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Predecessors of the Lithuanian Didactic Novella of the 19th Century and its Modifications

Didactic literature is a very significant part of the Lithuanian writings of the 19th century. The concept of didactic literature originates from a Greek word *didaktikós* – pastoral, teaching. Didactic, didacticism – all these words mean to teach, educate, moralize, enlighten and lecture, i.e. to make influence.

In the run of centuries didactic literature went through various modifications in various cultures and countries. In the Middle Ages didactics was very strong and distinctive. It is true to say that in the Middle Ages a person's whole life was in the focus of didactic guidance. The postulates of Christianity (and the Church) used to regulate the main didactic aspects. In the Middle Ages "a distinguished person is the one who has assimilated Christian virtues most thoroughly, in other words, the one whose behaviour is most compatible to the established behaviour canons and the most acknowledged model of a human being" (11, 255). The canons and models of the Middle Ages were propagated by various genres. Hagiographic literature (*hagios* – sacred, *grapho* – write) took ground. The lives of the saints depicting examples to be followed became very popular; the innocent always suffered, love was spiritual and a sacrifice was made for God's sake; all that propagated the image of an ascetic man, a recluse. *Exempla* (example) is one more genre of the Middle Ages. Such are short stories to be understood as real ones (it is their main feature) by the addressee and to be included into a wider discourse, most often into a sermon, by their reader. *Exempla* is openly didactic, while analysing and composing its fragments into a mosaic picture attempts may be made to reconstruct the world of man in the Middle Ages. This genre gained special popularity in the 18th century; the works of this genre were recorded (or composed) by priests. There are thousands of such works, quite many of them were collected and published; others are still in archives (42, 12). Jacques de Vitry was one of the most notable among those concerned about *exempla* in the Middle Ages. *Moralité* (*moralis* – moral) was often included into his sermons, it went after an example. In its essence it is a moral where a didactic sketch is discussed. Allegoric characters (most often taken from one collection and sermon and used in another) acting in the narration were explained. *Exempla* did not disappear without a trace. In Western Europe this genre was transformed into didactic stories, novellas in the 18th–19th centuries.

In the 18th century, the Age of Enlightenment, didactics took a very strong position, almost programmed. True, in Lithuania the tendencies of Enlightenment became most predominant in the 19th century. Didactic prose is not an exception. In Lithuania it was written even in the second half of the 19th century, meanwhile in Europe other tendencies prevailed at that time. Thus, in terms of typology, didactics manifested itself in one or another way (both in Europe and Lithuania) for many centuries changing genres and poetic forms, flexibly going through transformations but never losing its purport to influence the addressee, to teach and enlighten him.

Speaking about Lithuanian writings didactics became the dominant of literature in the 19th century. In this case not only historical but also its typological aspects are significant. In Lithuania works of didactic prose were written in approximately 1820–1870. It is "a phenomenon with trend boundaries, of an approximately clear chronological framework" (19, 5).

The Lithuanian didactic prose is a specific type of narrative. It is prose where philosophical, religious, moral, public, scientific and other ideas aimed to teach the addressee are presented. Didactics in these writings is evident. Didactic prose came to Lithuania through translations,

narrations, later original works were written. The most outstanding writers (also translators and followers) of didactic prose were *Juozapas Rupeika* (1789–1854), *Simonas Daukantas* (1793–1864), *Motiejus Valančius* (1801–1875), *Kajetonas Aleknavičius* (1804–1874), *Antanas Tatarė* (1805–1889), *Laurynas Ivinskis* (1810–1881), *Petras Gomalevskis* (1820–1868), *Juozapas Silvestras Dovydaitis* (1826–1882), *Mikalojus Akelaitis* (1829–1887) (3, 4).

The way of the Lithuanian didactic prose was rather long, starting with J. Chodzka's "Jonas iš Svisločės" (1823) translated by J. Rupeika and reaching its peak with the most praiseworthy novella "Palangos Juzė" by M. Valančiaus (1869). The genres of didactic prose are also of interest: dialogues, sketches, fables, stories, novellas. The definitions of genres used here are conditional.

"The 19th century hardly can be referred to as a period of any style <...>. It is much easier to speak about the whole range of a variety of styles of that epoch, as if about furniture styles in an antiquity shop <...>. The 19th century can not be characterised in any distinctive way. Although writings produced in that period were no worse, unfortunately, all of them had some touch of the past" (12, 160–161). Although these insights can not be generalised, they quite demonstrably reflect the situation of the didactic prose of the 19th century. This prose is marked by a great variety of ideas and forms of Christian art of the Middle Ages, antique culture, classicism, baroque, the Age of Enlightenment. H.-G. Gadamer's words: "The art of the past reaches us having passed through the filter of time and tradition that lively preserve and continuously transform it" may be cited here as a disapproval of a little diminishing characterisation "an antiquity shop" (8, 74).

If our aim was to index all plots, motifs, characters, maxims of the Lithuanian didactic prose of the 19th century, we would face a rather complicated task because so much was borrowed, they were not original, came to us by chance from elsewhere (Holy Script, folklore, original writings...).

The writer relies on the addressee's experience, his knowledge, it is important for him to write an understandable text so he has to create culturally "internalised" characters and situations or at least such which had been heard of. Discussing the poetry of plots, A. Veselovski notes that very often new elements are introduced into the old scheme of the plot because some important events happen in people's life (20, 303). This also happened in the Lithuanian didactic prose: the motif of drinking particularly often appeared and re-appeared, it was linked with sobriety campaigns of that time, etc. Bigger or smaller transformations are noticeable in migrating plots but what really matters is their local colouring, local topicality and reality.

In general, a premise may be put forward that migrating plots make up a very big (may be even a bigger) part of all plots and motifs of didactic prose. However, for such calculations one needs statistics, some digest of migrating plots and detailed text analysis. But it is not the aim of this paper; my task is to draw attention to the phenomenon of migrating plots in didactic prose as such. As M. Foucault says: "In my opinion, though I am not very positive, there is no such society where very important narratives were not re-narrated, repeated and transformed" (7, 15). The citation is very relevant in this context.

As it has been noted above, the didactic prose of the 19th century did not appear out of nowhere. It is evident that the Lithuanian literature was under the influence of the West European cultural tradition which mainly reached us via neighbouring countries. Translation of the novella „Jonas iš Svisločės“ (1823) by J. Chodzka was an impulse to produce analogous writings in Lithuanian; the canons of didactic migrated in Europe (didactic literature is a phenomenon common for European countries). It is known that the above mentioned J. Chodzka borrowed this plot from a French P. Jussieu. Alongside with archetypical plots and motifs of a didactic work, poetry characteristic for didactic texts also migrated.

It is worth discussing a rather complicated way of the above mentioned French work into Lithuanian literature via Polish literary texts (what is quite understandable, having in mind historical, political and cultural realia of that time).

Thus all began in 1818 when a French writer Laurent Pierre de Jussieu (1792–1866) published his novella “Simonas iš Nantujos, arba mugių prekiautojas” (“*Simon de Nantua, ou le marchand forain*“) (13). This didactic work “won a prize in literature for people in Paris“ (18, 32). It was favoured, noticed not only in its mother country (15 editions) but also by foreign writers and translated into 7 languages. Translations (followings) appeared very soon, what should be also stressed. After 1 year, in 1819, “Ponas Motiejus iš Jendrichovo, mugių prekybininkas“ (“*Pan Maciej z Jędrychowa, drelicharz jarmarkowy*“) was published in Polish (17). In fact, it was a remake (according to literature critic V. Maciūnas), not original. Frantyszek Skomorowski laid the scene in Poland and in this way adapted the text for the Polish reader because easier and more understandable scenes have a stronger effect and it is one of important strategies of a didactic text. Maciej, like his French predecessor Simon, visits towns, villages and teaches people different things, reproves for misbehaviour, etc. Such a model of the didactic novella, the plot of which is a described trip, became very popular and was favoured by authors with no particular talents. Neither the writer needs big efforts to follow the functioning model nor a not very sophisticated reader to understand an ordinary scheme of the plot and the form of narration.

Another step was a very popular novella “Ponas Jonas iš Svisločės“ (“*Pan Jan ze Swisloczy, kramarz wędrujący*“) by a Polish writer Jan Chodzka (1777–1851) published in 1821 (2). Namely this variant was translated into Lithuanian and is worth deeper analysis. Jan Chodzka was born in Vilnius Governorate (Vileika or Ašmena County) and actively participated in Lithuanian cultural and public life which was in progress in the time of prosperity of Vilnius University. He was chairman of Vilnius Charity Association, a member of the Lodges of Masons and its sect, the so-called “the šubravc“ union, also the patron of Dysna county schools and later (in 1822) was appointed inspector for Lithuanian schools by the University. Thus he had much information about the situation in education. He wrote about parish schools and people education in Vilnius press and put forward a question of preparing adapted to people books. He also wrote and the above mentioned didactic novella was published in 1821. It became very popular because the University recommended it for parish schools (14, 484).

In this way Jan Chodzka’s work became very popular in schools. It is known that in 1821 Vilnius University students philomaths bought 100 copies of this book from their low budget to give them to people (14, 485). At that time “Piligrimas Dobromiliuje“ (“*Pielgrzym w Dobromilu*“) (1818) by Izabelė Čartoriskienė was also widely known and formed a literary context for Jan Chodzka’s novella.

It is quite natural that before the times of nationalist movement the Lithuanian intelligentsia were concerned to have a popular didactic work in Lithuanian. It happened very soon, in 1823. Juozapas Rupeika (1789–1854), Šeduva dean, made a loose translation of the above discussed Jan Chodzka’s novella and gave it the title “Jonas iš Svisločės“ (“*Jonas isz Swisloczes krominikas wędrowois lietuwiszku liežuviu iszgulditas kasztu yr storony par Jozapa Rupeyka{...}, Wilniuje Pri bažniczes š. Kazimiera 1823 metuosie*“)(16). Namely this text became the model for the Lithuanian didactic novella, it is the first work of secular fiction literature in Lithuanian (14, 485) that gained popularity among people (the collection of Aesop’s 10 fables published by Jonas Šulcas in 1706 in Kongsberg was only a bibliographic scarcity known only for a very few). According to Maciūnas, the structure of “Jonas iš Svisločės“ is a copy, not original; its plot is very much the same as in the mentioned novella by a French de Jussieu (14, 485). It should be reminded in this context that literature critics and linguists have expressed their doubts not once whether Juozapas Rupeika translated Jan Chodzka’s work or simply sponsored its publication, however, the author of this

paper supports literature critic Vytautas Vanagas, who is of an opinion that “unless any evidence 100% proves that “Jonas iš Svisločės“ was translated by anybody else, we should not think that he did not translate it“ (19, 11). Juozapas Rupeika put efforts to link the text to Lithuanian realia adapting it to a local not very selective reader. Although the translation was rather precise it may be noticed that the Lithuanian text is more oriented towards common people whereas its Polish original is more “intellectual“. It is of great importance to stress that J. Rupeika included a rhymed *motto* glorifying the native language and also published the poem “Giesmė mužikėlio“ by an anonymous author. It is a completely Lithuanian innovation to supplement the text of the didactic prose (to be more exact, to complete it) with a rhymed insertion. This rather long insertion of 8 strophes is an example of the anonymous poetry of the 19th century; it may be assumed that a poem by a Polish poet P. Sokol-Szanin was followed freely and filled with vivid social motifs of the fate of a serf. It might be said that the poem “Giesmė mužikėlio“ is a program work of the Lithuanian poetry of the end of the 18th – first half of the 19th centuries (and the Lithuanian literature in general); it responded to the most acute life problems of that time and supported the start of secular fiction literature (9, 508). Juozapas Rupeika’s translation was no less popular than its French and Polish predecessors, its readers liked it and, what is more, it attracted other Lithuanian writers’ attention: following this example quite a number of didactic novellas was written (“Aplankymas seniuko dėl brolių Žemaičių ir lietuvių“ by Petras Gomaliauskis (1853), “Šiaulėniškis senelis“ (part I, 1860; part II, 1861; part III, 1864; part IV “Stepono Raudnosio gyvenimas“ (1895) by Juozapas Silvestras Dovydaitis, the most artistic Lithuanian didactic novella “Palangos Juzė“ by Motiejus Valančius (1869), etc.).

It should be stressed that in the discussed case “the circle of borrowings“ was very fast. Merely in 5 years (1818–1823) a French idea about a particular travelling and preaching character came to Lithuania, distant periphery of Europe, and its outlandish literature (at that time Lithuania was a part of the tsarist Russian empire, remote from the centre). As it has been mentioned, the culture of neighbouring Poland served as a mediator.

It is important to say that it was not an only case when another culture acted as a mediator. For example, “Robinson Crusoe“ by Daniel Defoe (1719) came to the Lithuanian reader through German literature: Simonas Daukantas, Lithuanian enlightener, got interested in Joachim Campe’s re-make “Robinson Junior“ (1779), he freely followed it and wrote the novella “Rubinaičio Peliūzės gyvenimas“ (in about 1843). Regretfully, this work was not published. Another version of Robinson’s adventures was written by Laurynas Ivinskis who translated “Robinson Crusoe“ from a Polish source “*Robinson na Wyspie albo Skroccenie przypadkow Robinsona*“ (1834). L. Ivinskis translated a French re-make, which was translated into Polish under the title “Robinson on the Island“. It was a version shortened for schools and prepared following J. J. Rousseau’s pedagogical ideas. The manuscript of L. Ivinskis’ translation was found in 1961. However, neither the works by S. Daukantas nor by L. Ivinskis had any influence on the Lithuanian literature of that time. The fate of the discussed work by Jussieu was quite different, successful and communicative.

It is interesting to note that the above discussed text was modified in Lithuanian literature already in the second half of the 19th century: in 1860 enlightener Mikalojus Akelaitis (1829–1887) published a revised and Lithuanized part I of “Jonas iš Svisločės“, “Jonas Išmisločius“ (“Jonas iszmisloczius kromininkas“) (1), (later, in 1860, this author wrote a didactic novella under the same model “Kvestorius po Lietuvą važinėdamas, žmones bemokinas“, the predecessor of which was “Kvestoriaus atsiminimai“, (“*Pamiętniki Kwestarza*“) by Jan Chodzka. In general, it is necessary to stress that quite often various loose translations and re-makes paved the way for original literature, Lithuanian writers learned and gained experience from foreign authors as it was not yet possible to do using our national literature.

Very often the Polish literature served as “a window to distant West European literatures (French, English, etc). Incidentally, after 1863 Mikalojus Akelaitis emigrated to France and died there. He Lithuanized novella “Jonas iš Svisločės“, which was translated and published by J. Chodzka. Lithuanian place-names and other Lithuanian realia were introduced, “moreover, instead of Polish religious and didactic writings, referred to by J. Chodzka, Akelaitis inserted known to him titles of writings published in Lithuanian“ (5, 525).

It is true that occasionally our authors were influence by, for example, the French culture and its environment directly, not through mediators; such cases were when our writers lived in that country for some time for different reasons.

Jonas Goštautas (1800–1871) was the author of the first novella of recollections with some didactic elements. It was “*Pan Siędzic, czyli opowiadanie o Litwie i Zmudzi* (“Ponas Teisėjaitis, arba pasakojimas apie Lietuvą ir Žemaitiją“) (1839). It was written in Polish but translated into Lithuanian and published only in 1967. The author dedicated this novella to the Polish Democratic Association founded in 1832 in France; its program was laid in a manifest published in 1836 and also signed by Goštautas. The motto of the booklet is “*Rėžk tiesą ir nebijok!*“ (“Tell the truth and don’t be afraid!”) (9, 526). It is known under what circumstances Jonas Goštautas came to France: he “joined the uprising of 1831, was commander of Šiauliai County cavalry. When the uprising was suppressed, he emigrated to France and worked as a conductor and had other jobs“ (15, 160). The novella published in France was authorless. The life of landlords and serfs, their everyday life is depicted there, the system of serfdom is disapproved, and uncontrolled power and treachery of noblemen, their preference of privileges rather than love to Motherland are blamed. In general, Jonas Goštautas’ novella is a little different than other Lithuanian didactic novellas, i. e. in the model of L. P. de Jussieu novellas, in terms of the genre as well as poetry and especially in terms of its active socio-political plan. Perhaps it is an example of one of the most fictionalized recollections in the context of the Lithuanian didactic novella, its addressee is different, it is a landlord whose conscience and common sense are appealed to. Goštautas died on 20 June, 1871, in Ruffece, France.

Thus, having overviewed the way of the didactic novellas linked to the work “*Simanas iš Nantujos*“ by L. P. de Jussieu such phases may be identified: since 1818 until 1860 the following works in French, Polish and Lithuanian were published:

- 1) *Simon de Nantua, ou le marchand forain* by Lautent Pierre de Jussieu, 1818.
- 2) *Pan Maciej z Jędrychowa* by Frantyszek Skomorowski, 1819.
- 3) *Pan Jan ze Swisloczy, kromarz wędrujący* by Jan Chodzka, 1821.
- 4) *Jonas iš Svisločės* by Juozapas Rupeika, 1823.
- 5) *Jonas Išmisločius kromininkas* by Mikalojus Akelaitis, 1860.

What is common for these 5 works, how are they linked, what main dominants may be identified?

Firstly, by all means, it is their migrating plot. It is based on a trip. A trip, as we know, is one of the main, archetypical symbols in the world literature, it became important for the writers and authors of the didactic prose in the Age of Enlightenment. “Experience gained on the road is enormous, in different cultures many other important activities of a person and even all his life are described as “the road“, “the way“, “the trip“ (6, 123). The plot of a trip, presumably, was beneficial for the prose writers (translators, re-makers) of the 19th century in the way that it was not difficult to combine not very closely linked passages into a coherent narration because of the logics of a trip: while travelling the main character meets different people, takes part in different events, expresses his opinion on what he sees and hears. Travel narrations were a chance for the reader to travel at least “virtually“, mentally visiting unseen places and meeting different people. The reader of the Lithuanian didactic prose of the 19th century is a common person living in a village, who has

never passed the boundaries of his parish. Thus, the didactic novella was very significant in terms of educating, teaching people. The plot of a trip in this case determines compositions of analogous works, where all episodes are within the framework of a trip.

Secondly, the main character (man by all means: Simon, Jan, Jonas) of the novella is presented positively, as an example (*exempla*) to be followed; he personifies Christian virtues, is learned and wise. He has the right to preach and teach those he meets. The situation of the Teacher - his Disciples, favourable for the didactic narration, is evident. Undoubtedly, the writer-didactic always identifies himself with the irreproachable character; the roles of the writer and the main character are very close. Thus the main character is depicted as an example for the whole Christian community; he conveys the intention of the didactic work most vividly. The work is based on the principle of opposition: when positive and negative characters are opposed the most effective, contrasting, demonstrative and teaching scene is portrayed.

Thirdly, most often the addressee of the didactic text is a person from a countryside environment therefore poetry in the text is rather simple, adapted to a not very intellectual perceiver. The didactic prose focuses not on literary scenes or aesthetics, its task is to teach, enlighten, and induce morality. It may be the reason why borrowings were so favoured; what really matters is the content and influence of the work but not the writer's artistic endeavours. Finally, the plot is slightly modified to make it close to the local reader but not searching for artistic individuality.

Fourthly, comparative textual analysis of the 5 works discussed above would be very expedient, thus the slightest changes in the plot might be fixed and evaluated from the very start, when the work was "Polonized" and later "Lithuanized".

By all means it is regrettable that there is no any copy of L. P. de Jussieu's work discussed above in Lithuanian libraries (presumably, Jan Chodzka might have used a French original or its translation by Skomorowski mentioned above, however, it is very likely that rich in that time Vilnius University library had Jussieu's work but it disappeared during complicated historical transformations). For textology studies in the first place Jussieu's authentic text as well as the other 4 books are necessary.

Thereby the didactic novella takes a very important place in the panorama of the Lithuanian literature genres of the 19th century. The most significant novellas here are travel novellas which convey the fundamental ideas of the Age of Enlightenment. All translations and re-makes mentioned above, the origins of which are to be traced in L. P. de Jussieu's novella about Simon on the road, contributed to the formation of the early Lithuanian prose and the development of the genre of the didactic novella. The genre of the novella had a very important position in the Lithuanian literature of the 19th century, it was the main genre until the beginning of the 20th century (the first Lithuanian novel, "Algimantas" by Vincas Pietaris, was published only in 1904). The development of the plot, the story, the way of describing characters and, finally, the ideology of a work were taken, speaking figuratively, from the European treasury.

Summing up it:

1. The didactic prose of 1820–1870 is a dominating paradigm in the Lithuanian literature of the 19th century. It vividly represents the Lithuanian literature of the 19th century and, being an integral part of the European didactic literature, enters the whole panorama of the world didactic thought.

2. Ideologically the Lithuanian didactic prose of the 19th century should be linked to the postulates of the Age of Enlightenment; the artistic principles of this prose include wide contexts of West Europe (antiquity, the Middle Ages, renaissance, classicism).

3. Externally, the Lithuanian didactic prose of the 19th century is very schematic, conventional in its form. The models of the didactic novella and the didactic story exist. The

universal model of the didactic text may also be traced. Specialists in didactics are more concerned with the search of the content rather than the form. Forms are traditional, borrowed from the European literature (Polish, German, etc.), meanwhile the content responds to the Lithuanian life reality of the 19th century. The didactic prose reflects the mentality of a Lithuanian farmer, local colouring, historical, geographical details, etc.

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Summary

The development of the Lithuanian didactic travel novella of the 19th century starting with Laurent Pierre de Jussieu's (1792–1866) novella “Simonas iš Nantujos, arba mugių prekyautojas“ (1818), “*Simon de Nantua, ou le marchand forain*“ through its loose translations and re-makes

which were the following: Frantiszek Skomorowski's "Ponas Motiejus iš Jendrichovo, mugių prekybininkas" (1819), "Pan Maciej z Jędrychowa, drelicharz jarmarkowy"; Jan Chodzka's (1777–1851) "Jonas iš Svisločės" (1821), "Pan Jan ze Swisloczy, kramarz wędrujący"; Juozapas Rupeika's (1789–1854) "Jonas iš Svisločės" (1823) and finishing with Mikalojus Akelaitis's (1829–1887) work "Jonas Išmisločius kromininkas" (1860) is discussed in the paper.

The phenomenon of the travel plot migrating through the French, Polish, Lithuanian literatures, the importance of the strategies of example (*exempla*) for didactic narrations highlighting the dominant of the main positive character (Simon, Jan, Jonas) are analysed in the paper. The didactic French, Polish, Lithuanian novella is presented as the product of the Age of Enlightenment. It is stressed that the original variant while migrating through literatures was transformed and modified with the aim to adapt it to the local reader, therefore the writers included the local realia (in this way Polish and later Lithuanian names, place-names, etc. were introduced). In general, the writers of the didactic prose were more concerned with the content than the form, esthetics, etc. So the forms of the Lithuanian travel didactic novella are traditional, borrowed from the European literatures (French, Polish, German), whereas its content responds to the Lithuanian life realia of the 19th century. Juozapas Rupeika's ir Mikalojus Akelaitis' versions reflect the mentality of a Lithuanian countryman, local colouring, historical, geographical details, etc. The moments in the biographies of the Lithuanian didactic writers (Jonas Goštautas, Mikalojus Akelaitis) related to France are highlighted in the paper.

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