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Stanisław Lem: Lucretius from Lviv

Lem began his writing career during the Second World War under the German and Soviet occupation (in Polish Lviv) and during the early postwar years. The war and the subsequent period of Stalinism in Poland had a deep impact on him. Lem is the most famous Polish writer, not Jewish, but first of all he is *par excellence* a great philosopher, like Schopenhauer, Russell, Popper or Kotarbiński. I call his position in the philosophy as „rationalistic naturalism with metaphysical extensions”. Lem agreed with this opinion.

One can call his outlook an enlightened anthropological manichaeism or the philosophy of inequality. Lem gave ideas, which relate to the problem of evil to issue of community (human propensity for evil and the temporal-social nature of man).

I repeat my main proposition (2010): the philosophy of Stanisław Lem is Neo-Lucretianism and Lem can be called the Lucretius of 20th century. The philosophical system of Lem is parallel to the ancient poem *De rerum natura (On the Nature of Things)*, written in the first century B.C. by the famous Roman poet and philosopher Titus Lucretius Carus.

The Antireligiosity of both philosophers doesn't concern all religions; it opposes the one which propagates a false outlook upon life. Therefore, their antireligiosity goes together with apologetics of religion. Lucretius and Lem don't negate the religiousness, i.e. religious disturbance of the soul. In opinion of Lucretius gods are necessary for people, Lem is of the opinion that God is “the beneficial power”. Lem also says that the Christian system of values is the most proper from the point of view of human nature. He repeats after Schopenhauer and Feuerbach (also Lucretius) that religion is a remedy for the fearful certainty of death.

Lem – the atheist in common parlance – from the Christian point of view is the man of ‘strange faith’. There is an eschatology in his outlook, though a worldly (finitistic) one, which clearly has a Lucretian nature. In opinion of both there are two attributes of the Cosmos: extermination (Lucretius says *mors immortalis*, Lem – *holocaust*), and creation. A mortal human finds comfort in the idea that ‘other worlds’ come into being in the dead Cosmos eternally and ‘different minds’ are born in them.

Keywords:

Lem, Lucretius, Lviv, neolucretianism, devilishness, Christianity, religion