

# Marek Rembierz

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"Filozofia polska na tle filozofii europejskiej w XX wieku", ed. Maciej Woźniczka, Częstochowa 2014 : [recenzja]

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*Filozofia polska  
na tle filozofii europejskiej w XX wieku*  
Ed. Maciej Woźniczka, 614 pp.  
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The book *Filozofia polska na tle filozofii europejskiej w XX wieku* [Polish Philosophy in the Context of the Twentieth-Century European Philosophy], conscientiously edited by Maciej Woźniczka, harmonizes—one can reasonably conclude—with the research program that the Science Editor of this volume has been implementing consistently at the JDU, to which the earlier volumes edited by him convincingly attest.

In the monographic volume currently being presented to the Reader, what has become the subject of multilateral and—in majority of texts—duly detailed analyses is Polish philosophy considered against the background of the European philosophy in the 20th century, very much in line with the title of the book. This subject has been aptly recognized as an important and valid research problem. The Editor has invited a team of competent authors to cooperate, including well-known and recognized researchers into the subject area presented here, as well as some authors from the younger generation.

The structure of the volume is coherent, with parts that complement one another and the texts, compiled into consecutive chapters of this monograph of joint authorship, that are arranged content-wise.

The volume opens with a comprehensive and informative Introduction, written by Maciej Woźniczka. The Introduction presents the organizing ideas of the book thoroughly and accurately. However, it would be worth giving a title of its

own to the Introduction since it is an exceptionally original text on the part of its author, and not just an “editorial introduction” (as it is written, perhaps too modestly, in the manuscript undergoing the review).

The first part—containing a series of thematically selected texts—is titled *Związek myśli polskiej z myślą europejską* [Associations between Polish and European Thought]. It starts with a systemizing and synthetizing (though at some points decisively disputable) study titled *Wkład Polaków do myśli filozoficznej na świecie w XX wieku* [The Contribution of Poles into the World Philosophical Thought of the 20th Century] by Roman Darowski. In successive texts—characterized in the first part by the fact that they discuss the undertaken questions from quite a general perspective—further aspects of the connections between the Polish and European thought are taken into consideration: the views concerning psychology of nations (Grażyna Szumera); a philosophical discussion focused on the theory of relativity, ongoing especially in Kraków and Lviv during the period between 1905–1925, which was carefully reconstructed and provided with a competent commentary (Paweł Polak); inquiries into the philosophical inspirations of Jan Łukasiewicz, which play a key role and are also relevant for the further development of philosophy and logics (Piotr Surma); practicing philosophy in harsh exile (1940–1990) in Great Britain, which—despite the predicaments of life in exile—was intense and developed into many ideologically different currents (Artur Andrzejuk); context, method and themes when practicing the recent history of Polish philosophy by Zbigniew A. Jordan (Stefan Konstańczak); specific characteristics and intellectual qualities of Bogdan Suchodolski’s “new humanism” and its location among contemporary ideas (Andrzej Ciążela). Neatly editorially composed, the whole first part is complemented with the discussion about the “benefits of localness” and going beyond the “provincial universality” (Adam Kubiak). It should be noted that many of the authors whose texts are gathered in the first part are ranked among leading experts in the fields they have undertaken.

The second part—also including another series of thematically selected texts—depicts multiple relationships between the Polish thought and—in a broad sense—German philosophical and ethical thought. This part opens with analyses concerning the dispute over the existence of time that is carried out—or: can be reconstructed—in the inquiries of Edmund Husserl and Roman Ingarden (Wojciech Mackiewicz). Next, the philosophical creeds of Ajdukiewicz and Ingarden as Husserl’s disciples are considered and juxtaposed by Adam Olech, who explains himself that his intention behind writing the text was spurred by the centenary of the first publication of Husserl’s *Ideas, Book I*). In the subsequent text, “Edith Stein’s Philosophical and Theological Paths to the Truth” (Anna Gładkowska) have been chosen as the object of examination, the formula already adopted in the title reveals a—by far affirmative—attitude towards the undertaken subject. Inspirations for and polemics against the Phenomenology of

Life, an original concept of Anna Teresa Tymieniecka, constitute a grateful and interesting topic for reflections, introducing the essential content of the concept as well as its sources and contexts (Magdalena Mruszczuk). Juxtaposition and comparison of selected issues present in the analyses of Gottlob Frege and Lviv-Warsaw School (the problem of “Frege’s way out”) are the objective of a deftly written analytical essay (Ryszard Miszczyński). Presentation of the oeuvre of Janina Kiersnowska-Suchorzewska’s, whose intellectual activity was associated with neo-Kantianism, has been chosen as the main research objective in the text by Anna Smywińska-Pohl. An article, written by Henry Popowski, treats expertly on the topic of Polish defenders of metaphysics in connection with German philosophy. The philosophy of evil in the thought of Marian Zdziechowski inspires a wider recognition of the undertaken questions in the context of other European thinkers, as Justyna Stecko argues convincingly. In contrast, Adam Dura situates the research on conscience in the Polish 20th century moral philosophy in the context of the German philosophy of conscience, indicating and considering ongoing relationships between them. Thus, in the second part of the volume, we receive versatile and competently presented an overview of selected connections between the Polish and German philosophical and ethical thought.

The third part—containing, like the previous ones, another series of thematically selected texts—shows the manifold relationships between the Polish thought and—in a broad sense—the Anglo-Saxon and Francophone philosophical and ethical creed. The first author here (Marek Perek) presents his comments regarding similarities in the statements of Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz and Thomas Kuhn on untranslatability of scientific language. Then, Tomasz Mróz (an expert on the reception of Plato’s thought) proposes a comparative study of—often disputed—opinions expressed by Bertrand Russell, Karl Rajmund Popper, and Władysław Witwicki on communism and totalitarianism of Plato. Against the works of various Polish and European thinkers, Anna Kazimierzczak-Kucharska reflects on the originality of Henryk Elzenberg’s perfectionist ethics, pointing out its unique characteristics and values, as well as its relations with the ideas and sentiments of other ethical conceptions. Further on, Michalina Kublicka enquires into Barbara Skarga’s inspiration for her concept of man, recognizing the source of this anthropological concept primarily in Barbara Skarga’s research fascination with French philosophers (especially Bergson and Lévinas). Finally, Łukasz Moniuszko scrutinizes the reception and interpretation of Chaim Perelman’s concept of justice, especially interesting from the cognitive perspective, as delivered by Zygmunt Ziemiński in his reflections on the philosophy of law and social ethics.

The fourth part focuses on the specificity of Polish philosophical culture. It opens with analyses (by Mariusz Oziębłowski) on the social context of cognitive paralysis of philosophy according to Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz. It is a brave and appropriate editorial decision to use a text engaged in the discussion of

such issues to introduce considerations about the specificity of Polish philosophical culture. Next, Andrzej Tarnopolski competently approaches and analyzes Władysław Biegański's predictive theory of cognition. A comparative and cross-cutting presentation depicts Stanisław Brzozowski's, Bolesław Miciński's, and Józef Tischner's "contributions to the future philosophy of man" (Bogusław Meiksner). The following two articles concern the idea and philosophical legacy of Florian Znaniecki, both still discussed by the academic community: culturalism and its reception (Sabina Prejsnar-Szatyńska), as well as the vision of heading towards the future civilization, as evidenced in the research focused on the experience of the modern city (Dorota H. Kutyla). The issues of the "Interhuman" in the philosophy of Witold Gombrowicz are discussed by Ryszard Przybylski, while the question, which has lost nothing of its relevance, namely the ethos of a scholar, is considered on the basis of an apt example of an outstanding expert in this field, that is, Stefan Amsterdamski, and presented in an article by two authors—Renata Trela and Grzegorz Trela. In turn, Anna Marek-Bieniasz directs her attention towards a significant share of Polish philosophers in the cultivation of philosophy and environmental ethics; she makes use of a good and well-known in the world example of the concept of eco-philosophy by Henryk Skolimowski. What deserves a particular interest and separate discussion are the causes of negligence in philosophical education in Poland, which has become the subject of Maciej Woźniczka's investigation. It seems appropriate that the very text ends and somehow completes the fourth part, focused on the specificity of Polish philosophical culture since it introduces the Reader to the current-day debate and leads to the continuation of this discussion.

In the fifth part of the volume, the leading questions and the transformation of the neo-Thomist thought in Poland have been presented competently. Justifiably, Magdalena Płotka pays attention to the trend in the Polish thought, which emphasizes the practical nature of philosophy; she follows the development of the concept of action in Polish philosophy (from the 15th to the 19th centuries). Michał Zembrzuski situates and considers Jan Stepa's theory of knowledge (the concept, in which epistemology is to be characterized by autonomy) against the background of European neo-Thomist philosophy. Izabella Andrzejuk tries to discern the specificity, sources and inspirations of Konstanty Michalski's philosophy of history. On the other hand, Andrzej Nowik focuses on the method of practicing the history of philosophy, which he finds in Paul Siwek's dissertations. Under the somewhat lofty title of *Nowe elementy wniesione przez Stanisława Ziemiańskiego SJ do filozofii Boga* [New Elements Introduced by Stanisław Ziemiański, S.J. to the Philosophy of God], the next article presents the views expressed by the said contemporary philosopher on Christian inspiration (Wanda Pilch). The controversial issue of "philosophy in the service of theology" is examined by Adam Filipowicz, who reconstructs didactics of philosophy in higher clergy seminars in the 20th century; it is—as this text

argues—worth a separate discussion. At the end, military ethics as considered and formulated by Józef Maria Bocheński is invoked (Dawid Pełka) by locating these principles in the context of the risks of the 20th century (and let us add: already the 21st century).

The whole volume complements the sixth part, or Annex: “Appeal to the Authors” (it is good that a text documenting the research program of the volume’s Editor has been included here, in which the invited authors were involved) and biographical notes about the authors.

The texts collected in the book should be interesting not only to historians, especially experts in Polish philosophy, but also to a large group of academic teachers and philosophy students, who aim at better familiarization with Polish philosophical culture, its uniqueness and values.

The Editor, Maciej Woźniczka, should be commended for the undertaken effort in editing this volume and for the praiseworthy consistency in his academic activity, as this volume is part of a series of monographs of joint authorship edited by him.

Thoroughly edited by Maciej Woźniczka, the volume *Filozofia polska na tle filozofii europejskiej w XX wieku* [Polish Philosophy Against the Background of the Twentieth-Century European Philosophy] ought to contribute significantly to disseminating knowledge of the Polish tradition and intellectual culture, as well as provide inspiration for further research and discussion.

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