

Monika Woźniak: Dialectical logic, logical dialectics? On the Principle of Non-Contradiction in Poland in Light of Soviet Debates on Dialectical and Formal Logic

Seminar, Department for the Study of Modern Czech Philosophy and *Contradictions: A Journal for Critical Thought*

Abstract

The discussion on the principle of contradiction (1946–1957) between Marxist and non-Marxist philosophers is often seen as the first signal of de-Stalinization in Polish philosophy. The traditional narrative about it focuses on Adam Schaff's figure and portrays his rejection of the superiority of dialectical logic over the formal logic (under the influence of Ajdukiewicz) as a breaking point which led to the victory of common sense. However, in my text I want to go beyond this narrative. Therefore, I pay equal attention to the other participants of this discussion, both Marxists and non-Marxists (Jarosław Ładosz, Helena Eilsten, Waldemar Rolbiecki, Stanisław Ossowski). This shift of perspective allows going beyond the misleadingly general label of “Marxism-Leninism” and describing the whole variety of Marxist positions in the debate, as well as see more clearly the difference between the philosophical and political landscape in Poland and the Soviet Union. To that end, I reconstruct Soviet reception of the analysed discussion and its relationship with the Soviet debates on the same matter in this period. As I argue, the change in Schaff's position on dialectical contradiction started right after the publication of Stalin's *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*, and was influenced not only by Lvov-Warsaw School, but also the shift in the attitude towards formal logic in the Soviet Union. However, the crucial position of the members of Lvov-Warsaw School within the philosophical field was the main factor that allowed the absorption of analytic tradition into Polish Marxism – an aspect in many way decisive for the later development of Marxism in Poland.

Date

Monday, June 7, 14.00–16.00

Join us on Zoom

Contact: mervart@flu.cas.cz