Institute of Culture, Philosophy and Art. The first presented volume covers the development of Lithuanian philosophy from the 16th to the 18th centuries. It includes late medieval and Renaissance philosophy, the second scholasticism and modern philosophy.

The first Lithuanians to be introduced to philosophy were young members of the gentry who studied in European universities at the end of the 14th century. The recently baptized Lithuania strove to adopt Western culture and to present itself as a Western state. Some graduated from the universities as bachelors or masters of philosophy and returned to their country. At the end of the 14th century, Vilnius Cathedral School was founded. The elements of logic were probably taught there. The growth of the political and economic power of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania brought about the need for higher education. That need was significantly increased by the growing activity of various religious orders. In 1507 the Dominicans started teaching philosophy and theology to their novices. They were able to teach late medieval philosophy in its thomistic interpretation. We can regard 1507 as the year Lithuania benefited from a new phenomenon, professional philosophy, and the Dominicans as its initiators. They taught not only the disciplines of late medieval philosophy but also the basics of the other sciences. The Dominicans, and later the Jesuits, Franciscans, Bernardines, Carmelites, Trinitarians and other monastic orders, enriched intellectual life in Lithuania by teaching philosophy in their schools.

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The spread of Renaissance culture started at the end of the 15th century and lasted till the middle of the 17th century. The palace of the Grand Duke of Lithuania and the estates of the gentry were the centers for this culture. They attracted men of letters, artists, architects, actors and scientists, and gave them patronage. The graduates of European universities introduced Renaissance ideas to Lithuanian society and applied a new humanist philosophical mentality in their own historical, fictional and public writings. Until higher schools and colleges with philosophical training were founded, Lithuanian intellectuals were preoccupied not so much with speculative philosophy as with social, political, juridical and moral theories of practical philosophy. The culture of private estates was interested in seeing the theoretical meanings of the problems of practical life, in expanding personal opportunities by means of a humanistic interpretation of moral virtues, in improving the social and political organization of the Lithuanian State, and in fostering a national self-awareness. Intellectuals followed the Renaissance principle that knowledge has to be concrete and useful, directed not at the supernatural but at the natural.

Lithuanian humanists interpreted human nature and personal value in a typically Renaissance way, rejecting metaphysical speculation and relying on the inquiry of creative personal activity and its results. They significantly secularized the notion of human nature, substituting original sin for the exploits of the great men, rulers and nobles, who protected the statehood of the Grand Duchy. They admitted democratically that each person, who contributes to the well-being of the state, is worthy of praise. Authors of legends about the origins of the Lithuanian people praised the natural properties of the national character. The old man-world opposition was seen as not quite correct. The belief that by his creative activity a man humanizes the surrounding reality and at the same time perfects his own personality was regarded as being more correct. The Renaissance personality expected to satisfy its thirst for glory within the limits of the nation and the State. The political entity of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was united by economic factors as well as by the territorial mobility of the nation. Models created in the attempt to unite a state-citizen consciousness with an ethnic-cultural one regarded language as the main factor for the expression of that unity and gave the status of social determinant to Latin or to the native colloquial language. Such models were created by Mykolas Lietuvis, A. Rotundas and M. Daukša.

Strykovskis, a historian, together with the didactic history writers tried to waken the historical consciousness. According to them, mentally meeting and talking with people from all epochs is a necessary condition for an understanding of the present. Through the past and the present, man and nation can travel to the future, but through historic memory

they travel to eternity. Humanist historians believed that historic truth was one and knowable, that the main problems of humankind was always the same. The moralizing writers of history based the striving for glory on working for the sake of the State's and society's well-being, which was treated as the principal virtue. The didactic writers of history considered human nature and the willpower of great men as historical determinants. The Grand Duke Vytautas was regarded as the most prominent. A. Rotundas, a prolific writer in praising the personalities of Lithuanian rulers, conducted successful polemics against opinions degrading the Lithuanian State that were generated in Poland and spread in Lithuania.

A philosophy of a new character was created by the Reformation. Protestant schools opened in Vilnius, Biržai, Kėdainiai and in other places. Protestant Aristotelianism, based on B. Keckermann, was taught in them. Calvinism and Arianism were the most prominent Protestant trends in theoretical thinking. The Calvinists – S. Budnas, A. Volanas and A. Rasijus – wrote political and social treatises concerning the improvement of the governance of the Lithuanian State and on perfecting the social and economic order in the process of the State's economic development. Volanas elaborated social theory based on social contract. He treated natural rights as a source of political power, although he was not conceptually mature enough to explain clearly how natural rights turn into political rights. A. A. Olizarovijus, a Vilnius University jurisprudence professor, described the origin of civil society in terms of late Renaissance political theories. The founders of the philosophy of law in Lithuania formulated the principles of constitutional governance. They regarded law as a counterbalance to sovereign's power; for law was supreme in relation to political power, which was treated as mere executive. They maintained the supremacy of social justice in relation to legality as the expression of legal proceedings, and derived positive law from the natural law. Vilnius theoreticians were adherents of the ancient concept of society as not only a political but also a moral community of citizens. They condemned serfdom and called for the expansion of freedom in the State by granting civil rights to the biggest part of society, the peasants and town dwellers. Applying the modern conception of social estates, they called for the reevaluation of feudal nobility, and maintained that personal value was not inherited from a person's ancestors but deserved through personal activity. Rasijus proposed including intellectuals and rich merchants in the nobility, and in a mercantilist way underlined the significance of foreign trade to internal and foreign politics during the process of the economic development of the State.

Arian theoreticians, dissatisfied with the status quo, produced a social utopia, directed against the feudal way of life, the feudal state and its institutions, against private property, serfdom and war. In Poland

and Lithuania Arian radicals incited people to abandon the society of evil, and taught them not to resist evil by force and do not participate in the activities of state institutions. They called for the abolition, or at least for significant reduction, of serfdom. Radical Arian theoreticians elaborated the theory of renunciation, but it was not accepted even by the part of the gentry that professed Arianism. The Arian gentry had no desire to renounce their privileges and property. They interpreted the idea of selling land and distributing money to the poor as a future ideal, but not as a practical demand to be implemented immediately. The utopia was criticized by the moderate Arians, especially by Budnas. And the majority of the gentry regarded Arian theories as irrational and dangerous. In the end the Arians were accused of collaboration with the hostile states and were expelled from the Republic of the Two Nations under the pretext of their refusal to convert to Catholicism. A positive aspect of the Arian utopia lay in the questioning of feudal social relations as problematic and encouraging the belief that the status quo was unacceptable.

The secular academic teaching was launched by the Jesuits, who were invited to Lithuania to fight against the Reformation. In Vilnius they founded the academic gymnasium, a college. There, in 1571, they began to teach philosophy. But the most important event in the development of philosophy in Lithuania was the foundation of Vilnius University in 1579. The disciplines usual to second level scholastics were taught in its philosophy department: logic, natural philosophy (physics), metaphysics and ethics. A separate professor taught mathematics and astronomy. The university conferred scientific degrees. According to incomplete data, the old Vilnius University conferred 1,810 bachelor of philosophy and 1,700 master (doctor) of philosophy degrees. The Jesuits founded many colleges in the Grand Duchy. There they schooled lay students in philosophy. Many religious schools had philosophy sections in which the clergy were trained. The teaching of philosophy at Vilnius University, the colleges and monasteries schools in Lithuania did not differ from contemporary philosophical teaching in West European universities and colleges. It consisted of Aristotelian philosophy and the theories of the most prominent representatives of medieval scholastics: Albert the Great, St Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, Durandus and others. In Lithuanian schools Jesuit theoreticians, as well as other theoreticians of scholastics of the 16th to the 17th centuries, were popular, namely Franciscus Toletus, Antonius Ruvius, Petrus Fonseca, Thomas Caietanus, Franciscus Suárez, Gabriel Vasquez, Ludovicus Molina, Rodericus Arriaga, Dominicus de Soto, Petrus Hurtadus and others.

Scholasticism, in spite of its drawbacks and imperfections, was an important phenomenon. It influenced Europe over the ages. Scholastics elaborated the terminology which was widely used by Renaissance thin-

kers. Some scholastic terms still function in contemporary thinking. They raised and inquired into questions of essence and existence, of possible worlds, of semiotics, of abstraction, of system analysis, and other real and important questions. They were interested not so much in the inquiry into empirical reality as in the analysis of thinking, and therefore elaborated a theory of logic of a high standard. Their achievements were appreciated and employed in Lithuanian schools. Consequently, ideas closely related to mathematical logic were brought to light. They belonged to propositional logic, the theory of logical consequence, the quantification logic, the logic of classes, modal logic and logical semantics. Lithuanian scholastics studied empirical and a priori factors of cognition. They interpreted questions of the truth and of cognitional means in an Aristotelian way. They discussed a central question of scholastic logic – the problem of universals. A lively debate was conducted between the adherents of conceptualism and the adherents of moderate realism. The well-known professor M. Smiglecius, of Vilnius University, published his work *Logica* in 1618. This work was republished in Oxford and was popular as a textbook in many European universities.

At Vilnius University along with scholastic theories of natural philosophy, Renaissance and modern times theories of nature were studied. In the lectures of the most courageous teachers a student could learn the names of contemporary scientists and philosophers of the Renaissance and modern times, they could learn about the theories of Copernicus, Galileo, Scheiner, Kircher, Clavius, Cabeus, Cardano, Riccioli, Tycho Brahe, Vesalius, Caesalpino, Fracastoro, Fernel, Zabarella, Bruno, Pomponazzi, and others. Interpreting psychology in the treatise *De Anima*, Vilnius University teachers relied on Vesalius' work *De humani corporis fabrica* and on his anatomical atlas. Astronomical observations were carried out in the university, and students were immersed in new discoveries. In 1645, Professor Osvald Krüger acknowledged that Copernicus' system yielded the best explanation for the solar system's planetary movements.

The recognition and consideration of the achievements of the new natural sciences stimulated their liberation from the supervision of metaphysics, which ceased to be regarded as the pinnacle of knowledge. As a theory of being, metaphysics experienced a crisis. It suffered from a methodological error: the theory of real being was gradually transformed into the theory of possible non-contradictory being, and metaphysics turned into formal ontology. This transformation reduced the role of metaphysics in schools in Lithuania.

Scholastic moral philosophy was supposed to be not only a theory of behavior but also a social theory, encompassing ethics and politics. It was directed at the Christian interpretation of Aristotelian ethics. The justice of economical relations was considered the same way. The role

of the moral factor was overemphasized, and therefore the theories of economic relations were not quite adequate to the then economic practice. Nevertheless, Vilnius thinkers who followed the economic doctrine of the second scholastics, managed to contribute to economical theory. They demonstrated the necessity of private property, spoke out for consumers' rights, condemned monopolies and discussed the limits of state power in controlling prices and profit norms.

Vilnius University theoreticians who tried to justify the political constitution of the Polish-Lithuanian State by the principles of Aristotelian political theory drew arguments from the work of modern philosophers such as J. Bodin, J. Lips, and others. The teaching of political science at Vilnius University was a positive innovation spreading civil and other social virtues among the young gentry. The professors maintained that essential political reform of the State was inevitable, that it was necessary to overcome the gentry's views, which were alien to legal thinking, and therefore the nobles saw the law in force as to a hindrance to their liberties. Vilnius theoreticians saw the foundations of law in natural and supernatural factors and regarded law as the instance, giving legality to laws. They defined law as the essential means for the implementation of Christian justice. They were close to the contemporary theories of justice by regarding impartiality as a principle of justice. Some philosophers of law, following the Renaissance ideas and employing both the empirical and inductive methods, criticized the political and legal reality of the Republic of the Two Nations. The Renaissance theory of law underlined freedom as an individual and social activity in accordance with the law in force, and called for social liberty for every social class. It demonstrated that the principles of civil life were not properly implemented, and sought a significant extension of civil law and the enrichment of its content.

In the mid-18th century scholastic philosophy could no longer satisfy the ruling class of the Polish-Lithuanian state, which under the influence of the ideas of the Enlightenment started to consider the Enlightenment as a powerful means to halt the general economic and political degeneration of the state. Philosophy in Lithuania entered a new period of development: the end of scholastic philosophy and the spread of the philosophy of modern times.

The society of the Republic of the Two Nations was susceptible to the ideas of the Enlightenment. The drawbacks of State and civil life encouraged the revision of civil order regarded earlier as natural and permanent. They incited the elaboration of a new understanding of the social situation and a refusal to foster vices, produced by the traditional liberties of the gentry. They stimulated the search for social reform programs in the ideology of the European Enlightenment. They encouraged a change in the rules of teaching and educating.

During the spread of the new philosophy in Lithuania, the titles of the disciplines remained the same, but their content was significantly modernized and some new disciplines added. Philosophers sought a balance between analytic and synthetic, deductive and inductive methods. But the authority and influence of C. Wolff and his followers determined that the deductive method prevailed in their work. The mathematical way of demonstration was transferred to philosophy, and some Vilnius University professors tried to deliver pieces of philosophy by means of geometrical method.

Because of the nihilistic attitude towards the heritage of scholastic philosophy, modern philosophy failed to assess properly the concepts of scholastic logic. In Lithuania the development of logic was directed at the theory of cognition, in which logical and psychological elements were mixed together and logic was engaged by epistemological problems. This new species of logic had its roots in the schools of Lithuania in the middle of the 18th century, as is obvious from the work of the Vilnius University professor B. Dobševičius, entitled *Praelectiones logicae* (1761).

Metaphysics consisted of ontology, cosmology, psychology and natural theology. Ontology embraced most questions of scholastic metaphysics. It treated being as something static. The permanency of being overshadowed historicity and mutability. Ontology was an abstract discipline in philosophy which used the conceptual means established by Wolff.

Following Wolff, the cosmology was also included in the metaphysical disciplines. Philosophical cosmology should produce concise Catholic interpretations of new data concerning cosmic relations, order and the perfection of the universe. The interpretation of the universal interconnection of all cosmic phenomena was very significant. According to G. Leibniz, it was based on the principle of sufficient reason: each phenomenon has more than one reason of its coming into being and existing. In the schools of Lithuania, the universal interconnection of all the phenomena was explained in terms of causal relations as well as of synchronic or successive existence.

Psychology gained a higher status by becoming an independent philosophical discipline. The Vilnius University professors A. Skorulskis and B. Dobševičius published works, in which they explained the content of the psychology of the time. In these works, relating mostly on Wolff, they interpreted psychological concepts of Descartes, Gassendi, Malebranche, Locke, Leibniz, and others. The associative psychology of the time regarded the flow of vital spirits (*spiritus vitales*) as the physiological foundation of the psychological associative connections. It explained the interaction of mind and body by means of physical influence, criticized occasionalism, the theory of pre-established harmony, and taught the principles of zoopsychology and psychometrics as the measurement of the duration, force, precision etc. of mental processes.

In the second half of the 18th century, physics became a most modern philosophical subject in Lithuanian schools. The new achievements in the contemporary natural sciences were considered. The latest discoveries in astronomy, thermodynamics, and the sphere of electric phenomena were explained. In the second half of the 18th century in Lithuanian schools (especially in Vilnius University and Vilnius Trinitarian College) the level of physics taught was as high as at the most distinguished European schools.

Descarte's physics was not seen in Lithuania as a by-passed stage in the development of physics. It was criticized with reference to Newton's principles in physics. Alongside Leibniz's and Wolff's concepts, not only Newton's ideas in physics, but his philosophical ideas and methodological principles of the investigation of nature were taught.

The professor of philosophy A. Dzialtovskis, who taught at the Vilnius Trinitarian College in 1763–1765, explained to his students the atomistic understanding of the structure of matter in the dynamical interpretation. He explained the key ideas of Boscovich's dynamical atomism. He was a consistent supporter of the Copernicus' system.

Scientists in Lithuania began to see nature historically: some professors opened a discussion concerning the origin and development of inorganic nature. They used cataclysms as a means of explaining the history and geological processes of the earth. Natural and supernatural factors were combined in this explanation.

The content of ethics teaching was also modernized. Ethics was treated as a science of moral customs. The origin and character of moral norms was interpreted by human nature, a concept based on the supernatural factors. Catholic ethics formulated principles of metaethics: analyzing the functions of moral propositions it ascertained their descriptive, prescriptive, estimative and expressive functions. It was regarded that the estimative function belonged to the conscience. Issues of substantiation in ethics were studied.

The spread of modern philosophy in the second half of the 18th century prepared the ground for the acceptance of the ideas of the Enlightenment in Lithuania, and created preconditions for setting out a new mentality proper to the independently and rationally acting person.

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HISTORIA FILOZOFII NA LITWIE (I)

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