

Humanities vs semi-peripheralisation

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*Statistics relates to ethics
as probability calculation to an examination of conscience*

On 5 December 2013, the Supreme Court quashed the decision of the lower courts to enter the Association of Persons of Silesian Nationality in the register of associations. In support of its judgment, the Supreme Court pointed out that the name of the association is misleading by suggesting a legal recognition of the Silesian *nationality* because it was stated in an earlier judgment of the Supreme Court that ‘no declaration of belonging to a *nation* [italics ZR] that does not exist is possible’ (Snarski 2014).

Critics of the judgment indicate that in its reasons no arguments were provided ‘involving the protection [...] of the right to the sense of a separate national identity’ (Snarski 2014). More importantly, however, the court tries ‘to replace sociologists in the formation of the concept of nation’ (ibidem), even though sociological knowledge is lacking in the judgment of the court, a visible indicator of which is the arbitrary decision on the existence or non-existence of a given nation (Snarski 2014) as well as confusion of the notions of nationality (in the name of the association) and nation (in the judgment of the court).

In the distal part of its justification the court states that ‘the unitarian form of the state is a consequence of the fact that Polish society is in many respects uniform. It can be specified in this way in the national sense, for a huge majority of citizens of Poland are persons of Polish nationality, [while] other national groups constitute an insignificant minority’ (Snarski 2014). This statement is based, however, on an a priori assumption of the uniformity of Polish society because it was not indicated in

what sense this unity is considered. In addition to being entangled in the unknown sociological matter, the court keeps on entangling itself in political scientific matters, in which it has equally little competence. The factually incorrect *iunctim* between the mono-ethnicity of society and the unitarian form of the state, provided in the reason of the judgement, is a good illustration of this fact.

It is worth noting that in the census of 2011 the residents of Poland were allowed to declare any national and ethnic identity, complex ones included. Silesian identity was declared by 846,719 people, including 375,635 for whom it was their only declared identity (Ludność..., 2013), a fact ignored by the Supreme Court for reasons known only to itself.

As a result, the court, having no sufficient sociological and political scientific knowledge, attempts to settle the relevant issues on the ground of legal definitions (Snarski 2014). In this context, social processes, including possible nation creating processes, are supposed to be settled by legal regulations.

Further, a logical error was indicated in the analysis of the reasons for judgment of the court: that the opportunity to register the subject bearing the name of a specific entity was derived from a necessity of the objective existence of the entity (Snarski 2014), the fact that would preclude a registration of many associations with not only fictitious (*ibidem*) but even empirically unverifiable names, including eschatological. Generally, therefore, it is difficult to resist the impression of humanist knowledge gaps among judges. Considering the fact that judges of the Supreme Court are in question here, it is difficult not to ask a question regarding the possible structural reasons of this state of affairs.

The supposition that these reasons may be structural seems to be supported by observations drawn from other areas of social life in Poland. Earlier this year Polish public opinion was rocked by two messages about scandalous negligence in hospitals, resulting in fatal accidents. The reasons for these failures were associated with the organisational and moral infrastructure of health care, including the instrumental treatment of patients.

In 2007, medics fought through strikes for a substantial wage increase, primarily, however, outside the public hospital system (Kublik 2014). Medics in Poland have never earned as much as they do now (Szulc 2014). Failures in public health

care services have precipitated the development of private clinics, dispensaries and hospitals that increase the demand for qualified doctors with appropriate specialisations. The result of this is that doctors work at several jobs. Work in a public hospital, a private clinic, in his/her own office and on night shifts is the norm. Doctors are now working more than ever and, as noted, they earn more than ever. 'Higher salaries do not mean[, however,] a higher sensitivity or a more developed sense of moral responsibility' (Kublik 2014). The structurally conditioned limits of admission of patients to hospitals results in huge queues of patients and this increases the demand for private health care facilities, the more so that doctors in public hospitals earn little. The result is not only the overwork of doctors who spread themselves across several jobs but also the neglect of their duties in one workplace in order to be on time at the other. This neglect of duty jeopardises the health and lives of patients. The guiding value becomes money rather than the patient (Szulc 2014). The ethos of the medical profession has changed. 'Once money did not seem right to speak about by the doctors, today it is on the contrary' (ibidem).

'The moral condition of the medical profession is not good and a prognosis is rather inauspicious. The crisis of confidence in medicals is obvious and its symptoms are simply dramatic. [...] In many cases the interest of the doctor takes precedence over the good of the patient' (Kublik 2014). 'The patient does not count because (s)he is losing to loyalty to the system, group and professional corporation' (ibidem), 'unless (s)he can afford excellent lawyers' (ibidem).

The structural conditionality of this state of affairs is related to the marketisation of the health care service and the related reinforcement of the dehumanisation of the medical profession, as well as the breakdown of the traditional patterns of teaching in the relations between master and pupil. An outflow of high level specialists from the medical profession proceeds (Kublik 2014), similar to that of the scientist.

The lack of suitably qualified staff for management of the health care system is essential (Kublik 2014). Again, this is similar to the world of science. Prominent doctors are not suited for the role of ministers of health, and prominent scholars do not take the position of the minister of science. As, however, Z. Szawarski maintains, training the medics in communication with the patient is essential, i.e. their equipment with humanist knowledge, including philosophy (Kublik 2014). In Oxford,

most people involved in politics are graduated in philosophy with political and economic sciences. 'This gives them a basis for a holistic thinking about the system they manage. They are prepared for all kinds of debates, including discussions of conflicting values and the possibility of resolving the related conflicts. We are never thinking about it and the debating skills training constitutes at most a hobby of more intelligent and engaged students' (Kublik 2014). Empathy, sensitivity and compassion are thus disappearing while 'the opportunity to settle down, to earn' (ibidem) money, remains. Empathy can be learned by 'reading good literature, watching good films, communing with art, by discussions, studying and thorough examination of all kinds of difficult moral cases. [...] But if you do not read that, if you do not think about it, you are not experiencing that' (Kublik 2014). 'Such an intellectual training lets us get rid of moral arrogance, and often a sense of infallibility of being a doctor, judge, persecutor[...] priest' (ibidem) or minister.

Now, however, we have 'a huge crisis of school and teaching. By emphasising a thoughtless memorising of an increasing set of information, we have forgotten about moral and aesthetic values. The school trains memory while it does not form characters. This cannot be reversed in ten or fifteen years' (Kublik 2014). 'We have missed the science of values and the ability to shape characters. [...] We do not teach the sensitivity of values [...]. It is only economic values that count' (ibidem). 'Medicine was a vocation and duty. Today it is a job as any other. [...] There is no ethos within the Polish intelligentsia any longer. What is taught in Cambridge is how to ask questions; what we teach is how to answer them because this is the easiest. Our intelligentsia cannot think. Our intelligentsia also leaves off feeling. And this is horrible itself' (Kublik 2014).

In this context, the fact that young medics do not know Latin, because they are not taught it, is just a trifle.

The phenomena indicated above result from the way humanistic and social sciences have been treated during the process of the reform of science and higher education in Poland (List otwarty..., 2014). The 'innovativeness' of humanistic thinking fundamentally differs from the innovativeness of the exact and natural sciences since the former is manifested in the public discourse in a democratic state, in which no *reasonable* [italics ZR] human being 'should doubt in the value of the well functioning

public sphere' (ibidem). It is therefore time to stop explaining and to begin demanding from the state authorities that they appreciate the contribution of humanistic thought to the formation of this sphere instead of the ornery expectations to adjust 'at all costs to the rules of the game dictated by the economy and labour market' (List otwarty..., 2014). In Poland, culturally competent citizens are needed rather than producers of the indices giving fine fettle to those in power.

The reform and modernisation of science and higher education in Poland was entrusted to officials at various levels who are poorly placed to understand the functioning of these areas. Paradoxically, the old and new institutions of the supervision of science (including the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, and the Research Units Evaluation Committee), often run by ex-scientists and current bureaucrats, operate in the name of the convenience of the supervisors and evaluators in complete isolation from the practices of the academic life (Trzy twarze..., 2014). The changes fatally combine the worst features of the Anglo-Saxon and continental systems. 'From the former, the emphasis on competitiveness of researchers and their entrepreneurship in the raising funds was primarily derived, and the burgeoning bureaucracy and the system of formal evaluation from the latter' (List otwarty..., 2014). Apparently the fact was overlooked that, in exchange for eternal uncertainty, freedom from excessive bureaucracy is achieved in the Anglo-Saxon world while in the continental [system] the need to submit to the administrative supervision' (ibidem) is compensated by the 'employment stability and a high level of structural subsidies for research' (ibidem). In Poland, on the contrary, a hybrid of an 'absolute competition' and 'pervasive bureaucracy' (List otwarty..., 2014) was applied. Paradoxically, this seems to be an effective way of destroying innovation in Polish science, rather than encouraging it (ibidem).

This especially applies to humanistic and social sciences whose paradigms are interdisciplinary studies. The ministerial regulations bring, on the contrary, actually, i.e. omitting rhetoric, an order to constrain university courses 'to one field of study under pain of monetary penalty' (List otwarty..., 2014) to 'the most ambitious students' (ibidem) who are forced to pay for studying more than one field.

Generally, the Ministry - apart from its rhetoric - attempts to shed the obligation to finance science by the de facto reduction of higher schools to their teaching

functions. University staff are only employed if a sufficiently large number of teaching hours can be entrusted to individuals while their usefulness is reckoned on the basis of their scientific achievements. 'There is no money for research and every scientist has to seek it himself[/herself]' (List otwarty..., 2014), for it is the grant system that is recognised as the mainstay of the every-day functioning of scientific institutions and their research activities. Whereas about 60 grants are awarded in sociology and political science every six months at the national level (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.), scientists who are required to make a personal financial contribution to their career development and research 'earn outrageously little' (ibidem) compared with almost all other salaried sectors, the fact apart of which it is hardly possible to understand 'what happens in Polish Academia' (ibidem). For instance, in the Institute of Sociology, Rzeszów University 610.87 PLN (ca 146 EUR) was granted for 'the research potential' in 2014 of each scholar, and each of the five most scientifically productive scholars (according to the parametric assessment) was given extra 203.62 PLN (ca 48.70 EUR) while the allocation of funds was made at the end of the fourth month of the financial year.

Two reports on the state of Polish Academia formed the basis of ministerial policy towards academic institutions. One of them, prepared by a consortium of two private institutions – an international company providing professional advisory services and auditing and a Polish independent non-governmental analytical and research centre – had been presented as 'an experts' strategy', which was subjected to devastating criticism by a volunteer team of young sociologists (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.). It was noted in their criticism that the 'expertise' was based on stereotypical opinions rather than in-depth investigation and that it therefore failed to meet the basic criteria for a reliable diagnosis. Firstly, it is 'based on fragile foundations' (ibidem) because its authors relied almost 'exclusively on [free] data available indoor even without e-mailing' (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.). Secondly, 'an inquisitiveness in the search and examination of the positive example' (ibidem) of the best research units in Poland is lacking 'whose experience could help in the developing of a [domestic] strategy of a reform of higher education better than examples of foreign universities' (ibidem) functioning in a different social and institutional context. Thirdly, the questions of the relations between the market and science in Poland against the

international background were presented mindlessly and selectively. Fourthly, a fetishism of rankings of universities is visible while the nature and methodology of the rankings is hardly understood. Fifthly, in the diagnosis 'research questions related to the addressees of the reform are lacking' (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.), who are 'not only institutions but also people, i.e. students and scholars [...] rather than universities [and] the Ministry' (ibidem). Sixthly, the population of scholars were treated as homogeneous - without differentiation by 'age, gender, career stage' (ibidem) and discipline. Seventhly, in-depth analysis of the work of scholars at a number of full-time jobs is lacking. Eighthly, an analysis of academics' incomes is omitted. Ninthly, 'a calculation of the costs of doing research incurred by scholars' (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.) was not performed, including the purchase of laptops, literature, computer software, participation in conferences, language verification of English texts and sometimes also publications. Generally, therefore, it may be stated that the information presented served more to 'prove the preconceived theses' (ibidem) than offer a true diagnosis, indeed, no information was provided 'about any group which the reform of higher education is to apply to' (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.). In this context it is interesting to note the production costs of 5,555 PLN (ca 1,323 EUR) per page of the text, and that the Ministry - apparently aware of the degree of the document's usefulness - does not benefit from it, even though it paid for it.

What is interesting in this context is the observation that if one wishes 'to induce universities to adjust to the requirements of the market, it is necessary to diagnose and learn the market before' (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.). One can in fact get the impression, if not the certainty, that 'it is the market and state economic policy that need greater changes' (ibidem). If the implemented changes are initiated from universities, a risk appears that they will be able to adjust to the market, however this will come at great expense: the deterioration in their quality, which is already seen happening. By adjusting science and higher education to the needs of the market, a semi-peripheral country like Poland is being condemned to deepen her peripheral-ity (Baczko-Dombi et al., n.d.).

While international surveys show Polish fifteen year olds increasing in their competencies, such skills as they have are at odds with the realities of the labour market: it cannot use these types of capital. The system 'that would encourage Polish

firms to invest in research and development' (Bukowski et al., 2014), and launch mechanisms in Polish universities to ensure 'a rapid joining the European scientific elite' (ibidem) was never built. In the existing situation, it is not possible 'to establish a productive cooperation between science and business [...]. Reversal of this negative trend requires the creation of Western working conditions, i.e. an increase in public research funding to the level providing the achievement of wage and scientific competitiveness on the European scale' (Bukowski et al., 2014).

In the debate 'on the necessity to reinforce scientific investigations in Poland a key fact is overlooked, that scientists in universities have been doing their research [...] *for free* for years since money the Ministry allocates for public universities [...] are ...] defined as the basic *educational* subsidy' (Cieśliński (2014). Research in universities has basically no funding source since research grants are accounted for separately, besides contributing to a small component of the university budget (ibidem). Paradoxically, the scientific-didactic workers, as the majority of university cadres are categorised, are assessed on the basis of their – unpaid – scientific activities. This is in explicit conflict with the governmental declarations about the key role of science in national development, and the possession of faculties conducting high standard scientific activities is a significant financial burden for the university (Cieśliński 2014). The present financing system of public universities rewards the non-employment of new scholars, releasing staff, and junking contracts (ibidem). The proliferation of these trends is the main reason why sabbaticals, guaranteed by the Higher Education Act, are a fiction. Within the market approach to science, it is even proposed to grant the reprographic payments to publishers rather than authors; this is to say that the latter, instead of receiving royalties, would be charged with the costs of their scientific publications when they appear.

The prevailing neo-liberal education policy in Poland is hypocritical. Initially, the catch-as-catch-can policy seemed to be implemented, in which the university was assumed to be a business as any other. It could be thus aimed at making money through easy diploma seekers who should have been harboured in higher schools against unemployment. Then, however, 'with a moralistic fervour' (Karwat 2014), a counterattack began under the banner of education quality. The result was that lecturers 'began [...] to deal with filling in forms instead of self-education, research and

contact with students' (Karwat 2014), whereas the 'education quality' is identified with that of reporting using essentially meaningless bureaucratic forms. 'To universities, including public, such requirements are made as if they were financially independent' (ibidem) profit-oriented enterprises, 'bearing respective economic risk, rather than institutions dependent on budget policy' (ibidem). And when they save themselves with the 'hopeless, doomed to fail, pursuit of demand for education, they are admonished that they should not just chase the cash' (Karwat 2014).

This reflects the meanders of the neo-liberal policy, in which tight market pragmatism is combined with the escape from responsibility for one's own decisions (Karwat 2014). The government's policy 'ignores the fact that it is not the profile of studies that generates workplaces but interests of and stereotypes by employers and the government's (tax and investment) policy' (ibidem). It is therefore not schools and universities that are to be blamed for unemployment (Hartman 2013). Since the government cannot create mechanisms for co-financing by entrepreneurs such fields of study that - according to the entrepreneurs - are needed by them, this is to say that the government is not even able to play the role of the night watchman that it is casted by in the ideology of liberalism.

Interestingly, the 'uncritical repetition of nonsensical stereotypes that the level of Polish science is such as the position of universities in the notorious rankings' (Karwat 2014) indicates that even if 'the criteria of these rankings would be taken for granted, it is these very criteria that discredit the Polish authorities because the high evaluation of universities are to a large extent determined by their infrastructure, expenditures on research, budgets[, as well as] the material and technological comfort of scholars' work. A strict correlation exists between the equipment of scholars, their earnings, number of students and didactic hours per lecturer, on the one hand, and the quality of education and the level of research, on the other. The financial misery of Polish science cannot be talked down by reformatory prolixity' (Karwat 2014). 'Universities are poor, dealing - due to the Ministry - with syllabi rather than science' (ibidem).

In the debate about the future of Polish science, the dialectical relation between 'internationalisation' and 'worldliness', on the one hand, and provincialism and cultural colonisation, on the other, should be taken into account.

A quiet revolution in Polish science is being made, which should not be misidentified with a scientific revolution in Thomas Kuhn's (1962) terms. The revolution consists in the deepening division between the fields, 'which can be immediately married with business and those which cannot' (Grabarczyk 2014). The marriage can embrace research 'that results in immediately implementable technologies' (ibidem) or 'the production of the ready-to-use employee who need not be trained any more' (ibidem). 'What is important, is to make it possible to do, and to do this fast' (ibidem). This condition of a short-term approach, reflecting the principle of fast moral use, or the satisfaction of immediate consumption (Bauman 1998), excludes the utilitarian sense of the 'usefulness' of the humanities, including philosophy, which is a good but, unfortunately, long-term investment. 'Philosophers created logic, without which it would not be possible to make computers' (Grabarczyk 2014), but this had already been done and no one cares about this any longer, or at least not the pseudo-reformers of Polish science.

The reduction of the university to the current educational needs of business is in opposition to the way of making science in Europe in the last two and half millennia. 'The traditional Aristotelian model of science as an interest in the world is substituted by a model of science as a reaction to current needs' (Grabarczyk 2014). The former model appeared, however, highly efficient due to the fact that not only current needs were considered. In consequence ideas and technologies were created which have been useful for centuries. Interestingly, every large corporation knows this. In wishing to create new trends rather than follow them, they finance laboratory projects that, given their impracticality, could not obtain financing in Polish universities (Grabarczyk 2014). The strategy that 'Poland takes for universities fit at most for small businesses, which, having no greater ambitions, [are] set [...] only to meet the existing demand' (ibidem) stems not only from Poland's semi-peripherality but even more so from the parochialism of her politicians, who misidentify with the elite leadership. One must therefore be very naive to believe that the same allegations which are currently used against philosophy will not be soon directed against mathematics, physics, biology or chemistry (Grabarczyk 2014). 'It may appear very soon that it is difficult to get money to study the Big Bang since it results from the theory itself that another Big Bang is hardly expected in the next fiscal year' (ibidem).

Paradoxically or not, one result of the 'uselessness' of the humanities is the desperate attempts of universities to rescue themselves via marketing tricks. 'They increase, in fact, for some time the number of students but [...] discredit the traditional fields [...] and drastically reduce the quality of education' (Łagosz 2014). 'The opening up of wide access to the possibility of obtaining a Ph.D. resulted in the fact that it has long since ceased to be synonymous with scholar' (ibidem). The massive proliferation of post-graduate studies resulted in a progressive deterioration and depreciation of this degree. The crisis of the overproduction of the 'people of knowledge' causes their financial, and thus also social, exclusion (ibidem). The devaluation of the Ph.D. is followed by that of habilitation. 'The pressure on assistant professors to prepare [...] as soon as possible their habilitation dissertations [...] results in a lowering of their quality' (Łagosz 2014) simply because writing the dissertation as a seminal work in one's scientific career needs time. Years ago, 'the standard question asked during the habilitation colloquium was what the fundamental contribution of the dissertation to world knowledge on the subject was' (ibidem), such questions have not been asked for many years. Undoubtedly, the results of such an approach to higher education, and especially to the humanities, will be very long-term, however radically different from those declared by the pseudo-reformers.

In this context, the notion of *useful idiots* is worth refreshing. This notion, attributed to V. I. Lenin, means *caviar philo-communists* and journalists in the West, inclined in good faith to approve, glorify and even praise not only the objectives but also the methods of the construction of the artfully designed ideal social system and to deny, downplay or justify any reports differing from the official propaganda (Judt 2012). In the interesting herein context, the term 'aptly describes the attitude of this part of the academic milieu which argues that the bureaucratic reforms introduced by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education are aimed at an improving of the quality of Polish science' (Trzcionkowski 2014). An important element of the arguments of the useful idiots is the belief that free time is not a prerequisite of doing science but a privilege of lazy humanists who should thus be controlled by reporting (ibidem), as well as an extensive institutional and organisational structure. The structure, implemented in Stalinist times, has not been basically undermined during the systems' transformation and it still includes institutions unknown to the Anglo-Saxon coun-

tries. The blow that impacted Polish science was arbitrarily imposed by minister B. Kudrycka. It painfully changed the model of the academic career and the path of advancement. This reform was 'based on an incorrect diagnosis, poor concepts and their disastrous implementation' (Tadeusiewicz 2014). 'This will have long-term negative consequences for Polish science and higher education. The consequences of these ill-considered actions affected the humanities as the first' (ibidem) but, as will soon be discovered, not them exclusively.

The basic problem of Polish universities is the virtual lack of autonomy, this being undermined by monstrous administrative interference. The ideal-types of the system are 'new scientists', i.e. employees of the scientific corporation, winners of a record number of points in the continually modified ministerial list (Trzcionkowski 2014). 'Generations of Polish intelligentsia's teenagers or twenties were educated by reading [...] works written in Polish for Polish intellectuals – not for scoring but from a sense of a fundamental duty to the truth and to fellow-citizens' (ibidem). These generations have now passed and the menacing Barbara Kudrycka generation is entering the historical scene. It is according to the system designed under her direction that 'articles, especially in international journals, preferably in English, [...] are scored the highest while it is worst to publish a book, God forbid, in Polish. For the great effort put into the preparation of a philological or historical work, expanding knowledge, [...] a fraction of the points awarded for a short publication in a journal from the Philadelphia list is granted' (Krzemiński 2014). The '[s]ystem created by Minister Kudrycka [...] works like the bureaucratic Matrix, in which immeasurable values do not matter' (ibidem). The period of the rule of Mrs. Kudrycka will [thus] leave a trace in these areas resembling a windthrow caused by a typhoon in a century-old forest. And many years will be needed to overgrow the scar (Tadeusiewicz 2014).

Students choose the marketing approved 'new' fields of study, which try to distance themselves from the traditional profile of an academic education, unadjusted – according to the ministerial pseudo-reformers – to the requirements of the labour market, in order to 'start from a privileged position to "the rate race" in the belief that entrepreneurs are starting to a parallel rate for the best graduates (Moll 2014) and both sides take the challenges associated with the transition to the knowledge-

based economy (ibidem). The trouble with 'impractical', 'fanciful' and thus – for simpletons – 'unnecessary' academic knowledge, however, is that an adjustment of the fields of education to the structure of the Polish economy would not even be short-sighted but rather suicidal simply because the economy in question is one 'that in the international division of labour has consolidated its advantage primarily in [low] labour costs and, additionally, is not able to produce innovations at all' (Moll 2014). The reason is that if one wishes actually 'to adjust higher education to the domestic labour market, [...] the fields of study [...] should be developed, which would prepare for work in assembly rooms, call centres [and] commercial networks' (ibidem), for which the five-years-long academic education is unnecessary. In reality, the adjustment of the education programmes to the needs of the knowledge-based economy remains a pure fantasy in Poland because it is impossible to 'adjust to something that does not exist' (Moll 2014).

Polish universities have yet to humbly take their assigned role of diploma mills that 'prepare for the Polish economy the labour force that it really [...] requires: numerous – and so cheap, competing with each other – and therefore unable to fight for collective interests' (Moll 2014). This also applies to scholars. 'In the new system, the individual is a worker in the Fordist factory: (s)he has a specific task to do and at any time can be found on the pavement. The one who decides to enter the way of a scientific career, is condemned to an uncertain fate' (Krzemiński 2014). For those with 'more and more junk diplomas, more and more junk work on junk contracts is waiting' (ibidem). This trend cannot be stopped if the adaptation of 'human resources' to external expectations is not replaced by the education of human subjects who will decide their own expectations (Moll 2014).

The choice between 'the university, providing a general knowledge, teaching critical thinking and solving problems' (Aleksandrowicz 2014), on the one hand, and a higher school equipping graduates in a particular profession, on the other, is fundamentally false, for the university is a place of acquiring knowledge rather than a profession. The heads of human resources departments in large corporations willingly employ graduates of philosophy who cannot fill in tables with correlations showing the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, but can think. The graduate of

management is able to offer the employer formulae or procedures from outdated textbooks while the one of philosophy is equipped with creative thinking, which includes the possibility of creating something new. This is in marked contrast to the completion of tables in spreadsheets that they will learn on a training (Aleksandrowicz 2014). Practical knowledge 'is sufficient for very short durations because the economy, technology, medicine etc. are in a constant transformation now. [...] Detailed, practical knowledge, learned even in the best universities, after a short time becomes museum knowledge, not congruent to the current needs of employers. [...] It is [therefore] necessary to break with the bad vision according to which only such education is needed that corporations and business wish' (Tadeusiewicz 2014). 'We should educate people who will be able and wish to learn fast, creatively assimilate news' (ibidem). An engineer lacking even basic humanistic knowledge can be dangerous for society – like a technologically perfect car left without the parking brake on a sloping road (ibidem).

The transformation of the university from an exclusive community of knowledge into an institution for the transfer of 'practical' knowledge leads to the consolidation of Poland's position as an applicatory country, implementing what was invented elsewhere, and, additionally, devoid of culture (ibidem). Apparently, the Centre wants 'us to remain in our subordinate, imitative, including scientific, dependence' (Bilewicz 2014).

It is therefore exactly what the pseudo-reformers' activity seems to be aimed at. Young people ceased to aspire to be intellectuals because it gives neither money nor prestige. It is hard to resist the impression that students ceased to be partners and became illiterate troglodytes who ceased reading, replaced knowledge with information, the difference between good and evil is for them a matter of negotiation (Nowak 2012). The fact that the Ministerial pseudo-reformers mean to only foster such troglodytes seems to be indicated by the compulsory booklet by Andrzej Kraśniewski (2011). Apart from the previously indicated rape of the Polish canons already noted within this journal's pages the following recommendation is worth noting at this point: 'The effects of education defined by the university should not reflect the expectations and ambitions of the staff but real potentialities to achieve these effects by the *weakest* student who [...] should get a diploma certifying the qualification

of the first or second degree' (ibidem). In practice, this means the adaptation of the level of the university education to the person least predestined to study (Nowak 2012), if not an incitement 'to an unprecedented appreciation of the negative assessment procedure' (ibidem). As Piotr Nowak (2012) ironically ascertains, so far 'I have looked for the best, most valuable students in my classes. Now it is to be changed. Here I am to dwell in groups in a contest for the last jerk, the hopeless victim of his/her own inability, and under him/her to write out a syllabus for the classes' (ibidem). The analysis of the examples of the classical philosophical readings indicates that in practice this means 'a reduction in the level of teaching and the replacement of knowledge with brief information, useful at the given moment in the labour market (Nowak 2012).

As P. Nowak (2012) ascertains, and the present author confirms on the basis of the participating observation, '[a]cademics [...] escape from the administrative pressure [...] in a relatively mild obstruction and misinterpretation [...] of the recommendations. [...] T]he bid in all the fuss is [, however,] really high – it is freedom and power. So far, the peculiar area of freedom was a university [...]. Today [...] [f]reedom has been [...] exchanged for other goods' (Nowak 2012). The scholars in universities are no longer scientists but bureaucrats of science (Czopek 2013). In younger universities, although probably not only just there, there is no climate for making science. Discussions, conferences and non-mandatory lectures enjoy faint interest. Instead, the pursuit of short-term 'effects' persists (ibidem).

As a result, '[t]hinking has moved beyond the university walls [...]. We are working out normal working hours at the university [while] thinking outside [...], viz. where things conducive to freedom of thought are holding up pretty well' (Nowak 2012). The author of the booklet about the preparation of the programmes of training argues, however, that he hardly understands why what he is doing could be categorised as the breeding of troglodytes (Kraśniewski 2012), for the whole affair can be reduced – to call it simply – to the inept wording of the author's idea (ibidem).

The new Minister of Science and Higher Education, Lena Kolarska-Bobińska, decided on a bold reinterpretation of the role of the humanities contrary to her predecessor. 'It is necessary to redefine innovation and say that [it] also applies to the approach to humanities and social sciences. And that education of formative and

creative citizens must be based on humanities. It is not the case that societies developed only due to new technologies' (Kolarska-Bobińska b.d.). The package for the humanities, presented by the Minister by the round table with scientists and students, appeared, however, faintly because – apart from general declarations – it included only one substantial statement while questions applying to education in humanistic fields were ignored (Bobrowicz 2014). Forty-one scientific councils of the institutes and councils of faculties in the twelve largest Polish universities supported the application to the Ombudsman for the referral to the Constitutional Court the provisions of the payment for the second field of study, which used to be humanistic. Having considered the request of the Ombudsman, the Court found the challenged provisions of the Act of Higher Education unconstitutional.

'So mass action of the scientific world has not happened in Poland since 1989. It is a powerful voice of protest against the policy of the Ministry. In the face of the greatest financial and institutional crisis of the humanities and social sciences in 25 years, the Ministry did not decided[, however,] to submit to the scientific milieu [...] any serious proposal' (Komitet..., 2014) and in the state budget allocated 300,000,000 PLN (ca 71,500,000 EUR) less than in the previous year (Krzemiński 2014).

'Despite publicly repeated questions, the Ministry has not answered what are the de facto savings associated with the restriction of access to the second field' of study (Komitet..., 2014). It can thus be supposed that the Ministry's insistence is principled and the stake is 'a conduct of another breach in the constitutional principle. [...] Students are today punished financially for the desire to complement their education. The only sense of these restrictions may be a preparation by successive precedents a full commercialisation of the University' (Komitet..., 2014). The easiest way to get a bureaucratic and especially, financial, success is still to 'offer popular, cheap and easy for students studies in the humanities and social sciences' (Niesiołowski-Spanò 2014). The legal regulations concerning public and private higher schools were designed 'with concern for the interests of the latter' (ibidem). Thus, having employed nine scholars, 'it is possible to educate 360 medicals, 225 artists but [...] 1440 students of social sciences and the humanities. [...] These fields of studies are therefore the most profitable' (ibidem).

The problems of the humanities and universities in general are systemic. 'In order to save departments of humanities against the pogrom and to enable the University to produce something more than just a vegetation[, it is] necessary [...] to break with the current system of the funding of research units' (Komitet..., 2014). The basic evil that affected science during the last 25 years is the dependence of the funding of higher schools on the number of students. Subsidies should, instead, be related 'to the level of research [rather than] the PR abilities of institutes in attracting clients' (ibidem).

It is worth noting, however, that the crisis of the humanities is a political phenomenon (Trzy twarze..., 2014). The financial collapse of the humanities and social faculties needs therefore political solutions and explanations. The binding of the collapse with the demographic depression is nothing more than a well-established superstition because what is responsible for the collapse is not the demographic depression but the model of the funding of research units, 'which relates a considerable part of the subsidies with demography' (ibidem). The demographic depression is a political phenomenon that may be neutralised by political means. It is necessary to bind the liquid part of the subsidies for scientific units with the level of research conducted in the units (Trzy twarze..., 2014).

'The solution of the crisis [...] does not depend on the goodwill of the management of the system but [...] on the political will, guided by the calculation of profits and losses' (Trzy twarze..., 2014). The financial collapse of many humanities faculties is an opportunity for the government to make savings in higher education and convince the public of the need for the commercialisation of studies. A change in the university funding model, ensuring an institutional continuity of the research units, can only be forced by 'a consistent, determined organisation of the university milieu' (ibidem). 'At the time being, politicians are looking for savings at the University, because they disregard it' (ibidem).

This disregard is misplaced. The Polish scientific community have made a psychological breakthrough since 2013 through massive solidarity and support through open letters to the Ombudsman regarding the second field of study (Trzy twarze..., 2014). On the other hand, however, the disregard is understandable because the intellectual and moral crisis of the humanities themselves is manifested in

an intellectual fragmentation of social life, which is also a moral fragmentation (ibidem), i.e. an atrophy of the ethos of solidarity (and the Solidarity) during the last quarter of a century. 'Egalitarianism and the community experience of the revolutionary times vanished irrevocably. In individualistically chopped contemporary society only temporary and short-term communities are formed' (Kalukin 2014: 22). Since the university cannot oppose the liquidation of the 'inefficient' and 'unprofitable' primary and secondary schools, a question arises of who will defend such universities. 'Academics are, after all, subjected to the same processes of precarisation [... as] the whole contemporary world of work. It is [so] the high time to recognise this community of interests' (Trzy twarze..., 2014). It is not true that 'the Polish humanist will end like a labourer in a factory. It is even worse - (s)he will end like a pallet-worker in a hypermarket on a junk contract' (mathias_faber 2014).

'Humanists awake in the world when their community is being successfully destroyed, as it had happened to other communities and social groups' (mathias_faber 2014). The Polish economic and legal system 'has caused exactly the same results in other social spheres since the beginning of the transformation and recently with a doubled strength. [...] The same happens in schools [where] the struggle for hours to complete the full-time employment plan makes teachers perceive each other as potential enemies rather than partners' (ibidem). After '25 years of freedom [...] indicators of social trust are still dramatically low' (ibidem). Without a radical change in the direction of policy no community of humanists will exist. It is in fact the case 'that no one else will intercede for you, no group, for you did not intercede for them, either, when they were still roughly bound together' (mathias_faber 2014). 'It is a pity you did not take care of allies who now would express understanding and [give] support. They simply do not exist' (ibidem). Instead of debating it is thus worth beginning to build institutions.

As Martin Niemöller stated: 'First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a communist. Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me - and there was no one left to speak out for me' (Marcuse 2013).

And it is this message rather than the philosophy of the Barbara Kudrycka generation that is the essence of the value system on which the philosophy of our journal, the *Przestrzeń Społeczna (Social Space)*, is based.

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