

Volume VII *Spiritual ways of Polish Catholicism in XVII century*, edited by Alina Nowicka-Jeżowa

Papers included in this tome present connections between Polish Catholicism and spiritual formations of the baroque. They confirm openness on inspirations coming from French and Italian culture (missionaries from the Order of Saint Lazarus, Daughters of Charity, Visitandines, Oratorians, followers of Jansenism) as well as Spanish and Flanderian (Carmelite monks and nuns) and others.

Pluralism of spiritual culture of Commonwealth in XVII century is visible against European backdrop. We easily recognise attempts to adapt and naturalise new forms, active reactions to critical tendencies and endeavours to reform inherited models of traditional religiousness and Renaissance humanism accordingly to new times.

Reconstructing the network of connections in European Catholic spirituality of XVII century will make it possible to understand original hermeneutics of values that constituted the spiritual formations. Such originality is found in e.g. mysticism of Polish Carmelites observed against Spanish and Netherlands backdrop. Signs of originality are also included in works of secular authors of XVII century like Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski who created his own vision of world and man based on philosophical and religious meditations inspired by European literature. On the background of European relations we can also clearly see typically Polish phenomena such as spirituality of Stanisław Papczyński - the founder of the Congregation of Marian Fathers.

In view of cultural events presented in this tome we must verify the opinion of dominating isolationism in religious culture of Commonwealth after the Council of Trent. Reducing that culture to provincial "Sarmatian Catholicism" - frequently met in various studies - pointing at its particularism, xenophobia and vulgarity of cult is a result of limiting research only to popular writing (which indeed had those features) and incomplete knowledge of texts that confirm dialogue with centres of European spirituality. Those are clearly open problems that demand thorough and comparative study of source texts. Such research resulted in historical and literary generalisations published in this volume.