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## ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF MUTUAL INSPIRATIONS BETWEEN SOCIOLOGICAL SUBDISCIPLINES. THE EXAMPLE OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE BODY AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT

**Abstract.** The aim of the paper is to present the phenomenon of the division of sociology into subdisciplines, using the sociology of the body and the sociology of sport as examples, and to show the possibility of mutual inspirations between the achievements of the two subdisciplines. The starting point of the analyses is the critique of the major theoretical projects of Robert Merton and his postulate of building a middle-range theory. The analyses refer also to Talcott Parsons' idea of specialisation. The analytical concepts referred to include Nicolas Mullins' notion of four stages of the formation of new scientific disciplines (the normal stage, the network stage, the cluster stage and the stage of the formation of a new speciality/subdiscipline or discipline) and the typology of sociological subdisciplines proposed by Jakub Ryszard Stempień. The text also presents the characteristics of the two subdisciplines in question, the institutional context in which they operate, the preferred theoretical approaches, the peculiarities of the methodology used and the ethical issues involved in practising each subdiscipline. An example of this cooperation is the national scientific conference "Sociology of the Body and Sociology of Sport. The state of research and mutual inspiration". The article presents the conclusions of this event, including the possibility of going beyond the framework of subdisciplines, as well as the advantages of adopting a non-subdisciplinary and general sociological perspective.

**Keywords:** sociology of the body, sociology of sport, sociological subdisciplines, sociology in Poland.

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## O MOŻLIWOŚCIACH WZAJEMNYCH INSPIRACJI SUBDYSCYPLIN SOCJOLOGICZNYCH. PRZYKŁAD SOCJOLOGII CIAŁA I SOCJOLOGII SPORTU

**Abstrakt.** Celem tekstu jest przedstawienie zjawiska podziału socjologii na subdyscypliny na przykładzie socjologii ciała i socjologii sportu, a także zaprezentowanie możliwości wzajemnej inspiracji dorobkiem obu subdyscyplin. Punktem wyjścia analiz jest krytyka wielkich projektów teoretycznych sformułowana przez Roberta Mertona oraz jego postulat dotyczący budowania teorii średniego zasięgu. W analizach odwołujemy się także do idei specjalizacji Talcotta Parsonsa. Do przywołanych koncepcji analitycznych należą także ujęcie Nicolasa Mullinsa, wyróżniającego cztery stadia formowania się nowych dyscyplin naukowych (stadium normalne, sieciowe, klastrowe oraz stadium wykształcenia nowej specjalności/subdyscypliny lub dyscypliny) oraz typologia subdyscyplin socjologicznych zaproponowana przez Jakuba Ryszarda Stempnia. Tekst prezentuje także charakterystykę obu omawianych subdyscyplin, kontekst instytucjonalny ich funkcjonowania, preferowane podejścia teoretyczne, specyfikę wykorzystywanej metodologii oraz kwestie etyczne uprawiania każdej z nich. Przykładem, na podstawie którego omawiana jest ta współpraca jest zorganizowana w listopadzie 2023 roku w Uniwersytecie Łódzkim ogólnopolska konferencja naukowa „Socjologia ciała i socjologia sportu. Stan badań i wzajemne inspiracje”. Artykuł przedstawia wnioski płynące z tego wydarzenia, dotyczące m.in. możliwości wykroczenia poza ramy subdyscyplin, a także korzyści płynące z przyjęcia perspektywy pozasubdyscyplinarnej, a socjologicznej po prostu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** socjologia ciała, socjologia sportu, subdyscypliny socjologiczne, socjologia w Polsce.

### 1. Instead of an introduction – about the legitimate development of subdisciplines in sociology

Why are there subdisciplines within sociology? This fundamental question is often treated as trivial and not in need of an answer. After all, most – or perhaps all – mature, advanced and developed disciplines have some kind of specialisation. But let us ask the question seriously: what is the purpose of subdisciplines in sociology? Why this fragmentation, which is only slightly younger than sociology itself (after all, when sociology was still being institutionalised, there were already proposals to create the first subdisciplines of it)?<sup>1</sup>

We could draw inspiration for our response from Merton's reflections. After all, his critique of grand theoretical projects and his call for the construction of a middle-range theory can be interpreted as a call for the parcelling out of the sociological field. Let us briefly recall this idea. Well, according to Merton, the construction of *ad hoc* general sociological theories would be – he formulated this thought in the middle of the 20th century – premature. The products of such efforts would be philosophical systems rather than in fact sociological theories. As Merton lamented, *some sociologists still write as though they expect, here and now,*

<sup>1</sup> For example, the term “medical sociology” was first used in 1894, while the term “sociology of sports” celebrated its 100th birthday in 2021 (Stempień 2020: 119–120).

*formulation of the general sociological theory broad enough to encompass the vast ranges of precisely observed details of social behavior, organization, and change and fruitful enough to direct the attention of research workers to a flow of problems for empirical research. This I take to be a premature and apocalyptic belief. We are not ready. Not enough preparatory work has been done* (Merton 1968: 66).

A key element of this preparatory work would be the formulation, testing and refinement of so-called middle-range theories, which are much less abstract than the general sociological theory mentioned above. Middle-range theories would thus be strongly linked to the empirical sphere, stimulating research that would refine and clarify the conceptual apparatus and theoretical generalisations (Turner 2004: 25–26). Importantly, middle-range theories would refer only to certain parts or areas of social reality, and within these they would retain their legitimacy.

According to Merton, it is on the basis of middle-range theory that it should be possible to gradually and unhurriedly create more and more general theoretical schemes. A grand sociological theory would thus be the product of the synthesis and consolidation of middle-range theories (Merton 1968: 71). For this to be possible at all, special theories would have to emerge according to a common template, each based on a paradigm that Merton called the paradigm for functional analysis (Merton 1968: 124 ff.). Functionalism would thus be a method (or, in other words, a matrix) for the formation of middle-range theory and, in the long run, of general sociological theory (cf. Boudon 1977: 61–62).

One can interpret Merton's idea as a kind of call for specialisation in sociology and the establishment of sociological subdisciplines. Each subdiscipline would be responsible for a particular area of social life (industry, religion, medicine, culture, politics, family, etc.) and would formulate and refine middle-range theories in relation to that area, which could then form the appropriate building blocks for a grand sociological theory. Reality, however, does not correspond to such an outlined project. Of course, the idea of middle-range theory has indeed gained some popularity and sympathy among sociologists, and the term itself has become firmly established in the sociological vocabulary. Moreover, within some subdisciplines it has indeed been possible to formulate such theories, although with limited legitimacy. Examples include the sociology of religion (with its theory of secularisation), the sociology of medicine (with its concept of the medicalisation of society and medicine as power), the sociology of politics (e.g. with its theories of revolution, circulation of elites, models of public opinion formation) or the sociology of migration (e.g. with its concept of migration network theory or institutional theory) (Mariański 2017: 233; Wieczorkowska 2012; Gałuszka 2003: 49 et seq.; Wiatr 2018: 23–73; Jaskułowski, Pawlak 2016: 136–138).

However, problems arise in two ways. First, some of the subdisciplines have not made their own theoretical proposals. One example is the sociology of sport. These subdisciplinary sociologies simply use the theoretical 'arsenal' common to all sociology in their researches and apply general sociological theories in

their studies. Secondly, the emerging middle-range theories are often not built according to Merton's paradigm for functional analysis, and functionalism itself has over time ceased to be a theoretical and research option that aspires to some kind of sociological supremacy or even exclusivity. It is now just one of many ways of doing sociology, by no means the most popular.

So why do we need sociological subdisciplines, if not to ensure that the research and analysis carried out within them leads us towards the development of a single, common and possibly well-rounded sociological theory? Perhaps we need to turn to another classic of functionalism for help in explaining the sense of specialisation. Talcott Parsons is most associated with so-called social statics, but he was also concerned with the question of long-term social change. In his view, societies moved from simple to more complex forms over the course of history; the division of labour progressed. The history of human societies is thus the history of the multiplication and differentiation of structures, subsystems, roles and tasks. The difference between primitive and modern societies lies therefore not only in size of the population or the sophistication of the technology used, but also the simplicity or complexity of the relationships in which the homogeneous or heterogeneous elements constituting the collective remain. The reason for the progressive complexity of the social structure, and thus for specialisation and increasing complexity, is the increase in efficiency in the performance of functions. Specialisation takes place through the division of the existing structure into at least two elements, which, however, turn out to be more efficient than the initial element and thus perform their tasks better, as indicated by the so-called adaptive upgrading mechanism. Moreover, progressive specialisation increases the adaptive capacity of the entire social system (Parsons 1966, 1971; Sztompka 2005: 122–123). What does this tell us about specialisation in sociology?

We can consider – in the mode of Parsons' argument – that specialisation serves a better diagnosis, and therefore research and analysis carried out within certain subdisciplines are more adequate, reliable and authoritative than if they were carried out in a given field by researchers without the relevant experience, competence, in-depth knowledge of previous studies and of previous successes and mistakes (and thus by researchers with only a general sociological education). Finally, we should not forget that researchers who focus on a specific field are also familiar with specific theoretical concepts or concepts developed for the analysis of specific phenomena. They are also more aware of and skilled in using research methods and techniques that take into account the specificity of the phenomenon. For example, it is better for the study of social deviance to be carried out by teams that have been working on a specific topic for a long time, to consult other similar teams, to compare results, to propose their own explanatory schemes, to use a specific terminology consistently, to adapt and develop new methodological solutions, to create specific schools, etc.

A second argument can be added. Well, perhaps specialisation in sociology would stimulate its adaptability and thus increase its readiness to respond to changes in its object of interest. According to this idea, rapid and radical social change would be better recognised within subdisciplines ('closer to the concrete') than at the level of general knowledge about society. Given the accelerating pace of social change, this is a non-trivial argument. Indeed, it would imply that if sociology wants to 'keep up with society' it should work through the subdisciplines.

The perspectives of Merton and Parsons differ. It can be assumed that, from Merton's point of view, the functioning of subdisciplines in sociology is legitimate insofar as it allows preparation for the development of a grand social theory. In other words, subdisciplines would be a particular historical product that retains legitimacy at a particular stage in the development of the general discipline. From a Parsons-inspired point of view, subdisciplines are necessary and one should rather expect their development, their further division. Sociology as a system should become more and more complex. This follows from the very logic of the development of social systems, but in this case it would also be particularly justified by the increasing complexity of social life itself, i.e. of the matter with which sociology deals.

In a perspective inspired by Parsons' views, however, we think there may be a trap. The proliferation of sociological subdisciplines is undoubtedly a fact. At present (2024) there are more than thirty specialised sections in the Polish Sociological Association and 38 research networks in the European Sociological Association. The International Sociological Association currently has 57 research committees, 5 thematic groups and 6 working groups. Well, we believe that an excessive division of social reality into detailed sociologies could strengthen the sociographic tendency. This would mean focusing on the 'social concrete', on the study of narrow slices of social reality, without reference to more general sociological problems and concepts. To take the situation *ad absurdum*, the number of subdisciplines could, at some point, be only slightly smaller than the number of sociologists themselves.

The danger, in our view, is that these researchers will collect detailed information about social life without any sense of the need to integrate it into a system of knowledge about society, and will lose sight of the big sociological questions (e.g., what is society? How can it be meaningfully described? What factors drive social change? How do people influence each other's actions?) This problem was highlighted by Jakub Ryszard Stempień (2023) when he proposed the term "reportage sociology".

It should be noted that Parsons himself saw the limits of specialisation. If differentiation (division) does not lead to an increase in adaptability (or simply to an increase in the efficiency of the subsystem in question), then such division has no *raison d'être* and the mechanism of inclusion (the incorporation of new subsystems into society) cannot work (Parsons 1966, 1971; Sztompka 2005: 123).

We therefore adopt a critical stance towards the two perspectives outlined, while recognising their usefulness. Merton's perspective, with its inspiring emphasis on the idea of developing a grand sociological theory, has its important limitations in that the achievement of a considerable degree of generality, as envisaged by this scholar, seems an unattainable goal. Progressive specialisation (see Parsons), on the other hand, could reduce sociology to sociography, i.e. to the practice of research without reference to existing sociological concepts, without creating new theories, without proposing recommendations to the environments under study (applied sociology).

Accepting the legitimacy of distinguishing sociological subdisciplines in the perspective of Parsons, and respecting Merton's ideal of laying the foundations for a grand sociological theory, we see the need to go beyond subdisciplinary divisions. This is especially possible in the case of those specific sociologies whose objects of interest are similar, as is the case, for example, with the sociology of the body and the sociology of sport.

## **2. Sociology of the body and sociology of sport – affinity, difference, inspiration**

The subject of the sociology of sport is the social context, conditions, consequences and manifestations of such phenomena as sport *sensu stricto*, physical recreation and physical education (Stempień 2018: 177). During the time of the Polish People's Republic and even immediately after the breakthrough of 1989, the term 'sociology of physical culture' was used, which objectively had its justification. However, the term 'physical culture' was ideologically exploited by communist activists, and as a result it was and still is used reluctantly in the western countries (Murrmann 2017; Kobierecki 2016). Instead, the term 'sociology of sport' has become more common, although specialists in this field actually go beyond considering the social aspects of sporting activities themselves in their work.

The sociology of the body, on the other hand, is concerned with all kinds of social phenomena and processes that affect the human body. This may involve different levels of social life. In terms of macro-social phenomena, the sociology of the body may be concerned, for example, with the influence of religion on believers' perceptions of the body as the seat of sin or the temple of the soul (Krajewska 2023), or with the marketing strategies of large cosmetics companies. At the *mezzo* level, the sociologist of the body may be interested in the specific ways in which the body is used in certain communities (e.g. in the course of rituals) or in closed institutions such as prisons. At the micro-social or even interactional level, on the other hand, the mutual influence of so-called body language signals on the course of interaction or identity processes of individuals may be of interest (Goffman 2005).

In this way, the domains of the two sociological subdisciplines partly overlap. It is a matter of social research and analysis of the corporeality of the athlete,

with the sporting and training body as its object. The common field of action and interest of both specific sociologies is thus the body in the area of sport: the body perceived in a culturally shaped way, the body disciplined by social conditions and requirements, the body whose qualities are decisive for personal identity or professional success. The common space may also include issues of gender: its significance in amateur and professional sport, the socialisation of children into certain sports as stereotypically masculine or feminine, the construction of representations of the feminine and masculine body in media messages, and issues related to the emergence of non-binary or transgender people in sport.

These practices of perceiving, naming, using, disciplining, shaming and judging the body, and in some cases sanctioning violence and oppression against it, can be a fascinating subject for sociological or, more broadly, humanistic-social studies. Outside the usual scope would be, on the side of the sociology of sport: the study of the social aspects of sport free from corporeal connotations (e.g. the study of sports organisations or the sport mega-events), and on the side of the sociology of the body: sociological analyses of corporeality beyond the realm of non-utilitarian physical activity (e.g. in relation to work, beauty standards, food or sexuality).

Both sub-disciplines share a similarity in terms of the completion of their institutionalisation process. Following Nicolas Mullins' notion of four stages of formation of new scientific disciplines (normal stage, network stage, cluster stage and stage of formation of a new speciality/subdiscipline or discipline), it can be argued that both sociology of the body and sociology of sport are now in stage four. This means not only the functioning of the leaders of the field and the frequent communication of the people who form it, and the education of the next generation of researchers, according to the classical model of master-student relations (which was inherent in the network and cluster stage), but also the acquisition of legitimacy for this very distinctiveness, including the recognition of the singularity of the object of research (Mullins 1972 according to: Loy, Kenyon, McPherson 1980).

At the same time, it seems that each of the subdisciplines of sociology can be assigned to one of the following four types (Stempień 2020: 115–116):

- 1) general sociology and social theory, social structure, social research methodology;
- 2) sociologies of different areas of social life, working independently, based on their own theoretical insights or drawing on theories from general sociology; their output may be useful to practitioners in the fields concerned (e.g. sociology of work, rural and urban life, everyday life, gender, civil society, science);
- 3) sociologies (e.g. sociology of culture, politics, art, religion, economic sociology) whose objects of interest are also in the domain of other social or humanistic disciplines (and have been indicated in the names of these disciplines); these sociologies can communicate with their "partners" on the basis of a common canon of the humanities, i.e. a certain corpus of concepts or slogans (e.g. liberalism, "dramatological perspective" or postmodernism) and

- a similar model of cognition; despite the differences in perspectives, it is possible to inspire each other and benefit from the intellectual output developed;
- 4) sociologies that deal with those fragments of social reality that have hitherto been colonised as objects of knowledge by other, non-human sciences (the sociology of medicine, sports/physical culture, the military, industry); these sociologies oscillate between carrying out social research for these other disciplines and carrying out strictly sociological studies critical of them (and the practical activities associated with them).<sup>2</sup>

While the sociology of the body can be assigned to the second type distinguished above, the sociology of sport, due to its links with the sports science, belongs firmly to the fourth type.

There are some interesting theoretical, methodological and ethical differences between the sociology of the body and the sociology of sport. The sociology of the body has always been in some way at odds with traditional sociological concepts, perhaps because the emergence of the body in sociology's field of interest was a manifestation of rebellion against the traditional Cartesian dualism. Therefore, at least in terms of simply pursuing the development of theoretical concepts that fit the structural-functional paradigm, its possibilities were limited. As a result, the sociology of the body has tended to draw on the achievements of either postmodernism, symbolic interactionism or phenomenology. It also results in researchers, both Western and Polish, trying to develop their own theoretical propositions regarding the presence of the body in social space, as can be seen, for example, in the work of Zygmunt Bauman (1995) or Anthony Giddens (2010).

The situation is somewhat different for the sociology of sport. It can be assumed that for a long time it was dominated by a functional approach, i.e. sport (or just physical culture) was considered from the perspective of the tasks that this subsystem was supposed to perform for the benefit of the social whole (cf. Krawczyk 1974). The sociology of sport, as mentioned, has not developed its own theoretical option (in the form of some social theory of sport). In this situation, sociologists of sport readily refer to canonical theoretical options and apply them to the analysis of the phenomena they study. As the textbook *Sport and Modern Social Theorists* edited by Richard Giulianotti (2004) shows, the possibilities for applying general sociological theories in sport studies are many. These studies are often examples of critical sociology.

Theoretical issues are also reflected in the choice of methodological strategies and specific techniques. When it comes to the sociology of the body, it is quite difficult

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<sup>2</sup> With regard to the last type and the sociology of medicine included in it, it is worth recalling Robert Straus' distinction between sociology of medicine, which conducts so-called basic research and often has a critical dimension, and sociology in medicine, which is an auxiliary science to medicine and has an applied dimension (Skrzypek 2012: 373). It seems that Straus' dichotomy can be applied to the analysis of functioning and other sub-disciplines belonging to type four, including, as far as possible, the sociology of sport.



to find examples of quantitative research. Given the characteristics of the phenomenon that is the human body, including above all the non-abducibility of bodily experience to narrative, techniques based on it seem insufficient (Byczkowska 2009). By this we mean both quantitative techniques, such as the questionnaire interview or survey, and qualitative techniques, such as the semi-structured or narrative interview. The interviewees' experiences and the knowledge they have acquired are not limited to know-what, but also include tacit knowing (Jakubowska 2017; Polanyi 1966), including know-how. The latter type of knowledge is sometimes crucial for understanding bodily actions, values, norms or practices in different research areas, such as work, food, beauty, sport or sexuality. Thus, in the field of sociology of the body, methodological proposals are emerging that involve persons under study in the production of data, e.g. analysis of photographs or videos in a photo/video elicited interview. An approach based on the researchers' bodily experiences is developing, and thus we are witnessing the popularisation of, among others, autoethnographic methods and techniques (Byczkowska-Owczarek, Jakubowska 2018: 152; Kafar, Kacperczyk 2020).

The situation in the sociology of sport is also different in terms of methodology. Qualitative studies definitely dominate (Stempień 2018), but it can probably be assumed that they are based on either narrative techniques (qualitative interviews in their various forms) or observational techniques (including participant observation during sport events), rather without involving the respondents in the creation or analysis of the data. Quantitative research, although rare, is still used in the form of survey measurements or standardised desk research. Sports sociologists are also keen to use off-the-shelf quantitative studies (e.g. public statistical data), so the low popularity of using quantitative techniques in their own research is unlikely to be due to paradigmatic considerations.

Body experiences and practices are also an area of researches that touch on sensitive and sometimes intimate areas of respondents' lives. These can include the difficulties of living with a disability, issues of appearance, but also, for example, deeply internalised shame. Ethical issues are therefore one of the important criteria in sociology of the body researches, including concern for the welfare of the persons under study. However, the potential sensitivity of this topic does not only affect the subjects, but also the researchers. Dealing with difficult issues, the experiences of the persons under study, listening to many hours of stories of suffering, shame, lack of acceptance of one's own body, also places a psychological burden on the researchers. Of course, this is not specific to research in the field of the sociology of the body, but since the human body is one of the most important elements in the process of constructing of human identity, everyday practices, close and intimate relationships with others, the presence of such difficulties should be noted. For this reason, from time to time, the community of sociologists of the body, in agreement with other sociological communities, raises the issue of supervision or intervention. This process, modelled on those used successfully in psychology, for example,

could provide support for researchers dealing with particularly difficult social problems. Ethical issues, on the other hand, do not seem to be as prominent in the sociology of sport.

### **3. Sociology of the body and sociology of sport – an example of collaboration**

As research practice, but also the broader practice of organising scientific life, shows, researchers in the sociology of the body and the sociology of sport often cooperate with each other. This is not just a matter of collaborating on research projects or publishing articles or academic monographs together. Pure pragmatism, related to the organisational side of the process of awarding degrees and titles, requires cooperation between representatives of both communities. This is dictated by the specificity of the two subdisciplines as well as the partial overlap of interests of the respective researchers. This leads to cooperation between members of both fellowships, to a better knowledge of current research practices or, for example, of theoretical concepts used in research (less often used by representatives of the other subdiscipline). As presidents of the Sociology of the Body and the Sociology of Sport Sections of the Polish Sociological Association, we wanted to take this collaboration to a slightly different level.

In 2023, both sections with the Institute of Sociology of the University of Lodz, and the Lodz Department of the PSA organised the aforementioned national scientific conference “Sociology of the Body and Sociology of Sport. The state of research and mutual inspiration”. The aim was to get to know the circles of both sections and to exchange methodological experiences. One of the ways in which the organisers tried to achieve this was by organising different types of sessions, so that the form of presentation could be adapted to the needs of the speakers. In addition to traditional forms such as an invited lecture or a presentation, some participants opted for a case study session, which took the form of a discussion of a research project, or a poster session, which allowed for intimate discussion of the research presented. One of the outcomes of this conference are two volumes of “Acta Universitatis Lodzensis. Folia Sociologica” entitled “Sociology of the body and sociology of sport – research explorations” and “Sociology of the body and sociology of sport – theoretical explorations”. We hope that papers in both volumes illustrate that mutual inspirations between the two sub-disciplines are possible and necessary.

As we have already pointed out, there are significant differences between the two subdisciplines described, despite a partially shared research field. These include the theoretical dimension, research practices, approaches to ethical issues, relations with other scientific disciplines (see Stempień’s typology 2020), and even the history of their development and institutionalisation (Byczkowska-Owczarek 2023; Jakubowska 2009; Stempień 2020). During the conference,

these differences led to in-depth discussions, often surprising questions and the formulation of insightful conclusions. Those in the early stages of their scientific journey were able to consult their ideas and make new contacts, those on the verge of completing a scientific project were able to obtain interesting and useful comments from other specialists, and researchers who had completed their projects were able to present their results to others.

Certainly, the affinity of the topics of sociological interest was of some help, but at the same time, methodological and theoretical differences raised the temperature of the discussions. However, we feel that the atmosphere of these discussions was so open and friendly that we managed to avoid the “if only there were no questions” kind of wishful thinking among the presenters.

It is hard to deny the considerable scholarly benefits of attending events outside one's own subdiscipline. Such gatherings of scholars not only allow one to look with curiosity at what other sociologists are doing, but also to take a fresh look at one's own area of reflection. In contrast to speaking in a circle of people working in a similar field, presenting research results to representatives of other disciplines requires a different, perhaps more reflective approach. For them, not everything is as ‘obvious’ as it is for representatives of a particular subdiscipline who have undergone a kind of secondary socialisation within it.

Contact with representatives of other subdisciplines can also provide a fresh perspective on one's own research problems. And even if, in the end, we decide to stick to our original assumption, the confrontation with another way of thinking at the level of methods, concepts, paradigmatic assumptions can prove valuable (for both sides of the discussion). Stepping out of one's own discipline is also, in a sense, stepping out of one's ‘comfort zone’. Within one's own subdiscipline, certain issues (methodology, literature) do not need to be clarified. We operate within the same understanding of concepts or processes and may therefore fall into unconscious methodological or theoretical assumptions.

The 2023 conference organised in Lodz was an activity that transcended the divisions of specialisation that placed us in the role of sociologists simply as researchers of a particular slice of social reality. The level of understanding between the sociology of the body and the sociology of sport is not only the athlete's body, but precisely Sociology and its ability to analyse and reflect on how bodily practices and practices in the field of sport reflect broader social processes and phenomena.

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