

Jean Jacques Rousseau czy John Locke? Nad traktatem C. Pyrrhysa de Varille

Jean Jacques Rousseau or John Locke? On the treatise of C. Pyrrhys de Varille

SUMMARY

César Pyrrhys de Varille, who derived from a noble family of Normandy, came to Poland in the year 1755 and is certainly better known in Polish scholarly writing than he is in France. It was in Poland that found a fertile ground for developing his intellectual potential, and this was reflected in a number of his political publications. While he was governor and educator of the three sons of the wife of the Marshal of Lithuania, duchess Barbara Sanguszko, at her court in Lubartów, he had a chance to meet the Polish intellectual elite of the period of kings Augustus III Wettin and Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski. At her palace in Warsaw, where she spent a considerable amount of time, the duchess entertained such renowned guests as the Bielińskis, the Jabłonowskis, the Rzewuskis, the young Ignacy Krasicki and Stanisław Konarski Sch. P. Pyrrhys de Varille probably witnessed the writing of Konarski's work *O skutecznym rad sposobie* [Concerning on Efficient Method of Government]. All this must have had a significant impact on the treatise written by Pyrrhys de Varille, entitled *Compendium politicum seu brevis dissertatio de variis Poloni imperii vicibus*. This small work, published in Latin in 1760, soon gained wide-spread popularity, which is testified to by the Polish translation of the treatise, which appeared in 1762 and 1763. Pyrrhys de Varille's treatise shows that he well understood the need for the sense of political reform in Poland. He tried to reinforce the reasoning he presented in his work by appealing to arguments from modern doctrines current in Western European scholarly and philosophical thinking – mainly those of natural law and social contract. It is at this point that a surprising finding emerges from the analysis of Pyrrhys de Varille's treatise: the detailed analysis of the next and its comparison with the works of Rousseau (above all the *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*) shows that, contrary to suggestions made by W. Smoleński and mistakenly repeated afterwards, it was not Jean Jacques Rousseau whose views influenced Pyrrhys de Varille, but John Locke and the views he presented in Two treatises of Government.

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