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Bartosz Wojciechowski

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND MUTUAL RECOGNITION AS THE BASIS OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY*

1. Introduction

Multicultural society is metaphorically referred to as "the orchestra of the human race" in which every ethnic group is an equally valuable tool, preserving its diversity, but nonetheless ready to play in an orchestra, that is to work within a given community or society. It seems therefore quite trivial to say that in every 21st century society there are various forms of social life. Among numerous different styles (forms) of a good human life there are also those that are neither better nor worse nor equal in value in respect to one another but they are valuable in a disproportionate or diverse manner. The fact of multiculturalism plays an important role in shaping the law and in the way how various state institutions function.

In my article, therefore, I try to answer the following questions: Do human rights make it possible to create a genuine mutual social recognition among the actors of interactions? Does acting consistently with law pattern automatically imply social recognition, or does leaving leeway or freedom to take decisions and to act (within legally defined framework) in some cases generate conflict situations, both individual and social ones? When answering the latter questions, I argue that the arguments for recognition of human rights must be sought in the principle of mutual recognition and equality of opportunities treated as universal rationale in

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their favour. Such assumptions expressed in human rights – justified or even presented in an innovative way – constitute a major force which shapes the multicultural civil society.

2. Multiculturalism as an element of essentiality of modern societies

The idea of one-nation and monocultural state collapsed because multicultural societies have become a historical fact[1]. Naturally, this fact has not yet been grasped in a fairly adequate or heuristically fertile idea that would enable the creative, peaceful, and thus devoid of hostile tension coexistence of these multicultural societies. Monological culturality became the past from the perspective of the state, as evidenced best by the emancipatory efforts of entities belonging to national minorities, ethnic communities and nomadic groups, all that demand their own cultural space. The climate of today's world is vividly and accurately reflected in the metaphor of Clifford Geertz, for whom the present time is a Kuwaiti bazaar, marketplace of values, hubbub of languages and dialects, paths trampled by multicultural and multiracial feet, paths where we all go at once and we find it more and more difficult to get out of each other's way. Maybe this is the reason why – due to common crossing ways, the colourfulness of varied life, the fear of often incomprehensible otherness – multiculturalism and social heterogeneity encounter in the social reality the lack of acceptance and tolerance.

At the narrative level, multiculturalism simply shows the cultural diversity of a given society, but it at the same time shuns any theoretical legitimacy of a universal model of culture, and it settles for its understanding as a kind of mirror reflecting the political, educational and socio-economic relations in multi-ethnic societies. It should be emphasized, however, that while the concept of culture is negated in its anthropological, overall – that is universal – interpretation, it is back in multiculturalism as an essentialist concept of the cultural baggage often associated with ethnic group and race. The consequence of the latter is a re-reification of the concept of culture, because each ethnic, racial group should treat the values of

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[1] This causes the contestation of homogenous assumptions of classical nation – state model. The requirements of assimilation or differentiating exclusion are nowadays increasingly seen as devoid of legitimacy, both at the national level, as well as internationally. The standard practiced in many countries (e.g. in Australia, Canada and Sweden) are pluralistic patterns, which are exemplified the anti-discrimination legislation, in affirmative programs or special protection of minorities. M. Koenig, P. de Guchteneire, *Political Governance and Cultural Diversity* [in:] *Democracy and Human Rights in Multicultural Societies*, idem (eds.), Hampshire–Burlington 2007, pp. 4–5.

their culture as a proof of a permanent and visible distinctiveness. Multiculturalism constitutes a set of phenomena, including: individuals, cultural groups, processes of development and of universalization of these groups, the mechanisms of forming territorial, racial, ethnic, linguistic and even religious bonds. As a result, it forms the basis for creating the dominant, relatively orderly shaped patterns of relations between cultural groups.

We perceive multiculturalism from a different perspective when we refer to government policies aimed at levelling social tensions associated with the phenomenon of multiculturalism, or when it comes to ideology, movement, doctrine and even the philosophy of multiculturalism (in the colloquial meaning of the doctrine of love of wisdom). The example of the latter can be the so-called multiculturalism officially adopted in Canada under the Constitution of 1982 which, in the most general terms, implies the recognition of the equality of all cultures, regardless of their geographical, racial or religious origin. Thus – as Zygmunt Bauman puts it – the state shall henceforth ensure "the tortuous road to common humanity"[2]. The main feature of official multiculturalism is therefore the recognition of cultural diversity while maintaining unity and loyalty to the state.

The idea of multiculturalism has gained a tint of ambivalence today; on the one hand, it defines a certain social condition, a fact or ideal of the coexistence of multiple cultures within one community, whereas on the other hand – the policy of the state aiming at conscious creation or reinforcement of mosaic society, whilst idealising the diversity over the processes of homogeneity. The strength of multiculturalism lies in paying attention to the compelling issue of our time, namely the heterogeneity of cultural and ethnic image of modern societies and the problem of multiplicity of identities. In other words, the objective of the proponents of the policy of multiculturalism is to celebrate the identity of social groups and to support them in their struggle for social, actual equality by means of equal treatment of cultural expression.

3. Human rights as the normative paradigm of multicultural societies

In such a society there appear questions about its normative basis. Nowadays, it seems that human rights constitute the undisputed cornerstone of any significant political culture. Both thinkers from different disciplines of social sciences, in par-

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[2] Z. Bauman, *Ponowoczesność jako źródło cierpień* [Post-Modernity as a Source of Suffering], Warszawa 2000, pp. 59–68.

ticular lawyers, as well as politicians and, ultimately, ordinary citizens, behave as if they knew what these rights stand for, what their scope and justification is. Is it really so that we know everything about human rights? The answer seems to be *prima facie* clear and affirmative. Meanwhile, considerable doubts arise already during the discussion about what authority is legitimised to ensure the observance of human rights by means of the power of sanctions.

They come into effect by granting the individual – by the state bodies, in an entirely positivist sense – a civic title of individual and unique legal entity. The uniqueness of this mode of granting rights consists in the fact that it takes place exclusively for the individual, respectively to *the personal significance of its own name*. The meaning of the name lies, after all, in allowing definitive distinction of any person from any other one. According to the logic of personal individuality, such a transfer of these rights allows to dispose of them purely by their owner. Every citizen is granted with fundamental rights – implemented in the latter way – as personal legal ownership in the same way, but not as an equal among equals, but as a person who *is unique and incomparable with anyone else*. The equality of personal rights of the holder vis-à-vis law – which is being warranted here – applies equally to the act of granting them, limiting their application, as well as to depriving of them. This also corresponds to the reality in which every citizen is granted with personal rights, granted to him exclusively with adequate gradation by age or life situation and with varying limitations, yet, he is always granted these rights in accordance with the principle of equality from the moment of birth.

Constitutional provisions on human rights should be transferred to supra state-national fundamental rights, i.e. German, French or American. Whilst assuming this *personal* interpretation of the fundamental rights, one also eliminates the drama of "the dilemma of human rights", the source of which is, on the one hand, sought in the secular law and, on the other hand, when talking about their supra-positivie character, one indicates their divine origins. At the same time, one can disregard all religious metaphysics. This would also correspond better to the intentions of philosophical enlightenment which – by referring to the fundamental criteria of scientific methodology – is directed against the introduction of religious and mythological assumptions in developing theory. It is only in this way that our basic rights of freedom would actually have a consistently secular character. One would still have to provide the answer on how it was possible to create cultural traditions such as the Western culture due to which, in fact, we owe the unique, individualistic figure of a legal person. Indeed, one cannot underestimate here the role of our Christian – Western tradition in the development of individually-personalistic image of man.

The fact that most countries run a policy of human rights in the name of being universally bound with legal norms of international relations, means that at present we have to deal with the global thrust of human rights-oriented system of global citizenship. In this sense, human rights gain priority over the law of nations which, in the conflict situation, enables a humanitarian intervention aimed to protect the rights of world citizens (human rights), which clearly violates the sovereignty of the nation-state[3].

This justification is not sufficient from the standpoint of individual communities, ethnic groups or, ultimately, individuals that make up a country's citizens. Justification and sanctioning of such universality has to be deeper, referring to the generally applicable arguments. Universalism is understood here as a belief in the existence and binding force of basic legal norms, expressed in the existing legal norms. The belief which is being formulated in present times is that human rights constitute a source of cosmopolitan power, namely such which stands over the sovereignty of nation-state, since it authorizes a humanitarian military intervention in a specific country. In this context, the concept "cosmopolitan" is understood as "a set of fundamental values setting the standards and limits that no one – be it a representative of the government, a state or a civil association – is allowed to violate"[4]. The determination of these values which are common to all is difficult, but as long as not all people give equal value to human rights as such, human dignity is believed in everywhere.

Dignity constitutes the essence of human person, namely it is inextricably linked with every man, irrespective of who he is and where he lives. Dignity is thus rooted in entelecheia of ideal humanity. Human dignity constitutes ontological quality and constitutive feature of selfhood. Hence, this materially open dignity is called "the sanctity of human person" and it constitutes a value that is confirmed rather than determined by positive law. Human dignity is inherent, and therefore it represents an intrinsic, fundamental and universal value. Its source is "humanity as such"[5]. The inherent character of dignity stands for its non-transferability. It claims further that every person has it, regardless of individual characteristics, i.e. irrespective of race, religion, nationality, obesity, abilities or background, etc., and

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[3] U. Beck, *Macht und Gegenmacht im globalen Zeitalter. Neue weltpolitische Ökonomie*, Frankfurt am Main 2002.

[4] D. Held, *Die Rückkehr der Politik* [in:] *Was wird aus der Demokratie?*, T. Assheuer, W.A. Berger (eds.), Opladen 2000, p. 5.

[5] I. Kant, *The Philosophy of Law: An Exposition of the Fundamental Principles of Jurisprudence as the Science of Right*, Edinburgh 1887, p. 50. It is worth noting that such understanding of dignity is also presented in the Koran in Sura 17.70.

therefore it is of non-gradable and non-transferable character, because if someone is a man, he or she is the latter in the same way as any other man. One can therefore draw a conclusion which is not widely accepted in the modern world that human dignity is not only independent of the nationality, ethnicity or gender, but also of the quality of moral or physical abilities of individuals.

Universal and egalitarian concept of dignity assumes that all people deserve to be treated with respect. In other words, the concept of dignity has taken the form of demands that consist of recognizing equal status of entire cultures and eliminating inequalities of gender, origin or race. This is based on the fundamental belief that as human beings, we are also equal in this respect, even if we were different in all other respects[6]. Dignity is thus a criterion for establishing whether a given law is fair, because a fair law protects the dignity, and a violation of such a law is inconsistent with the inherent dignity. It can be therefore stated that nobody should be regarded as morally inferior on the basis of such physical racial or other characteristics which he or she has no influence on.

All jurisprudential traditions, despite their differences, consider the idea of a rational and free person, and thus endowed with a specific dignity which makes it distinct from the world of things, as a basis of legal order. The meaning of this sentence is perfectly captured by Boethius' sentence "persona est rationalis naturae individua substantia". Dignity of a human being as a person lies in his ability to intelligent, free and moral action. These positions begin to differ, though, when it comes to identifying the quintessential element of human dignity, namely whether it is his rational nature (Thomas Aquinas and neo-Thomism), his freedom (Kant and liberalism), or rather a life in harmony with morality having its source in the community (Hegel and communitarianism).

They differ substantially also in terms of how the law should serve man, to enable him the fullest development of his personality, and thus to protect his dignity. And so, with some generalization, one could say that for a liberal, it is clear that the law respects human dignity only when it ensures to the maximum his sphere of individual autonomy (freedom to decide), which is incompatible with the sphere of autonomy of other people[7]. In turn for a Thomist (also for neo-Thomist) freedom to shape one's own life is just one of the basic human rights granted to him

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[6] Compare: J. Finnis, *The Priority of Persons* [in:] *Oxford Essays in Jurisprudence: Forth Series*, J. Horder (ed.), Oxford 2001, p. 1.

[7] It should be kept in mind that liberals themselves argue as to whether providing autonomy is sufficient to ensure freedom from direct compulsion, or should one also ensure equal opportunities or even material resources.

as a rational being. As a result, he will in certain situations permit the possibility of restricting freedom in the name of individual welfare, which for a liberal constitutes an expression of paternalism, infringing human dignity. For a communitarianist, in contrast, the most crucial issue is the protection of the good of the community in which a person can obtain positive freedom and complete dignity involving such life that conforms to the ethical standards. For a liberal, such standpoint is a manifestation of legal moralism.

It follows then that the idea of human person and its dignity constitute an indispensable element of the internal structure of the law. In this perspective, "human dignity" is the basis for the entire construction of the constitutional order, it provides the source, foundation and principle of that order. In other words, this is the basic norm (*Grundnorm*) of this order in the logical, ontological and hermeneutical sense. Without this idea it is difficult to comprehend the basic institutions such as legal subjectivity or legal liability, as well as the internal values of law, which include legal security or justice. The idea of human personality undoubtedly needs further development that can be granted by the conceptions of a human being and society – that remain external in relation to law. Consequently, it is generally recognized that the fundamental value that human rights are based on is the dignity of a man. Dignity reinforces the treatment of all people as free and equal, which is sufficient to formulate the fundamental and universal human rights that are based on these very values.

4. The principle of mutual recognition and respect and equal opportunities for every Other

The need to comply with such laws would result from adopting the principle of 'be a person and acknowledge others as persons'. The latter, nonetheless, results merely in the bans on infringement of a person's rights because the law that is based on it will merely set the limits of will. Universality of human rights lies in the argument on human dignity, because when considering the issue of universal equality treated as a cornerstone of modernity (the world of "culture") we assume that it is only appropriate to recognize Me – every human being as a *general* person in whom *everybody* is identical.

The desire to be recognized is thus a basic element of human life that begins with the identification and recognition of oneself and ends in dialectic which expresses the mutual relation between the need of constant struggle for recognition and its institutionalization. The fear of the refusal of recognition sometimes stands

for fear of death, therefore, the intention of obtaining it or protection against its loss becomes a driving force in the life of every man in society, the main motive of his actions in every aspect of his existence.

Generally speaking, the theory in question focuses on granting equal and mutual recognition in interpersonal relations to different individuals who are representatives of national, racial, or ethnic minorities, practising different religions, placed lower in the social hierarchy due to their material status. By fair and equitable relations of mutual recognition we mean such that would enable one to regard every individual – in interpersonal relations – as an equal and free interlocutor, as well as prevent humiliation and discrimination and in the area of economic relations, leading to redistribution. The moment which precedes recognition and, at the same time, is included in the latter is the feeling of one's own worth, manifested in preserving one's own authentic identity[8]. The process of building one's own identity is accompanied by discovering the difference between one's own and the Other's. What is meant by this is the taking into consideration both the negative character of the Other as well as his internalisation in the process of self-determination. In other words, the source of identity is in the Other, namely in internalised difference from the Other and difference of the Other. The sum of differences, that is adding that what differentiates me from the Other and that which differs the Other from me, constitutes the knowledge of oneself. It can be stated that mutual recognition stands for combining self-reflection and orientation at the Other, conditioning the attitude to oneself and intersubjectivity.

A characteristic feature of the recognition at issue is mutuality, whilst we do not mean here reciprocal mutuality, rather as a participant of a merely binary relation[9]. Mutuality is most vividly manifested in the relation I to the Other, as described by Lévinas, and mutuality of my obligation becomes my obligation when I become the Other for the Second Party or the Third Party. In other words, if I take care of another individual (the Second Party), I also require such care and attention for the Second Party from other individuals (the Third Party), and if such care and attention is to be full and omnipresent then *I* also require it from the Other (the

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[8] Ch. Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition* [in:] *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, A. Gutmann (ed.), Princeton–New Jersey 1994, pp. 28–44; also P. Ricoeur, *The Course of Recognition*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 69–149.

[9] Zygmunt Bauman writes about such mutuality, taking into consideration the difference between an agreement and morality. This difference consists in the fact, as noted by this recognised sociologist, that meeting the obligation which results from an agreement depends on meeting the obligation by the partner, and in the case of morality such conditional mutuality is excluded. See: Z. Bauman, *Etyka ponowoczesna*, Warszawa 1996 [*Postmodern Ethics*, Cambridge 1993], pp. 76–82.

Second and the Third Party) in relation to the Other from their viewpoint (Me). What intermingles here is a moral order of the obligation of I towards the Other, and the duty of the Other towards the Other (including Me). In other words, we pass from self-identification to dialectic relation, which can be observed on an existential level and which leads to mutuality or reciprocity. Mutual recognition stands for a certain intellectual simultaneity, intersubjective communion, or becoming one[10]. Ricoeur writes that dialectics of recognition starts from "something" in general, going then through "someone" and "oneself", in order to ultimately arrive at some symbol of identity obtained in mutuality (Greeks *allēlōn* – "one another"; "each other")[11]. The principle of mutuality has the character of a universal norm that is binding irrespective of cultural differences. In this context we can talk about *homo reciprocus*.

Mutuality plays a crucial role in well-ordered society understood as a system of social cooperation, though as a universal principle it functions in all societies, even those "badly-ordered". In a well-ordered society it has the most complete manifestation because the citizens are treated here as rational only when they perceive one another as free and equal[12]. The criterion of mutuality means that the conditions of ordering society are considered reasonable by all those who can accept them as free and equal citizens rather than as dominated and manipulated people who are placed lower in the social hierarchy.

Legal recognition stands for protection of an individual's sphere of freedom and legally ensured participation in public process of creating will, which is hardly possible without ensuring a certain measure of social standard of life. Being awarded individual rights means that a given individual can have socially accepted claims, that is, carry out legitimate social activity, whilst being self-assured that all other members of society have to treat him or her with respect. Rights, therefore, serve the purpose of creating self-respect since they equip the individual with a symbolic means of expression that enables this individual to show his or her social activities and leads to the situation in which he or she is universally recognised (also in a moral sense) as a valuable and talented person[13].

The duty of mutual respect reinforces the picture of us as irreproachable individuals, but it also assumes unity and particularity of human race. Lack of respect

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[10] P. Ricoeur, *The Course of Recognition*, op.cit., p. 151ff.

[11] Ibidem, p. 250.

[12] J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, New York 1996, p. 15ff.

[13] A. Honneth, *Kampf um Anerkennung. Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Kämpfe*, Frankfurt am Main 1994, p. 194.

harms human dignity, resulting in well-known atrocities like slavery, rape, ethnocide etc. What follows lack of respect is designation of people into more and less human, namely those who are worthy of living and those who do not deserve it. In this context, respecting human rights stands for respecting certain requirements that are indispensable for respecting human beings. Respect means that what we think, do, or plan to do counts for others; that we are relatively important people. As a consequence, the fact that we are alive "is of importance for others" and we deserve others' care. In this meaning, the abovementioned commandment "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" would lead to a situation in which one's neighbours would feel the urge to notice, recognize, and confirm that they themselves represent something exceptional, irreplaceable, and permanent. In other words, "equal love for one's neighbours and for oneself would stand for mutual recognition of one's own uniqueness – mutual respect for the differences between us"[14]. Morality – which can have a claim to fulfill the idea of a good person who is a cooperation partner in interpersonal relations – is regarded as morality of universal and equal respect. To put it differently, a true and accurate moral attitude consists in regarding every stranger (Other) as a subject of equal rights and, consequently, this means that the duties that are imposed on us in respect to others correspond with the rights of the Other[15]. The task of modern law is to protect the relations of intersubjective recognition by means of sanctions, at the same time leading to the least severe infringement of the integrity of a single subject of law.

Infringement of mutual relation of recognition, namely, of our obligations towards the Other, harms his identity. This obligation has to be mutual, that is – as it has already been noted – the responsibility for and towards the Other must assume a complete and equal responsibility of the Other. It is unacceptable to release him from the duty of respecting the rights of other people on account of his weaker position or his strangeness. Depriving him of the right to be responsible disqualifies his moral decisions and makes him an inadequate participant of social interactions and, at the same time, inequality becomes an element of the relation of mutual recognition. Such inequality of obligations and lack of balance in the sphere of obligation entail the danger of a patronising and top-down mode of granting privileges, which results from the belief in the superiority of one's own knowledge and morality and which, consequently, leads to lack of respect for and humiliation of the Other.

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[14] Z. Bauman, *Szanse etyki w zglobalizowanym świecie* [Chances of Ethics in Global World], Kraków 2007, p. 12.

[15] E. Tugendhat, *Vorlesungen über Ethik*, Frankfurt am Main 2001, p. 360.

Every individual is a member of a community, which allows him to live an authentic, real life of his own as a part of a common co-existence with others. It was Rousseau who first pointed out that in the structure of the state the fact of being dependent on others neither stands for being dependent on political authority nor entails other dependencies that condition survival or accomplishment of a certain goal, but stands rather for the urge to gain respect[16]. The notion of respect contains the moment of approval, or even social and psychosocial affirmation. It can be, therefore, seen that we approve (affirm) our contribution in creating the world (universalistic moment), in such way as we want to see it (individualistic moment). It is then of utmost importance what we do and who we are, or rather who we could be and what we could do. It has to be noted, at the same time, that equal legal status does not directly mean that we are seen and perceived (respected) by others. In the cacophony of numerous sounds coming from – at least formally – equal individuals – our voice can be completely lost and remain inaudible, which can constitute a source of our fears and feelings of injustice. Emancipation, therefore, aims at protecting uniqueness in society and this, in turn, means that the goal of the public sphere is to enhance and protect the private sphere.

According to Axel Honneth's theory of recognition, the conception of human mental development is connected with the conception of social participation and with the change the human being undergoes. The point of departure is then a determination of one's own identity as an intersubjective process of justifying the claim of mutual recognition of the subjects of social interactions. Francis Fukuyama, when referring to Plato, noted that *thymos* as "a proud side of human personality" requires from others recognition of our value and dignity[17]. Lack of recognition on any of the abovementioned three spheres, assuming the form of disrespect or contempt, arouses the feeling of shame or anger and this, in turn, can lead to the social fight for recognition. What is most severely felt and experienced is the contempt caused by the refusal to grant civic rights, frustration resulting from inability to participate in the process of shaping public will, and, ultimately, the feeling of exclusion caused by poverty and, in the effect, a lack of access to basic and fundamental material goods. To sum up, refusal or loss of recognition is every time manifested in a different form and emotional modality.

The above is the manifestation of the normative quality of Honneth's conception since permanent deliberations of the relations of recognition anticipate a hy-

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[16] J.J. Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Indianapolis 1992.

[17] F. Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*, New York 2003, p. 42.

pothetical state of a formal conception of a good life – ethicality (*Sittlichkeit*). Ethicality is manifested not only by the ethos of a particular lifeworld, but it is also manifested as a community of intersubjective conditions, which constitute the assumption of individual self-realisation[18]. In other words, different patterns of recognition present intersubjective conditions that we have to enhance in order to describe the structures of desirable life, whilst the anticipated state is already included in the community of values, which is ensured by relations of solidarity, as a part of which social judging takes place.

Those common values are universal human values justified by human dignity. Those values ensure peaceful coexistence of different lifestyles. What we mean here is law that lays the grounds for a commonly accepted community of values, which are indispensable at the state level (relations of solidarity). There arises a problem – already pointed out in the first chapter of this dissertation – of whether this common horizon of values in an intercultural context is always given or assumed. This problem entails disturbances in intercultural dialogue, which aims at recognising the diversity of every human being in his particularity of values. What has to be, therefore, assumed is a certain intransgressible canon of values presented in the form of universal and sacred human rights. It has to be noted that the issue of intercultural dialogue touches upon the belief in the minimum of common values despite cultural diversity[19], like the ethos of freedom and equality. What seems indispensable is a minimum "ethical consensus"[20]. Without the latter, no meaningful intercultural dialogue that aims at discursive consent makes sense. On the other hand, heterogeneity of certain values makes recognition true and complete. It is, thus, crucial to recognise the Other, irrespective of the diversity of his lifestyle, beliefs, and values. In other words, recognition of the Other consists also in exceeding and widening one's own horizon of values, which can be observed in the example of Christian societies being open for the values of Muslim culture. It should be noted that being open for the Other and exceeding limits determined by origin,

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[18] A. Honneth, *Kampf um Anerkennung*, op.cit., p. 275ff.

[19] M. Becka, *Anerkennung im Kontext interkultureller Philosophie*, Frankfurt am Main–London 2005, p. 154.

[20] This minimum consensus often comes down to the so-called golden rule formulated by Confucius "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to the others". This principle can be also found in Judaism: "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow", in Christianity: "Do to no one what you yourself dislike" or "And as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them likewise" (Luke, 3:31), in wisdom of Africa: "Just as pain is not agreeable to you, it is so with others". This principle is related to Kant's categorical imperative, according to which "I should not act differently than *to aim at my maxim becoming a universal law*". I. Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge 1996, p. 190.

gender, religion, race, or ethnicity is vividly emphasised in the society based on the idea of dignity of human beings in which recognition – in reference with the co-operative character of this society – depends exclusively on the individual's activity. In this sense, the fight for recognition is manifested in the omnipresent language of identity, referred to by Charles Taylor.

5. Conclusion

From the perspective of intercultural dialogue it is indispensable not only to recognize the values professed by the Other, but also a specific situation in which the Other lives. The difficulties with agreement and understanding require "a merger of horizons", as noted by Gadamer. This is possible to accomplish only by means of assuming the role of "the speaker" or "the listener"[21]. A change of dialogue perspective means engagement in symmetry, which constitutes the basis of every act of speech. What constitutes a point of departure is the conception of a generalised Other, which allows us to treat each individual as a rational being and as an addressee of such rights and duties as correspond with ours. "A generalised Other" is "an important Other", namely, the point of reference for our activities. Mutuality of perspectives allows the creation of a common horizon of the most fundamental values, which are intersubjectively shared. The latter originates from granting all subjects equal and inborn dignity and, at the same time, recognising equal rights. Such an abstract and formal conception does not always constitute a guarantee of fair treatment of a particular other because it can lead to a danger of improper unification of differences or diversities that occur among various individuals[22]. Such danger has been pointed at by American law philosopher, Seyla Benhabib, who is contemporarily the finest exponent of communitaristic criticism of liberalism and feministic criticism of normative ethics.

Benhabib postulates the complementing of ethical theories with the conception of "a particular Other", which would enable us to introduce fair activities to a greater extent than when applying merely the notion of "a generalised Other". What is meant by this is to treat every rational being as an individual with a specific history, identity, and affectively-emotional structure. In *Another Cosmopolitanism,* Benhabib notes that such a perspective allows for a better understanding of the

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[21] J. Habermas [in:] G. Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror. Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, Illinois 2003.

[22] M. Becka, *Anerkennung im Kontext*, op.cit., p. 155.

needs of the other, his motives, aims, or wishes[23]. Benhabib criticises here the abstract nature of Rawls' "veil of ignorance", assuming that a fair behaviour towards the other can take place only when we are aware of his needs and wishes as well as of his own history. It is primarily a dialogue that serves as a source of such cognition[24]. A similar view was expressed by Otfried Höffe, who accurately writes that what is crucial in intercultural discourse about human rights is knowledge of history, culture, language, and values of the different communities that are the participants of this argumentative process. Due to this consideration, one can anticipate the anthropological and – to a certain extent – also communitaristic goal that every human being is placed and deeply rooted in a specific culture or in a cultural "mixture" and is conditioned by the latter[25].

Additionally, it should be noted that the guiding principle of human rights is not freedom but equality. Egalitarianism of human rights implies that in granting rights which are based on human rights and their differentiation at the statutory level, there are no separate criteria either at natural (biological) level or at the social (artificial) level.

Such ways of living and treating others which remain in conflict with human rights do not gain moral legitimacy or the right to equal life opportunities, even if they constitute an integral part of cultural practices or of the system of religious beliefs which people identify themselves with[26]. Neutrality towards the various ideas for a good life (whether individual or collective) belongs to the canon of the principles of liberal society. However, due to the fact that the principle of neutrality gives expression to the egalitarianism of human rights, and these, in turn, provide everybody with equal entitlement to live in a democratic community governed with the principles of democracy, neutrality has an ethical and utterly moral dimension, and as such it does not allow the attitude of indifference vis-à-vis the forms of culture that violate human rights. Multinational, multicultural and multi-religious society, with various histories, no longer needs the traditional instances, which assumed the burden of social coherence or political integration. It is difficult to rely here on the national community and common historical experience. Such societies do not have a common past, homogeneous mythology or political symbolism. They have, at best, common future. Nevertheless, in order to

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[23] S. Benhabib, *Selbst im Kontext*, Frankfurt am Main 1995, p. 176.

[24] Ibidem, p. 180.

[25] O. Höffe, *Vernunft und Recht. Bausteine zu einem interkulturellen Rechtsdiskurs*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p. 60ff.

[26] W. Kersting, *Równość szans a samorealizacja* [Equality of Opportunities and Self-Realisation] [in:] *Etyka publiczna* [Public Ethics], E. Nowak (ed.), Poznań 2010, in print.

ensure the latter, they need a common foundation: the building blocks of which may be only the universality of human rights. This common foundation must be protected and such protection is provided by a policy of equal opportunities, which is in favour of individualism, self-realization, responsibility for oneself and for equal right to participate in social life.

Rights that follow the abovementioned pattern, constitute the basis of inclusive community of constructivist character. Legal compulsion is treated here as procedural rationality, and an appropriate communicative arrangement which should be used for the lawgiver's rational political will-formation and for the application of law[27]. Let us recall that such a community is comprised of various organic communities, however, it does not allow for the abovementioned lack of moral sense. At the same time, a normative model of such a community is based on the conception of an individual as a socialised advocate of the set of social roles, of the arrangement of roles internalised in the socialisation process, which is reproduced by the latter in undertaken interactions. In this perspective, an internalised, namely well-shaped social personality, ossifies quite autonomic symbols and normative models, which then leads to their externalisation. Such a community does not express a common morality, though it has as its basis the belief that a certain minimum of rules which protect human life, property, and compliance with obligations has to be accepted[28]. This means that in the spirit of communitaristic communication it demands particular values and forms of life, preserving the ability to judge others.

Such a community is – to the greatest extent possible – of an inclusive character, which constitutes a normative condition of the latter. It cannot be then driven by prejudices towards other communities (particularly religious, ethnic, or cultural ones), it is not created by means of hatred towards something which is strange and external, it is not secluded from different, strange subjects; just the opposite, this community induces the assumption that the principles that are binding within it and to become their members by means of opening to the expectations of modern world, which are connected with multicultural problems or plurality of values. This community does not negate a multiplicity of lifestyles, insofar as they are not against the principle of discourse, human rights, or the principle of mutual recognition. Such a community assumes the principle of mutuality and reliable, fair procedures, equality of its members, and cooperative participation in its activities. These prin-

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[27] J. Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms. Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, Cambridge 1998, p. 453.

[28] H.L.A. Hart, *Law, Liberty and Morality*, London 1964, p. 70.

ciples result from the assumption that a constructivist community is a discursive community in which the power of the argumentation – namely, its significance and the extent to which it is accepted – is a "predominant factor", rather than the argument in the form of power. This community is, therefore, open to others, as long as they are willing to respect the principles of a discourse.

The idea of constructiveness treats the argument of pluralism as a point of departure for reflective and critical deliberation on the basis of society, both from the perspective of particularistic as well as communitaristic and multicommunitaristic thought[29]. At the same time, constructivism makes it possible to enhance the elements that constitute the basis of objective significance of certain principles and values. Referring to the idea of communicative community allows the combination of the conception of obligation as an external compulsion, according to which moral demand requires support and social external reinforcement (morality will be then perceived as a socionomic, heteronomic, and external creation in respect to a given person[30]) with Kant's conception, which treats moral obligation as "self-compulsion and self-obligation".

What functions here as institutional protection is discursively determined law based on the consensus of all cooperating citizens who believe in Habermas' "constitutional patriotism" manifesting solidarity of citizens[31]. The constitution has to guarantee equal coexistence of different ethnic groups and their cultural forms of life. Furthermore, the constitution has to take into account the structures of communication that account on the fact that the identity of every individual is combined with collective identities and can be established only in a certain cultural net[32]. "Constitutional patriotism", despite the fact that it supports the significance

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[29] P. Roberts, *Political Constructivism*, London–New York 2007, p. 4, 10ff.

[30] H. Krämer, *Integrative Ethik*, Frankfurt am Main 1995, p. 42f. Krämer questions the possibility of self-compulsion and self-obligation.

[31] Neil MacCormick expresses a similar view, "We need not overstress the requirements of culture or common ethnicity or language as essentially constitutive of a *demos* in the sense required for the concept of democratic government. I should like to suggest the possibility of our conceiving such a thing as a 'civic' *demos*, that is, one identified by the relationship of individuals to common institutions of a civic rather than an ethnic or ethnic-cultural kind. People can have a civic identity constituted perhaps by what Habermas has dubbed 'constitutional patriotism', *Verfassungspatriotismus*. This is a common loyalty to a common constitutional order, regardless of differences of language, ethnic background, and the rest. People are sometimes willing to sink differences of culture, of language, of heritage, of history for the sake of their common participation in a lawfully constituted polity of commonwealth." N. MacCormick, *Questioning Sovereignty: Law, State, and Practical Reason*, Oxford 2001, p. 144.

[32] In this aspect, Habermas considers the issue of "reversed discrimination". He points out that some threatened primeval cultures have a moral right to be supported. It does not mean, however, that every culture has "equal value" in the sense that its contribution in creating world civilisation is

of liberal democracy, must promote the biggest kindliness towards diversity, it has to ensure the most tolerant and flexible political system. "Constitutional patriotism" constitutes a certain common minimum, which unifies groups and organic communities driven by diverse lifestyles, at the same time ensuring the protections of the rights of minorities and discriminated groups.

It can be pointed out, following Neil MacCormick, that the legal order results from background morality of those whose principles are embodied in political institutions. The very background morality, in turn, is morality of the political community, whose rights are already recognized on the basis of interpretation of the law. What must underlie this common morality is the respect for human rights, manifested in respecting everyone, even the most "other" human being and granting equal opportunities for all people in their pursuit of individual goals. This postulate is gaining particular value in the conditions of a complex, multicultural social system in which we happen to live today.

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equal and that it has something important for people. Ibidem, p. 258ff. A similar view was also expressed by S. Wolf, *Comment* [in:] *Multiculturalism. Examining the Politics of Recognition*, A. Gutman (ed.), Princeton 1994, p. 84. The task of the state – by means of law – is then only to enable cultural reproduction of lifeworlds. In other words, in multicultural societies, equal coexistence of different lifestyles gives an opportunity to every person, to every member of a given organic community, to preserve its traditions but it also enables its self-critical rejection. There is no room for fundamentalist standpoints which forbid the abandoning of one's own culture or for fanatically abiding by certain traditional dogmas. Habermas points out that such standpoints lack the awareness of fallibility of their claims and respect in case of "burdens of reason" – as described by Rawls. Fundamentalism does not allow for a reflective look at strange and diverse lifestyles that share the same universe of discourse. We should not confuse fundamentalism with dogmatism and orthodoxy.

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SUMMARY

The aim of this article is to show what should modern, multicultural democratic societies be driven by in order to avoid the violation of the basic human rights by dominant groups. One will not come up with an innovative observation when stating that, in principle, all countries are in the process of merging, and hence ethnic mutation. In other words, social bonds begin to be based on the principle of ethnicity, namely on non-territorial quasi national bonds; social order is based, at least theoretically, on the race to citizens' wealth, and individualism begins to dominate all other forms of social life. All European nations, as well as most non-European ones, despite the ethnocentric reaction and administrative defense of national interests, are now on the way to a multicultural society.

The main subject of discussion is to show the relationship between discursively shaped social relations, entrenched in the principle of mutual recognition and equality of opportunities and the necessity of introducing amendments to existing legislation in order to enable more efficient elimination of social inequalities and to reduce adverse social exclusions. My aim is to show that an aspiration of every democratic state of law should be the policy of mutual recognition, based on the principles of equal treatment of its members regardless of nationality, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Key words:

multiculturalism, discourse ethics, human rights, mutual recognition, cosmopolitan norms, human dignity, constructivist community

Janusz Mucha

THEORY TRENDS AND DEBATES: WHAT THEORY DO WE NEED? ARE "SOCIOLOGY OF INDIVIDUALS" AND "CRITICAL THEORY" THE LEADING TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY THEORETICAL SOCIOLOGY?[1]

1. Introduction

The fact that the European Sociological Association (ESA) organized at the Lisbon 2009 Conference a special semi-plenary session devoted to "purely theoretical" issues[2] ("sociology of individuals" and "critical theory") seems to be a proof that the association of European sociologists highly regards the scholarly production which transgresses problems defined as narrow, descriptive and practical, and it looks forward to efforts and research projects which could lead to much broader, more general and abstract modeling and explanations. However, "theory" was not defined by the Program Committee of the Conference nor by the organizers of the session. Perhaps the understanding of the term "theory" was taken for granted. It

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[1] This article draws upon the author's comments (as official discussant) presented at the Semi-Plenary Session "Theory Trends and Debates: what Theory do we need?" during the 9th Conference of the European Sociological Association, Lisbon, September 2009. It is a revised version of the Polish language article which appeared in "Studia Humanistyczne" 2010, No. 8. Many colleagues read this text and gave their opinions, but the responsibility is only the author's.

[2] During the former, 8th ESA Conference (Glasgow 2007) no such a session was held; likewise, at the XVI World Congress of Sociology (Durban 2006) there was not such a session. At the (Gothenburg 2010) XVII World Congress of Sociology a similar session was held (Plenary Theme 5: Theoretical Challenges). The papers were devoted to the problems of the "opposition" between the sacred and the profane; the secularization processes; the critique of "politicized religion".

should be remembered, too, that beside this "theoretical" semi-plenary session, the ESA Research Network on Social Theory organized in Lisbon its own working groups, as it does during each biannual ESA conference[3].

The **research problem** of this article is: to what extent this session reflects what is, in actual "sociological practice" and not in various general methodologies of sociology (or "social sciences"), considered to be a "sociological theory" now, at the turn of the century, and what seems to be particularly important in the theoretical trends, as they are visible at major European and global sociological conferences, and also in Polish sociology, native to the author. Therefore, this article is an exercise in **"sociology of sociological theory"**. Differences between theoretical and empirical practice in sociology should not be considered absolute and a-historical; they do exist, however, and it is theory and not empirical sociology what will be analyzed here.

Following the Introduction, this article consists of four sections. In the first one, I outline, in a brief and descriptive way, how "sociological (social) theory" has been understood in the "conference practice" of the most important European (ESA) and global (ISA – International Sociological Association) congresses of the last four years. In the second one, I present the interests in sociological theory "as such" in Poland during the last few decades, concentrating on the recent times. Poland is not only the case I know best, but she can also serve as an example of a Central and Eastern European country in which, until 1989, Marxism was regarded as the only or the major legitimate sociological theory and other general perspectives were marginalized or even denied (obviously, in many other respects Polish sociology is exceptional in this region). Therefore, it seems to me interesting, how and which general Western sociological perspectives were slowly becoming legitimized here. In the third section, I analyze the debate of the semi-plenary, theoretical session of the Lisbon Conference, with an attempt to understand what it really was in sociological theory "that we need" so much. In the fourth and closing part, I discuss how the topics suggested by the Lisbon Conference are being practiced in post-Communist sociology in Poland. Again, I hope that this analysis can become fruitful for other post-Communist and post-authoritarian sociologies.

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[3] There is no space here for the discussion of similarities and differences between "sociological theory" and "social theory". See e.g.: A. Giddens, *Sociology. A Brief but Critical Introduction* (1982), San Diego 1987, pp. 19–20.

2. Sociological theory as actually practiced by European sociologists and by larger sociological community. Case studies of congresses

As mentioned above, "theory" is seldom *explicitly* defined by organizers and program directors of big sociological congresses and even of major sessions devoted to theorizing at these events. This situation obviously differs from the advanced textbooks in the explicit fields of sociological theory (or theories) and from the historical and methodological conferences devoted to "theory as such". In this article, I am interested in the point of view of "practitioners" of sociological theorizing and not of methodologists, historians or theorists of theory. I will distinguish between theorizing on some substantive social matters on the one hand and dealing with theory as such and the ways theory is, or should be, constructed and evaluated, on the other.

When analyzing conferences and congresses, I rely not only on my memory, but also on the printed programs and printed (as well as electronic) abstract books.

It is very difficult to summarize in a short way the content of the individual working groups of the ESA Research Network 29 (Social Theory) in Lisbon. They dealt with theorizing Europe; contemporary uses of the classical theories; new developments in social theory; the roles of intellectuals and intellectual production; methodological nationalism; social theory and the study of culture; philosophy and general methodology of social sciences; impact of mass media on contemporary social theory. There were only three sessions debating individual theoretical and methodological orientations in contemporary social theory and one session on new challenges to social theory.

What were these "theoretical issues" (concepts, ideas, approaches, theoretical and methodological orientations) discussed by the members or sympathizers of this research network? The scholars dealt with interpretations of the borders between sociology of knowledge and phenomenological sociology; system theory developed by Niklas Luhmann; modern utilitarian theories with the particular stress on theories of rational choice, pragmatism and social capital; and "critical theory". In the last case, which is of particular interest for this article, the speakers debated on Jürgen Habermas' work, on the work of Cornelius Castoriadis, on traditional German critical theory and critical analyzes of social aspects of new technologies. Although we can see here, in a sense, a reflection of what was important to the organizers of the "theoretical" semi-plenary session of the Conference, this is the background for only one of the papers presented at the semi-plenary and, moreover, it significantly narrows the concept of "critical theory". We can ask, then,

if the working group devoted to new challenges for social theory could be considered an important background for the theoretical semi-plenary session. The answer would be rather negative. The working group dealt with the "internal complications" of theories as such at the beginning of the 21st century, with social creativeness and its consequences for social theory, and with the limitations for social theorizing caused by the natural environment in which we live. There were no papers on critical theory nor on sociology of individuals.

We can reach outside Europe and look at the Durban 2006 World Congress of Sociology, in search of the "practical" sociological (not "social") theorizing by its participants. I will skip the theorizing on various very important phenomena and processes of the today's social world and look at the issues raised by those scholars who were interested in contemporary "theoretical orientations" in sociology. Research Committee on Sociological Theory RC 16 consisted of working groups on social systems theory; philosophy and general methodology of social sciences; new perspectives in sociology of knowledge; action theory "after Bourdieu"; neo-Durkheimianism; contemporary interpretations of ideas which had been novel in sociology twenty years ago (globalization theories, "post-humanism", modernization). As we can see, neither critical theory nor sociology of individuals were particularly attractive and they did not seem to be desirable.

At the Gothenburg 2010 World Congress of Sociology, the RC 16 met twenty times and dealt, in addition to theorizing (again) on various important social phenomena and processes, with the visual turn in sociological theory; relations between sociological theory and our understanding of environment; non-Western challenges to Western social theory; political philosophy and social theory (the program announced, among other issues, the analysis of the work of Axel Honneth, to whom I will return in due course); and provincializing of social theory. Critical theory was present marginally, and sociology of individuals was absent.

As we can see, the themes, which according to the organizers of the Lisbon 2009 Conference were particularly significant for the recent theoretical debates in sociology, appeared relatively seldom in programs and discussions of "theoretical" working groups of big sociological conferences.

3. Practicing sociological theory from the Polish perspective of last few decades[4]

In this section of the essay I would like to put its main problem into the context of Polish publications within the field of global theoretical discussion in sociology, in particular (but not only) after the socialist system (and the domination of the Soviet Marxism) was abolished in 1989. In my opinion, it would potentially be very interesting to compare the Polish experience in this field with the experience of other Central and Eastern European sociological communities.

I will briefly analyze textbooks and readers explicitly representing "sociological theory (or – theorizing)", published in Poland. These books reach a much wider readership than the methodological and historical analyzes of what sociological theory is.

The first Polish edition of the textbook authored by Jonathan H. Turner, *The Structure of Sociological Theory* (original of 1974; the translated version came from 1978), was published in 1985. New Polish edition, based on the 1998 American version, was published in 2004. The last American version I know comes from 2003. Only the 1998 edition (and its Polish translation) takes the critical theory (in its many varieties: Jürgen Habermas, feminist sociological critique, postmodernism) into account. Sociology of individuals is not analyzed in the textbook.

The series "Sociological Library" ("Biblioteka Socjologiczna") of the Warsaw's PWN Publishing House has been publishing the old and new classics of sociology. Within this series, but also by other means, it published after 1989 selected theoretical books by Talcott Parsons, Robert K. Merton, Anthony Giddens, Niklas Luhmann, Pierre Bourdieu, Erving Goffman, Norbert Elias and Harold Garfinkel. Other Polish publishers have been publishing Parsons, Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Kaumann, Raymond Boudon, Ulrich Beck, Immanuel Wallerstein, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, Herbert Marcuse, Max Horkheimer, and Theodor W. Adorno. After 2000, the Krakow's Nomos Publishing House initiated a series Contemporary Sociological Theories with the intention to familiarize Polish readers not only with the post-Second World War sociological classics, but also with important works of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century.

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[4] This chapter of my article draws, to a limited extent, upon some paragraphs of the text by Aleksander Manterys and Janusz Mucha. A. Manterys, J. Mucha, *Nowe perspektywy teorii socjologicznej. Punkt widzenia 2009 r.* [New Perspectives of Sociological Theory. The 2009 Point of View] [in:] *Nowe perspektywy teorii socjologicznej* [New Perspectives of Sociological Theory], A. Manterys, J. Mucha (eds.), Kraków 2009.

Before the 1989 system transformation, a number of readers in the field of theoretical sociology was published in Poland. However, only the readers of 1977[5] and of 1984[6], both devoted to the crisis of sociology, paid attention to critical and radical theorizing. Much later, in 2006, another reader[7] presented recent contributions to neo-Marxism and post-Marxism as well as feminist criticism. These and other published in Poland translations of original works, as well as the readers, are very important since they present to the students majoring in sociology, to scholars and to the general public, what is considered to be the most recent and significant sociological theory. Actually, it would be an exaggeration to say, that critical theory is considered here to be very significant; and sociology of individuals is nearly completely absent.

There is no research committee on sociological (nor on social) theory in the framework of the Polish Sociological Association.

4. "Theory Trends and Debates: What Theory Do We Need" – according to the 2009 Lisbon Conference. Semi-Plenary Session of sociological theory

As I have noted before, the session under discussion was to present the recent trends and debates in sociological theory and, in particular, to answer the question what kind(s) of theory we need nowadays. The Program Committee decided that what was important and needed were critical theory and sociology of individuals. The chair of the session did not say why these topics were so important and necessary for sociology and society. The analysis presented above shows, in my opinion, that it is difficult to consider these two topics as very popular in recent European and global theoretical sociology. It does not, obviously, mean that they are not important or needed.

Both papers which were to be discussed during the session, that is the paper by Bernard Lahire[8] and by Gerard Delanty[9], have some common features. Their au-

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[5] *Czy kryzys socjologii?* [Is Sociology in Crisis?]*,* J. Szacki (ed.), Warszawa 1977.

[6] *Kryzys i schizma* [Crisis and Schism]*,* E. Mokrzycki (ed.), Warszawa 1984.

[7] *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne* [Modern Sociological Theories], A. Jasińska-Kania, L. Nijakowski, J. Szacki, M. Ziółkowski (eds.), Warszawa 2006.

[8] Lahire is a French scholar working in Lyon, a well known sociologist of individuals. See, e.g., the book by Jean-Claude Kaufmann. J.-C. Kaufmann, *Ego. Socjologia jednostki* [*Ego. Pour une sociologie de l'individu. Une autre Vision de l'homme et de la construction du sutej,* 2001], Warszawa 2004.

[9] Delanty is a British scholar working at University of Sussex. His field is cosmopolitan critical

thors stress the significance of the context of every social action as well as of the "positioning" of individuals (Delanty draws mostly upon Michel Foucault); both refer strongly and in a critical manner to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, namely to its different aspects and topics. Lahire stresses the individual level of social phenomena, while Delanty is rather interested in the macro level. These similarities and differences were very interesting for the debate and show the range of interests of today's theoretical sociology.

Announced in the program, delivered to the invited discussant, the paper of Bernard Lahire was not presented during the conference (the author was not able to come). Its title was *From the Habitus to an Individual Heritage of Dispositions. Towards a Dociology at the Level of the Individual*[10]. It became very soon published on the official website of the conference. I will quote the exact wording of the abstract of the paper, so that it is clear what I am referring to in due course.

It is argued that the notions sociologists use to conceptualize psychological processes occurring at the level of social groups capitalize too strongly on the idea that these processes are general and homogeneous in nature. In particular, the notion of 'disposition', which is central to Bourdieu's theory of the habitus and which is widely employed in sociological research, is found to rest upon these tacit and problematic assumptions which have never been tested empirically. Instead, we should envision that social agents have developed a broad array of dispositions, each of which owes its availability, composition, and force to the socialization process in which it was acquired. In particular, a distinction should be made between dispositions to act and dispositions to believe. Moreover, the intensity with which dispositions affect behavior depends also on the specific context in which social agents interact with one another. A focus on the plurality of dispositions and on the variety of situations in which they manifest themselves is at the core of a sociology at the level of the individual. Its research program conceives of individuals as being products of pluriform social processes occurring in very different domains. It focuses on

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theory. See: G. Delanty, *The Cosmopolitan Imagination. The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*, Cambridge 2009.

[10] It is very interesting, in my opinion, that Lahire's text which was to be (and eventually was) discussed at the 2009 conference, had been in identical version published six years earlier in a periodical, marginal from the point of view of sociology (see: B. Lahire, *From the Habitus to an Individual Heritage of Dispositions. Towards a Sociology at the Level of the Individual*, "Poetics" 2003, No. 32). Perhaps it means that the organizers of the Lisbon Conference were of the opinion that the article has proved to be very important and "in need" for today's sociology, and, therefore, it should be more widely distributed.

social factors that may account for behavioral variations and changes rather than for irreducible differences between social groups[11].

Sociology of individuals is, according to Lahire, one of the versions of sociology of socialization. It analyzes the ways in which human dispositions to act emerge, are activated, transformed, how they transfer from one individual onto another, how they disappear or become destroyed. The author is of the opinion that the social context, interactions between people, activate the dispositions. In his view, sociologists' empirical research problem is to what extent the concrete dispositions are coherent and stable. He assumes that the social character of dispositions does not mean that they are collective and general. The significance of individuality lies in the fact that it is a more frequent, more typical phenomenon of human life, than something of a unique character. Following Mary Douglas, he links the significance of individuality with the culture of Enlightenment (in my own opinion, we should go even deeper, to the Renaissance).

Lahire's article, very interesting and in my opinion important, raises a number of questions, both regarding the role of his ideas within the "traditional sociology of individuals" (and, by the same token, this is an issue of its originality), and its justifications.

Sociology of "on the level of individuals", the analysis of macro – and micro-social, interactive contexts of the process of shaping the dispositions, should, in my opinion, at the beginning of the 21st century prove that they transcend the well known theoretical ideas of Charles Horton Cooley from the beginnings of the 20th century, and later of, for example, Norbert Elias, who wrote on this topic until his last days in 1990. Lahire does not mention Cooley. He refers to one book by Elias, that on Wolfgang A. Mozart[12]. It is very much relevant here but it is only one of the possible exemplifications of very significant, more general views of that author, expressed, for instance, in his *Die Gesellschaft der Individuen* of 1987[13], but developed and modified during the decades of his intellectual activities.

Lahire is against the application in social sciences of those scientific procedures which (in his opinion) have been successfully used in natural sciences. In his view, generalizations and universal laws have sense only in the latter sciences. For the analysis of society, it is impossible to reduce the important, internal and external

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[11] B. Lahire, *From the Habitus to an Individual Heritage of Dispositions*, op.cit., p. 329.

[12] N. Elias, *Mozart: zur Soziologie eines Genies*, Frankfurt am Main 2005.

[13] See: N. Elias, *The Society of Individuals* [*Die Gesellschaft der Individuen*, 1987], New York 2001.

contexts of social action to the limited series of parameters. I do not want to re-start the debate on relations between the humanities and natural sciences but it seems to me that Lahire's strictly "deterministic" vision of natural sciences comes rather from the 19th than the 21st century, and that the opinion on the impossibil-ity of any generalizations and the senselessness of any "simplifications" in social sciences has not been proved in Lahire's text.

In my view, Bernard Lahire is right when he stresses the necessity and useful-ness of distinguishing between dispositions to act and dispositions to believe. I am not sure, however, if his struggle for recognition of this distinction is worthwhile. The empirical work of Richard LaPierre of the 1930s, of Richard Kutner of the 1950s, Gordon Allports interpretations of the problems connected with the inter-nal coherence of attitudes and his interpretations of tensions between prejudices and discrimination, published in the 1950s, and continued much later, for instance by Thomas Pettigrew, proved long before Lahire that his opinions are correct. How-ever, he does not refer to these contributions and does not go beyond them. I do not see any "added value". His stress that human individuals can believe in some-thing without having any material and dispositional means to achieve highly val-ued aims is also, in my opinion, very true, but it does not go beyond the contribu-tions by Emile Durkheim and Robert K. Merton in their already very well known analyzes of anomy and individual (but also collective) adaptation to the tension between values and norms.

To sum up this section of my essay, I would like to express a very cautious opinion that the issues raised by Bernard Lahire are very important, but the sense of his 2003' article repeated in 2009 lies rather in the strong confirmation of the old and well known views that contexts are significant for the interpretation of individual's actions than in any opening of the novel avenues for theoretical anal-ysis. I sincerely believe, like the French scholar, that it is not possible to reduce human worlds to nature but I have not found in Lahire's text any arguments which would support his thesis that "simplification" is senseless in social sciences and that generalizations are neither possible nor useful. My lack of enthusiasm for the rec-ognition of Lahire's article as a turning point for the new debates in theoretical sociology is, however, even for me modified by the fact that I am aware of the re-spect for Lahire's work, visible, for instance, in the above mentioned book by Jean-Claude Kaufman.

Gerard Delanty, in his *Varieties of Critique in Sociological Theory and Their Methodological Implications for Social Research* analyzes critical theory/ies mostly in the cosmopolitan context. His own summary of the paper prepared for the Lisbon Conference reads as follows:

The notion of critique, as in the idea of a critical theory of society, is in urgent need of clarification both theoretically and methodologically. At least five major uses of the term can be found within sociological theory, the positions associated with the critical theory of the Frankfurt School from Adorno to Habermas and Honneth, Bourdieu's critical sociology, critical realism, Foucault's genealogical critique, and various notions of critical practice, most notably the work of Boltanski and Thevenot. It is possible to detect a movement from the Hegelian-Marxist approach towards interpretative conceptions of critique, leading to a pluralisation of critique and a shift from macro to micro analysis. A theoretical clarification of the notion of critique in these approaches, offers a basis for a new and more rigorous methodological application of critique in social research[14].

I fully agree with the author's thesis that the very concept of critique demands clarification. On the other hand, it is not true that it is completely blurred. It seems to me that the problem is how the general notion of critique could be successfully applied in various social situations and in the sociological research practice. And this is exactly what the title of Delanty's paper offers.

Like Lahire the concept of individualism, Gerard Delanty links the concept of critique with Enlightenment. I wrote on this matter earlier[15], so I will not go into details of my own interpretation of this intellectual history. I would like to stress, however, that in my opinion both of these concepts have a deeper origin and can be traced at least to the Renaissance, and its analysis of the texts of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers and of the Bible. Slightly unlike Delanty, I would distinguish between critique in the Kantian sense (the analysis of "objective" determinants of knowledge) and critique in Marxian-Freudian sense (the analysis of the, generated by broadly understood culture, limitations of human knowledge and activities). I would typologize the ways of critical thinking in a different way than Delanty does. Following Jürgen Habermas, I would distinguish a critique in a common, everyday sense (pointing out that a statement does not reflect what is considered to be an "objective reality"); a critique in ideological sense (linking one's views with his or her defending of groups interests); Marxian and Kantian (linked

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[14] G. Delanty, *Varieties of Critique in Sociological Theory and Their Methodological Implications for Social Research*. A paper presented at the Semi-Plenary Session "Theory Trends and Debates: What Theory do We Need", 9th European Conference of Sociology, ESA, Lisbon, September, 27 pages. In print in "Irish Journal of Sociology" 2009b.

[15] See e.g.: J. Mucha, *Socjologia jako krytyka społeczna. Orientacja radykalna i krytyczna we współczesnej socjologii zachodniej* [Sociology as Social Criticism. Radical and Critical Perspectives in Contemporary Western Sociology], Warszawa 1986.

together for the purpose of this analysis) concept of critique of knowledge, understood as a critique of the object of this knowledge; and, last but not least, a critique as destruction, being a first step toward social emancipation. In stressing the particular significance of the latter, I would agree with Delanty. I would accompany him in understanding the "critical social science" only as this particular way of theorizing, which is self-reflexively and consciously critical. That means, perhaps paradoxically, that not only "critical theory" is critical. It is not only Karl R. Popper (Delanty refers to him) who was of the opinion that social sciences are critical out of their very nature. Much earlier, Vilfredo Pareto was of a similar view[16] when he wrote that every good sociology makes it clear to the readers that social life is based on illusions and it attempts to reveal these illusions. Anthony Giddens wrote the same, much later. He did not see any reason to construct a specific critical sociology, since every good sociology is characterized by a "critical imagination"[17]. Giddens stresses the fact that every form of social relations is temporary and the direction of transformations will depend on reflective activities of informed people. In the sense of Pareto, Popper and Giddens, sociology, in order to be *implicitly* critical, does not have to be normative. Delanty is for normative critical theory. For me, the above mentioned non-normative social theory can be in fact very critical but (like Delanty) I would not extent the term "critical theory" only because we can attach some critical functions to the revealing of the illusions or of the temporary character of what people consider to be eternal.

As suggested above, I would sympathize with Delanty's linking (*implicitly* or *explicitly*) sociological criticism with emancipatory potential of thinking and research. To the classics mentioned by the authors, C. Wright Mills and Alvin Gouldner, I would add the pre-Second World War American sociologists like Robert S. Lynd, as well as the post-war radical current in American sociology. When Delanty writes about the critical work of Michel Foucault, he aptly points to the fact that the French philosopher's ideas stress the necessity to study the perspective of the marginalized groups and to study the society's mainstream from the point of view of these marginalized groups. We should bear in mind, however, that this perspective had been very important to the American radical sociologists, including Alvin Gouldner, which is overlooked by Delanty. Personally, I would not put Michael Burawoy to this thematic field outlined by Delanty. Obviously, Burawoy considers critical sociology as a very important part or aspect of general socio-

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[16] See e.g.: A. Kojder, *Wstęp* [Introduction] [in:] V. Pareto, *Uczucia i działania. Fragmenty socjologiczne* [*Emotions and Actions. Sociological Fragments*, 1916], Warszawa 1994, pp. xii–xiv.

[17] A. Giddens, op.cit.

logical practice, but he means not the sociological critique of society but rather (this is very important too, in my view) the critical analysis of the foundations, normative and factual, of the research programs of the professional sociology[18].

I would agree with Delanty that the shift of the critical thinking in sociology from macro-sociological to micro-sociological analysis can mean a certain loss for sociology. However, to some extent this shift does not mean only substitution but also addition, or, in other words, that macro-critique is still practiced, but micro-critique is added, we can have to do with the broadening of the field of critique. This may be a pluralisation of critique, what should be considered, from the point of view of the message of Delanty's paper, something positive rather than negative.

As we can see in Delanty's summary of his paper presented above, the scholar offers his own typology of the today's complex, multiplot, based on various assumptions, critical sociology, or, rather, critical ideas present in current sociology, important for the methodologies of its research projects. As we remember, the author is interested in self-reflexive sociology, conscious of its own critical potential. I will not repeat this typology nor elaborate on it. I will only summarize what is important in my own opinion. The today's continuation of the classical critical theory is first of all the work of German sociologist and philosopher Axel Honneth, a leading representative of neo-Marxism, a critical analyst of the power relations, of social recognition, as well as reification[19]. He collaborates with such leading representatives of feminist criticism as Judith Butler and Nancy Fraser. The major figures in critical realism in sociology (in particular in sociology of culture) are Margaret Archer[20] and Andrew Sayer[21]. These scholars stress the significance of the objective and hard to observe empirically social reality which underlies the human actions and social transformations. This deep structural reality should be uncovered, disclosed, by the critical social sciences. Reflexive sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and its critical potential are very well known in sociological world, as much as the "genealogical critique" by Michel Foucault and its impact on sociology. "Critical practice", inherent in the work of Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thevenot, leading representatives of the "pragmatic school" in today's French sociology,

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[18] See: M. Burawoy, *For Public Sociology,* "American Sociological Review" 2005, No. 70 (February), p. 10.

[19] See: A. Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts,* Cambridge 1996; A. Honneth, *Reification. A Recognition-Theoretical View*, Oxford 2007.

[20] See e.g.: M. Archer, *Realist Social Theory. The Morphogenetic Approach*, Cambridge 1995.

[21] See e.g.: A. Sayer, *Realism and Social Sciences*, London 2000.

their analysis of moral aspects of conflicts and of justifications of the legitimacy claims[22], seem to be well known in sociological community, as well.

I like very much Delanty's typology and his analysis of particular types of critical approach in today's social sciences. I fully appreciate the fact that he is interested in methodological aspects and implications of the conceptions under consideration. At the same time, I have some problems with the scope of his idea of methodology, displayed in the title of his paper. In my opinion, his analysis concerns methodology understood as a set of directions how to interpret or explain social issues. This is a lot. However, the title refers to the implications for methodology of social research. We could potentially understand it as the directions how to collect the material (and what kind of material) and not only how to interpret material already collected. Does Delanty raise at all the issue of how to study the social phenomena according to a critical paradigm? He does not say a lot on that matter, but we can find in his paper some interesting directions. I have already mentioned that he stresses the emancipatory potential inherent *implicite* in critical research. We could refer this insight to the neglected by Delanty, but mentioned in my essay American radical sociology of the late 1960s and early 1970s, in particular to the work of Tom Bottomore, who underlined the necessity to study the emancipatory social movements, as well and the "sparks of the future", already visible today. This is a clear and realistic methodological directive. I have already mentioned the suggestions to study the power relations, social conflicts, and hidden below the surface of social life social and cultural structures, having significant consequences for our everyday life.

At the end of his paper, Gerard Delanty presents three research areas which should, according to him, be covered by critical theories. The first is the social crises, symptoms of the breakdown of important, for social actors, normative orders. The second are the processes of social resistance, social mobilization and the shaping and transformation of political agency. The third is the issue mentioned in the former paragraph of my article – the "world disclosure". The revealing of the objective social structures, which are the hidden foundations of social crises, is the background of the potential resolution of social problems (even if not all of them) and, finally, of emancipation. These aims of social research, significant for critical sociology, seem to me to be very important.

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[22] See e.g.: L. Boltanski, L. Thevenot, *De la justification. Les economies de la grandeur*, Paris 1991; L. Boltanski, L. Thevenot, *The Sociology of Critical Capacity*, "European Journal of Social Theory" 1996, No. 2, 3.

5. "Lisbon practice" in the field of sociological theory and the Polish "theoretical practice". Toward conclusions

Let us "return" to Poland. Everything (or rather nearly everything) what is considered important and what is practiced in the international sociological community, is present in Poland now, not only in translations but also in the "local" research programs and in the interpretations by Polish scholars. In this section of the essay, however, I am interested in a specific issue, namely the "real" Polish interests in the topics and theoretical fields that were defined by the Lisbon 2009 Conference as particularly significant and "in need". Therefore, I will be looking for the interest in "sociology of individuals" and in "critical theory" in Polish sociological activities, mostly publications. I hope it is obvious that I cannot know everything and that there might be some research projects and publications that escaped my careful attention. Another thing is that I will be primarily looking for the self-reflexive and conscious practicing of these two topics and not for a "common sense" sociology of individuals and a "common sense" critique practiced by sociologists.

I do not know if, from the point of view of the enthusiasts of "individualistic sociologies", it is enough, but the Elias' book on society of individuals[23] was translated and published in Polish in 2008, and the book by Jean-Claude Kaufmann on *Ego. Sociology of the Individual* was published in Polish in 2004. Polish scholars publish their interesting own books on this topic[24]. It is interesting, that the Polish own research projects do not rely very strongly on the translated classics of this field and ignore the contribution of Bernard Lahire who, as I have mentioned earlier, is very highly valued for instance by Kaufmann. It is possible that the present acquaintance of Polish sociologists with the recent French sociological literature is limited and Elias has become better known only very recently. My conclusion is that the debate on sociology of individuals is present in Poland, there are individual research projects in this field but it proceeds in a different way than the debate in the Western sociology. Moreover, it would be difficult to say that

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[23] N. Elias, *The Society of Individuals* [*Die Gesellschaft der Individuen*, 1987], New York 2001.

[24] See e.g.: Z. Bokszański, *Indywidualizm a zmiana społeczna* [Individualism and Social Change], Warszawa 2007; M. Jacyno, *Kultura indywidualizmu* [Culture of Individualism], Warszawa 2007; M.Olcoń-Kubicka, *Indywidualizacja a nowe formy wspólnotowości* [Individualization and New Forms of Collective Life], Warszawa 2009. See also a review of Polish contributions to individualistic sociology in: M. Gargula, *Dyskurs terapeutyczny jako główna tendencja współczesnej kultury* [Therapeutic Discourse as a Major Tendency of the Contemporary Culture], "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" 2009, LIII, No. 1.

theoretical or empirical sociology of individuals is considered to be particularly important in Poland.

I am much more interested in critical sociology. Critical theory of the Frankfurt School is well known in Poland. Some collections and authored books by the members of its first generation and also by Jürgen Habermas have been translated into Polish. There are a lot of Polish books, mostly published in the 1980s and 1990s, on various aspects of the School. There are books on the radical and critical American sociology of the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, the recent critical theory is much less known. Axel Honneth is known from one book authored by him and Nancy Fraser[25]. In May 2010, he gave a talk in the Department of Philosophy of Warsaw University. I do not remember any translation of the work by Margaret Archer or any analysis of her writings. Andrew Sayer is even less known than Archer. Most of the books written by Pierre Bourdieu were translated into Polish but the critical potential of his work is hardly stressed here (an exception will be discussed later in this article). Most of the books and essays by Michel Foucault were translated but, again, quite seldom are they discussed in the critical context. Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thevenot are not known[26].

It is very difficult to say if there has been and continues to be a self-reflexive, conscious of its intellectual character and status, critical sociology of the contemporary Polish society. Andrzej Rychard writes that (the context shows that he means the period of socialism) most of the Polish sociological community was ill-disposed, critical toward the political system[27], but this critical attitude, the author says, was motivated not politically but "esthetically" and morally. It is hard to disagree with Rychard. Even if we agree (I would) that there can be various ways of critical theorizing (not necessarily following the Frankfurt School or American radical sociology; we remember the Delanty's typology), the "critical approach" of Polish sociology between Second World War and 1989 was not based on any self-reflexive, conscious of its character, critical methodology. The same can be said about various books on the Solidarity period (1980–1981) and on the post-1989 era. Sergiusz Kowalski published in 1990, written in the 1980s, in my opinion a very important (reprinted several times), analysis of the Solidarity motivated, common-sense, everyday mentality. The title (*Critique of the Solidarity Reason*) is obviously

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[25] N. Fraser, A. Honneth, *Redystrybucja czy uznanie: debata polityczno-filozoficzna* [*Umverteilung oder Anerkennung? Eine politisch-philosophische Kontroverse*, 2003], Wrocław 2005.

[26] In the Internet catalogues of the major Polish university libraries, there are very few works by Honneth, Archer, Boltanski or Thevenot.

[27] A. Rychard, *Parę refleksji o trudnościach tworzenia krytycznej socjologii postkomunizmu* [Some Musings on Critical Sociology of PostCommunism], "Studia Socjologiczne" 2007, No. 1 (184), p. 48.

referring to the titles of Immanuel Kant's critiques. The book is critical and radical in the everyday, common-sense way, but it does not use any critical or radical methodology and actually does not even refer to the content of Kant's critiques. Therefore, this is not what Gerard Delanty had in mind when he analyzed various ways of recent critical theorizing and what the characters of his narrative have had in mind. However, I would include Kowalski's book to the broadly understood, "vernacular" critical sociology, since it is a profound analysis of mentality, revealing its deep structures which were not understood by its subjects and which prevented their emancipation.

During last few years, two short but very interesting articles were published in Poland, which stress the urgent need to develop a critical theorizing not only in this country but also in the whole Central and Eastern Europe. I will discuss them separately since there actually are nearly no common ideas in them. What makes them similar to each other and to Kowalski's book is the common-sense, vernacular approach to sociological critical thinking.

Andrzej Rychard[28] quotes one text by Habermas and one text by Gouldner but unfortunately not in order to take advantage of their critical methodologies. However, he poses in his short essay very important problems, significant for any sociology, and in particular for the critical one: how to explain the social world without justifying its actual, present shape; how to analyze critically a social order without being involved in the political conflict; how to do a "critical research" without limiting oneself to the analysis of the political field (or to what is currently understood as political). Without directly responding the Rychard questions in the present essay, I could simply say that there exist various answers to them, well elaborated for instance in critical sociologies discussed by Delanty. Perhaps Andrzej Rychard, for whom critical sociology of post-communism is so important, will take them into account in his next works.

Tomasz Zarycki conceptualizes the issue of critical theorizing in a different way. He is interested in the same region and period (Central and Eastern Europe as well as Russia during the last two decades), but he puts it into the theoretical framework of the analysis of centers and peripheries. Many times, he uses the term "critical sociology" but he does not explain it at all. He reaches for critical reflexive sociology of Pierre Bourdieu but I would hesitate to say that he is looking for any particular critical methodology in this classic. He reaches for the book of Craig J. Calhoun on the history and typology of critical thinking. These two sources serve him to draw the following, important conclusions: critical sociology should con-

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[28] Ibidem.

tain some elements of its own sociology, i.e. be self-critical; it should understand that it will inevitably be involved in real conflict of interests; it should take as its assumption the thesis that the existing state of affairs is not the only possible one and that the social dynamics has not come to the end[29].

However, I have a different opinion than Tomasz Zarycki on several topics. I cannot agree on some of his assumptions concerning critical sociology. *Classic Western Critical Sociology*, he says, "concentrates, as all of us know, on the problems of economic inequalities. To the majority of representatives of this current, they are *de facto* the only real inequalities, in particular in modern societies. Other dimensions of inequalities are treated as of secondary importance or ostensible"[30]. These sentences are, in my opinion, hardly true. It should be added that the author does not present any analysis of what he means by critical sociology. I will not continue this topic and come to his other ideas and postulates. According to Zarycki, in Poland (but also in other post-communist countries) the cultural capital (in Russia – political capital) is of a primary character, so critical sociology should concentrate on cultural inequalities. Because Zarycki does not believe in the existence of any (even in Bourdieu) cultural critical theory in the Western sociology, he does not look for any former methodologies of sociological critique (he does not offer his own methodology either). On the other hand, I find very interesting his conclusions of the assumption concerning the Central and Eastern European societies. In these societies with privileged role of cultural capital, sociologists belong to its carriers. Therefore, the practicing of critical sociology may be much more difficult than in societies where economic capital or even political capital dominate (and sociologists are not their carriers). In Central and Eastern Europe, according to this interpretation, critical sociologists would have to oppose their own social group base and, unlike in the West, they cannot expect any structural support from it.

I do not have a very clear opinion on the real significance of the sociology of individuals. If it is so important as the organizers of the Lisbon 2009 Conference thought, I am very sorry that it is not visible at other big sociological congresses and it does not develop faster in my country. Critical sociology, or, more generally, critical social theory, seems to me to be very important wherever there are strong social (economic, political, cultural, etc.) inequalities and where sociologists have a deep conviction that social life is ruled by some hidden mechanisms which prevent the social emancipation of large social groupings. Most probably, this is the

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[29] T. Zarycki, *Socjologia krytyczna na peryferiach* [Critical Sociology on the Peripheries], "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" 2009, LIII, No. 1, pp. 115–116.

[30] Ibidem, p. 105.

case everywhere in the world. As we could see in this concluding chapter, it is possible to practice critical sociology in the common-sense, vernacular way, but it is also possible to take advantage of the existing ideas, like those debated in Lisbon.

In Poland, during the XIV Polish Congress of Sociology, held in Kraków in 2010, two students organized a regular thematic group devoted to "critical theory today". Among eight speakers, there were only graduate students. Perhaps the change is coming.

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SUMMARY

This essay is an exercise in the field of sociology of sociology. Its inspiration lies in the debate on "such sociological theory which will be needed in the 21st century". The debate took place during the Lisbon Conference of the European Sociological Association in 2009. The Program Committee made the practical decision, by inviting the speakers of the semi-

plenary session devoted to social theory, that the most needed theoretical and methodological orientations in social sciences are "sociology of individuals" and "critical theory". The author shows, based on the examples of the accomplishments of big international (European and global) sociological conferences held during last decade, that these two theoretical orientations are not, in fact, as popular in sociology, as the Lisbon Conference would suggest. Therefore, the Lisbon diagnosis does not seem to be accurate. Similarly, in Polish way of practicing theory and in the publication practice (textbooks in the field of theory, readers in the field of theory) of last few decades, it is difficult to find arguments supporting the thesis that "sociology of individuals" and "critical theory" are what is particularly needed. Further on, the essay summarizes the arguments of the Lisbon speakers on the nature of contemporary sociology of individuals and critical theory. At the end, the author discusses the actual interest of Polish sociologists in sociology of individuals and critical theory.

Key words:

D o m i n i k   A n t o n o w i c z

TOUGH LOVE. MANAGERIAL STATE AND RESEARCH EVALUATION IN POLAND

1. Introduction

In the beginning I would like to make two important points. First, the main idea behind this paper is to enrich the existing public discussion in Poland that insofar has taken place only within the academic community. By doing so, this paper takes the point of view of *an average taxpayer* because her/his point of view is largely missing, which makes the debate incomplete. Secondly, the policy in science and higher education must take into account wider historical, political and economic context. Since now, most of the mainstream discussions on science and higher education have been completely decoupled from any wider context. Its only explanation was the assumption that science and higher education is so unique and notable that has to be read, treated and understood separately. The starting point of this paper is rather opposite. In order to understand the recent changes in scientific policy one needs to explore it from the perspective of an average tax-payer and see transformations of scientific policy as a wider project of the falling welfare state.

2. From welfare to managerial state. Political u-turn

The evaluative model of scientific policy is an integral part of managerial state and liberal model of public policy. It was brought to mainstream politics with first signs of the falling welfare-state model. Ideological foundation of managerial state and evaluative model of public policy were market mechanisms and consumers' choic-

es. The "market state" or "managerial state" revolutionized public policy in the USA and Western Europe (in particular the UK) in the beginning of the 80s. This unprecedented political u-turn had a major impact on the public realm. The managerial approach has a number of names such as "manageralism"; "new public management", "market based public administration", the post bureaucratic paradigm (or entrepreneurial government) or "entrepreneurial government".

The first distinctive feature of the political u-turn in public policy involved separation *steering from rowing*. The government involvement does not always involve government provision trough bureaucratic means. In practice, it meant allowing private and non-profit organizations to provide public services. In general, it was also related to the transfer of ideology and business techniques from the private sector to the public realm. It was built on an assumption that public aims could be equally delivered by public and private organizations. What really counts in the public realm is what works. Hence, it is outcomes, not ownership, which matter in the modern public service. Therefore the traditional political debate about private and public ownership became no longer meaningful so long as the tasks are performed. It was a radical move in the context of the welfare-state that put strong emphasis on equal distribution of public service and process of provisions services. It was more process oriented that outcomes-oriented performance. The introduction of the liberal public policy was a necessary measure to undertake in order to rescue a falling welfare state and stop further economic downfall. It led to establishment of market mechanisms in order to direct public organizations in three major directions *Efficiency, Economy, Effectiveness (3E)* pushing to a far reaching austerity in public spending but also critical approach to existing means of funding public sector.

The second major feature of the transformation from the welfare-state to the managerial one was to direct the spotlight on *the accountability of public sector institutions*. Any public institutions or institutions that deliver public goals must be ready to justify tax-payers money spent on them. But as shows, the **principal–agent** problem or *agency dilemma* interests of both sides can be very different or sometimes contradictory. The fiscal responsibility was obligatory to all public sector organizations, but accountability involves much more than just correct allocation of financial resources. It puts strong emphasis on effective and efficient use of public financial resources. Accountability replaced *institutional trust* typical for the welfare-state, in which government (on behalf of taxpayers) let public institutions do their best in order to achieve what is required from them. In higher education a symbol of institutional trust became the British *University Grant Committee* founded in 1919 by the Ministry of Treasure. It was an independent agency estab-

lished to provide funding for higher education institutions. From the very beginning it was a means to channel funds to universities according to unknown criteria. The UGC's role at this time was to examine the financial needs of the universities and to advise on grants. But it did not have a permit to plan for the development of universities. It was believed that if universities had known the financial algorithm they might have changed their activities, violated institutional autonomy and academic freedom. In the past universities did not have to be accountable because as professional organizations they enjoyed a high degree of public trust. In general it was believed that universities know best for and how to spend public money. Neither the government, nor UGC interfere in universities' performance, internal affairs or balance between teaching and research. Nobody dares question the ethics and professional integrity of the academic profession. But in the postwar decades – initially unconditional – trust gradually became questioned because radical increase of the number of higher education institutions forced the government to be more economic in planning public spending on research.

The third feature, and a natural consequence of the liberal u-turn in public policy was application of a simple rule *who pays the piper called the tune*. Institutional trust and generosity of welfare state was replaced by contractual relationship and market mechanisms that should have provided efficiency and effectiveness. The government contracted out various services and introduced compulsory tendering in the public sector, there was clearly a room and need for institutional mechanisms that would secure public interest. This form of relations between the government and public sector institutions can be defined as quasi-market relations or state's managed market. In contrast to *welfare state*, the managerial state develop public policy that could be characterized as goal-oriented and with a strong pressure on public accountability. This led to introduction of that evaluative mechanisms in order to secure public interest and help to achieve public goals. Decentralization of the state and contracting out public services requires better outcomes control. The managerial state became *an anti-welfare state* more distrustful toward its institutions. Effectiveness, efficiency and control of public spending became key drivers for the change in public policy.

After the policies of the golden age of expansion, European welfare states have been shaped by the "politics of austerity". The rhetoric of a "crisis" in the welfare state has been developed since the 1970s. From this time we have observed radical fiscal reforms, modernization of government and the end of the welfare state as we know it. The balance between state and market in meeting people's needs (so far met by public sector healthcare and pensions, and possibly including education) shifted towards the market. Following the changes in the model of a state, public

policy in science and higher education turned into a more competitive model, in which the central role was attached to evaluative mechanisms.

3. Evaluation as an instrument of scientific policy

The policy of institutional trust of the welfare-state does not pay any special attention to the achievement of results. Universities used to be self-governing and autonomous organizations, free to set their own missions, goals and agendas. The government, taxpayers had little impact on their activities but this kind of policy was possible when research was conducted in a few universities by a small number of academics. Spending on research was so insignificant in the national budget that there was no use paying too much attention to what they were spent on. The research (in particular conducted at universities) did not have a great impact on the economic development. It was mostly basic research that did not affect the world outside the ivory tower. Since 1960s the financial expectations of a growing number of higher education institutions has gone up rapidly and they exceeded national budget limits.

There was a number of social processes that had a major impact on revolution of policy of institutional trust. It was (a) massification of research activity, (b) increase in the instrumental role of research conduct at universities and research institutes, (c) growing pressure on accountability of higher education institutions. Science has also lost its unique nature, separate cognitive activity, as well as the idealistic belief that scholars perform a unique traditional and special role. All these processes made contribution to a growing role of scientific research both quantitative (number of academic staff engaged) and also qualitative (in terms of social and economic impact). The scientific policy became needed because public resources were scarce and their use had to be more effective. On the top of it, there was a growing assumption that research activities were no longer internal part of university and academic community. In was more and more a part of the economy. The managerial state increases the level of funding on science and development but it also sets targets to meet. To address this problem, the managerial state establishes the evaluative model of public policy that steers higher education institutions and research institutes according to proprieties set by the government. The evaluative model of scientific policy helped to stimulate (indirectly) the quality of research outcomes and efficient use of public resources. Evaluation played an important role in scientific policy as an instrument of legitimacy of public spending, instrument of setting the annual budget in research and development. It provided information for institutional performance of individual institutions and research

units. It helped to achieve what is best for the public interest. In a contrast to welfare state that tended to spend public money unconditionally, the evaluative model put a strong emphasis on monitoring and evaluating the performance of higher education institutions and research institutes. By doing so they introduced competitive mechanisms, in which potential research projects are evaluated and only the most promising receive funding on expanse of administrative institutional resource allocation. Research grants are forms of mutual contractual agreement between the state and institutions, organizational units or research teams. This is called conditional and competitive funding of research.

It appears to be a very effective instrument for the managerial state. First, it provides an instrument to conduct public policy in research which means allocating funding according to set priorities and requires a full accountability from public institutions. Second, it allows to introduce competitive mechanisms within the public sector research and higher education which leads to an increase in the quality of research and decrease of its costs. It drives all organizations to increase their performance and better (most effective) allocations of scarce resources. From the public interest there are very important goals in scientific policy and in a situation of limited resources their use must be very effective. The great advantage of evaluation is to achieve public goals in research without direct interference into higher education institutions. "The faith in regulation, planning mechanisms and coordination by the central government were replaced by new logic in which the role of the central government is to establish boundary conditions in which only higher education intuitions operate, leaving them freedom to act".

Since the 1970s, the way the universities are funded has undergone major changes. Governments use more subtle and indirect but more effective instruments to influence higher education institutions. As a result, new nature of relationship between the state and universities is established, which fits perfectly in the ideology of the evaluative state. The managerial state and the evaluative model of public policy in science did not cause much enthusiasm in the academic community. They claimed that as an effect of the reforms in science and higher education, the academic institutions had in fact lost a big part of their autonomy. But the government got new and effective policy instruments to influence the research activity. The most controversial was the idea of external evaluation of research (and teaching) that was seen to stay in odds with the traditional concept of the university and academic values. The evaluation and measuring of the quality of teaching and research strengths the position of the state because governmental agencies were to set criteria against which research performance would be evaluated. Despite giving more (conditional) autonomy to higher education institutions, the government

remained a key and dominant player in scientific policy. To add insult to injury, the external quality measurement became a very sensitive issue for universities. Examples of many European countries showed that academics strongly opposed any form of external interference in their performance. They fundamentally disagreed to be monitored and evaluated as they found it as an attack on their freedom of research and teaching.

In the evaluative model the mechanism of monitoring and assessment of research and teaching are being formalized and institutionalized. Scholars, such as Berit Askling claims that we can talk about the evaluation culture in research and higher education, in which the quantitative dimension of academic work starts to play a dominant role. A number of publications, presentations, citations' indexes and external funding became key performance indicators of academic performance. In the *evaluative culture* the role of external audit and peer review is raising. A wide range of performance indicators and strong emphasis on reporting not only replaced the trust in professional activity but they became an oracle of either success or failure of academic performance. A number of critics of the evaluative model underline that in fact evaluative culture has increased the red tape in higher education.

Introduction of the evaluative model in R&D resulted in many protests. The end of *the ivory tower* meant that universities and academics had to become accountable to the politicians who are a democratic representation of taxpayers. So, it is very difficult to be accountable to those (politicians) who are often seen as ignorant and complete barbarians. The introduction of an account of accountability and evaluative mechanisms in science and higher education has brought down an idealistic picture of scholars as true seekers and universities as temples of knowledge and wisdom. It ended the understanding of science as a selfless mission for the sake of humanity. Research and education simply became too important for social and economic development to let them remain *in the ivory tower*. Growing pressure on public accountability of academic institutions and strong emphasis on the measuring outcomes shook the academic community. The advent of managerial revolution brought down the traditional role of universities and research institutes It brought them to the society and became foundation of the *Third Wave Revolution*.

4. Research evaluation in Poland

In Poland research is conducted in both universities and research institutes. For the sake of this analysis I will treat these organizations in the same way – as institutions. Polish science is undefended in comparison to other EU countries. Ac-

cording to Eurostat research and development intensity, counting expenditure as % of GDP, Poland spends only 0.56% of GDP on research and development. It is one of the lowest levels not only in EU15 but also in EU27. Only Slovakia (0.46%), Bulgaria (0.48%), Romania (0.53%)and Cyprus (0.45%) spend equality little on R&D. The average in EU27 is approximately 1.88%, which is three times more than in Poland. For example, the highest R&D intensity countries (Nordic countries, Austria and Germany) spend more 2.5% GDP. This level of funding is unacceptable for the academic community who finds it damaging for science and higher education. It often calls the central government to increase the level of expenditure on R&D because the current level of spending marginalized Polish science and higher education. According to OECD Report "This low R&D intensity reflects a relatively low level of GDP and an industrial structure heavily weighted towards low technology, as well as a low level of R&D in foreign affiliates of multinational firms. It also reflects weaknesses in the framework conditions for innovation and a public research system that is insufficiently linked to industry".

Number of publications (in thousands)

Number of full-time academics (in thousands)

Number pf publications per one academic
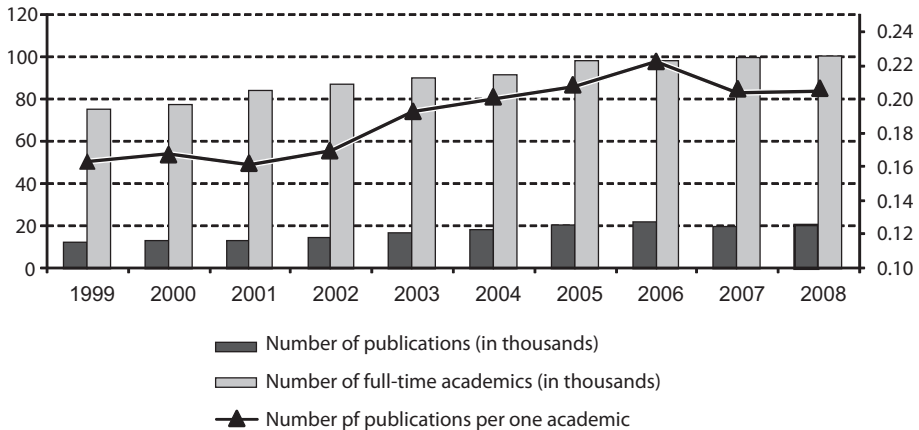
Graph 1. Number of publications, number of academics in Poland and number of publications per academic in Poland

Source: Strategy of Higher Education 2020.

The same issue looks completely different if one looks at it from a taxpayer's perspective. As Graph 1 shows the average number of publications in Poland is five times lower that the number of academics. This is a striking figure. To be precise, the total number of publications could be higher than the one mentioned above

but it would have to cover publications in regional, low quality journals, local conference papers and other publication that have very little or no impact on science. In other words, academics in Poland waste too much time and energy (that is paid by from the taxpayers money) on activities that seem to be almost completely useless (don't count). As a result, Polish higher education institutions are at the bottom in almost all international university rankings.

However, it must be underlined that there is a number of other significant reasons of the low position of Polish science, among which heavy underfunding seems to be the most important. Things get even worse if we analyze the structure of spending, which demonstrates the dominant role of public spending (69,6%) and only 30,4% of private money[1]. The structure of research and development is completely opposite to the developed countries of EU-15, where the private sector plays a dominant role. But Poland is still a developing country in a state of economic transformation and there is a number of important social expenditures that – from a political point of view – seem to be much more important. We need to bear in mind that social expenditure as a proportion of GDP has not increased. It means that the increase in public expenditure on research is very unlikely unless taxpayers are convinced that their money is not spent in vain. In other words, research and higher education must be much more effective, efficient and economic, and most importantly, accountable to their sponsors. Without a significant change in accountability, transparency and effectiveness of research, taxpayers will not agree to increase expenditure on science as a % of GDP. Therefore, Polish science requires urgent modernization to send a signal to taxpayers that their money is not being wasted on "hobby-like" activity and niche publications. They must be ensured that public money is effectively used and provides value for money.

In this context, the existing mechanism of evaluation of academic strengths structure kills any form of competition by failing to recognize the best and underperformed research institutions. As a result, in general it is seen as a form of social security for academic institutions rather than a source of instability that leads to competition and a continuous increase in the quality of the performance. The current research financing system could hardly be called competitive. The allocation of the state research budget, where 60–70% of funds are earmarked for "statutory subsidies" for faculties or faculty units conducting research, significantly reduces the competitiveness of the fund distribution system. Though the State Committee for Scientific Research (KBN) introduced successive parameter-based evaluations of units from 1997, the continual

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[1] GUS, *Nauka i technika w 2007 r.* [GUS (Central Statistical Office), Science and Technology in 2007], Warszawa 2009.

under-funding of research has effectively weakened this type of measure. Even when parameter-based evaluation demonstrated significant differences in the quality of research conducted at different institutions, successive ministers imposed top-down limits under which a statutory subsidy for a given institution could not vary by more than, for example, ±5% from the subsidy from the previous year. Moreover, at the cost of research grants (because no new funds were forthcoming), one minister after another created more new paths for financing science and increased the subsidies for the statutory activity of institutions[2]. See the graph below:
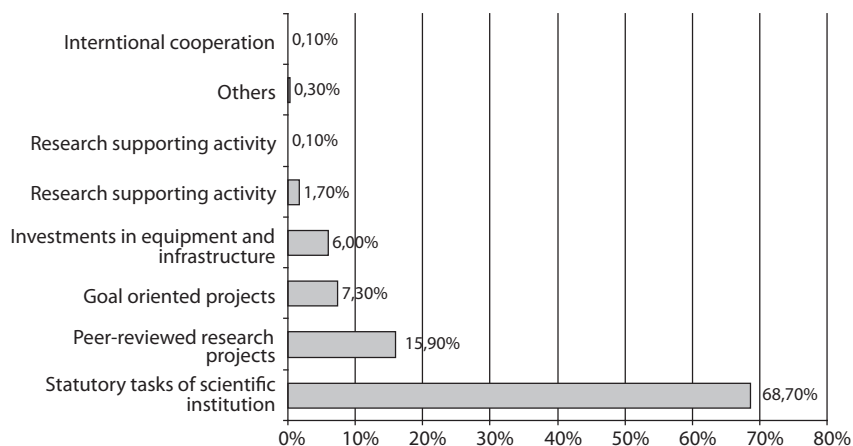
Graph 2. R&D Government Budget Allocation

Source: GUS, *Government Budget Allocated to R&D and Related Activities* (Budget Sector Science) by Channel of Financing, 2003.

We should not forget that scientific research and the quality of higher education make a vital contribution to the economy and also could have influence on the quality of life of society. On the top of it, they build external attractiveness and they create the image of the country outside[3]. Unfortunately, the existing system of evaluation of academic research does not encourage taxpayers to increase their generosity for science because it does not support an increase in the quality of research. The current mechanism of evaluation and funding supports research

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[2]   M. Żylicz, *Polish Science Reforms Bring Fear and Hope,* "Science" 2010, Vol. 327.

[3]   L. Cremonini, D. Antonowicz, *In the Eye of the Beholder? Conceptualizing Academic Attraction in the Global Higher Education Market*, "European Education" 2009, Vol. 41, No. 2.

activity that is done mostly to meet its own ends. Therefore, it is hard to believe that a taxpayer will spend more money to support autotelic system. In particular, in the situation in which an average number of citations per article is gradually decreasing. It puts Poland on the 19th place among 22 classified UE countries[4].

The underperformance of academic institutions and research institutes stems from many reasons. Low salaries make employment in research sector financially unattractive, there is lack of mobility etc. However, for taxpayers such explanations can be unconvincing. Many other public sector organizations use similar arguments to explain their unsatisfying achievements. Taxpayers would rather see new institutional arrangements that support quality in research. Only a real revolution can encourage taxpayers to increase public expenditure on R&D. One of the major issues that requires modernization is the parameter-based evaluation. Its task is to identify the best research units that make the best possible use of public funding, but also to identify those units that should be cut off from any form of public funding. Unfortunately, the current system of evaluation (as mentioned above) does not create financial initiatives for improving the quality of research. In contrary, it reflects the spirit of the welfare-state in which institutional stability and social security were driving forces. Lack of competition, transparency and the outcome-driven performance put a big question mark over an increase of public resources for science. Without these resources Polish research teams seem to be in a very unprivileged position in comparison to other teams from the EU. Furthermore, without a significant increase of resources, Polish research might be unable to become competitive in the European Research Area. The increase of public expenditure on research is impossible unless new institutional mechanisms supporting competitiveness are introduced.

5. Seven steps in establishing good parameter-based evaluation system

As discussed, the problem of Polish science is not the number of publications but the number of publications that really count in science. The number of reports that the Ministry of Science and Higher Education has recently produced indicates that the overproduction of useless publications and pointless research is a major problem that requires to be addressed. Therefore, the first and most important criterion of new evaluative mechanisms is to support the quality of research. As it was men-

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[4]   *Strategia rozwoju Szkolnictwa wyższego do roku 2020* [Strategy for Higher Education System Development up to 2010], Warszawa 2010.

tioned before, there is too much research done by higher education institutions and research institutes, too many useless articles. They are all a waste of public funding, and the research budget is very limited anyway. There is a wide range of research evaluation mechanisms applied in different countries that could be easily adopted in Poland. Secondly, the evaluation must be based on objective criteria that could be easily measured and compared. Help to restore faith in the system is necessary because otherwise increasing public expenditure seems to be simply impossible. The system of evaluation must convince taxpayers that money spend on research is a good investment that will eventually benefit economy and society. The evaluation system must be transparent and accountable and to create such, international experts must be employed to keep international professional and ethical standards. Thirdly, mechanism of evaluation must support the concentration of resources of academic and research units on selected fields in which the outcomes are most promising. The evaluation system cannot reward peripheral research activity. In situation of limited public resources one must concentrate them in research field where success is the most probable. In other words, it means research units should focus on fields in which their expertise is best. In developing countries publicly funded research must be based on past achievements. The outcomes in research are more promising in fields in which research has solid fundaments in the form of knowledge and competences than in fields where everything must be performed from scratch.

Fourthly, the model of evaluation should lead to better use of public resources: human, material and non-material resources. This applies to academic institutions, which are in general very fragmented, where the theory of management is defined as a *silo structure*. The silo structure is so deeply rooted in the academic institutions that create organizational *tunnel thinking*. It means that each and every unit of an academic institution (research institute) performs according to its own goals, which leads to chaos and lack of coordination and waste of public resources. For example, at one university there are three different units that conduct research in sociology, all of them are small and unable to apply for more adventurous research projects. But for unknown (personal) reasons they do not want to merge. Fifthly, the evaluation mechanism should lead to categorization of research institutions according to their research and publications record. Currently, there are five categories (1–5) in which "5" is excellent and "1" very poor research. In order to maintain effectiveness of evaluative mechanisms, a proportion between categories should be kept balanced (no more than 15% research institutions in one field in one category). The highest category should be dedicated for research institutions which are classified as excellent on international level. On the other end there are

research institutions that received "1" (very poor) and they should be stripped from any form of institutional funding. Financing them is simply a waste of money. In addition, in each category 10% top institutions should be compared with 10% lowest ones in the higher category. As a result, some units will be relegated to the lower category and some promoted to the higher category. The idea behind this mechanism is to create unstable conditions for research units that would put them in a continues quest for better research performance. Sixthly, the evaluation mechanisms should recognize a great diversity of different fields of science. It concerns social sciences and humanities that should also undergo assessment but criteria upon which they will be evaluated should recognize these diversities (national language and culture). In addition, the evaluation mechanism should also recognize a wide range of different aspects of academic performance that are very important in post-industrial society, such as serving as an expert in governmental bodies, academic mobility, or external funding for research. Seventhly, the current evaluation mechanism is based on the amount of academic staff. It means that if an academic unit has staff with a professor title, it is classified higher, even if the professors do neither research nor publish. The evaluation mechanism should focus on *research performance* not on the number of academic staff. From taxpayers' point of view it does not matter if they pay to a professor or a doctor if (s)he does not conduct any research. Therefore, it is research outcomes that should matter in evaluation.

6. Conclusions

A standing point of the evaluative model of public policy offers a very pragmatic approach to research policy. It recognizes a unique nature of research but at the same time subordinates to similar rules and regulations as other parts of public sector. This applies to the concept of accountability that has not been developed in Polish science. Accountability of Polish science requires effective mechanisms of evaluation and institutional assessment because otherwise taxpayers would not be willing to increase public expenditure on research and higher education. There are other institutions such as hospitals or the police that are also heavily underfunded and require urgent supply of additional resources. So, unless research and higher education can prove that they are good investments for economic development and wellbeing of society, they will be struggling with scarce resources, lower salaries and poor infrastructure. Politicians – who will make final decisions where to channel taxpayers' money – are not extremely popular in the academic commu-

nity in any country. But in comparison to other EU countries, Poland seems to be an example of exceptionally sharp misunderstandings between politicians and academics. Politicians from various parties blame academics for wasting public money, and in return academics blame politicians for overlooking research and higher education while planning national budget. This mutual exclusion leads to nowhere.

To sum up, this paper advocates the introduction of the evaluative model of public policy in science and higher education. It believes that without introducing evaluation mechanisms there is little chance that politicians (on behalf of taxpayers) will agree to increase public expenditures on science and higher education. There are too many other important and sensitive social tasks in the very difficult fiscal times that a decision on increasing budgetary spending must be based on evidence of financial return for the country in future. And this makes it very difficult to implement because one of significant features of Polish science is (as mentioned already) the gap of trust between politicians and academic oligarchy. But at the same time, one must remember that the government is the principal in this relations. It should not be taken as a surprise that the government will try to establish new mechanisms of evaluation with transparent rules that will lead to ending equal distribution of public money regardless the performance of academic institutions. In order to so, it should employ external (foreign experts) that would restore trust in evaluation an institutional assessment. There is no doubt that some organizations will benefit enormously from the new evaluation mechanisms, but also there will be others (that perform very poorly) that will have to be cut of from public money. Tough love. In difficult the fiscal times the government should effectively allocate/ invest resources and therefore must promote these institutions, research units and best research teams because they promise to use these resources most effectively. Taxpayers cannot provide funding for peripheral research that has no impact of science development. The only way to increase effective use of scarce public resources is to limit "statutory subsidies" for faculties or faculty units and introduce stronger competitive mechanisms. OECD report pointed to the need to strengthen the science base and to raise quality through more competitive funding. Competition is the best way to increase effective use of public resources and improve quality of research. This could be a convincing argument for taxpayers to increase public expenditure on research. In addition, as a result of globalizing processes, there is an increasing range of resources being available on supranational level. Almost all of them are distributed through competitive mechanisms which make them available (in reality) only to the best international research teams. The government – regardless of the unpopularity among many losers of the evaluation mechanisms

– must support these institutions, research units and research teams which can successfully apply for international research grants. There is no legitimacy to promote mediocrity in science because in science, like in sport, the winner takes it all.

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SUMMARY

The paper aims to contribute to the recent discussion on research evaluation system in Poland. It offers a wider and broader point of view on the subject, seeing it as a part of modernization of public policy. The analysis begins with presenting a wide context of changes in public policy in Western Europe in the late 70s and early 80s. By doing so, it shows changing relations between the state and public sector organizations including higher education institutions and research institutes. In the second part, it sketches the current situation in Poland, where research and development have been heavily underfunded by the central government under strong criticism from the academic community. Therefore, it shows the recent developments in Polish science that have brought about academic discourse on a new model of parameter-based evaluation. Last but not least, the paper offers seven points for improving the evaluation system in Polish science.

Key words:

managerial state, evaluation, public policy, R&D

Ryszard Szarfenberg

QUALITY OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

> *…Yet in the end social services have lost public support not because we failed to make the equity case with sufficient conviction and eloquence, or reveal depths of poverty with sufficient rigour… but above all because ordinary people's experiences of the services have often been demeaning and downright inefficient*
>
> Howard Glennerster

1. Introduction

Quality is a wide-ranging and relative notion. If we deem that a given object's quality corresponds to the entirety of its features most desirable by someone, inclusion of someone else's perspective may result in a slightly different set of features or a configuration thereof being recognised as the most desirable one. Purposefulness might be applied as a criterion for the assessment of the quality of an action; but when the purposes are ambiguous, such assessment is difficult to make. In Polish praxeology the quality of an action is manifested through efficiency (*sprawność*) and the instrumental values that represent it, e.g. usefulness, proficiency, effectiveness or cost-effectiveness. Today, they constitute a frequently applied set of evaluation criteria for social programmes and elsewhere. For some time now there has been a reflection going on in Poland about general quality issues under the name of qualitology, originally strongly linked to material production rather than services[1].

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[1] R. Kolman, *Kwalitologia. Wiedza o różnych dziedzinach jakości* [Qualitology. The Study of Different Domains in Quality], Warszawa 2009.

A discussion about the quality of social services and actions aimed to improve them is pursued in particular countries. Only recently, such actions have started to be coordinated between countries and at the European Union level. Dissemination of the discourse about quality in the area of services connected with social work has been linked to such perspectives as post-Fordism and new managerialism applied to public sector (New Public Management [NPM])[2].

American manifestos promoting privatisation of public services and NPM were published very early on in Poland[3]. The philosophy underlying this approach spread into the reflection and practice of Polish public sector. The nature of systemic transformation was conducive for such development, as this transformation was based, among other things, on criticism of the etatistic system characteristic of the People's Republic Polish period. The interest in improvement of local or self-governmental public services has been present in Poland at least since mid-1990s[4]. A great role was played in this respect by the Institutional Development Programme constituting a part of the component B-3 of the Rural Development Programme (RDP), implemented by the Ministry of Interior and Administration (MIA) in the years 2001–2004, and co-financed from the World Bank[5]. The project under the name "Building the Institutional Potential of Self-government Units For Better Provision of Public Services" was implemented in the years 2007–2010[6].

Polish literature concerning self-government social policy devotes little attention to the issues of services quality, and is dominated by descriptions of legal regulations, formal competences and tasks, sometimes supplemented with selected indica-

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[2] A. Alaszewski, J. Manthorpe, *Quality and the Welfare Services: A Literature Review*, "British Journal of Social Work" 1993, Vol. 23.

[3] E.S. Savas, *Prywatyzacja. Klucz do lepszego rządzenia* [Privatization. A Key to Better Government] Warszawa 1992; D. Osborne, T. Gaebler, *Rządzić inaczej* [To govern in a Different Way], Poznań 1992 (re-issued in 2005).

[4] In 1998, the Union of Polish Cities published a translation of the 1977 publication of Urban Institute *Jak skuteczne są wasze usługi komunalne? Procedury oceny ich jakości*, edited by S. Mikołajczak, J. Proniewicz, T. Weigt. The original title: *How Effective Are Your Community Services? Procedures for Performance Measurement* (since 1977 there were two more editions of the book published, the last one in 2006), i.e. Polish translators deemed performance measurement to be equivalent to quality assessment. What is important, the book does not list social services among public services.

[5] One of the publications resulting from the project focused also on measurement; social welfare services were not neglected in this publication: J. Duda, A. Jeżowski, W. Misiąg, B. Nowak, J. Szlachta, J. Zaleski, *Mierzenie ilości i jakości usług publicznych jako element programu rozwoju instytucjonalnego* [Measuring the Amount and Quality of Public Services as a Component of Institutional Development Program], Warsaw 2004.

[6] Social welfare services were taken into account, project's website: www.jst.org.pl.

tors of costs or resources of a given sector[7]. Moreover, it is difficult to find literature concerning governance of organisational units in the field of social welfare[8]. As concerns foreign literature, it is worthwhile pointing out the already classic book resulting from a mid-1990s seminar, with 40 papers presented and 100 persons from all over Europe participating[9]. The issues of quality in social services are currently very popular in Europe, which is best evidenced by the fact that the European Social Network and Czech Presidency have jointly held already the seventeenth European Social Services Conference about *Quality and Performance in Social Services*[10].

2. Welfarism vs. managerialism in the understanding of quality

Before we show various initiatives contributing to the improvement of quality in social services, it is worthwhile pointing attention to differences between classic welfarism and NPM. The former reflects the concept that social services are to be provided by professionals employed in public sector (teachers, medical doctors, social workers etc.) under the assumption that they are unbiased experts on problems of less fortunate citizens, who in turn were treated as passive recipients of the actions of experts defining and satisfying their needs[11].

Table 1. Welfarism vs. new managerialism

Welfarism	New managerialism
Public service ethos	Customer-oriented ethos
Decisions driven by commitment to 'Professional standards' and values, e.g., equity, care, social justice	Decisions instrumentalist and driven by efficiency, cost-effectiveness, search for competitive edge

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[7] See: *Zarządzanie publiczne w lokalnej polityce społecznej* [Management in Local Social Policy], A. Frączkiewicz-Wronka (ed.), Warszawa 2007.

[8] A few exceptions included the book by J. Krzyszkowski *Elementy organizacji i zarządzania w pomocy społecznej* [Elements of the Organization and Management in Social Assistance], Łódź 1997. Obviously the literature concerning management of schools, and in particular of hospitals, is much more extensive.

[9] *Developing Quality in Personal Social Services: Concepts, Cases and Comments*, A. Evers, R. Haverinen, K. Leichsenring, G. Wistow (eds.), Aldershot 1997.

[10] The conference materials are available on the web: http://www.esn-eu.org/prague/eng/downloads.html.

[11] For interesting piece of writing about this concept see: J. Le Grand, *Motivation, Agency, and Public Policy: Of Knights and Knaves, Pawns and Queens*, Oxford 2003. He thought that the major change in social policy thinking in the 1980s and 1990s consisted in recognition that social professions mainly take care of their own interests and their customers in reality are not passive in the process of defining and satisfying their needs.

Welfarism	New managerialism
Emphasis on collective relations with employees – through trade unions	Emphasis on individual relations – through marginalisation of trade unions and new management techniques, e.g., Total Quality Management (TQM), Human Resource Management (HRM)
Consultative	Authoritarian/'macho'
Substantive rationality	Technical rationality
Cooperation	Competition
Managers socialised within field and values of specific welfare sector, e.g., education, health, social work	Managers generically socialised, i.e., within field and values of management

Source: Sh. Gewritz, *The Managerial School: Post-welfarism and Social Justice in Education*, 2002.

The table indicates that each model lays stress on slightly different actions for quality. The social profession model assumes that meeting of the requirements related to personal features of the service-provider, e.g. those concerning his competence, attitude and values, will also yield good quality service. Managerialism is geared more towards service's outcome, and therefore requirements set on results of service-provider's actions are more important for quality than requirements set on the service-provider himself:

Performance management has been one of the most common instruments associated with NPM. The basic logic of performance management is to develop suitable measures of the outputs and outcomes of public action, and by using those measures to drive improved service delivery by the public sector. Making this method effective in turn requires the identification of the goals of government and making the linkage between those goals and the indicators of public-sector activity[12].

Another well-known author made an even bolder statement, "Performance Management and Performance Metrics were at the Heart of the NPM"[13]. One can also find arguments that performance management is not necessarily consistent with the ideas of quality management (the second major thread in the managerialism):

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[12] B. Guy Peters, *Meta-governance and Public Management* [in:] *The New Public Governance*, S.P. Osborne (ed.), London 2010, p. 44.

[13] C. Hood, after: *The New Public Governance*, op.cit., p. 422.

Excessive stress on performance may bring public administration to accept shortcuts and fail to see that improved inputs and processes lead to better quality. The father of the concept of total quality management W. Edwards Deming even thinks that the Management by Objectives (MBO)…, which, by the way, is listed among instrument of the new public management, cannot be reconciled with the total quality management concept[14].

The majority of what is important in the performance management can be combined with welfarism, which is best exemplified in the field of social work by PRAISES model integrating practice with evaluation[15].

Among several approaches to understanding the notion of quality, beside the welfare and managerial ones, one can identify the traditional, scientific, consumer and democratic approaches[16]. In the traditional approach, the quality of a product or service means that they are better than others, exclusive, luxurious. This also entails a higher price. Transposition of such associations into the public sector sometimes results in such issues as luxury service with an additional fee.

The "scientific" approach stems from the "scientific management" of the workflow in industrial enterprises in accordance with methods promoted by Frederick Taylor. The quality is composed of all features of a product or service that contribute to the needs and desires of the customers being well satisfied. Those features should be specified and described by experts; only then can they be transformed into standards that should be met by each and every unit of a given product. Quality assurance actions consist in such production management (provision of services) that all products/services have features determining their usefulness, i.e. they meet quality standards.

The level of consumer satisfaction and therefore undertaking of actions that make the product users or service recipients feel the best they can are essential for managerial understanding of excellence. This is difficult to achieve if we only pay attention to the opinions of professionals and treat them as infallible experts on needs. Then, we may overlook what the service recipients really expect. The strat-

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[14] J. Supernat, *Administracja publiczna w świetle koncepcji New Public Management* [Public Administration and the Concept of the New Public Management] on the following website: http://www.supernat.pl/artykuly/administracja_publiczna_w_swietle_koncepcji_new_public_management.html.

[15] M. Bloom, J. Fischer, J.G. Orme, *Evaluating Practice: Guidelines for the Accountable Professional*, Boston 2009, pp. 19–21.

[16] N. Pfeffer, A. Coote, *Is Quality Good for You? A Critical Review of Quality Assurance in Welfare Services*, London 1991. The last of those approaches was proposed by the authors themselves.

egy aimed to decrease the autonomy of professionals' work and subordinate them to managers is based on the aforementioned assumption.

The consumer approach to quality differs from managerial one in that it focuses on how consumer's position in relation to service-providers can be strengthened. The best example in this respect is provided by consumer policy in various dimensions, including consumer protection movement, consumer rights and instruments for their protection, combating monopoly trusts and stimulating competition. Among many reforms of the public sector, some aim to introduce competition and choice. Examples include contracting of services through competitive tenders, solutions of the "money follows the student/patient" type. More radical proposals include granting of school vouchers or budgets for own purchase of services.

Democratic approach to quality is based on due acknowledgement of fundamental differences between social and commercial services. As an example, the former ones serve entire communities, have numerous clients at the same time, and therefore many needs must be satisfied in the interest of the society. Besides, clients of those services are at the same time citizens, in whose interest lies good functioning of the entire public sphere – hence not only consumption but also proper planning matters. This approach uses elements of the aforementioned ones, apart from the traditional approach. Quality as purposefulness of a service (it fits the purpose well) from the scientific approach, however with the purpose defined as assurance of equal opportunities for successful life[17]. Quality as a search for such ways of defining the needs and forms of public services provision that their clients-citizens are satisfied with what, how and when they receive. An important element of such approach is the principle of empowerment of the service recipients, i.e. their inclusion into the process of needs definition and service design and delivery based on citizens and consumer rights, e.g. to counselling and information, privacy and advocacy, to complaint and appeal as well as compensation.

A slightly different classification of the approaches to quality issues was proposed by A. Evers[18]. The first type, characteristic of social professions with stress on peer review assured by a powerful organisation of a given profession based on standards and ethical codes defined by it. The second type is based on the idea of inspection and control of the enforcement of law and defined standards, usually performed by governmental or self-governmental bodies external to the profes-

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[17] Ibidem, p. 28.

[18] A. Evers, *Quality Development – Part of a Changing Culture of Care in Personal Social Services* [in:] *Developing Quality in Personal Social Services: Concepts, Cases and Comments*, A. Evers, R. Haverinen, K. Leichsenring, G. Wistow (eds.), Aldershot 1997, p. 10.

sion[19]. The third approach assumed bottom-up building of service relations with citizens and user involvement, which can be both a method to attain quality and a measure thereof. The last type comes from business field (TQM) and is focused on changes in the organisation and management of the work of service-providers and desires of the clients themselves.

3. Selected initiatives for assurance of social services quality

The movement for quality assurance in the field of social policy seems still extremely viable today. In the USA, the first social work quality assurance programmes appeared in the late 1960s[20]. Beside the development and dissemination of this type of initiatives, supranational projects also appear in particular countries.

International, but not pan-Union, projects in Europe include e.g. Qual A Sess (Germany and the United Kingdom)[21] and E-Qalin (*European Quality-improving, Innovative Learning in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly*; Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy and Slovenia)[22], which concerned quality assurance in social care institutions.

An *EQUASS (European Quality in Social Services) Principles for Quality* document was published on the initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation in 2002. It constituted the basis for certification of social services quality (EQUASS assurance, EQUASS excellence) and granting of awards (EQUASS award). In 2007, in the context of disability, the Disability High Level Group adopted the position *Quality of Social Services of General Interest (SSGI)*. In 2008, the Social Platform (a coalition of the European federation of social organisations) published a recommendations document titled *Quality of Social and Health Services Social NGOs'*

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[19] Additional sub-types of the inspection approach were identified in: B. Klein, *Quality Management and Quality Assurance in Residential and Nursing Home Care in Britain and Germany* [in:] *Developing Quality*, op.cit. Polish supervision of care institutions standards, mainly of housing and technical nature, and mainly of medical nature in the case of nursing and medical institutions, corresponds to the model she criticizes. She considered the type that acknowledges to a greater extent the opinions of patients as a better one.

[20] C.J. Coulton, *Social Work Quality Assurance Programs: A Comparative Analysis*, "National Association of Social Workers" 1979.

[21] The project was financed from the EU funds. J. Reed, B. Klein, G. Cook, D. Stanley, *Quality Improvement in German and UK Care Homes*, "International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance" 2003, Vol. 16, No. 4/5.

[22] Implemented in the years 2004–2007; currently it was decided that under the successive programme, E-Qalin will be disseminated in the United Kingdom and France.

Recommendations to EU Decision Makers. In 2009, the European Committee for Standardization launched a workshop *Common Quality Framework for Social Services* financed by the EU programme PROGRESS. An additional stimulus for the discussion about social services quality in the EU was given by the European Commission communication *Services of General Interest, Including Social Services of General Interest: A New European Commitment* (COM(2007) 725).

The *Common Quality Framework for Social Services of General Interest* is to be finally adopted in 2010. The seventh draft of the document prepared by participants of Prometheus project aims to develop, check and pilot inter-sectoral and international applications of social services quality assurance system, and it concerns definition, measurement, evaluation and improvement of the quality of those services[23].

Table 2. Drafted principles of CQF SSGI

Aspects	Domains	Preconditions	
Contextual	Preconditions for service delivery	Supportive social policy framework Rights based approach Legislative framework Sustainable framework Stakeholder dialogue Affordability Accessibility Availability	
		Quality principles	**Quality criteria**
Organisation	Requirements for the service provider	Good governance	a. Good management b. Accountability and transparency c. Annual planning d. Collection of feedback e. Systematic Quality Improvement f. Confidentiality
		Partnership	a. Partnership
Service delivery process	Needs of Persons served	Rights	a. Charter of Rights b. Non-discrimination c. Complaint management d. Freedom of choice e. Self-determination f. Access to advocate – support person
		Participation	a. Persons served actively involved decision-making & evaluation b. Empowerment of persons served

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[23] The project's website: http://www.epr.eu/index.php/equass/projects/128.

Aspects	Domains	Preconditions	
	Requirements for staff	Competence of staff	a. Skilled professionals b. Working conditions c. Training and development of staff d. Staff levels and staff ratio e. Volunteers
		Ethics	a. Respect to human dignity b. Ethical code for professionals c. Ensuring safety and security
	Requirements for the service	Persons centeredness	a. Tailor-made services b. Proximity c. Affordability
		Comprehensiveness	a. Holistic approach b. Promotion of quality of life c. Seamless provision of services d. Access to multi-disciplinary supports and services
Benefits and outcomes	Benefits and service results	Result orientation	a. Benefits for service users b. Records of outcomes c. Reviewing results d. Transparency of results

Source: *Common Quality Framework for Social Services of General Interest*, project No. 7, September 2009, pp. 9–10.

EQUASS philosophy is expressed through nine principles for quality of social services provided with 38 criteria adjusted to those principles.
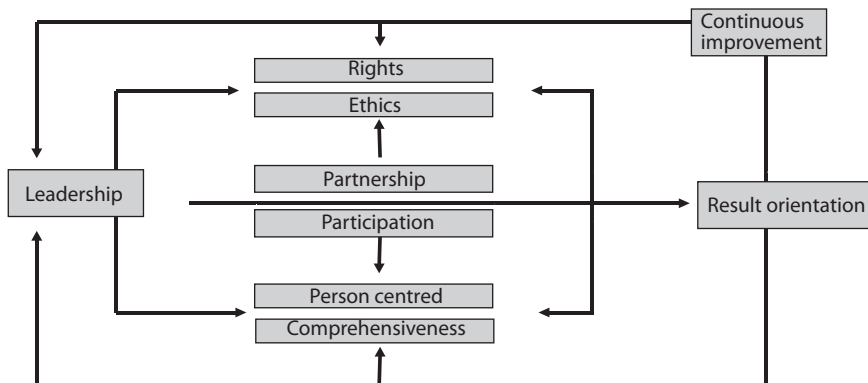
Figure 1. EQUASS Quality Framework

Source: Presentation: *A Comprehensive Approach in Meeting Needs and Expectations of Stakeholders.*

As an example, the principle concerning partnership was defined as follows:

Organisations operate in partnership with public and private sector agencies, employers' and workers' representatives, funders and purchasers, organisations of people with disabilities, local groups, families and carers to create a continuum of services and achieve more effective service impacts and a more open society.

Two criteria for this principle would be as follows: 1) the organisation operates in partnership with other organisations in provision of services; 2) the organisation develops services in partnership with the persons served, buyers and other stake-holders[24].

A simplified chart of thinking in terms of EQUASS can be presented as a triangle between the professional, the person served and the organisation at whose centre a given service is.
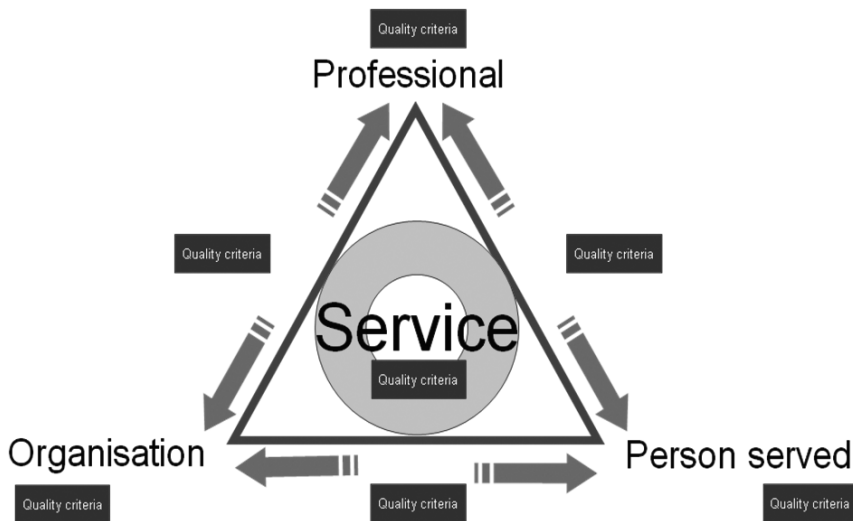
Figure 2. Triangle of the service quality criteria

Source: Presentation: *A Comprehensive Approach in Meeting Needs and Expectations of Stakeholders.*

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[24] Criteria for EQUASS Assurance (SSGI): http://www.epr.eu/images/EPR/documents/equass/criteriaequassassurancessgi.pdf, [access:18.06.2010].

Materials promoting EQUASS locate it in relation to other service quality assurance concepts (ISO, EFQM).
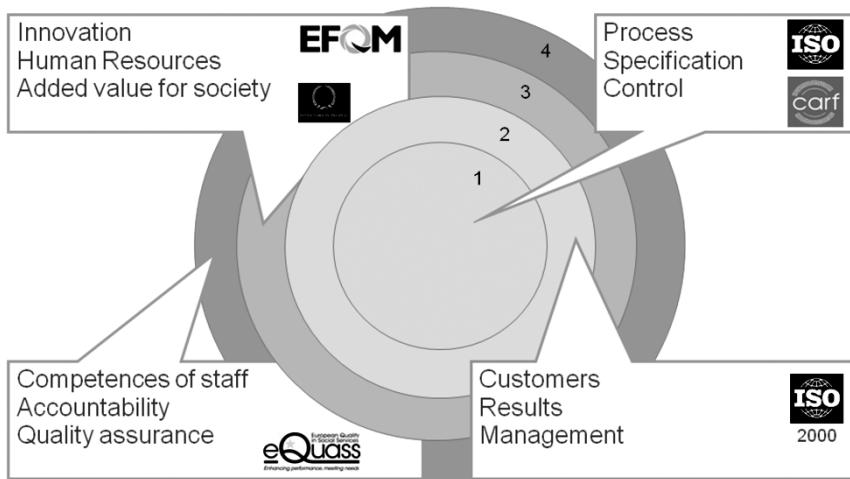
Figure 3. From ISO to EQUASS

Source: Presentation: *A Comprehensive Approach in Meeting Needs and Expectations of Stakeholders.*

Thinking about service quality in terms of certification and accreditation has been already acknowledged by Polish domain of social welfare. This is evidenced e.g. by the fact that several social assistance centres (large ones, e.g. Poznań, Gdańsk and small ones, e.g. Lesznowola) adopted quality management system accordant with ISO 9001: 2000 standards. It is not clear whether those were autonomous initiatives originating from social welfare community, or dissemination of the quality management strategy adopted by local authorities in relation to all services of common interest in their area[25].

Other undertakings of that type are also known. The city of Gdynia participates in the project Territorial Quality Standards in Social Services of General Interest of REVES[26] network, under which a charter of care services quality criteria is to be

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[25] J. Krzyszkowski, *Nowe zarządzanie instytucjami pomocy społecznej. Systemy zarządzania jakością ISO w pomocy społecznej: Case studies (Poznań, Gdańsk, Iława)* [New Management of Social Assistance Institutions. Systems of Managing the ISO Quality in Social Assitance: Case Studies (Poznań, Gdańsk, Iława)], an expert opinion for WRZOS, Warszawa 2010.

[26] Project's website: http://www.revesnetwork.eu/projects.php#proj1. It is scheduled to be completed in October 2010.

developed in a participative manner. On the other hand, the Silesian NGO Forum KAFOS prepared two manuals concerning evaluation of the services quality for welfare and medical institutions in the framework of the international project VALORIS TIQSS[27].

It is worthwhile mentioning the grassroots standardisation movement in NGOs. Pomorskie Forum for Coming out of Homelessness promotes several standards in this field: ethical, streetworking, institutional assistance, welfare work, education, professional activisation, progress monitoring, assistance[28]. Another document of narrower character is called *Standardy Kieleckie: Charakterystyka Usług Świadczonych na Rzecz Osób Bezdomnych i Wykluczonych Społecznie w Różnych Typach Placówek* [Kielce Standards: Characteristics of Services Provided for the Benefit of the Homeless and Socially Excluded in Various Types of Institutions][29]. Also in this field a document titled *Rekomendacja do Ogólnopolskiego Modelu Pomocy Osobom Bezdomnym w Okresie Zimowym* [Recommendations for a National Model of Assistance to the Homeless in the Winter Season] was published in 2008 and financed by one of the government programmes for NGOs; the project was coordinated by St. Brother Albert Assistance Association operating in Wrocław.

Another good example in the field of community work is provided by Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wspierania Aktywności Lokalnej (the Association of the Centre Supporting Local Activity), which has developed "Work standards. CAL model" and awards CAL certificates[30].

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[27] Information *Poprawmy jakość usług socjalnych w organizacjach pozarządowych* [Let Us Improve the Quality of Social Services in Non-Governmental Organizations], on the websites: www.wiadomosci24.pl, as of 18.07.10. Project's website: www.valoris-tiqss.eu. The method was developed in France, but its theoretical foundations originate from the USA – PASSING method based on Social Role Valorisation theory of Wolf Wolfensberger.

[28] *Od ulicy do samodzielności życiowej. Standardy społecznej i zawodowej (re)integracji osób bezdomnych w sześciu sferach* [From the Street to Life Independence. The Standards of Social and Professional (Re)Integration of Homeless People in Six Spheres], P. Olech, A. Dębska-Cenian (eds.), Gdańsk 2008.

[29] *Informator o placówkach pomagających osobom bezdomnym* [An Information Base of Centres Assisting Homeless Persons], S. Słowik (ed.), Kielce 2005.

[30] More information on the website of this organization: www.cal.org.pl. Many other examples of this type of activity can be found in C. Miżejewski, *Analiza wprowadzenia standaryzacji usług w organizacjach członkowskich WRZOS* [An analysis of the implementation of services standardization in the member organizations of the Working Community of Associations of Social Organisations (WRZOS)] [in:] *Wiedza i rozwój. Rola WRZOS w kształtowaniu polityki społecznej* [Knowledge and Development. The Role of WRZOS in Shaping Social Policy], A. Krawczyk, K. Płowiec, T. Sobierajski (eds.), Warszawa 2006.

4. Quality assurance concepts

Undertakings for assurance of social services quality originate from reforms in the framework of the NPM, which originally referred to not social services of general interest. Besides the movement for assurance of social services, quality developed most swiftly in the area of health care and it diffuses onto other fields of social services.

Two examples can be provided as illustrations of the diffusion of thinking about health care services quality into other social services. At the general level and in the context of social work, in 1982, Caludia J. Coulton wrote, "Many aspects of quality assurance programs in health care are potentially applicable in social service agencies"[31]. Moreover, the entire topic was discussed by her as an attempt to overcome the stalemate resulting from frustrated hopes for social services quality improvement through dissemination of evaluation research[32].

Coulton claims that monitoring and evaluation as well as service quality assurance are similar but not identical, with the main difference being that quality assurance focuses on the service provision process, instead of on the outcomes of their provision. With respect to quality assurance, she identified several important questions referring to fundamental elements of each service (inputs, process, output, outcomes, access):

- Are services being delivered by qualified staff members working in acceptable organisational or programme structures?
- Are services being delivered in accordance with accepted belief about what constitutes good practice?
- Are the services being delivered in sufficient quantity?
- Are the services having the desired effects on clients?
- Are clients who need services actually receiving them?

The requirements set by Coulton on social services quality assurance were as follows: 1) adaptability to changes in knowledge, technology and expectations; 2) efficiency in terms of producing adequate payoff relative to their costs (one of the recommendations is to focus in those programmes rather on problems and shortcomings); 3) common applicability to services of a given type; 4) participation of service providers themselves to make them more eager to make efforts in the

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[31] C.J. Coulton, *Quality Assurance for Social Service Programs: Lessons from Health Care*, "Social Work" 1982, Vol. 27, No. 5.

[32] For contemporary approach to the role of evaluation in social work see, e.g.: J.R. Dudley, *Social Work Evaluation. Enhancing What We Do*, Chicago 2009. The movement for *evidence-based practice* resulted in renewed interest in scientific research and evaluation in the field of social work.

implementation of quality policy; 5) sanctions for non-compliance with recommendations of quality assurance programmes; 6) supervision over this programme should be exercised by a separate organisational unit; 7) at least in certain aspects of services their quality should be defined by the clients, e.g. they should be included into the composition of the committees setting quality standards.

The second example concerning the use of the quality assurance concept created with the thought of health care entails the works of Avedis Donabedian[33]. In the context of services provided to the homeless in hostels, his approach, and more precisely one of his models, was applied by S. Fitzpatrick and J. Wygnańska[34]. It consists in identification of three elements within the service[35]:

- structure (material resources, human resources, organizational characteristics);
- process (the activities that constitute the service, e.g. medical: diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, prevention and patient education);
- outcome (e.g. in the field of health: change in health status, changes in knowledge acquired by patients and family members, changes in the behaviour of patients or family members, satisfaction of patients and their family members with the care received and its outcomes).

This model played an auxiliary role in the determination of the health care quality. Donabedian decided that this quality is determined by two major factors: science and technology of health care as well as its application in practice. He identified seven components of quality obtained due to those two factors. This concept can be generalised onto all social services and we can speak of the science and technology of social services and of components of the quality of those services.

Table 3. Components of health care quality

Name of quality component	Definition
Efficacy	The ability of the science and technology of health care to bring about improvements in health when used under the most favourable circumstances.
Effectiveness	The degree to which attainable improvements in health are, in fact, attained.
Efficiency	The ability to lower the cost of care without diminishing attainable improvements in health.
Optimality	The balancing of improvements in health against the costs of such improvements.

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[33] Early 1980s, his works in this respect were gathered and published also after his death: A. Donabedian, *An Introduction to Quality Assurance in Health Care*, Oxford 2003.

[34] Harmonizing Hostel Standards: Comparing the UK and Poland, "European Journal of Homelessness" 2007, Vol. 1.

[35] A. Donabedian, *An Introduction*, op.cit. pp. 46–57.

Name of quality component	Definition
Acceptability	Conformity to the wishes, desires, and expectations of patients and their families.
Legitimacy	Conformity to social preferences as expressed in ethical principles, values, norms, mores, laws, and regulations.
Equity	Conformity to a principle that determines what is just and fair in the distribution of health care and its benefits among members of the population.

Source: A. Donabedian, *An Introduction to Quality Assurance in Health Care*, Oxford 2003, p. 6.

Acceptability was a more complex component, since it contained: access; patient-doctor relations; facilities accompanying care; patient's preferences concerning care outcomes, risks, and costs; patient's convictions concerning what is equitable.

Donabedian claimed that one of the foundations of quality assurance programmes is agreement on definition of quality. Bearing in mind the complexity of the full concept of quality, it is doubtful if such an agreement is attainable: which care quality components should be given priority, which and when should be excluded from or included in the list. The author of this concept stated that it is impossible to provide a general answer to problems of this type[36].

The best proof that thinking in terms of quality management is already well rooted in the reflection on Polish health care is afforded by two issues of the book by K. Opolski, G. Dykowska and M. Możdżonek *Zarządzanie przez Jakość w Usługach Zdrowotnych: Teoria i Praktyka* (2003, 2009) [Quality Management in Health Services: Theory and Practice]. Two systems are applied in practice: the ISO certification and accreditation by the Centre for Quality Monitoring in Health Care (conducted since 1998)[37], "In contrast to ISO or EFQM, accreditation was established for evaluation of the specifics of health care and allows for aggregation of information about the national health care system and for identification of its problems. As an external evaluation of hospital's work, it stimulates external activities for improvement, initiates or improves the functioning in the cycle of continuous quality improvement"[38]. This quote suggests that ISO standards may take poor account of the specifics of social services (see further on).

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[36] Ibidem, pp. 24–26.

[37] For foundations and description of those systems see: *Zarządzanie w opiece zdrowotnej. Nowe wyzwania* [Management in Health Care. New Challenges], M. Kautsch (ed.), Warszawa 2010, part V titled *Quality in Health Care*, about two systems of quality assurance, pp. 354–375.

[38] The systemic project "Support to Accreditation Process of Health Care Institutions" in the framework of the Operational Programme Human Capital, Action 2.3. Strengthening of the health potential of working persons and improvement of the quality of the health care system, Sub-action 2.3.3 Improvement of the management quality in health care: http://www.wsparcieakredytacji.cmj. org.pl.

5. Experiences and research results

A typical approach to quality management with focus on the process instead of the product correspond well to public administration practice focused on procedures. In this connection the processes and procedures may obscure or even substitute broader objectives of general interest. This and several other arguments (difficulty with identification of clients, specifics of the services of general interest, specific culture of public organisations connected with politics) were put forward to corroborate the thesis that the orthodox quality management (TQM) is not going to work in relation to a majority of public organisations, but may be useful after a modification[39].

Against this background, it is interesting to analyse experiences from implementation of quality management principles into a Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in the early 1990s[40]. The service system consisted of sixty two organisational units of various types serving over 150 thousand people. A part of the problems indicated above proved hardly significant. Political determinants of the position of the managing persons mattered; this resulted in difficulty in the implementation of a uniform quality management in a network composed of many separate organizational units operating in different local political circumstances (factors called the culture of a public organization). However, other problems surfaced.

Firstly, similarly to market services, in services of general interest the improved quality leads to increased number of clients (greater market share), with the difference being that additional clients of the services of general interest are not followed by additional funding, at least in the case of annual or multi-annual budgets or budgeting based on the number of clients from previous years. In this connection, if short-term financing per a client decreases – for individual service providers this may result in more work for less money.

Secondly, quality management is introduced in market services with a view to increasing market share and increasing the profit level. This is also a good measure of success or failure of the quality management system. In public services such a test does not apply so it is difficult to assess the contribution made by introduction of quality management. This leads to a dilemma whether to increase the quality of services for the existing clients (add new services to the existing ones, en-

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[39] J.E. Swiss, *Adapting Total Quality Management (TQM) to Government*, "Public Administration Review" 1992, Vol. 52, No. 4.

[40] W. Rago, *Adapting Total Quality Management (TQM) to Government: Another Point of View*, "Review of Public Administration" 1994, Vol. 54, No. 1.

hance their intensity), or to provide more services of minimum quality for those who have not had access to them so far owing to present limitations in the financing of the services of general interest. For decision-makers responsible for services of general interest, it is equally difficult to send clients away empty-handed as it is to provide clients having multiple needs only with basic services at minimum level. In both cases, they are at risk of criticism from both the mass media and client advocacy organisations.

The general conclusion from this experience was as follows, "It is the government environment with its political culture and the unmet needs of an unlimited supply of customers that creates real problems for the application of TQM. Yet, even in the presence of these problems, it would be a mistake to believe that TQM cannot be successfully integrated into the government organisation"[41].

More recent research concerning quality assurance systems in residential homes for the elderly on the basis of ISO 9001 standards was presented by Inaki Heras and others[42]. The conclusion drawn was that general quality management systems are not adjusted to the specifics of the care sector and application of simpler and less demanding quality assurance models was recommended. In another article, the same authors showed on the basis of a study with the use of Delhi technique that ISO 9001 systems can be a useful tool for improving the quality of life of residents in care homes if[43]:

- its implementation has the objective of improving the quality of care;
- it is adapted to the needs of all stakeholders (residents, their families, employees, managers, public administration, and so on);
- there are sufficient resources for effective implementation; and
- all persons directly involved in the care of residents participate in the implementation.

Finally, we may ask a question about the impact of the implementation of instruments in the field of quality management and quality assurance on the outcomes and condition of the patients. In particular, when the main intention behind encouraging institutions for reforms in this field is to improve clients' well-being.

A view can be encountered in the literature that organisational changes in the public sector are more frequent than it is generally believed, but their impact on the effectiveness of the activities of public entities is small at best (so they have

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[41] Ibidem, p. 64.

[42] I. Heras, E. Cilleruelo, J. Iraki, *Quality Management and Quality of Care in Nursing Homes*, "International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance" 2008, Vol. 21, No. 7.

[43] I. Heras, E. Cilleruelo, J. Iraki, *ISO 9001 and Residential Homes for the Elderly: A Delphi Study*, "Managing Service Quality" 2008, Vol. 18, No. 3.

mostly symbolic and political significance)[44]. Bearing in mind that reasons for which organisational reforms are undertaken may be hardly important, a similar conclusion can be extended as a hypothesis concerning pro-quality undertakings in social sector.

A team of researchers tried to answer the question about the impact of initiatives on clients through quantitative research on a sample of Dutch nursing homes[45]. Although large differences were identified between homes in the outcomes of patients measured by undesirable clinical symptoms, the main differentiating factor was the original health and fitness condition of a resident and, to a much smaller extent, some features of the homes themselves (e.g. the number of beds), instead of efforts aimed at care quality. Nevertheless, quality policy imposed by the 1996 act could contribute to the reduction of the differentiation of the patients' outcomes between homes. The general conclusion is concerned with a need for further research.

6. Conclusions

In recapitulation, despite ambiguity and multidimensionality of the notion of quality and discrepancies in the concepts of new public management, pro-quality reforms of general interest services have been and still are undertaken. Services of general interest include social welfare services and hence they are also concerned. The leading role in the adoption of this philosophy is played by health services sector, and in this connection also by social services similar to those provided by care homes or nursing and medical institutions that are closest to the health services sector. One of the presently dominant sources of ideas aimed to improve quality are the strategies and instruments recommended and applied in the private sector. However, quality assurance models in the sector of manufacturing and commercial services not necessarily work well in social services. Therefore, approaches intended to take due account of their specifics are being developed. However, it is not certain whether even those service models and standards that are well adjusted to specifics of the social sector will have a significant impact on improvement of the clients quality of life, in particular in social care institutions.

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[44] B. Guy Peters, *Administracja publiczna w systemie politycznym* [Administration in Political System], Warszawa 1999, pp. 206–209.

[45] C. Wagner, K. Klein Ikkink, G. van der Wal, P. Spreeuwenberg, D.H. de Bakker, P.P. Groenewegen, *Quality Management Systems and Clinical Outcomes in Dutch Nursing Homes*, "Health Policy" 2006, Vol. 75, No. 2.

Presently, Poland implements a systemic project Operational Programme Human Capital *Creating and Developing Standards for Social Welfare and Integration Institutions*, whose name originally contained the words "quality standards", but "quality" was dropped from a successive version[46]. It is not known why this change was made (perhaps due to the conviction that ISO quality management standards are not adequate for social welfare organisation and services), but creation and development of standards with exclusion of such an extremely important premise for this process as the intention to improve services quality, seems at least puzzling.

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[46] Although not valid anymore, the original name can be still found on the website of the Human Resources Development Centre. The website contains also a short project description, see: http://www.crzl.gov.pl/projekty-mainmenu-5/pomoc-spoleczna-mainmenu-64/projekt-118-mainmenu-67.

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SUMMARY

Quality social services are a universal ideal of postmodern welfare states. It has many intellectual and practical sources, one of them is critique of the bureaucratic professionalism which characterized modern social policy. A very popular resolution for this problem is the new public management and quality management methods and techniques originated in private business sector. Quality is a rather slippery and ambiguous concept with different meanings. Social services and social work are enormous in scope and variety. Joining these two areas is a very interesting endeavour with now approximately thirty years of experience in some countries, in Poland too. The aim of this article is to give a short description of different quality concepts in social services context. There are professional, traditional, scientific, managerial, consumerist and democratic approaches to the quality in public sector. Many policy initiatives in Europe (e.g. CQF, EQASS) and in Poland have been implemented in order to improve quality of public and social services. There is little evidence, however, that they have a decisive impact on the improvement of the clients well-being. Readers will find information concerning arguments about rather limited usefulness of total quality management in social services organizations. Some results of research from the US and Europe were described and discussed.

Key words:

social welfare, social assistance, social services, quality, quality management, CQF SSGI, EQASS

Tomasz Szlendak, Arkadiusz Karwacki

TRUST AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY VERSUS INCOME RANGE. THE SPIRIT LEVEL CONCEPT IN THE LIGHT OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY

1. Introduction

For years sociologists and social politicians have been considering the relation between an objective level of poverty and social problems present in a population[1]. There has been an attempt to find the relation between the level of poverty, defined and measured in various ways, and the scale of social problems such as teenage pregnancies, single parenthood, crime (especially against people, and effecting from disturbed socialization), infant mortality, pathological obesity, poor results at school or unemployment among young men. Frequently, all efforts are wasted for one reason – the repetition, continuous explanation and analysis of a mistake which is looking for a determinant where it cannot be found. The simplest and most immediate explanation of all social problems is the very fact of poverty among people – the lack of multidimensional resources which leads to helpless-ness, idleness, alcoholism and illegal actions. Hence the most common forms of leveling the consequences of social problems through actions aiming at "pulling" people out of poverty above the level of income poverty, which according to many

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[1] Ch. Murray, *Losing Ground. American Social Policy, 1950–1980,* New York 1984; idem, *The Emerging British Underclass,* London 1990; A.B. Atkinson, *Poverty in Europe,* Oxford 1998; idem, *Social Exclusion, Poverty and Unemployment* [in:] *Exclusion, Employment and Opportunity,* A.B. Atkinson, J. Hills (eds.), London 1998; A. Sen, *Development as Freedom,* New York 1999; Ch. Jencks et al., *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America,* New York 1972; J. Sachs, *The End of Poverty. How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime,* London 2005.

researchers bring ambiguous or even opposite results[2], and in the opinion of others, in practice are often directed at improper recipients[3].

At the same time, this might be a wrong direction. The measures used to fight social problems in both the micro – and macro-scale prove to be inefficient as their reasons have not been understood. Perhaps it is not the objective level of poverty that people live in to determine the scale and increase of all kinds of social problems. Perhaps the very fact of poverty bears little importance and the determinants of high crime levels, teenage pregnancies, health problems and high infant mortality ought to be sought somewhere else.

This is the viewpoint of Richard G. Wilkinson. Wilkinson is a British epidemiologist who for 30 years has been studying the factors responsible for the health of entire populations. He observed[4] that the health of populations does not result from an objective, measurable financial status people live in, but rather from coefficient of relative economic differences between individuals living within the same population or country. The countries of considerable income differences and, consequently, of a high degree of social inequality and a low degree of coherence, demonstrate a high proportion of health problems, such as common obesity or higher frequency of mental illnesses, e.g. depression. The health of the population of "hyper-consumption" countries such as the United States or Great Britain, where the development of "casino" capitalism contributed to a very high income inequality, is worse than the health of the population, assessed as a whole, in countries like Sweden or Japan, where income range is far lower than economic inequalities in the USA or Great Britain.

The principles by Wilkinson attracted the attention of scholars and the media in the time of today's recession, caused both by the actions of the richest individuals (like dishonest investment bankers) and the current ultra-liberal social values which account for a high level of inequality. In his latest book entitled *The Spirit Level* (written with Kate E. Pickett, an epidemiologist[5]), Wilkinson proves that income inequality, resulting from the development of contemporary capitalism, is responsible for the increasing scale of social problems which are demonstrated by striking numbers: of people in penitentiary, cases of mental illnesses, people suffer-

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[2] Ch. Murray, *Losing Ground,* op.cit.; K. Auletta, *The Underclass,* New York 1982.

[3] E. Katz, J. Rosenberg, *Rent-seeking for Budgetary Allocation: Preliminary Results for 20 Countries*, "Public Choice" 1989, No. 60; M. Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Cambridge 1967; S. De Vylder, *The Rise and Fall of the Swedish Model*, "Occasional Paper" 1996, No. 26, http://hdr.undp.org.en/reports/global/hdr1996/papers/stefan_de_vylder.pdf .

[4] R.G. Wilkinson, K. Pickett, *The Problems of Relative Deprivation. Why Some Societies Do Better than Others*, "Social Science & Medicine" 2007, No. 65, p. 1996.

[5] R.G. Wilkinson, K.E. Pickett, *The Spirit Level. Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better,* London 2009.

ing from obesity or those who do not trust public institutions. According to Wilkinson and Pickett, the correlation between the scale of social inequalities (measured by Gini Coefficient and Income quintile share ratio) and the percentage of people imprisoned, individuals of racist attitudes or teenage pregnancies, carefully found and thoroughly listed, prove to be stable and constant to the extent that a strong causal connection can be observed on a universal scale, regardless of the set of data referred to. Although Wilkinson's book is the summary of thirty years of his scientific work carried out with the use of various research findings (obtained from over two hundred different sources), Wilkinson and Pickett have found the strongest arguments for their concept in the results of the research for the World Bank on fifty richest countries of the world. Nevertheless, they claim that their findings can be generalized and successfully applied to the analysis of social problems of the countries not taken into consideration in the research of the World Bank.

Therefore, the assumptions by Wilkinson and Pickett deserve serious attention and the correlation between income range and the intensification of disadvantageous social phenomena they discovered (which is referred to as "the Spirit Level concept") ought to be proved actual in the context of the European Union member countries in the light of data of the European Social Survey (ESS) which has been carried out since 2002.

If, according to the findings by Wilkinson and Pickett, income inequalities or their lack in a society are conditioned by other phenomena or processes such as health (including mental health) or tendency for criminal behaviour, it is worth analysing the relations between other (apart from the so-called public health) key features for appropriate social functioning and income distribution. It is therefore the question of the possibility of generalization of the Spirit Level concept, the range of its universality in the context of the phenomena that constitute the foundation of social, multidimensional prosperity. The first important phenomenon of that kind is trust, understood both as the relations among individuals as well as in the sphere of people-institutions relations. The second element would be social activity measured by the participation in voluntary organizations. The low level of engagement in such activities is commonly understood as social problem – an undesirable symptom of disappearance of citizen-feelings in democratic societies.

Within the test of Wilkinson and Pickett's findings we will therefore analyze the relation between trust (which they worked[6]) and social activity (which was not the

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[6] R.G. Wilkinson, K.E. Pickett, *The Problems of Relative Deprivation*, op.cit.; eadem, *The Spirit Level*, op.cit., pp. 52–58.

subject of their concern) with income inequalities distribution. We will also try to determine if the level of trust is actually, as the authors suggest, correlated with income range, after "dismantling" the notion of trust (enabled by means of detailed questions asked the respondents as a part of ESS program), so verifying the universal dimension of the Spirit Level concept. Furthermore, we will investigate if the Spirit Level concept is true for social activity, the phenomenon Wilkinson and Pickett did not take into consideration, which is undoubtedly related to inequality and socially experienced exclusion.

2. The Spirit Level concept: reconstruction

According to Wilkinson and Pickett, the only key to understand social problems is not the actual level of poverty in a country or population (e.g. an extreme poverty rate) but a scale of social inequalities in that country, particularly the space between the first and the last quintile on income scale. Wilkinson and Pickett prove that the greater the income discrepancy between one-fifth of the richest and one-fifth of the poorest, the more the social problems: more obese people, higher infant mortality, more people residing in prisons etc., and what is important and interesting in this concept – all problems occur regardless of the "quality" of poverty and wealth.

Poverty may have many faces thus it might seem that, for instance, infant mortality is higher where poverty is more common and where poor people cannot afford to buy the most necessary things and often suffer from starvation. From the perspective of a poor citizen of the Czech Republic, American poverty is simply prosperity. Infant mortality in such "prosperity" of the American poor (who at least afford highly caloric food) ought to be lower than infant mortality of the Czech poor, who often cannot afford to buy any food at all. Meanwhile, Wilkinson and Pickett's statistic analysis clearly demonstrates that the real face of poverty is not important. An essential factor is the distance, which in a specific country or region separates the poorest from the richest, the distance that generates the feeling of exclusion from the consumption of high-status artifacts, not the actual poverty of the poorest or the actual scale of wealth of the wealthiest. Infant mortality is therefore higher not where poverty adopts a dramatic face, but where the most spectacular social inequalities exist.

Income range is at the same time an indicator and determinant of social stratification scale. The income range is also directly proportional to the scale of problems appearing in a country. The higher the income range, the greater the problem scale.

Taking all the assumptions into account, in one of their works[7] (2007) and with reference to the data from *United Nations Development Program of 2003* (*Human Development Indicators*)*,* Wilkinson and Pickett analyze the situation in 24 countries. The income inequalities of these countries were measured as the relation of yearly incomes of one-fifth of the poorest to yearly incomes of one-fifth of the richest. The relation hesitated from 3.4 in Japan (the country of the flattest income structure) to 9.7 in Singapore, the country of the most stratified structure in respect of yearly incomes.

As a result of a detailed data analysis it turned out that regardless of the indicator taken into consideration, the individuals from the countries with a flattened income structure manage much better than the individuals from highly stratified in respect of yearly incomes countries. In other words, highly stratified in respect of yearly incomes societies are socially dysfunctional on many levels and within many spheres. Such a situation is present in the case of social mobility, the existence of mental illnesses in a population, and people residing in penitentiary.

Wilkinson and Pickett measured social mobility with the use of the correlation between the incomes of fathers and sons (at the time when the sons were in their thirties). The higher the correlation between the father-son incomes, the lower the level of inter-generation social mobility. Despite the fact that Wilkinson and Pickett vested with the data from only eight countries, they observed that the relation between inter-generation social mobility and income range is statistically important. The countries of high income range (USA and UK) proved to be simultaneously ones in which the level of inter-generation mobility is the lowest. In other words, in egalitarian countries with low income range, such as Sweden, Finland and Norway, social promotion of children is definitely easier and social status is not subjected to one's birth (in our opinion, these findings confirm the latest data of OECD[8]).

Similar relation was discovered in the case of the number of people residing in prisons or suffering from mental illnesses. The greatest number of the imprisoned out of 100 thousand citizens was observed in the most stratified in respect of yearly incomes countries – in the USA (576 people) and in Singapore (about 350 people). Again, the most egalitarian countries (Japan, Finland, Sweden, and Norway) can take pride in having the smallest number of the imprisoned individuals (about 50 out of 100 thousand citizens). The relation between income range and the existence the cases of mental illnesses in population is stronger, the most clear and distinct. In the least stratified Japan only 5% of the whole population suffer from a random mental disease whereas in the extremely stratified United States

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[7] R.G. Wilkinson, K.E. Pickett, *The Problems of Relative Deprivation*, op.cit.
[8] *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries,* OECD 2008.

– as much as 25%. At this point of consideration, raises a serious doubt if this clear relation is not accidentally the result of "the culture of couch" in the United States, where it is "trendy" to treat mental disorders, such as depression, with the help of psychoanalyst or strong tendency favoring non-revealing own mental problems in Japan, where the rules of social coexistence are in this respect completely different. The statistics in this regard may not reflect the entire truth on the real scale of problems of Americans and the Japanese.

Moreover, Wilkinson and Pickett claim that the higher the gap between the possessors and non-possessors, the more the attention is drawn to the material aspects of consumption. Therefore, the brand of a car means a lot in Australia and in the United States (the countries of a substantial income range), but much less in Sweden or in the Czech Republic (in which exists relatively small social inequality measured by income range). The material aspects of consumption are noticeable symbols of economic and social status in highly-stratified cultures. Their lack is evidence of social uselessness or just the lack of success among the individuals. For this reason, no one, according to Wilkinson and Pickett, wishes to join the group of people who do not possess appropriate symbols of status.

We observe here the mechanism of a reference group and the feeling of a relative deprivation, known in sociology from the Second World War. The problem all highly-diversified societies struggle with is the fact that the individuals from the group of the lowest incomes compare their incomes, lifestyle and general life situation not with the people similar to themselves but with those who earn the most in the entire population. The mechanism was discovered by a Harvard economist, a researcher of hyper-consumption conditionings in the United States, Juliet B. Schor[9]. Americans, from the second half of the 1970's, have been changing their reference groups at the same time having continual sense of being socially handicapped. They no longer compare each other in respect of incomes or owned status assets with people from the closest neighborhood. They compare themselves with wealthy people they see at the workplace or in media. The development of media in modern societies has contributed to the fact that anyone can run into messages that illustrate incomes and lifestyle of the richest. Furthermore, such a situation produces various problems among people who are not able to live up to the requirements of growing rich at all costs and, due to the possession of inappropriate habitus[10], are not able to jump on "a social sequoia" of incomes. In the opinion of Wilkinson and Pickett, in such situations the level of stress hormone – cortisol –

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[9] J.B. Schor, *Overspent American. Why We Want What We Don't Need*, New York 1998.

[10] R.G. Wilkinson, K. Pickett, *The Problems of Relative Deprivation*, op.cit.

rises. It is generally higher in the case of the individuals in stratified societies, which is connected with a constant necessity to compare to someone. People living in such societies look at their social status with anxiety and this might be the reason for their escape either in drugs or making efforts to obtain status goods (meaning – on macro-level – intensification of delinquency) in "alternative" ways.

In a situation like this, the poorest are not the only ones who lose. For the persons with average and high incomes it is also very disadvantageous. High level of delinquency directly affects the earning individuals. High infant mortality and poor health conditions of a large part of population (both physical and mental) imprint negatively on insurance, health and pension systems, as well as on "quality" of the employees and their work. The flattening of income hierarchy, "obligatory" in such countries as Sweden or Norway, is therefore followed by real social profits. "The similarity of incomes" favors establishing stable existence in the framework of the reference structure which is located within the scope of the aspiring individuals. It also creates favorable conditions for building trust and tolerance.

3. The Spirit Level concept: criticism

Having familiarized with the Spirit Level concept, the following questions occur: is this "theory of everything" actually true? Is it possible to classify its universal dimension with the use of reliable data, different from the ones their authors used? The authors themselves seem to suggest that the negation of their findings, in the face of the data they gathered from two hundred, very serious, sources, is practically impossible.

The next questions concern precautionary measures proposed by Wilkinson and Pickett. Can real social problems be prevented from developing by eliminating large income gaps in a society? Is it enough to curb the concentration on oneself and achieving higher and higher incomes at all costs (for instance, at the cost of holidays or resignation from both private and professional life) characteristic for hyper-consumption societies and flatten the differences in incomes so as to successfully dispose of the problem of obesity, depression or inequality within the scope of school accomplishments?

Reconstructing the Spirit Level concept in her review of Wilkinson and Pickett's book, a "Guardian's" publicist, Lynsey Hanley wrote[11] that if the British concen-

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[11] L. Hanley, *The Way We Live Now*, "Guardian" 2009, 14 March, http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/mar/13/the-spirit-level.

trated on settling the level of people's incomes (and flatten a payment hierarchy to the model applied in the Scandinavian countries or Japan), they would get additional weeks of holidays a year, they would be much slimmer, live longer and trust each other more. The only question one might ask is – at what cost?

Wilkinson and Pickett answer this question on the web page of *Equality Trust* organization and in the last part of their book[12]. Despite their reassurance that they are in favor of a gradual, evolutionary transformation, one may have the impression that the measures they promote are revolutionary by nature. Some of them simply make the reader think of the tendency of the authors to extremely leftist political solutions. Namely, they write (if we understand them correctly) that the situation could be simply healed be means of political manipulations as a part of tax system (in order to make it resemble the Swedish system) and reduce (in reality) the excessively high and unjustified incomes of the richest, for instance top-level managers, by introducing an upper limit for incomes (supported with the restrictions of so-called business expenses). Instead of dealing with inefficient in many cases "treatment" of particular social "diseases" such as the risk of teenage pregnancies, the increasing level of delinquency or constructing special and expensive policy against education exclusion, we ought to rely, in the opinion of Wilkinson and Pickett, on the simplest mean – the reduction of income gap in non-egalitarian societies by transforming the tax system. If egalitarian societies, such as Sweden, manage the majority of social problems more successfully, why not apply their real weapon (flattened income structure) somewhere else?

The ways of soothing social problems by flattening income structure proposed by Wilkinson and Pickett are therefore one of the strands that should come in for criticism. After all, it is impossible to leave the socio-political instruments that contribute to achieving the conditions of egalitarian social structure without a single comment. Not all countries, say for historical reasons and common values resulting from, e.g. historical determinants, are generally "up to" select leveling incomes as a means to soothe social problems. For example, Scandinavian *welfare state* and its success was an effect of, for instance, history and specific national heritage translated into appropriate priorities in social politics, such as the development of human capital through investments in professional qualifications and education, stability of power, consequently established consensus around collective responsibility based on heavy tax charges (meaning the famous citizens' sense of community called *folkhemmet*), in exchange for vast social guarantees connected to the citizenship (regardless ones wealth), inscribed in *the principle of income*

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[12] R.G. Wilkinson, K.E. Pickett, *The Spirit Level,* op.cit., pp. 229–265.

security. Therefore, social solidarity and consensus help to eliminate inequalities, simultaneously strengthening themselves on the basis of the experienced egalitarianism. Nevertheless, it seems that the successful fight with social problems may require hundreds of years to develop the counterparts of *folkhemmet* in other countries. The very "mechanical" introduction of the appropriate tax instruments in a country where the values of "a Sweden type" are a foreign body, will result in nothing but potential deepening of social tensions or "evaporation" of the highest incomes to tax paradises.

Wilkinson and Pickett argue[13] that they are not interested in the manner of approach towards the matter of equality but the equality itself. Meanwhile, the way of "flattening" inequalities is very important and ought to depend on for instance the stage of economic development of a country. One can only imagine the outbreak of social opposition in extremely individualized Poland if the politicians decided to tighten the already tight tax girdle. In countries such as Poland or Hungary, there is no economic cake big enough to divide within the framework of the reconstruction of the entire tax system. With the present level of GDP in these countries, the measures proposed by Wilkinson and Pickett to soothe inequalities are impossible to apply. The recent introduction of a linear tax in Sweden seems to prove the theory that developing countries cannot uncritically take advantage of all the instruments suggested by the authors of the Spirit Level concept. Meanwhile, they can draw more careful attention to other precautionary measures available in the tool box of Wilkinson and Pickett, for instance, strengthening the role of voluntary associations or non-profit/social benefit organizations (which provide their members with various services, from housing associations to universities) or trade unions, role of which practically collapsed (and in such countries as Poland additionally transformed into instruments of deepening inequalities since they serve exclusively well-earning members of the unions' management).

The next doubt: if after "the process of reducing" the income gap carried out even with the use of radical transformations of tax system, following the example of the model present in the Scandinavian countries, would automatically diminish the level of delinquency, teenagers would be less likely to give birth to children and everyone's bellies would be less fat? Unnecessarily. The level of stress hormone raises when confronted with social aims that are beyond the reach of an individual (if it was to be realized only in socially accepted, non-deviant way). The problem is not the very existence of the rich but their over-presence and excessive display in media. In order to realize the ideal demands of originators of *Equality*

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[13] Ibidem, p. 237.

Trust, undoubtedly media that present a consumptive lifestyle and promote earning money at all costs as a non-problematic good, ought to be dealt with. Therefore, programs such as MTV *Cribs* (in which celebrities show the viewers around their a few-hundred, extremely expensive mansions and home car parks full of awfully expensive cars) should be eliminated first. A possible explanation for the extreme level of delinquency in the USA is not only the accessibility of gun but also mass media pressure on the promotion of a consumptive lifestyle and presentation of financial success of the celebrities. One should rightly fear if the changes within tax system that may lead to the flattening of income gap will not be followed by changes in axio-normative system functioning in a population or country. After all, the values "managing" behaviors will not change – e.g. in Great Britain – along with equalization of incomes (if such equalization was politically possible).

As we have already pointed out, the Scandinavian tax systems did not come out of nowhere. They are economic effects of specific common values respected in such countries as Sweden, Denmark or Norway. The egalitarian tendencies and manifested in macro-scale "reluctance" to low social coherence and low level of solidarity decided in their case on this particular construction of economic system. Not the other way around. Therefore, the very transformation of a tax system carried out in order to flatten income range will not be much of a help in countries such as Australia, the United States or Portugal. The cultures differ from one another, sometimes diametrically[14]. Plausibly, the underlying reason for all social problems in the developed societies is high income range; nevertheless, it does not mean that this problem can be solved with the use of the same measures everywhere. These are the systems of values that promote and reward particular behaviors. There are such systems and such cultures which traditionally reward individualism, personal achievements, and economic success measured in houses, cars and trips to exotic places. These systems, the effect of hundreds years of development and the influence of specific ideology or religion, are responsible for high income range. Therefore, they – the axionormative systems – have to undergo transformation in order to improve the entire situation. However, there still remain justified fears that even the economic crisis will not switch the Americans to another line of thought.

After making acquainted with the theses by Wilkinson and Pickett, a doubt of a different kind raises: what about social problems that cannot be measured with the use of simple methods? What about *hikikomori* in Japan, which is not noted on the level of statistics? Maybe the Japanese culture, although it is practically a little-diversified society in respect of incomes, is struggling with social problems unidentified

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[14]   G. Hofstede, G.J. Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind,* McGraw-Hill 2004.

by the epidemiologists Wilkinson and Pickett? Maybe the Japanese are a highly-diversified society but not in respect of incomes but culturally and socially? Maybe there are some barriers that cannot be noticed on the level of statistics? Maybe an enormous emphasis put on educational and professional achievements in Japan that generates a substantial number of the excluded (for instance, because of *hikikomori*) is not measured by means of a simple tool such as Gini Coefficient?

The Spirit Level concept has a great power of seduction since it offers relatively simple, supported with truly striking set of statistics, explanation of social problems many countries have been unsuccessfully struggling with. The additional "power of seduction" of the concept comes from the crisis and general belief that it is the result of greed and rapacity of the richest. "The Spirit Level concept" splendidly inscribes in "critical public feelings". However, is this theoretical tool really so infallible and one-hundred-per-cent predictable? Let us look into this matter.

4. Research problem, hypotheses, source of data and method of analysis

In the present case study we concentrate exclusively on the analysis of phenomena hardly signalized in the works by Wilkinson and Pickett, such as trust and social activity. ESS creates the opportunity to examine trust in its various dimensions. We are able to look into the correlations between social inequality measured with the help of Gini Coefficient and the trust of particular nations of Europeans in: 1) their legal system, 2) politicians they vote for, 3) the police and 4) other people. Thanks to ESS, we are also able to familiarize with the relations between social inequality and social activity measured by the participation in associations and organizations.

We concentrate on these matters since Wilkinson and Pickett are generally interested in the phenomena which are, either directly (infant mortality, the percentage of people struggling with mental diseases) or indirectly (teenage pregnancies, the percentage of people residing in penitentiaries), related to public health. It seems interesting if the correlations they noticed are really present in the niches other than health or physical condition of the entire population. Are all the problems social politicians and social workers deal with results of extremely unequal income distribution?

Two hypotheses, both in accordance with the reasoning and findings by Wilkinson and Pickett are to be suggested:

1. The greater the income range in a country, the weaker the trust in legal system, politicians, police and other people.

2. The greater the income range in a country, the smaller the social activity measured by active participation in voluntary associations.

As a part of our analysis, we use widely available ESS data[15]. So far, there have been three ESS' tours – in 2002, 2004 and 2006. In the present work, we focus on the data obtained in 2004. We do that in order to examine the situation long before the economic recession, when all European countries were entering the phase of an economic growth and the answers of the respondents were supposedly not tormented neither by extreme optimism connected with a bull market or extreme pessimism related to the economic crisis we experience nowadays.

Analyzing the correlation between the level of trust in a country and the income gap, Wilkinson and Pickett make use of the data from the European and World Values Survey gathered between 1999 and 2001[16]. Within the frameworks of the research project the respondents are asked to take a stance on the following sentences: "The majority of people can be trusted". Since as a part of ESS, that we use in the present work, the opinions of the respondents were also examined (not only countable facts, such as the number of people in prisons), additionally, the opinions were examined in a much the same way. Using similar questions we assume that the results of our analyses fully cover the results obtained by Wilkinson and Pickett.

The diagnose of income inequality scale in particular countries is carried out with the use of Gini Coefficient. It is a well-known fact that this coefficient indicates income inequalities of a society members. It ought to be interpreted taking into account that the higher the index worth, the greater the inequalities in a country. The value of Gini Coefficient does not illustrate the incomes of people in a country and is not connected with the amount of GDP. The value of Gini Coefficient in the world oscillates between 0.24 and 0.71. As we all know, the worth of 1 (relatively 100) would be possible if only one household would have an income, and the worth of 0 (relatively 00) in the situation when all incomes would be equal.

The research of ESS was implemented in 20 European Union countries: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Spain, Holland, Ireland, Luxemburg, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Hungary and Great Britain. In case of these countries we dispose of both the results of

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[15] R. Jowell and the Central Coordinating Team, *European Social Survey 2006/2007. Technical Report*, London 2007.

[16] R.G. Wilkinson, K.E. Pickett, *The Spirit Level*, op.cit., p. 53.

ESS research and Gini Coefficient measured for the same year, 2004 (*The Social Situation in the European Union* 2008).

In accordance to the theses of Wilkinson and Pickett, we ought to assume that a society of substantial inequalities is at the same time a land of no trust and lack of social activity. In order to conduct the test of the Spirit Level concept, we therefore compare Gini Coefficient with the answers obtained from ESS respondents form the questions related either directly or indirectly to the matter of trust and social activity.

The definitions of trust constructed before emphasize its multidimensional nature and role in social life. Piotr Sztompka and James Coleman draw attention to the fact that trust is a kind of wager made by rational individuals in order to define and foresee unpredictable behaviors of other people[17]. This wager is based on the assumption that another individual in his/her action will either take our good into account[18], or that the actions will be advantageous to us[19]. The basis of trust is good will and positive intentions of the other subject[20], and its real representation – regular, honest, cooperative behaviors of others in accordance with the developed norms[21]. We can therefore trust people, organizations and institutions on the basis of the assumption that they function normally, diligently, in a non-egoistic and well-thought-out manner, in order to avoid acting to our detriment. Such definition of trust establishes the basis of social capital, which in turns constitutes natural building material of social order along with its benefits, originated in virtual communities in which people's trust contributes to the ability to define joint aims and cooperate to realize them.

Common social trust in people and institutions is a foundation of prosperity, stability in the sphere of social relations, social stability through general precautionary measures and acceptance of actions of socially scattered benefits. Trust, as an instrument of positive bond between group members, guarantees coherence of a group[22], whereas as a part of so-called *social cohesion theory* it is treated, next to social bond, identity, loyalty, social engagement and network of relations, as a pen-

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[17] P. Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory,* Cambridge 1999; J. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory,* Cambridge 1990.

[18] N. Lin, *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action,* Cambridge 2001.

[19] B. Misztal, *Trust in Modern Societies,* Cambridge 1996.

[20] A.B. Seligman, *The Problem of Trust,* Princeton–New Jersey 1997; J. Dunn, *Trust and Political Agency* [in:] *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations,* D. Gambetta (ed.), Oxford 1988.

[21] F. Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity,* New York 1995.

[22] J. Moody, D.R. White, *Structural Cohesion and Embeddedness: A Hierarchical Concept of Social Groups*, "American Sociological Review" 2003, No. 68.

etration one another guarantees of high quality of common life, resulting in social coherence[23]. Therefore, trust is connected with social prosperity, which stems from the existence of social coherence. Not without a reason contemporary social policy of the European Union concentrates on preparing the foundations for social coherence[24]. What is important, the path to coherence and prosperity is supposed to be establishing the European society of trust.

The second foundation of a democratic society analyzed next to trust in the present case study is social engagement equated with social activity. The societies of prosperity are usually those whose citizens "take matters in their own hands" and engage in the activity of voluntary associations and organizations of the third sector[25]. We may suspect that the fewer citizens showing social activity, the more social inequalities encountered in a country. On the other hand, the more egalitarian a country, the more citizens have the sense of meaning of personal participation in the creation of common aims and the more often they involve in the activity in voluntary associations. By contrast, in the countries with considerable inequalities, citizens may have the feeling of lack of influence on the course of events. They may suspect that only the rich (meaning people who at the same time own appropriate resources and qualifications, if we use the terminology of Ralph Dahrendorf[26]) influence the course of time, therefore it is no use trying for the sake of common good since the only good worth taking care of is our own and the one of our relatives. The lack of egalitarianism may thus cause loath to engage in the work of associations, voluntary work centers or political parties, which – in the conviction of some – realize only the business of the rich.

5. Trust and social activity versus income range in the light of ESS data

Therefore, do the answers of the respondents gathered as a part of ESS confirm the existence of the relation between income inequality and the declared trust in people and institutions?

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[23] N.E. Friedkin, *Social Cohesion*, "Annual Review of Sociology" 2004, No. 30.

[24] *Growing Regions, Growing Europe*, Fourth Report on Economic and Social Cohesion. European Union 2007.

[25] R. Inglehart, Ch. Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, Cambridge 2005.

[26] R. Dahrendorf, *Modern Social Conflict: An Essay on the Politics of Liberty,* Berkeley and Los Angeles 1989.

The problem of trust in other individuals concerns two questions asked within the framework of ESS. The first, according to the respondents, was taking attitude towards the conviction that "in contacts with other people, never enough caution". The second question in turn was taking attitude towards the thesis that "at any opportunity, the majority of people would like to take advantage of us". We are of the opinion that these are excellent indicators of trust in other individuals. The obtained results are illustrated in Figure 1 and 2.
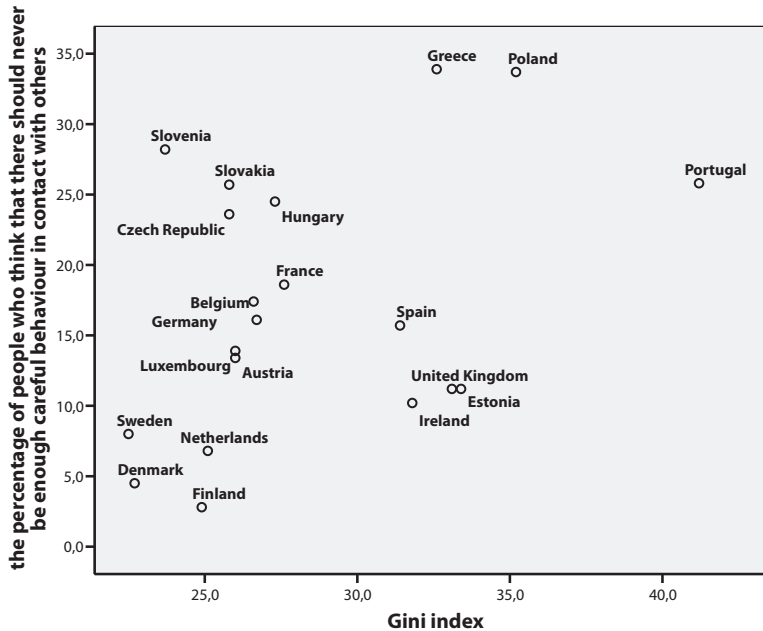
Figure 1. Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people who think there should never be enough careful behaviour in contact with others

The indicator of Pearson's linear correlation for Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring caution in contacts with other people equals r = 0.397 (with bilateral importance p = 0.83). It means that in the researched group of the countries we diagnosed, an average force of relation between important variables, nevertheless, is the relation of no statistic importance, which means that it does not allow generalization.

Apparently, the potential relation between the lack of inequalities and trust exists with reference to the extremely egalitarian countries: Denmark (here, hardly 4.5% of the respondents declare caution in contacts with other people), Finland (2.8), Holland (6.8) and Sweden (8.0) as well as highly stratified countries: Greece

(as much as 33.9% of the respondents declare caution) and Poland (33.7). Nevertheless, it turns out that in egalitarian, in respect of income, post-communist countries – the Czech Republic (23.6), Slovenia (28.2) and Slovakia (25.7) – as well as in Hungary (24.5) of average incomes, almost the same percentage of the respondents declare caution in contacts with other people (in other words, lack of trust) as in the country of extreme inequalities, such as Portugal (25.8).
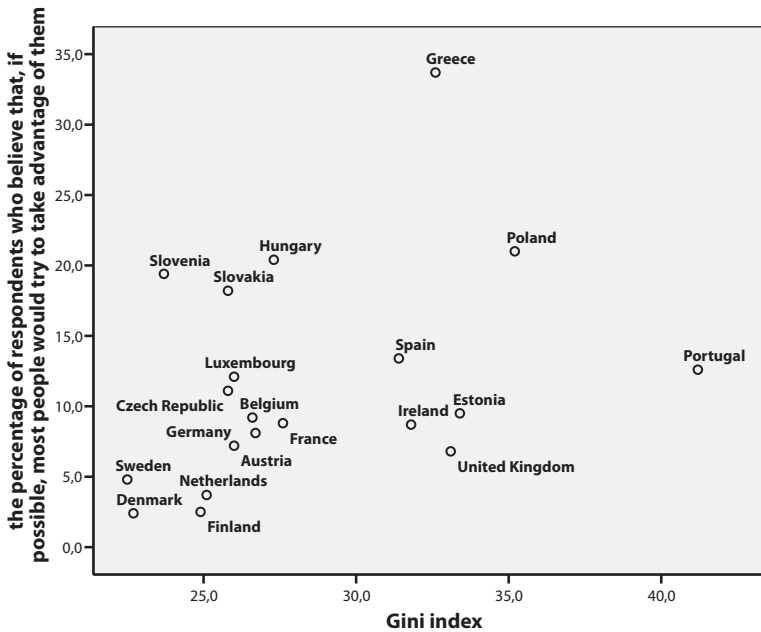
Figure 2. Gini Coefficient and the percentage of respondents who believe that if possible, most people would try to take advantage of them

The indicator of Pearson's linear correlation for Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring the conviction that they might be taken advantage of at any occasion equals $r = 0.344$ (with bilateral importance $p = 0.137$). It means that in the researched group of the countries we diagnosed an average force of relation between important variables, nevertheless, it is a relation of no statistic importance, which means that it does not allow generalization.

Therefore, as far as the second question asked to the respondents as a part of ESS signalizing the level of trust in a country is concerned, the potential relation between inequalities and trust occurs in the extremely egalitarian countries as well as in the strongly stratified ones. Among the analyzed countries, in Denmark and

Finland the lowest number of people are convinced that they would be used by others at any occasion (it is declared by – respectively – only 2.4 and 2.5% of the respondents). On the other hand, we notice that in average stratified in respect of incomes Hungary the respondents show significantly lower dose of honest intentions of other people (as many as 20.4% of the respondents are of the opinion that other people at the earliest opportunity will try to use them) than in similar to Hungary in respect of incomes France (only 8.8% of the French). Hence, the Hungarians who live in a relatively egalitarian country show less trust in other people than the Portuguese who live in a highly diversified country (12.6).

The trust in institutions concerns four questions asked to the respondents as a part of ESS (we will analyze only three of them, resigning from the analysis of the declared trust in the European Parliament). We therefore, in turn, work on the answers for the questions of trust in national parliament, the police and legal system. The results are illustrated in Figures 3, 4 and 5.

Figure 3. Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring trust in national parliament

The indicator of Pearson's linear correlation for Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring trust in parliament equals r = – 0.457 (with bilateral importance p = 0.043). It means that in the researched group of the countries we

diagnosed an average force of relation between important variables. The correlation is statistically important on the level of 0.05 (bilateral).

There is, therefore, a certain statistically important relation between social inequalities and lack of trust in politicians. The trust in national parliament is the highest in Denmark (32.3% of positive declarations of the respondents), Sweden (19.5) and Finland (26.0). The least trust in their representatives in national parliaments have, living in highly stratified countries, the Portuguese (3.7) and Poles (1.9). What is interesting, we observe again a substantial distinctiveness of the post-socialist countries. For instance, a minimally higher level of trust in the parliament than in the egalitarian Czech Republic (3.6) reveal living in highly stratified country the Portuguese (3.7). A comparable lack of trust in politicians is therefore found in almost all post-communist countries we analyzed despite the fact that they significantly differ in terms of income range. Accordingly, we can draw a conclusion that the lack of trust in public institutions in Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic is the heritage of few dozen of years of communing in hostile institutional and bureaucratic environment. Citizens of the post-socialist countries treat parliament similarly to the way they treat the police and legal system.
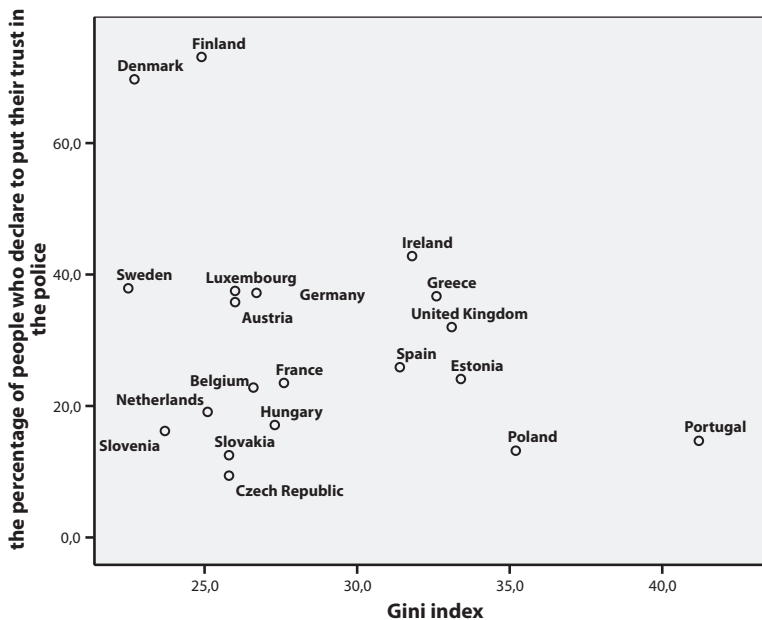
Figure 4. Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring trust in the police

The indicator of Pearson's linear correlation for Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring trust in the police equals r = 0.319 (with bilateral importance p = 0.170). It means that in the researched group of the countries we diagnosed an average force of relation between important variables, nevertheless, it is a relation of no statistic importance.

The police enjoy the biggest trust in egalitarian Finland (73.1% of positive declarations revealing trust) and Denmark (68.7). Interestingly enough, the countries of the most significant income inequalities located on the opposite side of the figure, which are Poland (13.2) and Portugal (14.7), are characterized by a slightly higher level of trust in the police than the egalitarian Czech Republic (9.4). Nevertheless, the strong separateness of the post-communist countries is emphasized again, which undoubtedly disturbs the correlation between trust and inequality. As a result, we can rightly suppose that after the exclusion of the post-communist countries, the correlations would be considerably stronger and additionally statistically important, which assumption is supported by the analysis of trust in legal system.
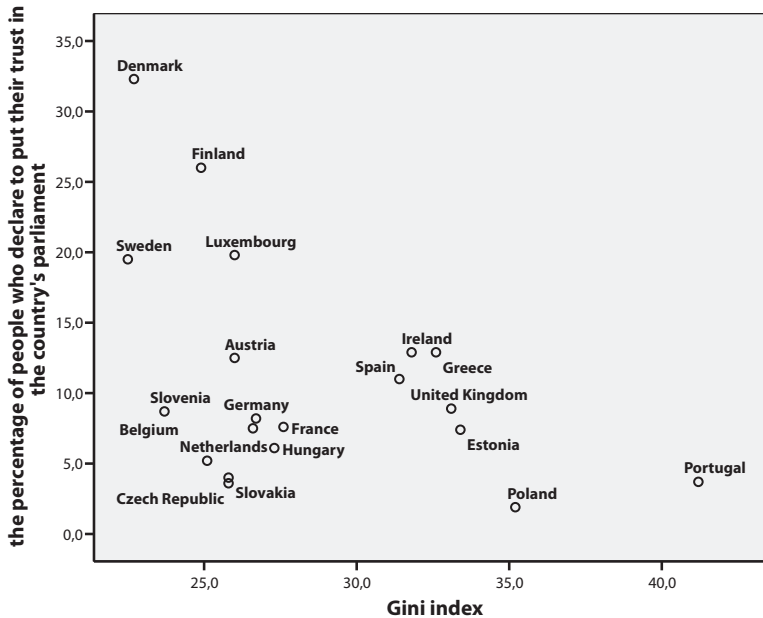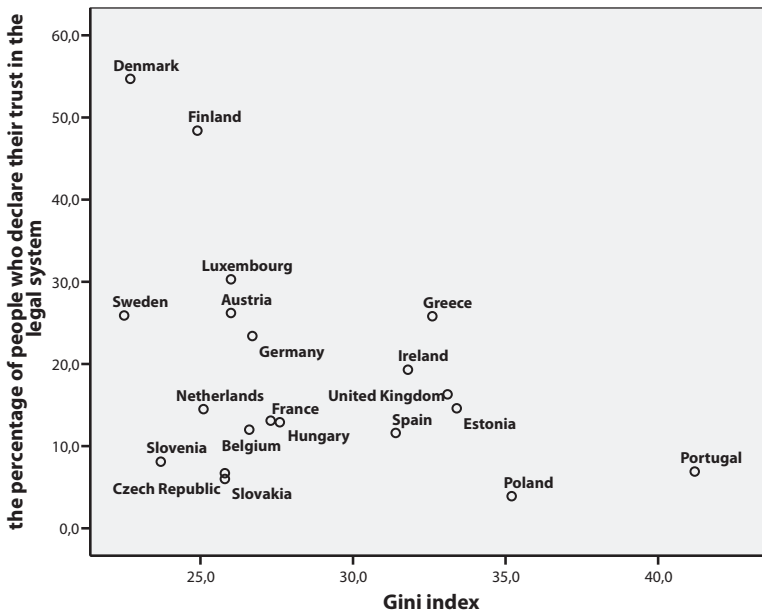

Figure 5. Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring trust in legal system

The indicator of Pearson's linear correlation for Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring trust in legal system equals r = – 0.427 (with bilateral importance p = 0.60). It means that in the researched group of the countries we diagnosed an average force of relation between important variables, nevertheless, it is a relation of no statistic importance.

Similarly to the previous analysis, the elements that stand out are the "boundaries" of the figure – the most and the least egalitarian countries. The legal system enjoys the greatest level of trust in egalitarian Denmark (54.7% of the respondents declared their trust) and Finland (48.4). Living in strongly stratified country Poles reveal the least level of trust in legal system (only s much as 3.9). What is important, as far as the question of trust in legal system is concerned, post-communist but egalitarian Czechs (6.7) are minimally inferior to extremely stratified Portuguese (6.9).

The level of social engagement examines as a part of ESS the question of participation of the respondents in the works of associations and social organizations within the last 12 months. The results of the survey are presented in Figure 6.
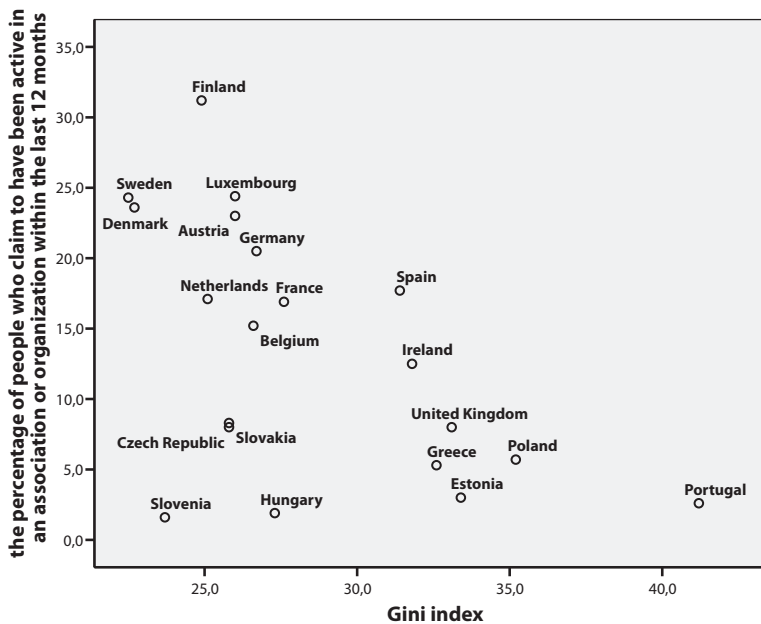
Figure 6. Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people who declare to have been active
in an association or organization within the last 12 months

The indicator of Pearson's linear correlation for Gini Coefficient and the percentage of people declaring social activity measured by participation in voluntary works of associations within the last 12 months equals r = − 0.557 (with bilateral importance p = 0.011). It means that in the researched group of the countries we diagnosed a clear force of relation between important variables. The correlation is bilaterally important on the level of 0.05.

It turns out that even though strong correlation between trust and social inequalities diagnosed by Wilkinson and Pickett is not confirmed in our analyses, there is a clear relation between the level of income stratification and social activity (which the authors of the Spirit Level concept were not occupied with). In this competition, the egalitarian countries definitely win, such as Finland (31.2% of the respondents declaring activity in either associations or social organizations), Sweden (24.3) and Denmark (23.6). The Czech Republic, a country almost as egalitarian as Finland, falls far behind (hardly 8%), as far as the matter of the citizens' engagement in social activity is concerned. What is important, the citizens of "a middle" of income range, Hungary (1.9) are less socially active than the citizens of extremely stratified countries – Poland (5.7) and Portugal (2.6). Despite these differences, the distinctiveness of the post-communist countries again stands out. Letting along the differences in the level of egalitarianism, Poland, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia can be ranked among the countries the citizens of which are not particularly active, in which competition only the citizens of strongly stratified countries – Greece and Portugal, are able to keep pace with.

6. Discussion

Do the presented data allow to demonstrate a linear, unquestionable relation between income inequalities in a country and the level of the declared trust in people and institutions? Our answer is: rather not.

As far as trust is concerned, it seems justifiable to claim that it ought to be treated as one of the conditions leading to (not resulting from) egalitarian income distribution, however, the very condition is definitely not enough. The highest level of trust in people, as well as in institutions, is observed among the citizens of the egalitarian countries, Scandinavian in particular. In these countries, on the basis of historical experiences, the politics of promotion of individual and intuitional credibility was built, so teaching and motivating to joint responsibility. The trust in these countries grew throughout the long process of establishing commu-

nity thinking and actions, which along with many other factors (mentioned before) translated into widespread (not concentrated) prosperity.

In the case of the post-communist countries, regardless the value of Gini Coefficient, the statement on the influence of communism on the level of trust seems justifiable. A low level of trust results from the inherited in the course of contemporary history distrust in the state and the instilled by apparatus of communist power lack of confidence in other individuals. In the search for common motifs, and at the same time relating to the towers of trust suggested by Piotr Sztompka[27], the historical experiences of post-communist countries determine present relations as well as – naturally – the widespread personal "closed to trust" constructions. According to Sztompka, trust is based on the relations and on the act of the assessment of other person's credibility. The second tower is personality, meaning practical psychological tendency of the individuals to trust on the basis of own experiences. The last foundations of trust in social life are cultural rules, which are a historically accumulated record of collective experiences of a society. It means that among these three components of trust, historical experiences have the function of key importance. They constitute background for potential patterns of the relations between individuals and the relations between individuals and institutions, as well as widespread individualistic patterns of trust or distrust.

Therefore, the egalitarianism in the Czech Republic does not grow on trust, as well as a relatively high level of trust in republican (solidary) France, it does not translate into a flattened social structure. The greater doze of egalitarianism in Hungary towards Portugal is not based on higher level of trust in other people and institutions – the ESS data contradict this possibility. Even thought it is easy to imagine that the similarity of incomes translates into the relations between people based on trust in someone who does not "stand out" from me in the sphere of material affluence and that such situation creates widespread individualistic attitudes based on trust, the data presented in the hereby case study do not allow indicating the lack of inequalities as the source of prevalent distrust among people and distrust in institutions. One of the key factors seems to be political and economic history with the results for psychological and social sphere. It may lead to inequalities with respect of incomes as well as generate the foundations of social trust.

Therefore, undoubtedly, the post-socialist countries, due to their historical distinctiveness and its present effects, definitely disturb the relation between Gini Coefficient and trust in the European Union countries. But for these historical experiences resulting in the lack of trust in parliaments, the police and courts, the

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[27] P. Sztompka, op.cit.

correlation on European scale would be more visible and the Spirit Level concept could be confirmed.

It turns out that historical circumstances do not disturb clear correlation between income range and social activity. One can rightly claim that the highest the level of egalitarianism in a EU country, the weaker the wish of its citizens to participate in social life on the level of voluntary associations and organizations. Despite ascertaining this general relation, it is important to add that the heritage of communist system present 20 years ago in each of the analyzed countries of the Central-Eastern Europe, is the lack of engagement in the work of associations and social organizations, a peculiar loather to the activity of this kind which the egalitarian Czechs and extremely stratified Poles may still associate with political engagement. In each of these countries, in the times of real socialism, rich social traditions, which are not in the course of reconstruction, were suspended. Additionally, the lack of interest in social activity in strongly stratified countries of historical experiences completely different from the ones of Poles, also in Portugal, can be explained by "detention" of the catholic cultures within family sub-world (which is strongly connected with the lack of trust in everyone outside the family).

7. Conclusion

Although some correlation between the increasing social inequality measured by Gini Coefficient and diminishing trust (especially in Scandinavian countries, which are extreme with respect of income distribution, and – on the other hand – in Portugal) is noticeable, the historical circumstances and values respected in some countries decide on ponderable exceptions from the rule discovered by Wilkinson and Pickett. Despite the fact that it is generally possible to foresee the level of trust in a country on the basis of knowledge on its egalitarianism or stratification, the historical factors that disturb the mechanism developed by Wilkinson and Pickett have to be taken into account. What is interesting, the lack of social activity and participation in associations is considerably correlated with the scale of egalitarianism/stratification in all the EU countries we analyzed. Notwithstanding the ascertainment of these correlations, there is a justified fear that establishing an egalitarian country through flattening income range does not necessarily have to have the function of the stimulator of trust and civil activity. The values and rules of a social game respected in a society ought to undergo certain changes, as well, and this is never easy. The subtitle of Wilkinson and Pickett's book is *Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*. Our case study emphasizes just one of these words – *almost*.

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SUMMARY

This article attempts to verify the findings by Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate E. Pickett (2009) which suggest a strong correlation between the inequality of income distribution and the citizens' life quality. According to Wilkinson and Pickett's thesis, here referred to as "the Spirit Level concept", all social problems (ranging from drug abuse, obesity to the closed channels of social mobility) are directly connected with the scale of social inequality in a country. The greater the income range is, the more intense the social dysfunctions are. In the present paper we challenge this thesis using the data of the European Social Survey. The Spirit Level concept is proved with reference to two phenomena which are essential to the functioning of societies – trust (in other people, the legal system, institutions and the police) and social activity (assessed on the basis of organizational activity). This concept has been tested in 20 countries of the European Union. Questioning the universal dimension of the Spirit Level concept, we demonstrate that although there is some correlation between the increase in inequality and the decline in trust (especially in the countries at the extreme ends of the income scale), historical context and moral values of countries determine significant exceptions to the principle by Wilkinson and Picket.

Nevertheless, an evident correlation between the degree of social stratification and social activity is to be observed. The less egalitarian a country is, the weaker the willingness to actively participate in voluntary organizations.

Key words:

The Spirit Level concept, income range, income gap, inequality, trust, social activity

Christian Giordano

RETHINKING THE NOTION OF CULTURE: THE ROLE OF PREFIXES

1. Introduction: the *classical* notion of culture

In 1871, evolution theorist Edward Burnett Tylor published *Primitive Culture*, which, despite legitimate or far too trenchant criticisms, was his work with the strongest impact on social sciences in general and on anthropology. The author had probably not foreseen that the notion of culture he introduces on the very first page of the book would become so renowned and would influence entire schools and generations of scholars directly or indirectly for over one hundred years. Amongst these, we need only mention Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Alfred Kroeber, Ralph Linton, Clyde Kluckhohn, George Peter Murdock, Bronislaw Malinowski, Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Browne, Edward Evans-Pritchard, Max Gluckman, Edmund Leach, Richard Thurnwald, Claude Lévi-Strauss, as well as Clifford Geertz, despite his very specific standing compared to the above-mentioned authors. Anglo-Saxon evolutionists or British functionalists, American relativists or diffusionists, as well as French structuralists or German ethnosociologists, and finally even representatives of interpretive anthropology (or hermeneutics, whichever you prefer) and postmodern currents could not disregard this fundamental concept of culture.

Given the remarkable success of this definition, it deserves being quoted verbatim as stated by our author of evolutionist derivation. In fact, with admirable clarity and a fair amount of courageous spontaneity (actually, naiveté) that connotes the neophyte, Tylor wrote:

> Culture or civilization… is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society[1].

As known, a veritable proliferation of re-elaborations, revisions, corrections, differentiations, and broadenings of the notion of culture arose in Tylor's wake. In fact, when US anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn, in 1952, tried to make a general appraisal of the debate in their country, they were faced by an impressive number of assorted definitions – i.e. over one hundred[2] – which, with some difficulty and artifice, they classified into six categories: descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural, and genetic concepts. Despite the methodological muddle that would account for the disparaging terms *culturalism* and *cultural determinism*, there are at least two elements highlighted by Tylor, which, up to some decades ago, most authors constantly took up implicitly or explicitly.

Firstly, there is the consensual assumption of a *psychic unity of mankind*, therefore that man, being a member of a collectivity, acquires culture through socialization, acculturation, or enculturation processes. In the second place, we ought to mention the widespread belief that culture is a complex whole in which the various elements form an organism or a well integrated and equally well-regulated system. Thus, each culture has its own internal coherence. However, due to this second aspect, we implicitly end up devising a specific representation of culture in which cultural systems are harmonious and conflict-free wholes, but likewise barely dynamic or actually static.

2. From complex culture to cultural complexity

These two aspects of the notion of culture, which stem from Tylor's and his successors' considerations, were fiercely challenged in the 1980s, thus calling in question the full legitimacy of the term. Due to these somewhat legitimate harsh criticisms, the concept of culture adopted by anthropologists more or less by common consent for over a century reached a crucial stage. Some authors, particularly those characterized by a radical *anticulturalism,* even came to the point of doubting the purpose of the notion of culture, demanding its eviction from the conceptual pan-

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[1] E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*, London 1871.

[2] A. Barnard, *History and Theory in Anthropology*, Cambridge 2000, p. 102.

theon of anthropology. After more than a century, according to these critics, the old banner of the discipline, its proud emblem, was obsolete and must be replaced by new representations, more compatible with current reality.

In this article, we will not discuss the epistemological pros and cons, or the sense and non-sense of this course of action. The deconstruction of the notion of culture, carried out especially by critics with a postmodern background, was undoubtedly a predictable result and certainly had a stimulating effect on the discipline. However, in the main it was carried out with such an iconoclast fury and such radicalism that it lost most of its credibility. In brief, we could say that this critical reflection on the classic concept of culture is an integral part of the so-called general crisis of representations brought on especially by postmodernism, which concerns most social sciences to some extent and anthropology in particular[3]. Consequently, we will delve into what we believe are the more pertinent critical arguments, leaving aside the less substantial and less relevant ones.

The first legitimate objection to classic definitions of culture in the 1980s was to have turned man into a sort of robot who, via specific types of learning, complies with norms and cultural models prescribed by society. However, we must highlight that actually some minority sociological and anthropological currents had expressed this criticism far before the so-called *postmodern turning-point*. In the symbolic interactionism of Herbert Blumer[4] and Howard Becker[5], or in the ethnomethodology of Harold Garfinkel[6] and Aaron Cicourel[7], as well as the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz[8] and the seminal theoretic suggestions of Erving Goffman[9] we could already perceive analogous objections aimed then at the most markedly *scientist* currents. Critics at that time rightfully stressed that the *classic* concepts of society and culture were influenced by a certain amount of determinism and that people, as members of a social group, were not merely passive consumers of culture, but were actually its makers and builders. Consequently, man had to be studied both as an *author* and as an *actor*, taking care not to reify culture by regarding it as an objective, unchanging, and nearly ineluctable reality. In this case, the postmodern turning-point in anthropology admittedly

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[3]　*Writing Culture*, J. Clifford, G.E. Marcus (eds.), Berkeley 1987.

[4]　H. Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism. Perspective and Metho*d, Englewood Cliffs 1969.

[5]　H. Becker, *Outsiders. Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, New York 1963.

[6]　H. Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Englewood Cliffs N.J. 1967.

[7]　A. Cicourel, *Method and Measurement in Sociology*, New York 1964.

[8]　C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York 1973.

[9]　E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, New York 1959; idem, *Stigma*, Englewood Cliffs N.J. 1963; idem, *Interaction Ritual*, New York 1967.

followed in the footsteps of contiguous disciplines, since the criticism regarding *culturalism* has at least some points in common with the one on *sociologism* by Émile Durkheim and his countless disciples and followers.

Yet, from a contemporary viewpoint the second objection has a far greater epistemological interest and methodological relevance. From the experience of the tortuous historical and sociocultural processes induced by the long-term expansion of the *world-system* (analyzed with masterly skill by US sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein and French historian Fernand Braudel)[10], the rise of techno-economic globalization, and the expansion of international migratory movements, critics stressed that at this point the idea of culture as a *complex whole* had become untenable. The idea of culture as a coherent, organic, and well integrated whole proved obsolete due precisely to the previously mentioned deep macrosociological changes. As Hans-Rudolf Wicker aptly stated, if classic authors spoke about *complex culture*, reasoning in terms of *cultural complexity* is certainly more appropriate these days[11]. This fitting formula underscores that nowadays analyzing a culture as a fixed and isolated entity would be quite pointless. However, we should add that probably this does not regard *late* or *reflexive modernity* societies alone[12].

Most likely, the *classic* concept of culture is unsuitable even to analyze the so-called *primitive societies*. Even the latter in the end were not so isolated or so far apart from each other as most monographic anthropological studies imply instead. To avoid this misleading perspective, with a truly pioneering spirit German ethnosociologist Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann in the 1950s had already suggested and spread an idea of anthropology as being a sociological theory on interethnic systems[13]. If, more generally, we observe complex societies of the past, we should mention the extremely dynamic cultural complexity of the great empires, from ancient to more modern ones, such as the British colonial empire, or the *Vielvölkerstaaten* of Central-East Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East. Therefore, we can determine that these examples from the distant and recent past clearly prove that the classic concept of culture is questionable not only for late or reflexive

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[10] I. Wallerstein, *The Modern-World System. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York 1974; F. Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle, économie, et capitalisme, XVe – XVIIe siècle. Le temps du monde*, Paris 1979.

[11] H.-R. Wicker, *From Complex Culture to Cultural Complexity* [in:] *Debating Cultural Hybridity, Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, P. Werbner, T. Moodood (eds.), London 1997.

[12] U. Beck, A. Giddens, S. Lash, *Reflexive Modernisierung. Eine Kontroverse*, Frankfurt am Main 1996.

[13] W.E. Mühlmann, *Ethnologie als Soziologie interethnischer Systeme*, "Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie" 1956, No. 8, p. 188.

modernity complex societies, as stressed by several authors, but also for premodernity ones, and maybe for ancient ones as well.

We can reasonably assume that, deliberately or not, the classic notion of culture was influenced by ideas such as nation or national State, prevalent in the 19th and 20th centuries, known to be based on the presumed invariability of belonging and identity, along with the myth of cultural homogeneity and/or ethnic purity within a given territory. Consequently, the ideology of nation and national State seems to have crept into the concept of culture, strongly influencing it.

A shift from the analysis of *complex cultures* to *cultural complexity* implies above all regarding culture as something changeable, processual, and relational created by individuals and collectivity through permanent interactions, transactions, negotiations, mutual exchanges, tensions, as well as conflicts, even tragic and very grievous ones. Studying *cultural complexity* means correlating culturally defined differences without challenging the undeniable boundaries that social groups themselves imagine, build, and then consolidate via aimed processes of essentialization. However, this is clearly one of the main shortcomings of anthropological constructivism; it persists in not taking into account that the collectivities and individuals themselves bring about and therefore determine essentialist processes.

From these reflections, we can draw the following two conclusions.

At present, examining sociocultural realities by focusing on a specific community, which is bound to be enclosed or encapsulated within a more extensive society, is methodologically misleading and counterproductive. A specifically monographic approach to the study of a religious, linguistic, or ethnic minority, of a territorial or immigrated collectivity, of a majority titular nation within a State, seems inadequate. We should be aware that members of these *culturally imagined communities*[14] in fact must invariably interact permanently and confront daily with individuals belonging to groups with analogous characteristics. Therefore, we must also bring to light the new and incessant revisions and changes of these collectivities' boundaries and identity scenarios.

From this point of view therefore, we can no longer minimize or, worse still, deny the considerable relevance of sociological perspective in the analysis of cultural phenomena. The fact that culture is an essential social and political resource, which can be individually or collectively molded and manipulated especially by a society's élites, has been repeatedly overlooked. The flaw of *cultural studies*, much in vogue these days, is to have disregarded, and at times even contemptuously ig-

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[14] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spreads of Nationalism*, New York 1983.

nored the sociological, political science, and psychological aspects of cultural phenomena.

These are the main reasons why the term *culture* can no longer be used *tout court*. This does not imply that social sciences and anthropology in particular have had to discard one of their key notions, which, moreover, has strongly contributed to the making of these disciplines. The exact opposite holds true instead; with proper precautions and appropriate discernment, the concept of culture is still quite sound.

To avoid the somewhat legitimate criticisms of *culturalism*, *essentialism*, *reification* and more, and to comply with new methodological approaches, we have had to put to use what I consider a clever and effective stratagem. The artifice is to use specific prefixes, which, however, have caused perplexities, some confusion, and some communication breakdowns among insiders. In fact, notions such as *multiculturalism*, *intercultural communication*, and *transnational relations* (meaning, clearly, transcultural ties) are being used in place of the term culture far more frequently nowadays. The prefixes *multi-*, *inter-*, and *trans* – share obvious similarities as well as subtle distinct connotations that are not always immediately perceptible. Lately, these slight but significant differences have inflamed the debate on cultural phenomena.

We should also point out that the three above-mentioned prefixes have helped and still help to shape notions used in a descriptive and therefore analytical context, as well as in a prescriptive thus normative one. However, the gap between *what is* and *what should be* is not clearly defined; therefore, as Max Weber would say, we are confronted by a puzzling and, at times, discouraging mix of scientific-based interpretation and valuational reasoning, if not by a blatant value judgment[15]. Consequently, scientific analysis mingles murkily with political programs, on top of which there are more or less outright utopian visions, and thus barely covert ideological connotations. Although this will complicate our analysis, we will try to unravel the conceptual tangle brought on by the crisis of the representation of culture.

3. The meanings of *multi*

The prefix *multi*, as in the word *multiculturalism*, actually tends to stress the importance of cultural differences as well as their related boundaries. Consequently, it often highlights the sharp separation between ethnocultural collectivities. This

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[15] M. Weber, *Soziologie, weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen, Politik*, Stuttgart 1968, p. 197.

application of the prefix is more relativist, communitarian, and at times segregative besides having a more cumulative and less relational aspect than the other two[16]. It is not surprising that *multi* is used by researchers, politicians, and intellectuals who are identity producers in countries where cultural difference is a given and pragmatically regarded as such (United Kingdom), or turned into a cult (United States, Canada and Australia).

Let's look into some examples. In Germany, after a period of widespread renown between the 70s and 90s of the past century, the prefix *multi* has lost most of its credit. At present, *multi* has even taken on a negative aspect, especially if used in a descriptive and a prescriptive way to typify migratory processes. Probably this present day negative connotation is due to what may be regarded as the various experimentations of that sociocultural project that we could term *MultiKulti*, which, despite its worthy intent, was marked by chaotic amateurishness. Consequently, it jeopardized *a priori* any future or more serious political concept of multiculturalism in the Federal Republic of Germany. The so-called *MultiKulti*, based on a hazy idea of harmonious and spontaneous coexistence, was doomed precisely because of the inaccuracy and naivete in which it was rooted[17]. As a result, in Germany the prefix *multi* ends up evoking the dread of *parallel societies*, i.e. hermetically sealed ethnic and/or national communities living on the same territory, though hardly ever meeting one another. Such a scenario is regarded as a social calamity that, rightly or not, awakens the ghosts of a not too distant ominous past.

In Switzerland instead, which has had a radically different history, *multi* has a far better standing in scientific, political, and everyday environments. Its national society's collective and political virtues, such as cultural diversity, linguistic and religious tolerance, stability, based on common consent and agreement, etc. are conceptualized but also perceived as *multi*. In fact, Switzerland explicitly defines itself as a multicultural State, as clearly revealed at the Confederation's jubilee for the 500 years of its establishment in 1991. On this occasion, multiculturality as being historically grounded in Swiss society and multiculturalism as a political strategy were demonstratively staged and widely celebrated. Switzerland, therefore, is an imagined community, with a historically defined multiculturalism constitutionally established and acknowledged since 1848. In Switzerland's case, we can

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[16] Ch. Taylor, *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"*, Princeton N.J. 1992; A.-J., Akkari, *Le multiculturalisme critique* [in:] *Multikulturalismus und Multilinguismus. Ein Symposium*, Ch. Giordano, J.-L. Patry (eds.), Fribourg 2002.

[17] K. Leggewie, *MultiKulti. Spielregeln für die Vielvölkerrebublik*, Berlin 1991; D. Cohn-Bendit, T. Schmid, *Heimat Babylon: Das Wagnis der multikulturellen Demokratie*, Hamburg 1992.

truly say it has a constitutional multiculturalism based on the representation that the Swiss – and thus the country itself – have four separate *Völkerschaften*[18]. Swiss society is both aware and very proud of its cultural differences, legally acknowledged and defined by the so-called territorial principle; diversity among the *Völkerschaften* is accurately encouraged and proudly displayed. Will Kymlicka, certainly one of the most qualified theorists of the liberal politics of multiculturalism, is probably right when he states that the Swiss develop a feeling of loyalty towards their confederate State exactly because it guarantees ample rights to diversity and acknowledges explicit linguistic and religious cultural boundaries[19]. Swiss patriotism, and the ensuing feeling of unity within society, can certainly be traced back to the centuries-old *policy of difference;* if not, the country's remarkably lasting continuity would have been impossible. Switzerland, according to the paradoxical formula of historian and politician Georges-André Chevallaz, should be regarded as a *coalition of opposite strengths* and would not have lasted this long without acknowledging cultural diversity within its political system[20]. However, in Switzerland this implied the rise of political practices specifically based on *power sharing* among the various *Völkerschaften* communities; thus, on the idea of *consociational democracy*, as meant by Dutch political scientist Arend Lijphart[21]. Such a concept of politics also means that the *classic* model of liberal democracy cannot be adopted *tout court*. It must be modified and sometimes nearly distorted to accommodate written or unwritten political rules, like the broad federal coalition called the *magic formula*, that heed the balance of powers among the *Völkerschaften*, and ultimately aim at curtailing the asymmetries between majority and minority, or, more specifically, the disparity between titular nation and minority groups.

Yet, *multi* is extremely popular even in the post-colonial societies that emerged from the *plural societies* pursued and imposed by the British and Dutch empires[22]. In this context of enormously diversified ethnic groups, nationalities, and cultures assembled in a single state, a national ideology based on *multi* seems to be the basic requirement to justify discourses aimed at legitimizing cultural (as well as social) differences in the public sphere. Within this system of sometimes parallel

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[18] U. Altermatt, *Sprache und Nation*, Fribourg 1997; Ch. Giordano, *"Liberi e Svizzeri". L'identité tessinoise ou la production sociale de la dialectique*, "Ethnologie Française" 2002, XXXII, No. 2, pp. 295–296.

[19] W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship. A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford 1995, p. 13.

[20] H. Lüthy, *Wozu Geschichte?*, Zürich 1969; A. Reszler, *Mythes et identites de la Suisse*, Genève 1986, p. 70.

[21] A. Lijphart, *Consociational Democracy*, "World Politics" 1969.

[22] J.S. Furnivall, *Netherland's India. A Study of Plural Economy*, Cambridge 1939.

but usually socially and economically juxtaposed majorities and minorities in a single state – as the classic examples of Trinidad and Tobago, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Mauritius show – it is not surprising that ethnocultural differences are demonstratively enacted under the banner of *multi*. Thus, the prefix *multi* becomes a crucial component of diversity that is emphasized and celebrated through various types of manifestations in Malaysia, such as national celebrations, regional or local multicultural rituals, folklore festivals, etc., whose end is to strengthen the somewhat unsteady social balance and maintain political *status quo*. Even in these *multi* postcolonial contexts that emerged from *plural societies*, the classic rules of democracy have a finite relevance and work only through adapted government practices established by custom or legally defined[23]. As the example of Malaysia reveals, cooperation among the nation's various ethnic components in the public sphere and thus a relatively democratic course as well, are guaranteed by a sweeping coalition of ethnic parties (*Nasional Barisan*), and, above all, by charismatic leaders (as the three prime ministers who have led Malaysia since its independence) who can authoritatively undertake the role of *great mediator* among the various ethnic communities more or less willingly *condemned* to live side by side.

The purpose of *agreement* and *magic formula* in Switzerland, and *Nasional Barisan* and *great mediators* in Malaysia is to forestall and take the edge off dangerous tensions that might arise from a political contest based entirely on the dispute between majority and opposition in these two professedly *multi* societies.

4. The meanings of *inter*

Both in a descriptive and a normative sphere, the prefix *inter* instead presupposes a more universalist view and a more voluntarist leaning. For this reason, it is often used, rightly or not, opposed to *multi*[24]. In fact, the prefix *inter* nearly always declares a disagreement with the idea of culture as a *complex whole*, i.e. as an *iron cage* from which virtually captive individuals cannot escape. The advocates of *inter* regard the prefix *multi* as being too *isolationist* and *segregationist*. *Inter* instead is regarded as a term expressing integration, dialogue: in other words, communication between cultures and not separation.

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[23] *The Politics of Multiculturalism. Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia*, R. Hefner (ed.), Honolulu 2001, p. 4.

[24] A.-J. Akkari, *Le multiculturalisme critique* [in:] *Multikulturalismus und Multilinguismus. Ein Symposium*, Ch. Giordano, J.-L. Patry (eds.), Fribourg 2002.

Therefore, with *inter* the meeting and interaction of cultures take on a distinctly more dynamic and relational aspect and using this prefix highlights the ability of each individual to define, shape, and negotiate (to some extent) his/her belonging and cultural identity. In the terms using *inter*, we can obviously perceive a more liberal and sometimes Jacobinic spirit pervaded by a civic republicanism, which ultimately postulates normative models of cultural integration and not of separation between majorities and minorities. It would seem almost banal but not pointless to observe that the prefix *inter* is more congenial to the French-speaking world, which is more steeped in the values of the Revolution of 1789. The advocates of *inter*, especially the French-speaking ones, look upon *multi* as a dubious expedient of Anglo-Saxon origin, chiefly from the United States.

The idea of *interculturalité*, frequently found in Francophone science of education and socio-linguistics, is a sociologically relevant fact that not only challenges the *multi* point of view, but also the *assimilation* political doctrine, which still characterizes the French national State's structure and is the basic guideline to grant French citizenship to a foreigner. Above all *assimilation* implies the gradual absorption of an individual from a supposedly alien group (such as regional cultures during the nineteenth century or immigrants over the last fifty years) within the French society[25]. For example, Eugene Weber in his book *Peasants into Frenchmen* aptly showed how France pursued a firm and often repressive assimilation policy between 1870 and 1914, which blotted out many local diversities[26]. The person being assimilated achieves this crossing from one culture to another ideally by learning and accepting those values, norms, and customs regarded as essential virtues and unquestionable framework by the national community. Therefore, *assimilation* also implies a radical change of one's feeling of belonging, besides the identity change. The notion of *interculturalité* challenges this model of the foreigner's absorption while stressing the preservation of cultural differences within a strongly integrated community of citizens, which in itself is considered the mainstay of the republican *Etat-Nation*, one and undivided. Consider, however, that the most popular as well as the politically most effective metaphor of *interculturalité* has been the national soccer team, which won the World Cup. It was and still is presented as a collective in which players/actors, despite their clear cultural differences, understand each other perfectly and fight together to honor the tricolor flag. With the *interculturalité* model, individuals, though culturally very di-

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[25] D. Schnapper, *La France de l'intégration. Sociologie de la nation en 1990*, Paris 1991.

[26] E. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914*, Stanford CA 1976.

verse, develop a shared feeling of loyalty towards the French State. This attitude has a remarkable correspondence with the *constitutional patriotism* strongly called out for by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas[27].

5. The meanings of *trans*

Finally, those who operate with the prefix *trans* generally opt for an explicitly voluntarist standing often implying utopian contents by which a human being can be above and beyond his surrounding society that tries to lock him up within rigid norms, pre-established identities, and ineluctable behavior models. In the end, the possibility of free choice is expressed via *trans*. *Trans* concepts, which are often optimistic outcomes of the past twenty years' debate on globalization, stress the importance of individuality, and are consequently characterized by a radical individualism that allows the person to act nearly without collective or social restrictions. The implicit idea of the prefix *trans* could be condensed by the postmodern formula by which the road to *everything goes* is laid open to man. Adjectives such as *transcultural* or *transnational* are used mainly to suggest the capability, most often personal but occasionally even collective, to go beyond cultural boundaries and national frontiers and fluctuate very freely among belongings and identities.

Thus, an individual can decide which connection or tie to have with a social group, and more specifically, with an ethnic or cultural community. If the prefix *multi* anchors people to a given group, *trans* expresses skepticism towards the efficiency of traditions and cultural boundaries while stressing the importance of belonging to one or more changeable and freely chosen collectivities instead. Therefore, social models pertaining to the prefix *trans* stress the existence of multiple affiliations that lead to hybrid identities. The latter should be understood as postethnic, postcultural, and finally postnational. This position stems from the far too optimistic hypothesis that globalization produced an epochal rift – which I believe can hardly be empirically proven, particularly after 9/11 – that, moreover, has clearly undermined national States' sovereignty and role. Within this globalized context, societies are heading for a worldwide ecumene in which individuals, with by now nomadic identities, live and interact in utter freedom within cosmopolitan environments, i.e. the so-called *ethnoscapes*[28].

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[27] J. Habermas, *Anerkennungskämpfe im demokratischen Rechtsstaat* [in:] Ch. Taylor, *Multikulturalismus und die Politik der Anerkennung*, Frankfurt am Main 1992.

[28] A. Appadurai, *Global Ethnoscapes. Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology* [in:]

Probably this feeling of free will, autonomy, individual emancipation and crea-
tivity, besides the implicit progressiveness of this prefix, is appealing and causes its
present high standing. At this point, we ought to seriously examine whether or not
this fascinating and optimistic outlook, which we could paradoxically and a bit
polemically label as anarcho-liberal, is suitable for all individuals or only to analyze
specific people belonging to microscopic groups with very high economic standings
and social status, such as specific migrant élites (German managers in Tokyo, US
businessmen in the Middle East, Indian computer specialists in Silicon Valley,
wealthy vacationers in Tuscany, or eco-alternative intellectual communities in Pro-
vence, etc.). Generalizing this specific aspect of cultural complexity to global soci-
ety, perhaps with a normative framework as well, would be tantamount to undertak-
ing a new dangerous reification of a utopian vision, i.e. universal hybridism.

Actually, we ought to highlight that some social sciences researchers who have
employed the prefix *trans* have shown us a less utopian and less deceptive reality.
Researches on transmigrants, as those presented in the studies by Nina Glick-
Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, reveal how these individuals live
in two worlds at the same time via their transnational relations and maintain bi-
lateral sociocultural reference models[29]. From these studies, we can assume that
sociocultural dynamics and identity and belonging changes are not as much at the
individual's discretion after all, as the more radical representatives of theoretic
concepts based on the *trans* idea would have us believe instead. However, at this
point, we ought to consider whether there still is a true semantic difference be-
tween *trans* and *inter*.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the crisis of the classic notion of culture along with the advent of
the prefixes *multi*, *inter*, and *trans*, reveals that there is no single model of *cultural
complexity*, neither at a descriptive nor at a normative level. Besides, this means
that to believe one prefix would be more descriptively *adequate* or normatively
correct than the other would be deceptive. Therefore, the idea of one of these pre-
fixes' preeminence is fundamentally misleading, while arguing over one of these
prefixes' supremacy in social sciences is unsavory and frankly seems quite uncalled

Recapturing Anthropology. Working in the Present, R.G. Fox (ed.), (American Research) 1991; A. Ap-
padurai, *Patriotism and its Futures*, "Public Culture" 1993, No. 5.

   [29] *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration. Race, Class, Ethnicity and Nationalism
Reconsidered*, N. Glick-Schiller, L. Basch Blanc-Szanton (eds.), New York 1992.

for and inappropriate, both from a theoretical point of view and that of the empirical evidence, for the following reasons:

The social organization of cultural complexity, being many-shaped and many-sided, calls for an interpretation via a contextualizing methodological approach. Consequently, this type of analysis also requires a system of representations mediated by suitable terms for the various situations that can properly express the plurality of processes and relations. Therefore, being restricted to one single prefix is not enough.

All three prefixes could simultaneously be useful for an analysis in several concrete situations. As the cases of Switzerland, Malaysia, and Mauritius show, we can observe a somewhat rigid *formal multiculturalism* in national public institutions and in the juridical system, while detecting a pragmatic *interculturality* in everyday life. Moreover, Chinese and Indians in Malaysia and Mauritius maintain strong transnational relations with their respective countries of origin, mainly for business reasons. Therefore, phenomena represented via the prefixes *multi*, *inter*, and *trans* can successfully coexist within the same context.

These three prefixes should not be considered in opposition to each other but should rather be regarded as complementary. They are needed to build concepts that do not necessarily contradict each other but rather complete one another.

Within social sciences, there are different disciplines with different semantic and terminological traditions. Political philosophy, especially the North American one, assigns a different meaning to the prefix *multi* from the one used by Francophone sciences of education, which prefers the prefix *inter* instead. Such is the case of US philosopher David Hollinger who has lately coined the terms *pluralistic multiculturalism* and *cosmopolite multiculturalism*. With the former, he evokes those classic forms of multiculturalism based on the clear separation of groups and belongings, while with the latter he draws us towards certain postethnic phenomena which many anthropologists classify as *trans*. There are many similar equivalencies, but we don't have enough time to delve into them.

Finally, we ought to say that we should probably gauge the soundness of prefixes even with reference to the processes or relations they are meant to represent. *Multi* and *inter* seem to be more appropriate for the conceptualization of dynamics and relations regarding groups and collectivities. *Trans* seems more appropriate to reconstruct personal routes.

In the meantime, the prefixes we mentioned have certainly been useful and epistemologically legitimate. Therefore, let's use them, but use them critically, without dogmatisms and *cum grano salis*.

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SUMMARY

The holistic concept of culture as defined by Edward B. Taylor and his successors, North Americans in particular, has proven insufficient to analyze societies in the globalization era. In fact, this concept tends to essentialize culture, thus to reduce it to a coherent and monolithic whole of cultural traits and models as if these were natural phenomena and not social constructions implemented by the actors themselves. Apparently, therefore, social sciences and cultural sciences would need to abandon the notion of culture, which would be tantamount to doing away with these disciplines. This article endeavors to show that the concept of culture can still be valid albeit through a change of paradigm, i.e., if, instead of focusing on the analysis of *complex cultures,* the focus shifts on the *cultural complexity* within a given society. Starting from this assumption, we need to affix the prefixes *multi, inter* and *trans* to the notion of culture in order to express three different forms of *cultural complexity*. The prefix *multi* underscores the stability and the deliberate separation among the various ethno-cultural communities that constitute a social body. The prefix *inter*, instead, calls to mind the relations among groups from different cultures. Finally, the prefix

trans highlights the ability, especially of single individuals, to transcend one's own belonging, thus to move from one cultural community to another or to construct hybrid identities through processes of *creolization*.

Key words:

culture, cultural complexity, multiculturalism, intercultural communication, transnational identities

COMMUNICATES-DISCUSSIONS

Josef Malach, Martin Malčík

VALUE-ADDED ASSESSMENT IN POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS, THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND RESEARCH RESULTS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

> *Schools readily acknowledge the
> need to monitor pupil progress,
> provide regular information to parents
> and use assessment information evaluatively
> for school improvement*
> Russell Hobby, General Secretary of the National Asso-
> ciation of Head Teachers, 2007.

1. Introduction

Schools today face a constant stream of new problems and ambitious challenges that create significant pressure on their quality. If the education system and schools are to be able to reach the requirements demanded by society – and the question remains whether the demands, especially those of a short-term character, always need to be satisfied – three successive steps need to be carried out. Firstly, obtaining relevant data about the way the system works; secondly, finding out which parts of the system do not function properly, in accordance with the defined standards; and thirdly, attempting to rectify the imperfections. The concept of these three steps is built on two reasons for the evaluation of school results. The first reason represents school's responsibility for its results; the second reason is school's need to continuously improve its results. One of the possible methods for evaluating

schools is the measurement of their education value-added. Schools today are expected to develop in a relatively autonomous mode, and the development is supposed to be stimulated from the inside, using inner resources. Many authors suggest that the most favourable environment is the one that combines applying pressure on schools – schools accountability for the outcomes of their activities – with supporting the efforts to improve school's work from the inside. For the correct formulation and direction of further development, schools need valid and up-to-date performance data, preferably in such a format that would enable comparison with other schools of similar type and orientation on the national level as well as international level later on.

2. Education value-added as a pedagogical construct

Pedagogy and its sub-disciplines have been using the term value-added for a relatively short time. Therefore, a clear definition of this term (construct) is yet to be arrived at. In Polish literature, the value-added is defined as the rate of progress achieved between individual education stages[1]. The OECD study of 2008[2] defines models of value-added as comparisons between two time-sections, in which the results of education are being examined. The models of value-added measure school's contribution to pupil progress and school's education goals set beforehand. The contribution is a value cleaned from other factors that also contribute to pupil progress in learning. This approach clearly specifies the need to measure pupil progress, i.e. the change in time, in which the school's impact on an individual is reflected. It is also important to delimit school's contribution from other impacts and factors that also contribute to learning; an issue that is very complex[3].

Other formulation considers models for measuring value-added as a class of statistic models, which are used to estimate school's contribution to pupil learning by using trajectories of test results. This definition emphasises a statistical approach to the models of value-added, the data of which are collected mostly by means of test measuring.

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[1] A. Bartmańska, *Wartość dodana wyniku kształcenia w szkolnictwie brytyjskim* [The Value Added of Educational effect in the British Education System] [in:] *Edukacyjna wartość dodana* [The Educational Value Added] "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy", No. 8, 2006 [25th September 2010], pp. 4–8, available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/badania/biul_8.pdf

[2] OECD: *Measuring Improvements in Learning Outcomes: Best Practices to Assess the Value-Added of Schools*, Paris 2008.

[3] R. Ryška, *Evaluace a přidaná hodnota ve vzdělávání*, Praha 2009.

Considering the conditions of higher education, the following definition has been formulated: "Value added is the enhancement that students achieve (to knowledge, skills, abilities and other attributes) as a result of their higher education experience"[4].

Value added is about what value, for a student, has been accumulated as a result of a period of time in higher education. Institutions may be evaluated or assessed on the basis of the cumulative value that they add to their students. Some proponents argue that the status of an institution should be judged by their value added contribution. However, most league tables or rankings do not do this as it is difficult to calculate value added.

The assessment of education value-added is usually worked out in the framework of gradually forming evaluation systems on different levels of directing and management – from the international level to the level of directing a class room. The basic issue of the measuring of the value-added is posed by the difficulty to separate the impact of school or its individual teachers from other formative non-school factors, e.g. influence of the family, peers, and recently of the media, especially the internet. Some models for measuring value-added do not include these contextual variables, while other models try to incorporate them, which leads to fairer value-added results of schools that include the significant index of socio-economic background.

3. Outline of the development of measuring education valued-added

The term probably emerged in the middle of 1970s in connection with the critical continuation of the idea of school accountability. From the time-line perspective, many researchers consider the concept of education value-added as the most important analytical tool that emerged in pedagogical sciences in the last 20 years[5]. It has been used in the Great Britain's education system since 2003.

In Poland, the beginnings of the value-added research are connected with the European Social Funds research project done by the Central Examination Board in 2005 and 2006. Its results became the basis for further theoretical studies as well as practical applications. The Board published two important science collections on

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[4] L. Harvey, *Analytic Quality Glossary*, Quality Research International, http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/, p. 9.

[5] R. Dolata, *Wprowadzenie* [Introduction], "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy" 2007, No. 14, available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/biul_14.pdf.

this topic in 2006[6] and 2007[7]. To explain this new approach to assessing school quality, seminars for school principals have been organised as well. Already, data of measured value-added are available for three successive years for the grades of the second stage of primary schools (called grammar schools in Poland). In January 2010, the results were published of the three-year ESF project "Three-Year Examination Indicator", education value-added[8]. The education value-added indicator is presented as a graphical diagram that does not require special statistical knowledge to understand it, only imagination and sound judgment. To be as much objective as possible, its final form is arrived at using considerably complex procedures. The indicator's calculation is done in four stages: 1) results normalisation, 2) results estimation using multi-level modelling, 3) value-added indicator estimation using multi-level modelling, 4) presentation of the results in 2D form, taking into account the estimation uncertainty. The way to express the value-added indicator for a particular school is shown in Figure 1. It shows the position of a supportive school, successful school, school of underused possibilities and school that needs help.
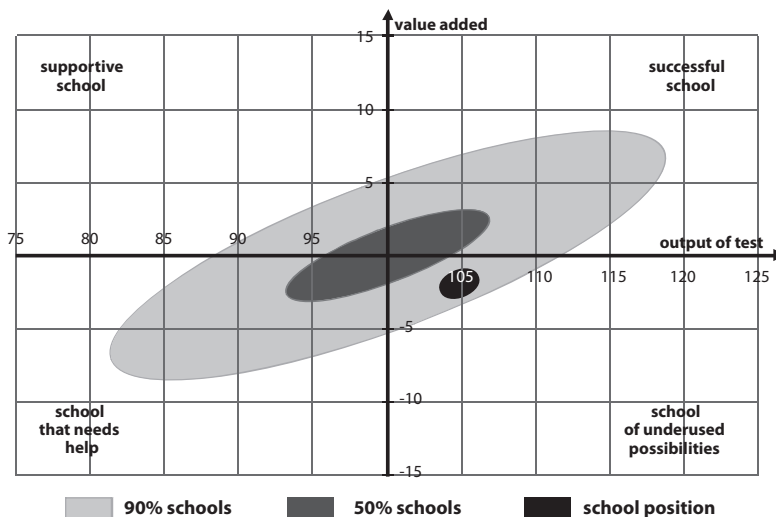
Figure 1. Graphical representation of the Three-Year Examination Indicator

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[6] *Edukacyjna wartość dodana* [The Educational Value Added], "Egzamin. Biuletyn badawczy CKE" 2006, No. 8 [9th September 2009], available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/badania/biul_8.pdf.

[7] *Edukacyjna wartość dodana*, part 2, "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy CKE" 2007, No. 14 [9th September 2009], available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/biul_14.pdf.

[8] *Trzyletni wskaznik egzaminacyjny. Edukacyjna wartość dodana. Dokumentacja techniczna* [The Three-Year Examinational Indicator. The Educational Value Added. Technical Documentation], January 2010, [1st October 2010], available at: http://www.ewd.edu.pl/Dokumentacja%20techniczna %20v1.0.pdf.

Currently, procedures determining the value-added are already being thought-out and implemented for secondary schools with the leaving exam (GCSE level equivalent)[9]. There are basically **two strategies** to deal with the complexity of the final leaving exam. The first strategy to calculate the education value-added is to count points from different exams into one or several summative final exam results. Consequently, value-added for these summative results can be determined. The second strategy is based on determining partial value-added for each final test separately, and then uniting them into an aggregate indicator; this is not without problems. This situation is further complicated by the fact that only a small number of students undergo some of the exams; this significantly reduces the precision of the estimation of the value-added calculation model.

In the Czech Republic, measuring education value-added is in the stage of theoretical analyses and pilot trials, and there is no united national system yet. There is no any systematic national testing[10], nor any external secondary school leaving exam, although the exam has been revised for 12 years now[11]. Since entering the OECD (1995) however, the Czech Republic has participated in the international researches of education results – TIMSS (1995)[12] and PISA (2000)[13].

The first attempts at determining the education value-added in the Czech Republic were made by the education policy of the Charles University in Prague. In order to compare the education results of three types of secondary schools – grammar schools, secondary specialist schools and vocational type schools – the policy used the findings of the PISA project and of the trial run of the new secondary school leaving exam two times. The value-added was determined using the data from the PISA 2000, and 2003 Final exam trial run – only 64 secondary schools participated. The PISA 2003 and 2006 Final exam trial run data were already collected from 95 schools. However, from the total number of 1466 schools this represents only 4.3% and 6.4% of schools, respectively. Therefore the collected data must not be overrated in terms of significance. Two rather different projects with different types of tests have been used to asses the "education progress". The PISA

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[9] R. Dolata, A. Pokropek, *Analiza metod szacowania edukacyjnej wartości dodanej dla szkół kończących się maturą* [An Analysis of Methods to Estimate the Educational Value Added in Schools Leading to the Matura Examination]*,* "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy" 2007, No. 14 [25th September 2010], available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/biul_14.pdf.

[10] *National Testing of Pupils in Europe. Organisation and Use Results* [20th August 2010], available at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/109EN.pdf.

[11] *Nová maturita* [25th August 2010], available at: http://www.novamaturita.cz/.

[12] TIMSS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, available at: http://www.iea/.nl/.

[13] PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment, available at http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/51/27/37474503.pdf.

project is oriented more on the defined abilities, whereas the Final exam trial run is based on the national curriculum. These methodological limitations did not allow determining the value-added for individual pupils; only for schools that participated in both these projects, the participation being rather random. It was also supposed that the results of both mentioned assessments could be transformed into an "average result" of a school. The value-added was then determined as the departure of individual schools from the average results of all the participating schools in the two projects. In reality, the average results were calculated from the PISA project results for selected schools. This average value was then compared with the results of a particular school, which brought the deviation of the given school from the average of all the schools from PISA project; this was also done for the Final exam trial runs. The deviations were subtracted, and the difference represented the value-added. Even if the methods of determining the education value-added on the three types of schools might be problematic, they were still used as a basis for creating the education policy in the newly created administrative regions of the Czech Republic. However, the so-called contextual variables could not be taken into account, because they were part of the PISA project only.

4. Value-added indicators and models

One of the main areas where value-added models can be utilised is the improvement of performance on the level of individual schools. The supply of performance indicators and information that significantly help to identify the state of a school can become a greatly effective groundwork for the creation of school goals and for a targeted intervention in all school functions. Data analyses provide information on the relationship between school inputs and outputs, enabling even more precise choice of effective strategies that deal with school procedures and with implementing changes in the use of available human and financial resources. It is clear enough that the school management obtains important data for their decision making. This is in line with the current trend that emphasises informed decision making based on having sufficient amount of relevant information.

Value-added indicators can be divided into **absolute and relative** indicators[14,15].

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[14] R. Dolata, *Edukacyjna wartość dodana w komunikowaniu wyników egzaminów zewnętrznych* [The Educational Value Added in Communicating the Results of External Exams], "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy CKE" 2006, No. 8 [9th September 2009], available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/badania/biul_8.pdf.

[15] B. Niemierko, *Diagnostyka edukacyjna* [Educational Diagnostics], Warszawa 2009.

The **absolute indicator** is the more valuable one. It requires however, that all the measuring of results during all the stages of education has to be done using the same standards. For example, a tool measuring text understanding would have to be available from the 6th grade of primary school to the 3rd grade of secondary school. The tool would have to include content interpretation, which would not only enable to measure progress, but also interpret obtained results from the content expectations point of view. Such tools are not available yet, but it is desirable to start working on their creation.

The **relative indicator** is less valuable, but its use stems from the current situation in the field. Because measuring is not done with identical tools, we are forced to accept that the result of measuring on a lower education level is presented as the total amount of education potential. In the next stage, we use this value as the expected value of the next stage of measuring. The result really achieved by a pupil is then compared with the expected result and we acquire the value of value-added on the given level of education. The average of indicators obtained in this way for a particular school represents the quality of that school.

Two classes of models are principally used to determine value-added. One class – **simple models** – uses mainly raw data, or very slightly refined data. The second class – **conceptual models** – uses other complementary contextual information to determine value-added. Most models of value-added provide relative indicators. Each model has its advantages and disadvantages, and no single one can be unequivocally recommended for usage. The choice of the model can be affected by political goals and limitations relating to the measuring[16]. Models are being evolved, combined with each other and optimised. The following models are mostly created and used in the OECD countries: linear regression model of value-added, fixed-effects model of value-added, variance component model, multivariate response model, cross-classified model and other models.

5. Value-added measuring results publication

A substantially important issue of the value-added measuring system is the representation of its results and their distribution to the people involved, including their potential release to the public.

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[16] *Zjišťování přidané hodnoty. Celková zpráva projektu LS0602. Středisko vzdělávací polityki*, PdF UK Praha, 2008 [18th August 2010], available at: http://www.strediskovzdelavacipolitiky.info/download/VAM%20Celkova%20zprava%20projektu.pdf.

One example to present the measuring results, for many reasons specific for the USA, is a categorised list of outputs in the state of California from the STAR system (Standardised Testing and Reporting)[17]. It has several sorting criteria and thus enables further data analyses. Outputs are for example available for both sexes, pupils with special education needs, economically disadvantaged children, for all races and ethnic groups in the state, as well as for all the languages used by the pupils.

In Poland, a report on the value-added measuring results was first published in 2005[18]. The regression model of relative value-added was used and the results were presented on a nine-point scale (the so called stanine scale). The results were intended for pupils, or their parents rather, teachers and school principals.

For pupils and their teachers, the information is best comprehensible through its graphical representation by the means of tables and diagrams. The table contains pupil's results from the entrance testing and the expected results of the next testing. The difference between the expected and measured value, which can be either positive or negative, is the education value-added of that particular pupil. This value can be represented by a diagram very well. The results are often expressed in words, usually on a five-point scale where gain is stated as being small, lower average, average, higher average or large. It is convenient to attach well-thought commentaries to each point of the five-point scale that combine the summative representation with formative elements[19].

For school principals, the results of pupil testing are given for certain stages/ school-years; the calculation of estimated results of the value-added between selected years is given; followed by the calculation of the difference between estimated and measured values; the degree of value-added is expressed in words. A school receives a wider commentary that contains suggestions on the changes of the teaching/learning processes in the monitored subjects.

For school authorities or school inspection authorities, overall tables of value-added for the schools they organise/monitor is given; the tables also work with the five-point scales.

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[17] Standardised Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, available at: http://star.cde.ca.gov/star2010/aboutSTAR.asp.

[18] M.K. Szmigiel, A. Rappe, *Komunikowanie wartości dodanej osiągnięć edukacyjnych uczniom, nauczycielom i dyrektorom szkół* [Communicating the Value Added of Educational Achievements to Students, Teachers and Principals], "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy" 2006, No. 8, available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/badania/biul_8.pdf.

[19] Ibidem, p. 53.

The ways of releasing and expressing the results, their interpretation, all these bear a very strong ethical dimension, and using them in a wrong way can bring destruction on the relationships between the subjects involved in education, it can demotivate pupils and teachers alike, and it can lead to personnel mobility.

An example of this can be seen in the recently published information in media about the discovered value-added or rather "effectiveness" of individual teachers and schools that has spawned stormy discussions with many opposing opinions by both parents and professionals[20]. Some called for immediate dismissal of the teachers with low measured value-added regardless of other possible factors that may have affected the results such as: teacher's experience, group specifics of their pupils and external conditions of teaching.

Critical reflection on the publishing of value-added results of teachers brought up these 7 points:

1) Value-added test scores should not be used as the *primary* means of informing high-stakes decisions, such as tenure and dismissal.
2) Embracing the status quo is unacceptable.
3) The "lesser of two evils" axiom should not be invoked.
4) Don't lose sight of the utility of value-added data to inform formative assessment of teaching practice.
5) Valid and reliable classroom observation conducted by trained evaluators is critical.
6) We've got to get beyond this focus on the "best" and "worst" teachers.
7) Teacher effectiveness is contextual.

These indicate the difficulties with interpreting published reports and their ethical dimensions. Every country should thoroughly contemplate all the conditions that relate to the publishing of value-added results in the context of their historic and cultural background, and make a responsible decision. It also has to be taken into account, whether the published results of schools will not lead to an unwanted rate of competition between schools, becoming a hindrance to sharing examples of good practice – a system that has a strong potential to improve the overall quality of education. Many countries publish their results of pupil testing; on the other hand, many of the best in TIMSS and PISA researches do not, e.g. Singapore and Finland. Honk-Kong has recently changed its publishing policy as well[21].

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[20] *Adding Value to the Value-Added Debate Tuesday, Los Angeles Times, August 31, 2010* [23rd September 2010], available at: http://eduoptimists.blogspot.com/2010/08/adding-value-to-value-added-debate.html.

[21] McKinsey&Company Klesající výsledky českého základního a středního školství: Fakta a řešení, 2010.

6. Utilising the results of value-added measuring

The results of value-added measuring can be used on many different occasions of education management on the level of the classroom, school and education system. For example:

- for preparing tables that compare results between schools, classes and pupils;
- for improving education quality at schools under their self-evaluation activities;
- to inform involved subjects such as inspection authorities (in some countries they serve as supporting bodies) or other agencies, which are in support of the process of improving schools;
- as a signalling tool, drawing attention to schools that are in need of external support;
- for comparing different types of schools; to inform education reforms.

Defining the possible negative ways of using the results of value-added measuring is an essential factor in promoting this tool to be used in the evaluation system. The measured and evaluated variables can create such value-added information that will reflect the education system function and the function of its individual elements on different levels. The fact that education results are under measurement enables whole new approaches and options to assess how effective individual teachers are, and how education progress correlates with other pupil and school characteristics; it creates conditions for school comparison to be fairer; it reflects the influence of curriculum on the actual progress in acquired competences and skills; also, possibilities of comparison on an international scale appear. All this creates prerequisites to influence individual areas of education in order to improve the desired characteristics[22]. Authors of the study arranged the possibilities into four areas: a) measures on the teacher level – salaries and further training, b) selection effects, c) curriculum changes effects, d) improving school, its effectiveness.

Measures on the teacher level are considered to be highly important and stem from the research-backed standpoint that the role of teachers in the effectiveness of education process and competence acquiring is, compared with other factors, by far more significant. It is being discussed if and how the current systems of teacher remuneration take into account the results achieved by their pupils. According to the cited study, remuneration bonuses for the teacher's pupil results can be found in 13 OECD member countries. More often, however, inspections and

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[22] *Zjišťování přidané hodnoty. Celková zpráva projektu LS0602,* op.cit.

their findings, and other methods are used to appraise teachers. Among the list of reasons for the low number of countries that reward teachers for their excellent results is the scepticism about this method of rewarding leading to the increase in school effectiveness. Two other reasons apply for countries that on the one hand believe this system could increase effectiveness, but on the other they either expect considerable complexity of this system or are afraid of significant difficulties with measuring pupil performance, and of the relating moral issues.

Teacher salaries that would depend on their output characteristic have two advantages: Firstly, they work as incentives, and secondly, they stimulate the labour market mobility. The model for measuring value-added has to, however, truly reflect the results of individual teachers. Individual teacher results then reflect the total value-added of the school. To conclude, results from different models for measuring value-added can have direct financial consequences in terms of bonuses or salary increase, or non-financial effects in terms of higher work satisfaction and prestige in the professional community; they can also increase the autonomy of school with good results, or, on the contrary, increase the control over schools with insufficient results. Finally, the results can affect the carrier progression of teachers in the managing hierarchy and empower their position on the labour market. In any case, it is desirable that teachers are adequately trained in and informed about the issue of measuring education value-added[23].

Selection effect is a phenomenon where the assessed results not only affect measures to change the working methods of current teachers, but can also inform those who are currently preparing for the teaching profession or who are contemplating abandoning it completely. Furthermore, schools that include pupil results in teacher rewarding can attract aspiring teachers with long-term thinking.

A relatively known phenomenon in education systems that utilises testing significantly is the **risk of curriculum narrowing**. The narrowing can take place on the level of subjects – the extent or depth of taught information; or on the level of testing itself: by narrowing it to only some of the taught subjects – usually the native language, a foreign language, and mathematics or sciences.

Improving school, its effectiveness and its choices are three interconnected goals that are the direct endeavour of the implementation of value-added measuring into the education system. It is desirable to set a balanced weight on the relation between the measured results of pupils and the consequences resulting from them.

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[23] E. Stozek, *Analiza wyników egzaminów zewnętrznych z wykorzystaniem metody EWD* [An Analysis of External Exams Using the Method of EWD (Educational Value Added)], 2008 [25th September 2010], available at: http://www.ewd.edu.pl/materialy.php

If the measured results are given too much weight with significant consequences for schools and teachers, it will bring many undesired effects, e.g. schools striving for the best measured performance with the use of curriculum narrowing, excessive teacher mobility or purposeful exclusion of certain pupils from the measuring or emphasis on students whose results can be accented in the methodology. However, if the weight given to the measured results of teachers and schools is overly low, it will not bring any effect on the pupil performance improvement.

7. Summative and formative features of pupil testing

These two types of testing differ from each other partly because of their information value and also because for the assessed pupil each of them has different working consequences and often experiential consequences as well. Formative assessment is carried out at schools during the education process; its results are systematically discussed with pupils in order to increase the effectiveness of learning. This type of assessment deals with understanding pupils' learning needs, and with adjusting the teaching to these needs. For summative assessment, it is important that it follows a long-term and well thought-out work with formative assessment.

Summative assessment:
- represents a final aggregate overview of achieved results ("final" assessment) or a qualitative classification of the whole assessed data file (of pupils, teachers, work results, procedures, etc.);
- therefore, its aim is not to guide a pupil continuously (as with the formative one), but to classify their successfulness after a longer period of performance (or to select those who were more successful);
- it is often done by external evaluators who do not participate directly in the education process (examination committee, superiors, control authorities);
- information brought by the summative assessment for the assessed is often limited to a placement on a certain value scale (admitted-rejected, good-average-poor, accepted to the following school year-rejected from it).

Formative assessment[24]:
- establishment of a classroom culture, that encourages interaction and use of assessment tools;

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[24] *OECD Formative Assessment – Improving Learning in Secondary Cassrooms*, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, 2005.

- establishment of learning goals, and directing individual student progress toward these goals;
- use of varied instruction methods to meet diverse student needs;
- use of varied approaches to assessing student understanding;
- feedback on student performance and adaptation of instruction to meet the identified needs;
- active involvement of students in the learning process.

8. Relative gain of students' knowledge as a model of measuring the education value-added

In the Moravian-Silesian region there has been a project called Quality 2007–2010 (Kvalita 2007 až 2010) realized since 2007. Its main aim is to test pupils who attend the first year of graduation fields at secondary schools in mathematics, Czech language, English language and German language, using the method of relative gain of knowledge. Tentatively it concerns 8,000 pupils of 300 classes and 80 schools from the total number of 147 secondary schools of all types and of different institutors. The sample covers about 55% of all schools and it may be regarded as representative. The measuring is implemented both in the Czech language for schools with Czech as the teaching language, and in the Polish language for schools where the teaching language is Polish. Between the years 2007 and 2009 the input value was tested, while the output value will be tested between 2010 and 2012. The testing takes place electronically and for the realization itself special applications in combination with portal and database systems have been prepared. The intention of the region to learn the value-added of its schools, which has been realized by the Methodical and Evaluation Centre attached to the University of Ostrava (Metodické a Evaluační centrum Ostravské university v Ostravě)[25], was in 2008 valued in the first Czech study dealing with the issue as the most advanced in the national standard[26].

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[25] http://portal.mecops.cz/.

[26] *Zjišťování přidané hodnoty. Celková zpráva projektu LS0602*, op.cit., p. 76.

Electronic testing

Electronic testing has several positive features which make it better than the conventional "pen & paper" testing. The features are:

- Time saving;
- Higher motivation of pupils when using computers for testing;
- Financially undemanding logistics and other expendable supplies;
- Immediate availability and clarity of results;
- Immediate comparison of pupils, classes and schools;
- Wider possibilities in the graphic processing of the results;
- Opportunity to offer the pupils recommended tasks for their further development.

Electronic testing will enable schools to measure not only the knowledge, but also the degree of skills of individual students. The development of skills of individual students is ensured by recommended tasks according to the test results.

Electronic tests will enable individual continual access to the results in subareas of the tests and to the recommendation for further work. A pupil can compare his/her results with other students at their school or with the result of pupils in the same group of educational fields. The system of access to the data of pupils respects the Law on the Protection of Personal Data.

Except the information about the results of the test, in each report for individual pupils there are also recommendations for developing the achieved conditions for the subareas of the tests. For teachers and the school management there are reports generated dealing with the individual classes and reports dealing with the whole schools.

Relative gain of knowledge algorithm

The method of the relative gain of knowledge was developed on the basis of the experience and methods from the Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring of the University of Durham. Practically it is implemented in five consequential stages:

1st Stage: Evaluation of a student's input knowledge level;
- Electronic testing with the same tasks for all pupils;
- Not only subjects as such are tested, but also the skills needed for successful solving of the tasks;
- Double time for carrying out the test if there is a student with special educational needs;

- Immediate evaluation for the school, classes, pupils, except for percentiles.

2ⁿᵈ Stage: Evaluation of the student's output knowledge level:

- Electronic variant testing;
- Not only subjects as such are tested, but also important skills needed for successful solving of the tasks;
- Using ten variants of the test with similar difficulty where rotation of tasks is ensured in the framework of individual parts of the test;
- Random distribution of variants till all the variants are spent;
- Double time of carrying out the test if there is a student with special educational needs;
- Harmonization of the variants.

3ʳᵈ Stage: Pairing of data:

- Pairing of data from 2007 to 2010 on the level of basic identifiers of pupils.

4ᵗʰ Stage: Calculation of the relative gain of knowledge by educational fields:

- Determination of regression line by educational fields and by subjects.

5ᵗʰ Stage: Processing and presentation of the results and outputs from the testing:

- Division – matching the relative gain of student's knowledge with 5 stages of pupils (15%, 20%, 30%, 20%, 15%);
- Division – matching the relative gain of knowledge at schools with 4 stages (by quartiles, 0–25%, 25%-50%, 50%-75%, 75–100%, 0–25%);
- Processing the outputs:
  – Reports for pupils, short and long;
  – Reports for schools;
  – General;
  – By classes;
  – By pupils;
- Calculation of Shewhart's diagrams;
- In the individual stages there are these following activities used:

In the 1ˢᵗ Stage: Evaluation of a student's input knowledge level

For the needs of evaluating the input knowledge level we will consider the knowledge in its broad sense both as the pieces of knowledge achieved, and as the skills, abilities and habits used for exercising particular activities. The input knowledge level is special initial information used for the results of the subsequent testing, but it is obvious that the level of a pupil while testing the input knowledge level is partly influenced by the effectiveness of his previous education. It is always the output of one teacher which is the input of another teacher. The main idea of the

relative gain of knowledge method is examining the changes concerning students in time, where there are mainly students of similar initial input knowledge level compared. Evaluation of the input knowledge level should most authentically correspond to the students' success in later years, in other words it must closely correlate with later results in different subjects. While testing the input knowledge level not only subjects as such are tested, but also the important skills needed for successful solving of the tasks. In the Quality 2007 project (Kvalita 2007) 27 skills were tested this way:

- Czech language – 5 skills;
- Mathematics – 9 skills;
- English language – 6 skills;
- German language – 7 skills.

After the evaluation of the tests, information about individual students succeeding in the subjects was gained, but there was also information about the level of the monitored skills. The development of individual skills was ensured by recommended tasks according to the results of the tests.

The evaluation of the input knowledge level is formalized in such a way so that every pupil could work on the same tasks under the same conditions. The teachers ensure the objectivity of the testing by being present during the process and by explaining the measurement principle of the education value-added.

In the 2nd Stage: Evaluation of a student's output knowledge level
Testing and the choice of the test variant

During the output testing there is a need of ensuring the objectivity of testing as far as cribbing is concerned and, at the same time, it is necessary to prepare tests of similar difficulty and with sufficient quality parameters. In the case of electronic testing these requirements are fulfilled under these conditions:

1. More variants of similarly difficult tests are prepared and their parameters are measured (for instance validity, reliability, etc.).
2. Individual variants are submitted to pupils randomly and, at the same time, rotation of the tasks in some parts and subjects of the tests is ensured.
3. The results in the individual test variants are harmonized, which means that the deviations in the difficulty of the tests are balanced.
4. The achieved results of all students are compared.

The output testing has been realized in a prepared electronic application. This application enables to submit more variants of the tests. If students sign up from the same IP address (school computer rooms are usually linked by proxy server) they are given a random variant of the test and continuously also others are given the

variants randomly. In the case of the Quality 2007 project (Kvalita 2007), there were 10 variants of tests prepared in the Czech language, English language, German language and mathematics. These were then introduced to the pupils who had to solve them.

During the output knowledge level testing, again not only the subjects themselves are tested, but also the skills needed for successful solving of the tasks. After the evaluation of the tests, information about individual students succeeding in the subjects was gained, but there was also information about the pupil level in the monitored skills. The development of individual skills was ensured by recommended tasks according to the results of the tests. At the end, students were given information about their success and percentiles, as well as about their relative gain of knowledge in the subjects tested and about the success and percentiles in the 27 tested skills.

Harmonization

Although extreme attention is paid to preparing and trying the tests and these tests are balanced in the basic parameters, when considering two different tests it is never possible to speak about hundred-per-cent equality from the point of view of their difficulty. In case one test is more difficult than another, it is no more fair to compare the aspirants only with respect to the number of achieved points (score), because the participants in the more difficult test would be generally disadvantaged.

To make it possible to compare all students, it is necessary to harmonize the scores. It is a process when the points of a participant are converted to points that he would theoretically achieve if he carried out the other test in that particular time. It results in the possibility of comparing all students when taking into consideration the differences in difficulty of the individual test variants. For this purpose, we may also use the equipercentile method. The equipercentile method is based on the term of percentile score, which shows, for a certain score, how many percents of the tested students achieved lower or the same score. Comparison of the score from a variant with the score of another variant will be managed by matching each score from one variant with the scores from the second variant with the same percentile. The equipercentile method is used as follows – the variant of the test with the lowest nonzero percentile will be considered a pivot that will be transformed. Other variants will be re-counted so that the percent score will be transformed to the percentile score, this will be then transformed to the percentile of the model test, and this transformed percentile will be transformed to the percent score.

Mathematical formulation of the process is as follows

For different scores x_i in the A variant we have the counting distribution f, $f(x_i)$= the number of participants who achieved the score x_i in the A variant. The cumulative distribution function *FA* of this distribution is

$$F_A(x_i) = \frac{1}{N_A} \sum_{j \leq i} f(x_j),$$

where N_A is the number of participants who solved the A variant F is then the ratio of the aspirants who achieved the score lower or equal with x_i in the A variant.

If K_A is the highest achieved score in the A variant, then: $F_A KA = 1$. We define the distribution function *FA* continuously linearly for every two neighboring scores x_i, x_i+_1 in the A variant.

$$F_A(x) = F_A(x_i) + \frac{F_A(x_{i+1}) - F_A(x_i)}{x_{i+1} - x_i}(x - x_i); \dots x \in (x_i, x_{i+1}).\sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}$$

Similarly, for different scores yi in the B variant we define counting distribution g and the cumulative distribution function G_B . Equipercentile comparative function e_A , which compares scores from the B variant with the scores from the A variant, is then $e_A(y) = F_A^{-1}G_B(y)$, where F_A-1 is the inverse function to the distribution function F_A. By this function we can match every score yi from the B variant with the corresponding score from the A variant.

In the 3ʳᵈ Stage: Pairing of data
For pairing the data of pupils from different tests there are special algorithms prepared. Although in the Czech Republic it is not possible to use a pupil's ID for pairing the data, the pairing done by the project was very successful, on the level of 80% of all tested pupils.

In the 4ᵗʰ stage: Calculation of the relative gain of knowledge
For gaining the value-added of a student we need to know the information to what extent he was doing better or worse than it was expectable. The "expectable" results are those which are equal to the results of similar students from other schools. The students should be similar mainly in respect of their previous results, because these are the best presumptions for the future results.
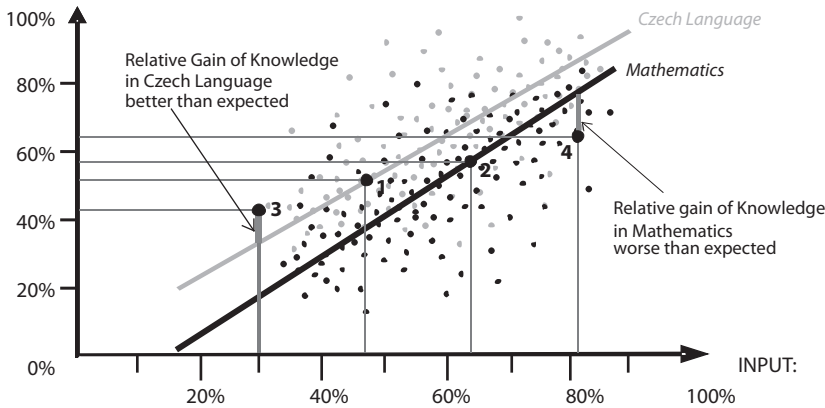
Figure 2. The way of determining the relative gain of knowledge

For the calculation of the relative gain of knowledge we use the linearly regression model based on measuring the pupil's knowledge in two time sections between the previous and the subsequent results. Figure 2 shows the process of determination of the expected value-added in two subjects. The horizontal axis shows the input results of pupils, while the output results are shown on the vertical axis. The data field is characterized by the regression line which is calculated by the subjects and fields as follows:

$$y_{ij} = a + a1y_{ij(1)} + b1X1_{ij} + \ldots + b_pX_{pij} + \varepsilon_{ij}$$

where

i – pupil in the framework of j-school

$y_{ij(2)}$ – result of the final test

$y_{ij(1)}$ – result of the previous testing

{X} – profile of the pupil or his/her family

$a_0, a_1, b_1, \ldots, b_p$ – regression coefficients

ε_{ij} – random error with normal distribution, independent for individual pupils and with the same scatter.

The regression line roughly shows the average results of students whose previous results placed them on the particular position on the axis of input information.

In Figure 2 we can see that student **2,** who enters with the success 64%, will probably end with the grade 52% from mathematics. This success is the expected success of the student.

If a student achieves better results than he/she was expected – and practically one half of all students always achieve better results than they were expected – the student has a "positive residual". Here the residual is defined as the difference between the success that the student has really achieved and the success that had been predicted on the basis of the regression line. If a student achieves worse grade than he/she was expected, then he/she has a "negative residual", as we can see in Figure 2 when looking at student 4 in mathematics.

As it was noted earlier, residuals are often referred to as measures of the value-added. But certainly it will be more accurate to consider them as a *relative* value-added. Some students achieved higher value-added than others, as it is shown by their residuals.

Contextual information and the relative gain of knowledge

The school value-added is influenced by contextual information at three levels:

1. Students differently trained in the tested subjects enter the school and they sometimes have further contextual characteristics, for instance socio-economic status, Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), special educational needs etc.
2. Their contextual information shown within the framework of opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in the progress of all their school attendance.
3. Schools have differently set education programs as far as the curricula are concerned.

The calculation of the value-added by the method of the relative gain of knowledge reacts to these possible influences this way:

1. All students have the same conditions at the input – they have passed the general education program for primary education and their results at the input place them to groups according to their results.
2. In this project no contextual information has been directly used (for instance ethnicity, mobility, socio-economic status, special educational needs etc.) Certain division is made by measuring the value-added by groups of schools with their educational fields. We can assume that they were the pupils with similar contextual information who applied for and entered the schools of individual fields.
3. The gain of knowledge is calculated by the so called fields, when all classes participating in the testing were matched to one of the nine fields of education by using a uniform classifier. "Similar" schools with similar general education programs then got into the individual fields and their value-added is then to some extent comparable.

In the 5th Stage: Processing and presentation of the results and outputs from the testing

The success and the relative gain of students', classes' and schools' knowledge were evaluated generally and then also by fields to which the individual classes rank according to the uniform classifier. In our case, we distinguished the following fields: 1) Grammar schools, 2) Lyceums, 3) Technically oriented schools, 4) Scientific schools, 5) Economic schools, 6) Services-oriented schools, 7) Pedagogic, social and medical schools, 8) Humanitarian schools, 9) Artistic schools.

Concrete measured results – residuals – as numbers do not have sufficient predicative value either for schools and for pupils. By number we cannot determine how a student, class or school is doing compared to others. Moreover, a negative number is demotivating and supposing a misleading interpretation. That is why transformation of the residual into levels is used for presentation of the results:

- Pupil – assigning the relative gain of knowledge to 5 levels according to distribution (15%, 20%, 30%, 20%, 15%) with the indication high, high medial, medial, low medial, low.
- Class, school – assigning the relative gain of knowledge to 4 levels (by quartiles, 0–25%, 25–50%, 50–75%, 75–100%).

Apart from the levels, pupils and schools will also have the information about where their gain of knowledge is regarding the medial gain of knowledge (Figure 3 and 4).
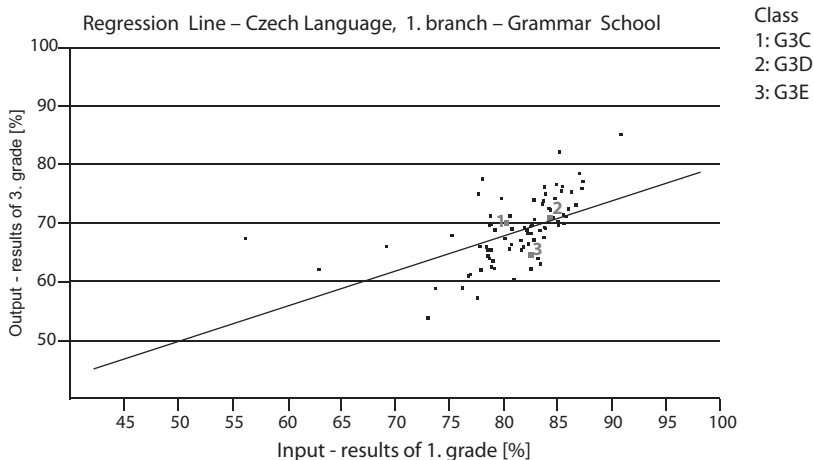
Figure 3. Value-added of all classes of the field No. 1 – grammar schools – in the Czech language with the marked results of classes in concrete schools regarding the regression line

PUPILS:
1 – Fidlerová, Táňa
2 – Holeszová, Nikola
3 – Baláda, David
4 – Holá, Michaela
5 – Križliaková, Markéta
6 – Janúchová, Nikol
7 – Koščová, Žaneta
8 – Sochorec, Rostislav
9 – Malíková Kristina
10 – Šulej, Michal
11 – Grigel, Patrik
12 – Szyszkowicz, Marek
13 – Kaděrová, Tereza
14 – Demjanovič, Jan
15 – Lapišová, Markéta
16 – Müllerová, Eva
17 – Čírová, Kristýna
18 – Hegedüsová, Kateřina
19 – Hanáková, Michaela
20 – Sykorová, Jana
21 – Ligocká, Gabriela
22 – Mazurková, Michaela
23 – Tomiová, Aneta
24 – Fialková, Barbora
25 – Pyvýšilová, Lucie
26 – Hořínková, Zuzana
27 – Vatter, Jakub

Figure 4. Value-added of tested students in class G3C in the field No. 1 – grammar schools – in the Czech language with their marked position regarding the regression line

Statistical treatment

Within the framework of processing the results some basic statistical calculations and correlations were made.

Table 1. Correlation between the input and the output results

Czech	0,616	Mathematics	0,523
English	0,642	German 0,606	

The correlation between the input and output (see Figure 1) determines the so called prediction validity of testing. *Prediction validity* – the result of the output testing is compared with the participant's success in the input testing. Actually, it is a special case of criterion validity. In our case the correlation in all subjects is fairly high.

In Figure 1 some ruling deviations of "relative gains" are shown in subjects by individual fields. If the deviation of a particular field and subject is smaller, it means that the "relative gains" are more concentrated near the average rate, so it means that more participants tested adhere to a certain line, and on the contrary, the more distinct deviation means that the relative gains are more scattered from the average rate, so it means that there are more of those who had worse relative gains (negative

with higher absolute value), and also those who had better relative gains (positive with higher absolute value). In our case, the smallest deviation belongs to the results in the Czech language, which may be connected to the fact that it is the only compulsory graduation subject and that at schools constant attention is paid to teaching this subject.
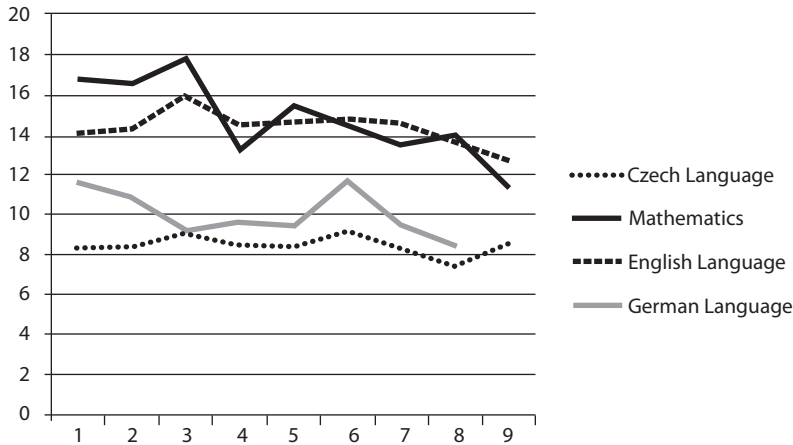
Figur 5. Shows the ruling deviation of the relative gain of knowledge in the framework of individual educational fields 1 to 9

Shewhart's diagrams

These diagrams are used mainly for the quality process management where tests are made whether a particular series matches the requirements or whether it statistically significantly differs from the others. In the relative gain of schools´ knowledge method we test, by using the Shewhart´s diagrams, whether the schools differ from the whole sample according to the set relative gains. If the value of the relative gain is above the upper boundary, then its relative value is significantly better than if the relative gain of the school is under the bottom line – then its relative gain is significantly worse. The outputs from the diagrams show the schools which achieve really excellent results and they also show schools which for different reasons need help.
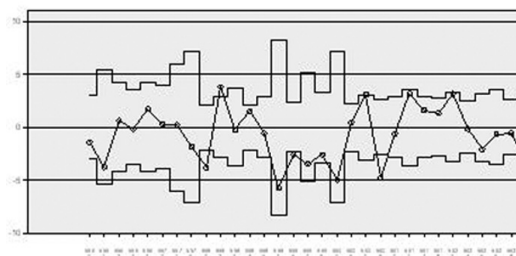
Figure 6. Shewhart's diagrams for individual schools and subjects

Features of formative assessment in the relative gain of knowledge

The method of the relative gain of knowledge is conceived to serve the development of pupils' personalities. It includes features of general assessment, but particularly features of formative assessment, when:

- pupils get information about their success and percentiles in individual subjects by fields and also generally, which enables them to have the image of where they are with their knowledge in the framework of the class, group of pupils in a field, among all pupils generally;
- pupils gain percentiles also by identified skills, which enables them to target more exactly the possibilities of training particular skills;
- according to the results from the skills a pupil receives tasks which develop a particular skill;
- pupils receive feedback from the detachment of evaluation of their performance and by this they get information about the subject in which they undervalue or overvalue themselves.

9. Discussion of results

The results of the measuring the value-added must always be viewed from the following points of view[27]:

1. Quality of gained data:

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[27] *Zjišťování přidané hodnoty. Celková zpráva projektu LS0602,* op.cit.

The tests covered important aims of educational programs, there were the same conditions for all pupils during the testing, impossibility of cribbing was ensured during the input testing

2. Integrity of the data:

During the electronic testing, setting and archiving the databases high integrity of dates was ensured. Similarly, during the pairing of the pupils´ data good results were achieved, most of the disparate pupils were not tested in the framework of the input or output testing.

3. Philosophy of alterations:

Raw data have not been altered.

4. Technical complexity:

The relative gain of knowledge ranks among the simple models of finding the value-added. However, it has a very good predicative value, as evidenced by for instance its high prediction validity. As for the people taking part in it and as for the complexity of the model and calculations, the project was managed without bigger problems. Specialists from the Pedagogical Faculty of the University of Ostrava, as well as the employees of the Evaluation and Methodical Centre, o.p.s. and teachers from schools, were involved in the making of the project. The teachers involved, administrators from schools were trained by means of e-learning and were given an audio record with instructions for students. Telephone helpdesk was in operation during the whole time of testing.

5. Transparency:

Simplicity and a detailed description of the methods ensures the transparency of the model. The information system of testing was certificated by the ISO 20000–1 system, which deals with providing IT services.

6. Expenses:

All expenses were financed by the schools' institutor – the regional authority of the Moravian-Silesian region, and they were financed from the public sources.

7. We can also discuss the quality of the tests used and examine their chosen parameters (reliability, vulnerability, etc.). In the Quality project the basic parameters and variants of the input and output tests were measured by the Rasch analysis in the Winsteps program[28].

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[28] G.T. Bond, Ch.M. Fox, *Applying The Rasch Model*, Mahwah 2001.

10. Conclusion

The sequential areal use of measuring the value-added as one of the instruments of improving the quality of schools performance and increasing their responsibility for the students' result brings about a sense of potential threats for the educational system connected with it[29]. These threats are a) problems connected with underestimating the importance of educational effectiveness, b) overestimating minor differences between schools, increasing the rivalry between teachers and schools, and c) increasing of the "learning for the test" and cheating during the exams.

The authors of the study are aware of these risks. That is why they started negotiation with the local school management as the submitter of the measuring and discussed how to present the results of in fact the first methodologically well-based measuring of the education value-added – it means to which participants of the education and to which detail it should be presented. At the same time, they share the experience of some countries that the information receivers must be previously trained and familiar with the reactions to the results of the measuring. For this reason, a study is useful, which deals with the issue of the evaluation systems assessment[30]. It brings six important points of view by which we must consider the evaluation systems: they are the technical accuracy, moral defensibility, social defensibility, legal acceptability, economic manageability, political viability. The evaluation systems must, to a reasonable extent, respect the given points of view, including the presentation of the measured results.

The pilot measuring of the education value-added in one of the most densely populated regions in the Czech republic enables formulation of certain recommendations that can make it easy to put the instrument to common practice.

For the system implementation of measuring the education value-added it is thus desirable:

1. To analyze key sources of the scientific approach to this issue – particularly the documents of OECD[31], NAEP[32], experiences of the academic and specialized centers (for instance of the Central Examination Board in Poland).

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[29] R. Dolata, *Krytyczna analiza metody edukacyjnej wartości dodanej* [A Critical Analysis of the Educational Value Added Method], "Egzamin. Biuletyn Badawczy" 2007, No. 14, available at: http://www.cke.edu.pl/images/stories/biul_14.pdf, p. 163.

[30] P.E. Newton, *Evaluating Assessment Systems. QCA – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority,* 2007.

[31] OECD: *Measuring Improvements in Learning Outcomes: Best Practices to Assess the Value-Added of Schools*, Paris 2008.

[32] National Assessment of Educational Progress [16th September 2010], available at: http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/educators/update.asp#common_core.

2. To become familiar with the functioning national systems of estimating the value-added, particularly the systems of countries with similar cultural and educational tradition (in case of the Czech Republic they are for instance Poland and Slovakia).

3. To introduce the system of national testing of pupils which will enable by acquired data to calculate the value-added (see for instance the document EACEA[33] and the study[34]).

4. In the framework of the system of further education to train all teachers in the issue of external testing and measuring the value-added as part of the school evaluation, particularly from the point of view of adequate interpretation of data and taking appropriate pedagogical measures.

5. To make pupils, parents, school management, decision sphere and the general public acquainted with the concept of education value-added, with its importance for judging the quality of education and with the right interpretation of data.

6. To incorporate the issue of ensuring quality by means of estimating the value-added to the undergraduate training of all teachers and also to the system of their further education. To fully achieve mastering the issue of pedagogical evaluation which has already some standards developed in some countries[35].

7. In the framework of school system to define and prepare a specialized category of teachers who would deal with the issue of school testing (building test coordinators), similarly as for instance in the USA[36,37].

The study has shown that in the present state of scientific knowledge concerning the area of estimating the value-added and on the basis of critical analysis of good practice it is possible to realize national measuring of the education value-added. It may be implemented and its results accepted under the condition of

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[33] *National Testing of Pupils in Europe: Objectives, Organisation and Use of Results, Eurydice*, EACEA, 2009 [28th July 2010], available at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/109EN.pdf.

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composing it into a system of educational reforms observing the high quality of education and its effectiveness at the same time.

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SUMMARY:

The study brings summary of the state of theoretical cognition concerning value-added assessment of a school. The study also defines the key terms and development of this relatively new sphere of interest of current pedagogy and educational policy. It pays attention to the problems of purpose of value-added assessment. The value-added assessment as a concept itself integrates findings of many theoretical and practical disciplines and findings of an area of realization and monitoring of educational service, especially Educational Assessment, Educational Evaluation, Educational Policy and School Management. After an overview of actual approaches and experiences, the study introduces the methodological frame of value-added assessment through relative gain of knowledge methodology. It presents results of main stages of the pilot value-added assessment performed on the complex of students from Moravian-Silesian region of the Czech Republic and adjudicates the used procedure of assessment by selected criteria. In the end, the study formularizes recom-

mendations for another procedure for introducing of this evaluation instrument to the educational systems.

Key words:

value-added of school, relative gain of knowledge, presentation and interpretation outcomes of value added assessment

Danuta Dziawgo

SAVING AND INVESTING AMONG POLISH SOCIETY – DISSCUSION STARTING POINT

1. Introduction[1]

During the Polish economy transformation process a lot of reforms have been implemented, including those connected with pension system. The pension system was based on two obligatory pillars. So-called the second pillar of pension security was supposed to guarantee future humane pension (at an adequate level), when reaching retirement age. However, it is not going to happen. Despite an advertising campaign in 1998 saying that salary replacement rate[2] may reach even more than 100%, economists drew attention to the word "may". Getting a pension at the level of the value of the last salary from the I pillar (Social Insurance Institution) and II pillar (Open Pension Fund) did not seem real with flow of around 20% salary[3] into pension system and with such high functioning costs of pension system[4].

It is worth recalling that the first monthly payment from the second pillar in 2008 was PLN 28.26 (around EUR 7). That amount shocked both many citizens and politicians. Since then, many people became aware of the fact that the created

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[1] Financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education as scientific project in 2007–2009.

[2] Relation between the value of first pension and the last salary i.e. what percentage of the last salary will constitute the received pension.

[3] In the case of people with higher earnings, it is less due to the possibility of stopping payments to the pension fund after reaching a certain level.

[4] At the beginning, the fee from each amount was 10%, then 7%. From 2010 is 3.5%. Additionally, other positions should be covered from the future pensioners' money such as: management fee, bank deposit commission, or market transaction costs (e.g., for purchasing or selling shares every time a fee of 0.3% transaction value is withdrawn).

pension system was not investment type but insurance type. Therefore, future pensioners should not, unfortunately, trust in high rate of future pensions received from pillar I & II and, much earlier, individually take care of their financial security. Do Poles really undertake this kind of activities? Do they save and invest?

In this working paper results of research conducted by others and the author have been presented in order to formulate an answer to the abovementioned question. The identification of standpoints and behavior concerning saving and investing is crucial in reference to economic and educational policy. Changing social mentality requires many years. What should be of high concern is a steady growth of households debt level in banks.

Therefore, in the present paper, the deliberation on the saving issue will be provided in relation to two groups: a representative sample referring to average citizens saving in the traditional way (most often bank deposits) and a target sample referring to individuals investing on stock exchange in more advanced financial instruments.

Moreover, in the article examples of proactive state undertakings aiming at encouraging citizens to saving have been presented. Unfortunately, the examples are taken from the British market, and not Polish.

2. Significance of savings in economy

Citizens investment activity does not seem a whim but a necessity. In economics there are three main reasons why households intend a part of their income for savings, and than for investments. These are: transactional (timely payments), provident (for unforeseeable events) and portfolio (diversification of income sources – gaining income not only from work but also from capital). From the microeconomic point of view, the aim of saving[5] is securing widely understood family financial stability as well as assuring stable level of consumption – independently of households life cycle.

Within the macroeconomic approach, financial household savings as well as budget deficit reduction are the base for increase of investments and long-lasting economic growth. Consequently, it should result in the growth of general wealth of society. It is pointed out here that household savings constitute the cheapest source of capital accumulation and also they influence state economic sovereignty

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[5] Saving is defined as a process of limiting the current consumption for future consumption purpose.

(domestic capital is less prone to outflow than foreign capital). However, it should not be left out that high saving rate reduces current consumption, so it limits economic growth pace.

Therefore, from the point of view of economic growth, both possessing savings by households and taking credits fostering economic prosperity are favorable, and the most desirable state in this issue is relative balance between the two.

The transformation of household savings into investments is possible due to the presence of financial market and due to instruments operating in it. In modern societies of high-developed countries such traditional saving instruments as banking accounts and deposits are being replaced with more advanced instruments, e.g., bonds, shares, investment funds, instruments resulted from securitization, structure products or derivatives. Those instruments of higher level of investment risk offer potentially higher return rate. Meanwhile, traditional bank deposits also become more and more complicated which can be exemplified by structured deposits, also offered in Poland. All this generates new challenges.

3. Financial scissors differentials

In the middle of 2008, in Poland, a so-called financial scissors gap occurred – households took from banks more credits than entrusted deposits in them. As presented in Figure 1, that situation is continuing and the value of the gap is increasing.
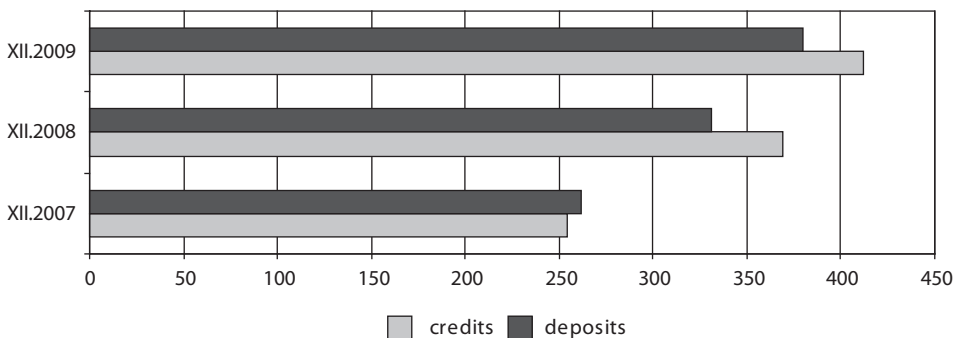
Figure 1. Value of household deposits and loans within the banking sector (nominal value, bln PLN)

Source: Polish Financial Supervision Authority, www.knf.gov.pl.

However, the statistical data should be analyzed with some research reservation. The presented data is underestimated by the value of loans issued by quasi-bank institutions. On the other hand, a decrease of deposit value might result from investing savings in other instruments than banking deposits or keeping cash at home. Therefore, it is so important to conduct survey among households to check if they possess any savings, and, if so, what instruments they use.

4. Household savings in Poland[6]

Such surveys on Poles' saving are conducted, among others, by CBOS (Public Opinion Research Centre). Their results show that in 2007 as much as 77% of society did not possess any savings in cash, 59% of households did not take any credits, and 41% were paying them back (4% declared difficulties with timely payments)[7]. Also in research conducted by Central Statistical Office in 2000 and by Ipsos Demoskop in 2003, respectively 77% and 79% of respondents declared lack of savings. It would indicate that around 77% of Polish society do not have any savings, and this level remains stable. However, one should be aware of the fact that maintaining this level may slow down the pace of economic growth in future.

Also surveys conducted by the author confirm such a pessimistic picture (Table 1); in 2002, 79%, and in 2009, 70% of Poles declared lack of savings (but 5% refused to answer)[8]. It can be cautiously assumed that in Polish society, at least since 2000, the rate of individuals without any savings has remained stable at the level of 70%.

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[6] PASW Statistics programme was used to process the data.

[7] *Oszczędności i długi Polaków* [Poles' Savings and Debts], CBOS, BS/36/2008, www.cbos.pl. The survey was conducted between September-November 2007 on a sample of 38,866 households.

[8] Surveys were made in the form of a direct questionnaire. The August 2002 research was done through TSN OBOP firm on a representative sample of 1,017 respondents. In September 2009, a research was conducted by MillwardBrown SMG/KRC firm on a representative sample of 1,012 respondents. A standard error was +/– 3,1% at the 95% level confidence.

Table 1. Range of answers to the question: "What do you invest your money in? Indicate all ways of money investment which you use" (%)

Specification	Percentage			
	Representative sample		Individual investors sample	
	2002	2009	2002	2009
Shares	2.7	0.6	86.5	87.5
Bonds	0.9	1.0	58.0	21.5
Bank deposits	9.8	8.6	35.0	48.5
Derivatives	0.1	0.1	27.5	16.0
Investment funds	0.5	0.8	16.5	48.0
Currencies	1.5	1.4	14.5	29.0
Real estate	3.8	2.5	11.5	40.5
Others, in which: – insurance with investment part – gold – numismatic coins	1.5	2.8 0.4 0.7 0.3	4.0	55.0 25.0 7.0 12.0
I own savings but I do not invest them (I keep them at home)	**4.3**	**11.5**	–	–
I do not own savings so I do not invest	**79.1**	**69.9**	–	–
Refuse to answer	–	4.9	–	–

Note: Respondents could give more than one answer, therefore the total percentage does not equal 100.

However, the individuals who have savings do not always invest them. In 2002, savings were kept at home by 4%, whereas in 2009, by almost 12%. This threefold increase certainly resulted from the turbulences in the international financial market and news about bankruptcy and foreign banks problems. Such a cautious attitude of Polish deponents can be justified by the worldwide atmosphere of distrust towards financial institutions.

An analysis of instruments used in the investing process indicates their relative structural stability over that time. Only in the shares case a significant decrease from 3% in 2002 to 1% in 2009 is observed.

The individuals who declared investing in shares, invest parallel in bonds, bank deposits, currencies and investment funds. But they do not invest in insurance, real estate or gold.

The acquired results of research conducted on representative samples of Polish society are not optimistic. They imply that over the last 10 years the percentage of Polish society living day-by-day remains stable at the level of 70%. The group, in fact, transfers responsibility for their financial security over to the State. Reasons for such behavior are an open question.

A more detailed analysis of the research results from 2009 seems interesting and necessary. It might be the case that larger households will declare having savings more rarely than smaller households. However, such a relation did not take place. Possessing savings is declared by 12% of 1-person households, 17% of 2-person, but also 16% of households with more than 6-members (Figure 2).
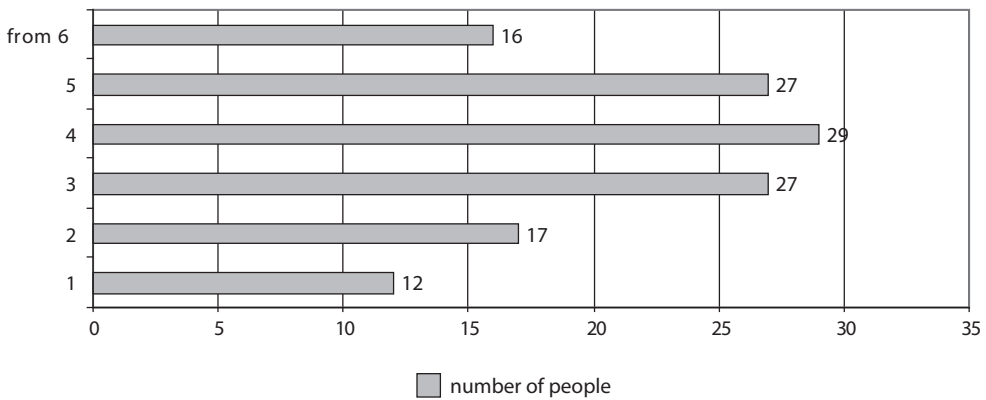
Figure 2. Number of household members with relation to savings (%)

Source: based on research.

A thesis that Poles do not save because they earn little and they cannot put aside any money has not been confirmed. An analysis of respondents income invalidate such assumption. Even more people with very low monthly income save something. Having savings was declared by 13% of respondents with monthly household income per person not higher than PLN 200. On the other hand, belonging to the most wealthy group does not equal having savings. The highest monthly household income per person in the respondents group was respectively: PLN 7,500, PLN 4,000 and PLN 3,750. However, among those with PLN 7,500, possessing savings was declared by 1 person, and 25 respondents declared lack of savings. In the PLN 4,000 income group 3 persons declared savings and 5 declared none. Among persons with PLN 3,750 income 7 declared savings and 28 declared lack of them.

Paradoxically, savings are owned by 13% households with monthly income per person at the level of not higher than PLN 200, and only 4% households exceeding

PLN 5,000 (Figure 3). Certainly, it may result from the fact that individuals with high monthly income have high creditability allowing for getting credits. They could make investments supporting themselves a credit which they are paying back now. Nevertheless, from the point of view of economic aggregate which is constituted by household savings, it turns out that in terms of generating financial savings this group is unreliable.
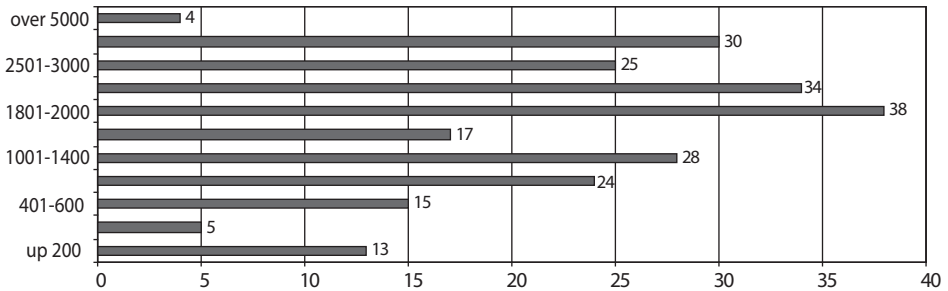
Figure 3. Level of household monthly income per person (in PLN) vs. owning savings
Source: based on research.

However, due to the character of occupation, it can be indicated that savings are owned by 77% of managers and free-lancers and 67% of company owners but also 8% of the unemployed, 11% of pensioners, 19% of skilled workers, 21% of farmers, 29% of unskilled workers.

It allows for drawing a conclusion that having and collecting savings is rather a question of accepted life attitude, and not current income, size of household or socio-professional group. It may also result from adjusting consumption level to the level of current income, which limits household abilities to save. The survey results make evident that saving is not one of Polish household priorities, independently of monthly income level. It may imply a low level of financial culture in Polish society, resulting from a low level of knowledge about personal finance. It certainly shows Poles' carelessness and lack of wide-perspective thinking about financial security at the time of decrease in professional activities. There is still an open question left whether the state will be able to bear the burden of financial support for so many citizens.

It may be the case that Poland will face the problem, already present in, among others, the United States and Great Britain, of shifting financial responsibility from citizens to the state at the time of both their professional activity and retirement.

It is a consequence of an extensive social welfare system and high taxes which limit citizens' invention, creativity and activity. As a result, in today's world there are attempts made to change societies' attitude and mentality from passive, reaching hands up for help, to active, in which the state does not interfere with citizens getting wealthier, and what is even more, it stimulates and fosters their additional activity leading to higher income. Examples of radical system changes in this matter are New Zealand and Australia.

5. Helping people to save – experiences from Great Britain

Research conducted at the end of the 90s in Great Britain showed that the number of households without savings doubled compared with the early 80s; 10% of households lacked any savings in any form, and 9% of grown-up citizens did not have bank accounts[9]. Other research from 1999 indicated that half of British adults have liquid financial resources smaller than GBP 750, although still other research showed that over 2/3 of households own real estate, and 60% of individuals at economically productive age have pension insurance. What was worrying was a steady increase of households debt level – the debt exceeded the owned assets.

As a result, in 2000, the British government accepted a document *Helping People to Save*. As a priority for the government activities, change in attitude to saving and investing among the British was recognized. It was argued that possessing savings results in life independence (in decisions concerning starting a family, changing jobs or place of living, setting up own company). It also gives security and comfort, particularly after getting retired. In consequence, a few programmes were implemented, aiming at activating savings and investing in society. In the context of the dissertations concerning Polish market, in the present paper, two of those programmes are interesting.

In 2002, testing several versions of the *Saving Gateway* programme started. The programme was targeted at individuals with low income, benefiting from various forms of government support. In one of such sub-programmes, participants could deposit monthly from GBP 1 to 25. At the end of the saving period, for each deposited pound an extra pound was transferred into the account by the government. As many as 52% of participants deposited the maximum sum i.e., GBP 375. More-

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⁹ *Family Resources Survey* 1998–99, Department of Social Security [in:] *Helping People to Save. The Modernisation of Britain's Tax and Benefit System*, No. 7, http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

over, 21% of individuals declared to keep the collected money (and the one received from the government) for a rainy day, whereas 23% intended to spend everything, and 46% intended to save some and spend the rest.

Within all the pilot programmes, 22,000 individuals saved GBP 15 million, receiving from the government GBP 5 million of a kind of bonus for saving. Out of the programme participants, 38% started saving regularly every month, and 39% started paying their debts back. The obtained results were so encouraging that the Parliament issued a regulation and since 2010 individuals with low income may save in the Saving Gateway programme. Special accounts may be opened by approximately 8 million citizens. The accounts will operate for 2 years with maximum monthly deposits up to GBP 25. At the end of the saving periods, for each deposited pound the government will give 50 pence. It means that after 2 years the state will add maximum GBP 300 to each account (the financial bonus is tax free). The programme aims at encouraging the British to systematic saving and fighting against the phenomenon of financial exclusion.

In 2005, the British government offered a form of saving to parents of children born after August 31, 2002. The yearly limit of investment in the dedicated account is GBP 1,200. The collected money belongs to the child and can be withdrawn only by him/her at the age of 18. At the moment of opening the account, the government deposits to the account GBP 250[10]. The next deposit of GBP 250 will be transferred to the account for the child's seventh birthday (in the case of low income families the amount is GBP 500). The investment profit is tax free. The success of the programme in encouraging saving and investing can be measured by the number of 3.2 million opened accounts.

As it was presented on the example of the two programmes operating in Britain, promotion of saving among citizens is an important element of educating society, maintaining a sense of responsibility for taken action and encouraging creativity. Also, in the long run, it is supposed to prevent expansion of the financial exclusion phenomenon. Promoting individual investing and investing by giving up a part of tax revenue shows how important in Great Britain citizens' investment initiative is.

The fact is even more worth noting as the British capital market is considered a leading market and British society – one of the most affluent. However, in order

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[10]   It could be called a British version of the Polish "becikowe" (maternity grant). However, in the UK it is used for supporting investing and securing a child with a certain amount on the threshold of adulthood as the money belongs to the child. Hence this is a more sophisticated concept.

to maintain the high position, it is necessary to continue improving economy and create desired social attitudes, including those concerning saving and investing. Great Britain is trying to create an investing and consuming society, and not a society of indebted consumers.

6. Savings of Polish stock investors

Stock investing may be considered an advanced form of depositing savings. Therefore, it will be valuable to compare a representative sample of Polish society with individuals investing on stock exchange. Not only do the individuals belong to the group of 30% of Polish society owning savings, but they seem the most financially educated part of the group, as well. That is why, in 2002 and 2009, the Author conducted a survey on a target group of 200 individuals on the stock exchange[11]. Although results of the survey cannot be considered representative, yet they give a certain view on attitudes and opinions of individual investors' circles. Moreover, each conducted survey, also the one on an unrepresentative sample of a given population, is valuable, because information on attitudes, behaviour and expressed views developing at a given time is collected. Results concerning investing of individual investors in particular assets are presented in Table 1.

Among respondents-stock investors dominate individuals investing in shares at a similar level in both tested groups. Differently from what was observed in the case of representative sample, stock investors do not have a bank deposit and, what is more, their share increased (from 35% to 48.5%). Also, a significant increase of individuals investing took place in real estate (from 11.5% to 40.5%), investment funds (from16.5% to 48%), and other assets (from 4% to 55%). At the same time, a decrease of individuals investing in bonds (from 58% to 21.5%) and derivatives instruments (from 27.5% to 16%) was observed.

A decrease in popularity of investing in derivatives may result from the fact that in the market foreign institutional investors are becoming more and more active, which limits the possibilities of generating satisfactory profits by minor investors. The fall in bonds, in turn, results from their diminishing investment attractiveness. It may also be the case that investors investing before in bonds, invested in investment funds capable of giving higher rate of returns.

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[11] The survey in the form of a phone interview was conducted in 2002 by TSN OBOP, whereas in 2009 by MillwardBrown SMG/KRC.

On the basis of the list presented in Table 1, it should be stated that Polish individual stock investors are aware of the risk resulting from investing in stock market. Therefore, they diversify their investments both within as well as outside financial market (investing in real estate, gold, numismatic coins). Individual investors invest on stock exchange both directly and independently, and parallel indirectly, through investment funds. Such strategy ensures better diversification of investments, lowers costs of individual risk reduction and eliminates barriers for an individual with a relatively small capital entering certain markets (real estate market, foreign markets, natural resources markets). At the same time, the investors keep cash at the ready on bank deposits, being able to use it in case of rising investment opportunities, yet securing their financial needs in case they lost investing in the financial market. Such attitudes are characteristic of experienced investors, owning relatively big capital and, most of all, aware of the investment risk only in one market segment, in one type of investments and in one element of assets. So, individual investors invest on the stock exchange consciously, looking for possibilities of securing their capital purchasing value and enlarging it. They certainly do not count on ZUS (Social Insurance Institution) or OFE (Open Pension Fund), but actively and in advance build their pension funds (pillars) themselves, their current and future financial security and independence.

7. Financial knowledge of Polish society

Taking action to activate 70% of Polish society with no savings seems then a fundamental issue. However, what is problematic is defining the level of financial knowledge of an average Pole. A kind of test showing a relatively wider knowledge of finance may be a test checking deeper knowledge of the issue of shares. Therefore, the representative group was asked to name advantages and disadvantages of investing in shares and point out shareholders rights. This allowed to establish the level of Polish society's preparation for potential use of investing instruments.

The representative group was asked an open question concerning types of rights shareholders are entitled to, deriving from the very fact of having shares. A correct answer was given by 10% respondents, which can be considered a very high score in the case of an open question, in which respondents must show their knowledge and independently choose proper words. Moreover, the respondents used professional terminology, e.g., dividend, right to vote, participation in AGM, participation in general meeting, issue rights, insight into financial matters, or casting vote. One of the respondents stated: "I'm not interested in stock exchange"

– however, it is worth noting that he correctly associates shares with stock exchange. And another respondent stated: "I can't tell the difference between shares and bonds" – yet, he knows both terms, which shows certain, at least basic, level of knowledge in the field of finance.

Also, answers given by respondents to a question concerning reasons why it is or it is not worth investing in shares, were correct. The most often quoted argument for investing was "you can benefit a lot/accumulating money". It was given 219 times. Among the most interesting ones were: "you can earn quickly and easily" (18 times), "adrenaline", "long-term shares are better", "investment diversification", "one of the quickest ways of accumulating money", "you can make more money than from investment funds", "money shouldn't lie", "investing in the future".

As far as arguments against investing in shares are concerned, the risk factor was most often mentioned: "risk of losing money/profit is uncertain" – it was quoted 165 times. To illustrate other arguments, here are some more examples: "a possible crisis on the stock exchange"(7 times), "you can lose everything" (32 times), "a lot of stress about investing" (7 times), "there is risk of falling share value" (7 times), or "those with weak psyche can have a nervous breakdown" . As it was presented, also in the answers to the question respondents used such professional terminology as: profit, risk, diversification, stock exchange crash, or value decrease.

It proves that Poles possess a relatively deeper knowledge, enabling them to consciously take advantage of more advanced investing instruments. It also means that on the basis of the presented material, lack of knowledge cannot be indicated as a reason for not owning savings.

8. Conclusions

Concluding the dissertations presented in the work, supported by survey results, it can be stated that the level of financial education of Polish society is relatively high, although there are certainly differences between the level of knowledge of an average citizen and a stock investor. However, although stock investors' level of knowledge translates into saving and investment structure, the same relation is not present in reference to an average Pole. This may mean a certain erosion of thrift, which used to be considered a virtue.

However, this lack of foresight may in future lead to triggering another financial crisis – heavy indebting of households resulting in their bankruptcies, stress connected with lack of security, burdening the state with taking care of securing family existence, as well as health and pension insurance. All the elements generate

costs – functioning costs of economic system in a given state. However, when crossing a certain critical point, destabilization takes place.

States are wealthy with their citizens' wealth. Therefore, certain reservations are raised by the question whether 30% of active and farsighted Poles owning savings will be sufficient for capital balancing of economy, in order to prevent the next potential crisis at the indifferent attitude of 70% of society. In other highly developed countries the problem was noticed and action was taken to encourage saving and investing, whereas in Poland it is not. One piece of evidence, among others, is the still maintained capital gains tax, which certainly cannot be classified as a saving stimulus. Polish society have already begun (following the American example) heading towards indebted consumers. With the continuation of the trend, turbulences will be unavoidable.

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Polish Financial Supervision Authority, www.knf.gov.pl
Oszczędności i długi Polaków [Poles' Savings and Debts], CBOS, BS/36/2008, www.cbos.pl

SUMMARY

The aim of the working paper is to obtain an answer to the question: Do Poles take action which will give them financial security in the future? Do they save and invest? In the paper, attention has been drawn to a potential problem which Poland could face, the problem of shifting financial responsibility from citizens to the state. Unfortunately, the presented survey results do not allow to formulate optimistic conclusions. Only 30% of Poles are financially resourceful and foresighted.

Key words:

savings, individual investors, financial investments, households

B a r t o s z   P i e l i ń s k i

ON THE INEVITABILITY OF CONVERGENCE. THE HISTORY OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOCIAL POLICY MODELS IN EAST ASIA

1. Introduction

These days a lot of students of social policy are focusing their attention on the differences between distinct types of social policy models which have been developing around the world[1]. Social policy is under influence of historical institutionalism which tends to emphasize the difference more than similarity between institutional settings functioning in individual countries[2]. Furthermore, in last twenty years the comparative social policy has been on the rise and it has been mostly interested in the pluralism of social policy models. Also, the term convergence is strongly connected to the dictation about modernization, which was sometimes criticized for its Eurocentric undertone[3]. Last but not least, scholars form each region or even each country have been keen to show that the social policy model which has been under their investigation is one of a kind.

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[1] *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Social Policy in Development Context*, I. Gough, G. Wood (eds.), Cambridge 2004; *Welfare States in Transition. National Adaptations in Global Economies*, G. Esping-Andersen (ed.), London, Thousand Oaks and London 1996.

[2] P. Pierson, *Politics in Time. History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*, Princeton and Oxford 2004; P. Pierson, *Dismantling the Welfare State? Reagan, Thatcher, and the Politics of Retrenchment*, Cambridge 1994; S. Steinmo, K. Thelen, F. Longstreth, *Structuring Politics. Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, Cambridge 1992; *Bringing the State Back In*, P. B. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, T. Skocpol (eds.), Cambridge 1985.

[3] I. Gough, *Welfare Regimes in Development Context: A Global and Regional Analysis* [in:] *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia,* op.cit., pp. 15–48.

Despite this, I would like to show in my paper that it is highly plausible that welfare regimes around the world are heading in the same direction and will have more and more in common. In my opinion, the influence of the globalized markets, the end of the the Cold War and the slow but steady democratizations of political systems around the world have been the sources of the convergence of welfare models. I would like to prove my thesis on the example of East Asia. The experiences of Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan have shown that in a long period of time welfare models which had been remote form European way of institutionalizing social policy had been transforming themselves to become similar to the Western welfare state[4]. It is needles to say that in 2005 Japan was devoting 18,6% of its GDP to the social expenditures compared with 15,9% devoted by the United States and 29,4% devoted by Sweden[5]. This very simple example shows that the country which was once applauded by many for its ability to combine a rapid modernization with very low level of public spending, today is on an equal footing with western countries with its welfare system.

My paper in many ways repeats Arthur Gould's analysis[6]. He also pointed out that the European and East Asian welfare models had became more and more similar. But unlike Gould, I would like to focus myself almost entirely on East Asia and secondly, I would like to describe the development of welfare model not only in Japan, as Gould did, but also take into consideration Korean, Taiwanese and Singaporean experiences. It is also worth pointing out that I would like to analyze a period of time form the end of 19th century to the very beginning of 21st century. As it will be shown, in recent history there have been two main welfare systems in East Asia. The first one, which I call the traditional welfare, was developed after the second world war and lasted till the beginning of 1980s, and the second one, named the conservative-motivational social policy model, has been developing in those countries ever since. The traditional welfare state was based on the authoritarian

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[4] There is an ongoing debate about the existence of one East Asian welfare model: *The East Asian Welfare Model. Welfare Orientalism and the State*, R. Goodman, G. White, H. Kwon (eds.), London and New York 1998; G. Esping-Andersen, *Hybrid or Unique: The Japanese Welfare State Between Europe and America*, "Journal of European Social Policy" 1997, No. 3, pp. 179–189; M. Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State*, Ithaca and London 1999; I. Holliday, *Productivist Welfare Capitalism: Social Policy in East Asia*, "Political Studies" 2000, Vol. 4, pp. 706–723; I. Gough, *East Asia: The Limits of Productivist Regimes* [in:] *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia*, op.cit., pp. 169–201; K. Tang, *Social Welfare Development in East Asia*, New York 2000; C. Aspalter, *Conservative Welfare State Systems in East Asia*, London 2001; A. Gould, *Capitalism Welfare Systems: A Comparison of Japan, Britain and Sweden*, London and New York 1993.

[5] W. Adema, M. Ladaique, *How Expensive is the Welfare State?*, "OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers" 2009, No. 92, p. 84.

[6] A. Gould, *Capitalism*, op.cit.

political system, a partly centrally managed economy and on traditionally structured society. This kind of welfare state was functional as long as all those element remained stable. If any change had occurred it relatively quickly turned into the conservative-motivational welfare model. The new model is characterized by bigger state involvement in social policy issues, it reinforces the inequalities generated by market economy and it strongly encourages participation in a labor market.

The paper begins with a brief introduction to Weberian idea of traditional welfare state. Next, I present the main characteristics of the traditional welfare state in East Asia. After that, I describe the present days transformation of social policy system which has been taking place in the region, to finish my paper with a few reflections about the convergence of social policy systems in East Asia.

2. The traditional welfare state

If we look at the past developments of social policy in East Asia (Table 1), we have to agree that it was a long process. In Japan, where the modernization in East Asia had begun, the first major health insurance was set up in 1927[7]. It was almost 60 years after the beginning of the Meiji Revolution. In South Korea, the first attempt to create a health insurance scheme was made in 1977[8]. And in Taiwan, the introduction of the pension insurance began in 1984[9]. Although Sven Olsson Hort and Stein Kuhnle[10] stated that the pace of incorporation of welfare institutions in East Asia was faster than in Europe during its period of modernization, one must remember that for a few decades East Asian economic and political system had been in the process of dynamic development without any support from the institutions of modern social policy. The issue which arises form those facts is if there had been any welfare system before the institutions of modern social policy were developed in East Asia. My answer is positive and I named this pre-modern welfare system the traditional welfare state.

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[7] M. Seeleib-Kaiser, *The Development of Social Assistance and Unemployment Insurance in Germany and Japan*, "Social Policy and Administration" 1995, Vol. 29, No. 3, p. 270; G. Kasza, *War and Welfare Policy in Japan*, "The Journal of Asian Studies" 2002, Vol. 61, No. 2, p. 419.

[8] H. Kwon, *Democracy and the Politics of Social Welfare: a Comparative Analysis of Welfare System in East Asia* [in:] *The East Asian Welfare Model*, op.cit., p. 51; Idem, *The Korean Welfare State: Development and Reform Agenda* [in:] *Discovering the Welfare State in East Asia*, C. Aspalter (ed.), London 2002, p. 66.

[9] http://www.bli.gov.tw/English/sub.asp?a=0010394.

[10] S. Hort, S. Kuhnie, *The Coming of East and South-East Asian Welfare State*, "Journal of European Social Policy" 2000, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 162–184.

Table 1. Development of social insurances in East Asia. The date of first implementation of the scheme (I). The date of reaching universal status by the scheme (U)[11]

	Health insurance		Pension insurance		Employment insurance	
	I	U	I	U	I	U
Japan	1927	1961	1936	1959	1936	1974
South Korea	1977	1989	1988	1999	1995	–
Taiwan	1958*	1995	1984	2005	1998	–
Singapore	1984	1992	1955	1992	–	–

* The date of first implementation of Labor Insurance.

I developed the notion of the traditional welfare state from the work of Max Weber. In his seminary book *Economy and Society*[12] he distinguished three well known types of domination – charismatic, traditional and legal. Charismatic domination is based on personal ability of a political leader to create strong bounds between him and his followers. Traditional domination is based also on personal bounds but those bounds do not rest on the personal abilities of the leader but on the custom which is a part of a wider tradition. The legal domination is based on formal relation between the state apparatus and the citizens and those relations rest upon the rule of impersonal law.

In his analysis, Weber puts a strong emphasis on traditional domination. He distinguishes several types of the traditional domination. For example, he writes about patriarchalism and patrimonialism. But he is especially interested in feudalism which he considers almost as a separate subtype which was specific for medieval Europe and which gave birth to legal domination. Weber is also interested in the relations between a political leader and his subject. In his opinion, under traditional domination, these relations are based on two factors. The first one is tradi-

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[11] M. Seeleib-Kaiser, op.cit., pp. 269–293; G. Kasza, op.cit., pp. 417–435; A. Gould, op.cit.; T. Fukawa, *Public Heath Insurance in Japan*, World Bank Working Papers 2002; A. Gordon, *Busines and Corporate State: The Business Lobby and Bureaucrats on Labor, 1911–1941* [in:] *Managing Industrial Enterprise: Cases from Japan's Prewar Experience*, W. Wray (ed.), Cambridge 1989, pp. 53–85; H. Kwon, *Democracy…*, op.cit., pp. 27–74; H. Kwon, *The South Korean National Pension Programme: Fulfilling Its Promise?* [in:] *The East Asian Welfare Model…*, op.cit., pp. 106–115; H. Kwon, *The Korean Welfare State…*, op.cit., pp. 63–79; H. Lee, *Civil Society and Welfare Reforms in Post-Crisis South Korea*, paper presented at *Canada-Korea Social Policy Symposium II*, January 2005; C. Aspalter, *Democratization and Welfare State Development in Taiwan*, Ashgate 2002; C. Tremewan, *Welfare and Governance: Public Housing under Singapore's Party-state* [in:] *The East Asian…*, op.cit., pp. 77–105.

[12] In my study I use Polish translation of Weber's book: M. Weber, *Gospodarka i społeczeństwo. Zarys socjologii rozumiejącej*, Warszawa 2002. English translation of the book: M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1978.

tion itself. People follow their sovereign because he or she was chosen by the rules. The second one is based on personal relations between the master and his or her subjects. Those relations lay on the notion of welfare. People are obligated to follow the orders of their political leader as long as he or she is able to deliver them a life in relative welfare.

For Weber, welfare state (*Wohlfahrtsstaat*) is rooted in the notion of a sovereign as the father of the community which is subjected to him. And a political leader as a father is obligated to take care of his people. He could be harsh but he has to be effective in his actions. Every action which he takes must confirm his role as a ruler – ruler chosen by the tradition. If the people prosper it is a sign that their leader is rightful, if they live in poverty it is a sign that their leader is a usurper and they have the right to overthrow him. Hence, in a political system based on the traditional domination those who have power are forced all the time to show that they are able to deliver welfare to people.

To achieve the aim of creating the effective welfare state under traditional rule one must take into consideration the strong decentralization tendency. Weber thought that in time every traditional domination would evolve from the centralistic authoritarian rule into a more decentralized patrimonial political system. The decentralization is inevitable because the political leader has no means to control his political dominium under traditional rule. He is unable to develop the professional central administration. Because of that, he is forced to renounce a part of his political authority to a selected group of his subjects (nobles) and make them rule in his name. By doing so, he cannot give up his obligation to deliver welfare for his supporter.

In my opinion, the notion of the traditional welfare state created by Weber fits to the characteristic of the welfare model in East Asia. First of all, the political élites which were conducting process of modernization in East Asia were legitimizing themselves by the reference to the tradition. Form the period of Meiji Revolution to the modern times, politicians in East Asia have been keen to show their devotion to the traditional values. Another thing which shows resemblance of East Asian political system to Weberian traditional welfare state is the domination of authoritarian regimes. Until the 1980s, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore were ruled by authoritarian regimes. There were of course democratic interludes as it was in case of South Korea, or there were some elements of democratic procedures as in the case of Singapore, nevertheless, the East Asian countries were for many years under rule of one political force.

Another connection between Weberian traditional welfare state and East Asian political system is the influence of the economic élites on politics. The economic

policy was under heavy influence of the representatives of big industries and the financial sector. To develop an effective economic policy, even the most powerful political actors in East Asia had to cooperate with main local economic players.

The last characteristic of East Asian political and economical system which is similar to the traditional welfare state is the emphasis on welfare. Almost all political powers in that region put tremendous effort in increasing welfare of its citizens. The Kuomintang, People's Action Party or general Park could deprive their people of freedom of speech or the right to vote, they were extremely focused on providing those people good conditions of living .

All those elements allow me to talk about the traditional welfare state in East Asia. It started to develop at the end of the 19th century in Japan during the Meiji Revolution and gained a new momentum after the Second World War. In that time the traditional welfare state was set up in new states which were creating on the eve of Cold War. The traditional welfare state was developed in South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore.

Below I would like to show examples of how the traditional welfare state functioned in East Asia. First, I would like to show the power of politics over economy. Then, I would like to present the evidence that the political control of economy was exercised with the cooperation of the biggest industries.

3. State managed economy

The East Asian governments had been exercising their influences on economy in many ways. They had been doing it not only by preparing the economic plan every three or four years[13]. They also developed the institutions whose main aim had

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[13]   The full list of economic plans from 1955 to 1979 (K. Yutaka, *The Politics of Economic Management* [in:] K. Yamamura, Y. Yasuba, *The Political Economy of Japan*, Vol. 1, *The Domestic Transformation*, Amsterdam 1987, pp. 566–567): Five-Year Plan for Economic Self-Support 1956–1960; New Long-Range Economic Plan 1958–1962; National Income-Doubling Plan 1961–1970; Medium-Term Economic Plan 1964–1968; Economic and Social Plan 1967–1971; New Economic and Social Development Plan 1970–1975; Basic Economic and Social Plan 1973–1977; Economic Plan for the Second Half of the 1970s – 1976–1980; New Economic and Social Development Seven-Year Plan 1979–1985.

The full list of economic plans from 1953 to 1996 (F. Robins, *Taiwan's Economic Success* [in:] *Emerging Economic Systems in Asia. Political and Economic Survey*, K. Sheridan (ed.), St. Leonards 1998, p. 51: First Four-Year Plan 1953–1956; Second Four-Year Plan 1957–1960; Third Four-Year Plan 1961–1964; Fourth Four-Year Plan; Fifth Four-Year Plan 1969–1972; Sixth Four-Year Plan 1973–1976; Seventh Six-Year Economic Development Plan 1976–1981; Ten-Year Projection Assessment 1980–1989; Eighth New Four-Year Plan 1982–1985; Ninth Medium-Term Economic Development

been to create strategies for economic development and to implement them into live. Maybe the most famous of such organizations was the Ministry of International Trade and Industry[14]. The ministry, which was established in 1952, had very wide authority over economy. It had control over the flow of foreign currencies. It controlled the influx of new technologies to Japan. The ministry also very quickly gained control over the flow of foreign capital, had strong influence on the whole banking system and on public investments. The most famous action taken by this institution was the development of petrochemical industry. MITI created the Development Bank, which was responsible for financing the project. MITI also brought new foreign technologies, as well as secured land for the new petrochemical factories. Thanks to the effort taken by the MITI, petrochemical industry became one of the most dynamic parts of Japanese economy.

Quite similar to MITI is the Economic Development Board in Singapore[15]. This institution is not, however, a part of the government and it is a semi-independent organization with its own financial found and with its own organizational structure. The main goal of the EDB is to manage the development of Singaporean economy. First of all, EDB is responsible for acquiring foreign investments. Because of this, EDB has its outpost in all major cities in the world. Their officers are looking for the investments which are in compliance with the current economic policy set by Singaporean government. Nowadays, EDB is searching mainly for investments in the third sector and modern technologies, but not so long ago EDB was encouraging heavy industry companies to set their businesses on the island. But the role of EDB has always been bigger than that. EDB was also engaged in securing the financing of foreign investments, as well as in securing them the right location on the island. The wild variety of actions which EDB was obligated to take was the reason for creation of a set of similar institutions, which were supposed to help EDB in implementing the economic policy of the Singaporean government. Those institutions were the Development Bank of Singapore and the Jurong Town Corporation.

Plan 1986–1989; Perspectives on the Taiwan Economy to the Year 2000 1986–2000; Tenth Medium-Term Plan 1990–1993; The Six-Year National Development Plan 1991–1996.

[14] C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925–1975*, Stanford 1982.

[15] K.-S. Kwong, *Singapore: Dominance of Multinational Corporations* [in:] *Industrial Development in Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea*, K.-S. Kwong, L.-Ch. Chau, F. Lui, L. Qiu, (eds.), New Jersey, London, Singapore, Kong Kong and Bangalore 2001, pp. 22–27; C. Yue, *The Character and Progress of Industrialization* [in:] *Managment of Success. The Moulding of Modern Singapore*, K. Snadhu, P. Wheatley (eds.), Singapore 1990, pp. 250–279.

There were correspondent to MITI and EDB organizations in South Korea and Taiwan. In 1961, the Economic Planning Board[16] was established in South Korea and in 1951, the Economic Stabilization Board[17] was set up in Taiwan. But the influence of the East Asian governments is difficult to evaluate only by the popularity of this kind of organizations. The most obvious way to estimate the strong impact of the government on economy is to look at the financial system of East Asian countries. The most illustrative example is Taiwan.

After the evacuations in Taiwan, the Kuomintang government decided to reform its financial system. Almost entire control over the banking system was given to the Bank of Taiwan and after 1961 to the Bank of China[18]. The control was so strict that even in 1990, out of 16 banks which were operating in Taiwan, only in 4 banks the government had limited control[19]. All those four banks controlled less than one-tenth of Taiwanese banking market. Furthermore, the central bank not only regulated the interest on banking deposits but also loans interest rates. The importance of government control over banking was very significant because of the importance of the banking sector itself. In 1980, only 5% of the assets of main Taiwanese financial institutions were placed outside the banking systems, and from 1981 to 1990, the banking savings were worth 33% of Taiwanese GDP[20]. The strong grip on the banking system allowed the government to have a great amount of control over the whole economy. The banking sector was forced to support mainly the state owned companies and the industries which were supported by the government[21]. The tied control over financial system which gave no access for small and medium companies created a very large financial curb market. It was based on rotating mutual credits and the loans given by the small entrepreneurs. It is estimated that in years 1964 to 1990 around 23% of capital in Taiwanese economy came from the curb market[22].

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[16] L.-Ch. Chau, *South Korea: Government-led Development and the Dominance of Giant Corporations* [in:] *Industrial Development…*, op.cit., pp. 118–200; R. Shin, Y.-S. Ha, *Financial Crisis and Policy Reform: The South Korean Experience*, [in:] *Industrial Development…*, op.cit., pp. 101–103.

[17] T. Gold, *State and Society in the Taiwan Miracle*, New York and London 1986, pp. 67–72.

[18] J. Shea, *Taiwan: Development and Structural Change of the Financial System* [in:] *The Financial Development of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan*, H. Patrick, Y. Park (eds.), Cambridge 1994, pp. 225–226.

[19] Ibidem, p. 249.

[20] Ibidem, p. 238.

[21] R. Wade, *East Asian Financial Systems as a Challenge to Economics: Lesson from Taiwan*, "California Management Review" 1985, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 120–121.

[22] J. Shea, op.cit., pp. 241–244.

Another channel of control for the East Asian governments over its econo-
mies was the direct ownership of the companies. The most obvious example is
Singapore. Even after the process of partial privatization of many companies dur-
ing the end of the 90's round the 40% of the publicly-traded corporations were
controlled by the government[23]. The Singaporean government hasn't had a direct
control over every particular company. It has been exercising its control through
the network of institutions. The most famous of them have been the Temasek
Holding and the INTRACO[24]. Both of them were owned by the government and
both of them have had control over a number of others companies which full list
is still unknown.

The East Asian government had also control over the foreign trade. In Japan the
import for over 1400 products were limited in 1960[25]. In Taiwan in 1970 only 51%
of manufactured abroad products had access to the internal market and in 1974
the average nominal tariff was 55%[26]. In Singapore after the process of the inde-
pendency had began there also had began the process of the gradual separation of
the internal market form the influences of the international markets. Only in 1993
the free flow of trade reach the same level as in 1959.

On all those mentioned above levels the government had been exercising control
over the market. There were economic planning, advising boards, direct control over
the financial system and over the part of the companies and there was sometimes
strict control over the foreign trade in the East Asian countries. Some authors doubt
if there were any free economies in Taiwan or Singapore in the few decades after
the Second World War. Some tried to describe the economic system in which state
intervention is married with free market economies. Maybe the most famous is
Robert Wade's book *Governing the Market*, in which the author tries to place East
Asian economies somewhere in the middle between centrally planned economies
typical for communist countries and laissez-faire model known from Anglo-Saxon
countries[27].

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[23] S. Claessens, S. Djankov, L. Lang, *Who Controls East Asian Corporations?*, World Bank 1999.

[24] L. Krause, *The Government as an Entrepreneur* [in:] *The Singapore Economy Reconsidered*,
L. Krause, K. Tee, L. Yuan (eds.), Singapore 1987, pp. 113–114; F. Deyo, *Dependent Development and
Industrial Order: An Asian Case Study*, New York 1981, pp. 58–59.

[25] R. Komiya, M. Itoh, *Japan's International Trade and Trade Policy, 1955–1985* [in:] *The Political
Economy of Japan*, Vol. 2, *The Changing International Context*, T. Inoguchi, D. Okimoto (eds.), Stanford
1988, p. 192.

[26] H. Smith, *Taiwan's Industrial Policy in the 1980s. An Appraisal?* [in:] *The Economies of Asia
1950–1998*, R. Ash, A. Booth (eds.), London and New York 2000, pp. 415–417.

[27] R. Wade, op.cit.

In the next section, I would like to show the ambiguity of East Asian economies form a different perspective. I would like to show that although the governmental control over the East Asian economies was immense, there was also close cooperation between economic and political élites. Hence, many decisions taken by the East Asian governments were made after consultations with companies which were affected by those decisions.

4. Economic élites

Maybe the most illustrative examples of the strict cooperation between the representatives of economical and the political systems in East Asia is the history of the creation of the most famous Japanese companies. A good example is the development of the Mitsubishi holding, which was created from the *zaibatsu* set up by the successful entrepreneur Iwasaki Yataro. *Zaibatsu* is the word used to describe the families cartels which had been functioning in Japanese economy before the Second World War[28].

Iwasaki began his major career as a businessman after the Meiji Revolution in 1871 when he gained control over a large part of properties belonging to one of Japanese feudal masters *daimyo*. In 1873, the Mitsubishi Shokai was established, which gave Iwasaki an opportunity to make him the most successful entrepreneur in the field of seafaring. It was accomplished with the support of the Japanese government. After the war between China and Japan in 1874, Iwasaki obtained all 13 ships which had been bought by the government during the war, as well as was given 18 ships which had been bought by the government from Iwasaki's competitors. In the end, Iwasaki controlled 80% of Japanese ships in 1877. The government's support for the Mitsubishi *zaibatsu* was still granted after Iwasaki's death in 1885. In the 1920s, after several changes, the Mitsubishi holding consisted of several shipyard companies, smelting companies, mine companies and a few trading businesses.

But the Mitsubishi *zaibatsu* was not the only one, there were Mitsui *zaibatsu*[29] and Nissan *zaibatsu*[30]. There was cooperation as well as competition between those

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[28] K. Yamamura, *The Founding of Mitsubishi: A Case Study in Japanese Business History*, "Business History Review" 1967, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 141–160.

[29] S. Yonekura, *The Emergence of the Prototype of Enterprise Group Capitalism – The Case of Mitsui*, "Hitotsubashi Journal of Commerce and Management" 1985, No. 20, pp. 63–104.

[30] H. Masaki, *The Financial Characteristic of the Zaibatsu in Japan: The Old Zaibatsu and Their Closed Finance* [in:] *Marketing and Finance in the Course of Industrialisation*, K. Nakagawa (ed.), Tokyo 1986, pp. 33–54.

cartels but every one of them developed strong ties with politicians and bureau-crats. There was a dense network of social connections, corruption and even mar-riages among the representatives of *zaibatsu* families and political élites. Form time to time, there were attempts to narrow down the connections between the govern-ment and the biggest Japanese companies, but they always ended with reinforce-ment of the biggest *zaibatsu*s.

There is a direct connection between Japanese *zaibatsu* and Korean *chaebol*. *Chaebol* is the Korean name for *zaibatsu*[31]. The connection between those compa-nies is not only a semantic one. There are also very strong institutional similarities between *zaibatsu* and *chaebol*. *Chaebols* had also the pyramidal structure on the top of which were the members of one or two families. Every *chaebol* has also specialized in one sector of economy, but it has its affiliates in every sector of economy[32]. The historical origins of *chaebols* were similar to those of *zaibatsu*.

*Chaebol*s originated form the nationalization of the Japanese assets after the Second World War. It is estimated that president Syngman Rhee nationalized prob-ably 85% of Korean assets. In 1957, there was a program of privatization of those assets including 3551 factories[33]. The main criterion in getting access to those assets was a good relation with presidential allies. A very good example is the history of Yi Pyong-chol, the founder of Samsung *chaebol*. Before the privatization project began, he had been an owner of a small mill, a trade company and an owner of a few properties. In the end o 1950s, thanks to his good relations with Korean politicians, he owned several sugar and textile plants, which became the fundament on which he was building during next few decades his economic empire. Those connections between the politics and economy were cemented by the flow of cap-ital. In 1956, before the presidential election, a group of Korean companies was granted a loan worth 17 million wons form the Commercial Bank of Korea. The hole amount of the loan was then transmitted to the president Rhee's party.

The persistence of the relations between *chaebols* and the political leaders was shown in 1961 after the coup d'etat organized by Park Chung Hee. One of fist first decisions was the detention of the representatives of the biggest *chaebols*[34]. They

[31] K. Kim, *Political Factors in the Formation of the Entrepreneurial Elite in South Korea*, "Asian Survey" 1976, Vol. 16, No. 5, pp. 465–477.

[32] G. Hamilton, N. Biggart, *Market, Culture, and Authority: A Comparative Analysis of Manage-ment and Organization in the Far East*, "American Journal of Sociology" 1988, No. 94, pp. 59–60.

[33] J. Woo, *Race to the Swift: State and Finance in Korean Industrialization*, New York 1991, pp. 65–68.

[34] E. Kim, *From Dominance to Symbiosis: State and Chaebol in Korea*, "Pacific Focus" 1988, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 105–121.

were accused of illegal enrichment. But after a few months the heads of *chaebols* were freed. As a redemption for their previous activities the *chaebols* were obligated to build several cement factories, smelting and electronic factories. Because all those investments were financed by the government, Park's attempt to narrow down the *chaebols* influences ended with reinforcement of their role in Korean economy.

The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan was probably more effective in curbing the influences of oligarchic structures on economy. Shortly after the end of the Pacific War, it was decided that a part of the fault of Japanese expansionism belonged to the economic élites[35]. Hence, the assets of the major *zaibatsus* were nationalized and then privatized with one important limitation that no one was allowed to acquire the control of over 1% of the sold companies. It was the reason why after the end of Second World War the *zaibatsu* vanished and their place was taken by more decentralized structures called *keiretsu*[36].

The move taken by the SCAP despite its immediate impact on Japanese economic structure did not break the relations between politics and economy entirely but rather changed the form of those relations. A few decades after the end of war, the Japanese economic policy was mostly molded by bureaucrats form private companies and from ministries in charge of economy. The close connections between these two groups were ritualized by the custom of *amakudari* – descent from heaven[37]. It was a practice where Japanese senior bureaucrats retire to the positions in the industries which were under their supervision during their careers in the government structures. For example, it was a very common phenomenon that pensioners form MITI were expected to find a job in one of the automobile companies or, in later days, in high-tech firms. *Amakudari* gave the industries which were heavily dependent on the government a warrant that the decisions taken by the ministries would be reasonable form the perspective of those industries. Bureaucrats would have in mind their future after retiring from governmental positions. On the other hand, the governmental officials had easy access to the top management of major Japanese companies thanks to the personal contacts with their older colleagues.

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[35] M. Aoki, *The Japanese Firms in Transition* [in:] *The Political Economy of Japan*, Vol. 1, *The Domestic Transformation*, K. Yamamura, Y. Yasuba (eds.), Stanford 1987, pp. 268–269.

[36] K. Imai, *Japan's Corporate Networks* [in:] *The Political Economy of Japan*, Vol. 3, *Cultural and Social Dynamics*, S. Kumon, H. Rosovsky (eds.), Stanford 1992, pp. 212–213.

[37] C. Johnson, op.cit., pp. 69–73; T. Inoki, *Japanese Bureaucrats at Retirement: The Mobility of Human Resources from Central Government to Public Corporations* [in:] *The Japanese Civil Service and Economic Development*, H. Kim, M. Muramatsu, T. Pempel, A. Yamamura (eds.), Oxford and New York 1995, pp. 213–234.

In the case of Taiwan, the relations between the government and the economic elites were more one-sided. Because of the high tension between the Kuomintang and majority of Taiwan inhabitants, and because of the continuing war with the People's Republic of China, Taiwanese government has direct control over almost entire economy[38]. In this case maybe the most interesting model of cooperation between the government and the economic elites was developed in Singapore. This island-state had based its economy on foreign investments. Those investments had been carefully picked by EDB and had to meet standards set by the Singapore government. Despite this, there were several institutions which had been used by the Singaporean technocrats to cut the deals with foreign investors. The most famous of those institutions has been National Wages Council[39]. This body was set up to coordinate the wage policy in the Singaporean economy. The NWC consists of representatives of the government, foreign and local entrepreneurs and labor unions. The agreements set by the NWC have no legal enforcement but the company which does not obey the rules may be bothered by several public institutions.

5. The decline of traditional welfare state

It is fair to say that in Japan after the Meiji Revolution and in the rest of the East Asian countries after the Second World War there were the political structures which very closely resemble the traditional welfare state described by Max Weber. These structures rested on very closed connections between the state and the economic elites. There was very strong governmental control over economy combined with authoritarian or quasi-democratic political regimes. Politicians and bureaucrats had institutionalized abilities to exercise very strong control over economy. But hardly ever did they use them without the cooperation with the main economic actors. They used their control over the economy mostly to secure the stability of their countries' economies rather than to shape them according to their own visions.

The reason for this symbiotic coexistence was shown by Weber in his description of traditional domination. The East Asian political elites were unable to use the full potential of their political power over economies. They had never followed

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[38] T. Cheng, op.cit., p. 150; H. Amsden, *The State and Taiwan's Economic Development* [in:] *Bringing the State Back In*, P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, T. Skocpol (eds.), Cambridge 1985, pp. 91–92.

[39] C. Tremewan, op.cit., pp. 80–83.

the path of communist countries, in which communists had not been hesitating to exercise full control over economy. Partly because of its alliance with the United States and partly out of pure pragmatism, East Asian politicians decided to cooperate with economic elites rather than to dominate over them. Politicians from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore decided to share their control over economy in the name of delivering their people the undying increase of their welfare.

According to Weberian analysis, to stabilize the political system based on traditional domination it is necessary to fulfill the promise of improvement of people's welfare. And this promise was given in East Asia. The Liberal-Democratic Party's conservative policy line (*hoshu honryu*)[40], The Kuomintang's Three Principles of the People (*San Min Chu-i*)[41] or People's Action Party's Asian values ideology[42] contained the promise of increasing the welfare of ordinary people. This promise was in many ways necessary. It was very often the only way to legitimize the political power gained by at least not fully democratic means.

For the institutional shape of the social policy in East Asia the existence of the traditional welfare state had very important implications. There was no need to develop social policy institutions known from European countries. The tight governmental control over the economy, close cooperation between government and economic elites and conducive geo-economical conditions allowed to secure the welfare of many East Asian households without the necessity of creating a complex social security system. Stable economic growth combined with increasing requirement for labour secured the realization of the welfare promise.

When the Western welfare state and East Asian traditional welfare state are compared, the main difference between these two conceptions lays in the way they had been trying to institutionalize the delivery of welfare to people. In Western countries, one of the most important elements of the welfare system was, as Gosta Esping-Andersen noticed, decommodification. The mechanism by which every person has an opportunity to secure his/her needs despite his/her situation on the labour market. In East Asian countries, mostly after the Second World War, the situation was the opposite – the mechanism by which every person had a chance to secure his/her needs was commodification. East Asian governments put pressure

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[40] M. Muramatsu, E. Krauss, *The Conservative Policy Line and the Development of Patterned Pluralism* [in:] *The Political Economy of Japan*, Vol. 1, *The Domestic Transformation*, K. Yamamura, Y. Yasuba (eds.), Stanford 1987, pp. 516–554.

[41] P. Moody, *Political Change on Taiwan. A Study of Ruling Party Adaptability*, New York 1992, pp. 20–25.

[42] M. Hill, K. Lian, *The Politics of Nation Building and Citizenship in Singapore*, London and New York 1995, pp. 188–219.

on their citizens to enter the labor market or to open their own companies. They were doing it because they had control over economy. They had institutionalized means of creating stable blooming economy. To secure the welfare of their people, East Asian governments had to encourage the development of controlled market economy.

But at the time the welfare crisis was developing in Western countries, another crisis began in East Asia – the crisis of the traditional welfare economy. It began in the 1980s and has been developing on two levels: economic and political one. On the political level there was a very wide process of democratization. In 1989, the Liberal-Democratic Party lost its majority in the upper house of Japanese parliament[43]. In 1988, the opposition parties won the parliament election in South Korea[44]. In 1987, the martial law was called off, which gave way for the development of a fully democratic system on the island[45]. Even in Singapore the ruling PAP was forced to make some political connection for their opponents after 1981 when a representative of an opposition party won one seat in the national parliament[46]. At the same time, the whole geopolitical landscape changed. The Cold War ended. The United States were less tolerant to the fact that their East Asian allies had open access to the American market while the East Asian markets were closed for American products and services. At the same time, international markets were becoming more globalized and Asian companies had to adapt to this new environment.

All those factors caused the dissolution of the traditional welfare state. The development of the democratic system created several political fractions which have been more focused on competition with each other than on cooperation. In this situation, it has become almost impossible to exercise firm political control over the economy. With the beginning of the process of democratization, there has also been an increasing pressure from the voters to create a social policy system which would go beyond the very rudimentary social assistance[47].

The globalization of the international markets and more aggressive economical policy of the United States forced East Asian companies to change the way they

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[43] I. Takashi, P. Jain, *Introduction* [in:] *Japanese Politics Today*, P. Jain (ed.), New York 1997, pp. 1–4; P. Jain, *Party Politics at the Crossroads* [in:] *Japanese Politics Today*, idem (ed.), New York 1997, pp. 19–21.

[44] J. Rurarz, *Historia Korei* [The History of Korea], Warszawa 2005, pp. 381–389.

[45] G. Davison, *A Short History of Taiwan. The Case for Independence*, London 2003, pp. 92–119; J. Copper, *Taiwan. Nation-State or Province*, Boulder 1996, pp. 41–49.

[46] H. Mutalib, *Constitutional-Electoral Reforms and Politics in Singapore*, "Legislative Studies Quarterly" 2002, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 659–672.

[47] C. Aspalter, *Democratization…*, op.cit.

were doing businesses[48]. Economic élites have been less prone to cooperate with governments. Because the governments no longer have been able to shield their economies from the foreign competition, there has been no major reason to strictly cooperate with East Asian politicians. In the face of the increasing competition, East Asian companies have also been forced to reduce the cost of production. They have begun to retreat form the policy of life-long employment, the very generous social programs, and from the stable cooperation with small contractors. All these elements have been exercising an additional pressure on the development of modern social security system.

In consequence, there was a rapid development of social security system in 1980. In 1977, the National Health Insurance was established in South Korea and ever since it was gradually liberalizing to cover almost all population of the country in 1989[49]. At the same time, the new pension scheme was under preparation, which took shape as the National Pension Programme in 1988[50]. In Taiwan, there was a rapid development of different types of insurances directed to different social groups. Between 1980 and 1990, several programs were established: Health Insurance for Government Employees' Dependents, Health Insurance for Retired Government Employees, Health Insurance for Spouses of Retired Government Employees, Insurance for Retired Teaching and Administrative Staff of Private Schools and Insurance for Spouses of Retired Teaching and Administrative Staff of Private Schools[51]. All these schemes were merged in to one system – the National Health Insurance – in 1995. In Singapore, in 1984, the Medisave scheme was created, which has been aimed to cover a part of health expenses of these Singaporean citizens who have been insured in the Central Provident Found. In 1987, the Min-

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[48] K. Akira, *Big Business and Politics in Japan, 1993–95* [in:] *Japanese Politics Today*, op.cit., pp. 124–143; I. Takashi, *Japanese Bureaucracy: Coping with New Challenges* [in:] *Japanese Politics…*, op.cit., pp. 92–107; K. Imai, op.cit., pp. 218–228; S. Kim, *Korea and Globalization (Segyehwa): A Framework for Analysis* [in:] *Korea's Globalization*, S. Kim (ed.), Cambridge 2000, pp. 1–28; C. Howe, *The Taiwan Economy. The Transition to Maturity of the Political Economy of its Changing International Status* [in:] *The Economies of Asia 1950–1998*, R. Ash, A. Booth (eds.), London and New York 2000, pp. 135–159; H. Smith, *Industrial Policy in Taiwan and Korea in the 1980s. Winning with the Market*, Northampton 2000; F. Robins, op.cit., pp. 45–77; T. Bellows, *Economic Challenges and Political Innovation: The Case of Singapore*, "Asian Affairs: An American Review" 2006, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 231–255; T. Chong, *Singapore. Globalizing on Its Own Terms*, "Southeast Asian Affairs" 2006, pp. 265–282; P. Fong, *Staying Global and Going Regional: Singapore's Inward and Outward Direct Investment* [in:] *The Economies of Asia 1950–1998. Critical Perspective on the World Economy*, R. Ash, A. Booth (eds.), London and New York 2000, pp. 497–510; M. Hobday, *Technological Learning in Singapore: A Taste Case of Leapfrogging* [in:] *The Economies of Asia…*, op.cit., pp. 539–568 .

[49] H. Kwon, *The Korean Welfare State…*, op.cit., pp. 66–67.

[50] H. Kwon, *The South Korean National* Pension…, op.cit., pp. 108–109.

[51] C. Aspalter, *Democratization…*, op.cit., pp. 57–58.

imum Sum program was established to secure Singaporeans the minimal level of financial support during their retirement[52]. Even in Japan after the announcement of the Japanese welfare society given in 1978 by Prime Minister Ohira, the social policy system had been still developing. In 1982, the Health and Medical Services Law for the Elderly was passed and in 1989, the Ten-Year Strategy to Promote Health Care and Welfare for the Aged was enounced[53].

The above mentioned reforms were the start of the deep transformation which East Asian social policy systems have been going through since the 1990s and at the beginning of the 21st century. The new model is based on very similar principles to the ones which characterized the conservative models known from the Western countries. In reference to Christian Aspalter[54], I suggest to call it the conservative-motivational social policy model. It is characterized by high reluctance of the government to direct involvement in social security issues, enforcement of the social divisions created by the labor market, privileges given to groups connected with the state apparatus and the very strong adherence to the idea of subsidiarity of public support to a person in need. The public assistance is given only to these people who can prove that no one else is able to give them support. The whole institutional system of social policy is focused on encouraging, or even forcing people to enter the labour market and determining the level of social security on the level which a person has gained on this market.

As much as restrictive conservative-motivational model of social policy may be, it is, in my opinion, a fully developed model of social policy which can be compared to the systems which are know from western countries. The development of such a system in East Asia and its descent form the traditional welfare state is a sign that there is no way to escape the creation of a modern-day social policy system. Such a system is in many ways a reaction to the demands of contemporary politics and economy. On the one hand, the existence of democratic or quiz-democratic systems puts pressure on politicians to develop the comprehensive institutions of social security. On the other hand, private companies are unwilling to cooperate with political forces in creating the stable system of social security. They see that it is the government's role to deliver public welfare. Private companies have

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[52] C. Aspalter, *Singapore: A Welfare State in a Class by Itself* [in:] *Discovering the Welfare State in East Asia*, C. Aspalter (ed.), London 2002, pp. 180–181; I. Holliday, *Health Care* [in:] *Welfare Capitalism in East Asia. Social Policy in the Tiger Economies*, I. Holliday, P. Wilding (eds.), New York 2003, pp. 70–98.

[53] *Annual Report on Health and Welfare 1999*, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan 2000.

[54] C. Aspalter, *Conservative…*, op.cit.

to focus on competition with one another, not on the cooperation with governments. As a result, we have been witnessing the process of increasing convergence, where in East Asian countries a modern welfare system is developing and in the Western countries the "classical" welfare state is rearranging itself to fit new political and economic environment.

Of course, one can find exceptions. In the case of East Asia, the most evident is Singapore. The political and economic reforms which have been taking place there have never reached the essential rules on which the country is ruled by PAP. All the time there has been a strict political control over Singaporean people, as well as there has always been tight governmental control over the island's economy. But even in Singapore there is a very particular but nevertheless comprehensive social security system based on the Central Provident Fund[55].

Nowadays, the validity of the convergence thesis depends on the transformations which are taking place in the People's Republic of China. Taking into account the political power of this state and its huge economic potential, the way in which this country will be meeting modern social issues may be in some way different from the experience of its neighbors. The Chinese government has a very strong position *vis-à-vis* even the most powerful economic actors and the unique position of Chinese economy in the world markets gives it the ability to play with those markets on its own rights. However, at the same time, political transformation inside China makes it prone to develop the comprehensive welfare system. Chinese people, with their experience of communism and with their tendency to put more pressure on social than political rights may as well push the Communist Party in the direction of creating a wide-ranging social policy system. For those reasons, one should expect that the PRC is the place where new ways of thinking about social policy will be developing.

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SUMMARY

These studies, influenced mostly by historical institutionalism, explore the different paths of social policy development in particular countries. In my paper, I would like to show the opposite process, the process of convergence of the welfare models. As examples I use four countries – South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Singapore. These countries, in recent years, have been going through a transformation from the traditional welfare state to the conservative-motivational social policy model. I derive the notion of traditional welfare state from the work of Max Weber. In his book, *Economy and Society*, he describes a *Wohlfahrtsstaat*. In his opinion, it is a welfare state which develops under the traditional type of domination. The political leader takes care of his people's welfare to confirm his role as a ruler. The welfare system which developed after the Second World War in many ways resembled the *Wohlfahrtsstaat* described by Weber. The strong authoritarian rule was combined with central managed economy and with very closed cooperation between political and economical elites. This system allowed the governments to improve the welfare of their people without the necessity to develop the welfare systems known form the western countries. But the existence of the traditional welfare state came to an end in the beginning of last two decades of the 20th century. In this period, the world economy began to globalize, the East Asian political systems have been transforming themselves to a more democratic one and the Cold War came to its end. In this new environment, it was not possible to sustain the existence of the traditional welfare state.

Key words:

East Asia, social policy, convergence, traditional welfare system, Max Weber, transformation

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CAN INFORMATION ABOUT SIMILARITIES OR DIFFERENCES CHANGE THE ATTITUDE TOWARD FOREIGNERS? AN INTERNET STUDY WITH JAPANESE AND POLISH MALE STUDENTS

1. Introduction

In a century of increasing globalization, communication in an international environment has become an issue of great significance. The present economic and cultural exchange among countries requires a deep insight into the process of cross-cultural communication. For these reasons, social scientists try to identify potential barriers and obstacles that may influence this process. Attitudes toward foreigners are an important element that must be taken into account while exploring the field of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, the subject of this study is the problem of how information about differences or similarities between countries can affect attitudes toward foreigners. The analyses are based on an experimental study conducted among Polish and Japanese students.

Before further investigating the problem of social attitudes toward foreigners, it is crucial to realize the importance of culture, which determines both the content and the structure of people's experiences as well as the way they understand the world surrounding them. Even the most basic psychological terms, such as the self, emotions or coping with post-decisional dissonance, are rather culturally dependant than universal[1]. Because it is impossible to describe and control all cultural

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[1] S. Kitayama, A.C. Snibbe, H.R. Markus, T. Suzuki, *Is There any "Free" Choice? Self and Dissonance in Two Cultures,* "Psychological Science" 2004, Vol.15, pp. 527–533.

differences existing between such distant countries as Japan and Poland, in the present study it is assumed that life orientations, considered to be the means of the indirect influence of culture and the indicators of individual differences, can be monitored. For this purpose the RN-02 Inventory constructed by Mudyń[2] is used.

2. Social distance as the basic component of the attitudes toward foreigners

The main category determining social attitudes is social distance. Social distance is a dimension of readiness for social contact, which ranges from very close and intimate contact to total separation. **Social distance** describes attitudes of one group toward another. The concept itself refers to "**the degree of closeness or acceptance that members of one group are willing to show members of another group**"[3]. The degree of closeness may be related to a group norm, as an effect of functional relations between groups. It is also influenced by individual predispositions such as "unique experiences, past contact with out-group members, personality variables, and so forth"[4]. Intergroup attitudes were for years the point of interest of many scientists. However, no systematic investigation was carried out. Bogardus was the first to define and measure what he called "social distance". According to his concept, "social distance is the sympathetic understanding that exists between persons, between groups, and between a person and each of his groups. [Social distance] may take the form of either farness or nearness. Where there is little sympathetic understanding, social farness exists. Where sympathetic nearness is great, nearness exists"[5].

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[2] K. Mudyń, *Rzeczywiste-nierzeczywiste. Podręcznik metody do badania orientacji życiowych* [Real-Non(real). The Manual for the Method RN-02 for Assessing Life Orientations], Kraków 2010. See also K. Mudyń, *W poszukiwaniu prywatnych orientacji ontologicznych* [Searching for Private Ontological Orientations], Kraków 2007, as well as K. Mudyń, K. Pietras, *Explicit and implicit values of Polish Grandmothers and Their Granddaughters. In Search of Correspondence*, "Polish Psychological Bulletin" 2009, No. 2 (40), pp. 62–68.

[3] L. Sagiv, S.H. Schwartz, *Value Priorities and Readiness for Out-group Social Contact,* "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" 1995, Vol. 69, p. 437.

[4] Ibidem, p. 437.

[5] E.S. Bogardus, *A Social Distance Scale*, "Sociology and Social Research", Vol. 17, pp. 265–271; after S. Siegel, I.L. Shepherd, *An Ordered Metric Measure of Social Distance,* "Sociometry" 1959, Vol. 22, p. 336.

2.1. The Poles' and the Japanese' attitudes toward other nations

The Poles' attitude toward foreign nations has been surveyed for the last decade. In a study conducted by Staszewski and Grudniewicz, Poles were asked about their positive or negative feelings concerning certain nations[6]. At first, in the early nineties, the list of nations consisted of eighteen countries. Nowadays, it has increased to twenty eight and consists mainly of European countries. In the same study, Japan was taken into account for the first time in 1995, with over 40% of respondents expressing their positive feelings. Antipathy toward the Japanese was declared by about 30% of participants. The remaining 30% remained indifferent. As a result of their research, the authors observed a general tendency for Poles to reveal more positive attitudes toward nations and countries that are well developed and which belong to the so called "Rich West", such as America, France, Italy, Britain, and Sweden. Japan, as a well-developed country, also qualified among the nations enjoying the Poles' positive attitude.

In 1966 research concerning attitudes toward foreign countries was carried out in Tokyo by Basabe. The aim of the study was to deal with images which students formed in respect to different nations and to examine national preferences and stereotypes[7]. The first part of the experiment was based on a rank-order scale. Students were asked to arrange a list of 18 nations according to their preferences. In the second part a social distance scale adapted to Japan was used. It contained questions regarding the extent to which certain counties were considered wanted or unwanted travel destinations or places of work, etc. The result significant for this study was that the Africans are among the nations least welcomed in Japan.

3. The influence of culture on social attitudes – Geert Hofstede's concept of culture

The role of culture in the creation of attitudes toward foreigners is undisputedly significant. To adequately approach this problem it is necessary to decide how to understand culture. According to Hofstede's concept of cultural dimensions (derived from Levinson's theory) there are issues that are universal and common for

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[6] *Polska – Europa – świat. Opinia publiczna w okresie integracji* [Poland – Europe – World. Public Opinion in the Period of Integration], K. Zagórski, M. Strzeszeski (eds.), Warszawa 2005.

[7] F. Basabe, *Attitudes of Japanese Students Toward Foreign Countries*, "Monumenta Nipponica" 1966, Vol. 21, pp. 61–96.

nations all over the world[8]. These problems are essential for the functioning of whole societies, groups, as well as individuals. These issues are as follows: the attitude towards power, the concept of the relation between an individual and society, the concept of masculinity and femininity and the methods of organizing social situations and solving conflicts, and the orientation in time. Since in the present study comparisons are made between Poland and Japan, some cultural differences must be pointed out (Table 1).

Table 1. Japan and Poland in Hofstede's dimensions

Country	Power distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty avoidance	Long-term orientation
Japan	54	46	95	92	80
Poland*	68	60	64	93	32

* Estimated values
Source: Hofstede, 2001.

What Polish and Japanese cultures have in common is definitely the dimension of uncertainty avoidance. Both societies tend to organize their social life by following clear rules and laws describing acceptable behaviors. This means that in both countries etiquette is emphasized. The greatest divergence exists in time orientation. Polish culture is deeply devoted to tradition and is short-term oriented, whereas Japanese culture is long-term oriented and tends to worship every single moment[9]. This does not mean that the Japanese cut off from tradition. It means that they are fascinated by fleeting phenomena[10]. The difference in defining gender roles is also visible. In Japanese society the functions of men and women are clear and have little in common. In Poland, however, behaviors typical of one sex are acceptable when exhibited by the other. A similar difference in point scores is noticeable in the first two dimensions. The Japanese tend to display stronger respect for authority and power. Collectivity seems to be also characteristic of the Japanese rather than the Polish culture. According to Azuma[11] "the core features of Japanese collectivism are role attachment and receptive diligence". This is also emphasized

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[8] G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences, Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*, Thousand Oaks CA 2001.

[9] *Estetyka japońska* [Japanese Esthetics], K. Wilkoszewska (ed.), Kraków 2006.

[10] S. Kaji, N. Hama, J. Rice, *Poradnik ksenofoba. Japończycy* [Xenophobe's Guide. The Japanese], Warszawa 2001.

[11] H. Azuma, S. Coll, *Japanese Collectivism and Education* [in:] *Global Prospects for Education: Development, Culture, and Schooling*, P.G. Scott, H.M. Wellman (eds.), Washington 1998, p. 294.

in Confucius's philosophy, which is fundamental for Japanese culture, stating that "society works best when individuals are loyal to those more learned and experienced and live up to their obligations to one another"[12].

4. Social cognition and social attitudes

Another problem influencing attitudes toward foreigners is social cognition, which concerns the question of how the individual makes sense of other people and themselves. It is therefore relevant to the study of attitudes, individual perception, stereotypization, etc.[13]. In the context of the present study there must be an awareness of the fact that all social interactions are rooted in a complex environment[14]. Due to the fact that the social environment is extremely complicated, social cognition always implies a certain extent of simplicity and predictability[15]. It leads to stereotyping, which is often treated as a broad, rigid, relatively inaccurate way of perceiving a category of people. In this sense, a traditional idea of a stereotypical response seems closely related to cognitive simplicity[16].

A stereotype, as a cognitive aspect of prejudice, is defined as a generalization referring to a group that may be distinguished on the basis of specific features like sex or race. All members of that group are perceived as having the same characteristics. Individual differences between them are neglected[17]. For example, "individuating information about a person can be relatively inconsequential when perceivers base their evaluations of a person on information associated with the individual's social group"[18]. A psychological process underlying stereotypical judgments is categorization[19]. Due to the complexity of the social world, the individu-

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[12] J. Scarborough, *The Origins of Cultural Differences and Their Impact on Management*, London 1998, p. 27.

[13] S.T. Fiske, S.E. Taylor, *Social Cognition*, New York 1984.

[14] M. Argyle, *The Psychology of Interpersonal Behavior*, London 1994.

[15] T. Maruszewski, *Psychologia poznania* [The Psychology of Cognition], Gdańsk 2002.

[16] F.W. Koenig, M.B. King, *Cognitive Simplicity and Out-Group Stereotyping*, "Social Forces" 1964, Vol. 42, pp. 324–327.

[17] E. Aronson., T.D. Wilson, R.M. Akert, *Social Psychology*, New York 2007.

[18] A.R. McConnell, R.J. Rydell., L.M. Strain, D.M. Mackie, *Forming Implicit and Explicit Attitudes Toward Individuals: Social Group Association Cues*, "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" 2008, Vol. 94, p. 792.

[19] H. Joffe, C. Staerkle, *The Centrality of the Self-control Ethos in Western Aspersions Regarding Outgroups: A Social Representational Approach to Stereotype Content*, "Culture and Psychology" 2007, Vol. 13, pp. 395–419.

al refers to specific categories, which make the understanding of this world easier. Additionally, what is significant for this study is that in the case of Japan, the majority of stereotypes have not been acquired by personal experience or by personal contact with representatives of different nations. "Japan has attempted to maintain its homogeneity through such dramatic steps as a self-imposed isolation from international exchange for more than two centuries"[20]. Therefore, Japan seems to be the most ethnically homogeneous society in the world[21]. As Japan exists in specific isolation due to its geographical location and history, the majority of these stereotypes have been acquired mainly through mass media, which are intentionally or not, influencing the images of each ethnic group[22]. Similarly, in the case of Poland, a geographical central location also has its impact on the creation of stereotypes. As Poles aspire to Western countries, they follow depreciating stereotypes of their eastern neighbors[23].

Furthermore, **perceived similarity may be the factor which influences social attitudes**. The mechanism of this influence is based on Heider's concept of balance[24]. The concept of structural balance can be illustrated as a relation among person A, person B and an act, property, or characteristic X. "When subject A likes person B and B subscribes to opinion X, such a force is generated that A tends to agree with opinion X. If A agrees with X, the three elements A, B, and X, are in a state of balance. If A does not agree with statement X, an imbalanced state arises"[25]. Analogously, it is assumed that by concentrating on differences, positive feelings are decreased.

5. Personal values as determinants of social attitudes

In this research, personal values are recognized as factors strongly affecting social attitudes. Values are commonly described as "relatively stable individual preferences that reflect socialization"[26]. They "refer to orientations toward what is con-

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[20] T. Levey, C.B. Silver, *Gender and Value Orientations – What's the Difference!? The Case of Japan and the United States*, "Sociological Forum" 2006, Vol. 21, p. 664.

[21] P. Varley, *Kultura japońska* [Japanese Culture], Kraków 2006.

[22] F. Basabe, op.cit.

[23] E. Lipniacka, *Poradnik ksenofoba. Polacy* [Xenophobe's Guide. The Poles], Warsaw 2001.

[24] A.J. Smith, *Perceived Similarity and the Projection of Similarity: The Influence of Valence*, "The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology" 1958, Vol. 57, pp. 376.

[25] Ibidem, p. 376.

[26] W. Bilsky, S.H. Schwartz, *Values and Personality,* "European Journal of Personality" 1994, Vol. 8, p. 164.

sidered desirable or preferable by people living in a society"[27]. The study of values as determinants of individual behavior has grown out of the will to understand the logics of the personality. As state Vernon and Allport in relation to Spranger's theory of values: "The common situations of everyday life give rise to evaluative judgments. One may look at a wedding ring […] and regard it as an object that is glittering (an aesthetic evaluation), as made of 14-carat gold (theoretical), as a marketable object (economic), as a symbol of loyalty and love (social), as an emblem of right and duties (political), as an object with sacramental and mystical significance (religious)"[28].

Moreover, value patterns arise as a result of complex interactions between individuals and their social environment, which are determined by their culture. Values, as part of the cognitive structure and personality of individuals, may vary due to individual differences. Furthermore, the cultural influence on social environment explains the diversity in value patterns observed across different cultures[29].

Interestingly, indirect conclusions about personal values may refer to life orientations, to the assessment of whether things are real or not. The ontological status of certain things that the individual evaluates helps to assess personal values. What one believes to be more valuable is also treated as more real. "Every idea […], as far as it becomes truly important to the individual, gains the status of reality"[30].

Personal values are of central importance to one's readiness for out-group contact. Values serve as standards for judgments and evaluations of intergroup attitudes and behaviors, as well as the justification and rationalization of prejudiced attitudes. "Perception that another group has values different from one's own or that this other group blocks cherished values have been founded to predict intergroup prejudice and readiness of aggression"[31].

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[27] M. Zavalloni, *Values* [in:] *Social Psychology Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, H. Triandis, R. Brislin (eds.), Boston 1982, pp. 78.

[28] P.E. Vernon, G.W. Allport, *A Test for Personal Values*, "The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology" 1931, Vol. 26, p. 234.

[29] K. Kumar, M.S. Thibodeaux, *Differences*, op.cit.

[30] K. Mudyń, *W poszukiwaniu* [Searching], op.cit., p. 127.

[31] L. Sagiv, S.H. Schwartz, *Value Priorities*, op.cit., p. 437.

6. Research questions, participants, and procedure

Research Questions

In the present study the main problem is the differences in Japanese and Polish students' reactions to additional information supporting or refuting previous stereotypical opinions. The hypothesis was as follows: students who are provided with information about the compared country, estimate social distance differently than those provided with no information. When the information regards similarities between the countries, they have a lower social distance. On the contrary, when it regards differences, social distance increases. This refers to the mechanism mentioned above – information regarding similarities between countries should increase the likeability and decrease the perceived social distance. The second problem regards the relation between personal values and the estimation of social distance and opinions about foreign countries. It is assumed that values preferred by Polish and Japanese students are different and that personal values are related to the estimation of the perceived social distance.

Participants

Over three hundred Japanese and Polish students participated in the study. As for Poles, around two hundred students from the Cracow University of Economics took part in the experiment – 122 females and 69 males. However, because of the unequal proportion of males to females in the Polish and Japanese groups, this analysis regards male students only. The participants' age ranges from 18 to 23 years and the average age is 21.6. As for the Japanese, students from Hiroshima University of Economics and the University of Kyoto were involved – 20 females and 64 males. The age range is the same as in the previous case and the average age is 20.4.

Research Procedure

The study is based on an experiment conducted via the Internet. All students were asked to visit a specified website.

They were asked to provide data about their sex, age, and year of study.

Both Japanese and Polish male students taking part in the experiment were randomly divided into three groups as presented in the diagram above (Figure 1). The numerosity of each group was comparable and varied from 18 to 25 participants. Two control groups with no experimental manipulation answered the Bogardus Social Distance Scale, RN-02 Inventory, and Country Description Scales. The Country Description Scales and Bogardus Social Distance Scale concerned Japan, Poland, and Kenya.
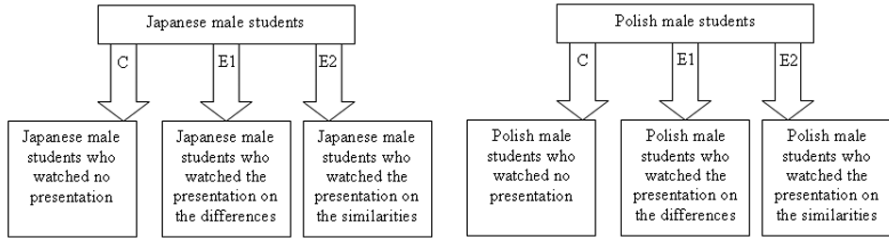
Figure 1. The procedure of the experiment

Source: own.

C – control group
E1 – experimental group who watched the presentation on the differences
E2 – experimental group who watched the presentation on the similarities

The next two groups, before being asked the questions, watched a presentation emphasizing the differences among those three countries. The presentation was divided into three parts, each of which was devoted to a different country. Firstly they watched pictures from Kenya, then from Poland, and finally from Japan. In the images, clothes, food, landscape and other typical features of that particular country were shown (see: Appendix 1).

The presentation on similarities among the same three countries was shown to the last two groups. Contrary to the presentation on differences, this time each slide consisted of three pictures – one from Kenya, one from Poland, and one from Japan (see: Appendix 2). They were ordered by a theme – family, school, playground, football teams, doctors, policemen, and offices. The aim was to expose similarities.

7. Instruments and hypothesis

Cross-cultural researchers should take some steps to overcome boundaries, so in this experiment all the methods were presented to the participants in their native language. This means that Polish and Japanese language versions of all the methods used were prepared for the need of the present study. However, the awareness of limitations is still present.

The Bogardus Social Distance Scale

The method is derived from Bogardus's concept of social distance[32]. Instead of regarding sympathy or antipathy towards a nation directly, the questions present various social situations. These situations range in gradation from one's willingness to marry into a different group or nation to the exclusion of a member of the group from the country[33]. The situations are as follows: matrimony, friendship, neighborhood, cooperation, citizenship and tourism. The underlying assumptions are that replies to these social situations would help in estimating the degree of sympathy felt towards different nations. Questions are ordered according to the level of acceptance, from a high degree of sympathy to rejection. Anyone who responds positively to the first of these questions is expected to answer all the other questions positively, except for the last one. An affirmative answer to the second question is supposedly equal to a positive response to the third, fourth, fifth and sixth ones, and negative to the seventh, and so on[34].

The RN-02 Inventory[35]

RN-02 is a method created by Krzysztof Mudyń. It helps to distinguish the life orientation favored by an individual. It is not a direct method of asking about values, but a method based on psychological projection. The main assumption is that what is believed to be more important and more valuable for an interviewee is also more real. This implies that the Inventory refers to values that are rather "sensed" than rationally accepted, i.e., "declared". This distinction is similar to the one made by Ossowski[36], who distinguished between "felt values" and "acknowledged values" which are considered as obligatorily respected. Moreover, as the term "real" is unspecified, it seems to be a good incentive for respondents to make psychological projections[37]. The categorization of life orientation is based on Sprang-

[32] E.S. Bogardus, *A Social Distance Scale*, "Sociology and Social Research" 1933, Vol. 17, pp. 265–271.

[33] M.C. Payne, M. York, J. Fagan, *Changes in Measured Social Distance Over Time*, "Sociometry" 1974 , Vol. 37, pp. 131–136.

[34] F. Basabe, *Attitudes of Japanese Students*, op.cit.

[35] RN-02 Inventory RN-02 is included in Appendix 3. An Office Excel program (calculating the results obtained in "paper and pencil" tests) is available at: http://www.ips.uj.edu.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=105:dr-hab-krzysztof-mudyn&catid

[36] S. Ossowski, *Konflikty niewspółmiernych skali wartości* [The Conflict Between Incommensurate Scales of Values] [in:] S. Ossowski, *Z zagadnień psychologii społecznej* [The Issues of Social Psychology], Warszawa 2000.

[37] K. Mudyń, *W poszukiwaniu* [Searching], op.cit.; see also K. Mudyń, K. Pietras, *Explicit*, op.cit., p. 64.

er's[38] concept of personal values (economic, theoretical, social, religious, esthetic, and political).

In RN-02 Inventory each of the six values is represented by ten items. The Inventory is composed of 58 such multiple choice items. In each item a respondent should pick out only one option which is the most real according to them. Additionally, the RN-02 Inventory enables distinguishing two separate clusters: analytic – instrumental and holistic. **The analytic-instrumental cluster** consists of Theoretical, Economic and Political Orientations, whereas **the holistic cluster** includes Social, Esthetic and Religious Orientations.

The Country Description Scales (method created by Michalik)
The Country Description Scales is a method created to gather opinions about countries in a unified way. It is based on Osgood's semantic differential marked on sevenpoint scales. A total score is estimated on a continuum between two opposite adjectives. Each country is described on nine scales: "Known – Unknown", "Friendly – Hostile", "Dominant – Submissive", "Sad – Joyful", "Passive – Active", "Nice – Unfriendly", "Close – Distant", "Similar – Different", "Interesting – Boring". Results are interpreted as follows: the lower the score is, the more attractive, similar, or familiar another country appears to be to the interviewee. When a respondent evaluates the attractiveness, similarity or familiarity for 1 point, it means the evaluated country can be fully characterized by those features. On the contrary, 7 points indicate that a respondent perceives the evaluated country as unattractive, dissimilar or unfamiliar.

Operationalized Hypothesis
In operational terms, the scores in the Bogardus Social Distance Scale are significantly different in each of the three, previously distinguished groups. The experimental groups' (those that were shown the presentation on the differences or similarities) results differ from those of the control group. The experimental group that watched the presentation on similarities should assess the lowest social distance. Additionally, Japanese students are expected to estimate a greater social distance in comparison to Polish students. Then, opinions about foreign countries expressed in the Country Description Scales will differ among the control and the experimental groups as well as between Polish and Japanese groups. Especially the score in the "Similarity" Scale in the Country Description Scale should vary among control and experimental groups – this hypothesis is also tested inside each nationality. Next, scores obtained by Polish and Japanese students in the RN-02 In-

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[38] E. Spranger, *Types of Men. The Psychology of Etics and Personality*, New York 1928.

ventory should differ. The Japanese are expected to score higher than Poles in social orientation. Finally, students who score differently in the RN-02 Inventory are also expected to estimate social distance differently.

8. Results

The experiment revealed some differences in the estimation of social distance evaluated by Polish and Japanese students. **Poles tend to estimate social distance toward foreigners lower than the Japanese.**

As presented below in Table 2, the differences are especially visible in comparisons between Polish and Japanese groups who watched the presentation on differences. Statistically significant differences were reported in the evaluation of social distance towards the Kenyans (the two-tailed t-test result was t (2, 43) = 2.1; p = 0.04). Some tendencies in the evaluations were observed toward each other (t (2, 43) = 1.6; p = 0.1) and generally toward foreigners (t (2, 43) = 2.0; p = 0.06). Surprisingly, Poles tend to evaluate social distance higher than the Japanese after having watched the presentation on similarities. However, this tendency is not statistically significant.

Table 2. A comparison of Polish and Japanese male students' evaluations of social distance estimated on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale

Social distance	Estimated by	No presentation	The presentation on the differences	The presentation on the similarities	*One-way ANOVA p value*
Toward the Kenyans	The Poles	1.6	1.8	2.0	*0.72*
	The Japanese	1.6	2.9	1.6	0.01
	two tailed t-test p value	*0.94*	0.04	*0.64*	
Toward each other *	The Poles	1.2	1.6	1.3	*0.62*
	The Japanese	1.9	2.5	1.6	*0.25*
	two tailed t-test p value	*0.16*	*0.11*	*0.53*	
Toward foreigners**	The Poles	1.4	1.7	1.7	*0.81*
	The Japanese	1.7	2.7	1.6	0.05
	two tailed t-test p value	*0.46*	*0.06*	*0.86*	

* Poles estimated the social distance towards the Japanese and the Japanese toward Poles.
** Social distance towards foreigners is calculated as the average social distance towards the Kenyans and the Japanese in the case of Poles, and towards the Kenyans and the Japanese in the case of the Japanese.

Source: own.

Other significant differences were observed between the control and experimental groups among Japanese students (Figure 2).
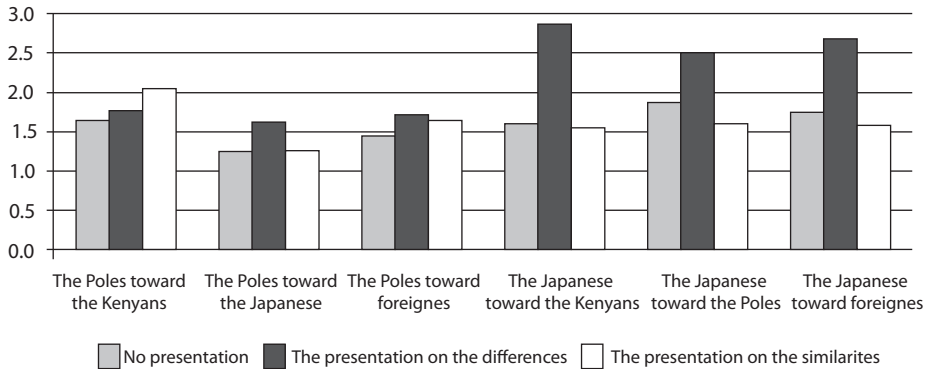

Figure 2. A comparison of Polish and Japanese control and experimental groups' evaluations of social distance estimated on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale

Source: own.

Students who were shown the presentation on differences evaluated social distance as higher than those from other groups. In the case of the attitudes toward the Kenyans there was a One-way ANOVA $F_{(2, 63)} = 5.1$; $p = 0.01$ and toward foreigners in general $F_{(2, 63)} = 3.3$; $p = 0.05$. In the case of the attitudes toward Poles the same tendency appears, but is not statistically significant. Moreover, **Polish groups who watched the presentation on similarities estimated social distance as greater than the control group did**.

Another issue explored in the present study is personal values and their impact on the estimation of social distance. Polish and Japanese students differ in preferred orientations. **Poles tend to score significantly higher in the Economic Orientation, whereas the Japanese in Esthetic and Political Orientations** (Figure 3). Similarly, in another study comparing Polish and Irish students' life orientations, Poles scored higher in the Economic Orientation and lower in Esthetic and Political Orientations[39].

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[39] J. Matyjasik, *Indywidualna hierarchia wartości i retrospekcyjny obraz postaw rodziców a zadowolenie z życia i poczucie szczęścia* [An Individual Hierarchy of Values and Retrospective Image of Parents' Attitudes in Relation to Life Satisfaction and Happiness], Niepublikowana praca magisterska [Unpublished master thesis], Institute of Applied Psychology UJ, Kraków 2009.
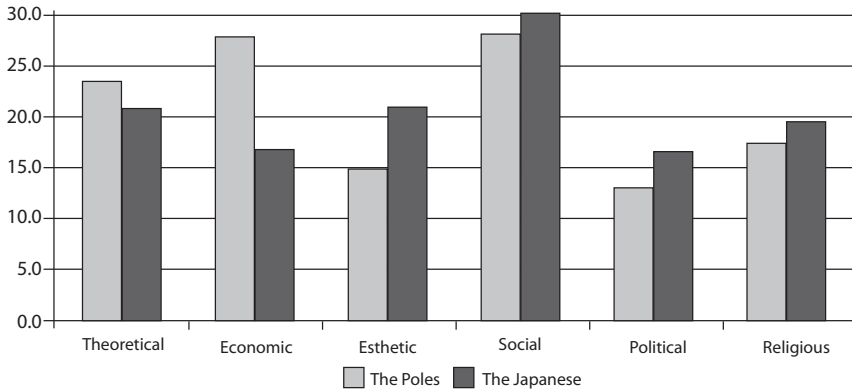
Figure 3. **The comparison of Polish and Japanese male students' scores in the RN-02 Inventory orientations**

Source: own.

Table 3. **Main scores obtained by Polish and Japanese male students in RN-02 Inventory**

Orientations	Theoretical	Economic	Esthetic	Social	Political	Religious
The Poles	23.2	27.6	15.0	27.9	12.8	17.4
The Japanese	20.8	16.6	20.6	29.9	16.4	19.3
Mann-Whitney test (two-tailed) p value	*0.76*	0.001	0.01	*0.46**	0.02	*0.12*

*Unpaired two-tailed t-test.

The observed differences are mostly statistically significant (Table 3). Also, the analyses of the clusters support the hypothesis on differences between Poles and the Japanese in personal value systems. Previous research conducted in Poland by Mudyń[40] (2007) enabled to distinguish two clusters: analytic–instrumental and holistic. The revealed tendency is applied in the analyses of current data. Japanese students significantly more often chose orientations typical of the holistic cluster, whereas Polish students chose life orientations representing the instrumental cluster more frequently (Table 4).

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[40] K. Mudyń, *W poszukiwaniu* [Searching], op.cit.

Table 4. The comparison of clusters chosen by Polish and Japanese male students in the RN-02 Inventory

Nationality	Analytic – instrumental cluster	Holistic cluster	t-test p value
The Poles	63.6	60.2	*0.26*
The Japanese	53.8	69.9	0.001

Source: own.

A question that seems to be interesting from the present study's point of view is how the preferred life orientation or cluster influences the attitude towards foreigners. In the case of Polish students no correlation was found between the estimation of social distance on the Bogardus Scale and the life orientation measured by the RN-02 Inventory. Only a slight correlation (Pearson r = – 0.29) between social distance and Political Orientation was observed in the group that did not watch a presentation (p = 0.16). Similarly, the analysis of correlation between social distance and orientation clusters revealed no statistically significant relations.

Table 5. The correlation between Japanese students' scores in the RN-02 Inventory and the estimation of social distance on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale

	Theoretical	Economic	Esthetic	Social	Political	Religious
All Japanese students (N=59)						
Pearson r	0.17	0.15	0.08	-0.49 ***	0.34 **	0.02
Students who watched no presentation (N=21)						
Pearson r	0.31	-0.02	-0.29	-0.31	0.52 *	-0.01
Students who watched the presentation on differences (N=21)						
Pearson r	-0.17	0.43 *	0.08	-0.51 *	0.46 *	-0.03
Students who watched the presentation on similarities (N=17)						
Pearson r	0.46	0.14	0.20	-0.59 *	-0.01	-0.04

*p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

On the contrary, the results obtained by Japanese students in the RN-02 Inventory correlate with the estimation of social distance on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale (Table 5). According to expectations, Social Orientation highly correlates (Pearson r = – 0.49) with the evaluation of social distance. **The higher the score in Social Orientation, the lower the estimation of social distance**. The opposite relation was observed between Political Orientation and the estimation of social distance – **the higher the score in Political Orientation, the greater the reported social distance.**

The next aim of the experiment was to verify whether the presentation of material regarding chosen countries affects attitudes toward foreigners (Table 6 and 7). Despite the fact that the influence of the experimental material was weaker than expected, some statistically significant differences were reported.

First, the presentations affected opinions on how well-known the given countries are. Poles found Kenya better known after having seen the material on similarities (the two-tailed t-test result was t (2, 45) = 1.7; p = 0.1). The same tendency was observed in opinions about Japan – Poles who watched the presentation on similarities considered Japan as better known than those who were not shown any presentation. At the same time, the Japanese who watched the presentation on differences estimated the level of knowledge about Kenya as lower than those who saw no presentation (the two-tailed t-test result was t (2, 44) = 1.9; p = 0.12).

Second, some differences were revealed in the estimation of similarity between countries. Poles estimated the similarity of Kenya as greater after being shown both the presentation on differences (Mann-Whitney U (2, 45) = 189; p = 0.12) and similarities (Mann-Whitney U (2, 45) = 190; p = 0.06). Similarly, the Japanese who watched the presentation on similarities found Poland to be more similar than the students who did not see the material (the two-tailed t-test result was t (2, 39) = 1.7; p = 0.1). This tendency was noticeable in the estimation of the similarity of Poland.

Next, some trends were reported for the "Nice – Unfriendly" scale: in most cases the Japanese estimated higher how nice the country is after being shown the presentations. The Polish results support the existence of the observed tendency – Poles found Kenya nicer after the presentation on differences (the two-tailed t-test result was t (2, 45) = 1.7; p = 0.1).

Finally, the presentations had no effect on the evaluation of how interesting the given countries are, how close they are and how friendly they are considered with one exception – the Japanese found Kenya less friendly after having seen the presentation on differences (the two-tailed t-test result was t (2, 44) = 1.8; p = 0.08).

Table 6. The comparison of opinions about Kenya expressed by Polish and Japanese students on the Country Description Scales

Kenya	Estimated by	No presentation	The presentation on differences	The presentation on similarities
Known	The Poles	2.8	3.0	3.5
	The Japanese	4.0	2.9	3.6
	p**	*0.02*	*0.74*	*0.66*

Kenya	Estimated by	No presentation	The presentation on differences	The presentation on similarities
Similar	The Poles	1.4	2.2	2.4
	The Japanese	2.6	2.8	3.2
	p	0.001	*0.20*	*0.18*
Friendly	The Poles	4.2	4.5	4.2
	The Japanese	5.1	4.6	5.3
	p	0.02	*0.84*	0.02
Interesting	The Poles	5.5	5.9	5.1
	The Japanese	4.1	4.3	4.6
	p	0.01	0.001	*0.20*
Nice	The Poles	4.4	5.2	4.3
	The Japanese	4.5	4.3	5.1
	p	*0.86*	*0.08*	*0.22*
Close	The Poles	1.9	2.0	2.5
	The Japanese	2.3	2.0	2.2
	p	*0.28*	*0.92*	*0.52*

* The values on the Country Description Scales were reversed to simplify the presentation of data.
** All the statistics are based on the two-tailed t-test p value.

Source: own.

Poles and the Japanese differ further in their opinions (Table 6 and 7). **The most noticeable difference is that Polish students found foreign countries far more interesting than Japanese students did.** Poles also claimed to know Japan better that the Japanese declared to know Poland (Table 7). Additionally, according to Poles, Japan is closer than Poland is according to the Japanese. On the contrary, Japanese students found Kenya and Poland statistically more similar than Polish students found Kenya and Japan.

Table 7. The comparison of opinions about each other expressed by Polish and Japanese students on the Country Description Scales

Each other opinions	Estimated by	No presentation	The presentation on differences	The presentation on similarities
Known	The Poles	4.6	5.2	5.3
	The Japanese	3.9	3.4	3.4
	p**	*0.20*	0.001	0.001
Similar	The Poles	2.6	2.2	2.8
	The Japanese	3.3	3.4	4.1
	p	*0.16*	0.02	0.02

Each other opinions	Estimated by	No presentation	The presentation on differences	The presentation on similarities
Friendly	The Poles	5.4	5.2	5.3
	The Japanese	4.8	4.9	5.1
	p	0.04	*0.36*	*0.58*
Interesting	The Poles	5.9	6.3	6.0
	The Japanese	4.3	4.4	4.3
	p	0.01	0.001	0.01
Nice	The Poles	5.4	5.0	5.1
	The Japanese	4.6	5.0	5.2
	p	0.04	*0.92*	*0.88*
Close	The Poles	6.0	6.0	6.0
	The Japanese	2.8	2.7	3.0
	p	0.001	0.001	0.001

* The values on the Country Description Scales were reversed to simplify the presentation of data.
** All the statistics are based on the two-tailed t-test p value.

Finally, the correlation between opinions about the countries and the estimation of social distance was explored. The scale that correlates the most with social distance is "Interesting – Boring". When a country was evaluated as more interesting, the social distance towards those particular foreigners was lower. An exception was the attitude towards the Japanese of the Polish group of students who were not shown any presentation – the more interesting Japan appeared to them, the greater they reported the social distance.

Moreover, in the Japanese sample there was a negative correlation between the estimation of social distance and "Nice – Unfriendly" (on average Pearson r = – 0.44). The nicer the foreign country is considered to be, the lower the existing social distance is.

The last relation worth mentioning exists between Japanese and Polish students' opinions on how well-known Kenya is and the evaluation of social distance towards the Kenyans. According to the results gathered in Poland, the less known Kenya is, the closer the distance is declared. On the contrary, the tendency in the Japanese sample is the opposite – the better Kenya is known, the closer the distance is expressed.

Interestingly, **the presentation on differences induced the strongest correlations**. As it is presented in Table 8, the nicer, more interesting or friendlier a foreign country is found, the lower the estimation of social distance. This observation supports the claim that the presentation on differences induced significant changes in the attitudes toward foreigners.

Table 8. **The correlation between the Country Description Scales and the estimation of social distance on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale in Polish and Japanese groups who were shown the presentation on differences**

	Known	Friendly	Interesting	Nice	Close	Similar
Kenya assessed by Polish students (N=22)						
Pearson r	0.30	0.14	-0.42 *	-0.40	0.32	0.23
Japan assessed by Polish students (N=22)						
Pearson r	-0.04	-0.60***	-0.46 *	-0.46 *	0.00	0.11
Kenya assessed by Japanese students (N=21)						
Pearson r	-0.40	-0.15	-0.62**	-0.67***	-0.07	-0.28
Poland assessed by Japanese students (N=21)						
Pearson r	-0.18	-0.32	-0.19	-0.33	0.05	0.02

* The values on the Country Description Scales were reversed to simplify the presentation of data.

Source: own.

9. Discussion

To begin with, social distance evaluated by both Polish and Japanese students, is significantly different from zero, suggesting total acceptance of foreigners. Regarding Hofstede's concept, in both Japanese and Polish culture, there is a strong tendency to avoid uncertainty[41]. Not knowing social rules and rituals, foreigners bring uncertainty to social life and may therefore be rejected from society. The disturbance of social order and predictability by foreigners can be an explanation for this reluctance.

The differences reported between Polish and Japanese men's judgments of social distance support previously assumed hypotheses. Indeed, **the Japanese tend to perceive greater social distance towards foreigners than Poles.** The explanation probably lies in familiarity with foreigners, which in this case seems to be culturally determined. Polish students are accustomed to foreign students in class. Given the opportunity by Erasmus Internships, Poles can also study abroad more easily. An additional barrier that exists between Japanese students and foreigners are poor foreign language skills. Despite many years of studying English, a majority of the

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[41] G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, op.cit.

Japanese cannot manage to speak it[42]. Similar observation was also made by one of the authors of the article made during a few months stay in one of academic centers in Japan in the academic year 2006/2007. Difficulties in studying languages make it hard to get to know and understand foreigners. The lack of common ground increases the sense of distance. In addition, "intense group solidarity is complemented by discomfort in the presence of non-Japanese"[43].

Moreover, some questions arise while referring to the evaluation of social distance by Poles who did not watch a presentation and by those who were presented experimental material. Students who were shown the presentation on differences were expected to estimate social distance as greater than those who did not. Students who were shown the presentation on similarities were supposed to evaluate social distance as closer. **Contrary to expectations, both groups that were shown presentations evaluated social distance as greater**. Although this tendency is not statistically significant, it is worth noticing. According to Kloskowska's research[44], young Poles present a more open attitude towards foreigners in the practical rather than declarative aspect. The current study leads to the opposite conclusion. When students were asked just about their attitudes, they were more open. Watching a presentation requires rethinking one's own point of view and so, due to the presentation, unspecified questions become more realistic. When thinking less theoretically about the situations presented in the Bogardus Social Distance Scale, Poles evaluate social distance towards foreigners as greater. Another possible justification regards the aspiration of Poles to belong to "the beloved West"[45]. **Being shown similarities with the Kenyans, Poles reject them and consider the Kenyans to be more distant**. A different tendency was observed in the Japanese sample and was in accordance with the hypothesis. While exploring why the Japanese students, contrary to Poles, were affected by the experimental manipulation, two facts have to be taken into account.

One probable explanation is the fact that in Japan, respect for authority is strong[46] and since a presentation is treated as scientific material, it may evoke changes in attitudes. The Japanese seem to follow authority more easily than Poles.

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[42] M. Dezaki, *Shame over Poor English Level Lies with Education Ministry*, 2009, http://search.japantimes.co.jp/rss/fl20090120hn.html, [access: 24.01.2009].

[43] J. Scarborough, *The Origins of Cultural Differences and Their Impact on Management*, London 1998.

[44] A. Kłoskowska, *Kultury narodowe u korzeni* [National Cultures at Their Roots], Warszawa 2005.

[45] E. Lipniacka, *Poradnik ksenofoba. Polacy* [Xenophobe's Guide. The Poles], op.cit. See also: A. Kłoskowska, *Kultury narodowe* [National Cultures], op.cit.

[46] G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, op.cit.

Additionally, the way Poles react may have its source in the need for uniqueness. Western culture forces people to become independent from others by expressing their uniqueness. According to Snyder and Fromkin[47], as well as Lynn and Snyder[48], **individuals' need for uniqueness is fulfilled by the comfort of being moderately different or unique from others**. The intensity of this need varies among individuals. Given the differences between Polish and Japanese cultures, **Poles are expected to express a stronger need for uniqueness**. This concept may also explain the difference in reactions to the presentation on differences. While in the Japanese sample the information on differences generally induced greater social distance and less positive opinions, in the Polish sample it had the opposite effect. Perhaps for Poles the information on differences is needed to maintain a desired level of uniqueness. On the contrary, the information on similarities invaded the Poles' sense of uniqueness, which resulted in less positive attitudes toward foreigners.

Another possible idea considers Basabes's observation about stereotypes in Japan[49]. As Japan is isolated from other countries, stereotypes of foreigners are generally created by the media. Presented material may have the same impact on attitudes as regular TV material. Presentations can be considered a valuable source of information and may therefore generate changes in attitudes.

As for cultural differences in personal values and life orientations, Polish and Japanese students vary significantly. The most visible divergence regards the Economic Orientation. The Japanese score definitely lower than Poles. Perhaps the reason lies in Japanese modesty and reluctance to deal overtly with money[50] and may stop the Japanese from openly admitting to an interest in economics. On the other hand, all the participants from Poland study at the University of Economics while only half of the Japanese participants are recognized as students of economics faculties However, according to Mudyń[51] previous study, in Poland such low scores in the Economic Orientation as those observed in Japan do not occur. He suggests that **the Poles' interest in economical issues may be a consequence of the national economy transforming from socialism into capitalism** – which would support the previous explanation.

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[47] C.R. Snyder, H.L. Fromkin, *Abnormality as a Positive Characteristic: The Development and Validation of a Scale Measuring Need for Uniqueness*, "Journal of Abnormal Psychology" 1977, Vol. 86. Also: C.R. Snyder, H.L. Fromkin, *Uniqueness: The Human Pursuit of Difference*, New York 1980.

[48] M. Lynn, C R Snyder, *Uniqueness Seeking* [in:] *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, C.R. Snyder, S.J. Lopez (eds.), Oxford 2002, pp. 395–410.

[49] F. Basabe, *Attitudes of Japanese Students*, op.cit.

[50] S. Kaji, N. Hama, J. Rice, op.cit.

[51] K. Mudyń, *Rzeczywiste–Nierzeczywiste* [Real-Non(real)], op.cit., pp. 46–47.

Moreover, the Japanese are significantly more esthetically orientated than Poles. This tendency seems to be in accordance with Hofstede's concept. Namely, the Japanese tend to worship every single moment and care a lot about passing beauty[52]. Adoration of the cherry blossom or the artistic carefulness of sushi preparation are just a few examples of the importance of esthetic values. Contrary to expectations, the research did not reveal considerable differences in the Social Orientation. Although the Japanese obtained higher results, they are not statistically significant. As Japan is considered to be a rather collective society[53], social values may be understood in a different manner than in Western societies, where the RN-02 Inventory was created.

In the Japanese sample there is a clear trend that people who favor the Social Orientation declare lower social distance towards foreigners. This is one of the tendencies that were previously assumed and later on confirmed by this research. As Japan is considered to be an example of a collectivistic and society-focused country, the result does not surprise. Furthermore, positive correlation between the Social Orientation score and the estimation of social distance was reported. The justification is related directly to Spranger's value types. Socially-oriented people tend to care about social relations and are characterized by a philanthropic attitude towards other human beings[54].

Another interesting result is how the Political Orientation is related to the estimation of social distance. In the Japanese sample there is a strong correlation – the higher one scores in Political Orientation, the greater the social distance is perceived. **Perhaps an interest in political issues increases the sense of separateness from other countries.** An opposite tendency, though not statistically significant, was observed in the Polish sample.

A following question is what Polish and Japanese male students think of foreign countries. Generally, Poles seem to be attracted by other countries much more than the Japanese. Polish students declare to know Kenya less than the Japanese, but at the same time believe they know more about Japan than the Japanese know about Poland. What seems interesting is that **Poles find Japan more familiar, more interesting, and closer than the Japanese find Poland**. However, Poles estimate the level of similarity to Japan lower than the Japanese estimate their similarity to Poland. As for the relation between an opinion about a certain country and the

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[52] G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, op.cit.; *Estetyka japońska* [Japanese Esthetics],K. Wilko-szewska (ed.), Kraków 2006.

[53] G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, op.cit.

[54] P.E. Vernon, G.W. Allport, *A Test*, op.cit.

perceived social distance towards its inhabitants, the estimation of how well-known the country is, is worth attention. In the Polish sample, when a country is considered to be better known, as in the case of Kenya, the social distance is greater. Unlike in the Polish sample, in the Japanese the correlation is opposite. This tendency is in accordance with the general conclusion on how Poles and the Japanese reacted to information about other countries and how they perceive social distance.

10. Conclusion

First, as a result of the present study with Polish and Japanese students, comes a conclusion regarding the importance of culture and its influence on attitudes toward foreigners. Not only does culture directly determine perceived social distance, but it also indirectly affects personal values and social cognition. **The present study confirmed differences in the value system of Poles and the Japanese**. It also revealed crosscultural variation in the reception of cognitive material. Nevertheless, the most significant observation refers to differences in opinions on social distance towards foreigners between Poles and the Japanese. It must be pointed out that Japanese students' attitudes toward foreigners are in accordance with previous assumptions. Polish students' attitudes seem to be less rational. Their opinions are not coherent. A possible explanation is that now Poland is involved in social changes related to its admission to the European Union, which also includes changes in Poles attitudes toward foreigners. This is why their opinions are not stable.

Second, values are recognized as one of several individual factors affecting the perception of social distance. **Especially the Social and Political Orientations are distinguished as having the strongest influence on decisions regarding social attitudes**. However, only the data collected in Japan support the assumption that being socially-oriented decreases social distance.

Next, **the results indicate that the same information may result in different reactions in different cultures**. Moreover, there is a relation between the given information and the estimation of social distance. It shows that **to overcome obstacles caused by stereotypes in cross-cultural communication, simple provision of information may not be enough. Information must be adjusted to recipients' hitherto gathered knowledge**. This problem needs further investigation.

All in all, the study confirmed that cross-cultural communication is strongly affected by cultural and individual determinants. One has to realize the existence of a difference in perceiving social distance towards representatives of other na-

tionalities. It is also important to bear in mind, that stereotypical attitudes are deeply established in the social conscience.

As for the experiment itself, several limitations of the study were recognized. The preparation of presentations was based on subjective judgments. In addition, the Country Description Scale, being the author's own method, requires further investigation (i.e. the lack of the scale "Poor –Rich"). Moreover, one more individual factor should be considered – the frequency of contact with foreigners and personal experience in this matter. Cross-cultural studies require the contribution of representatives of various nationalities. The researchers are deeply embedded in their own culture, which in fact affects the study at every stage, from early preparation to analyzing data and formulating conclusions[55]. Despite these limitations, these analyses are expected to enhance the understanding of the attitudes of Polish and Japanese students toward foreigners. Hopefully, they can be an inspiration for further investigation in this domain.

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SUMMARY

In an Internet study, Japanese and Polish male students (aged 19–23) were shown presentations depicting either similarities or differences between Japan, Poland, and Kenya. Next, both the experimental and control groups filled in the Bogardus Social Distance Scale, RN-02 Inventory, and Country Description Scale. The expected social distance effect, which increases after differences between countries are presented, was observed only in the Japanese sample toward the Kenyans ($p < 0.01$). Moreover, Japanese students appeared more sensitive to differences than Polish students and were also found to be more esthetically ($p < 0.001$) and politically ($p < 0.05$) oriented than Polish students, who demonstrated a stronger economic orientation ($p < 0.001$).
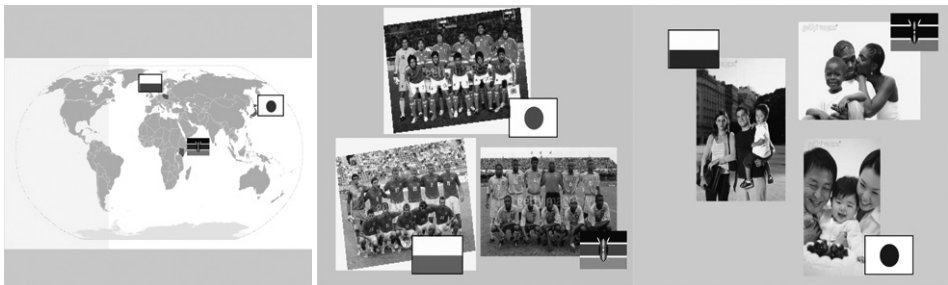
Key words:

Appendix 1. Sample slides from the presentation on differences
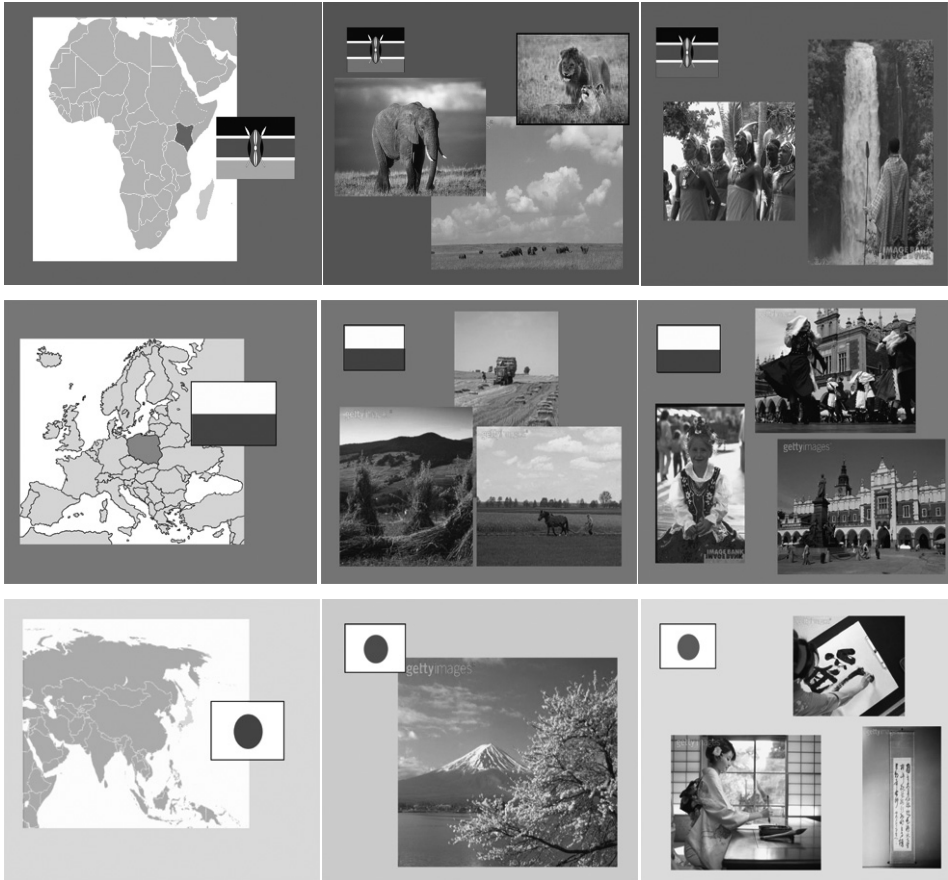
Appendix 2. Sample slides from the presentation on similarities

Appendix 3.

Krzysztof Mudyń, Jagiellonian University, Institute of Applied Psychology

RN-02
Below is a list of 58 multiple-choice sets of items referring to different "objects" or different aspects of reality. Some of them refer to something that seems to be very real, whereas others to something that you may find not very real or completely unreal.

According to your own opinion and feelings, please choose just one answer in each set. You should find the chosen item more real than the other two or three in the set.

Each answer is going to reappear in different sets. Even if it is hard to decide on one answer, please try to distinguish the one that is the most real for you.

1. a) the city of Cracow
   b) the Universe
   c) I, myself

2. a) stockbroker office,
   b) God the Creator
   c) community of experiences

3. a) genotype
   b) poetic mood
   c) minority's regime

4. a) energy consumption
   b) true friendship
   c) probability of events

5. a) composition of colours
   b) mathematical formula
   c) domestic budget

6. a) article of faith,
   b) humanitarian aid,
   c) harmony of shapes

7. a) meaning of life
   b) military advantage
   c) electromagnetic field

8. a) neighborly relations
   b) gravity
   c) Impressionist painting

9. a) circle of friends
   b) the structure of power
   c) internal freedom

10. a) territorial government
    b) stylish outfit
    c) promotional price

11. a) the hero of the novel
    b) Satan
    c) income tax

12. a) power struggle
    b) investment profitability
    c) group solidarity

13. a) logical inconsistency
    b) immortality of the soul
    c) public opinion

14. a) atomic structure
    b) joint prayer
    c) piano concert

15. a) destiny
    b) the ability to cooperate
    c) causal connection

16. a) investment credit
    b) flowers' aroma
    c) election campaign

17. a) political opposition
    b) costs of production
    c) interpersonal relations

18. a) the Universe
    b) I, myself
    c) the city of Cracow

19. a) composition of colours
    b) community of experiences
    c) minority's regime

20. a) genotype
    b) poetic mood
    c) true friendship

21. a) domestic budget
    b) mathematical formula
    c) article of faith

22. a) humanitarian aid
    b) military advantage
    c) electromagnetic field

23. a) the structure of power
    b) gravity
    c) Impressionist painting

24. a) internal freedom
    b) promotional price
    c) the hero of the novel

25. a) group solidarity
    b) income tax
    c) immortality of the soul

26. a) Satan
    b) public opinion
    c) investment profitability

27. a) party in power
    b) violin sonata
    c) artificial intelligence

28. a) social justice
    b) guardian angel
    c) stock exchange transaction

29. a) relativity theory
    b) Act of Parliament
    c) eternal redemption

30. a) aesthetic interior design
    b) common fun
    c) economic recession

31. a) guardian angel
    b) atomic structure
    c) social justice

32. a) costs of production
    b) violin sonata
    c) common fun

33. a) logical inconsistency
    b) investment credit
    c) power struggle

34. a) election campaign
    b) causal connection
    c) circle of friends.

35. a) flowers' aroma
    b) artificial intelligence
    c) eternal redemption

36. a) piano concert
    b) party in power
    c) probability of events

37. a) relativity theory
    b) meaning of life
    c) Act of Parliament

38. a) consumption of energy
    b) harmony of shapes
    c) the ability to cooperate

39. a) stylish outfit
    b) territorial government
    c) stockbroker office

40. a) interpersonal relations
    b) God the Creator
    c) stock exchange transaction

41. a) aesthetic interior design
    b) destiny
    c) political opposition

42. a) joint prayer
    b) economic recession
    c) neighborly relations

43. a) I, myself
    b) the Universe
    c) the city of Cracow

44. a) stockbroker office
    b) composition of colours
    c) atomic structure
    d) community of experiences

45. a) probability of events
    b) costs of production
    c) poetic mood
    d) minority's regime

46. a) joint prayer
    b) energy consumption
    c) true friendship
    d) genotype

47. a) God the Creator,
    b) electromagnetic field
    c) piano concert
    d) domestic budget

48. a) causal connection
    b) harmony of shapes
    c) humanitarian aid
    d) article of faith

49. a) investment credit
    b) meaning of life
    c) the structure of power
    d) mathematical formula

50. a) political opposition
    b) neighborly relations
    c) gravity
    d) Impressionist painting

51. a) flowers' aroma
    b) circle of friends
    c) military advantage
    d) internal freedom

52. a) the ability to cooperate
    b) the hero of the novel
    c) power struggle
    d) promotional price

53. a) election campaign
    b) stylish outfit
    c) immortality of the soul
    d) income tax

54. a) destiny
    b) territorial government
    c) investment profitability
    d) group solidarity

55. a) interpersonal relations
    b) logical inconsistency
    c) Satan
    d) public opinion

56. a) eternal redemption
    b) party in power
    c) social justice
    d) aesthetic interior design

57. a) common fun
    b) economic recession
    c) relativity theory
    d) violin sonata

58. a) stock exchange transaction,
    b) artificial intelligence
    c) guardian angel
    d) Act of Parliament

SPECIAL COMMUNICATES

Janusz Mucha, Paulina Świątek

"WHAT'S GOING ON WITH SOCIETY?". POLISH SOCIETY AND POLISH SOCIOLOGY AS REFLECTED BY THE 14TH POLISH CONGRESS OF SOCIOLOGY, KRAKÓW, SEPTEMBER 2010

1. Introduction

Expectations that a big sociological Congress (in this case, 1,200 active participants) can be coherent, or that it can give a precise answer to its slogan question seem to us excessive under the conditions of relative, even if dynamic, economic, political, structural and cultural stability. Similarly, the expectations that at any three-day long scientific congress it is possible to reach a compromise which would satisfy all interested parties, between the aspirations of numerous hundreds of scholars who would like to have enough time to present the details of their findings and their willingness to have plenty of time for discussion during each session, we consider to be completely unrealistic. It is enough to participate in any Conference of the European Sociological Association or in any World Congress of Sociology in order to see that it is not possible in practice to fulfill these hopes.

Big social scientific events (if not during the social crises) serve, in our opinion, other functions. They give the scholars a chance to talk (formally and informally) with peers who study similar issues, to learn about new trends in empirical and theoretical analysis of social phenomena, to listen to contemporary classics, local and global, of the discipline, whom it is difficult to see on the everyday basis. We are of the opinion that the Kraków Congress met these functions, even if not to the extent outlined by the official program. We are also aware of the fact that some

participants were not satisfied. During the Congress discussions, formal and informal, as well as in the media, they expressed the convictions that the conference had not proposed any new perspectives on the dynamics of Polish society and Polish sociology, that it had not concentrated enough on the vital problems of Polish society, on barriers hindering its growth (whatever the understanding of this growth was).

   In the next sections of this analysis we will deal with the following issues. Firstly, we will briefly mention the former congresses of sociology in sovereign Poland. Secondly, we will outline the "main sessions" – plenary sessions and symposia of the Kraków Congress. Thirdly, we will discuss the topics of the thematic groups. Fourthly, we will present the official events accompanying the Congress – they also tell a lot about Polish society and Polish sociology. We will comment on the international aspects of the Congress. The empirical basis of this account is first of all our participant observation in the main sessions and accompanying events, the electronic and printed program, and the report of the task force which selected and recommended the thematic group proposals to the Program Committee. This report gave an interesting typology of the thematic groups, later accepted by the Committee. We were not able to participate in other thematic groups than our own. Our account is subjective in the sense that we present here what was in our opinion particularly important. The authors of papers might have had another opinion on their own lectures. Unlike many of those participants who published their opinions in the media, we will limit the attempt to make the value judgments on this Congress' significance.

2. Sociological Congresses in sovereign Poland

The 1st congress (at that time called a "conference") of Polish sociologists was sponsored by the Polish Institute of Sociology (PIS), having been established by Florian Znaniecki, and took place in Poznań in 1931. During this conference, the first Polish Sociological Association was founded (the today's Polish Sociological Association emerged from a sociological section of the Polish Philosophical Association in 1957, after the first liberalization wave under state socialism in 1956). Ludwik Krzywicki became the President of the association. The 2nd Congress, again organized by the PIS, convened in 1935[1]. We do not intend to underestimate the

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[1] See: W. Winclawski, *Wyimki z kalendarza socjologii polskiej* [Extracts from the Calendar of the Polish Sociology], "Przegląd Socjologiczny" 2001, Vol. 50, No. 2, pp. 187–236; idem, *Wyimki z kalendarza socjologii polskiej*, "Przegląd Socjologiczny" 2005, Vol. 54, No. 1–2, pp. 319–392.

social and cultural role of sociological congresses under state socialism in Poland, between the Second World War and 1989 (in particular for the self-reflection of Polish society), but will not discuss these five events[2].

The 8th Congress took place in Toruń in 1990, and its topic was the "break-through" (or the fast transition from the political socialism and command economy to political democracy and market economy) and the "challenges", or new problems which the society faced then. Soon, it turned out that these problems were growing. The 9th Congress, organized in Lublin in 1994, analyzed the five-year long processes of creation and consolidation of the new social order. The participants debated first of all on the crucial triggers of the successful transformation – characteristics of individuals (in particular their rationality and agency) and/or characteristics of new formal institutions. This Congress, and in particular some of the lectures at its main sessions, expressed the reorientation of a significant part of the Polish sociological community into the neo-institutional approach. The 10th Congress was held in Katowice in 1997. At that time, another topic became particularly important for Poland and for sociologists. This was the triad: "regions, Poland, Europe". Again, the transition from socialism (without the clear idea to what) but in the perspective of various localities (regional, Polish) and the global (at least European) arena was analyzed. The 11th Congress took place in Rzeszów in 2000. It reflected on the "opposition" (debated not only in Poland) between the "society of fate" and "society of choice". The most significant topics of discussions were the cultural heritage which influences a part of the shape of every society, and the openness, the willingness to face the challenges, the choices standing in front of society. Fate and choice can be considered an opposition but they can be also treated as supplementary. We must go ahead, choose new social mechanisms and solutions but it is necessary to bear in mind the historic preconditions of any societal agency. In 2004, in Poznań, the next, 12th Congress was organized. That year, Poland was accepted by the European Union. Global, or at least European, perspective became once more very important for the understanding of structural and cultural processes going on in our country. Therefore, the debates concentrated on different circles of social integration and different kinds of social identifications. The 13th Congress was held in Zielona Góra in 2007. It seems to us that this was the most international of the Polish sociological congresses. The President of the International Sociological Association, Michel Wieviorka and its Vice-President, Michael Burawoy, as well as many other foreign scholars participated very actively. The

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[2] See: A. Kloskowska, *Osiem Zjazdów* [The Eight Conferences], "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" 1990, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, pp. 3–6, on their topics and contributions.

Congress concentrated on the growing differentiation of Polish society as one of the consequences of the economic, structural and cultural transformations[3].

3. Main session and debates of the Kraków 2010 Congress

We will analyze here the sociological aspects of the opening plenary session (with two opening lectures), three formal plenary sessions, final international plenary session and four semi-plenary symposia.

The opening session was, in our opinion, very important. Piotr Gliński, the President of the Polish Sociological Association, gave a long and very substantive address. Three topics seem to us of particular significance. Firstly, he asked, if in the situation of fast growing social differentiation in Poland, dramatic weakening of social bonds, the breaking of the social structure into amorphous collectivities, we are still "a society". Secondly, he encouraged the sociological community to think critically, to follow the "sociological disobedience in thinking". In his opinion, Polish sociologists do not participate enough in public life of the country. Thirdly, he addressed the issue of relations between sociology and political power. In his view, the current authorities (newly elected President of Poland, the government) are not interested in the opinions and advice which could be given by sociologists. On the other hand, sociologists do not have enough to offer the political authorities.

This pessimism (but its other aspects) was shared by the second speaker, Claus Offe from the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. The title of his lecture (given in English) was *What, if Anything, We Mean by Social and Political "Progress" Today?* He presented three, most crucial in his opinion, concepts of "progress" and later turned the attention of the audience to the fact that they sometimes overlap, sometimes superimpose. Today, the concept of progress is loaded with many contradictions and paradoxes. He debated on the main current dangers to the progress, in the form of energy crisis, climate changes and their societal consequences, global terrorism. He was discussing the social movements which are connected with these dangers. He stressed the difference in the perspective on the progress between the point of view of the elites and of the rank and file people. He recommended the slowing down of the progress (in whatever meaning) and the concentration on its current contents and directions.

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[3] See on these congresses, J. Mucha, E. Narkiewicz-Niedbalec, M. Zielińska, *Co nas łączy, co nas dzieli. Przedmowa* [What Brings Us Together, What Drives Us Apart. Foreword] [in:] eadem (eds.), *Co nas łączy, co nas dzieli* [What Brings Us Together, What Drives Us Apart] Zielona Góra 2008, pp. 11–16.

There was no discussion on Gliński's paper on that day (it returned after one of the symposia and we will return to it), but the discussion on Offe's paper was long and heated. These were the main issues raised by the audience: relations between the concept of progress and Marxist and neo-Marxist thinking; potential usefulness or un-usefulness of this radically pessimistic conceptualization of progress for our self-reflection and our understanding of the contemporary dynamics; the sense of the concentration on progress by a scholar who does not see any use of this concept; the tension between the pessimism of Offe and the growing general life satisfaction of people in the Western world.

The first formal plenary session was entitled *Order or Disorder. Production of Social Order*. Four papers were given. Marek Szczepański and Annna Śliz spoke about the "actors in the background" on the global social scene. The main actors are, in their opinion, the largest nation-states, big metropolises, multinational corporations, global institutions, international organizations and alliances. The actors in the background are the local communities throughout the world, native communities in the Third World, immigrant communities in big metropolises throughout the world, traditional local communities, local imagined networks, virtual communities. The authors stressed the fact that the worlds of the major actors and these secondary actors overlap, influence each other. Jadwiga Staniszkis' paper was devoted to the "epistemology of order" at the beginning of the 21st century. She stressed that "order" is of a mental and not a "real" character. Dynamic mental patterns define "something" as orderly or disorderly. The current social order is a-systemic, processual, network-like. If we want to understand it, we must accept the fact that conflicts, negotiations, re-negotiations, are not pathological but normal phenomena; we must study relations between various arrangement rather than the contents of these arrangements. David Ost (from the US) was talking about social classes and social order, mostly in the Polish context. The dynamic, transforming global capitalist system produces a social order and a social disorder at the same time. The way the "losers" of these transformations are able to express their discontent and even anger, their resistance to the system, are very important to the dynamics of the system. Processual social order cannot mean the lack of conflicts. They are a "natural" aspect of the order. In relation to the Polish affairs, Ost expressed his opinion that the social classes still exist and are important actors in politics but the traditional class discourse changes. The upper classes express their interests in the language of globalization, and the lower classes, the "losers", express their interests in the cultural language of nationalism. The problem is, according to Ost, that the traditional class language had much more inclusive character than the cultural language of exclusion. The last speaker, Radosław Markowski, spoke

about "sociology of politics and politology of society". He paid a lot of attention to the classics of political sciences but, in our opinion, the most important issues addressed in his paper were the following. The structural and cultural divisions in Polish society have strictly political consequences but their nature is not very clear. These consequences are: the electoral behavior and the way the political institutions function.

Let us summarize these presentations and the discussion. Social order cannot be understood in a static way. It is a dynamic equilibrium, a process of constant solutions of ever emerging tensions and conflicts between various actors (of different global and local significance), belonging to different social spheres, between which there are dynamic relations. Whether or not we see order or disorder (and to what extent, and in which spheres), how the order and disorder is expressed, is very important for the social state of affairs in a given place and time. Discussion concentrated on several topics. Stressing the significance of social actors means that we may overlook the spontaneous processes. Frozen social divisions can get "unfrozen", but the social dynamics can also make them less significant than before, for instance by making other divisions, phenomena and (in particular) relations even more important. Network analysis stresses mental processes but tends to neglect the emotional processes, so important in traditional sociological understanding of social bond. When we debate the issue of coordination of interests, it would be important to start with precise identification of those interests, and their representations.

The second plenary session concerned the *Old and New Forms of Power and Sociation* (we are using here the English language equivalent of Polish term "uspołecznienie", following the Kurt H. Wolff's translation of the Georg Simmel's term "Vergesellschaftung"). We will not analyze two very long introductions by organizers of this session and we immediately move to the invited speakers. Miroslawa Marody was interested in the ways of the "formatting" (the computer metaphor was intended) of society, old and new means of sociation (Georg Simmel's language was intended). She underlined the decline of the old types of social bonds in postmodern world, but their new forms should not be overlooked. In her opinion, these are bonds not between groups, localities and institutions and not between people and groups, localities and institutions, but rather of the "person to person" kind. New forms of communication emerge, but we must analyze the resistance against them as well. Anonymity is a well known phenomenon, but we should study now the resistance against anonymity of the network society. Subnetworks emerge, which fight for recognition and social values. New collectivities undertake new, unknown until now, social and cultural practices. Societies are

more and more diversified, and political power is less and less significant for peo-
ple's everyday lives. The second speaker, Marek Czyzewski, spoke about the knowl-
edge society and neo-liberal "governmentality". Sociology, social psychology, and
other social sciences should be analyzed in the same way as the other forms of
discourse are. They became new forms of social ideologies, serving to justify the
new forms of society. Critical knowledge becomes an ideology as well. Therefore,
new sociology of social knowledge is necessary. The third speaker, Małgorzata
Fuszara, concentrated on the gender analysis of political power. Let us present
some of her arguments. It is important to analyze participation of women in the
significant role areas defined by men, but we should not overlook the new, emerg-
ing roles defined by women. Women should get the right to define more roles as
important. We should start a debate on the problem whether there are social roles
which are gender neutral. Division between private and public roles should be
defined in a new way. Power and coercion in family should be defined in a new
way. Finally, Jacek Raciborski, the last speaker, analyzed relations between the state
apparatus and the "folk". The latter concept, undefined in the paper (this issue re-
turned during the discussion) was very important for the author. His analysis was
in a complete opposition to the analysis presented in this session by Marody, and
by many speakers of other sessions. According to Raciborski, states, in particular
the large ones, are more and more powerful and the "folk" is very happy that the
state is so strong and is able to serve as the folk's guardian. Nation-states not only
rule but they define what should be the object of their domination and what can
be left to other actors. In the author's opinion, the state apparatus and power is not
the people whom we elect in the public vote. We vote for some bodies, and other
bodies rule. (However, Raciborski did not raise the issue who rules and how to
study the real power relations.) This situation is very dangerous for individual
liberties. This session was not very coherent but was interesting, in particular due
to the last presentation. Unfortunately, the lack of time limited the discussion
which concentrated on the concept of folk and disparity between Raciborski's and
Marody's interpretations of social order. Perhaps Raciborski was addressing the
outcoming social world and Marody the incoming social world.

   The third formal plenary session was to answer the question *How the Future
Society is Produced*. Its main (at least the first and two times as long as expected)
paper was given by Michał Boni, the Chief Social Advisor to the Prime Minister
of Poland. He spoke about the report "Poland 2030", issued by his team several
months earlier. The optimism of the report and of its main author astonished many
listeners who had known some theses but not the details of the document. Next
speaker, economist Krzysztof Rybiński, strongly questioned the empirical basis of

the latter's optimism and stressed the global and local dangers and risks overlooked by the report. He was also very critical of the current government's economic policies and their social consequences. Next speakers, Ryszard Szarfenberg, a leading representative of social policy, and Edwin Bendyk, one of the leading journalists who specializes in social and cultural aspects of scientific and technological changes, had not enough time for adequate presentation of their views. Therefore, the audience learned neither about the social policy consequences of the economic situation of Poland, Europe and the world of open borders, nor about the network analysis and the new, unexpected role of the Internet in new economy and new culture. Discussion was very short and, again, dominated by Boni and Rybinski, whose interpretations of facts (or, what in their opinions could be treated as facts) were completely opposed.

The last plenary session of the Congress was the English-language panel devoted to *Sociology and Society in a Globalizing World*. In fact, however, the debate focused on the unity and conceptual and theoretical homogeneity of sociology as a social science, versus divergent national traditions within the discipline. Piotr Sztompka, who was moderating the panel, stressed the unity and for Michael Burawoy, President of the ISA, diversity was more important and promising. The other panelists, Valery Mansurov (President of Russian Sociological Society), Ishwar Modi from India and Marek Ziółkowski from Poland, all represented the in-between approach, but closer to Burawoy's than Sztompka's views. The debate was very controversial and interesting but the shortage of time did not allow the willing audience to participate.

As we have already mentioned, four semi-plenary symposia belonged to major events of the Congress. The first was devoted to Polish sociology. Three papers were presented. Piotr Sztompka's opinion was already mentioned in this text, since he repeated his lecture next day in the already mentioned English-language panel. Mirosława Grabowska, Director of the Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) presented a rich analysis of empirical research activity in Poland after 1989. She discussed the number of research projects, their methodologies, theoretical background, and societal significance. There are more and more research projects. In general, she liked their methodologies. The projects were very rarely theoretically grounded. Therefore, we describe social phenomena but we do not know very well what they mean. What we study seems to be important, we address many vital social trouble, but we cannot address more general social processes without having conceptualized them theoretically. Krystyna Szafraniec spoke about sociological education in institutions of higher education in Poland. In the academic year 2000/2001, 18,500 students majored in sociology, while in 2009/2010 their number

reached 42,300. Two thirds of them study on the BA level; nearly two thirds are weekend students. Ten years ago, they studied in 24 universities and colleges, now in 92 institutions. There is nearly no problem of unemployment of graduates.

Discussion was heated. The problem of the involvement of Polish sociology in solving social problems in Poland and in shaping the social life of the country overwhelmed the debate. One discussant was of the opinion that Polish sociology is boring and has nothing to tell to the political authorities, so no wonder they are not interested in sociological findings; Polish sociology should concentrate, in research and education, on the Polish national interest (which was not defined by the speaker). Other discussants continued the topic of relations between sociology and political power, one day earlier raised by Piotr Gliński. Sociology should serve society and not authorities, it was argued, and society is represented by social movements, the NGOs and the media. Self-reflection of Polish society should be the aim of sociological analysis. Many sociologists study significant social troubles and processes, participate in public discussions, are active on various committees and panels. Discussants complained that the political actors do not follow their advice but the issue why it is so, was not raised.

A parallel symposium was devoted to the *Social Structure – Coherent or Broken*. The first paper, given by Irena Kotowska, a demographer, analyzed the influence of transformations of family life and households on changes in social structure. According to Kotowska, contemporary structural transformations are caused by economy, culture and demography. She concentrated on the latter and discussed the delays in transition from one stage of family life to another, the destabilization and deinstitutionalization of families, the drop in fertility rates, the ageing of society, the increase in volume of labour migration. As a consequence, family relations and intergenerational relations change, family patterns diversify. Moreover, these changes have, in Europe, a unilinear character, and individual countries differ only in their dynamics. Henryk Domański focused on empirical verification of the main hypothesis of the symposium, that the cultural differentiations in Polish society have systematically deepened since 1989, and the structure is more and more broken, which is supposed to be reflected in social barriers and distances between various segments of population. Based on the empirical data from 1982–2008, Domański analyzed differences between socio-occupational categories in nine dimensions. His conclusion was that the thesis on deepening of social divisions and distances is not empirically grounded, that the social structure is not, in fact, broken. Anna Titkow analyzed the gender dimension of social structure, and focused on difference between men and women in the value hierarchies (children as the major element of the women's world) and role identification (women as

mothers, men as husbands). She stressed the differences in the division of household labour and tensions being their consequences. Jarosław Górniak asked which factor is more important in determining the place of an individual in social structure – his or her competences or his or her social background. His conclusions were optimistic and supported Domański's opinion – individual's intelligence and competences are very important for shaping his or her location in social structure.

The really vivid discussion concentrated on the difficulties with conceptualizing and collecting empirical data which would reflect more and more complex social processes.

The third symposium dealt with *Society, Economy and Crisis*. Danuta Walczak-Duraj discussed recent re-evaluation of work processes. She looked at them from the perspectives of globalization and "new economy"; culturalist approach to economic phenomena; and discrepancies between the world of employers and the world of employees. She asked the question of what it means today, that some procedures are "employee-friendly" and what are the similarities and differences between the entrepreneurship in the corporate world and in the small-scale companies. Barbara Gaciarz analyzed institutional dysfunctions in the socio-economic development in contemporary Poland and asked if they must be treated only as barriers. Perhaps, she said, they can be seen as a chance in the sense that they give a window of opportunity to social and economic actors usually not taken into account. Based on empirical findings of 2002 and 2010, she stressed the fact that local institutions are much more efficient than national ones. Even local governments do not work well, though. They do not take into account many needs of specific groups, social movements, NGOs. However, people increasingly trust more local governments (and the European Union) as important social and economic actors than they trust the national government. Sławomir Partycki gave a very well organized lecture on the nature of financial crises of the last two years. He suggested to look at them from a sociological rather than economic point of view. It is problematic, though, if Partycki's approach was really sociological.

The discussion was interesting. The main points were: economic (and particularly financial) crisis undermined a lot of legitimacy of economic analyzes but not necessarily of sociological analyzes. Neo-liberal economy has both advantages and disadvantages. New (not that new in 2010, though) global actors, like China, Brazil, India, should be analyzed more deeply in macrosociology. Crisis is very important for social mobility, in all senses of the term. Local elites are as diversified as national elites.

The parallel fourth symposium's topic was the *New Mechanisms of the Production of Culture*. Małgorzata Jacyno, following Michel Foucault's analysis of influence of

various devices on individual's agency, claimed that nowadays we have to do, in the sphere of culture, with the transition from endogenous to exogenous relations which isolate individuals by making the impression of permanent endangering on the part of others. Devices determine a specific path of reflexivity and they contribute on the one hand to the increasing self-sufficiency of individuals (even to de-familiarization), and on the other hand to increasing problems with one's own identification. "Sociation", in the opinion of the author, has a very superficial character and individuals life paths are designed by devices. Krzysztof Abriszewski presented a comment on Marek Krajewski's paper given in one of the previous day's thematic groups, on the "participation in culture as a process of sociation". Abriszewski discussed participation of individuals in the dynamic cultural industry and focused on the evolution of the carriers of music and its influence on the shape of culture. This evolution which takes place in the discursive field has a linear character but the participants of culture react to it in a "network way", what results in the emergence of new forms of participation and in asymmetry. Alek Tarkowski asked, in his paper, whether the Internet, as a liaison between actors of culture, can become an arena for the development of new social movements. The Internet, stimulating processes of social production (which fundamentally differ from the production of commodities), resulted, among other things, in the emergence of the "free software" movement, which belongs to the field of culture. A key question, that returned in the discussion, concerned the problem if the Internet-based movements meet the constituent conditions of social movements, namely the conscious participation. Jan Sowa was interested in the issue of independence in the functioning of culture. In his opinion, the state authorities, claiming that they hand over culture to the NGOs and civic sphere, actually give up the responsibility for culture production, but controlling the flow of financial resources, they influence some directions of its development. The alternative, suggested by the speaker, would be the creation of a next ("pi") sector, completely independent from the state.

The discussion was exceptionally vivid, interesting and critical. Most of the comments were directed to the last speaker. Some discussants claimed that actually, in Poland, all NGOs are "governmentalized" (they use governmental grants and serve the state functions), some stressed that the NGOs should cut any ties (being, as such, dangerous) with the establishment. The idea of the "pi" sector (both the potential field of its activity and the very sense of its creation) was questioned by many participants of the discussion.

A brief summary of the content of the "main sessions" of the Congress, which were obviously the most prestigious and collected the largest audiences, can be found in the conclusions of this report.

4. Diversity of thematic groups

Thematic groups were not "imposed" on the Congress participants by the Program Committee but were a result of grass-root initiatives. Everybody was eligible to propose a group. Proposals were discussed by the Committee's task force and finally accepted by the Committee. No group could have more than two sessions and only groups with at least four speakers were included into the final program. As usual, at this kind of congress, it was completely impossible to participate in all thematic groups (most of them took place at the same time). It was interesting for us that a prize was awarded at the end of the Congress to the "best paper" given in the thematic groups. What was the procedure of evaluation of the papers is a mystery. We will not discuss in this report any individual papers nor the discussions in these groups. Instead, we will present the arrangement of the 85 thematic groups, when the proposals were published on the Congress' website with calls for abstracts.

The Program Committee divided the accepted proposals of the groups into twenty one unequal categories (we analyze here only the proposals which eventually turned into real groups). We will list them and in each of the categories we will give (in parentheses) one, most interesting in our view, example of a group. These examples were selected based on the abstracts of the groups and the abstracts of the papers submitted to the group organizer(s).

Polish Society in this Historical Moment (Post-Colonialism and Post-Socialism in Contemporary Poland); Politics – Power – Society (Trade Unions and Social Dialogue in Central and Eastern Europe in Comparative Perspective); Citizenship, Civic Society, Local Government (Deliberative Democracy and Deliberative Surveys); Regions and Local Communities (Europeization of Local Communities in Cultural Perspective); Cities and Villages (Contemporary Cities – New Phenomena, New Dilemmas); Social Structure and Interests (Conflict of Interests in Contemporary Poland); Big Processes in Culture (Cultural Pluralism – Conflict or Co-existence); Anthropology and Cultural Phenomena (Resistance as an Idea and Practice in Post-1989 Poland); New Media (Computerization and Mediatization in the Everyday Life of Poles); Styles and Tastes of Life (Body in Social Space); Memory and Identity (Past as Reflected in Popular Culture); Family and Life Course (Developing of the 'Sociology of Ageing' to Tackle the Challenge of Ageing Societies in Central and Eastern Europe); Gender (Queer Perspective in Sociology); Migrations (From Migration to Integration – Polish Experiences in Comparative Perspective); Social Problems, Social Policy and Social Work (Discourses of Poverty and Social Exclusion); Education and Science (Social and Institutional Consequences of the 1999 Educational Reform in Poland);

Religion and Morality (Secularization and De-secularization in the Life of Poles); Social Control and Law (Technological or Social Supervising? New Faces of Social Control); Sociology and Other Sciences (Critical Theory Today); Methods in Sociology (Qualitative Sociology – Innovative Methods in Qualitative Research); Miscellanea (Sociology of Emotions).

In the opinion of many participants of the Congress, the thematic groups were its most interesting events. It is very difficult, based on the analysis of the submitted abstracts of group proposals, abstracts of papers and unsystematically collected comments by participants, to form an adequate opinion on the whole Polish society, methods and approaches of studying it, methods of interpretations of the research findings. However, in our opinion, the Congress (and the thematic groups in particular) proved that Polish sociologists are sensitive to various new, emerging phenomena, processes of continuation and transformation. We could say that the thematic groups showed well "what's going on with society".

5. Special events

The Congress' program lists several special, accompanying events. We will take into account most of them: a) the closing lecture by Michael Burawoy; b) Burawoy's meeting with graduate students and other young sociologists; c) poster sessions; d) a symposium on Holocaust; e) *ad hoc* groups; f) a meeting on gender studies. We will not discuss the special sessions devoted to the jubilee of Janusz Marianski (a leading sociologist of religion) nor a session focused on teaching sociology.

The closing lecture by Michael Burawoy was in fact the last plenary session of the Congress. The talk was very interesting and presented in an interesting way, but it was one of the versions of his famous "presidential address" on public sociology, having been published a number of times[4], including in Polish. However, Polish examples of public sociology were presented to the Polish audience.

During his meeting with a large number of Polish young sociologists, Burawoy, as the President of the ISA, was encouraging his audience to intellectual activity, to critical thinking, to public engagement. He wanted young sociologists from the whole world to unite, to keep in touch with each other and with him. The idea of "public sociology" was obviously discussed as well. The speaker was interested in the opinions of his audience on the role of public sociology in Poland. There were

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[4] M. Burawoy, *2004 Presidential Address. For Public Sociology*, "American Sociological Review" 2005, Vol. 70, No. 1, pp. 4–28.

other topics in the discussion as well. Adequate jobs for PhDs in sociology, roles of sociologists in various socio-cultural contexts, influence of the financial crises on the way universities function, belonged to them.

Five official poster sessions were organized during the Congress. The number of posters was smaller than the program offered. The poster sessions were usually linked to the topics of thematic groups. The poster sessions were devoted to classes and status groups in the city of Poznan; the building of the public spaces; old age, ageing and intergenerational relations at the beginning of the 21st century; network analysis of contemporary Polish society; the state of the art of Polish sociology at the beginning of the 21st century.

A two-session symposium *Anti-Semitism, Holocaust and Auschwitz in Social Research* took place in the Jewish Museum "Galicja". Young scholars (graduate students, young professors) presented their recent findings on various aspects of Polish anti-Semitism and the ways some segments of Polish society defend themselves against the accusations of anti-Semitism. Nine interesting papers contributed to the accomplishments of the Congress.

Three *ad hoc* sessions, like other special events, were not limited by many formal Congress rules referring to the thematic groups. The topic of the first was the *Sociology of Reconciliation* which is in fact a newly emerging sub-discipline potentially very significant in terms of scholarly research and public effects. Many different kinds of reconciliation were discussed (however, mostly the ones on the border areas, between soccer fans, between practitioners of various religions). The issues discussed were very important, it is difficult to say, though, in what sense this was an *ad hoc* group.

The second such group had a much stronger justification of its extraordinary (*ad hoc*) character. It discussed social reactions to the Smoleńsk catastrophe (10 April 2010) when 96 Polish public persons died in the plane crash in Russia. Papers analyzed the social atmosphere after the crash and its dynamics, controversies over the burial of late President Lech Kaczyński in the cathedral at the Wawel Castle in Kraków, the dynamics of the mitologization of the late President. In addition to the purely scholarly aspect, the session had for some participants very emotional aspects, since Kaczynski gave an interesting lecture during the former Polish Congress of Sociology (Zielona Góra 2007). The third *ad hoc* group also dealt with the Smoleńsk crash, but focused on its political consequences. The papers discussed two general questions: democratic procedures during the state crisis which would make the power transition easier, and the very political succession in times of crisis. Two detailed issues were present as well: the dynamics of support for political parties and presidential elections before the constitutional term was ended.

Doctoral students and some scholars working at the Gender Studies Program of the Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University of Kraków, organized in a coffee-shop a semi-formal (listed in the Congress' program) session *University – Activism – Emancipation*. The venue is important here, since the organizers, speakers and participants presented themselves as victims of the system, persons strongly contesting the university as the institution supporting the neo-liberal establishment and research programs apologetic toward neo-liberalism, while suppressing the critical approach. Discussion changed the character when a senior professor of sociology from Jagiellonian University, a distinguished scholar in the fields of family patterns and the role of women in contemporary society, who is also a moderate feminist activist, presented her opinion. According to her, if the isolation of the academic critical feminist discourse is really a fact, one of its reasons is the way of operation of the academic feminists who do not try to win allies, do not know how to fight efficiently for their rights.

6. Final remarks

This Congress was "internationalized" in a slightly different way than the previous Polish Congress of Sociology, held in Zielona Gora three years earlier. At that congress, there were three English-language thematic groups; a meeting of the representatives of national sociological associations from many European countries was held; both the then President and then Vice-President of ISA presented the lectures. In Kraków, there were two English-language thematic groups, and one partly in English. In some Polish-language groups some papers were given in English, though (the same occurred in Zielona Góra). The opening lecture was given in English by a European distinguished scholar; an American scholar, a very well known specialist in the field of Polish affairs, gave a regular plenary lecture in Polish; there was an English-language symposium in which several foreigners participated, and the final lecture was given in English by the ISA's President.

We are of the opinion that the Kraków Congress accurately reflected the state of art of Polish sociology but we cannot be sure if Polish sociology (in fact, any "national sociology") can accurately reflect the social state of affairs and its dynamics in any society. We believe that sociology provides many, more or less significant contributions which help us understand society in its dynamics. The thematic groups and special sessions of the Congress presented a variety of "old" and "new" social phenomena which are worth studying in a systematic way. Main sessions turned our attention to the increasing diversity, pluralism, dynamics and network

character of Polish society, increasing significance of its cultural aspects, but they also stressed the fact that it is still possible to catch, in social research, the main social actors, decision makers, on different levels of influence on social processes. The speakers did not always agree which the actors and with when they are particularly powerful, but we think that a consensus might potentially limit the chance for further discourse.

We think that this Congress neither brought any breakthrough in the public understanding of "Polish matters", nor that it set new directions for social research. However, unlike some of the disappointed colleagues, we do not think that that would be the only reason to organize this kind of event.

Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz

"TO REACH OUT FOR NEW LIFE" – REFLECTED BY THE 7TH POLISH CONGRESS OF PEDAGOGIC (TORUŃ)

"To reach out for new life" („Po życie sięgać nowe") is the title of the 7th Pedagogical Congress that was held from 21th to 22nd Septemeber 2010 in Toruń. The Congress was organised by the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń and the Research Board was chaired by Prof. Aleksander Nalaskowski. The representatives of almost all fields of study and research within pedagogy had been invited to co-organise the Congress. The plenary session with the papers by Professors: Kwieciński, Kwiatkowski, Nalaskowski, Śliwerski, Witkowski and Męczkowska outlined the thematic area of the conference, and presented social diagnoses – a list of issues to solve, a collection of social expectations and tasks for pedagogy and pedagogues. The two-day conference was based on the workings of ten sessions. A brief thematic description of each of them shall follow.

Session one entitled *Market and Education: Between Entrepreneurship and Exclusion* posed questions on whether the market is not a trap for education, seen as an authotelic quality, in search for a direction towards cultural heritage and the quality of concern for the individual and the sense of community.

How to prevent the "new life", which is worth reaching for, as the title of the Meeting suggests, from changing into a life that is worse and more futile, despite the sense of self-satisfaction due to being unaware of deficiencies, incapabilities and loss of chances for spiritual development?

Isn't entrepreneurship becoming cynical and culture-deprived, almost accepting the exclusion from the high culture and educational aspirations, apart form the concern for superficial markers of status and education?

1. Does the rat race facilitate entrepreneurship or exclusion?

The questions referred to the following relations between market and education:

The market of educational offers and services, including the interests of educational institutions and the quality of their personnel's educational attitudes, and the policy of assessment of the institution's potential (rankings) and "personnel market value";

Labour market, including the demand for professions and employers' expectations, with its emphasis on profiles oriented towards economy, service and application, without the concern for solid foundations in literature, tradition and theory;

The market of consumer attitudes to education and the quality of intellectual competencies and preferences (expectations) of those competing for a degree, here it is the market that determines the quality of potential connected with absorption capacity;

The market of publishing and media offer in relation to its means, their content, forms and programmes to mediate the reference to symbolic culture and knowledge (textbooks, dictionaries, handbooks, classics, literature, films, television and its theme channels and the internet).

The stated questions were answered in several stages. The first one was an introduction to the presently dominant ideology of free market capitalism which means liberalism and its varieties. This issue was referred to in the speech by Prof. Eugenia Potulicka who presented a criticism of neoliberalism, proving that there is an alternative to what is called "the only right way" in the post-socialist societies. The demand for ethical liberalism seems exceptionally promising here. The second stage was a panel discussion with vice-chancellors of Polish state and private universities. The speeches were made by: the Rector of Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz – Prof. Józef Kubik, the Rector of the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław – Prof. Robert Kwaśnica, the Rector of the Higher School of Pedagogy of the Society of Public Knowledge in Szczecin – Prof. Kazimierz Wenta, the Rector of the Higher School of Health Education and Social Sciences in Łódź – Prof. Zygfryd Juczyński.

In the panel discussion, what was especially interesting and valuable was the contrast between the opinions emphasizing the necessity of adjusting a university function to market requirements and expectations of the so called "clients", and the attempt to critically analyse the legal foundations of the functioning of non-state universities which marginalize these educational institutions at the very beginning of their operation. Such criticism or even a truth-revealing bias characterised the speech by Prof. Robert Kwaśnica.

The second session was entitled *Democracy: Passiveness and Involvement*. Its organizers agreed on a hypothesis that democracy is neither a guaranteed ideal nor it is non-problematic. It is disappointing, unstable and still at risk of, on the one hand, impotence, on the other though, authoritarianism temptations; still in the state of recession and fired with criticism. Its connections with education are varied and multi-directional – education "to democracy" or "for democracy" is not the only perspective worth consideration. What is also problematic is the democracy in education (a democratic school?) and democracy for education (political conditions of the access to meaningful education). The following papers were presented:

- Piotr Błajet: *Foresight in Education – How the Future Determines the Present*;
- Mariola Gańko-Karwowska: *Between Strategic and Deliberative Understanding of Passiveness and Electoral Involvement*;
- Anna Kola-Rola: *The Role of Elite Education in the Process of Democratisation and Pluralisation of the Polish Society after 1989*;
- Michał Mielczarek: *Active Social Policy in the World of "Disappearing Employment" – Urging for Involvement or Placing in Passiveness?*;
- Małgorzata Orłowska: *Social Assistance Recipient – is it Still a Citizen?*;
- Piotr Stańczyk: *Silent Consent, Culture of Silence and Policy of Voice*;
- Karolina Starego: *Democracy – People's Power or Managing the Masses? Contemporary Social and Political Reality as Viewed by the Polish Teachers*;
- Rafał Włodarczyk: *Involvement and Drawing Boundaries from the Perspective of the Pedagogy of Asylum*.

The discussion during the session proved that in Poland there exist circles who not only pose questions about the range and content of various social groups' and entities' participation in the public sphere, about access to education, citizens' freedom and rights, but also show inequalities and barriers connected with them, as well as mechanisms of their emergence and fixation. Undoubtedly, the academic circle of the Gdańsk University, gathered around the moderator of the session, Prof. Tomasz Szkudlarek, has comprehensive knowledge on the issue.

The third session's discussion topic was *Difference or Confusion – Imitation or Homeliness?* The organizers of the debate in this session assumed that there are two phenomena occurring in the contemporary culture and education: universalisation and particularisation. On the one hand, the invasiveness of globalisation processes leads both to the realisation of the idea of "global village" and "the elimination of differences" (Americanisation, McDonaldization, CocaColisation). On the other hand, one witnesses a growing importance of "difference" and "dissimilarity" – of a search for individual forms of identity. In this case, the absolutisation of a form

of difference sometimes becomes the source of fundamentalism. It is difficult not to mention the phenomenon of "difference faking", typical of the contemporary society of consumerism (the mass culture's typical idea of "you have to be the same" has been replaced with the idea of "you have to be different", however, the sources of dissimilarity seem to be consumption choices and pop culture sphere only). The individual more and more often builds their sense of freedom by constructing their identity (including even their citizenship or gender) from a broad, the critics would say – faked, consumerism ideology or mass media offer. The session included the following list of papers:

Part 1 – *Global Citizenship or a New Tower of Babel?*
- Dr hab. Jadwiga Kosowska-Rataj: *Intercultural Awareness of University Students*;
- Dr Lidia Marek: *World Inhabitants or Citizens? – The Educational Perspective of Global Citizenship*;
- Mgr Łukasz Stankiewicz: *Imitational Transformation and Its Influence on the Ideology in the Discourse of the Polish Public Sphere*;
- Dr Monika Nęcka: *The Problem of Culture Identification of International Schools Students – A Diagnosis and an Educational Help Suggestion*;
- Mgr Telimena Ryta: *Homeliness and Foreignness as Constituent Principles of Social Organisation (Mass Culture as a Characteristic of a Modern Society)*;
- Dr Joanna Cukras-Stelągowska: *Post-modern Re(constructions) of Ethnic Identities*;

Part 2 – *Between Pluralism and Longing for Normative Solutions*
- Dr Tomasz Gmerek: *Education in Russia – from Socialism to Neoliberalism*;
- Dr Andrzej Jarosław Puliński: *Egalitarianism as a Factor in Educational Success of the Finnish School*;
- Dr Jarema Drozdowicz: *Mapping the Difference. Human Terrain System in Academic and Social Discourses of Authority*;
- Mgr Olga Mazurek-Lipka: *Social Constructions of Life Success in the USA. Between Aiming at a Degree and Television Show*;
- Mgr Joanna Nawój-Połoczańska: *Flexibility Versus Attachment: European Union Policy Within the Scope of Lifelong Life Counselling*;
- Mgr Maria Serafinowicz: *Fashion in Junior High School: Creating One's Individual Image or Following Current Trends*?
- Mgr Karolina Domagalska: *Mr Smith, Pop Culture and Immigrants' Identity in Norway.*

Part 3 – *Academy – Homeliness or Confusion*
- Prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Kruszewski: *Intercultural Activities in Relations Between Universities from Different Countries*;

- Dr Renata Wawrzyniak-Beszterda, Dr Sylwia Jaskulska, Mgr Mateusz Marciniak: *Between School and Academic Field. Inspirations of P. Bourdieu in Studies on the Students of UAM (the University of Adam Mickiewicz) in Poznań*;
- Dr Sławomir Banaszak: *Managers Education in Poland: Present State and Perspectives*;
- Dr Włodzimierz Olszewski: *University's Objectives for the Development of the local community*;
- Dr Katarzyna Kabacińska: *The Czech Students on Life Success*;
- Dr Daria Hejwosz: *Social Functions of Higher Education in the Republic of South Africa and Difference Constructing.*

This session was extremely varied. Adequately to the listed topics of presentation, they were either of a universal dimension, discussed essential issues which the authors attempted to embed in a theoretical context, or referred to "details" which were considered locally, for example narrowly understanding the issue of ethnical identities. The variety of issues and their presentation methods can be both considered as an advantage of the session and its limitation. It becomes an advantage when we understand diversity as an asset, when we do not associate multitude with chaos, mess, superficial tumult. It is a limitation for those of us who expect some order form a scientific debate – content, presentation, form or method.

The fourth session was *Postmodernism and Tradition.* Its rich programme included the plenary part with the presentations by:

- Prof. Dr hab. Roman Schulz: *Does Pedagogy Have its Big Questions?*
- Dr hab. Romuald Grzybowski: *Educational Heritage of the Past: Burden or a Treasury of Patterns?*

The three sections were:

Section one

Pedagogy and Education in the Postmodernist Perspective

Section two

Pedagogical World Views and Projects – The Heritage of the Past

Section three

Educational Successes and Failures – Between Tradition and the Present

The variety of content and wide range of issues discussed in this session were not its only characteristics. For the first time during the Pedagogical Congress, historians could find such an interesting, current and interdisciplinary area. It was filled with both traditional, historical issues, and the most current, contemporary problems embedded in tradition, in a broad time perspective. Examples of the diversity of issues in session four are as follows: the question about the function and importance of education, its models in the past and present; the question about

a university's mission; about upbringing and various environments where it takes place; the question about the importance of tradition and contrasting it with the concept of modernity.

The next, fifth session was entitled ***Egoism or Autonomy. Or the End of Community***?

As the moderator and the person responsible for the debate in this session, the author of the present paper invited the participants with the following words:

The subject matter of the session lies within the issue of "passage": from collectivism to individualism, from the pro-social orientation to egoism, from involvement to autonomy. The issue of passage becomes then one of the issues around which the debate is to focus. How is the experience of a passage, a threshold, a critical event understood and described in pedagogy today, what in the field of theory, concept of the contemporary humanities is this experience, once referred to as intuition, maturing, growing-up or development? What is the nature of this experience, its ontological characteristics? What competencies are needed today to face the experience of passage? It is a question about passage, its ontological status, importance, possible forms and consequences posed from the perspective of an individual. What is this experience from the social experience though? What knowledge about change, its phases, barriers and pathologies that accompany it, is provided by today's social practice? How does pedagogy cope with this issue? How is passage, change, crisis described from the social perspective and in reference to it (to social institutions such as school, social environments like family, peer group, social phenomena like mass culture)? And the third perspective which is a theoretical reflection, or even scientific knowledge constituting our field. What can pedagogy, with its language of generalisation, say about methods, causes, mechanisms, sooner or later consequences of those verge experiences, passages or breakthroughs witnessed from the perspective of an individual, social group, culture? Are those issues present in the discourse of contemporary pedagogy and what is the nature of this presence? This is the first thematic block which I invite the participants to.

The second one is the question about the subject, how the humanities, and pedagogy among them, treat the ideal of a person as consciousness. How are the conditions for studying what is most irreducible in the subject – openness to dissimilarity, to the outside, to being the place for "going beyond oneself", to transcendency – created? What is the concept of subjectivity open to today, what are the examples and signs of such openness? In this context, what is the understanding of the genesis of the contemporary individualism, the modern term, the passage from the traditional hierarchical society to the modern egalitarian one? What

is the role of tradition in thinking about the subject and what are the consequences of the tradition for pedagogy? The further areas for research and discussion, which I invite this session participant to, are philosophy of the subject and pedagogy, and the philosophy of the subject and education.

The third thematic block is the question about the identity of the individual, about the possible methods of describing, studying and understanding this category. Is identity a construct possible to be created today by the individual, or a task to be completed, or is it a kind of narration, a still continued story of "I"? What problems are recognised in the contemporary reflection on this conceptual category? What are the orientations of the contemporary person – the professional, educational, biographical ones? On the basis of what values are these being constructed, and what are the construction methods available today? What is the position and role of education processes and educational institutions for the formation of all those orientations and each of them separately? Where are the sources of the basic identity deficits, problems and disorders of the contemporary person? Are pedagogy and pedagogues able to recognize and describe them, are they able to respond to them and should they be? What is the autonomy of the individual? Is it a condition for effective functioning, a personality characteristic, a phase in moral development, or a quality within the crucial competencies, necessary for understanding and the comprehension of the present world, and which are one of the basic objectives of education?

The fourth thematic block is the consequence of the question: does the contemporary individualism mean the end of community? The community of values, aims, life orientations, and the community of practices and involvement. This issue can be exemplified by the question: is the university (as an idea and an institution) today this kind of community, or rather an interest group, a field of battle for hegemony of different discourses, legitimised and authorised by various, explicit and implicit ideologies? What ideology is present in education – in educational practices and institutions?

The last, fifth thematic block of the session is connected with the question about the community of researchers. Is the research, carried out within our discipline, of the common, involved nature; does it refer to the shared conventions, to the norms and traditions recognised in methodology, or are they rather a collection of individual research practices, conducted in an "island-like" manner, which connect to form interests, lobby or fashion groups? Does the community of researchers still exist, or has it also been affected by "revolution of subjects"? Is science an involved social practice today, or rather an individual choice, an individually constructed life orientation?

The sixteen papers presented in this session proved that, on the one hand, "there will not be a revolution of subjects" (the title of the paper by Dr Paweł Rudnicki from the University of Lower Silesia) since, as we are enslaved by consumption, we have today the only freedom… of the very consumption, on the other, though, they raised hopes for citizenship as a new kind of independence, and for subjectivity as a new model of development and personality.

Session six was entitled *Searching for a New Paradigm: Polyphony or Cacophony?*

During the session, questions about the dominant model of the validation of the humanities, its characteristics and basic qualities were posed; there were questions about the validity criteria of scientific cognition in the humanities. The presentation of methodological attitudes and perspectives used by particular schools and circles of researchers was also diverse. The less present perspectives (such as hermeneutics and phenomenology) were discussed, epistemological terms were defined: pictorial turn, practical turn. This area, as the previous ones, was also characterised by multitude and diversity of attitudes. Multitude understood as either the variety within the discipline, or chaos, superficial, general "humanistic review" which, on the one hand, justified the banality of analyses, on the other though, faked their transdisciplinarity.

Session seven was a great meeting of educational researchers, practitioners, decision-makers and the very students – experiencing their offers on an everyday basis. Its title was: *Pretence in Education Invites to Consideration, Intrigues, Irritates*. Undoubtedly, the distinct thesis included in the title did not allow any of the participants to remain indifferent. Another feature of the session was the way of conducting the debate by the two charismatic Professors: Prof. Maria Dudzikowa and Prof. Dariusz Kubinowski.

Session eight was dedicated to the analysis of course books and handbooks. The thematic area of the session was outlined by the two moderators – Prof. Mariola Chomczyńska-Rubacha and Prof. Lucyna Kopciewicz, as follows: The debate on course books and handbooks is a good starting point for the discussion about the education of the future. However, focusing on the concrete thing, which are course book and handbooks, has the advantage of disciplining the discussion, placing it both within the material world and in the world of ideas; both in the present and in the future. To construct the answer for the title question may require the process of analysing the *status quo* of the contemporary course books (their present) and the role which they are to play in the world of information technologies (their future). Carrying out the analysis, one's thinking about course books shall not be limited to their dictionary definitions which ignore the fact that, apart from knowledge, course books also contain heuristics that facilitate the learning process of the

readers. And this is what distinguishes them from the scientific and popular scientific texts, or handbooks.

2. The present of course books and handbooks

The shape of the contemporary course books and handbooks is a source of knowledge about the state of didactics, as well as a source of knowledge about the society. Subsequent generations of course books and handbooks illustrate and exemplify the contemporary standards of knowledge and ways of its transmission, and present the applied strategies of physical, behavioural and intellectual discipline of the addressees. The analysis of course books and handbooks can be conducted from various perspectives. Apart from factual, didactic and editorial criteria, one can indicate less obvious ones such as author's preferences on world view, propaganda values, beliefs and norms. Besides the issues explicit in course books, that is the theory of school knowledge, the hypotheses about students of both genders, and learning, we – pedagogues are also interested in the implicit messages of the coursebooks (on races, religions, ethnic groups, gender, class, etc.). Thus, we invite you to join in the search for criteria due to which a teacher (but also a parent and every person interested) could make a choice of a coursebook which would be free from discrimination and prejudices, and guarantee effective learning.

3. The future of coursebooks and handbooks

Modern technologies have introduced a new dimension of learning and interaction between the participants of the education process, which has necessitated a review of teaching content, methods and measures. In spite of some signals of fears, the introduction of books, coursebooks and magazines in the electronic form (audiobooks, e-books, e-coursebooks, coursebooks via the Internet) into the educational practice creates new opportunities and challenges. Some doubts are raised due to: the quality of displays (causing tiredness and slower reading), high costs of technical devices, limited protection of copyright law, the quality of materials, etc. Among the advantages, the most important is the opportunity to quickly update the content, which in the face of fast ageing knowledge becomes an essential feature of electronic publications. There is a number of questions to answer, among them:
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of an electronic coursebook?

- Are electronic coursebooks a full alternative for their paper counterparts?
- What are the criteria of the assessment of electronic coursebooks?
- Is learning based on electronic coursebooks effective?
- Does the young generation possess the digital intelligence which predisposes them to use the electronic and multimedia educational materials?
- Is the access to electronic coursebooks and study aids going to contribute to or diminish the phenomenon of social exclusion?

The heated discussion which took place during the session, the disagreement on the ideology of the transfer of content, the kind of justifications which underlie the dominant or the dominant-to-be kind of justification, proved that the issue discussed was essential and current.

Session nine referred to the problems of the profession of the teacher, and the forms of performing this profession of "public trust". The introduction to the session was the paper by Prof. Dorota Gołębniak who offered the description of broad socio-cultural contexts in considering the teacher and playing the role. A new approach, an attempt to update the questions about the teacher and an introduction into the area of research in action as a way of "being" the teacher inspired the participants to join an interesting discussion. An important and original voice in the discussion was also the paper by Mgr Iwona Hęćka on trust as the basic value for the teacher-student interaction.

The last, tenth session was supposed to be the meeting of Practitioners-Creators of alternative educational concepts, alternative schools. They had arrived hoping for experience exchange, to use the opportunity to learn from one another. Did they succeed? Were we all successful – the organisers and co-organisers of this exceptional meeting of the whole circle of academic pedagogues, which takes place once every three years?

A new life of pedagogy, a new life of pedagogues, a new life of school… was the announcement in the title of the 7th Pedagogical Congress. We arrived at the meeting, intrigued by a promise of breakthrough, moved by the atmosphere in our country, full of involvement and with a strong belief in the power and importance of education. What did we find, what did we agree on, what happened during the next Congress of the researchers of education and learning processes? Do we have any kind of picture of the Polish educational reality today? What picture is it and what are its consequences for all the participants of this reality? The present text shall attempt to offer the author of the present paper's own, subjective answer to the question.

4. Firstly: pedagogy

Once more, during the next big conference, the pedagogues proved that the first and most important issue is the state of their discipline. I understand that this kind of professional meetings encourage such debates, the specific "self-examination"; it is my strong feeling, though, that we have already exceeded the limit of caring for ourselves in the situation when "reality bites" and demands descriptions, diagnoses, some attempts to solve the problems in the field of upbringing, education, learning. It is no use making repeated, at almost every conference, appeals for the consideration of pedagogues and pedagogy, for our influence on the course of events in the sphere of upbringing and education, if instead of these descriptions and diagnoses we complain about the marginal position of our discipline, our absence in the public debate, or about ignoring our findings by subsequent parties of decision-makers. In order to have an impact on the reality, one has to somehow respond to it, be familiar with it, speak about it using the language of their own discipline; has to precisely and often repeatedly name problems, suggest solutions, disclose threats and pathologies. Self-knowledge and self-reflection of a discipline and the community who practices it is one (certainly important) issue, however, the social importance of a science is manifested by how successful it is in explaining people their world in an adequate, comprehensible and useful way. The world or worlds of education which each of us experiences today require such descriptions – this is our, the pedagogues' task. What do pedagogues say about pedagogy? What problems within their own discipline do they prioritise?

5. Secondly: school

Today, school as the basic educational institution demands a deeper and a bolder diagnosis, a comprehensive description of the processes which take place in it; a description of what functions it really has today in the life of each of us: the parent, the student, the teacher. The description and criticism of this institution, present in the debate during one of the thematic sessions entitled *Pretence in Education – Diagnosis, Attempts of Solutions* were examples and attempts of such diagnoses. An interesting idea successfully used by the two professors conducting the session – Prof. M. Dudzikowa from UAM in Poznań and Prof. D. Kubinowski from UMCS (Maria Curie Skłodowska University) in Lublin was to invite for a joint consideration on today's school functioning, on the current pretence of researchers and practitioners among whom to find both the teachers, head teachers and the very students.

The idea of a joint, open and democratic debate over the Polish schools is especially close to me. For several years, as a part of the Lower Silesian Science Festival (Dolnośląski Festiwal Nauki), the author, together with a team of associates from the University of Lower Silesia, organises debates entitled *What's the Matter with School?* [*Co z tą szkołą?*].

The participants of the debates are parents and teachers, head-teachers and students of Wrocław's schools, the representatives of educational authorities and academic circles, all having equal rights. The discussions have been inspired by the conviction that a lack of a real dialogue, inability to mutually respect persons co-creating school, or limited abilities to listen to the voice of others – all this generates problems which prevent an effective co-operation between the students, parents, teachers, school controlling authorities, or local government. The problems connected with communicative competencies at school translate into the overall picture of educational and upbringing problems. People who know they will not be listened to, remain silent or express their dissatisfaction with aggression. "The training of silence", or "symbolic violence" emerge as pedagogical categories showing how much oppressive school can be for both students and teachers. The questions arising in this context refer to: How to talk and what about? How to go beyond the stereotypical roles of "the all-knowing teacher" and "the nothing-knowing student"? How to ensure that the dialogue becomes the space for education? The experiences gained from the previous meetings prove how difficult it is for us to learn to talk to each other, how hard it is to listen to each other when no role and position statuses are between us, and when we try to exchange our such different educational experiences. They also show that we will have to overcome numerous pretended activities, which fake development and mock dialogue; activities which are used by various participants of the educational process mostly as a means to secure their position and their own, often dissimilar interests. During the Pedagogical Meeting, in the debate over the school, the pretence was noticed, and it refers to:

6. Thirdly: the individual

The individual finds oneself in the conditions when they are forced to accept dissimilar, and even contradictory images of themselves which refer to the roles they perform. In the past, the traditional answer to the question "who are you?" was "I am my father's son". Today, the answer is "I am myself, I decide for myself by what I do and what I choose". This change of self-identification is a sign of the present.

It is also a forecast of a serious crisis of individual's identity. A stable personal identity which is continued throughout the whole life seems to be not only untypical, but what is more, it appears to be socially pathological and apparently out-of-date in the post-industrial society. Today, in the knowledge-based society, an increasing number of longer educated people take on the research-reflective orientation. The people understand themselves and their identities as objects which undergo intentional modifications, and they fully consciously and deliberately begin attempts of a psychological transformation and social reconstruction of themselves. For the generation who were born at the beginning of the 80s, change has become a form of socialisation. The individual's identity, though, has become their problem since there are no matrixes, identity types which would ensure a safe socialisation. As many types of descriptions of the present times co-exist today, so there co-exist many various and contradictory identity models. The conviction "you have to be this", so typical of the modern era, in the consumption society has been replaced with "you can be anyone". Therefore, so important today becomes the issue of choice of: life orientation, values and aims, lifestyle and way of life, as well as of the kind of justification that motivates the choices, enables and legitimises them. It is good that during the 7th Pedagogical Congress there was a chance to discuss this issue.

However, is it possible today to say that we have reached out for "a new life"? For new ideas and problems, new ways and new opportunities of describing and understanding reality, for new theories used as instruments for such descriptions, and finally, has a new generation or even a group of researchers emerged? Has the quote from Adam Asnyk's poem become a realised hope of meeting a community of pedagogues, or is it still our dream? An unrealised one, and thus, so inspiring? I think that each of us, the participants of the meeting, may have their own, often different (which does not mean – false or less correct) answer to this question.

REVIEWS–REPORTS

Grażyna Krzyminiewska (rev.): Maria Nawojczyk, *Przedsiębiorczość. O trudnościach w aplikacji teorii* [**Entrepreneurship. On the Difficulties of Theory Application**], **Wydawnictwo Nomos, Kraków 2009, pp. 254.**

Entrepreneurship's meaning for the development of economy is grand. Great hopes are pinned upon it in regard to economic and social policy, since it may increase the number of self-supporting people and enhance positive effects on labour markets. From this point of view, analyses of entrepreneurship's determinants and ways of eradicating barriers in this respect are a significant task for social and economic sciences. The studies on entrepreneurship have undoubtedly brought great achievements, yet they have so far been dominated by economists, at the expense of a broader understanding of the phenomenon. The perception of entrepreneurship in contemporary sciences is moving away from strictly economic analyses and is approaching a broader scientific field where it is understood as a cultural, psychological, economic, technological and social phenomenon. Therefore carrying research on entrepreneurship has an interdisciplinary character

and is established according to widely understood cultural determinants.

The work of Maria Nawojczyk *Entrepreneurship. On Difficulties in Theory Application*, published by Nomos Publishing House in 2009, belongs without doubt to the above-mentioned scientific current. The publication evokes interest due to at least three reasons. Firstly, it presents a substantially competent and eruditely interesting review of literature on the subject, where the author shows diversity and evolution of the entrepreneurship-notion. One has to do with an attempt to demonstrate various perspectives of understanding entrepreneurship and indicating the interdisciplinary character of its research. Secondly, M. Nawojczyk makes an effort to show some aspects of creating entrepreneurship in the economies of Central and Eastern Europe, focusing on the specificity of Polish entrepreneurship. Thirdly – because of methodological originality of her empirical research and characteristics of the local market.

Entrepreneurship. On Difficulties in Theory Application is interesting in every respect, as it encourages additional reflection on some issues discussed in the book and polemics with some of its parts.

The first two chapters, which discuss the essence of entrepreneurship, concentrate on theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship typical for economics and sociology. The author emphasizes the interdisciplinary character of research on entrepreneurship and writes about psychological and cognitive perspective of the phenomenon, although she does not pay as much attention to it as it is the case in economic perspectives. It is worth emphasizing that wide empirical research (including the research in the reviewed book) to a great extent makes use of this perspective when examining, among other things, motivation to achievement, involvement in work, etc. Cognitive psychology seems to have a future in explaining the phenomenon of entrepreneurship, especially in the respect which M. Nawojczyk adopts in her scientific perspective and uses in her surveys. One can even try to risk an iconoclastic statement that where economics begins to exhaust its possibilities as to applying the theories of entrepreneurship, remaining within the acknowledged, but classical (historical) currents, social psychology, cognitive science and sociology have still a lot to offer.

In *Entrepreneurship…*, one has to do with a very solid lecture on economic theories. And despite the fact that the author favours the paradigm of socioeconomics or sociology of economy (the dispute as to the name of this subdiscipline is still unsolved), or even of sociology of entrepreneurship, the reader's appetite for analyses of these diverse perspectives remains unsatisfied. This quite frequent practice, typical of so-

ciological research on entrepreneurship, contributes to the conviction that sociology has less to offer in this respect than economics. Accordingly, the author of the book, using interdisciplinary character of her research as an excuse, seems to enhance the status of economic theories of entrepreneurship instead of indicating application opportunities of socioeconomics. In my opinion, achievement of both sociology and psychology is rich enough not to be a complement to economic theory of entrepreneurship, but to provide an independent research perspective. However, it does not belittle the rank of the characterization carried out in the first two chapters where M. Nawojczyk, in a solid and interesting way, presents the achievement of the two disciplines, i.e. economics and sociology in theory of entrepreneurship. The problem is rather that the bottom line is not stated expressly enough. It is not until the conclusion that the author states that in relation to the chosen subject "psychology and sociology have somewhat more to offer in the issue of entrepreneurship" (p. 221). The author of *Entrepreneurship…* claims, citing some researchers, that the concept of social entrepreneurship means abandoning its narrower economic meaning. She also maintains that social change is done owing to social entrepreneurship in the process of civic creation of entrepreneurship and its connection to social change (with the differentiation between an internal change as a form of development and an external change leading to adaptation). The author acknowledges the connection's usefulness

for analyses of economies under transformation (p. 109). If so, taking one's stance expressly in favour of sociology of entrepreneurship would not be inappropriate, especially because subsequent parts of the work concern the mentioned change.

M. Nawojczyk writes erroneously in Conclusions about some discomfort resulting from her conviction about incompatibility between empirical interests and numerous theoretical models (p. 219). Well, to be quite blunt, if realities do not fit in created theoretical models, it is with the loss for the latter (it indicates namely a problem of today's economics which proves a bit helpless in the face of giving an explanation for the current economic crisis, going beyond the theoretical frames known so far). To cut a long story short, I regret that the author did not present the theoretical assumption of her empirical research more explicitly.

The second part is devoted as a whole to entrepreneurship of economies under transformation. M. Nawojczyk concentrates on Central – and Eastern European countries, treating them as a point of reference for processes in Poland. She justifies her choice with the fact that it concerns a group of countries participating in integration with the EU. One deals with a lot of information on the issue in numerous scientific and journalistic works. One might therefore infer that *Entrepreneurship…* would not contribute much to the situation. It is not the case, though. The author has found an interesting key to show entrepreneurship in the countries within her interest, making comparisons between different aspects which influence entrepreneurship. The comparisons concern environment for entrepreneurship's development in Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary; they concentrate specifically on legislative barriers, financial and social determinants and differences in adopted strategies for entrepreneurship. Showing this material helps above all to realize the grim truth that Poland performs very badly in terms of entrepreneurship, if one makes a ranking of best-performing countries under transformation. The country's weakness is exposed and although the author, using different gauges of economic freedom, indicates that in all economies under transformation one deals with bureaucratized and long procedure of company registration, it is still specially onerous in Poland (in spite of the endless debate on the subject there's no significant change). Each of the presented variables should at last throw the state institutions off their complacency.

M. Nawojczyk mentions in her analysis an important issue of social determinants of entrepreneurship. She indicates that although numerous gauges confirm the great modernization jump of countries under transformation, social opinions on the transformation's advantages are ambiguous and the level of acceptance of transformations is not as high as one could expect. M. Nawojczyk does not pay much attention to the issue, which is a pity, since a more elaborate explanation of this phenomenon would be extremely beneficial.

Writing on social determinants, the author of the book states that "Environment

unfavourable for entrepreneurship did not create a great barrier for development of the private sector. Liberalization itself gave a strong enough rise to releasing the resources of social entrepreneurship. This proces was favoured by the level of education of the societies under transformation, although here opinions vary. Accordingly, some people considered educational standards in socialist countries as similar to those in capitalist ones; others thought that the education system in the latter was subordinate to the industrial, centralized structure of capitalist economies. Nevertheless, all emphasized the lack of managerial skills, strategic planning, creating business plans, knowledge of marketing and rules of functioning of market institutions" (p. 128). In my opinion, the issue of education is worth a significant elaborating because of the frequent mythologization of the Polish education's quality, both in the past and today. The problem is that education in terms of entrepreneurship not only means knowledge of economics, organization and management, but also fostering creativity. P. Drucker claims that good education curriculums should be constructed in a way to promote openness, self-reliance, creativity, ability of an independent problem analysis, freedom of thinking and ability of critical thinking[1]. Learning entrepreneurship cannot only comprise the acquisition of professional knowledge, but also the comprehensive

forming of these social characteristics and competences which enable individuals and communities to participate as subjects in social and economic life. The list of abilities recognized as indispensable for effective functioning in economic and public life is rich, though it is definitely worth mentioning the following ones: skills concerning interpersonal communication, co-operation regarded in today's world as a condition for realization of various tasks and undertakings, conflict solving, where the ability of controlling the conflict equals the ability of reaction to difficult situations and initiating definite relevant behaviours. One should also mention the ability of creating interpersonal contacts – an important element of building social capital, which is crucial for communities' development, the ability of gathering information, regarded as a prerequisite to participate in economic and social processes in knowledge-based economies, readiness to change, important for the dynamics of labour market and market processes, ability to use new solutions, important for innovative attitude and readiness to abide contracts and agreements with other people, which builds credibility as well as trust and makes an important component of an image of a public life participant. Last but not least, it is worth listing the ability to plan one's activities, which means the skill of rationalizing activities, readiness to postpone the benefit from their effects, the ability of effective time management and management of one's own life career.

To my mind, Polish education has never met these conditions, which may have fatal

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[1] P. Drucker, *Innowacja i przedsiębiorczość. Praktyka i zasady* [*Innovation and Entrepreneurship,* New York 1985], Warszawa 1992, p. 30).

consequences for socio-economic development of our country, since "the present education system concentrates on the students' achievements and marginalizes activities aiming to perpetuate the desirable cultural patterns"[2]. This remark, perhaps too elaborate, results from the conviction that the Polish way of transformation, even though it is in the end positively evaluated, is full of the same problems which have remained unsolved for years. The pessimistic view is that entrepreneurship in Poland, described perhaps by M. Nawojczyk in future in her next scientific works, will be developing in the same difficult conditions.

The third part of *Entrepreneurship…* is an analysis of the fieldwork conducted by the author, concentrating on local markets. The research is interesting, as it perceives entrepreneurship from the point of view of ecology and spatial differentiation. Torun and Cracow are two cities where two loose interviews were conducted. They focused on enterprises placed within chosen streets. M. Nawojczyk examines the local market's surroundings – macroeconomic situation, institutional environment, the issue of the entrepreneurs' attitude to the EU; she analyzes also social networks – families, customers and competitors. An interesting part of the analyses in question is sketching the entrepreneurs' portrayals. In the previous

part of the book, the author refers to the portrayals of Polish entrepreneurs, present in the literature on the subject. She describes their construction – mental types and stereotypes. Then – does the analysis carried out on the basis of the conducted research contribute somehow to the already existing characteristics? In my opinion – it does. For it is a value to show the phenomenon in a micro-scale. Admittedly, M. Nawojczyk explains that "the picture of small enterprises on both research fields is rather a patchwork than a homogenous portrait, that is why excessive generalizations might lead to oversimplification" (p. 213), which she wishes to avoid in her conclusions concerning the analyses. Nevertheless, I regard such analyses as a value in itself, because they allow a better understanding of the phenomenon of small enterprises, the phenomenon's locality, essential for knowledge about processes within different communities. This type of research does not need to have a generalizing value, or bear characteristics typical of whole communities, especially if one is aware of the polarization in this respect. It becomes a value to show a microworld where people live, act and create phenomena making up a larger picture of social reality. From this point of view, the conclusions drawn by the book's author are important. She writes, "Most of them aim to survive in their activity on the market, which means that they do not reach the expected financial satisfaction, although it does not concern all of my respondents. They have, according to their words, a moral satisfaction but remain optimists. It is

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2 Z. Pisz, *Odpowiedzialność społeczna w szkolnictwie* [Social Responsibility in Education] [in:] *Człowiek w pracy i polityce społecznej* [Human at Work and Social Policy], J. Szambelańczyk, M. Żukowski (eds.), Poznań 2010, pp. 305–307.

a very significant trait in their attitude to the world. They have some plans for the future and most of them seems realistic. They do not have a long-term development strategies. Their time horizon is relatively short. I think that most of these companies are going to remain on the market, but as "microenterprises" (pp. 217–218). They are important because by showing economic and cultural determinants which are unfavourable for entrepreneurship, they allow to "create a map of good and bad sides of local markets, which could enable proper institutional changes to enhance supporting desirable patterns and eliminate harmful and forbidden practices" (p. 226).

Concluding my discussion of the analyses presented in the book of Maria Nawojczyk *Entrepreneurship. On Difficulties in Theory Application*, I would like to state that it is a fault of numerous scientific elaborations and reviews to point out by the reviewer what the work, according to him/her, is missing. Focusing on shortcomings often obscures the work's indisputable values. I'm afraid that the author of these words did not escape this disease of reviewers. This is why I wish to emphasize that the work of Maria Nawojczyk is by all means praiseworthy, distinguishing itself by a solid knowledge of literature on the subject and an interesting approach to empirical research. The chosen fragments of the book should not be treated as criticism, but rather serve as an incentive to further deliberation, discussion and especially empirical research on different aspects of entrepreneurship.

Grażyna Krzyminiewska

Maria Nawojczyk: Controversy on the Sidelines. Comment to Review of the Book *Przedsiębiorczość. O trudnościach w aplikacji teorii* [Entrepreneurship. On the Difficulties of Theory Application]

I want to thank the Author of my book reviews for all comments and the editorial of "Culture and Education" for providing me with this review and thereby creating the possibility of open polemics on this text. As the reviewer pointed out, the difficulty of a review lies in its very nature, rather focusing on the drawbacks or shortcomings than advantages of this text, so the convention of the polemics with my peer's review makes my answer mainly focus on these issues which seem questionable to me. For all the warm words addressed to the book thank you very much. Now, I will focus on the polemic comments.

Already in the introduction (p. 12), I explicitly advocate for the adoption of the perspective of economic sociology, as the basic framework of my discussion. In this context, it is not surprising that I devoted so much space to the economic theories of entrepreneurship. But I do not consider this topic as the dominant one. After all, the whole section *Sociology of Entrepreneurship* (Sec. 2.3.) shows the achievements of sociology in this field and documents how much sociological research in this field has to offer. If there occurred an impression of imbalance in the legal treatment of the two disciplines, it may result from different approaches to the classical concept of the intellectual traditions of both. In econom-

ics, in general we are dealing with one of the dominant paradigms in a given period of time, therefore, the intellectual achievements of this discipline of science seem a lot more structured. By contrast, in sociology, in parallel, there are many competing theories, which in addition constantly refer to classical concepts, and sometimes even the same authors, only to different interpretations. Thus, their intellectual arrangement becomes much more difficult, and perhaps I was unable to sufficiently fulfill this task.

As I explore entrepreneurship from the perspective of economic sociology, I could not devote more space to psychology, no matter how interesting the research findings of this discipline are. I simply could not write a book about everything, especially when the object of research is so complex. Therefore, touching those topics I clearly indicated – as the reviewer notes – very promising concepts in social psychology and cognitive science. For the same reason, I am clearly voting for the sociology of entrepreneurship as an interesting research field of economic sociology, but not treating it as part of a new interdisciplinary science of entrepreneurship. Remaining in the mainstream of sociological thought, I could not neglect the important concepts of social stratification existent within the discipline. They lie at the root of this "discomfort" incompatibility of theoretical models to reality. In my opinion, the social stratum of entrepreneurs is so internally diverse that it loses its value as an explanatory category. Therefore, its particular part – micro-entrepreneurs – I tried to describe with such

diligence and I am glad that this has been appreciated by the reviewer.

Another controversial issue concerns the cultural embeddedness of economies in transition. Vast transformational literature, which in the text I just pointed out (p. 135), devotes much attention to endogenous and exogenous factors in this process, as well as changes of a revolutionary character and evolutionary one. While the legislative changes could be made in a revolutionary way, the changes in social attitudes are of evolutionary character rather. Setting the time frame of my considerations, I accepted that the transformation of post-socialist countries can be considered as completed with the accession to the EU structures (p. 115). However, in relation to cultural changes such as e.g. stereotypes of entrepreneurship, or changes in attitudes to these processes, such as a sense of being a winner or loser, transition boundary of the latter is unclear, since they are long and evolutionary processes. Moreover, the public opinion on the benefits of transformation is not only ambiguous but it evolves over time. This is a subject that is fascinating but for me it constitutes only a social and cultural context of entrepreneurship, and as part of that context it was presented.

One of the essential elements of that context, particularly raised by the reviewer, is education. I share her views on the paramount importance of education in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes, and also all the skills mentioned in the review as a key element of such education. In my opinion, the problem lies in the fact that the education system is a reflection of social and cultural

values of the communities in which it operates. Thus, the education system is not able to shape or promote creativity and self-reliance, critical thinking, risk taking, etc., if those features in the general system of values of a society have negative connotations. Polish culture is not conducive to entrepreneurship and it certainly will not change from day to day. Changes towards a more positive perception of entrepreneurship are not excluded. Sociological research findings show us for example that children of persons taking up an entrepreneurial activity are much more likely to appreciate and undertake such activities. Their attitudes towards entrepreneurship are changing strongly in favor during the primary socialization process. Just over three million micro-entrepreneurs create favorable conditions for such socialization. We do not know yet the impact of migration processes to more pro-entrepreneurial societies (e.g., Ireland, Great Britain) on changing these attitudes in Poland. However, if such interaction takes place, it will be rather in a positive direction for the entrepreneurship. Therefore, I do not share the pessimism of the reviewer, as to the future of the same harsh conditions of doing business in Poland. I would be rather a cautious optimist in this matter.

I am glad that the reading of this book can also help to stimulate discussion, ask questions and perhaps look for answers in subsequent research on entrepreneurship. The more we know about it, the more likely the disenchantment of the negative stereotypes can occur.

Maria Nawojczyk

Andrzej Zalewski (rev.): Antonio Negri, *Goodbye Mr. Socialism*, Wydawnictwo WAB, Warszawa 2008, pp. 278.

The anti-positivistic turn in humanism and the profound transformation of the contemporary world, which involves primarily the end of the bipolar system in the global politics, the IT revolution and the globalization, are accompanied in social sciences by the growing importance of thinking that I would call the "narrations" of intellectuals. Such narration involves a broad, holistic and interdisciplinary reflection on the modern times, aiming at creating a new interpretation framework for the world, which is changing so dynamically that it makes many traditional categories and concepts irrelevant, such as a national state or the class structure in the Marxist understanding. This type of artistic activity includes, in my opinion, the philosophy and sociology of Zygmunt Bauman, some works by Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, any many others, who are trying to describe the post-industrial or even post-modern world with their more or less essayistic works. Many of these authors adopt the evaluating perspective, going beyond the boundaries of scientific disciplines and cultivating the type of thinking that is close to social philosophy. Depending on the temperament and the theoretic approach, the attitude to such reflections may differ. Some of these works fulfil their role by inspiring us to theorise even better or by shaping the philosophical premises that precede the cultivation of science in the strict meaning of the word, while

some of them are the eruption of empty erudition and the "smoke veil of jargon". Honestly, I found it hard to say whether the first book by Negri (Empire, co-author: Michael Hardt) deserved the applause it received from a part of the European public. Therefore, I was curious to read another book by Negri, *Goodbye Mr. Socialism*.

It is high time to present the author, whose works are often recognised as the most accurate description of the nature of political power in the 21st century. It is not an overstatement to describe Negri as a radically committed philosopher. After all, his works focus on the problems of the socialist movement (or even on the attempt to revitalize the communist thinking), while his biography abounds with "radical" events, such as his involvement in the terrorist organization called Autonomia Operaia (Labour Autonomy) or the 25-year prison sentence. One of my professors said once that to become a genius in the post-modern epoch it suffices to invent a brilliant metaphor. And the metaphor of the Empire created by Negri is considered as brilliant. What is the Empire? It has no emblem or capital city. Rather, it is a collection of rules "[…] that have no authors or guardians. Whenever we start searching, we fall into the labyrinth of connections and necessities, which spring out of nowhere and are the core of the system"[1]. In analytical categories, the Empire is the pyramid of power made of mon-

archy, aristocracy and network. On the monarchic level, the main actors are the national states with most resources (such as the US) and their alliances (G-7) as well as international organizations, such as the UN. Below the monarchic level, there is aristocracy, which is made of all states and the largest global corporations that control the flow of capital, culture and know-how. The network level is composed of social movements and NGOs, such as the Amnesty International and Greenpeace. The Empire controls them not with police methods, but rather with disciplinary ones. The authorities do not try to force people, rather to tempt them. They do not affect the external environment of individuals, but instead influence their brains and bodies directly. In other words, the Empire constitutes a "biopower". Interestingly, the order formed by the Empire does not come into being spontaneously, nor is it enacted. The Empire follows a coherent logic, however it does not stem from the actions of individual players. Another key concept developed by the Italian philosopher is the "multitude". This "multitude" is a rather airy being, which Negri identifies with all the powers that desire (even potentially) to oppose the Empire and build an alternative model of globalization.

The above reminder of the basic concepts developed by Negri has been necessary, as the book I am reviewing is an attempt at construing major social and political events of the contemporary times through the prism of categories developed in the Empire. Let us move on to *Goodbye Mr. Socialism*, where Negri sets off for an

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[1] J. Żakowski, *Invisible Empire: Conversation with Antonio Negri* [in:] *Koniec* [The End], J. Żakowski (ed.), Warszawa 2006, p. 68.

intellectual journey all over the world, desiring to describe events that inspire him, from the World Economic Forum in Davos, through Iraq, to the protests in Seattle. The book is an interview between Negri and his friend, Raf "Valvola" Scelsi, which starts with the unaffected "Hi Toni! What's up? […]" (p. 5). However, the introduction in this original convention is misleading, as the rest of the book is embellished with highly complex thoughts, both in terms of their language and content. Particularly intricate ruminations can be found in the first chapter, where Negri remembers (with joy) the fall of the Berlin Wall. However, that event encourages him to rather original reflections on the nature of the "real socialism". He pays much of his attention to the causes of the failed revolution in the USSR, looking for them in the isolationistic policy of the West, as well as in the view of Stalinism as the effect of the immanent mechanisms of modernity and modernization (and the related accumulation of capital) (p. 15). Morally, he condemns the USSR, however, he sees it with the eye of a detached historian who is a well-wisher of the communist revolution. He comes to the conclusion that the root of the very negative effects of communism in Russia was the defence of the revolution by limiting freedom, the inability to produce wealth and freedom simultaneously. Today, we can produce both freedom and resources, therefore the idea of communism is having a bright future, as it is the only alternative to postmodernism. On the other hand, the liberal and socialist left will not overcome its present crisis (hence the

perverse title, *Goodbye Mr Socialism*). Most of the leftist activists are "rascals" for Negri anyway, who were first uncritical towards the USSR, and afterwards towards capitalism. How does the author imagine the new communism in more detail? He claims that a new order cannot be invented theoretically, however, the concept of the new communism may be described as the "radical modification of working entities, […] the construction of community as the common production and reproduction capacities of the social element in freedom" (p. 28). Let us come back to the above-mentioned journey of Negri across the modern world. Its main route follows the places where resistance to the Empire stiffens, the most important being the cradle of the alter-globalization movement, the American city of Seattle. The nature of protests there is explained by the inflow of people opposing the unfavourable forms of employment (Seattle was the destination of many workers who escaped from unstable employment conditions on the East Coast). According to the authors, we have to understand the differences between temporary employment that opens up life prospects broadly and the forms of employment that do not provide this. Work should involve "cooperation and common self-indexation", and these ideas inspired the strikers. The key aspect of the social movements in Seattle was also the operation of network communication and social structures. For Negri, the cooperation of people in networks is a factor that may limit bureaucracy and the asymmetry in communication. The Internet is the best example of such oppor-

tunities, and its creators are seen as people focusing on community rather than on property, thus being more of the socialist than capitalist breed. For the author, the key needs of the multitude include: creating the enigmatic "community" based on biopolitical categories as well as the transformation of work and communication forms. In general, Negri repeats the slogans of alter-globalists solemnly: "A different world is possible", trying to name or particularise their aspirations, praising the internal diversity of the movement at the same time. What is happening on the other side of the barricade, in the Empire? Negri uses the summit in Davos as the lens. The unity of the capitalist model of globalization is evident there in its entirety. This unity is not perfect, however, as could be seen from numerous speeches against Bush-governed America (when the US tried to take over the complete global control on the monarchy level). This capitalist model of globalization refers also to culture, it operates via lifestyles and wants to be one. It stems from the transfer of the gravity centre of capital from physical work to an imaginative individual. Of course, the economic power is also exercised by the Empire. Such power is exercised today through the banking system and intellect control. This is the only way to control production by major companies that use mental work and the network. Negri claims, however, that the present historic moment is determined by changes, the transfer from the "internationalisation" to "globalisation"; therefore it is a plastic moment, which is open to human activity, as

another theoretician (Immanuel Wallerstein) would say.

Summing up, despite several interesting fragments, the latest book by Negri shows that the author is out of form. The high level of conceptual complexity, which is not compensated for with the quality of proposed concepts and the transfer of focus from the social-political philosophy to (exotic, in my opinion) political thinking, make the book fall short of the expectations that might be held for the philosopher of his fame.

Andrzej Zalewski

Maciej Gurtowski (rev.): Janine Wedel, *Shadow Elite. How the World's New Power Brokers Undermine Democracy, Government, and the Free Market*, Basic Books, New York 2009, pp. 304.

The collapse of communism and Revolutions of 1989 are probably the major problems for western social sciences. Rapid and mainly unexpected transformations have changed the balance of power in the world. The very origins of these processes could be identified in the early 1980s in Poland. While the communistic block was spread over the vast part of Eurasia, from Laba River in Europe to the Mekong in China, there was a country that managed to create a rift in this block – the legal democratic opposition. Janine Wedel was an eyewitness to the beginnings of Solidarity movement and to the attempts of crashing it by introducing the martial law in 1981 followed by

the transition of communistic regimes into democratic states. As a social anthropologist, not the political scientist, she observed how Poles were operating around the rules under communism and during its transition. They were skilled conspirators and experienced rule-abiders because of almost two centuries of living under occupation. And because of some historical factors Poles saved their national identity while being skeptical to their state. People living in the police state were forced to deceive the state institutions and such a situation required from citizens a kind of flexible identity. As Wedel stated: "In communist Poland, the necessity of getting around the system bred absurdities, ranging from the employee who "lifts" a desk from state-owned factory to sell for cash and then complains when a fellow worker "steals" it from him, to the employee of the Communist Party headquarters who doubles as an underground publisher, printing his leaflets at the headquarters. While the totalitarian nature of the state necessitated such strategies, America today seems increasingly to offer such absurdities of its own" (p. X). The core idea of the "Shadow elite" is the observation that some important phenomena, apparently typical for communistic and transitional states, are starting to occur also in model democracy such as the United States. What are these phenomena? First of all, let's start from drafting the specific field of research which is the base of Wedel's findings.

We can divide the subject of social sciences into four categories using two methodological criteria: transparency and com-

plexity. Then we achieve the matrix with four types. First, there are transparent and simple phenomena, teenagers dating habits, for example. Second, we've got phenomena that are simple and latent, like the contents of confessions in Catholic congregation. Third, we achieve complex and transparent, in methodological sense, phenomena, for example: macro trends in education. The last category contains the field of exploration which is most challengeable for researchers because of its secrecy and complexity. It includes, for example, revolutions, price-fixing conspiracies, covert actions of secret services, financial scams, terrorist networks activity, etc. Such phenomena are difficult for scientific inquiry because of a few specific obstacles. Radosław Sojak and Daniel Wicenty analyzed such restrictions[1] for their conceptualization of the field study they called "behind the scenes dimensions of society"[2]. Among these specific obstacles two of them are, according to "Shadow Elite", especially worth emphasizing. Firstly, it is uneasy to collect and verify the data about hidden and complex phenomena. Secondly, some clandestine social activity is understandable only in its unique, usually also not available context.

Most of Polish scientific analyses of the transition of former communistic regimes neglect one important, in our opinion, vari-

[1]   R. Sojak, D. Wicenty, *Zagubiona rzeczywistość. O społecznym konstruowaniu niewiedzy* [A Lost Reality. On Social Costructing of Ignorance], Warszawa 2005, pp. 173–219.

[2]   Ibidem, pp. 21–66.

able[3] – the legacy of the police state[4]. For example, the role of communist secret services and *nomenklatura* in designing and managing the transition, or the problem of the so called "early winners" of the transition are still, in respect to its importance, unexplored[5]. Janine Wedel is the one of the few who analyzed this neglected dimension of postcommunist transitions[6]. In her previous book[7], she wrote about the observed in transition democracies processes of blurring the border between the public and the private, and about the abuses of western reform advisors. What is most important here is the fact that after almost a decade, Wedel discovered similar phenomena in so called mature democracies. It is an effect of the well-known mechanism of a hermeneutic circle.

Wedel's book is about insidious threats to modern market democracies. Who are the members of the shadow elite and how do they "undermine democracy, government and free market"? Wedel calls "the new breed of influencers 'flexians'. When such operators work together in longstanding groups, thus multiplying their influence, they are flex nets. Flexians and flex nets operate at one extreme of a continuum in crafting their coincidences of interests" (p. 5). They "operate at the nexus of official and private power, cannot only co-opt public policy agendas, crafting policy with their own purposes in mind. They test the time-honoured principles of both the canons of accountability of the modern state and the codes of competition of free market" (p. 7). Flexians intentionally locate themselves in situations of coincidences of interests because it brings them more influence. It's not just a simple profit as in classic conflict of interest. Usually, they try not to simply enrich themselves but rather to take control over some part of public policy in intention to protect some idea or they simply promote themselves. According to flexians, terms like "corruption" and "lobbing" are not applicable. Anti-corruption regulations cause new sophisticated methods of bypassing them. Comparing to flexians, double agents, as Wedel stated, are simple creatures. Flexians usually combine, at the same time, positions: academic, advisory, journalistic, commercial and public. So it is hard to track their loyalties and to simply answer: "who do they serve?" because their various conflicting agendas allow them to avoid accountability. Coincidences of interests comparing to conflicts of interests are uneasy to detect.

[3] Ibidem, pp. 199, 223.

[4] M. Łoś, A. Zybertowicz, *Privatizing the Police-State: The Case of Poland*, London–New York 2000.

[5] A. Zybertowicz, *Hidden Actors, Overlooked Dimensions and Blind Intellectuals: Nine Paradoxes that Account for Institutionally Entrenched Ignorance* [in:] *Building Democracy and Civil Society*, S. Eliaeson (ed.), London–New York 2006, pp. 226–37.

[6] See also: D. Stark, *Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism*, "The American Journal of Sociology" 1996, Vol. 101, No. 4, pp. 993–1027; J. S. Hellman, *Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Postcommunist Transitions*, "World Politics" 1998, Vol. 50, pp. 203–34.

[7] J. Wedel, *Collision and Collusion. The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe*, New York 2001.

According to Wedel, this new international class of influencers emerge as a cause of four transformational developments which occurred over the last quarter of century: government outsourcing and deregulation, the end of the Cold War, the growth of information technologies, and "the embrace of *truthiness*". The first three of them are literally understandable but the last one needs a comment. Truthiness is a concept of Stephen Colbert, and the easiest way to explain its meaning is by comparison to Baudrillard's term "simulacra": "Simulation, unlike pretense, and like "truthiness", produces real intuitive feelings, emotions or symptoms in someone, and, therefore, blurs the difference between the 'real' and 'imaginary'" (p. 219). Truth needs a proof and "truthinees" thrives on impressions. "Truthiness" allow flexians to hide their complex conflicting agendas behind the mask of the currently performing role. So it is hard for the media or the public opinion to recognize the flexian and their flex net. Wedel emphasizes that the media no longer control public authorities. Instead, the media enhance politicians to entertain the audience. Public servants could easier conceal their private interests.

How do flexians and flex nets work? Wedel enumerates their most important features (pp. 15–19). First is "personalizing bureaucracy", which means that flexians use informal relationships to affect formal institutions. Flexians are loyal to people not to organizations or institutions. Second, "privatizing information while branding conviction" with "shared conviction and action" – flex nets are capturing the information available only to insiders and their members get a similar worldview. Third, "jiggling roles and representations", which is simply representing simultaneously different and sometimes competitive interests. Fourth, "relaxing rules at interstices of official and private institutions", which is literally clear but it needs to be emphasized that this relaxing is achieved by constantly "almost breaking" a given rule a little more.

Concepts of flexians and flex nets are used by Wedel for explaining some apparently irrational decisions of the US Government. Wedel argues that flexians captured important links in decision making processes. For example, saving bankrupting banks with public money has been, until recently, unthinkable. But, as she proves, influence of flexians has blurred the border between the public and the private and between bureaucracy and the market.

Wedel's concepts are illustrated by four case studies. The first is about post-Communist transition in Poland. The author shows how some flexian-like individuals connected with authorities of the former system together achieved enormous success during and after transformation. Wedel describes the example of institutionalization of a flex net. She argues that Ordynacka Association (students association in the beginning) was an attempt to organize a formal flex net with intention of creating background for informal influence. According to Wedel, the effect of that enterprise was the Rywingate – considered a major Polish political affair that in consequence totally reshaped political balance in Poland.

Another case is an analysis of the process of the US government outsourcing and deregulation. Wedel argues that instead of budget's savings and limitation of bureaucracy, outsourcing brings to former governments' contractors exclusive knowledge and other useful resources.

The third case study is about Russian industry privatization. Wedel describes how western privatization advisors, mainly economists and managers from Harvard, mixed their liberal and free-market ideas with local, post-communist management culture, which resulted in ruination of Russian industry. But a more interesting discovery is that western advisors brought back to America the Russian way of doing business with no respect to the rules and private property.

The fourth case is of American Neoconservatives. According to Wedel, they create a flex net whose aim was to protect the world from repetition of holocaust. The author argues that "Neocons" captured a vast part of governmental administration to the level which allowed them to force the invasion on Iraq. Consider the example of their impact: Lawrence B. Wilkerson, the Chief of the Staff said about Neocons to the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, from 2002 to 2005: "We were up against a ruthless machine that had its people in every corner of the bureaucracy, with a vision and strategy for carrying out the vision" (p. 177). It is also interesting that, according to Wedel's findings, Neocons' flex net, like Ordynacka, is also responsible for a huge political affair – the well-known Iran-Contras.

Is it possible that in an established state, a small group of individuals is able to influence the major institutions of the state for a long time? How do they do that? Janine Wedel is not the first who analyzes such phenomena. She directly quotes theories of Polish sociologists: Antoni Kamiński, Joanna Kurczewska and Adam Podgórecki. The first two of them are authors of the concept of "institutional nomads"[8], actors similar to flexions, and Podgórecki[9] conceptualized the phenomenon of capturing some functions of institution by hidden net of individuals.

In her book Wedel explored complex and clandestine phenomena and as a social anthropologist she has got an excellent background for uncovering the hidden meanings of social activity. Moreover, she has not only spent years on analyzing informal institutions and social networks in Central and Eastern Europe but she has

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[8] A. Kamiński, J. Kurczewska, *Main Actors of Transformation: The Nomadic Elites* [in:] *The General Outlines of Transformation*, E. Allardt, W. Wesołowski (eds.), Warszawa 1994, pp. 132––153.

[9] A. Podgórecki, *Social Control of the Third Order*, "International Journal of Contemporary Sociology" 1986, Vol. 23, No. 3–4. For most advanced sociological conceptualization of social arrangement which capture state institutions see: A. Zybertowicz, *Przemoc Układu: O peerelowskich korzeniach sieci biznesowej Zygmunta Solorza* [Violence of the Arrangement: On the PRL (Polish People's Republic) Roots of Zygmunt Solorz's Business Network] [in:] *Transformacja podszyta przemocą: O nieformalnych mechanizmach przemian* [Transformation Streaked with Violence: On Informal Mechanisms of Transformations] R. Sojak, A. Zybertowicz (eds.), Toruń 2008, pp. 187–266.

also been a participant in Moscow meetings of privatization advisors. Wedel used the data collected by participant observations and by interviews with insiders. We can surely agree that Wedel has overcome the obstacles mentioned in the beginning, the access to hidden data and its unavailable context. She has just used well documented examples.

In "Shadow Elite", there is no systematic theoretical background. Wedel uses different ideas from classic and modern scholars in an easy manner. The reasoning is sometimes not clear mainly because of the sophisticated narration and non-intuitive terminology. The theses are often too strong for the argumentation. But there is still a wealth of evidence. Wedel manages rather to impress the reader than to prove her theses. Some ideas of Wedel are surely brilliant. She states important questions and offers original answers. What makes Wedel's book so valuable is that it also contains useful heuristics for other researchers.

Maciej Gurtowski

Joanna Piechowiak-Lamparska: The Report on the 4ᵗʰ International Scientific Conference *Contemporary Asia. Politics – Security – Economy – Culture*

The 13ᵗʰ and 14ᵗʰ of May 2010 were the days when the Fourth International Scientific Conference *Contemporary Asia. Politics – Security – Economy – Culture* took place. The conference was organized by the Asian Pacific Society, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies at Nicolaus Copernicus University and Adam Marszałek Publishing House under the honorary patronage of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Radosław Sikorski, the Marshal of Cuiavian-Pomeranian Voivodship Mr. Piotr Całbecki and the President of the City of Toruń Mr. Michał Zaleski with the support of His Magnificence the President of Nicolaus Copernicus Uniwersity Professor, Ph.D. Andrzej Radzimiński.

The conference was a subsequent stage of series of conventions taking place in Toruń from 2007. Dr. Joanna Marszałek-Kawa, the initiator of the meeting, once again organized one of the most important scientific events in Poland concerning the subject of Asia[1]. A lot of organizational aspects of the conference deserve attention. One of them is the publication of the meeting results in the form of monograph[2], diversified in respect of subject. What is important, especially for scholars taking part in this conference, materials are collected in reviewed volumes. Both the subject matter and the earned prestige of the conference allowed many scholars from Poland and from abroad to meet. The invitation to this conference was accepted, among others, by Professor Miao Huashou and Associate

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[1] I International Scientific Conference *Asia – Politics, Economy, Political System* from 2007; II International Scientific Conference *The Role and Place of Asia in the Contemporary World* from 2008; III International Scientific Conference *The Faces of Asian statehood. Aspects of Civilization, Culture, Politics, Law, and Economy* from 2009.

[2] 12 volumes have appeared so far.

Professor Liu Lian from the Academy of International Relations at People's University in Beijing, Dr. Arusyak Julhakyan from the University of Warsaw, Dr. Mukhit Sydyknazarow from L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University in Kazakhstan or Dr. Hayssam Obeidat from the Jagiellonian University. We could also find employees from all important scientific centres in Poland; among others, from the University of Warsaw, the Jagiellonian University, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the University of Wrocław, Higher School of Social Psychology in Warsaw, University of Łódź, University of Szczecin, University of Gdańsk or at last, from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

During the conference almost 80 reports were delivered and were listened to by over 120 people – scholars, students, specialists, diplomats and officials. The presence of representatives of Embassy of the People's Republic of China, or Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and local authorities should be also underlined. The interdisciplinary character of the meeting allowed in principle to raise any possible subject concerning Asia. The subjects were assigned to four panels entitled: *Politics*, *Security*, *Economy*, and *Culture*. Only a part of the expressed views were included in the following report.

The conference began with plenary debates In Collegium Maximum. The panel was chaired by Professor, Ph.D. Krzysztof Pałecki, and Professor, Ph.D. Jerzy Jaskiernia, Professor, Ph.D. Jarosław Piątek, Profes-

sor, Ph.D. Zbigniew Wiktor, Professor, Ph.D. Edward Czapiewski, Professor, PhD. Henryk Hermann, Professor, Ph.D. Małgorzata Pietrasik, and Professor, Ph.D. Jacek Sobczak presented their papers. It was undoubtedly the most interesting panel, both in terms of lecturers, and in terms of the discussed subjects. The lecture of Professor Jaskiernia entitled *The Significance of Asia in the Common Foreign Policy and Security of the European Union* finished with an interesting conclusion that "the vital motivation for diplomatic activities of the European Union in Asia may be creating the multi-polar system in place of the dominance of the United States of America in the international arena. The one-polar model is not in the interest of the EU, with no regard to how useful the relations with the United States might be". Equally interesting subject, also belonging to the macro scale, was discussed in the paper of Professor Piątek entitled *To Understand the Strategy of Contemporary China, to Understand the Future*. The author claims that presently China is so significant and active an actor of the international political and economical scene, that without the thorough analysis of tactics of this country the right judgment concerning the future of the world cannot be made. The location of Middle Kingdom among the most important players in the international arena indicates constant increase of significance of China together with, among others, the United States and the European Union. The lecture of Professor Sobczak, who in his paper entitled *Uigurians – the Forgotten Nation* mentioned the more and more urgent

problem of ethnic minorities in China, was also very significant. In the light of the reports on persecutions and tough policy with regard to citizens of Sinkiangu, it is visible that the world forgot about the 9-million nation. All lectures of the plenary panel were characterized by noticeable care in preparation, and by interestingly advanced theses.

After the opening ceremony and plenary debates, the participants were divided into two teams which were parallelly discussing Asian politics and culture. The first panel, which concerned politics, was conducted by Professor, Ph.D. Edward Olszewski. *One of the most significant papers – On the Cosmopolitan Vision of Human Rights in the Context of the so Called Asian Values Accusation*, presented by Professor, Ph.D. Bartosz Wojciechowski – discussed the controversial concept of separation of the Western and Eastern worlds. The question of different understanding of values, that is so often addressed by many international organizations, leads to disparate views on the rights of individuals and groups. Therefore, finding a way to reach consensus of opinion should become a priority in the international dialogue. The author of the subsequent significant paper Professor, Ph.D. Maciej Franz posed an important question: *Is China Ready to Perform the Role of a Global Military superpower?* As it was noted by the professor, China is not only an economic superpower of a different culture but also a huge, impossible to estimate military power. The impressive military potential of Middle Kingdom is not subordinate to the government since it is the comunist party that supervises military forces. This system of dependence, so opposite to the Western one, raises a question whether it will be sufficient to counterbalance such powers as the United States.

The second part of the panel devoted to politics was dominated by international matters. The speeches concerned Armenia, Iraq, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan. Mukhit Sydyknazarov, Ph.D. presented an outline of the cooperation between Kazakhstan and the European Union in the fields of science and education. This issue seems to be of high significance, especially with regard to the formation of civil society. Two of the presentations concerned Turkmenistan. Ksenia Kakarenko, MA presented a reflection on the political system, and Mariusz Marszewski discussed the question of legitimation of authorities in the independent Turkmenistan.

The second debate was chaired by Professor, Ph.D. Anna Chmielak and Professor, Ph.D. Adam Jelonek. The panel *Culture* constituted a platform for discussion on philosophy, religion, value systems, law, and legacy of Asia. The first part thematically oscillated mainly around Confucianism and its different aspects. Dr. Adam Małachowski put forward the issue of virtue as the natural conduct for spiritual forming of social and political community according to St. Thomas and Confucius. While Sławomir Stromski, MA compared the concept of the man in the discourse of these two thinkers. Dr. Łukasz Dominiak compared the ethical tradition of Confucius with Aristotle and the

Thomistic School. During the second part of the panel the participants focused on the religious systems and social-religious doctrines. Dr. Sławomir Drelich in his paper referred to the reflection on social and political ethics propagated by Mahatma Ghandi. The attempt to diagnose the social situation of Muslims in China was made by Paulina Parcewicz, MA, while the presentation of Dr. Veronika Belyaeva concerned the nation-forming aspects of the influence of shamanism and Buddhism on Buryat society.

On the second day of the conference, there were three parallel panels: *Politics*, *Economy*, and *Security*. The first part of the panel, related to the politics of Asia, led by Professor, Ph.D. Jerzy Jaskiernia, concerned the energy issues and bilateral relations among countries. China's demand for fuels was the issue that Professor, Ph. D. Piotr Mickiewicz focused his paper on. The report concerned the influence of the energy sector on China's policy on Middle Asia. Complementary to the first paper was the lecture of Marta Zobeniak, MA entitled *Geopolitics of Resources in Central Asia* and the lecture of Przemysław Adamczewski, MA "Geopolitical significance of Azerbaijan". These three papers enabled, quite precisely, to familiarize with the problem of fuel sources consumption and diversification.

The second part of the panel, led by Professor, Ph.D. Piotr Mickiewicz, thematically oscillated around the issues concerning Asian countries in international relations and around particular political and social

conditions of the nations. Dr. Grażyna Strnad presented two interesting papers on Korea. The first concerned the problem of denuclearization of North Korea, which is, undoubtedly, an immense challenge for both individual states and international organizations. In her second appearance, the lecturer discussed the strategy of reconciliation between North and South Korea. The author presented The "Bright Sunlight" Policy, and tried to make predictions for the future of Korean internal dialog. Lika Mkrtchyan, MA, in her paper, discussed the subject of relations between Turkey and the European Union. This problem has been present for many years in the EU politics, but, so far, it has not received satisfactory solution for both sides. Another important subject was taken up by Dr. Jakub Potulski. He discussed the international cooperation between Russia, China and India.

Next was the panel *Economy*, in the first part led by Professor, Ph.D. Zbigniew Wiktor. The meeting was dominated by incredibly fast development of India, and by the problems connected to globalization and integration of Asian Area. Dr. Hayssam Obeidat, in his speech, discussed the relations between India and the countries belonging to the Cooperation Council For The Arab States of The Gulf. This strategic partnership formed to develop political, economical, and military cooperation can change the balance of forces in the region. The complementary paper was the appearance of Dr. Karolina Klecha-Tylec, entitled *The Currency Integration of the Persian Gulf states – the Perspective of Introduction of*

a Common Currency. The author completed the information concerning the organization itself and made predictions for its further development in the context of plans concerning forming the currency union by such states as Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates. The subject of India was also mentioned by Dr. Grzegorz Ronk, who gave an account of bilateral relations between Great Britain and India at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, and by Agata Wancio, MA in the paper entitled *Indian Transnational Corporations' Investments on the Global Market – Tendencies and Perspectives*. These lectures gave feasible thorough examination of economic issues concerning India. Extremely important subject of globalization in this region was entered into by Professor, Ph.D. Grzegorz Piwnicki. He discussed the influence of globalization on the economy of the East-Asian states.

The second part of the panel, led by Professor, Ph.D. Ewa Oziewicz, was dominated by the subject of Japan and China, and by economic relations of Asian states. The issue of Japanese investments in Australia was outlined by Dr. Mieczysław Sprengel, and energy foreign policy of Japan was discussed by Michał Paszkowski, MA. Japan, as one of the stablest Asian states, is very interesting object of economic analyses. Equally interesting is the development and characteristics of economic and commercial cooperation between Asian states and the Russian Federation, and Latin American states – this issue was presented in turn by Swietłana Sydun, MA and Dr. Edyta Chwiej. Also in this panel, the methods of coping

with the world crisis by China were discussed. Luiza Kostecka, MA claimed that Middle Kingdom came away unscathed from the threat of production crisis and the danger of growing unemployment. China was also the subject of the report of Aleksandra Jaskólska, MA, entitled *Economic Expansion of India – Will "made in India" replace "made in China"?* In her lecture the author asked a very important question about whether the majority of world production, so far placed in China, will move to cheaper and having friendlier law and tax system for entrepreneurs, India.

The last panel, led by Professor, Ph. D. Jarosław Piątek, was *The Security* panel. The first part of the panel was dominated by issues concerning conflicts. The genesis, effects and predictions concerning controversial issues, in which Asian states are entangled were brought under debate. Professor, Ph.D. Maciej S'zczurowski discussed the strategic aims of security policy of China. This is a permanently topical item because the defence sector is one of the most important sectors in Middle Kingdom's economy and politics. The reasons for armed conflicts in Asia were presented by Dr. Karol Kościelniak. While Dr. Krzysztof Czubocha explained the causes of conflicts and separatist activities within the states. As the main factor he mentioned "the lack of interior stability of many Asian states, determined by complicated ethnic, racial and religious relations". The issue of the conflict on the Korean Peninsula was raised by Dr. Marceli Burdelski. He discussed the possibility of transforming armistice into peace treaty.

The second part of *The Security* panel was dominated by Chinese issues. The probem of military cooperation among the Russian Federation, China, India, and other countries was discussed by Col Tadeusz Krząstek. The paper entitled *Keeping and Development of Marine Forces as the Element of Security on the Area of Far East Asia* was presented by Professor, Ph.D. Maciej Franz, who determined a navy as one of the most significant elements of state defensive systems. This thesis is justified, especially because of the insular character of some countries. A very interesting question was stated by Dr. Wojciech Wiejacki. In his lecture, he said that China is becoming more and more significant player on African and South American stage. Africa, as the area of influence, is currently contested by European countries as well as by Middle Kingdom.

The conference was finished with the panel in which all moderators participated. An excellent summary and synthetic conclusion from the lecturers' appearances constituted the discussion entitled *Have We Entered the Age of Asia?* All papers indicated the rise of importance of Asia in the international arena. Politics, security, economy, and culture in the world cannot be discussed without taking into account Asian states.

The conference was undoubtedly one of the most significant scientific events concerning the subject of Asia. Impressing was both the number of lecturers and the audience taking part in the meeting as well as the organization of the conference itself. The 4th Conference was a thematically rich platform of exchanging knowledge, views, and predictions. The materials gathered during the conference will be, according to custom, published in the form of reviewed publications. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the organizers also took care of the entertaining part, which helped strengthen relations among the scholars from different countries and scientific centres. The added value constitute, expressed by all participants, declarations of return to subsequent edition of the conference in 2011.

Joanna Piechowiak-Lamparska

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According to Ministry of Science and Higher Education Ordinance from 25th
June 2010 (annex No. 2) – journals included in the European Reference Index
for Humanities (ERIH) are evaluated on the basis of a specific grading scale.
Polish version of "Culture and Education" has been classified in category C of
ERIH, based on an expert evaluation. As a consequence, articles published
in "Culture and Education" receive 10 points.

So far it is the highest rank for a periodical published in Polish. Soon we can fulfill
formal conditions allowing us to move up the ERIH, which automatically would
give us 15 points, and later even 20 points.

Editorial Board