



Review of: Anna Tumarkin, *Being and Becoming Swiss Philosophy; Russian Philosophical and Social Thought, Monographs, Volume 4*, Zielona Góra, Oficyna Wydawnicza UZ, 2024, 242 pages, Paperback: ISBN 978-83-7842-544-1, € 6,90

Kamil Wojtowicz¹ 

Accepted: 21 December 2024

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In 2024, the University of Zielona Góra Publishing House published a translation from German into Polish (translator Bogumiła Husak) and Russian (translator Alexandr Tsygankov) of Anna Tumarkin's book *Being and Becoming Swiss Philosophy*. This publication is the next (fourth) part of the series entitled *Russian Philosophical and Social Thought. Monographs*, in which important texts related to Russian philosophical and social thought are published. The publication is bilingual, allowing it to reach both Polish and Russian-speaking readers. The editor-in-chief of the publication is Lilianna Kiejzik, who also wrote an exhaustive introduction introducing the reader to Anna Tumarkin's work. This introduction introduces the reader to the figure of Anna Tumarkin (not well known either in Poland or in Russia) and presents some of her intellectual achievements, with particular emphasis on *Being and Becoming Swiss Philosophy*.

The author, Anna Tumarkin (1875–1951) was a Russian philosopher of Jewish origin. At the age of 17, she emigrated to Switzerland to study, where she remained for the rest of her life (she became a Swiss citizen in 1921). She was the first woman to be named a professor at a co-educational university in the world. The University of Bern awarded her the title of professor of philosophy, where she had previously taught as a lecturer. Her academic interests included Greek philosophy, Kantian philosophy, and Swiss philosophy, particularly its practicality and focus on reality. She was also engaged with feminist issues, including women's suffrage and the role of women in Swiss society. Although born in the Russian Empire, she showed little interest in Russian philosophy. In 1948, she wrote *Being and Becoming Swiss Philosophy*, a publication in which, considering the history of Swiss philosophy, she tried to prove the existence of a separate philosophical thought created by the Swiss, and proved that

✉ K. Wojtowicz
kamil.michal.wojtowicz@gmail.com

¹ Doctoral School of Humanities and Social Sciences of University of Zielona Góra, University of Zielona Góra, Zielona Góra, Poland

for the Swiss, philosophy had a practical, life-related dimension, not a theoretical and speculative one.

In the first chapter of the book entitled *The General Direction of the Philosophical Interests of the Swiss*, the author outlines a general picture of the history of Swiss philosophy, as well as philosophy in general in Switzerland. She points out that although a cursory analysis of the development of intellectual thought in Switzerland may indicate a lack of a specific Swiss philosophy, this is an erroneous conclusion. According to the author, the fact that the Swiss did not create philosophical systems is due to their focus on the practical dimension of thinking and the practical dimension of philosophy. For the Swiss, philosophical thought was something alive, which could not be confined within the bounds of philosophical systems.

Moving on to a chronological analysis of Swiss philosophical thought, in the next chapter the author focuses on philosophy in Switzerland up until the Enlightenment. This division of philosophical history in Switzerland is dictated by the exceptional flourishing of Swiss philosophical thought during the Enlightenment and the relatively small (compared to later periods) interest in philosophical thought prior to it. The main axis of reflection in this chapter is the thought of Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531)—a theologian, Protestant thinker and Swiss preacher. The author points out that Zwingli correctly noticed that religion and reflection on religion seem to be key to Swiss philosophical thought. However, this reflection is not limited, but open to various trends of thought and culture, in a way universal. It was also related to the statehood of the Swiss and the creation of Swiss society.

The next chapter, *Philosophical thought of the Swiss in the Age of Enlightenment*, begins with the author emphasizing the importance of this period for the general development of philosophical thought in Switzerland. According to Anna Tumarkin, it was then that the Swiss began to devise their philosophical theories, particularly distancing themselves from European philosophical systems. This revealed their tendency to approach reflection in a practical way, as that which explains reality. In this chapter, the author shows the development of Swiss philosophical thought, describing the views of, among others, John Calvin (1509–1564), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Johan Georg Suzler (1720–1779). These views are presented chronologically, in mutual dialogue with each other, indicating the richness of the content of philosophical thought in Switzerland. The author ends this chapter with a reflection that indicates that the practical dimension of philosophical thought in Switzerland led to the separation of two important areas of consideration for Swiss thinkers: natural law and the theory of education.

The next two chapters are *Swiss Natural Law* and *Swiss Educational Theory*. In these chapters, the author describes these two aspects of philosophy that have been strongly developed and are important for Swiss thought. In both, she chronologically presents the history of the development of considerations on these issues, focusing on foreign influences as well as presenting the original views of Swiss thinkers.

In the chapter *Swiss Natural Law*, Anna Tumarkin describes the history of Swiss reflections on natural law, which began in the Enlightenment. She focuses in particular on the views of thinkers such as Jean Barbeyrac (1674–1744), Jean-Jacques Burlamaqui (1694–1748), John Calvin and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The views of these thinkers are again presented in a chronological manner, as well as the discussions

and polemics between individual philosophers. According to the author, reflections on natural law led Swiss thinkers to reflect on teaching and pedagogy as ways and methods for educating righteous and moral citizens.

In the last chapter entitled *The Swiss Theory of Education* the author focuses on the views of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827), Jean-Pierre de Crousaz (1663–1750) and B  at Louis de Muralt (1665–1749). Anna Tumarkin indicates that the considerations of education in Switzerland were focused on the practical dimension, and the aim of education was to create pious and ethical citizens who would create a good society. This chapter ends with a summary of J. Pestalozzi's activities and the reflection that, just like Pestalozzi's activities, the entirety of Swiss philosophy focused on reflections on faith in God and love of neighbor.

To summarize, the reviewed publication has many positive features. In the context of the translation itself, the fact that it is translated into two languages (Polish and Russian) is a great feature, increasing the range of potential readers. Anna Tumarkin's intellectual activity is not known in Poland or in the Russian-speaking world. The same is true of Swiss philosophy—it is not sufficiently known in Poland, and the above publication presents its outline in an accessible and precise way. The author has proven her views in the text. Firstly, that Swiss philosophy is an autonomous philosophy. Secondly, she has proven that Swiss philosophy had a practical dimension, was focused on life and functioning in the world, not dealing with speculation and not being overly interested in theory.

The text is scientific, but also narrative, which makes it readable and transparent. The separation of individual periods in the history of Swiss philosophical thought allows for the chronological ordering of considerations on it, and gives these considerations a structure, indicating the directions of development and evolution of Swiss philosophy.

Anna Tumarkin's book *Being and Becoming Swiss Philosophy* is a significant contribution to Polish and Russian research on Swiss thought, as well as providing historical material for research on Russian philosophical thought in exile.

Declarations

Competing Interests The author has no ethical conflict of interest to declare.

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