

# LITHUANIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY OF PHILOSOPHY

## SUMMARY

Several external and internal factors make the topic relevant. The following are external ones: 1) the continually developing methodical self-awareness of humanitarian disciplines akin to philosophical historiography, 2) the negative influence of popular trends of methodical anarchism and cognitive relativism in the historiography of philosophy. The first factor is most characteristically represented by the group of historians, which develops the methodological inquiries into historiography of the country. The Lithuanian sociologists also carry on the study of the history of their own discipline. These circumstances incite the historians of philosophy to determine better the boundaries of their own discipline in respect to the field of humanitarian inquiries, to reexamine its „theoretical tools“, and to reevaluate their efficacy. Such revision has never been performed in the past.

However, the most important factor motivating the development of a methodological self-awareness of philosophical historiography is the internal theoretical progress of philosophical historiography itself. In Lithuania, the reflections on the past of philosophy have become sequential studies and obtained the status of philosophical discipline only at the beginning of the 7th decade of the last century. Nevertheless, the greatest part of this historiography is performed without sufficient apprehension of its rules. An individual historian of philosophy is not necessarily obliged to be methodologically premeditated. Nevertheless, when the whole discipline doesn't perform a methodological reflection (doesn't explicate and evaluate the rules of inquiry), it is unqualified for proper functioning and developing.

These external and internal factors necessitate the formation and the elaboration of meta-theoretical, reflective level for Lithuanian philosophical historiography. The meta-theoretical philosophical historiography has

to explicate the guiding rules of historiography studies, which have to encompass the reception of methodological conceptions and the choice of the strategies of interpretation and explanation. The retrospective explication of the methodological instruments is significant as a guiding instruction that assists historians of philosophy in choosing directions and the most effective means of inquiry. It also assists in interpretation, evaluation, classification and structuring of its materials and results.

Monograph investigates the researches in the field of history of Lithuanian philosophy, or philosophical historiography as a separate branch within the philosophy during the period of 1960–2004, through its development, structure and methods applied. Philosophical historiography is treated as the whole of evaluations of the philosophy in the past. The methodological structure of the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy consists of conceptual means (methodological elements of philosophical theories) and implicit rules of inquiry (philosophical presuppositions, stereotypes and strategies of interpretation and evaluation). The inquiry aims at explicating the nature and functions of the most important of the mentioned elements. It performs the following tasks: displays the level of methodological reflection of the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy and measures its declared methods of inquiry; relaying on the differences of interpretational strategies, determines the types of historical inquiry of philosophy; compares the identified methodologies with universally accepted ones; explicates the images of the development of philosophy that are implicitly present in the works of the Lithuanian historians of philosophy; estimates the efficacy of various methodological rules applied in the works of the historians.

This book treats the historiography of philosophy as the exploratory activity determined by specific means, rules and aims. It relays on the types of historical interpretation proposed by Hayden White: formistic, organicistic, mechanistic, and contextualistic. White's scheme is used as convenient meta-theoretic means for the structuring of historical interpretation of philosophy. As a rule, the Lithuanian historians of philosophy do not declare their aims and rules of research in their works. Hence, their aims and rules

have to be explicated by means of special inquiry. In general this procedure is analytical. It mostly corresponds to the meta-theoretical character of analytical philosophy. Here analyticity of the method is understood as its formality and independence of any purposeful conception.

During the period of the Lithuanian revival, the historians of philosophy attempted to give a new sense to the rules and aims of historical inquiry. B. Kuzmickas advised avoiding the biased (Marxist) approach to the heritage of philosophy and incited the search for adequate criteria of its assessment. A. Poška underlined the influence of the cultural values to the development of philosophy and discussed the character of reception of philosophical theories. Also he considered the relations between the national and the world philosophy, theory and empirical experience, and philosophical and close to philosophical texts. R. Plečkaitis especially accentuated the importance of the proper criteria for the estimation of inherited theories. K. Masiulis surveyed the formation of the history of philosophy in Lithuania. He regarded the 6–7<sup>th</sup> decade of the last century as the beginning of the systematic studies. According to him, the initiator of those studies was Prof. R. Plečkaitis. K. Masiulis discussed the scope of philosophical historiography and indicated the problems to be considered in the future.

The sources of this study belong to the forty year period from 1960 to 2004. Before 1960, there were no historical studies of philosophy in Lithuania. Geographically all the sources are related to Lithuania. They are produced by Lithuanian scholars, published in the Lithuanian language, and available in the libraries of the republic. The sources were selected on the idea that philosophical historiography consists of the sum of assessments of a philosophical heritage (a particular philosophical work, collected writings of some philosopher, solution of some philosophical problem, development of some branch of philosophy, philosophical tradition, etc.). Therefore, the sources encompass writings in which at least one of the mentioned elements of assessment is present. Of course, the main attention is given to the works in which the presence of historiography concepts are apparent.

The research of the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy is partially based on the fundamental categories of the Western history of philosophy,

which were mainly elaborated by G. W. Hegel, M. Heidegger, K. Jaspers, N. Hartmann, H.-G. Gadamer and others. They are widely used in the analysis of the *philosophy* of the history of philosophy in Lithuania and the interpretation of the past philosophizing.

The first chapter determines the flow of the texts in the philosophical historiography and its dynamics (the growth rate). It also analyzes the scientific communication of Lithuanian philosophical historiography: the teacher – pupil relations, the establishment of scientific schools and their structure. Bibliometrically constructed panoramic view of the historiography of philosophy (HP) demonstrates this philosophical discipline to be the most numerous in the soviet period, and still remaining such in the period of independence. The number of HP texts grew up quantitatively by 3,5 times, or by 6,1 percent per year in the period of 1990-2010, hence it felt only little short from the exponential growth rates of the general Lithuanian philosophical discourse. We should note particularly large differences in the development of subdisciplines of general history of philosophy (GHP) and history of Lithuanian philosophy (HLP): since 1990 there has been an impressive growth of the GHP (the number of its texts grew up by 7 times or by 10 percent a year) and respective stagnation of HLP – during the same period it only doubled, which made only 3 percent a year. Institutionally the absolute leader in the HP in the period of 1960-2009 is Lithuanian Culture Research Institute (LCRI), where more than a half of all HP researches are done. This institution was the only center of HLP, where two thirds of its texts has been composed. The analysis of the flow of citations demonstrates that it (HP) grows constantly (except from the period between 1990-1994) and fast (almost 50 percent every 5 years), hence the HP discipline is viable and is developing constructively. The scientific communication of HLP is much higher than that of GHP. The researches of HLP taken by historical periods are distributed very unevenly: a half of it is devoted for the Lithuanian Philosophy of the first half of the 20th century. Within the GHP the most popular period is the Antique (the fourth part of all researches); after 1990 there is a notable increase in the attention to the Medieval Philosophy. This period

also demonstrates the big part of studies devoted for the Oriental Philosophy, and for the big syntheses overarching great periods of history. The analysis of productivity of Lithuanian historians of philosophy reveals the stratification which confirms the well-known Lotka and Price Law: the greatest part of academical texts is produced by the minority of most productive authors. Bibliometric data demonstrate that the distribution of the productivity of Lithuanian historians of philosophy perfectly matches the proportions provided by this law: the minority of 5 percent of the most productive authors produces 30-40 percent of all texts, 10 percent of authors give a half, and 20 percent of authors – approximately 70 percent of all texts.

In the second chapter the methodological declarations of the Lithuanian historians of philosophy are surveyed; their relations with methodological theories and exploratory works in the field of the history of philosophy are determined; and the insufficiency of the reflectivity of the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy is exposed. The criteria of explication and estimation of the methodological structure of this discipline are settled. It is stated that the methodological explications of the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy do not correspond to its practical application (the situation of misbalanced reflectivity): as a rule, the researchers either do not declare their methods, or declare them vaguely and never sufficiently reflect on them. Nevertheless, in their works certain rules of inquiry are implicitly present. They have to be detected and explicated and their conceptual dependence has to be identified and compared with well-known methodological theories. The identification of methodology is important but not the only task. The methodological structure of the historiography of philosophy encompasses many elements, which are quite independent (non-analytical intuitions, philosophical premises, conceptions of philosophical status, pictures of philosophy development, etc.). To their explication and classification White's scheme of the four strategies (contextualistic, mechanistic, organicistic, and formistic) is applied. The indicated strategies show how the field of the research has to be divided.

The chapter III presents the contextualistic strategy of interpretation and discusses the peculiarities of its application. In Lithuania, this strategy

is prevalent and regarded as the most corresponding to the standard image of the history of philosophy. It underlines the historical transformation of philosophical theories, minimizes the influence of theories, which are foreign to the subject of research, for the estimation of that subject. In its assessments, it relies on the data of the historical context. Historical reconstruction is an essential procedure of contextualistic strategy. It demands the interpretation of the subject of inquiry in terms of its own times of existence, i.e. an as exact as possible reconstruction of conceptual structure (which could be made of some ingredients of theory, society, culture, etc.) to which that subject belongs. Such reconstruction treats the subject of inquiry as a product of its context, as an element of objectively functioning system but not as result of some subjective philosophical motives or universal laws. This way all “undocumented” – historically unchecked – subjective and speculative metaphysical factors, which constitute the history of philosophy, are eliminated from the structure of interpretation.

Relaying on the character of the analyzed elements, the history is divided into internal and external. The internal one is the history of the correlation of the theoretical elements (theories belonging to some historical period, problematic situation constituted by them). The external history considers non-theoretical elements (social, political, cultural, religious etc.). The book focuses on the contextualistic interpretations of the internal history of philosophy. The external history does function in the Lithuania historiography of philosophy only as auxiliary for the internal history: it assists in reconstruction of its background.

The most significant among species of contextualistic interpretation is the methodology of the history of problems. Its application in the methodology of Lithuanian history of philosophy is considered, and the most important of its elements as well as their functioning is explicated. These elements are: 1) the objective historical understanding, which treats philosophy as the totality of objectively and universally functioning cognitional elements and excludes from the interpretation of the history of philosophy all subjective and metaphysical factors; 2) the concept of history of philosophy as the process

of transformation of philosophical problems, which initiates the beginning, provides the material, and structures the interpretation of the results; 3) the historical reconstruction of the problematic situation as a constellation of theoretical elements motivating the creation of a new theory. The best examples of this methodology are works by R. Plečkaitis, K. Masiulis, and A. Vaišvila. In the writings of R. Plečkaitis the main methodological procedure is the historical reconstruction of problematic situation. This reconstruction constitutes the nucleus of methodological structure, around which secondary elements of interpretation are grouped. In his works, R. Plečkaitis depicts the picture of continuous but uneven progress of philosophy that involves the elements for paradigmatic changes. He presents the radical modification of the solution of problem (change of paradigm) as the formation of a new problematic situation, which is treated as paradigmatic for the solution of other remaining problems. This is the constellation of the elements, which substantiate a peculiar method of philosophical thinking (paradigm).

The elements of the methodology of rational reconstruction (R. Plečkaitis) are examined. These elements are the description, structuring and evaluation of philosophical and logical theories of the past by the means of contemporary theoretical problems and the methods of their solution. It is maintained that the methodological means of the rational reconstruction supplement the history of problems by actualistic implications. The subject of inquiry is reconstructed on the background of the contemporary philosophical content. Therefore, the rational reconstruction can be reduced to the indirect strategy of contextualization.

Other significant contextualistic researches of the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy are concisely discussed. They have the following characteristics: 1) to deal with the identifications of particular propositions or principles and their relatedness with empirical elements of the content but not with the reconstruction of their intricate theoretical constellations; 2) to focus on the immanent elements of the considered theory and to pay less attention to its position in the general system of theories, therefore to estimate it less objectively (compared with the history of problems) estima-

tion; 3) to strive to present as many historical facts as possible and to not pay much attention to their conceptual assessment. Thus their interpretations, as a rule, consist mainly of descriptions. Therefore, it is almost impossible to identify the elements of those methodological conceptions that function in them. In the best case, their methodological structure is eclectic, consisting of unconsidered aspects of various methodologies.

The chapter IV discusses the mechanistic strategy of interpretation, which treats the subject of inquiry as a regular product of some non-theoretic reality. The reductionism determines the construction of certain regularities, typologies, schemes and artificial evaluations. Mechanicism is concerned not so much with understanding of certain philosophical theory as with its *explanation* by means of some external factors and its integration into premeditated schemes. In Lithuania, this strategy of interpretation is represented by Marxist methodology. It structures the field of inquiry by means of vertical and horizontal reduction. The first one is founded on the causal relations between the basis and the superstructure, the second – on the application of Marxist categories. So-called interpretative solipsism is characteristic to the latter methodological procedure. It enforces the conceptual apparatus of its own theoretical position upon the subject of research without considering whether the terms of that apparatus have something in common with the content of the subject. This property produces ungrounded evaluations and the ignorance of conceptual complexities. There are different degrees of interpretative solipsism in the Lithuanian history of philosophy. The examples of the highest can be seen in the works of I. Zaksas, those of the moderate – in the writings of J. Balčius and A. Griška, and of the lowest – in the works of A. Lozuraitis, J. Mureika. Interpretative solipsism is less characteristic in the analysis of the *dynamic* aspects of the development of philosophy. In it, the picture of the progressive development of philosophy supplants the interpretative solipsism. It depicts the history of philosophy as the progressive transformation of theories, which inevitably leads to Marxism as the most progressive theory.

The procedure of vertical reductionism is considered. As a rule, it involves the principle of antagonistic classes into the estimation of the chosen theory.



Most frequently, this procedure is used in the works of the group, headed by A. Gaidys. The vertical reductionism regards philosophy as the product of social relations and denies its self-contained value. It approaches philosophy as ideology and criticizes it as such. It transforms philosophical problems into social problems, formulates them in Marxist way, and finally reduces them to ideology. It ignores that some philosophical problems have nothing in common with social questions.

The application of the horizontal reductionism is analyzed. This kind of reductionism does prevail in Marxist methodology of history of philosophy in Lithuania. I. Zaksas is a priori convinced that his own theory is impeccable and that the subject of inquiry is undoubtedly fallacious and theoretically worthless. Moreover, he not only does criticize non-Marxist theories but also “teaches” their authors how to solve theoretical problems correctly. J. Balčius, B. Deksnys, and A. Griška pay more attention to the description of the subject of inquiry. They rely on materialistic, atheistic and scientist aspects of Marxism. A. Lozuraitis and J. Mureika regard Marxism as quite reliable method for solution of some theoretical problems. Their approach is akin to the methodology of history of problems. In Marxist methodology the analysis of static elements of history is dominating. It considers the dynamic factors as secondary and tries to elaborate the concept of development of philosophy towards Marxism. Some of its representatives renounce the radical progressivism and treat Marxism as one contemporary trend of philosophy among the others.

In the chapter V, the interpretation of history of philosophy by A. Šliogeris is considered as the best example of the organicist interpretation in Lithuania. The structure and peculiarity of organicistic strategy of interpretation is discussed. Organicistic interpretation integrates the subject of inquiry into an existentially and theoretically more significant whole. A. Šliogeris regards philosophical theory as an expression of the experience of being. The development of his interpretation of the history of philosophy is divided into three periods: a) the application of Marxist methodology during the eighth decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; b) the inquiry of the ontological structures of philoso-

phy in the ninth decade of the last century. During this period, A. Šliogeris declaratively explicates Marxist ideology, distinguishes the concepts of pure transcendent and transcending as fundamental philosophical structures and applies them to the interpretation of philosophical development, creates and elaborates the category of thing as a peculiar category of interpretation of the history of philosophy; c) during the tenth decade, the development of understanding the history of philosophy as a dialog with the traditions of the philosophers of the past. A. Šliogeris bases the understanding and interpretation of theory on the trans-textual factors. He attempts a hypothetical reconstruction of the existential metaphysical experience of the philosophers of the past. The interpretational project of A. Šliogeris is influenced by M. Heidegger's search for the authentic thinking of being in the history of philosophy. A. Šliogeris enriches the latter by the classical, substantial thinking and by elements of his own ontological principles of thing, transcendence, transcending thinking. He treats the history of philosophy as the process of degradation. According to him, philosophy is an inauthentic experience and contemplation of being. A. Šliogeris elaborates the most speculative version of the history of philosophy, which is structurally equivalent to the popular Western existential-hermeneutical methods of interpretation of history of philosophy. A. Šliogeris uses the historical approach in order to justify his own philosophical position and does not care much of objective assessments of historical phenomena. Hence, he schematizes too much, his typologies are too abstract and assessments faintly grounded.

The so-called intellectual history is analyzed. The principles of this methodology was elaborated by R. Rorty. According to him, philosophical theory has to be interpreted as a part of philosopher's practical activity. On this principle V. Bagdonavičius bases his inquiry of Vydūnas's life and writings. He employs many elements of various interpretational strategies but the organicism prevails. V. Bagdonavičius treats the philosophical theory as an integral part of the whole of Vydūnas's life. The comparative analysis is also applied. It functions not as a tool of comparativistic methodology, which analysis the theoretical level, but as the means for the reconstruction of complete

biographical picture. It allows to unfold the affinity of the different holistic systems of life and forms of the creative work. The V chapter also concisely presents those organicistic interpretations, the methodological identification of which is difficult or even impossible. B. Kuzmickas includes the subject of his inquiry (particular philosophical theories of Christianity) into the large theoretical unity – Christian philosophy. This theoretical unity is the paradigm of philosophizing, the essential characteristics of which give the basis for the different theories, which constitute it. Some organicistic researches are inconsistent, mixed with the elements of contextualism and mechanicism.

In the chapter VI, formistic strategy of interpretation and its methods of structuring the historical field are presented. The formistic interpretation encompasses various methodologies that abstract the subject of inquiry from their historical field, underlines its specific properties, and looks for their synchronic and diachronic interactions by means of immanent analysis either logical or most frequently rather psychological. Psychological hermeneutics is considered. That interpretation is seen in the works by A. Konickis, who employs biographical and psychological data about an author for the better understanding and explaining the meaning of his texts. A. Konickis aims at the explanation of theory using the data of an author's life as an auxiliary means.

The static and dynamic aspects of the history of ideas are analyzed, relying on the works of G. Mažeikis and A. Andrijauskas. Studying the most significant writings of the most famous thinkers, he comes to the interpretation of cultural tradition as a whole. Then he singles out the ideas he wants to inquire and explicates their functioning in the context of that whole. A. Andrijauskas understands 'idea' as the equivalent of 'notion'. The works of G. Mažeikis can be attributed to the *static* history of ideas. He prescind from historical changes and focuses on the distribution of ideas in the synchronic segment of history. In his writings, methodologically indeterminate descriptions and free interpretations of wide cultural material dominate. The denomination of the subject of inquiry as "totally transcendent *other*" expresses the decomposing operations of formism.

The VI chapter also investigates the usage of comparativistic methodology (A. Beinorius and others). The essential elements of a comparativistic interpretation are those subjects, which exist independently (parallel) of each other; nevertheless, the certain conceptual basis for their theoretical comparison is present. A. Beinorius's subject of inquiry is certain integral whole, the tradition of thinking, or, more precisely, the comparison of two traditions and their properties. In this research, the two independent subjects are related by consciousness as their own subject of inquiry. Being a universal and transcendental structure, consciousness grants the problematic commensurability for the subjects of comparativistic analysis. Such formistic interpretation is akin to the methodology of history of problems; the subjects of inquiry are not absolutely separate, for they have some conceptual links. They are just different solutions of the same problem by different means and manners. Consciousness as the basis of commensurability acts as integrating impulse, which unites the different trends of thinking and particular thinkers as their representatives. Analyzing separate terms and premises, A. Beinorius moves towards their integration into the whole and tries to explicate all the relations within that whole.

The chapter VII analyzes the historiography of Lithuanian philosophy from the point of view of conflict sociology. The insights of H. White on the pre-critical and incommensurable character of different ways of historiographical representation of historical field are applied here. The chapter provides with a concise presentation of sociological theories, which treat the conflict as an essential form of scientific communication. It asserts that within the community of Lithuanian historians of philosophy historians-contextualists (R. Plečkaitis, A. Poška) argue against the ahistorical Thomists and representatives of mechanistic Marxism, the representatives of philosophical hermeneutics (A. Sverdiolas) – against the reductionists in a broad sense (where contextualists are also included). J. Repšys develops an attitude which criticizes the dogmatism and schematism of the Marxism, expresses the continuous decrease in the accentuation of philosophical partisanship and social determinism, with a relevant increase within the Marxism of the

importance of principles of problematic approach. A. Šliogeris depends homonomic position, that there is only one true interpretation of the philosophical text, independent of historical or cultural context, with a sole ground of its truth – a reality itself. This attitude is confronted with a heteronomic one, which commits itself to a variety of interpretations. The radical Formism with anarchistic ideological implication (G. Mažeikis) challenges all the other strategies of explanation. Within the contextualism we may distinguish a polemics between R. Plečkaitis (represented the methodology of history of problems) and philosophical-historical publicist B. Genzelis. The main conceptual reason which gave rise to the conflicts was holding by the historian of philosophy of a presupposed concept of philosophy – its status and function, and the defending of it. The fixed conflicts usually remained on individual grounds; and, as such, they hadn't determined the development of Lithuanian historiography of philosophy, hadn't produced new research and methodological lines. The sociological causes and expressions of the conflicts in the Lithuanian historiography of philosophy (the fight over the higher status) were less important than the above mentioned conceptual reason.