THE RECEPTION OF GERMAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE
TRACTATE OF JÓZEF GOŁUCHOWSKI

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Received 12 December, 2011; accepted 12 January, 2012

Abstract. This article attempts to discern an impact of German philosophy on the
Tractate of Józef Gołuchowski, which was submitted in 1821 to contest the seat of professor
of philosophy at Vilnius University. The main ideas of Gołuchowski’s logic are taken
from Kantian and Hegelian philosophy. The biggest influence on Gołuchowski’s theory of
knowledge comes from Kant’s theory. In ontological considerations we can discern an attitude
of Schelling on the identity of nature and spirit. The Romanticism of Gołuchowski expresses
itself in the recurrent emphasis on the organic unity, on the principles of harmony of human
powers. His moral philosophy is an attempt to combine the Kantian concept of morality with
the traditional ethics of values.

Keywords: values, logic, theory of knowledge, metaphysics, Kant, Fichte, Hegel,
Schelling, Romanticism.
Introduction

This article attempts to discern an impact of German philosophy on the Tractate of Józef Gołuchowski, which was submitted in 1821 to contest the seat of professor of philosophy at Vilnius University. This philosopher of Polish origin (1797–1858) studied in Wien, Warsaw, Heidelberg and Erlangen. During the studies he attended the courses of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, published a study “The Role of the Philosophy in the Life of Entire Nations and Separate Individuals”\(^1\). Gołuchowski has won the contest and started lecturing at the fall of 1823. He drew great interest not only from students but also from many other citizens. Unfortunately, tsarist government found his lectures disloyal and after three months his course was cancelled. At the end of his life, already outside the university the philosopher wrote two volumes of “The Considerations on the Main Tasks in the Life of a Person”\(^2\). A Polish scientist Stefan Harassek accomplished a most thorough review of the creative activity of Gołuchowski in the book published in 1924\(^3\). We shall analyze the work, which hasn’t been analyzed in this book, since the manuscript hasn’t been yet found at the time of Harassek’s publication.

Logic, metaphysics and moral philosophy constituted the traditional course of philosophy at the Imperial University of Vilnius. The Tractate written for the contest contains all these three parts with an additional part on teaching of philosophy and the list of recommended bibliography. On the same traditional grounds, which divide philosophy into theoretical and practical, Gołuchowski separates knowledge and practice. Logics and metaphysics are divided by the separate ways the thinking relates to its objects. The act of thinking the philosopher explains by clearly drawing the line between the passive pole of sensual impressions and the active pole of concepts, which organizes the former, emphasizing the point that thoughts are always related to their objects. The idea of Gołuchowski that thinking works on the matter by detracting qualities from their objects thus obtaining concepts is close to empiricism. In order to explain the cognitive activity, according to the author, we need to discern the principles of the process of thinking, while the subject of logics is to analyze the functions of conceptual thinking.

1. Affinities in the Concept of Logic

In Gołuchowski’s concept of logic one can find many similarities with that of Kant and Hegel. Similarly as for Immanuel Kant, the task of logic for the author is to analyze the conceptual thinking from its formal side, logic is taken to be not an organon, but


\(^2\) Gołuchowski, J. Dumania nad najwyższemi zagadnieniami człowieka. Wilno: Nakładem i drukiem Józefa Zawadzkiego, 1861.

a canon of what is formal in the application of the intellect. The author shortcuts the distinctions Kant makes in analyzing the forms of sensual intuition, their matter and relevant intellectual categories and summarizes them with a volatile expression that the mind encounters the things “with a veil of its own design”\textsuperscript{4}. Gołuchowski only points out the principle “I cognize”, which conveys all the representations, however, he doesn’t keep up with Kantian apriorism, he doesn’t discern a transcendental logic and, as was used to be done, divides general logic into the pure and applied one, understanding the latter as a mean of purification of common sense and elaboration of thinking. Following Kant, the author stresses the difference between the logic and psychology, points out the empirical factors that hamper the ability of logical thinking, notes that human reason first cognizes the objects and only afterwards discerns the rules of their consideration. The thinker repeatedly emphasizes that the mere knowledge of logical forms wouldn’t help thinking, “a fool won’t obtain wisdom only by means of logic”\textsuperscript{5} and describes this capacity in a way Kant speaks of the power of judgment. Tractate echoes Kantian phrase that “this faculty is therefore the specific quality of the so-called mother wit, the want of which no scholastic discipline can compensate. For although education may furnish, and, as it were, engraft upon a limited understanding rules borrowed from other minds, yet the power of employing these rules correctly must belong to the pupil himself; and no rule which we can prescribe to him with this purpose is, in the absence or deficiency of this gift of nature, secure from misuse.”\textsuperscript{6}. Kant even goes further and adds: “Deficiency in judgment is properly that which is called stupidity; and for such a failing we know no remedy. A dull or narrow-minded person, to whom nothing is wanting but a proper degree of understanding, may be improved by tuition, even so far as to deserve the epithet of learned. But as such persons frequently labour under a deficiency in the faculty of judgement, it is not uncommon to find men extremely learned who in the application of their science betray a lamentable degree this irremediable want”\textsuperscript{7}. Gołuchowski, however, ignores this specific Kantian difference between cognition and power of judgment and treats the rules of conceptual thinking as inborn as well, stating that “multiple sources of our mistakes are hidden nowhere else but in ourselves”\textsuperscript{8}. Explaining the structure of applied logic Gołuchowski distinguishes a scientific meditation; however, he doesn’t extrapolate its meaning. This term could have been taken from Kant. In “Logic” Kant defines the meditation as a consideration or methodical thinking and states that “meditation should accompany every reading and learning and therefore it is necessary that first we should make some preparatory investigations and only afterwards we organize our thoughts or connect them in a methodical manner”\textsuperscript{9}.

\textsuperscript{4} Gołuchowski, J. Rozprawa konkursowa. Archiwum historii filozofii i myśli społecznej. 1962, 8, p. 273.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., p. 275.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., p. 117.
\textsuperscript{8} Gołuchowski, J., supra note 4, p. 272.
The way functions of thinking are distinguished within the related systemic totality, the accents given to a necessity and exhaustiveness of particular logical chapters are similar to the composition of Kantian transcendental analytic. Admittedly, the principle of unity of reason, which grounds the variety of functions of thinking, is most common among the philosophers of the Romanticism and Gołuchowski stands here amongst them. The striving towards the systematic order of science, its deductiveness from the basic laws brings the position of Gołuchowski closer to the philosophy of New Ages and particularly to that of German classical philosophy. Many repeated intentions to reach this goal remind us of Kantian opposition between science and common understanding. The science according to Kant is only a systemic totality of knowledge, while common understanding is an aggregate of separate knowledge prior to its systemic unity. Kant discerns in his “Logic” as a separate part of logic “the common science on the method [...] which explains the form of science in general or the mode of connecting diverse knowledge into one science”\(^{10}\). Gołuchowski explains the synthesis in logic in a similar way. Paradoxically, he denies the possibility of identification of science with its system, however, grounds his position with a Hegelian style triad of unity, development and totality, which nevertheless implies some systematic order. On the other hand, the author doesn’t apply this negative requirement to the Logic.

Contrary to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Gołuchowski doesn’t treat logic itself as metaphysics or pure speculative philosophy, doesn’t give it a status of a science of becoming of reality, emphasizes that logic analyses only pure forms of thinking, while the truth itself is beyond its limits. Nevertheless, many aspects of his logic are close to those of Hegel. Similarly as Hegel in his “Science of Logic”, Gołuchowski stresses that the highest principle of logic should be grounded in itself and all the system of logic should be deduced from it. Another important point of similarity between logic in *Tractate* and Hegelian logic is the reference to the relation of internal organization of logic and language. Certainly, the relation of the analysis of language and logic has been known already in antiquity, therefore the opinion of Gołuchowski that the theory of language should be related with the exposition of logic might be derived from the tradition and the thought of Hegel stemming from it that the benefit of language is the possible magnitude of logical expressions within it. The parts of logic are discerned following the principle of dialectic triads, even though Gołuchowski doesn’t provide us with the totality of reciprocal subordination of all the triads, limiting himself with a reference of all the triads to the main and all explaining triad of the unity, diversity and relation of thought.

An interpretation of the relations of the main logical concepts and laws based on the structure of thesis – antithesis – synthesis combines the elements of concepts of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Wilhelm Josef Schelling and Hegel with elements of traditional logic. It is well known that Hegel gives a priority to contradiction rather than identity, therefore the idea of Gołuchowski that elimination of all contradictions is a basic principle of thinking refers to ideas of Fichte, where thesis is understood

The concept of antithesis as a principle of cognition of diversity through a division of unity into various parts, their separation and contraposition is closer to that of Hegel, since noting that the principle of *tertium non datur* hasn’t been explained properly, Hegel stresses that “it is an important statement and its necessity lies in that identity passes into difference and difference into the opposition”\(^\text{12}\). The connection of the principle of sufficient grounds with relations in thinking relates it to the Hegelian theory as well, since noting that this principle of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz has a deep meaning, Hegel stresses that sufficient ground is not only a totality of all external, accidental, mechanical causes, but encompasses a goal as a unity of all relations. Fichte relates the principle of sufficient grounds to both antithesis and synthesis, since first requires as a necessity a ground to separate equal things, while the second needs a ground to connect opposites. An echo of this position might be an idea of Gołuchowski that following the principle of sufficient grounds we unite or discern variety in the process of synthesis. Similar to Hegelian is a triad of concept, judgment and consideration. In his interpretation of a traditional logic Hegel takes concept to be a unity of different determinations, the merge of being and essence into the identity, the judgment for him is a division of the concept into opposition of its moments. This consideration for Gołuchowski is traditional as a connectivity of thought when deducing one judgment from the other. The triad of determination, differentiation and proof resembles that one distinguished in Hegel’s “Science of Logic”. Together with Hegel, Gołuchowski states that for the determination the most important is the unification of characteristics of the perceived being, for differentiation – the definition of difference between particularities and universalities. Hegel calls synthesis a scientific proposition (Lehrsatz), but explains that proof is necessary for knowledge itself, since it gives a ground for such a scientific proposition. Therefore, the understanding of proof by Gołuchowski through the relation and connection is similar to Hegelian thought, that synthesis in scientific proposition is a connection of opposites. Hegel doesn’t discern triads of logical possibility, reality and necessity, logical clarity, precision and consistency, thus we should look for other sources of these ideas of Gołuchowski. It appears that here he follows Schelling, who related possibility with thesis, reality with antithesis and necessity with synthesis\(^\text{13}\). Partially the concept used by Gołuchowski matches Kantian logic, where the principles of identity and contradiction are related with logical possibility, sufficient ground – with reality and the principle of excluded middle with logical necessity. Clarity, justification and systematic character serve for Kant as perfections of logical thinking. Therefore, here Gołuchowski might have interpreted the ideas of Kant, combining them with the above mentioned triads.

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Though the major logical ideas of Gołuchowski are taken from German classical philosophy we can find some aspects of Romanticism in their exposition as well. His expression that without the unity of all functions of thinking, which ensures the unity of all and every science, “above which there is no higher principle and without which human wouldn’t have any meaning his life would be only sum of details without an organic whole. The soul then would get split into pieces neither action, nor thinking will be related” 14. The pathetic sound of these expressions is close to the philosophy of Romanticism. Together with Romantics Gołuchowski elevates organicism, vivacity as the highest principle working even in the smallest details and uses many colorful expressions to present it. Nevertheless many logical propositions in the Tractate don’t seem to be substantiated. Compared with earlier courses of Logic taught at the University of Vilnius, this provisional course of Gołuchowski scarcely appears to be richer. A brief overlook of it demonstrates that Vilnius people seemed to be thirsty for novelties and the structural aspects of theory attracted them more than its justification.

2. Affinities in the Concept of Metaphysics

The teaching of metaphysics was only included into the plan presented in the Tractate. Having started the lectures Gołuchowski changed the plan, didn’t teach metaphysics, while the subject of anthropology, which, according to the original plan, should have served as an introduction into philosophy, has got his major attention and was the only to be taught the whole first year. Presumably the Tractate was written only to match the requirements of the contest, while the teaching of metaphysics for Gołuchowski was taken alongside the position of Kant, who wrote in 1783 that “the old order of university studies still preserves the shadow of metaphysics, some scientific academies still supports one or another attempt to investigate it, yet it doesn’t belong to major sciences any longer” 15.

The task of metaphysics Gołuchowski describes rather in Kantian, than in traditional manner. First it investigates the laws that rule the things we cognize, analyzes the whole act of cognition encompassing the domains of senses, intellect and reason, searches for the basic forms of cognition and applies them for the major objects. Gołuchowski identifies metaphysics with ontology, however, ontology itself he understands as a theory of knowledge yet only while explaining the history of a term he mentions that Aristotle did use the term of gnoseology. The usage of the term “ontology” to explain the theory of cognition was usual in the philosophy of that time, for example, Kant suggested Ludwig Jacobi and Jacob Sigismund Beck to teach ontology through explanation of the conditions of knowledge, intellectual categories, principles of thinking. Following Kant, Gołuchowski acknowledges natural need for the metaphysics, a human strive to search for a purpose of being. In the evaluation of

14 Gołuchowski, J., supra note 4, p. 275.
human possibilities to cognize the universe and their own nature we can hear Pascalian
notes. The man is explained as a participant of two worlds. He rests in an eternal nature,
where everything is tied up by causal relations and also, together with other people,
in a human sphere where he himself “finds the strength to start his individual life”16.

Acknowledging the Kantian difference between the nature and humanity, Gołuchowski
expresses an attempt common to Romanticism to contemplate their unity. Following
Fichte, the author passionately describes never stopping wheel of the emergence and
disappearance of all things, which raises a desire to recognize some higher reality,
the existence of freedom and stability. First of all Gołuchowski suggests to search if
metaphysics can prove that all things contain an eternal principle and traces of an infinite
mind, that accidental changes are meaningful and there is a final purpose of the World.
Gołuchowski criticizes the dualist concept of the world, the overestimation of a subject
at the expense of nature common to rationalism and then to Fichte, yet still retains a
Cartesian belief that the most reliable knowledge is on the thinking itself.

Gołuchowski states that combining speculation with an empirical knowledge we
can objectively know the nature. Following Kant, Gołuchowski understands the nature
in its pure sense not as a totality of things in themselves but only as its phenomena,
found in our experience. An ambiguous usage of the term of nature explains us why
the author insists that metaphysics don’t cognize the nature, however, soon afterwards
states that applied metaphysics do. The text of the Tractate demonstrates that its author
was not perfectly sure about the unknowable character of things in themselves. Though
he insists that all knowledge is based on the laws of thinking, he also writes that objects
reflect themselves in the mind “as in a mirror”17, that “objects appear for us as they really
are”18. The Kantian concept of noumenon would be inconsistent with knowledge if a
phenomenon is a mirror image of the noumenon and what is the noumenon “in reality”.
Following Kant, our philosopher acknowledges that intellect, which organizes a sensual
material, is not a highest power of reason. Attempting to prove the reality of an activity
of such a higher power of reason he gives the same example as Kant – that of morality.
A thinking of Reason for Gołuchowski is itself creative, it creates the ideas. Presenting
Kantian analytical division of pure power of reason into three parts, Gołuchowski changes
the terms – transcendental aesthetic and transcendental dialectic he calls respectively
analytics of sensibility and reason. An applied metaphysics for Gołuchowski is a science
about what “can be known undoubtedly beyond the limits of human domain”19. The higher
part of the applied metaphysics refers to Kantian transcendental dialectic. Gołuchowski
names the ideas of the human soul, the world-whole and God without giving a ground
for their distinction. Kant uses the same concepts as the author to characterize these
ideas, however, the definitions given by Gołuchowski are not the same as those of Kant.
Gołuchowski shortens the disclosure of transcendental ideas and the differentiation
of the spheres of metaphysics which are supposed to analyze them to such an extent

16 Gołuchowski, J., supra note 4, p. 279.
17 Ibid., p. 281.
18 Ibid., p. 282.
19 Ibid., p. 289.
that it becomes unclear, whether he supports Kant, who stresses that “I” is only a self-consciousness of my thinking, thus one cannot describe it with a term of simple substance. Gołuchowski also doesn’t explain if the universe is an object created only by thoughts or its idea matches the reality and does absolutely unconditioned and necessary in itself being exist. He emphasizes that metaphysical ideas surpass the sensual representations, however, he doesn’t express his opinion whether these ideas are the scientific objects or only mark the limits of all possible theoretical knowledge. Nevertheless, the reference to the narrow sphere of investigations still retained for metaphysics allows us to think that, following Kant, the existence of substances corresponding to the transcendental ideas is kept for a justification by practical reason. We can use some elements of Kantian theory to explain why Gołuchowski separates cosmology from the philosophy of nature. The rational cosmology for Kant is a discipline which puts the boundaries unsurpassable for a speculative mind, while metaphysics of nature he treats as a science of natural bodies. As we have mentioned before, Gołuchowski doesn’t write, what status he allocates for the rational cosmology therefore there is no ground which justifies its difference from the philosophy of nature.

It also doesn’t seem evident on what grounds Gołuchowski diversifies the lower applied metaphysics - the philosophy of nature – into hylology, organology and teleology. Explaining his plans to Karl Leonard Reinhold Kant uses the term “teleology” as a synonym for all “The Critique of the Power of Judgment”; later he recognizes teleology as a regulative principle of the reflecting power of judgment, which adds to the knowledge on organic beings. Therefore, we might guess that term “teleology” has been borrowed from Kant. However, other chapters of the Tractate devoted for the philosophy of nature have nothing to do with Kant neither in their names, nor in contents, since Kant divides them according to the structures of intellectual categories in his transcendental analytic. His metaphysical principles of natural sciences consist of phoronomy, which explains the movement only through its quantitative aspects: size, speed and direction; dynamics, which analyzes the movement through its qualitative aspect, emerging from fundamental forces of attraction and repulsion immanent to matter and acting on it; mechanics – a relations between the matter and these dynamic qualities and phenomenology, which describes the movement of the matter or its quiet status only in a relation with the way of their representation, that is through its modality. Thus the differences between Gołuchowski and Kant in understanding of philosophy of nature are quite evident. The approach of Gołuchowski is also distinct from that of Hegel. Gołuchowski treats the teleology in a narrower sense, limiting it with only sensually perceived nature, while Hegel elevates the return of absolute spirit to itself as a purpose of all development of Being. The philosophy of nature in Hegelian system is divided into mechanics, physics and organic physics. The matter is understood as a formless mass and it is analyzed in the chapter of mechanics, the bodies which obtain individuality are analyzed by physics, while live organisms – in the second and third parts of chapter devoted for the organic physics. Gołuchowski’s division of the philosophy of nature, though expressed in a form of triad, is not Hegelian. Apparently the thinking of Gołuchowski is closest to that of Schelling, who analyzed the continuum of organic and nonorganic nature and treated the nature as purposive, though not created purposively.
The ontological ideas in a contemporary sense Gołuchowski formulates not as a propositions, but as metaphoric guesses. Following Hegel either Schelling philosopher speaks about an infinite spirit, “which hides itself in unnumbered creatures surrounding the Man”\(^\text{20}\), expresses itself both in the circulation of spatial bodies and in the actions of miniscule beings. Schelling’s idea of the power of light, which together with the power of gravity creates the world, recurs in Gołuchowski’s story about the sun, which is common to our and kindred planets and which gives birth to a life; as well as about an infinite number of other suns performing the same deeds. Gołuchowski speaks in a Schellingian manner about the continuous stages of the development of nature, presenting themselves with an endless variety of creatures, yet holding them together in a harmonious whole. The idea of nature as of an intellect crystallized in the Being reflects itself in the phrase of Gołuchowski, that “the life, imprisoned in the mass of dead nonorganic beings, is only the deep thinking of nature on itself, in plants it already effloresces as a longing for the light, while on the higher level of living beings it obtains even a deeper sense”\(^\text{21}\). Recurrent comparison of nature and human being, stressing that their affinity is not only thought out, resembles an absolute of Schelling as an identity wherein an eternal becoming takes place and the mind and the universe are but its poles. Following Schelling, Gołuchowski depicts the world-whole as a live organism and the sciences about the world as necessary related into organic whole.

3. Affinities in the Conception of Moral Philosophy

Gołuchowski explains an object, extent and limits of moral philosophy mostly on the basis of Aristotelian and Kantian theories. Moral philosophy is the main part of Philosophy itself, which analyses a human being not as a spectator but as an acting person. Because of the desire as the center of all human life, the man becomes the highest work of art among the creatures. The practical philosophy defines for a man what should be done, what should be counted for as a final purpose of all his deeds. The values are the source for all human activities for Gołuchowski. The first among all the values is happiness, perfection and virtue. Giving an explanation of the sources of these values he recognizes the Kantian principle of an absolute value of human person, denotes that morality is the highest goal of all our activities, that the reason should be understood as the source in itself of all human laws. In a similar Kantian manner he explains the principles of autonomy, free will, delineates a natural law and a pure moral philosophy. On the other hand it is the virtue not the duty, which deserves the main priority in the ethics of Gołuchowski. He points out that the duties come from the virtues and the teaching on duties he treats only as a part of elementary applied ethics. The final result of all moral philosophy according to Gołuchowski should be God and assuredness in his own immortality, and, together with Kant, stresses the impossibility to reach these ideas through speculation. We should only believe in them if we do not


want to refuse of our mind. Gołuchowski states, that “the autonomy of mind, which is necessary for the morality, doesn’t prohibit the possibility for an individual man as a limited and sensual being to submit to another intelligent being, especially when this being in the visible order of things demonstrates himself as a highest and, being eternal, transcends himself all our powers of imagination. On the contrary, the recognition of the existence of this highest being is a moral necessity together with an understanding of moral laws inherent in our reason as of laws of its own”22. As well as the author of “The Religion within the Limits of Reason”, Gołuchowski holds the analysis of human evil and the necessity to extinguish it an important part of moral philosophy. The purpose of the moral philosophy is to find the final goal of human life and devote it all human activities, to organize one’s life according to the eternal ideals, to raise it above manifold everyday worries.

**Conclusions**

The main ideas of Gołuchowski’s logic are taken from the classical German philosophy. Similar to Kant Gołuchowski explains the task of logic, emphasizes the difference between the logic and psychology, the necessity to build a systemic science derived from the basic laws. The parts of logic are discerned according to the dialectic principle of triads of Hegel and Fichte. These dialectic structures are used to interpret the concepts of logic and the relations of its laws. The biggest influence on Gołuchowski’s theory of knowledge comes from Kant’s theory, however, the text of the Tractate demonstrates that its author was not sure of impossibility to know things in themselves. In ontological considerations we can discern an attitude of Schelling on the continuity of nonorganic and organic nature, an identity of nature and spirit, a purposive character of nature. Kant’s influence is particularly clear in the moral philosophy of Gołuchowski. Here he attempts to combine the Kantian concept of morality with the traditional ethics of values therefore we can state that Gołuchowski follows Kant not consistently. Together with terms common to classical German philosophy, we can find many terms of Romanticism. The Romanticism of Gołuchowski expresses itself in the recurrent emphasis on the organic unity, on the principles of harmony of human powers.

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22 Gołuchowski, J., supra note 4, p. 291.
VOKIEČIŲ FILOSOFIJOS RECEPCIJA J. GOŁUCHOWSKIO „KONKURSINIAME TRAKTATE”

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kantiškąją moralumo sampratą ir tradicinę dorybių etiką, tad Kanto teorija remiasi ne
nuosekliai. Greta klasikinei filosofijai būdingų teiginių traktate yra vokiečių romantikams
artimų idėjų. Gołuchowskio romantizmas reiškiasi vis pabrėžiamuose organiškos vienybės,
žmogaus galių harmonijos principuose.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: vertėbės, logika, pažinimo teorija, metafizika, Kantas, Hegelis,
Fichte, Schellingas, romantizmas.

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