

SUMMARY

This book continues series of researches entitled “The History of Lithuanian Philosophy. Monuments and Researches”, and performed by the Department of the History of Lithuanian Philosophy at the Lithuanian Culture Research Institute since 1990. It is devoted to the work of Jean- Jacques Rousseau *Considérations sur le Gouvernement de Pologne* (The Considerations on the Government of Poland and on its proposed reformation, 1782) and the reception of Rousseau’s philosophy in Grand Duchy of Lithuania until 1794. It contains the translation of this work into Lithuanian (from French by Vygandas Aleksandravičius) and translations of several texts of the most prominent follower of Rousseau in Lithuania Mauricijus Pranciškus Karpis (Maurycy Franciszek Karp, 1749–1817). They include an Epigraph for Rousseau, the Speech in Great Sejm of 1791, the fragments of the philosophical Essay and publicist work *Pytanie i odpowiedź* (The Question and Answer) – and are translated from Polish to Lithuanian by Dalius Viliūnas.

The main subject of the translations and related research work hence lays in the sphere of Political philosophy. This theme is new in the field of Historiography of Lithuanian Philosophy and Lithuanian Political History.

The book consists of three parts: 1) “The Book of Rousseau for the Republic”; 2) The student of Rousseau – Mauricijus Pranciškus Karpis; 3) The advance of Pre-Romanticism in Lithuania.

The first part is a broad historical and philosophical introduction as well as commentary on the above-mentioned work of Rousseau devoted to the reform of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Vygandas Aleksandravičius distinguishes the extraordinary position of Rousseau and the Commonwealth of Two Nations in their respective intellectual and geo-political contexts, and the unique opportunities which had been opened for them both in their “meeting”. The chance of the Commonwealth to survive amidst the despotic regimes of Enlightened absolutism is also the chance of the direct democratic development essential to the political philosophy of Rousseau against the Hobbesian and Lockean alternatives, with their negative concept of freedom, in fact supporting the despotism at the end of the day. The thought of Rousseau is interpreted in the context of the fundamental philosophical

opposition between Power and Law, Violence and Justice. The repetition of this Platonic opposition is firstly reconstructed on its ontological grounds in the context of the metaphysical and epistemological differences between Descartes and Newton. Differences in their concepts of space, motion and force contribute to the relevant differences in the worldview with its moral and political consequences. Thomas Hobbes is taken as representative of the Cartesian side, while Rousseau is considered as building up his position on the broadly understood Newtonian paradigm. Avoiding direct transposition of physical principals to the politics, Rousseau employs the model of Newtonian thinking in a tacit manner.

Leaving behind the determinism, mechanicism and materialism of the Enlightenment as the modes of “un-authentic being”, Rousseau creates the alternative Enlightenment, attempts to disclose the elemental sphere of “Authentic being”. The vision of this authentic being (encompassing also the ideal of education of national identity) is also a background for the interpretation of this work – Considerations for Poland– designed for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Refusing to follow the lines in Polish historiography treating this work only as utopian, the interpretation here reveals both the providential and actual value of the work. The geopolitical and socio-cultural actualities of the XXIst century allows us to treat this work as a deep philosophical book which retains its actuality, demands careful reading, provokes creative understanding and productive thinking.

Dalius Viliūnas follows Polish historians in presenting the general background of the work, its historical landscape (The Confederation of Bar), yet also introduces the elements of Lithuanian studies, which allow to suggest a new interpretation of the socio-cultural situation of the seventh and eighth decades of the XVIIIth century. Firstly, these are the facts of integration between different social estates, the start of usage of Lithuanian language in the civil, patriotically colored contexts. Philosophy of Rousseau apparently contributed to the processes of emancipation of the middle-ranked nobility and disappearance of the feudal clientele system. It has definitely contributed to the emergence of the ideology of “Independence”.

The Second part of this work investigates the life and works of Mauricijus Pranciškus Karpis, the main representative of Rousseauism in Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL), and determines series of facts which are important for the evaluation of the impact of Rousseau. To mention the few relevant to this impact: the Rousseauism was spread through the translations of French novels

(written by the epigones of Rousseau); the reception of Rousseau extended to the middle ranked nobility (not only enlightened elite, moguls), it also provided the traditional ideology of nobles (Sarmatism) with the content of modern democracy and philosophically grounded Republicanism. The middle ranked nobility – especially Mauricijus Pranciškus Karpis – had a support of broader ranks of nobility. It has been determined that the family of Karpis (at least four of them) had formed a group united by the philosophy of Rousseau. Thus we may talk about the center of the distribution of the philosophy of Rousseau in Lithuania.

The third part analyzes the Republicanism of Karpis – his political philosophy, which emphasizes the role of the Legislative power. The latter is understood in rousseauvian manner as a direct expression of the General will. The separate chapter considers the religious beliefs of Karpis. He held deistic views analogous to those of Rousseau. Nevertheless, he also translated the radical atheistic works of Jacques Naigeon and demonstrated his dependence to the underground current in the Commonwealth of Two Nations which proclaimed radically individualistic and libertine concept of personality. Two chapters are devoted for the rustical approach – the aspect of sentimentalist worldview inspired by Rousseau. The rustical approach expresses itself through misopoly – the hate of the cities – and an attempt to return to the country (to the “Authentic being”). With the use of the archive documents the hypothesis is raised that family of Karps were elaborating a program of building the economy which was alternative to the dominant physiocratism and represented a kind of anticapitalist utopia.

The final chapter “The Beginnings of the Philosophy of Nationalism” raises the hypothesis that the early nationalism in GDL was formed in the milieu of the republicanism of the middle rank nobility, and was strongly affected by the sentimentalism and philosophy of Rousseau. This nationalism was no longer only a legal–state nationalism, but substantially a moral – cultural nationalism implying the legal-statist one (and not vice versa). We may say that M. P. Karpis foresees the winding up of the tradition of the noble democracy of few previous centuries (he treats the birth, nobility as “chimeric”) and the passage of the legislative power to the nation, to the people. He treats the people as a society without estates, which has the peasant virtues as its moral and existential ground.

The ideals of Republicanism – freedom, equality, the rule of law, and the values matching the Ancient virtues of economy, virility, courage, and endurance formed the content of the early nationalism. Altogether they determined the

concept of the general will of the nation. It was a “naked” nationalism, not yet covered with the “ethnocentric values”. It was grounded in the basic positive sentiments towards the native land, the concepts of internal and external independence, the concept of legislative freedom. One of the major conceptual innovations suggested by both researchers of the book – the distinction of the Other – markedly Rousseauistic – Enlightenment: not rationalistic, but appealing to the sentiment, not monarchist, but republican and democratic, not deterministic, but cherishing freedom, not progressivist, but skeptical, self-critical and historical Enlightenment. The hypothesis of its importance for the development of modern nationalism is developed throughout the book.