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The discourse on alienation of the our present social time

ABSTRACT: The paper tries to take up an analysis of anxieties of political tendencies/inclinations and governmental decisions which have been occurred in Poland during last four years. The above discourse in fact – its main goal – is to quote negative consequences generate public threats and crises as also uncertainty in risk in human actions in with is involved modern social pedagogy among other disciplines in social sciences. Alienation is a common treat of its cross-national character, but the vision of *Polish communitarianism* seems to be stronger than in other developed *post-communist* countries.

KEYWORDS: Alienation, social time, discourse, social pedagogy.

This text is dedicated to the Dear, Noble and Close to me Jubilarian, commonly recognized as one of the leaders of social pedagogy in Europe, Poland and in the world. Tadeusz – the enlightened Jubilarian – has achieved the true ethos of the scholar, rarely seen during one's lifetime, which is also identified with the autonomy of thinking and paradigmatic, yet at the same time conflict-free, active and efficient philosophy of action. In the field of several sub-disciplines of social sciences he leaves behind, but fortunately also constantly expands, his profound and lasting mark. In the field of science of education he is probably one of the (very few) representatives of social sciences, a widely and „modern” educated scientist, who cannot be overlooked in scientific historiography in any way.

The Professor's scientific achievements can be seen as a classic form of a borderline of several disciplines. At the same time, it is very rich and varied. A lot of the works of this well-known and popular Author, both in Poland and abroad, are difficult to qualify for one scientific discipline, because they are on the borderline of several sciences: pedagogy, philosophy, as well as sociology and political science. Among the many issues raised by the scholar, one can also observe a lasting interest in cultural history, politics and social philosophy. Tadeusz – which should be constantly emphasized – is an extremely outstanding figure in contemporary Polish science, and at the same time a very mobile and creative academic teacher. What is more, the scientific activity of today's Jubilarian was mostly shaped by aspirations and practical and, to some extent, political goals. This is because he was/is associated with the Polish People's Party, demonstrating exceptional mobility in terms of the successful implementation of a variety of organic and complementary tasks. As a keen participant and co-creator of Professor Ryszard Wroczyński's school of social pedagogy (Pilch, Theiss 2018; cf. Theiss 2018), for several years he also successfully served as Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Poland, without resigning from his life passion of an academic expert and a man devoted to science (example: the well-known and extensive "Parliamentary Expertise" on the programme of education reform). He possesses an unquestionable authority and a very extensive oeuvre not only in the scope of our sub-discipline. For a number of years, there has been a widespread complaint among representatives of the sciences on education (and especially among social pedagogues) about the lack of general theoretical and methodological studies. Unlike empirical research, which can be imposed with a certain rhythm and which development can easily be put into the framework of even a rather rigorous, top-down plan, studies on the general theory of local community development are an extremely difficult project. They require specific intellectual abilities, extensive erudition and unique psychosocial stimuli, also coming from the political climate, which creates a certain demand for specific theories or philosophical and social recommendations. The achievements of Professor Tadeusz Pilch were always aimed at filling this gap. The presented approaches of the researcher in the scope of numerous analyses concerning the interdependence between educational phenomena occurring in the local environment of the pupil (socialization) and the process of intentional education organized in school led the author to the conviction that social pedagogy should analyze the relations between the intentional educational process and the environment that disintegrates this process. Analyses have always shown that there is often a phenomenon of disintegration, separation caused by the divergence of goals and interests, attitudes, views or beliefs. Our exceptional Author has

always demonstrated that, despite frequently articulated demands, the expected cooperation of these educational communities has not been achieved so far, and that there is a specific asymmetry in their mutual relations. School always has many internal difficulties due to the current problems. It is too often reluctant to accept a partner in the local environment who, in turn, is not always willing to recognize (assimilate) the values represented by the educational institution. The phenomenon of separation and isolation of these two communities perpetuates, unfortunately, the unfavorable stereotype of an isolated nature of school, which has been established, among other things, to provide numerous services to the local community (cf. Radziewicz-Winnicki 2008; see Theiss 2006).

To put it very simply, we can recall the above signaled generalizations as dominating in the entire work of Professor Tadeusz Pilch. The Jubilarian, a well-known personality, achieved a special gift of reliability and credibility in acting and thinking, as well as of presented and simultaneously communicated publicly, without fear of judgment and extremely accurate, social and political opinions. This is followed by righteousness of thinking and acting, which must be seen both in a credible logical and ethical, and above all in a particularly pro-social sense. No less important and momentous are not only his numerous activities, but also the inspiring papers and statements accompanying the scientific conferences in which he participated/participates, always in the course of discussions, as well as the role he has been playing for years in friendly, direct (and not only scientific) contacts. He always feels responsible for the shape of the academic community, very courageously defending the attitudes, norms, patterns and values he follows and fully accepts. He is able to separate the public mission of an academic teacher from the private, family life. Evokes admiration and respect in view of all his achievements. Envious is also the indisputable prestige of your model of engaged public academic teacher, Dear Tadeusz, which is worthy of universal following.

Dear Tadeusz, Our Jubilarian! Today, as always, I remain with esteem, admiration and long-term friendship. We are waiting for your next successes and innovative programs. Ad multos annos!

General comments

In this article I will attempt to present a few issues which were/are rarely studied by pedagogy and other disciplines of social sciences (philosophy of education, sociology, political science or psychology). I am convinced that the associate Professor Pilch is of the same opinion, based, amongst other things, on the analysis of a number of the Jubilarian's papers. Furthermore, in my opinion the continuation of the topic of specific selected issues may have

an impact on the scientific level or the development of our sub-discipline. The attempt to forecast the development of the present and at the same time of the future, which arises from the current everyday life, undoubtedly calls for the necessity to use a more specific convention or predictions. I have no doubt that what *connects* such divagations is only the *alternative of integration* (cf. Marzec-Holka et al. 2018) of contemporary social sciences. I will try to adapt to the indicated rule during my attempts at – more or less realistic – analyses in the perspective of future, often non-existent facts. These will undoubtedly be personal reflections that I stress below, and perhaps they will be shared with a wider circle of our regular readers, the vast majority of whom are social pedagogues. I also stress the need to make a number of adjustments, by means of a number of reformers representing a similar point of view. Thus, the article often focuses on the perspectives of a very near future for the next decade of the 21st century, not forgetting in any way the achievements of our classics (Smolińska-Theiss 2014; Theiss 2018, et al.). I am therefore addressing a topic that is certainly important and ambitious, but at the same time not verifiable and quite difficult, but above all risky. It thus necessitates the adoption of a number of assumptions, reservations and restrictions. Their main danger lies in the high risk of the author falling into the use of tautological assumptions, superficiality of analyses, triviality accompanied by the danger of *idiographism*, to which Elżbieta Tarkowska devoted so much space. It results from the unprecedented pace of transformations taking place nowadays, the introduction of dubious reforms, emerging and disappearing phenomena. The knowledge we have gained is quickly becoming outdated and historical. This usually leads researchers to act very quickly, to immediately catch various new, perhaps impermanent and fleeting – and also without much significance – suddenly emerging facts. This has consequences on the quality of our information, knowledge and sources. Sometimes they may give the impression of ethnographic and social documentation or a journalistic relation rather than socio-pedagogical research. There is no time to explore deeper, to include the analyzed phenomenon in a broader context of interpretation. Researchers must sometimes act as representatives of the so-called *urgent anthropology*, i.e. *the anthropology of the moment*, oriented towards the identification of irreversibly changing cultures and societies – which seems obvious. This, however, is connected with the danger of a very external, narrowed down, or even, strictly speaking, superficial approach. This danger not only threatens qualitative research, but also applies to quantitative research. The *pressure* of rapidly changing modern times is particularly acute when it comes to qualitative research, as this type of research is very time-consuming.

It is also extremely time-consuming to collect materials and to work on them; as is well known to every researcher who has spent countless hours analyzing the literature on the subject, in-depth interviews or observations, or analyzing biographical materials and other documents. The burden of time and the lack of it can change e.g. an ethnographic research into a pilot study or even a journalistic report (Tarkowska, 1993; cf. Radziewicz-Winnicki, 2001). In order to analyze the destructive role of the currently emerging mutated social dynamics, I will adopt two basic concepts, which I will try to briefly discuss below.

The ambiguity of the concepts of *alienation* and *discourse*

The concept of *alienation* indicates an exceptional ambiguity of the term. Usually, it is identified with the emotional separation of the individual from the surrounding social reality. It is often caused by the feeling of helplessness and isolation, there is also mention of alienation or loss of one's own sense of clear identification (identity), among others in the face of the occurring public anomie. This state (states) provokes, among others, the consciousness identified with the impossibility of one's own effective influence on the course of appearing events.

According to Jerzy Szacki, Krzysztof Olechnicki and Paweł Załęcki, Georg Wilhelm Hegel had already claimed that apart from psychological experience, it is a social process that manifests itself in a situation where state structures become alien to the spirit of the past and oppose it very clearly (Hegel 1965 after: Szacki 2005; cf. Olechnicki, Załęcki 1997). Many authors attributed the concept of *alienation* with a very diverse role in all the presented concepts. Most often – as it seems – the word *alienation* was used – as in this study – to refer to emerging social order disturbances, but also to less precise descriptions of states of loneliness, hopelessness, isolation, anomia, despair or simple indifference caused by the *pressure* of external social reality (Szacki 2005).

Discourse, in turn, is a system of human communication, a system of relatively coherent and interrelated thoughts formed on the basis of the community majority for a given society, i.e., rules, reflections, thoughts, but also superstitions and stereotypes which refer to a certain phenomenon, object or idea and which express the current attitude towards them, thus illustrating a larger or wider public assessment. It is worth noting that the concept of discourse was introduced into Polish pedagogy by: Zbigniew Kwieciński, Tadeusz Szkudlarek and Lech Witkowski (Czerska 2003). In the discussed

meanings the concept of *discourse*, or *discourse thinking*, it can be roughly assumed – in my opinion – that two more popular meaning interpretations dominate in the literature. The first one, proposed by Michael Foucault, is understood as an area of phenomena that are in a sense dispersed, but not randomly, because they are arranged – upon closer synthesis, as Foucault claims – in regular series.

In the case of this author, *disciplinary authority* and *biopolitical authority* (Foucault 1998 after: Szacki 2005), which were the basic factors in the presented interpretation of logically conducted considerations, were extremely important for his theoretical explications. Foucault analyzed legal, political, theological and strictly scientific texts, and thus all of them were referred to as “discourse” or analytically conducted discursive practices” (Szacki 2005; see Czerska 2003).

The second one is related to the concept/vision of Jürgen Habermas for whom the so-called *discourse* should consist only of those forms of argumentation in which their participants must necessarily take the counterfactual assumption that the conditions of an “ideal situation of mutual communication” are fulfilled to a satisfactory degree. Literally, it would be a so-called “claim to binding effect” because of the authenticity, normative rightness, understandability and sincerity of the statement. Habermas himself describes it as the *ethics of expression* (cf. Habermas 2002; cf. Czerska 2003). He also stresses *procedural sovereignty* in shaping one’s own opinion and the preaching role performed within autonomous and independent public spheres. However, we must also note the fact that analyses of Habermas’ early years prove that he took into account the theses, assumptions or arguments of a strictly religious nature (Habermas, Ratzinger 2004 after: Szacki 2005). In the discursive analysis of the surrounding social reality that is different from the one that we have experienced/are experiencing, the convention of intellectual perception adopted by Foucault seems to be much closer to me, although I am aware, as well as many authors, that by indicating the “field” or “arena” of many disputes, it will only be possible to outline a specific integrated concept, e.g. e.g. of the development of the future of social pedagogy as a result of communication between a number of experts (see Pilch, Smolińska-Theiss ed. 1984; Theiss ed. 2001; Marynowicz-Hetka ed. 2007; Modrzewski et al. 2018; et al.). It happens, however – in other disciplines of social sciences – that often authors present not very successful *agreements* based on individual articulation of a limited set of their own arguments (Czyżewski 1997 after: Szacki 2005).

While conducting the presented analyses in the further part of the text, I tried to be faithful to the basic properties of discursive thinking recommended in detail, among others, by Jadwiga Michalik-Surówka. According to the above

mentioned Author these include: their logical character, the use of deduction and induction in logical thinking, verbal character, one-directional linear structure, the gradation of argumentation, etc. (Michalik-Surówka, 2003). I assume, however, that the category of conducting a discourse may allow for the emergence of a certain new quality, or perhaps even initiate a modification or even a change of the existing paradigms in many areas of contemporary theoretical social sciences.

Common and Polish domestic unrest and the change of some paradigms and current rules of public conduct

The current crisis of our present time is both institutional in character and in the sphere of consciousness, which concerns many members diversified in terms of experience and evolution of the public community. Its comprehension requires going beyond tradition, the logic of development and methodology and accepting the fact of conventionality (as well as schematicity) of all the decisions of a classification and typological nature. The above mentioned comments for several years now have clearly indicated that the established place of a given theory (paradigm) in a specific theoretical system of the whole family of social sciences is not a constant value. It is perfectly understandable that we, contemporary people, will also be perceived in the future by next generations as *producers* of certain views, introduced divisions or systematizations, which need to be at least corrected either now or in the near future (Wolański 1992). Elżbieta Tarkowska, when discussing the *concept of social time* – the third basic concept of the title of this article – stresses that every micro-social element, every group and every kind of activity takes place in their proper time. It does not flow in one direction, nor does it have to be linear, it may (but does not have to) be cyclic, spiral or circular. It is not an empty elapse of the astronomical universality of flow, but a factor (element) that has a fundamental impact on social life. This is a period common to wide groups of people – common are also the shared ideas, thinking systems, symbols, etc. It has important and essential regulatory, communicational and integrative functions in this community, as it directly creates social bonds and forms the basis for group identification and integration.

The basic problem of discussions on social time is its universality. The characteristics of time as a social phenomenon take into account social changeability and time differentiation, as well as universal cognitive, symbolic and, as a rule, evaluative processes in varying forms. This category of time is one of the most basic and universal concepts in social sciences, allowing for

a proper and complete understanding of everyday life. With all the cultural diversity and multiplicity of social times, we can speak about its universality and consider social time as an attribute of social functioning of people, as a necessary and accompanying element of social life (Tarkowska 1998).

The system of social time changes along with the social structure and undeniably modifies traditional paradigms. For instance, social pedagogues for two decades have been trying to assess the possibilities and prospects for the development of the situation of individual social groups in the new, currently emerging social order, which is different from the previous one (cf. Pilch 2014). Nearly twenty years ago, I mentioned to our Readers the *Millennium Project* – at least its main scope – related to the scenario of further development of the world by 2050. It was created at the turn of the century. It envisaged the (highly probable) implementation of one of the four alternative projections. I would like to recall them to our Readers. They were based on cautious speculations of experts, as well as on the deliberations of a large group of publicists gathered around the *Millennium Project* at that time. The first one concerned cybertopia. The world will be better and richer thanks to continuing intensive technological development. Two Asian countries: China and India will become the next IT powers. The gap between the rich and the poor will grow wider, but thanks to the intensive development of economy, medicine and education, it will be possible to observe a stop to negative development trends in poor and slowly developing countries. The World Trade Organization should provide global social protection. The next, second script is more pessimistic. It assumed that there would be further significant growth in the population of South Asia and Africa. Another fact, and a consequence, will be a very significant widening of the gap between the richest and the poorest countries in the world from the present level of 50:1 up to the presently unprecedented level like 80:1. This scenario assumes a significant increase in population migration on a global scale, which will cause further tensions and perturbations. The third scenario predicts a highly probable stagnation in the development of highly industrialized countries. The world may become different in terms of global control of its own development dynamics. The fundamental, nearly irresolvable problem will be jobs. The number of people of working age will grow faster than the number of new jobs. Around 2025, regional economic blocs will become involved in numerous customs and trade conflicts (wars). Protectionism may return, and the allocation of public funds will be decided by politicians from central decision-making bodies, who generally prefer to act to obtain substances and subsidies rather than to obtain projects and programmes of the most optimal strategies for further

development. The fourth – and last – scenario is the perception of the world as a “huge bazaar”. If this vision is adopted, the development of the economy of East Asia and South-East Asia will dominate, as these regions will compete effectively and freely with the economies of the USA, the European Union and Japan. Slowly, but visibly, the differences between the rich North and the poor South will begin to disappear (Ostrowski, Szostkiewicz 2001 after: Radziejewicz-Winnicki 2001).

At the moment – after nearly two decades – the third scenario, which displays a very high probability of further dominance in the international relations of the coming years by the USA, China and Russia, persistently pursuing global influence all over the world, seems to dominate¹.

Of course, the presented scenarios may combine with each other. For example, the first with the fourth one, which would be an extremely optimistic and promising option. However, the symbiosis of the second and third options definitely evokes melancholy and pessimism. The current crisis of transformation is mentioned in relation to various parts and countries of the world. These processes, to some extent, disrupt the global and local social cohesion. In Poland, however, the situation seems to be quite unique compared to other EU Member States. The situation in the field of restructuring or the competition (scientific efficiency) in basic research, which could change our traditional *eloquence* of satisfactory development, is at least not very promising. The atmosphere created by the government’s causal factors is certainly not conducive to the development of pro-innovative ideas and concepts. The economy, despite several years of promises, does not fully finance most of the research or the awaiting scientific background (microelectronics, communication and information technologies, acquisition of new types of energy, environmental protection, as well as the development of a programme for the implementation of innovative raw material techniques). The governing factors are not able to at least promote the effective transfer of technologies that improve our everyday existence. We remain at a distant place in the global *challenge* in many areas of expected innovation, with persistently high levels of social poverty (Pilch ed. 2016; et al.).

Despite many declarations and promised forms of action from two or three decades ago, we can now speak about the crisis of civil society in Poland. In civilized countries, there are two trajectories of development of

¹ Discussions on this subject often appear in the daily press. See e.g. <https://www.rp.pl/Dyplomacja/302019873-USA-Chiny-Rosja-Trzy-mocarstwa-w-swiatowej-grze.html> (access date: 30.03.2019).

various organizations in the so-called third sector, which are able to perform, to a certain extent, also the control function over state bodies. In Germany, for example, new organizations (often NGOs established outside the basic institutions of the welfare state) are a manifestation of a conscious attitude of civil society, where the traditional closeness of this third sector to state institutions (or other formal institutions existing in individual *federal states*) is almost non-existent. May finally this independent sector, recognized and approved by EU civil society, quickly enter the political debates in our country, like in the Federal Republic of Germany². The signaled issue, which is of great interest to social pedagogy, requires the modernization of law and the efficiency and modification of care and security functions by a number of higher public utility institutions (Anheier 2000). The same applies to the delayed decision to implement the obvious, progressive and, at the same time, tautological slogan: intelligence instead of dangers and muscle strain. I am referring to the obligatory and constantly awaiting reduction of jobs in the Polish mining and metallurgy industry in favor of employing these employees in other industries. Our neighbors from beyond the western border can also give us examples to follow. More than five million inhabitants of the Ruhr industrial district (*Ruhrgebiet*) are witnesses of structural changes transforming the coal and metallurgical region, which resembles our, smaller in terms of numbers, Upper Silesia, constitute nowadays the society and the whole region of modern technologies. A commendable, exemplary and admirable metamorphosis (Zipf, Cojaniz 1997).

² The need for actions leading to structural homeostasis is also mentioned by the authorities themselves. They express / expressed the view that an essential condition for the existence of any society is reaching a certain level of interpersonal community with social, bonding or strictly community characteristics. At the same time, the cohesive interdependence shaping social structures, in order to exist, must take into account the condition of relative reduction of divisions and structural differences: social, economic or cultural ones. In order to consider a set of individuals and wider communities as a single, relatively integrated society, it should have a certain sense of group (public) cohesion. Contemporary society should not, or even cannot, be characterized by too large, even drastic, social, economic, as well as cultural and axiological differences (Gliński, 2011), which for obvious reasons – apart from the known consequences – constitute a serious impediment to further expected social evolution. In the practice of the intentional influence of one of the main government politicians, the opinions expressed above remain an empty platitude.

Populism and crisis of everyday life in Poland

The mass media – associated with the democratic opposition – for the last three years have been constantly mentioning the *bug of populism* that has been developing at an unprecedented pace in Poland. Populism is nothing other than a specific form of rhetoric and political argumentation known in the history of social thought, which builds its effectiveness and looks for political legitimacy in referring to the unidentified “will of the people”, “will of the nation”, “will of the masses”, etc. It is often very demagogic. It is a view that the most effective way to achieve most political and social goals is to create direct relations (relations of interdependence and multilateral communication) between individuals and social groups and individuals or organizations that govern them (cf. Olechnicki, Załęcki 1997, p. 158). In the case of the party that has been in power in our country since autumn 2015, this is a constant expression of a series of statements, contradicting the reality, that after the party came to power it found the society in a deep crisis, and nowadays the representatives of the governing political party must very actively monitor the stream of their own experiences and demands, in an ongoing repair and organization work, the carrier of which is the simple and common slogan of “good change”³. The degrees of *occurrence* of the everyday life crisis have a macrosocial character, very extensive and rare in the European Union countries.

I believe that this way I – and others – indicate in social-pedagogical literature of several disciplines the significant social phenomena, previously observed in the world and in the country, during the *people’s democracy experiment* period (1945–1989), which now, after an interval of nearly thirty years, has a specific impact on individual political and local structures, social organization and selected contexts of individual existence in the practice of life, still seemingly democratic, in Polish post-industrial society. It goes without saying that at the end of the last century a new variable time perspective finally appeared in our country, which we adopted in large part, and an attempt to implement elements of *communitarianism* may now hurt and offend, not only experts.

³ Let us remind you that in the times of socialism there was also a frequent return to the naive and populist slogans, such as the method of working in the social economy, which was described as the “doro” method (good job – pol. dobra robota), and which was frequently, or even stubbornly, promoted in journals that at that time were called “publications”.

The convincing vision of implementing the so-called *social democracy*, promoted by the authorities currently in power, is practically a reversal of the current liberal democratic order and promotes – without conducting a competent public discussion on social egalitarianism – *anti-democratic* solutions, often strengthened in the public narrative by consent to the use of veto rights. Of course, I do not agree with the view of the elites who have been in power since the end of 2015. Thus, I try to evoke – with many intellectuals – the confidence and conviction, not only among experts, that education and grassroots work, aimed at the contemporary Polish family, is becoming urgent and necessary. This is because family should be defined as a historical and cultural system of specific patterns of behavior (as well as norms and roles) that serve to support this fundamental social group in the real and exemplary sense, and indirectly – and in a very authoritative way – exemplifying the general structure of a given society by providing outdated, highly “retarded” patterns of perception, behaviors or the promoted lifestyle. Unfortunately, for years our society, perhaps not the majority, but still a large part of it, has been terribly lacking in basic, purely lexical knowledge about the mechanisms of development of modern and progressive public structures (Marzec-Holka et al. 2018). The advocates of such a transformation, which now surrounds us, stubbornly propose the implementation of an anti-democratic and anti-liberal movement and the urgent adoption of solutions seemingly strengthening the position of the family, neighborhood community, urban space, supposedly (?) encouraging interpersonal contacts, satisfactory participation in the community life, a sense of traditional domestication, being at home (cf. Szahaj 2005).

The changes introduced over the last three years are *alien*, not to say *contradictory*, towards the ideas of social and political egalitarianism, which are typical of modern societies as opposed to traditional ones. Their representatives – like among the vast majority of conservatives – behave as if they were convinced that the new social strata, the new social classes are obliged to refer to the values of elites who had historical significance (in the past) and take over/imitate their habits, evaluations (e.g. moral), opinions, the view of reality and knowledge (from today’s point of view limited and inadequate/insufficient to understand modernity). Conservatives – according to Paweł Śpiewak – and what a credible assessment it is – are convinced that it is possible to draw up (prepare) a list of basic virtues, including the principles of education, creation of the structure of education, and the selection of persons (using the adopted criteria), which occupy key positions in the participation of conservative power (Śpiewak 1999a). If the discussed situation lasts longer, it may also lead to a full, encyclopaedically defined *social anomie*. As we know,

under this concept there is a state of confusion, a special sense of helplessness resulting from the weakening of the influence or disintegration of the norms that may affect a given social group (community) as a result of a collapse of the social order (change of system, order, war, revolution, social crisis). The anomie results from the lack of balance between culturally determined goals and the currently possible ways of achieving them, defined as legitimate and institutionalized. That state (sensations) also means a disorder of routine behaviors, scales of expectations and aspirations, lifestyle, patterns of consumption, etc. (Radziewicz-Winnicki, 2008). It may result in resistance and social rebellion accompanying the increasing anarchy and chaos, which I am only signaling (see Bielska 2013).

If we perceive any shortcomings or absurdities in the diagnoses made, and the subsequent wrong and incompetent decisions made (or merely “promoted”) that create our reality (undoubtedly resulting from a deficit of rationally liberated ideas and decentralized consultancy to meet the needs of economic and social policy in the modern civic structures, which could make the traditional archetype of organizational activity more flexible), one should unfortunately seek the main reason for this in the national tradition. The *new communitarianism*, that is promoted by the Polish government claims that the current social order of the globalization era, based on the extreme exploitation of unilateral interest (especially by persons exerting a privileged market position), inevitably leads to social destruction. There comes a situation in which social life can be unnaturally deformed, even when individual interests are ignored or replaced by excessive care by the state social policy (Radziewicz-Winnicki 2017). In such a situation a state of social apathy and the overwhelming inclination to shaping reformist attitudes may also arise (Starosta 2000). In general, communitarism and anti-globalization movements (or alter-globalization movements) are the answer to the common public reception (specific, generally poorer social groups) of a populist notion of justice in the conditions of market economy. The promoted ideal of social justice in the perspective of attempting to create a new, corrected political and moral system in contemporary Poland must lead to a reinforcement of the central administration, which thus also prevails over other forms of activation/mobilization of local communities. The probability of the threat of centralism increases when in a given community (example: nation) more and more supporters appear who follow the policy of “absolute trust and faith” towards the ruling elites, accepted with attention, without understanding, just *a priori*. In such a social order, such places, nowadays particularly exposed, can be occupied by a large group of people preferring common mass politics of plebeian and folk character (cf. Śpiewak 1999b), people with very often

distrustful and unmasking attitude towards liberal democracy. What is more, in our country – in a previously unheard of way – there has been a decrease – in the majority of the population – in the perception of the normative threshold of tolerance to behaviors that cause a sense of absolute shame in the traditional society (Elias 1980 after: Hałas 2005). *The government* should finally acknowledge the tautological thesis that for the strategy of the expected evolution of public integration or social cohesion, a liberated, tolerant, dynamic, democratic and creative society, which is always open to satisfactory exchange with other cultures without forbidden stereotypical stigmatization, becomes an essential subject.

The necessity of the moment is to live in the European world according to the paradigm of this part of the globe. It isolates us somewhat from other continents, but at the same time allows us to clearly distinguish ourselves and preserve our European identity. This attitude is manifested and strengthened in community discourse: this is irrelevant, and this is what is important and relevant. This strategy, which consolidates the paradigm from within, is accompanied by a variety of externally oriented and defensive strategies, as well as the *aggressive* ones that confront “our world” with different “foreign worlds” (Wajland 2004; see Nowosad 2011).

To be bolder, arguing that our European continent is not only an economic market itself, but above all a constructive social model that exposes humanistic ideals of humanity, from folk knowledge to the social sciences developed today (Pilch 2005); the time has come to adopt a European Constitution eliminating all the shortcomings in the legislation of the Member States and guaranteeing, in a historical perspective, an integrated economic and social existence of the old continent, while of course preserving many cultural differences. The same applies to image of the currently evolving democracy and the perception of it. Decisions made not only in our parliament, but also in other representative bodies of the legislature of the European Union member states are often taken by people who are not sufficiently educated, competent, who are motivated by their own/party preferences, the ideology – often unspecified – of the so-called expected social justice⁴. Nowadays in Poland too often – this is one of the examples – the groups in power take into account the principle of equal

⁴ Perhaps during the drafting of the *European Constitution*, which is mentioned by many personalities from the world of politics, of course by means of referendums in individual Member States, second chambers of Parliament (Senate, Bundesrat, House of Lords, etc.) would be composed of *apolitical*, recognized experts who are not a randomly selected group of people. This text is being prepared during the period of parliamentary *paralysis* in the UK before the upcoming exit from the EU (*brexite*).

opportunities in holding high offices and public positions, without the need to acquire the necessary qualifications needed to hold a specific public position.

The absolute implementation of the described principles in social life can, however, lead to animosity, chaos, anomie and even conflict. The social conflict caused not directly by communitarism, but undoubtedly positively perceived and moreover publicly articulated by its ideologists, may result in the activation of different manners of politicized understanding of the concept *democracy* itself by the party currently dominating in our country. The objective conflict of interest, the mutual exclusion of group goals due to the limited possibility to obtain the expected rewards, goods and privileges constantly takes place in public practice (Mucha 1999). In a different (behavioral) approach, there may be actions (interactions, relations between people), which, as a result of mutual *incompatibility*, can take turn not only into animosity, but even social struggle, not to mention the highly likely oppositional competition (Radziewicz-Winnicki 2017).

I do believe, like others, that it is possible to include in one short volume of the European Constitution, similar to the *Declaration* of the United States of America, both secular achievements and some universal and at the same time religious experiences of contemporary European Countries, democracy and individual rights, some relics of Roman law or even the Napoleonic Code – which for a moment united a number of European liberated nations – as I have already mentioned traditional Christianity and, above all, contemporary scientific and technical achievements. This would be the true foundation – according to Jürgen Habermas, who we often refer to – of a *European identity or of the successful coexistence of the European nations*. The egalitarian, much-anticipated intellectual universalism would also be demonstrated (Habermas 2014). A Constitution would be a true milestone. This idea seems to be a strategy for a successful and sustainable evolution of the past and an orientation and at the same time a developmental tool. It would be an important stage of Polish dreams to finally leave the poor peripheral European province and transform into a center of new technologies of this century.

In place of *the Conclusion*

Unanswered questions (addressed not only to social pedagogues)

Below I allow myself to pose, not for the first time, a series of fundamental and legitimate questions, the answers to which (the earlier filled with accurate, credible and reliable content) the sooner we find ourselves on the path of hope regarding the prospects for further development of the species *homo sapiens*,

in the XXI century AD. I will therefore try to list only those main questions that are representative for many sets of complementary questions. Political scientists, sociologists and social pedagogues for almost three decades have been trying to assess the possibilities and prospects for the development of the situation of individual social groups in the new, currently emerging social order, which is different from the previous one. These include, among other things, the following questions: What can the emerging development trends and alleged scenarios of our existence mean for an individual nowadays? What criteria and basic interactions within social order will apply in the nearest and distant future? Will compliance with them still determine the effective participation of an individual in the community life, ours or that of the next generation? What will the birth, development and future of the post-IT society look like? Will the scope, profundity, frequency and course of accompanying events preserve a certain state of the future reality or will humanity of the next decades of the 21st century witness the institutionalized impermanence and state of permanent change? Will there be a dominance of collaboration, formal and informal cooperation and symbolic partnership or of conflict, opposition, ruthless competition, confrontation and rivalry? Should we assume that the most characteristic symptom of further development will be the situation of transformation, which is characterized by a multitude of events and new phenomena, their unclear shape, unknown direction of changes, uncertainty and very low predictability of the changing reality of life? (Tarkowska 1993; Radziewicz-Winnicki 2014). Is the permanent unawareness of our citizens about other styles of living/existing becoming a fertile ground for cultural extremism? Can the imagination and creativity of enlightened individuals, combined with an appropriate dose of social responsibility, change attitudes and in consequence recognize and internalize (assimilate, adopt) those norms and values that are conducive to more efficient (better) control of animosity, conflicts and crises? Do more efficient school education and public democracy, by creating open access to information and the possibility of its dissemination, offer a public opportunity for mass and unrestricted public expression on all the issues and concerns as well as the control over the centers of power, i.e. the government? Will we still be concerned about the intimacy and private integrity of the private sphere of the individual? How far are we from the tolerant coexistence of cultures and the development of a global code of ethnic standards? What global concepts of employment will there be/remain tomorrow?

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The above questions are based on the belief that our democratic-liberal capitalism system of this century, with a certain degree of state interventionism, can be reformed. Speaking of a crisis, it is the lack of a community (individuals and social groups) imagination that would suggest to us, with a high degree of probability, even our near future determined by everyday life remaining in the state of decline and crises (Czapliński, Bednarek 2018). I do not allow myself to think that our current system could be unreformable, closed, still uninnovative and full of platitudes, empty and deeply nationalistic and xenophobic slogans. They would reflect the short periods of domination of bold and ridiculous platitudes appearing in the long national history of seemingly only a romantic image of the no longer existing Polish state. Let me believe that this very essayistic text will be of interest to the Honorable Jubilarian as well as to the multitude of our Readers. The adopted form of articulation in the form of a short political and social-educational ethnography may turn out to be accepted as far as original and interesting (?) in the social perception are the judgments, opinions and assumptions contained in it. The overwhelming urge in the *Conclusion* to ask a series of current and future questions, and the strong conviction that the time has come to ask them in the current state of national decadence, finally made me decide to submit the text to the always credible and tolerant Editors of “Pedagogika Współczesna”.

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