Acta Universitatis Lodziensis

FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA

72

2020

WYDAWNICTWO
UNIWERSYTETU
ŁÓDZKIEGO

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FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA

72
2020

Gender Roles and Society

edited by
Emilia Garncarek

WYDAWNICTWO
UNIWERSYTETU
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ŁÓDŹ 2020

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Czasopismo afiliowane przy Wydziale Ekonomiczno-Socjologicznym Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego

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Wydane przez Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego
Wydanie I. W.09599.19.0.Z

Ark. wyd. 9,9; ark. druk. 9,25

ISSN 0208-600X
e-ISSN 2353-4850

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ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.01

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Member since 2019
JM14479

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WHICH WOMEN (DON'T) LEAVE AND WHICH MEN (DON'T) STAY? GENDER AND THE DIVERSITY OF FORMS AND THE TEMPORALITY OF CONTEMPORARY INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Abstract. The article focuses on relationship experiences in the light of the diversity of relationship forms, relationship length and the attitude of partners to relationship permanence. The conceptual framework was determined by the sociotemporal perspective, and the analysis was carried out with reference to concepts employed in the fields of the sociology of the family, the sociology of intimacy, the sociology of gender and the sociology of time. The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of women and men and their relationship experiences, the diversity of relationship forms and their length, as well as their readiness to stay in a relationship or leave in a crisis situation. The research was carried out using the diagnostic survey method on a representative sample of adult Poles in January 2018. Gender has been shown to differentiate the length of relationship and the attitudes to relationship permanence. It was found that women stay in shorter relationships more often than men. It was also found that the experiences of women with different types of relationships are more diverse when linked to their social status than the experiences of men. Four types of orientation to the (im)permanence of relationships were identified. It was established that men's readiness to leave depends on their age, education and self-assessment of their financial situation, whereas women's decision to leave depends on their age, education and socio-occupational category.

Keywords: intimate relationships, breakups, women, men, sex, gender.

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1. Introduction

The article focuses on the experiences of being in a relationship in the light of the diversity of relationship forms, relationship length and the attitude of partners to relationship permanence. The conceptual framework was determined by a sociotemporal perspective and the analysis was carried out in reference to concepts employed in the fields of the sociology of family, the sociology of intimacy, the sociology of gender and the sociology of time. It was assumed that an important factor and context for the interpretation of transformations in matrimonial life are changes both in relations between the sexes and in the area of social time. The argument for adopting such a perspective stemmed not only from the fact that temporality plays a key role in the experience of living together, but also from the way it changes the current biographical order, also in the realm of intimate biography (Lahad 2011; Strzelecka 2017; Paprzycka 2019).

The presented study contributes to current research on changes in marital-family life, which assumes that the primary indicators of contemporary intimate relationships are related to the changes in their dynamics, i.e. their formation, course and duration (Kaufmann 1993; 2012; Jamieson 1998; 2008; Giddens 2006; 2010; Schmidt 2015). The article focuses on two of the features of relationships that are perceived as the most characteristic of modern relationships, namely their temporality (Jamieson 2008; Bauman 2003; Lahad 2011; Musiał 2015; Strzelecka 2017) and the orientation of partners towards maximizing the fulfilment of their own/ individual needs (Bawin-Lergos 2004; Giddens 2006; Jamieson 2008). It is emphasized that the main function of a modern relationship is to meet needs of an erotic and emotional nature. As a result, if the individual needs and expectations typically involved in an intimate relationship are not met, it can be interrupted at any time (Bawin-Lergos 2004). According to this approach, the nature of an intimate relationship is determined by how the conditions set by partners are met, with the dynamics being based on gratification and constant striving for compromises between the fulfilment of the partners' individual needs and the need for the security that a relationship with another person provides (Giddens 2006). A feature of modern relationships is that they are created not due to external coercion or social expectations, and their functioning is not regulated by top-down norms and rules, but is rather shaped according to the will of the participating individuals. Anthony Giddens argues that nowadays individuals enter into a relationship for themselves, i.e. for what each of them can derive from a lasting relationship with another person (Giddens 2006: 75). This means that the individuals who participate in such a relationship permanently monitor the state of this relationship and attempt to transform it when it ceases to meet their expectations or, as a last resort, they end their participation in the relationship. According to Giddens, the "romantic idea of love that lasts forever", which had been binding until recently, is giving way to "the idea of pure love as long as it lasts". Therefore, as Jean-Claude Kaufmann (2012: 120–122) observes, the basic problem faced by contemporary couples is that they are permanently deciding whether to stay together or break up, hence modern relationships can be seen as relationships that are constantly being constructed and deconstructed.

The changes in marital-family life are accompanied by changes in social definitions, norms and social expectations. The literature on this topic emphasizes that the history of changes in intimate life is embedded in the transformations that took place and are taking place in pre-modern, modern and post-modern societies (see Beck, Beck-Gernsheim 1995; Giddens 2006; 2007; Jamieson 2008). The intimacy created today has emerged because three models of intimacy (traditional, modern and post-modern) are being applied simultaneously (Plummer 2003). As a result, analyzing contemporary intimate relationships poses a challenge for researchers, because while traditional relationships and modern relationships are relatively well defined, there is as yet no precise description for post-modern relationships. Studies on changes in martial life focus primarily on changes in the structure of the family. It is believed that new forms of being together are a symbol of a postmodern condition expressed by the increase in diversity and fluctuation of intimate relationships (Stacey 1990). According to Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim (2002: 204), we are now entering into optional relationships within families, which are very difficult to identify in an objective and empirical way, because they are a matter of subjective perspectives and decisions. Lyn Jamieson (2008) proposes two analytical perspectives: optimistic and pessimistic. The former assumes that intimate relationships remain the essence of private life, but the marriage-based family is losing its primary importance as a norm and ideal. In this conception, it is no longer the family but rather one or more satisfying relationships that are at the centre of personal life. According to Jamieson, despite the fact that permanent, long-term intimate relationships are still most often chosen – including informal ones – a variety of intimate lifestyles is inevitably developing. In the second perspective, these changes are viewed in terms of the collapse of the normative and religious foundations of marriage. She attributes the main reason for the changes to the negative effects of individualism, which in modern societies encourages the free choice of the object of love, and in post-modern relationships leads to the breakup of relationships. In this pessimistic interpretation, the importance of intimacy is diminished due to the influence of a consumer culture that promotes self-centred and self-isolating individualism.

The transformation of marital-family life in the era of postmodernity is often explained by the fact that people are now looking for ways of being together that are better suited to current living conditions. These changes can be also considered from the perspective of social time. Some authors assert that well-known models of linear and cyclic time, developing within long-term socio-cultural processes, clearly result in established forms of marital-family life, i.e. multi-generational, nuclear, neoliberal and contemporary, the so-called cyclical (see Strzelecka 2017). The nuclear family model is related to the linear perception of time, which is characterized by an inflexible model of events: birth – education – work – marriage – family – retirement – death (Dychtwald 2003). This entails that, in contrast, contemporary intimate relationships are seen as temporal arrangements in which the practised models of being together are characterized by much greater mobility and diversity (Lahad 2011), while the basic attributes of marital-family life, e.g. a marriage certificate, are no longer associated with them (Trybulec 2009). It is noted that the elements formerly associated with living together as a couple are being replaced by emotional and financial bonds (see Renzetti, Curran 2008), and the increasing number of divorces and subsequent marriages confirm the change in the model of marital-family life from linear to cyclical. There is no single dominant relationship in this model, and starting a family and having children are no longer the natural consequences of going through subsequent biographical stages, but are becoming a matter of choice (Collier, Rosaldo, Yanagisako 2007; Strzelecka 2017). In this model, the intimate life of each individual may change several times – the individual may return to a previous phase or start living in a new configuration outside of formalized intimate relationships (Strzelecka 2017).

The analyses proposed in the article fit into the "optimistic" perspectives of research on changes occurring in marital-family life, which oppose conceiving of these changes in terms of family crisis and propose considering the intensive changes in this area as the emergence of new practices in the field of redefining relationships, in terms of functions and types (see de Singly 1994; 1996; Brown 2004; Kiernan 2004; Kaufmann 2005; Silverstein, Auerbach 2005; Slany 2006; Giddens 2007; Majka-Rostek 2008; Kwak, Bieńko 2012; Kwak 2014; Illouz 2016; Mizielińska 2017). This research focused solely on intimate relationships because attention has been drawn to the increasingly autonomous nature of such relationships in relation to family relationships for many years (Lenz 2006). This approach is becoming increasingly popular among researchers and is exemplified, for example, in the form of a theoretical-research programme proposal (see Schmidt et al. 2018).

The current study adopts the conceptualization of an intimate relationship put forward by Jean-Claude Kaufmann (2012: 120–122), who defines such a relationship as a continuous process, in which the formation of a couple emerges as a coincidence, and the relationship length results from a lack of motivation to make a decision to end it. In this approach, the relationship between a modern couple appears to be something lacking stability and having a complicated structure. At the same time, Eva Illouz (2016) and other researchers, for instance Lyn Jamieson (2008), explain the increase in the number of breakups (divorces, separations) not in terms of crisis, but as indicating a rise in the importance of a relationship. According to Illouz, an intimate relationship has now become the main component of a person's biography and has taken on a meaning it never had before. In consequence, this leads to an increase in the demands placed on the partner and requirements with regard to the quality of the relationship. Despite the impermanence of relationships, it is argued that a stable and satisfying relationship is still an important reference point in the evaluation of intimate relationships, both for couples and people currently not in a relationship (Kaufmann 2012; Jewdokimow, Garncarek 2007; Paprzycka 2019). The increase in the number of breakups can, therefore, be seen not as people giving up the search for a lifetime companion, but rather as a lack of consent to a malfunctioning relationship (Jamieson 2008). Interpreted from this perspective, high divorce rates reflect the growing importance attached today to a good marriage and are treated as one of the factors that transform marriage. At present, people who decide to get married consider the possibility of separation and do not expect to live together until they die (Walerstein, Blakeslee 1989). The greater likelihood of separation also increases the efforts made by partners to prevent this from happening.

In this article, the term "intimate relationship" is used for all types of intimate relationships that fall into the category of an intimate couple; it does not only apply to marriages. The analyses were conducted from the perspective that treats an intimate couple as a social relationship (Sztompka 2012). They focused on the relationship between the social position of the partners in an intimate relationship (their status) and the framework of an intimate relationship as defined by its form, the patterns of its course and its duration. Gender was made a main analytical category as it is crucial for the positioning of women and men in society. The study adopted a functional approach to gender (Holmes, Marra 2011; Wharton 2006) assuming its stratification significance (Acker 1990; Ferree 2003; Martin 2004). The perspectives of the analysis drew on two different but complementary concepts – one developed by Anthony Giddens (2006; 2007) and the other one created by Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1995), who perceive the transformation of marital-family life in relation to changes in the relations between the sexes. Giddens points out that the increase in freedom and equality, which translates into changes in the area of intimate life, weakens inequalities between men and women. He predicts that more and more people will be looking for a new type of relationship, a so-called "pure relationship", which by definition is a relationship between equal people. However, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim believe that the increase in freedom and equality is, to a large extent, purely theoretical and postulative. They point to restrictions in this area, which are located primarily in the social structure. These barriers also result from tensions between the requirements of the labour market and requirements related to family life. According to these authors, despite the emergence of new values, society as a whole does not keep up with progressive and egalitarian beliefs, especially in the context of changing gender relations.

The theoretical framework of the research covered in the article is indebted to the socio-cultural theory of Raewyn Connell (1987; 2013), in which gender is defined as a specific structure and institution essential for shaping social stratification and access to various types of capital. In this approach, gender structures social life in its various dimensions (micro-, meso- and macrostructural) and is a gradation structure. In terms of social process and practice, it is created and reproduced by social orders, and places different categories of women and men in various spaces and positions. It is assumed that there are individual differences within the male and female community. The presented research takes into account the status differentiation within the gender category. The analyses were aimed at identifying the structural consequences of gender differences in the area of experience in relationships – the diversity of forms and duration as well as orientation on their permanence.

2. Methodological assumptions

The research was of a descriptive and explanatory nature, and its purpose was to determine the relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of women and men, their relationship experiences, and their readiness to remain in a relationship or break up in a crisis situation. The research sought answers to the following research questions: 1) Does gender differentiate relationship experiences and the readiness to remain in a relationship or break up when there is a crisis in the relationship and dissatisfaction with it? 2) How do the features of social status among women and men (with gender understood here structurally) differentiate relationship experiences and the readiness to remain in a relationship or break up when crisis and dissatisfaction arise?

The following hypotheses were made:

H 1. Gender differentiates relationship experiences and the readiness to remain in a relationship or break up when there is a crisis in the relationship and dissatisfaction with it.

H 2. The characteristics of social status differentiate relationship experiences and the readiness among women and men to remain in a relationship or break up in times of crisis and dissatisfaction.

Data

The research was carried out in 2018 on a representative sample of 951 adult residents of Poland (18–66 years old)[1], which was *drawn from* the National Register of Polish citizens (PESEL). In order to control the territorial dispersion,

[1] The research was carried out under the project: "Dynamics of Poles' intimate relationships" in 2017–2018. Purposeful grant from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Project manager: Emilia Paprzycka.

the random selection was stratified in proportion to the voivodships and the size of the place of residence (80 layers). 53% of respondents were women, 47% of them were men. The study was conducted in the subjects' homes by means of computer-assisted direct interviews, so-called CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview).

Variables and indicators

The set of characteristics defining gender in the adopted structural approach was determined by the research questions, which employed socio-demographic independent variables such as age, place of residence, education, professional category, financial situation (the objective indicator of which was the amount of monthly income per person; the subjective indicator being the subjects' self-assessment of their financial situation)[2]. Gender was treated both as an independent variable and as a criterion for the division of respondents.

A dependent variable was the relationship experience, the components of which were conceptualized from the intimate relationship status and the length of the relationship. Intimate relationship status indicators were operationalized according to the criterion of being in a relationship. The basic categories were being married, being in an informal relationship (cohabitation) and being without a partner (single life). The relationship length was determined on the basis of the categorized duration of the relationship.

Another dependent variable was the readiness to remain in a relationship or break up in the event of crisis and dissatisfaction. To this end, a composite indicator was constructed: the scale of orientation towards the (im)permanence of the relationship in the event of dissatisfaction. It was based on two dimensions. The first dimension of *temporality versus permanence* was the readiness to remain in a relationship, which was measured by the number of arguments for staying in the relationship despite the lack of satisfaction with it[3]. The second dimension: *uncompromisingness versus conciliation* was the readiness to end the relationship, which was measured by the number of possible reasons for leaving the partner in a crisis situation[4].

[2] The structure of the socio-demographic characteristics is presented in Table 1.

[3] The reasons for staying in an unsatisfactory relationship proposed for assessment, in addition to the reasons of a pragmatic nature, included arguments that referred to commitments made during the marriage vows, defining marriage as an inseparable relationship based on love. In total, the list includes eight reasons that may influence the continuation of an unsatisfactory relationship: (1) fear of friends and family's opinion, (2) belief in the inseparability of marriage, (3) best interests of their children, (4) love for a partner, (5) joint financial liabilities (credits, loans), (6) financial dependence on the partner, (7) convenience, reluctance to change, (8) fear of loneliness.

[4] Among the reasons for deciding to separate proposed for assessment, the most frequently mentioned reasons for divorce were taken into account (Eurostat 2015). The respondents were also assessed for potential breakups, the source of which may be functioning in a long-term relationship or

The position of the respondent at every dimension was the basis for recognizing the readiness to remain in a relationship or break up in the event of crisis and dissatisfaction[5]. Four types of orientation towards the (im)permanence of the relationship were singled out:

1. *oriented towards relationship permanence, but an uncompromising attitude in a crisis situation (ambivalence)*. This type describes respondents who indicated many reasons to stay in an unsatisfactory relationship, yet at the same time many reasons to end such a relationship. Simultaneously indicating many arguments "for" and "against" indicates the absence of an unequivocal attitude to ending an unsatisfactory relationship, and may be a predictor of the readiness to negotiate.
2. *oriented towards the temporary nature of the relationship, and an uncompromising attitude in a crisis situation (acceptance).* This type describes respondents who would consider many reasons to leave their partner, while few arguments could prompt them to continue a failed relationship. This configuration of reasons indicates a great potential for ending a relationship and separating from a partner.
3. *oriented towards the temporary nature of relationships, but conciliation in a crisis (indifference).* This type describes respondents who indicated a few reasons that would lead them to leave and a few reasons that they would consider when thinking about whether or not to remain in an unsatisfactory relationship. It is a situation that is rather conducive to maintaining the status quo of the relationship and displays passivity in approaching the decision to break up. Although the termination of the relationship is not ruled out (reasons for separation are identified, although there are a few), the number of arguments for making the decision to break up, however, do not form a sufficient basis for making such a decision. Although termination of the relationship is not ruled out (there are a few reasons to stay), there are also many reasons for leaving the partner.
4. *oriented towards relationship permanence, and conciliation in a crisis situation (inertia).* The respondents who are characterized by such an attitude to the (im)permanence of a relationship would consider a lot of arguments for continuing the failed relationship and at the same time see a few reasons for abandoning their partner if problems arose in the relationship. In this case, the relationship does not seem uncertain, as the arguments raised reinforce the argument for maintaining the relationship.

lack of loyalty. The respondents evaluated the following reasons: (1) lack of time for each other, (2) difficulties in communicating, frequent quarrels, (3) burnout of the relationship, distance from each other, (4) partner's addiction (e.g. alcohol, drugs, gambling), (5) physical or psychological violence, (6) decrease in the partner's attractiveness – age-related appearance changes, neglect, (7) sexual mismatch, (8) one-time betrayal by the partner, (9) long-term affair of the partner, (10) financial problems of the partner, (11) inability of the partner to have children, (12) long-term illness of the partner.

[5] For both dimensions, a dichotomous division of the number of reasons was established. It was assumed that the indication of more than four reasons means high readiness to part, and failure to indicate any or at most four means low readiness to part.

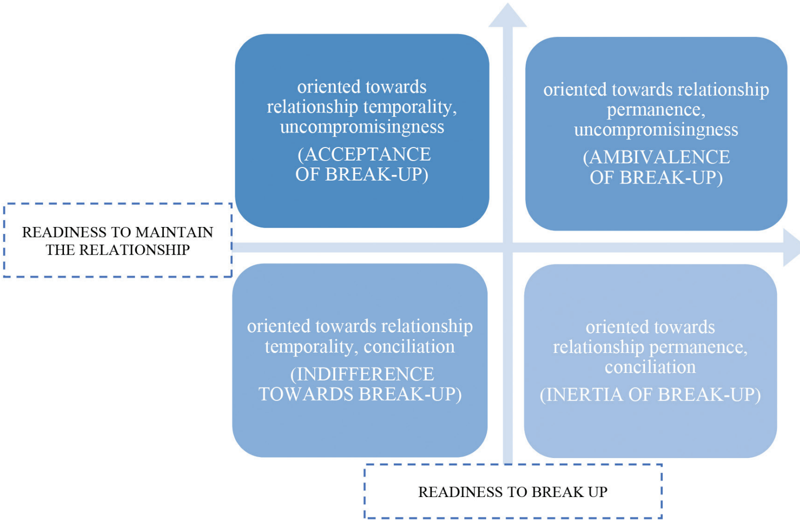

Diagram 1. The typology of orientation towards the (im)permanence of a relationship in the event of crisis or lack of satisfaction

Source: authors' own research

Statistical tools

The assumed relationship between the distribution of nominal variables (intimate relationship status, relation to the (im)permanence of a relationship), was checked using the chi-squared test, and the distributions of the ordinal variable (relationship length) in several groups were compared using the non-parametric Kruskall-Wallis H test. The differences between the groups for multiple comparisons and two groups were tested using the Mann-Whitney U test. The strength of the relationship was analyzed depending on the level of measurement and the number of categories of correlated variables, based on the V-Kramer contingency coefficient and Kendall tau-b and tau-c coefficients. The studies assumed the significance level alpha = 0.05, and in the case of multiple comparisons the Bonferroni correction for the significance level was taken into account. The calculations were made in the PS IMAGO statistical package.

3. Results

Gender and relationship experiences

The relationship experiences have been described in two dimensions: the intimate relationship status and the relationship length. All the categories of intimate relationship status were noted among the respondents. The majority of the respondents

(71.8%) were people in relationships. These were both formal relationships – marriages (62.5%; civil – 6.7%; religious – 55.8%) and informal (9.3%). 28.2% of respondents were without a partner. Gender did not differentiate the structure of the intimate relationship status (Chart 1).

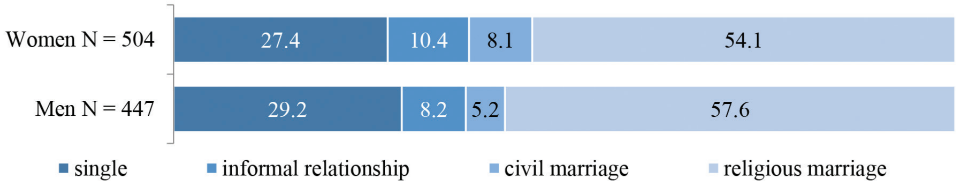

Chart 1. The structure of the intimate relationship status among men and women
Source: authors' own research

The second dimension of the relationship experience – the relationship length, was a feature the distribution of which was statistically significantly dependent on gender (chi = 16.20; df = 5, $p = 0.006$; $V = 0.154$). Among the respondents, people in the longest relationship dominated both among men and women. Women were more likely to have shorter relationships than men. More men than women were in longer relationships lasting over 25 years (Chart 2).

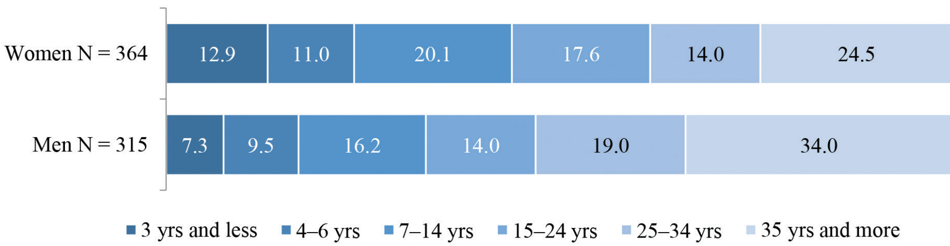

Chart 2. The structure of the relationship length among men and women
Source: authors' own research

In accordance with the adopted theoretical concept of socio-cultural gender, in order to identify individual differences within the population of women and men, analyses regarding the relationships between the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the relationship experience were conducted separately for women and men. Such analytical proceedings allowed the differences and similarities in this regard to be determined, not only between men and women, but also within the gender category.

The intimate relationship status of men was differentiated by three socio-demographic features: age, education and belonging to a socio-occupational group. The age of the respondents (chi = 107.974; df = 10, $p < 0.000$; $V = 0.348$) and the position in the socio-occupational structure (chi = 65.324; df = 12, $p < 0.000$; $V = 0.271$) most strongly correlated with the intimate status. The weakest relationship was recorded in case of education (chi = 31.267; df = 6, $p < 0.000$;

V = 0.187). The intimate relationship status among men was not differentiated by the place of residence, or by income and assessment of financial situation.

The intimate relationship status of women was differentiated by most of the analyzed socio-demographic characteristics. A statistically significant relationship was only not recorded for income. Similarly to men, the strongest correlation occurred in the case of age (chi = 134.771; df = 10, $p < 0.000$; V = 0.367) and belonging to a socio-professional category (chi = 77.061; df = 12, $p < 0.000$; V = 0.277)). Weaker relationships were found in the case of: education (chi = 39.392; df = 6, $p < 0.000$; V = 0.198), the place of residence (chi = 24.950; df = 6, $p < 0.000$; V = 0.158) and self-assessment of financial situation (chi = 34.303; df = 4, $p < 0.000$; V = 0.185).

In the light of these results (Table 1), it can be stated that in the case of men, those in marriages were primarily from older age groups, with higher or vocational education, representatives of management and specialists, as well as retirees and pensioners. However, being in an informal relationship or remaining without a partner was associated with a young age. These types of intimate relationship status best describe the youngest respondents. Having primary/lower secondary or secondary education and belonging to the category of persons employed as middle level staff and working in administration or services was associated with being single. On the other hand, being in an informal relationship was associated with a low level of completed education (having at most vocational education).

Based on the results obtained among the women, it can be concluded that marriage was most common among women who were mature (45–54 years old) with higher education and who were residents of large cities (100–500 000 inhabitants). They were most often women who assessed their financial situation as good, representing socio-occupational groups such as management and specialists, the self-employed, farmers, housewives and the unemployed.

Single life was most often experienced by women from the youngest and oldest age category: pupils, students, retirees or pensioners, most often with primary/lower secondary or secondary education. This intimate relationship status was usually accompanied by the lowest self-assessment of one's own financial situation. Without a partner were, in particular, inhabitants of villages, medium-sized towns (20–100 000 inhabitants) and larger cities (over 500 000 inhabitants).

Informal relationships were most typical for the youngest women from medium-sized cities (20–100 000 inhabitants). Being in a relationship not confirmed by marriage vows was also more likely to affect young women, pupils and students, and women with at least secondary education.

Table 1. The intimate relationship status and socio-demographic characteristics among women (N = 504) and men (N = 447). Data in percentages

				Women			Men		
		W	M	Single	Inform. relation	Married	Single	Inform. relation	Married
Characteristics	**categories**	**53.0**	**47.0**	**27.4**	**10.4**	**62.2**	**29.2**	**8.2**	**62.6**
Age	18–24	7.3	8.1	47.2	47.2	5.6	73.0	21.6	5.4
	25–34	20.9	17.6	12.4	17.1	70.5	36.7	22.8	40.5
	35–44	19.7	17.6	21.4	5.1	73.5	25.6	3.8	70.5
	45–54	14.1	16	15.5	4.2	80.3	20.0	7.1	72.9
	55–64	17.1	19.4	25.0	6.0	69.0	27.6	2.3	70.1
	65 or more	21.0	21.3	50.5	2.9	46.7	18.8	–	81.3
Education	primary/ low secon.	18.2	19.7	48.9	8.7	42.4	43.2	3.4	53.4
	vocational	17.9	31.9	24.7	5.6	69.7	22.4	6.3	71.3
	secondary	32.5	28.2	28.8	12.9	58.3	38.4	10.4	51.2
	high	31.5	20.2	14.6	11.4	74.1	14.4	12.2	73.3
Place of residence	village	37.8	41.9	27.9	6.3	65.8	36.4	8.0	55.6
	town < 19 000	12.9	15.8	18.5	24.6	56.9	19.4	11.1	69.4
	town 20–99 000	20.2	19	34.3	10.8	54.9	24.7	5.9	69.4
	town 100–499 000	16.5	14.4	20.7	7.3	72.0	29.2	6.2	64.6
	city > 500 000	12.5	8.8	30.6	12.9	56.5	21.6	13.5	64.9
Income*	< 2 000 zł	72.5	64.8	31.3	8.0	60.7	29.9	5.2	64.9
	2000 zł and more	27.5	35.2	26.3	11.7	61.9	25.5	7.3	67.2
Financial situation	bad	6.3	5.8	56.3	12.5	31.3	40.7	3.7	55.6
	average	31.5	32.8	37.6	10.8	51.6	32.9	8.9	58.2
	good	62.2	61.5	19.5	9.9	70.6	26.1	8.1	65.8
Socio-occupational group	managers and specialists	13.3	10.6	16.7	9.1	74.2	12.5	6.3	81.3
	middle-level, services and office staff	19.3	18.8	22.7	14.4	62.9	34.1	13.4	52.4
	labourers/ manual workers	8.1	14.5	29.3	9.8	61.0	27.8	9.3	62.9
	self-employed farmers	7.4	9.3	13.5	8.1	78.4	23.5	13.7	62.7
	housewives, househusbands and unemployed	16.9	12	14.3	9.5	76.2	55.2	13.8	31.0
	retirees and pensioners	30.7	31.8	41.3	5.2	53.5	22.9	0.7	76.4
	pupils and students	4.3	3.8	57.1	42.9	–	85.7	14.3	–

* missing data: men 24.5%; women 21.7%.
Source: authors' own research.

The socio-demographic characteristics mostly correlated with the length of the intimate relationship of the respondents. Among men, the strongest association was noted between the age and the length of relationship ($chi = 251.181$; $df = 5$, $p < 0.001$, $tau\text{-}b = 0.768$). A connection between education and the length of the relationship was also found ($chi = 24.539$; $df = 3$, $p < 0.001$, $tau\text{-}c = -0.271$). The length of the relationship of the surveyed men depended on the self-assessment of their financial situation ($chi = 9.484$; $df = 2$, $p = 0.009$, $tau\text{-}c = -0.14$) and income per person ($z = -2.537$; $p = 0.011$; $V = 0.271$). A relationship was also established between men's belonging to a socio-occupational group and the relationship's length ($chi = 163.223$; $df = 6$, $p < 0.001$; $V = 0.380$). The connection between the place of residence and the length of the relationship turned out to be statistically insignificant.

Similar associations were also found for women. Both age ($chi = 272.498$; $df = 5$, $p < 0.001$, $tau\text{-}b = 0.749$) and education ($chi = 42.118$; $df = 3$, $p < 0.001$, $tau\text{-}c = -0.292$) differentiated the length of the relationship. The length of staying in a relationship depended on the self-assessment of their financial situation ($chi = 16.496$; $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$; $V = 0.186$) and the location in the socio-occupational structure ($chi = 157.871$; $df = 6$ $p < 0.001$; $V = 0.361$). Among the socio-demographic features included in the study, statistically insignificant differences were obtained in the case of the relationship length and the place of residence, as well as income per person.

Summing up the results of the study (Table 2–5), it can be stated that men from older age groups with lower education, assessing their financial situation as bad or average, with an income per person above 2000 zł were more often in longer relationships. Retirees and pensioners, as well as housekeepers and the unemployed, were in the longest relationships. Men with higher education from younger age categories, as well as pupils and students, were usually in the shortest relationships.

As in the case of men, women who reported being in a longer relationship tended to be from older age categories, with lower education, most often assessing their financial situation as bad or average. Being a retiree, a pensioner, a self-employed farmer or a manual worker was associated with being in a long relationship. The youngest women, with higher education, studying and assessing their financial situation as good, were in the shortest relationships.

Table 2. The age and the length of relationship. Mann-Whitney U test results for multiple comparisons among men (M, N = 315) and women (W, N = 364) in relationships

	Age	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64
M	25–34	z = −3.196 p = 0.001				
	35–44	z = −4.610 p < 0.001	z = −5.540 p < 0.001			
	45–54	z = −5.216 p < 0.001	z = −8.228 p < 0.001	z = −6.692 p < 0.001		
	55–64	z = −5.274 p < 0.001	z = −9.242 p < 0.001	z = −9.067 p < 0.001	z = −6.667 p < 0.001	
	65 and more	z = −7.399 p < 0.001	z = −10.644 p < 0.001	z = −10.363 p < 0.001	z = −9.694 p < 0.001	z = −4.800 p < 0.001
W	25–34	z = −4.268 p < 0.001				
	35–44	z = −6.742 p < 0.001	z = −8.051 p < 0.001			
	45–54	z = −6.382 p < 0.001	z = −8.502 p < 0.001	z = −6.155 p < 0.001		
	55–64	z = −7.441 p < 0.001	z = −10.470 p < 0.001	z = −9.071 p < 0.001	z = −6.675 p < 0.001	
	65 and more	z = −7.799 p < 0.001	z = −10.526 p < 0.001	z = −9.428 p < 0.001	z = −7.795 p < 0.001	ns.

Source: authors' own research.

Table 3. Education and the length of relationship. Mann-Whitney U test results for multiple comparisons among men (M, N = 315) and women (W, N = 364) in relationships

	Education	Primary/ Lower secondary	Vocational	Secondary
M	Vocational	ns.		
	Secondary	z= −3.552 p < 0.001	z = −2.146 p < 0.001	
	Higher	z = −4.253 p < 0.001	z = −3.339 p < 0.001	ns.
W	Vocational	z = 1.982 p = 0.047		
	Secondary	z = −3.097 p = 0.002	z = −2.146 p < 0.001	
	Higher	z = −4.922 p < 0.001	z = −5.743 p < 0.001	z = −2.996 p < 0.001

Source: authors' own research.

Table 4. Self-assessment and the length of relationship. Mann-Whitney U test results for multiple comparisons among men (M, N = 315) and women (W, N = 364) in relationships

	Financial situation	Bad	Average
M	Average	ns.	
	Good	ns	z = −2.858 p = 0.004
W	Average	ns.	
	Good	z = −2.158 p = 0.031	z = −3.694 p < 0.001

Source: authors' own research.

Table 5. Socio-occupational group and the length of relationship. Mann-Whitney U test results for multiple comparisons among men (M, N = 315) and women (W, N = 364) in relationships

	Socio-occupational group	Managers and specialists	Middle-level, services and office staff	Labourers	Self-employed farmers	Housewives, househusbands and unemployed	Retirees and pensioners
M	Middle-level, services and office staff	ns.					
	Labourers	ns.	$z = -3.337$ $p = 0.001$				
	Self-employed farmers	ns	$z = 2.474$ $p = 0.013$	ns.			
	Househusbands and unemployed	$z = -2.217$ $p = 0.027$	$z = -2.924$ $p = 0.003$	ns.	ns.		
	Retirees and pensioners	$z = -7.962$ $p < 0.01$	$z = -10.390$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -6.777$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -8.340$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -4.364$ $p < 0.001$	
	Pupils and students	ns	ns	$z = -2.221$ $p = 0.026$	$z = -2.088$ $p = 0.037$	ns.	$z = -3.523$ $p < 0.001$
W	Middle-level, services and office staff	ns.					
	Labourers	ns.	ns.				
	Self-employed farmers	ns.	$z = -2.273$ $p = 0.023$	ns.			
	Housewives and unemployed	ns.	ns.	ns.	$z = -2.074$ $p = 0.038$		
	Retirees and pensioners	$z = -8.762$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -9.774$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -7.139$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -6.309$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -9.494$ $p <0.001$	
	Pupils and students	$z = -3.821$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -3.428$ $p = 0.001$	$z = -3.843$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -4.173$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -3.747$ $p < 0.001$	$z = -6.317$ $p < 0.001$

Source: author's own research.

Gender and orientation towards the (im)permanence of a relationship

The proposed analytical approach to recognizing the attitude to the (im)permanence of a relationship from the perspective of readiness to remain in a relationship or to end it was displayed by representatives of all types among the respondents. Of the four orientations towards the (im)permanence of a relationship, two had a clear profile regarding the future of the relationship – one of them had a high potential for separation, while the other had a small one, thereby guaranteeing the relationship's permanence. The other two weighed the arguments for each option without clearly determining the future of the relationship. The research results showed that the largest number of respondents were in favour of one of these possibilities (indifference) – their decision to persist in an unsatisfactory relationship was determined by a kind of passivity; despite their orientation towards temporality, their readiness to remain in a relationship was low. They indicated a few reasons that would lead them to leave, and a few reasons which they would consider when thinking about whether or not to remain in an unsatisfactory relationship (37.8%). The second most frequent attitude was that which expressed a high degree of readiness to break up – it took into account many reasons to end a failed relationship and at the same time not many to continue (acceptance). 28.2% of respondents would adopt this attitude to separation if they were in an unsatisfactory relationship. Fewer respondents (18.4%) exemplified the orientation expressing a high degree of readiness to remain in a relationship while maintaining a high level of relationship requirements – no compromise in the event of a relationship crisis (ambivalence). The respondents most rarely identified with the orientation expressing the least potential for separation – they found many arguments for staying in a relationship despite the lack of satisfaction with it and at the same time despite a crisis situation arising in the relationship, few reasons would persuade them to end it (15.7%) (inertia).

Gender differentiated the attitude to relationship permanence (chi = 8.845; df = 3, p = 0.031; V = 0.102). A clear difference between men and women in this respect was noticeable only in the case of orientation indicating a high degree of readiness for separation (acceptance). In the situation of dissatisfaction with a relationship, women more often than men did not give up the high requirements of relationships, and at the same time indicated a few possible reasons for staying in a relationship. Therefore, women representing this orientation had the greatest potential for separation among the respondents.

For both women and men, showing a specific orientation towards the (im)permanence of a relationship in a situation of dissatisfaction was associated with their socio-demographic characteristics. Among men, the differentiating factor was age (chi = 32.919; df = 15, p = 0.005; V = 0.167), education (chi = 17.744; df = 9, p = 0.038; V = 1.123) and self-assessment of financial situation (chi = 19.368; df = 6, p = 0.004; V = 0.157). Among women, the attitude to (im)permanence of a relationship also varied depending on age (chi = 47.606; df = 15, p = 0.000; V = 0.187) and education (chi = 18.876; df = 9, p = 0.026; V = 0.118). The dynamics of change was also associated with the woman's socio-occupational category (chi = 41.332; df = 18, p = 0.001; V = 0.175).

On the basis of the results, it can be concluded that in the case of men the orientation with the lowest potential for separation (inertia) was represented by 14.7% of respondents. This type of orientation was typical of the oldest men (its incidence increased with the age of the respondents), more often with primary/lower secondary or vocational education. Men who assessed their financial situation as good were the least likely to adopt this orientation.

Men most often (40.7%) adopted the indifferent orientation. This type of orientation meant the absence of making a decision to end the relationship and a low degree of readiness to remain in an unsatisfactory relationship. It was demonstrated primarily by men with higher education and who made the highest assessments of their financial situation.

23.9% of men expressed the separation orientation (acceptance). Actions aimed at ending the relationship in the event of dissatisfaction were most often undertaken by men with secondary education, who most often assessed their financial situation as bad.

Every fifth respondent (20.7%) showed an ambivalent attitude to separation. Men with a university degree were the least likely to be demanding in a relationship and permanence-oriented, i.e. considering many arguments for opposite scenarios.

For women, the orientation with the least potential for separation (inertia) was demonstrated by 16.6% of the respondents. Despite the dissatisfaction with the relationship, women from the oldest age category, the least educated, manual workers, as well as retirees and pensioners, would still remain in it. The frequency of this orientation increased with age and decreased with the level of education of women.

As with men, indifference was the most common orientation (35.3%) among women. Women aged 35–44, housewives or the unemployed showed the lowest readiness to remain in an unsatisfactory relationship in the absence of decision to break up.

31.8% of the respondents represented the orientation exemplifying a high degree of readiness to break up and low readiness to remain in a relationship if they were dissatisfied with it (acceptance). This type of orientation was usually characteristic of the youngest women (students). On the other hand, it was the least often represented by women with elementary/ low secondary school education, retirees and pensioners.

The orientation indicating ambivalence was found in 16.6% of the women surveyed. This type was most often represented by women with the lowest level of education, working as manual workers. The least frequent occurrence of this type was recorded among women aged 35–44 (Table 6).

Table 6. Attitude to relationship (im)permanence and the socio-demographics of women (N = 504) and men (N = 447). Data in percentages

Characteristics	Categories	W	M	Women INR*	Women IND	Women ACC	Women AMB	Men INR	Men IND	Men ACC	Men AMB
		53.0	**47.0**	**16.6**	**35.3**	**31.8**	**16.2**	**14.7**	**40.7**	**23.9**	**20.7**
Age	18–24	7.3	8.1	3.0	21.2	63.6	12.1	–	28.6	37.1	34.3
	25–34	20.9	17.6	10.5	29.5	43.2	16.8	10.1	42.0	31.9	15.9
	35–44	19.7	17.6	14.1	44.6	33.7	7.6	10.6	39.4	28.8	21.2
	45–54	14.1	16	20.0	30.8	29.2	20.0	11.3	54.8	19.4	14.5
	55–64	17.1	19.4	20.3	40.5	19.0	20.3	22.9	37.3	19.3	20.5
	65 or more	21.0	21.3	25.6	35.6	18.9	20.0	22.5	37.5	16.3	23.8
Education	primary/ low sec.	18.2	19.7	23.7	23.7	23.7	28.9	16.0	40.7	18.5	24.7
	vocational	17.9	31.9	18.5	35.8	32.1	13.6	20.0	37.5	20.8	21.7
	secondary	32.5	28.2	15.8	35.5	34.9	13.8	9.2	34.9	32.1	23.9
	higher	31.5	20.2	12.6	40.6	32.9	14.0	13.1	52.4	22.6	11.9
Place of residence	village	37.8	41.9	20.3	34.9	27.9	16.9	12.1	38.8	25.5	23.6
	town < 19 000	12.9	15.8	15.3	28.8	33.9	22.0	16.1	29.0	29.0	25.8
	town 20–99 000	20.2	19	14.9	37.2	35.1	12.8	15.4	52.6	16.7	15.4
	town 100–499 000	16.5	14.4	12.3	37.0	34.2	16.4	16.9	45.8	23.7	13.6
	city > 500 000	12.5	8.8	14.8	37.0	33.3	14.8	19.4	32.3	25.8	22.6
Income**	Less than 2000 zł	72.5	64.8	16.5	29.1	37.9	16.5	14.7	39.7	25.0	20.6
	2000 zł or more	27.5	35.2	16.5	38.4	27.5	17.6	13.8	40.2	23.4	22.6
Financial situation	bad	6.3	5.8	13.8	41.4	24.1	20.7	24.0	28.0	28.0	20.0
	average	31.5	32.8	17.3	33.8	29.5	19.4	21.1	35.0	16.3	27.6
	good	62.2	61.5	16.5	35.8	33.7	14.0	10.5	44.9	27.1	17.4
Socio-occupational group	managers and specialists	13.3	10.6	17.5	38.6	28.1	15.8	9.1	57.6	18.2	15.2
	middle-level, services and office staff	19.3	18.8	7.8	37.8	40.0	14.4	7.2	36.2	34.8	21.7
	labourers/ manual workers	8.1	14.5	24.3	24.3	27.0	24.3	14.1	42.4	24.7	18.8
	self-employed farmers	7.4	9.3	19.4	30.6	44.4	5.6	12.8	42.6	23.4	21.3
	Housewives, househusbands, unemployed	16.9	12	10.7	42.7	32.0	14.7	15.4	34.6	34.6	15.4
	Retirees and pensioners	30.7	31.8	22.2	37.8	20.7	19.3	23.0	36.9	15.6	24.6
	pupils students	4.3	3.8	14.3	4.8	66.7	14.3	–	50.0	35.7	14.3

* INR – inertion, IND – indifference, ACC – acceptance, AMB – ambivalence.
** missing data: men: 24.5%; women 21.7%.
Source: authors' own research

4. Discussion of the results and conclusions

The analyses of the results of the conducted research have shown that the contemporary relationships of Poles are varied in terms of their form and length, and that relationship diversity among men and women depends on their socio-demographic characteristics. It has been established that the most popular model for life as a couple is a long-lasting marriage – long-term relationships predominate. This allows us to state that the linear order of the course of a relationship is still the dominant model. However, given that long-term relationships are mostly formed by older women and men, while being in informal and short-term relationships correlates with young age, it can be concluded that the temporary model of intimate relationships concerns primarily young men and women.

It is worth noting, however, that although the dominant relationship model is a long-term formal relationship, all respondents indicated at least one reason why they would be willing to end the relationship in a situation of crisis and dissatisfaction. These results justify the conclusion that regardless of the model of life as a couple, the existence of relationships has boundaries which are marked by dissatisfaction with the relationship, and separation is permissible. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that readiness to break up is one of the elements functioning in contemporary intimate relationships, and using the category of separation in the analysis of contemporary intimate relationships is well-founded.

The study has also shown that for both women and men the most common types of attitude to separation were indifference and acceptance. The analysis shows that the latter attitude – indicating a high degree of readiness to part – was much more often manifested by women. This result leads to the conclusion that women are more uncompromising if a crisis occurs in a relationship and it is unsatisfactory for them. This is in line with the findings of other researchers which show that women are more likely to file for divorce or, in the case of informal relationships, initiate separation (Jalovaara 2003).

The findings presented in the article correspond with the results of research on the causes of divorces, which indicate that the decision to separate depends on socio-demographic characteristics (see for example: Hills, Rubin, Peplau 1976; Amato 2000; Slany 2001; Jalovaara 2003). However, they propose a more detailed perspective. Gender is not one of the socio-demographic variables here, but it is the main axis of analysis and the criterion of description. This made it possible to show the diversity of attitudes to separation within gender groups, not only the differences between men and women. The analyses taking into account the structural approach to gender made it possible to determine which women and men – with which status characteristics – are more willing to separate. They also showed that most often, despite the lack of satisfaction with the relationship, older men with the lowest level of education and in a bad financial situation would remain in a relationship. Men with secondary education and rather low economic status would not remain in a failed relationship. In the case of women, those from the oldest age category, the least educated, inactive on the labour market, would not leave an unsatisfactory relationship. Most often the women who are the youngest, better educated, and studying, would decide to leave. The results obtained seem to indicate that women tend to prefer the Giddensian pure relationship model more than men, and when it does not meet their expectations, they are willing to end it. At the same time, it can be said that the idea of a pure relationship has its structural limitations, which were indicated by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) as being one of the most important limiting components limit in the transformation of marital-family life. The obtained results show that in the event of being in an unsatisfactory relationship, the readiness to break up was differentiated by social status – which was especially visible in the case of women. Younger, better educated women would more often decide to split up than the older, less educated ones with low incomes.

The research has confirmed the hypotheses. It was found that gender differentiates relationship experiences, but only in the scope of one of the dimensions analyzed, i.e. relationship length. It was established that women stay more often than men in shorter relationships. The structure of the intimate relationship status of respondents was similar among men and women.

The analyses that took into account the features of the social status within the gender category have revealed the diversity of relationship experiences among women and men. It has been shown that the intimate relationship status among men was differentiated by three socio-demographic characteristics: age, education and belonging to a socio-occupational group. Among women, however, the intimate relationship status of women was differentiated by most of the socio-demographic characteristics analyzed, i.e. age, belonging to a socio-occupational category, education, place of residence, and their self-assessment of their financial situation.

It was also found that the relationship between the variation in the relationship length among men and women depends on socio-demographic characteristics. Among men, a dependence was noted for such characteristics as: age, education, self-assessment of financial situation, income per person and the belonging to a socio-occupational group. A similar dependence was found for women – age, education, self-assessment of financial situation, and the socio-occupational category differentiated the length of relationships among women.

Gender has been shown to differentiate the attitude to relationship permanence. Showing a specific orientation towards the (im)permanence of the relationship was associated both for men and women with their socio-demographic characteristics. Among men, age, education and self-assessment of financial situation were of differentiating importance, while among women it was their age, education and socio-occupational category.

The findings from the research can contribute to the development of a new approach to the study of changes in marital-family life proposed in the framework of the sociology of intimacy (Jamieson 2008) or the sociology of the couple (see

Schmidt et al. 2018). The results of the presented research can complement the sociological analyses of the functioning of the couple, in which it is emphasized that the individual who starts to build a relationship has a number of ideas about how it should function, what a successful relationship is and how their partner should behave. These images constitute a set of expectations for a relationship and most often come to light in conflict situations (Schmidt et al. 2018). The proposed analyses show that these expectations are well defined and the failure to meet them sets boundaries for the permanence of the relationship. Even if separating is not a real event in a relationship, in the event of failure to meet the partners' expectations it is considered as a potential event in crisis situations.

In addition, the analytical perspective presented here goes beyond existing approaches to the issue of separation, which boils down to the examination of divorced persons. The approach used in the analysis includes persons living in informal relationships as well as currently unmarried people. This approach is indicated as particularly desirable in the study of changes in modern martial-family life (see among others: Krumrei, Mahoney, Pargament 2009; Toth, Kemmelmeier, 2009; Afifi et al. 2013).

The research may also constitute an exemplification of the legitimacy of using perspectives in which gender is treated as a theoretical category and in which the structural consequences of gender differences are taken into account. As has been shown, this allows researcher not only to create an image of intimate life in selected aspects, but also to expand knowledge about women and men. It is also possible that the proposed study of changes in intimate life from the perspective of its temporary nature will lead to new sociological questions and reflections developed as part of research on socio-cultural time and the cyclical family (see among others: Adamski 2002; Dychtwald 2003; Strzelecka 2017) or those within the socio-temporal dimensions of intimate biographies (Lahad 2011; Paprzycka 2019).

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JAKIE KOBIETY (NIE) ODCHODZĄ, A JACY MĘŻCZYŹNI (NIE) ZOSTAJĄ? PŁEĆ A RÓŻNORODNOŚĆ FORM I TEMPORALNOŚĆ WSPÓŁCZESNYCH ZWIĄZKÓW INTYMNYCH

Abstrakt. Przedmiotem zainteresowania w artykule uczyniono doświadczenia w związkach w perspektywie różnorodności ich form i czasu trwania oraz orientacji partnerów na trwałość relacji. Ramy pojęciowe wyznaczała perspektywa socjotemporalna, a analizy prowadzono w odwołaniu do koncepcji usytuowanych w obszarze socjologii rodziny, socjologii intymności, socjologii płci oraz socjologii czasu. Celem badań było ustalenie zależności między cechami społeczno-demograficznymi a doświadczeniami w związkach (różnorodnością form i czasem trwania) oraz gotowością do pozostania lub rozstania w sytuacji kryzysu w związku kobiet i mężczyzn. Badania zrealizowano metodą sondażu diagnostycznego na reprezentatywnej próbie dorosłych Polaków w styczniu 2018 roku. Płeć okazała się różnicować staż związku i stosunek do trwałości związków. Ustalono, że kobiety częściej niż mężczyźni pozostają w krótszych związkach. Stwierdzono również, że doświadczenia kobiet z różnymi typami związków są bardziej zróżnicowane ze względu na status społeczny niż mężczyzn. Rozpoznano cztery typy orientacji na (nie)trwałość związku. Ustalono, że wśród mężczyzn gotowość do rozstania jest zróżnicowana przez wiek, wykształcenie i samoocenę warunków materialnych, a wśród kobiet przez wiek, wykształcenie i kategorię społeczno-zawodową.

Słowa kluczowe: związki intymne, rozstania, kobiety, mężczyźni, płeć, płeć kulturowa.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.02

COPE
Member since 2019
JM14479

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TRAJECTORY EXPERIENCE OF MOTHERHOOD

Abstract. Motherhood, which includes the process of becoming and being a mother, is understood as an institution or as personal experience, and both these perspectives are interdependent. The institution of motherhood, which is necessary for the functioning of societies, shapes women's living conditions, influences their choices, frames desirable behaviours, gives the highest priority to the social role of the mother, and limits women's identity to a single dimension. The experience of women-mothers is juxtaposed with the idea of sacrificing oneself for the good of another human being. The stories of motherhood analysed for the purpose of this article were published on the fanpage Żałuję rodzicielstwa [*I regret parenthood*] and clearly indicate that being a mother can be a trajectory experience associated with overpowering suffering. Women's experiences were inscribed in the subsequent phases of a trajectory process identified by F. Schütze and G. Reimann, and the reflection on those experiences leads, among other things, to the conclusion that both mothers who have undertaken biographical work on their own experiences, as well as those who have not done so, most often organise their further life with the trajectory in the background, without fundamentally changing their personal situation.

Keywords: motherhood, auto/biographical experience, trajectory, work on trajectory experience.

1. Motherhood as a social role and experience

Motherhood is a concept that should be analysed in the biological, socio-cultural, psychological, pedagogical or legal context (Karwowska 2007: 38). It can be defined as the attribute or a state of being a mother, but also the process of becoming a mother, including the time taken to prepare for the new role[1], the period of pregnancy, labour, childcare and the education of the child (Lesińska-Sawicka

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[1] Preparation for the role of a mother may include the process of shaping maternal attitudes in the course of socialisation and upbringing. The observed patterns of behaviour of women-mothers build ideas about motherhood, provide information about the range of duties, shape skills (e.g. baby care) and indicate ways of fulfilling this social role. Preparation for the role of a mother can also entail preventive reproductive health or medical procedures when a woman plans to have children or opts for assisted procreation.

2008: 29). The term "mother" is used to refer to a woman who is a parent – one that has given birth to a child and is bringing the child up. The two conditions formulated above (giving birth and raising a child) do not always appear together, which is why the term "mother" is complemented with the adjectives: "biological", "adoptive" and "surrogate", indicating the formal and legal relationship with the child.

Motherhood can be seen both as an individual experience of a woman and as a social institution (Rich 1976). These two perspectives are closely intertwined. Due to biological predispositions, as well as skills shaped in the course of socialisation, motherhood is a natural state for women, and one that is positively valued in society and, therefore, all women are subject to the obligation to assume this role, i.e. the "imperative of motherhood" (Budrowska 2000: 14). The naturalisation of women[2] strengthens the claim that motherhood is their essential biological and social role (Gawlina 2003: 34), a task, a vocation or even an obligation that entails sacrificing oneself for the child and the family; it also determines and restricts the space of women's activity to the private sphere (whether temporarily or permanently). The need to have children and the innate ability to care for children is explained by invoking the maternal instinct (cf. Budrowska 2000: 18 et seq.), while the strong emotional bond with the child, the responsibility for and care of the child, as well as the service to another human being, is explained by invoking maternal love (cf. Badinter 1998). Despite the fact that the image of women-mothers and motherhood has changed over the centuries (Bartkowiak 2015), social awareness and public discourse are dominated by narratives that affirm motherhood, thus reinforcing and reproducing certain stereotypes that arise directly from the ideal vision of motherhood and the model of a "good mother". They primarily show the positive aspects of the motherhood experience; accompanied by happiness, a sense of personal fulfilment and satisfaction with caring for the child, whose smile rewards all the worries and compensates for the effort. Being a mother makes the life of a woman more meaningful, while taking up new activities changes the values that guide actions and priorities in life. As soon as a mother takes on this new role, she gives up her old lifestyle without regret, focusing entirely on the child's needs. On the basis of the universal, rarely questioned truths outlined above, women construct an image of themselves as mothers, and then compare their own experiences with it. The experiences of women-mothers correspond with the behavioural patterns expected by society to varying degrees. Therefore, narratives built on the basis of women's personal experience are more diverse and reveal many faces of motherhood: from those that are close to the idealised model (cf. Bębas, Adamczyk-Bębas 2011), to those

[2] The naturalisation of women consists in biologising their existence, and spreading the belief that their participation in society is determined by the laws of nature and dependent on biological factors.

where fulfilment, joy, love, pride and enthusiasm are mixed with fatigue, bitterness, helplessness and fear (cf. Budrowska 2000; Bartosz 2002), right through to experiences dominated by negative feelings, aversion to the child and an overpowering longing for the old life, now irrevocably lost (cf. Rich 1976; Donath 2017). In the case of the latter experiences, women-mothers rarely decide to make a sincere confession[3] because, in their own eyes and in the eyes of society, they do not fit into the existing norm, and their inadequate adaptation to the new role is most often explained by a lack of maturity and responsibility, selfishness or, in extreme cases, mental health disorders, such as depression or psychosis (Fejfer-Szpytko, Włodarczyk, Trąbińska-Haduch 2016). The way those women describe how they deal with daily difficulties, their own feelings, the new identity and social expectations has the characteristics of a trajectory experience and will be further analysed as such.

2. Research material

Public discourse, especially that embedded in online space, encourages women to share their difficult experiences related to motherhood. Few mothers bravely discuss their own experiences by revealing their names, while many more women share their experience in this sphere anonymously. One such online space is the public group entitled Żałuję rodzicielstwa [I regret parenthood][4], founded on 3 November 2018 on social media, following the example of *I Regret Having Children*, created on 9 July 2012. This website publishes anonymous stories submitted primarily by women (to date only one story by a man has been published), both mothers and childless women, who share difficult experiences, thoughts and feelings related to parenthood. In addition to posts (anonymous stories, questions, opinions and messages from readers, as well as information from the group's administrators) and related comments, the website also publishes news and articles on the subject. It should be noted that while the authors of the stories posted on the website remain anonymous, people commenting on posts must take into account that their voice might be recognised by people who know them. Nevertheless, many people express their happiness and gratitude to the website administrators for creating a space to talk about this difficult issue that tends to be tabooed.

Women who share their stories and recall the difficult aspects of their own lives are driven by various motivations (Oleś 2008: 39–41). They stress the need to share the lessons of their own experience with others (usually as a warning),

[3] One exception included the narratives of women whose difficult motherhood is socially recognised and, as such, they are granted the right to experience the related suffering, e.g. in situations of children with a disability (Lindyberg 2012), underage mothers (Skowrońska-Pućka 2016) or single mothers (Lachowska 1999).

[4] https://www.facebook.com/ZalujeRodzicielstwa/ (accessed 25.02.2019).

stress their point of view on a selected issue (e.g. social expectations related to motherhood), want to share their experiences to relieve the mental burden, they seek attention, support or advice, they want to summarise a certain stage in their life or understand past events. Some women see the series of events in their lives as unique, others find a community of experiences by identifying with others in the same socio-cultural context. They reflect on the importance of their principles and values for the course of life, justify their decisions and actions by referring to their own needs or other people's expectations, they name their own feelings, or try to redefine themselves.

In the period from 4 November 2018 (the publication of the first story on the website by the administrators) to 25 February 2019 (the completion of this text), a total of 55 auto/biographical stories from women were published on *I regret parenthood*. Of these, 19 stories were written by childless women, who argued why they did not want to become mothers. Given the diversity of the research material and considering there is a certain community of experience among women-mothers, this text only analyses posts that contained anonymous stories of mothers about their own experience of motherhood. Therefore, 36 out of the 55 stories were finally subjected to analysis. Moreover, it should be noted that the website administrator expresses the reservation that some stories had to be "edited in order to be publishable" because "people often do not write legibly when overpowered by emotions". The difficulty with expressing one's thoughts precisely and presenting the events in an orderly manner may be caused by the strong emotions and suffering that stems from difficult experiences (Rokuszewska-Pawełek 1996: 82; Kaźmierska 1999: 22–23). However, it is not known which stories were changed and how much, whether only small edits were made to improve the legibility of the message or whether the content was interpreted in a certain way. Since the published stories are not free of errors, one can assume that the administrators did not proofread the texts. Based on this assumption, one can, with some caution, treat the analysed posts as auto/biographical material focused on a specific topic (Helling 1990: 16), which reflects difficult, sometimes traumatic experiences connected with motherhood. Moreover, it should be noted that the research material is not free from defects. The stories vary in length (from about 100 to 750 words) and in their degree of detail, the narrative motifs do not always prevail over argumentative and descriptive ones, and the lack of a broader context (fragmented statements) makes it difficult to identify the relationships between significant events in women's lives or to reconstruct the arrangement and relations between process structures or to present the course of individual trajectories. Due to the aforementioned imperfections of the research material, the analytical procedure proposed by Fritz Schütze for autobiographical interviews cannot be fully implemented, as it is difficult, for example, to create the women's biographical profiles. On the other hand, however, the identified weaknesses of the material do not invalidate its cognitive value. The published stories were written voluntarily and spontaneously, they are emotional and represent an extremely valuable (and, more importantly, non-isolated) voice of women in the discourse on motherhood, which is far being from affirmative since it oscillates between ambivalent and negative attitudes. What is common to all stories is that women emphasise their negative feelings about assuming the social role of a mother, about references to an idealised model of motherhood and social expectations. This, when compared with individual experience, leads to disappointment and suffering. The aforementioned stories were created for imaginary audiences and contain strands of events to which women-mothers assign a certain meaning. The socio-cultural context of the created stories is important, as it constitutes their interpretative framework; one can also notice changes in the way of explaining reality over time, as new experiences emerge (Horsdal 2004: 12).

While not all stories contain demographic data, it can be assumed that the range of the authors' ages is 20–55 years. These women usually have one or two children or, less commonly, several children of different ages (the youngest one was almost one year old, the oldest were adults who had already started their own families); they live with the father of the child/ children, another partner or remain single; they live both in cities and in the countryside. Although the women differ in age, number of children, marital status, social status or place of residence, they all focus on describing their own motherhood from the perspective of significant events, trying to understand their experiences, decisions made, changes experienced, as well as their current situation. In the majority of posts, mothers express regret about being a parent, and only a handful have come to terms with the existing, irreversible situation. Motherhood is described in terms of constant hardships, struggle (primarily with oneself, but sometimes also with the child), giving up one's previous life, negatively perceived changes, and slim chances for a positive change in the situation that could provide some welcome relief.

The regret about being a mother occurs at different moments in women's lives and relates to all stages of motherhood (from pregnancy, through baby care, to raising a schoolchild or a teenager, up to the relationship with an adult child). Moreover, the regret is expressed in relation to the narrating woman's current experiences, ongoing or recent events, and it also covers a longer time perspective, serving as a kind of summary assessment of the role that the women have played for many years. The time elapsed between the difficult events and the moment of narrating can be significant from the perspective of reflecting on the experience and, thus, working on the trajectory.

The analysis of auto/biographical stories focused on the experience of motherhood reveals that the dominant form of the women-mothers' activity is to experience subsequent events and to endure the hardships of the current state of affairs. The categorical nature of the situation, the lack of prospect for change and the sense of responsibility entail suffering, which leads to a sense of helplessness and prevents women from taking intentional action. Women-mothers write about the physical and mental aspects of their suffering. They invoke events associated with pain and unpleasant bodily sensations, as well as difficult emotions associated with things such as regret, sadness or a sense of injustice. When talking about their motherhood, they use terms such as trauma, traumatic experience, nightmare, or misery; they describe it as the most difficult period in their lives, as punishment, imprisonment, burden, a sense of being overwhelmed, a mental breakdown, a sense of discouragement; they think about escaping, leaving everything behind, or committing suicide; or they look for something to help them survive. The presentation of maternal experiences in this way indicates that they take the form of a trajectory (Rokuszewska-Pawełek 2002: 47–49).

3. The trajectory character of maternity experience

The concept of the trajectory framework was developed in research on patients and their companions in the context of health care structures (Corbin, Strauss 1991), and then this category was extended beyond the medical context and described by Fritz Schütze (Schütze 1997: 25–27) as a biographical phenomenon associated with a particular type of experience. This complex, sequential process is characterised by a gradual limitation of the possibility to undertake the planned actions due to external forces, independent of human will (events, circumstances). This causes a growing sense of a lack of agency and control over one's life, the sense that the situation is unpredictable, and that the everyday routine is disorganised, which in turn causes suffering, and also leads to the transformation of identity (Rokuszewska-Pawełek 2002: 71).

The analysed maternity-related experiences describe the difficult, sometimes traumatic experiences of women between the moment of conception and pregnancy to the adulthood of their own children. The women stress the effort involved in becoming and being a mother, the daily effort of struggling with reality and overcoming numerous obstacles; they reflect on the relationship with their child(ren) and others (partner, family, generalised others), and on the work on their own beliefs, their attitude towards the new role and identity. Due to the diversity of the research material, it is impossible to present complete individual trajectories and to compare them, which means that it will not be possible to create a specific model presenting the experiences of all the mothers on the basis of the collected data. However, it turns out that some events or periods of motherhood are difficult for many women and are repeated in individual experiences. A combination of unfavourable circumstances in the life of mothers, difficulties in relations with other people (mostly with the child, but also with the partner and family members), the permanence of the situation and the pressure of social expectations mean that nearly any troublesome and persistent condition can become a source of suffering.

The mother's relationship with her child changes as the child grows and develops, as do the tasks she faces. The successive stages of motherhood, reconstructed from women's stories, show that suffering might be experienced at any time (regardless of the child's age). At the same time, the stories show that the appearance of a trajectory potential in a specific phase of motherhood is related to the development of the trajectory process in subsequent phases because its effect is not inhibited or eliminated (e.g. by other people's support with child care).

The first trajectory reconstructed by women in the context of their motherhood was the conception of an unwanted child and the awareness of becoming pregnant, which resulted from the partner's failure or planned action, his actions involving pressure, blackmail or deception.

> I was on the pill. There was a time when I had a slight cold and I took other medicines, too. My gynaecologist alerted me that those medicines could affect my contraception and told me to take extra precautions. But how can you influence a man who wants to have kids, how can you make him take extra precautions? He will start finding excuses right away (...) And, above all, he'll see this an opportunity. Yeah, I'm just saying it out loud. He saw this as an opportunity to impregnate me. I know how it sounds (19).

The pregnancy period generated many negative emotions and associated tears. The unwanted child was an intruder in the personal space or personified the changes that would take place in women's lives. Mothers-to-be realised the irreversibility of their situation and found it difficult to accept their condition and themselves in a new role. In the case of planned children, the pregnancy itself was traumatic, as well as accompanying complications, and the mother's concerns about her own health and life and that of her unborn baby.

> I got pregnant when I was 19. I got up the duff with my boyfriend. I gave birth when I was 20. I didn't want that baby. Throughout the whole pregnancy I wanted to get rid of what I was carrying inside me (5).

> I got pregnant. I can't remember the pregnancy period. People are surprised when I say this. But that's true. A black hole in my mind 'cause this was a traumatic experience for me. I cried every single day (19).

During pregnancy, women may experience anxiety related to the image of labour. During their stay in hospital, women experience a medical intervention into their bodies, and are often not informed about what is happening to them, which is why they do not understand the perinatal procedures. They feel helpless, completely dependent on others, and thus not in control. The unpredictability of the situation, powerful emotions, hours of pain and other physiological symptoms, as well as potential complications, the threat to health and life were a source of traumas. It was also difficult for them to meet their newborn baby when the mother did not feel a bond or any positive emotions about the newborn.

> The pregnancy was quite tough, my labour was terrible, very long, there was a threat to my life and that of my baby, but luckily everything ended well, but after the birth we stayed in hospital for quite a long time because of health complications (19).

> When my baby was born, I didn't feel anything. There is so much talk that you're going to love the baby once you give birth to it. Yeah, right. I didn't feel anything, I was just glad that the nightmarish labour was over. I was in labour for 12 hours. Seriously, I thought I was going to die (6).

During pregnancy or just after labour, mothers learned about the sex of their baby, thus being confronted with their previous ideas and desires. The fact of having a daughter or son in the context of their specific desired family model led to non-acceptance of the existing situation. Likewise, women expecting their first child, or those who already had children of one sex, may have felt disappointed. Having no dream child, an heir of talents, a continuator of passions, caused disappointment, deep sadness and even rejection of the baby.

> I never liked children and never wanted any. But at one point I had a great partner, a stable job and I was almost 40. And I thought this was the moment when I really had to make up my mind. But I was no longer sure. Nobody talked me into it, it was my own idea that it would be nice to have a daughter that I could share my values with, I could show her my hobby (dancing). But I gave birth to a son. And I don't feel anything (8).

Returning home with a baby entailed many changes in the mothers' lives, and those changes did not always affect the babies' fathers to the same extent. The women's physical and social space narrowed down, and their priorities and plans for the future changed. They spent all their time with the baby, who required constant attention, as well as repeated feeding and nursing routines. Mothers intuitively learned to interpret the infant's signals, and that determined their daily routines. The baby attracted all the attention of the surrounding people and its needs pushed women's desires to the background, sometimes preventing them from taking care of their own health, which was not yet back to normal after childbirth, or which deteriorated as a result of the excessive strain on the body. The 24-hour childcare became more strenuous during prolonged periods when the baby cried or screamed or whenever health problems occurred. Mothers were permanently fatigued, both physically and mentally, due to lack of sleep and rest, and because of routine activities, limited personal freedom and the overwhelming responsibility. Social support (from the child's father, the woman's parents or other people) played an important role as a factor that either aggravated the difficulties or helped the women to maintain a fragile balance.

> I had a wonderful pregnancy. The worst things came afterwards. And it's not that I didn't know how much time a little baby needs. I lost myself. I feel like I lost my own freedom at that moment. It's as if somebody had clipped my wings (11).

> The nightmare was about to begin. My son slept very little... Whenever I wanted to put him to sleep, he would yell. Now imagine a young woman (...) who carries an infant, weighing a few kilograms, for a few hours. Your arms hurt, your legs hurt, your spine hurts. And your ears hurt,

> too, because the little one is yelling, even though you give him as much affection as he wants. And you feel you've had enough of him after an hour (6).

As the child grew and developed, activities associated with the physical care of the infant were gradually replaced by activities associated with education or upbringing. Mothers talked about many problematic situations, when their child behaved against the accepted norms. As they struggled to find effective solutions and felt helpless, they sometimes sought help from specialists.

> Today he's four years old and has his own opinion on everything. I can't make him respect me, he doesn't listen to me, he doesn't care what I tell him. He does what he wants, and then I'm ashamed in front of people. And they tell me how hopeless I am because I can't handle him (6).

> She ignores what I say to her, she talks back, she uses words that I have never used towards other people, and she is only 9 years old. I can see she doesn't care if I'm angry or crying. She can see she's hurting me, but she doesn't give a damn. In the clinic, they told me that it would be over, it's just her age. And she apparently needs lots of warmth and love (...) But what about me, don't I need the same? Can I be called names and be disrespected? (22)

Parenthood does not end with the child becoming independent, which is why women suffered further psychological traumas in relationships with their adult children.

> I have a son who will soon turn 30. Problems began when he was around the age of 12. The only time he didn't tell lies was when he was asleep (...) When he was about 15, he started to leave the house for long hours (...) He would kindly return home late at night (...) Today, my son is unable to stay in any job for long. He thinks he deserves everything (...) We can see how our son is going to end up in the gutter, he is falling into alcoholism, but he is an adult, and we want to have some peace of mind after all these years (...) At some point, you feel helpless: we devoted so many years to him, we tried to bring him up, but he gives nothing back. He doesn't respect us, he's nice only when he wants something. When he can't have his way, he gets offended or screams. I'm sick and tired of him (17).

These important events and difficult periods in women's lives resulted from the fact that they assumed the role of a mother but could not find fulfilment in it. The circumstances of their lives caused suffering and remained beyond their control. A detailed analysis of the mothers' experiences enables us to link the overwhelming experiences with the subsequent phases of the sequential trajectory process. It should also be noted that women are at different stages of the developing trajectory process, so the excerpts presented below come from multiple stories. The stories about current situations or past events are extremely emotional and filled with suffering. Those events still evoke strong reactions and indicate that the experiences have not been psychologically "processed" so the trajectories are still developing dynamically. The stories told by women who reflected on past events reveal a certain level of understanding (or sometimes acceptance) of their own experiences; at the same time, they sum up the experiences and indicate the consequences of their life trajectories for their current situation, without a detailed reconstruction of the previous stages of the trajectory process. Therefore, due to the nature of the research material, it will not be possible to present a sequential biographical trajectory in relation to just one narrative of the experience of motherhood.

Fritz Schütze, in collaboration with Gerhard Reimann, described this biographical phenomenon, indicating its properties, the circumstances conducive to activating the potential, its internal dynamics and the consequences. The researchers distinguished seven successive stages (Riemann, Schütze 1992: 104–106), which can be found in stories about women's maternal experiences.

The accumulation of trajectory potential was initially unnoticed, it proceeded either gradually or under the influence of a sudden, unexpected event. The growing external forces were played down or remained outside the mothers' consciousness, which meant that they did not take any timely or methodical actions to neutralise the threat. The trajectory potential became more dynamic at a time when the women's lives were filled with complications, tensions and contradictions, and they themselves became less resistant to hurt.

> In my first relationship, I had a long-awaited pregnancy, but I had a miscarriage. Then we split up. And there was another relationship, with my current boyfriend. I knew right from the start that he didn't want any children, but I felt I could convince him somehow. After all, everyone wants kids, that's what I thought. I kept on at him about pregnancy so he finally agreed but said he wouldn't take care of the baby. I was delighted. After the baby was born, he started disappearing from the house for a few hours a day, several times a week (4).

Crossing the border between intentional and conditioned modes of action occurred when the trajectory potential transformed into a process, under the influence of one event or a series of devastating events. Women realised that external circumstances were beyond their control but framed their lives. The tried-and-tested coping methods ceased to be adequate, causing a sense of feeling lost and confused. Women lost the ability to actively manage their own lives, and they could only react in a manner determined by the circumstances.

> I hate how much my life changed since I gave birth to my child (...) I can't fit into the role of a mother (...) Every morning I pray for evening to come. Every minute with my child seems like eternity to me. I've never liked walks, games, fairy tales. My child is demanding, he can't sit still for five minutes, he constantly wants my attention. He cries all the time, and he throws a tantrum when something doesn't go the way he wants it. And I feel discouraged. I do everything carelessly and without joy, because I just don't feel like doing things anymore. I feel like I'm locked up in a cage. Even if I manage to go out alone, the thought of having to go back home is totally depressing. Recently I went with a friend for coffee and I couldn't enjoy it because I kept thinking that I had to go home soon anyway. Go back to my prison (21).

Attempts to achieve a new, shaky balance in dealing with everyday life in the context of a biographical problem were undertaken because of the need to control the reality changed by external forces. Women tried to find a place for themselves in the new situation and work out effective coping methods to minimise their sense of threat and helplessness. They strived to achieve an optimal level of functioning, which required a great deal of commitment and effort given the uninterrupted impact of the trajectory potential, which they could not effectively counteract. As a result, they fully focused on the fundamental biographical problem (motherhood), marginalising all other issues or, alternatively, addressing other issues in order to reduce the importance of the fundamental problem.

> After work I walk around the neighbourhood without any purpose because that "relaxes" me, I do a degree programme in another city, it dragged throughout my maternity leave, and I don't even deny it when my boyfriend says that I run away, to work, to university, and I even do the housework, just to avoid taking care of the baby. Of course, I do all the dirty work, clean up the fish tank, the cat litter trays... You can't escape from it just like that. I see a psychiatrist, but the problem is that then I'm out of the house and I feel good because I quickly feel good without my child, when I'm away from home. At work, I'm at my best, I'm concentrated, motivated. But at home I'm a crying, sluggish slimy cow (8).

The destabilisation of the fragile balance in everyday life occurred when mothers completely lost control over the situation, repeating ineffective action patterns and trying to cope with the difficulties at any price. Attempts to make their lives seem normal absorbed all their energy, but the problem was too great for them to counteract, so they focused only on part of the problem. The growing chaos generated extreme, inadequate reactions among mothers, which led to a situation where they could no longer trust themselves.

> I have a son, he's currently 8 years old. What he can do to us is beyond human comprehension. I need to point out straight away that we saw many doctors, but they were unable to diagnose anything (...) He responds with contempt, he talks back, he uses words that we certainly did not teach him. He throws horrible fights in shops, at friends' places, at birthday parties. (...) Neither of us knows how to cope with this. I don't even know how many psychologists we have seen. The psychiatrist said our son is fine, he only has problems with aggression. I know that myself, I know that all too well. I still remember him kicking his furniture because I banned him from watching a movie. He yelled and kicked his furniture until I gave in. I'm afraid of what might happen in a few years' time. Neither my husband nor I have the strength to cope, and we are nervous every day. Everyone says it's the fault of the stress-free approach. That pisses me off because our home has some rules that we agreed on together, but he doesn't care. Once when I threatened to punish him, he said I wouldn't do anything to him anyway, and if I do, he'd go to the police and say we were harassing or beating him. And that they will put us in jail. He said it with a smile on his face. (...) At times I don't want to be alive any more and I really want to put him up for adoption, even though he's my son. I'm ashamed of that feeling, but I'm totally exhausted (16).

The collapsed structure of everyday life and orientation towards oneself occurred in response to the disintegration of an established pattern of behaviour and the destabilisation of the order of everyday activities, when subsequent chaotic attempts at overcoming the difficulties turned out to be futile. The system orienting the women's activities weakened and they lost their point of reference as a result. Gradually, they experienced growing confusion, a sense of loneliness and helplessness towards the crisis which they were unable to explain or resolve. They were convinced that their situation was different, they had a sense of alienation, which added to their suffering, as they had to live in a way that was different from their imagined benchmark. The aggravating crisis intensified the impression that their actions were ineffective and caused inadequate reactions that led to a sense of being alienated from themselves. The women were aware that their situation far exceeded their adaptability and they needed immediate support but, at the same time, they struggled to believe that anyone could help them.

> I've had enough of my baby. Every day I feel more and more guilty about not being the mother I'd always imagined I would be. I don't feel fulfilled, I don't sense any instinct or whatever they call it. I'm really fed up with feeling tired all the time. All I hear is crying, wailing and screaming. I can't remember the last time I slept well. I have no right to rest – I feel like my son is following me all the time. I eat with him, I can't go into the bathroom because he starts yelling, I fall asleep with him because he won't fall asleep by himself. I don't have the patience anymore. I once complained to a friend, a mother of three. She said this feeling would go away. When I asked her "when", she couldn't answer. But what terrifies me the most is the responsibility for my son. Sometimes I can barely see anything, but I need to be really alert because he's already able to get where he isn't supposed to get to, he touches things he shouldn't be touching. And I also feel lonely. Sometimes, when I feel really helpless, I sit down and cry, sometimes I shake my son or shout at him all the time, and when things get very bad, I will sometimes tell him how sorry I am that I gave birth to him and how good things were before he was born. I'm fed up with being tired and living in a mess (...) (18).

Attempts at theoretical reworking of the trajectory included its rationalisation, an effort to explain it on the basis of the women's current knowledge of past events, decisions made and actions taken. As a result of the reflection, the mothers tried to understand their experiences and related suffering, which required them to completely redefine their situation. As a consequence of this theoretical work on the trajectory, women either accepted or rejected it.

> Today we have a daughter. I'm not gonna tell you how things changed magically with her arrival because this wasn't the case. I didn't feel a sudden warm glow after she was born. I had to learn to love my daughter. It was terribly difficult, but I didn't want her to feel unwanted, it's not her fault (23).

> Motherhood makes me tired. I love my child, but I don't like the role of a mother and the fact that I'm always with everything (...) I think that if I hadn't gone back to work, things would certainly be very bad with me. Every woman should have her own world, where her husband and the kids have no access to. Something like that would be a luxury (33).

Practical work on a trajectory involves attempts to gain control over it or free oneself from its influence using a strategy of choice that is realistic under the circumstances: an escape from a trajectory situation, reorganisation of life or organisation of life with a trajectory.

None of the mothers who described their experiences abandoned their families, although many of them admitted having such thoughts.

> I feel like running away. Leave everything and everyone behind, and run away from here (18).

Some women's experiences were particularly traumatic for them because the anguish they experienced generated suicidal thoughts.

> If I could go back in time, maybe I could have had the courage to end my miserable life much earlier because, despite many situations, I always finally came to the conclusion that I didn't want to cause pain to my loved ones. Now it turns out that this would have been the best solution. My life isn't mine anymore, the baby took everything away from me. The baby didn't do it on purpose, but does it make any difference? (34)

Many of the stories published on the website were written by women facing the challenge of raising a child (children) on their own because the fathers escaped.

> My fiancé wanted a baby, but I didn't (...) The baby is one year old today, and I'm left alone. Yesterday he told me something like "it's not how I had imagined it all" and "I have to think a few things over" and he moved out. I'm really pissed off because the truth is he forced me to get pregnant using blackmail. I gave him the baby he wanted so much. If it wasn't for the fact that our daughter is lovely and I really love her, I think I would kill myself (...) And I never even dreamt of being a single mom. I wasn't ready for that (13).

The strategy used by the mothers when working on their trajectory was to reorganise their life situation. As part of this, they undertook biographical work on their own personal growth.

> One fundamental thing has changed. I'm back to working full time. My job helps me relax. Sometimes I take overtime so I don't have to go back home too soon. That's true (33).

In many more cases, however, mothers organised their own life with the trajectory, focusing on controlling the dynamics of the process (slowing it down or stopping it altogether), as well as striving to isolate or minimise its harmful consequences.

> (...) my little daughter has never felt that I don't like things. On the outside, I seem to be a very committed, warm mother. Many people tell me that. And that's good. That's the way things are supposed to be. Only one person knows that I've never experienced the joy of motherhood (11).

> My relatives, whom we don't see very often, don't know anything about my situation, they think everything is OK. I pretend to be a happy wife and mother. My husband doesn't know how I really feel, either, although he often sees me walking around angry and depressed. And he can see that the kids stick to him. Sometimes I think I should leave him with the kids, but I don't want to do that to him because he's a really good guy, a great father, he works hard, and I don't want to leave him alone with all this. Despite all my negative feelings, I love my children (although they probably don't love me back) and I wouldn't want anyone else to raise them. They've already been born into this world, I can't turn back the clock, I gave birth to them, so I have to raise them (29).

The analysis of the maternal experiences of the women whose stories were published in the group entitled *I regret parenthood* allows us to reconstruct the conditions under which the their suffering occurred. Since the women's stories are narrowed mostly to the private sphere, the described difficulties in relationships occurred in a dyad (mother-child), triad (mother-child-partner) or tetrad (mother-child-partner-others, e.g. family members, acquaintances, etc.), fitting into a broader context of social norms and expectations towards mothers. Their way of performing the role of a mother, as well as the relationship with the child, were the source of many unpleasant situations for women. Therefore, what was important was the lack of acceptance for the new role (during pregnancy) and the belief that motherhood is an experience without a deeper sense, one that limits them, inhibits their growth and completely changes their current life and, as a result, such a mother feels alienated from herself and cannot come to terms with the losses she suffers. What also played a role was the woman's previous lifestyle and age (also the age at which she became a mother), as well as her ideas about motherhood and partnership, and her acceptance of social expectations and norms. There was also physical suffering (pain) or inability to satisfy her biological needs (e.g. sleep), a sense of being overloaded with chores and the difficulties experienced in raising the child. Women's stories also contained important motifs related to lack of support from their partner or family, or social isolation.

Given the fragmented nature of the narratives, it is difficult to make any generalisations that could be hypothetically applied to the population of all mothers who regret parenthood. However, two regularities can be observed. The most common configuration of these conditions was the case of a young mother, overburdened with chores, who had not planned her motherhood, but tries to cope with the difficult situations stemming from the presence of her child. She sees the absence of desired outcomes as her own failure and, at the same time, she has no support from her partner or family members. Another set of conditions that are a source of suffering can be seen in narratives told by mature, independent and active women who consciously decide to have a baby (although they are not always fully convinced about it). They enjoy their partners' support in carrying out their daily chores but are unhappy in their new role and cannot accept the changes and limitations entailed by motherhood.

The categorisations outlined above may be relevant for understanding the actual sources of suffering of women-mothers and for supporting their work on the trajectory experience.

4. Closing remarks

A critical perspective on the analysed materials (online posts) enables us to formulate many methodological comments. However, if we assume that the materials are records of significant personal experiences (around the proposed topic), published in a safe space and driven by women's need to articulate them and share their own experience with others, we see unique auto/biographical material, albeit not without some flaws. The motherhood narratives are written from the authors' current perspective, but they refer to both current and past events. The time lapse does not mean, however, that the stories have been mentally processed and included in biographies as a "baggage" of experience. In fact, the stories often still resonate with suffering that is as intense as in reports of ongoing trauma. The content of many stories points to a currently developing trajectory process that has reached a specific phase, which means that work on the trajectory process is not yet possible.

In several narratives of their lives, mothers likened their own functioning to living in a prison or a cage. Such feelings arose in connection with a lack of freedom in action, no control over their own lives, dependence on others, the resulting coercion and awareness of being involved in a permanent situation, repeated routine activities and a sense of losing their own identity, replaced by being in a constant relationship with the child. Above all, however, the mothers' existence was accompanied by suffering and a sense of loneliness. Mothers could not fit into their new role, could not cope with the burden and fatigue, were not ready for numerous changes, sacrifices and giving up their own desires. They longed for their lost lives but, as time passed, they learned to live under the limitations and organised their lives with the trajectory. Not always happy, coming to terms with their fate, they ultimately fit into the role model of a mother generated by the institution of motherhood.

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Katarzyna Gajek

TRAJEKTORYJNE DOŚWIADCZENIE MACIERZYŃSTWA

Abstrakt. Macierzyństwo, które obejmuje proces stawania się i bycia matką, ujmowane jest jako instytucja lub osobiste doświadczenie, a obie te perspektywy pozostają ze sobą w zależności. Instytucja macierzyństwa będąca tworem niezbędnym dla funkcjonowania społeczeństwa, kształtuje warunki życia kobiet, wpływa na ich wybory, wyznacza ramy pożądanych zachowań, nadaje najwyższą rangę roli społecznej matki i zawęża tożsamość kobiet do jednego wymiaru. Z ideą poświęcenia siebie dla dobra drugiego człowieka konfrontowane są doświadczenia kobiet-matek. Analizowane na potrzeby niniejszego tekstu historie dotyczące macierzyństwa opublikowane zostały na fanpage'u Żałuję rodzicielstwa i w jednoznaczny sposób wskazują na to, że bycie matką może być doświadczeniem trajektoryjnym, związanym ze zniewalającym cierpieniem. Przeżycia kobiet wpisane zostały w wyróżnione przez F. Schütze i G. Reimanna kolejne fazy procesu trajektoryjnego, a refleksja nad nimi prowadzi m.in. do wniosku, że zarówno matki, które podjęły biograficzną pracę nad własnymi doświadczeniami, jak i te, które tego nie zrobiły w konsekwencji i tak najczęściej organizują swoje dalsze życie z trajektorią w tle, nie zmieniając zasadniczo osobistej sytuacji.

Słowa kluczowe: macierzyństwo, doświadczenia auto/biograficzne, trajektoria, praca nad trajektoryjnym doświadczeniem.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.03

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SENIOR CITIZENS' CLOTHING IN A "YOUTHING" POLISH SOCIETY. THE PERSPECTIVE OF ELDERLY WOMEN AND MEN

Abstract. The way the modern-day senior citizens dress may be determined by their functioning in a "youthing" society, together with the legacy of the Polish People's Republic and the dress codes prevailing at that time. This article provides an analysis of the abovementioned issue in a gender context, as the described *age-ordering of clothes* in this text concerns women and men differently. The analysis was based on a diagnostic survey, conducted among people over sixty years old, who gave their opinions on their own and their peers' dress sense.

The responses given suggest that the trends characteristic for a "youthing" society contribute to rejuvenating the way Polish senior citizens dress. According to them, the elderly dress fashionably, tastefully and colorfully – which was stated more often by the women than the men. The survey results also confirm that the dress codes relevant to PPR times are deeply rooted in the seniors' minds. This was reflected more often in men's opinions than in women's.

The preliminary results presented in this article indicate that the way elderly people in Poland dress is beginning to be reshaped. The results require greater depth, and this could be facilitated through the use of qualitative techniques that might complement the collected material.

Keywords: clothing, seniors, senior citizens, the age-ordering of clothes, Polish People's Republic, "youthing" society.

1. Introduction

Analysing the history of clothing, Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat stated that the question "What induced the need of a primitive man to cover their body?" will most probably remain unanswered. Was it the result of a harsh climate and a desire to stay warm? Or maybe they felt the need to cover their arms and genitals? One thing is certain. "Somebody came up with a substitute material, ensuring the same function as fur, that we were deprived of by nature". The author also claims:

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> And then, there was a moment in the history of the world, when comfort and grandeur of outfit had to comply with emerging social conventions, which later turned into "absurd principles". Henceforth, societies were grounded on the principle of inequality, which was beneficial for the more powerful ones, who were able to demonstrate their wealth (Toussaint-Samat 2011: 11).

The symbolic meaning of clothing and the abovementioned social conventions have never disappeared. What is more,

> for centuries clothing has served to emphasize social position, and has been an element of symbolic isolation from those whose social position was inferior. Not to mention the unlucky souls at the very bottom of a social ladder. Sometimes, subtle differences were about the colour, cut and make of clothing. Even its texture was symbolic (Szarota 2008: 175).

According to Malcolm Barnard (1996), clothes have always been ideological, due to the fact that they constitute a process in which social groups establish, maintain and reconstruct their position of power, dominance and submission of relations, making inequality seem natural, appropriate and rightful. This socially determined ordering of clothes can be discerned in relation to social classes, as well as age and sex (Twigg 2007).

Fashion and mode of dress is most commonly analysed in relation to women. They are more likely to purchase clothes and spend more money on shopping, however this trend is changing. Contemporary men also pay attention to their appearance. It seems that:

> pursuing physical beauty has always been a source of constructive identity for women, and the basis for distinct biographic experience for them – in contrast to men (…). A woman's appearance is always a basic, starting determinant of identification. It is an expression of the immutable expectations imposed on a female body by current standards and social norms (Gromkowska-Melosik 2013: 63).

Regardless of a woman's age, she has to be beautiful in the way specified by those standards, somewhat in the name of an ideal embodiment of an "ageless woman". Various social practices support this, and, as reported by Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik, citing the studies of Susan Bordo (2003), fashion and medicine play a crucial role in the social manipulation of a female body, "constituting an essential strategy in confirming the asymmetrical relationship between women and men, always to the disadvantage of the former" (Gromkowska-Melosik 2012: 18). This view is supported by Sheila Jeffreis (2005), according to whom fashion has always been perceived as imposing oppressive forms of gender identity, or the embodiment of practices which aim to objectify and constrain a woman, or even to lock her up in a defensive and inauthentic form of presentation. Analysing this issue with regard to the Victorian Era, Gromkowska-Melosik (2012: 21) asserts:

> women outfits at that time accentuated their social position: lack of activity (encumbered body movements), submission and fragility (emphasized by a tiny waist, sloping shoulders

> and a soft physique). A woman was expected to be an ornament to a household, as well as to demonstrate the wealth of a husband or a father.

The appearance of a contemporary woman is an excellent example of her submission to a man. Is it the past? Not necessarily. Karol Więch (2015: 230–231) claims:

> a female body was a mirror for artists, a mirror which reflected a religious doctrine, an aesthetic canon or generalization concerning the gender stereotype. The Gothic style idealised the vertical, impersonal, sanctified depiction of a female body. In Baroque art, which was supposed to captivate the imagination and provoke feelings, a woman herself seduces the viewer with her erotism and becomes entirely "fleshy", gravitating downwards, hence to what is natural and physical. Symbolic violence, as Bourdieu notices, is a form of power, which concerns the body directly. The depiction of the female body, created by men over the course of centuries and today, provides relevant examples confirming the sociologist's thesis.

I am therefore of the view that analysing the issue of clothing in the context of gender is legitimate. The cultural concept of gender allows us to analyse femininity and masculinity in relation to certain social roles, personality traits or appearance. Patriarchal definitions of femininity and masculinity imply that a man's social position (of dominating status) is not defined by his looks, but by his intellect and professional achievements. On the other hand, a woman's social position (of dominated status) depends, to a great extent, on her appearance. Simone de Beauvoir (2003), after analysing the situation of women, concluded that in a patriarchal culture there is no space for a woman's wisdom and intellect. This patriarchal pitfall seems to be most cruel to elderly women. "An old, wise woman does not fill anybody with admiration, but rather with anxiety. The moment she tries to escape her age and the invisibility attributed to old age, she becomes ridiculous" (Grajewska 2008: 268). Therefore, in this patriarchal order, wisdom and life experience are men's privilege, whereas a woman should focus on her appearance and physical attractiveness. However, a fear of old age may lead to the infantilisation of their behaviour and views. Does this also concern their dress sense? I will look into the issue of clothing with regard to an individual's gender, as well as age.

In the international scholarship, we can encounter the term *the age-ordering of clothes,* which can be understood as matching one's clothing to one's age, or, in other words, a dress code characteristic for people of certain age. It is contingent on the stage of development, or the culture of a given country, part of the world or religion. A British sociologist, Julia Twigg, who has been analyzing – for many years – the issue of clothing and fashion in relation to elderly people and the fact that societies are ageing, explains that the age-ordering of clothes determining the way seniors dress is slowly changing. To her mind, senior citizens were always associated with a more covered style, longer and shapeless pieces of clothing, higher necklines, darker colours, which made them somewhat invisible in the social area, and certainly inconspicuous (Twigg 2007; 2013; Gibson 2000; Greer 1991).

At this moment in time, although a lot is changing in this area, this issue has not yet been thoroughly analysed from the perspectives of sociology or gerontology. Clothes and fashion often interweave with physical attractiveness and sexuality, and few attribute/attributed these features to the elderly and their bodies. Elderly people are/ were more often considered as unattractive and unsexy and, what is more, not interested in fashion. However, the fact that the senior population is growing resulted in them being more visible in the social area and the factors determining their choice of certain garments have become the subject of scientific research for sociologists (Twigg 2013; Slevin 2010; Szczepański et al. 2008). This is of particular interest in relation to trends characteristic for modern societies, which Anthony Giddens calls "youthing societies". On the one hand, demographers raise the alarm and warn us against the consequences of European societies undergoing dramatic ageing. On the other hand, this spreading juvenilization of our culture commands us to discipline old age, to subordinate it to emergent norms, where successful ageing is viewed as ageing that does not indicate senility. Old age must be rejuvenated. And according to the definition, "a 'youthing' society is a society where the life-habits of older people merge with those of the younger generations" (Giddens 2009: 170). Old people are becoming younger in many respects, and this seems to be most noticeable in terms of their appearance, including how they dress. What about the age-ordering of clothes?

In this article I will look into the dress sense of contemporary senior citizens – women and men. Based on research conducted among people aged sixty and above, I will be looking for an answer to the following questions: What do modern seniors think about clothes? Does living in the present-day, I mean, "youthing" society influence their views in this regard? To what extent do their responses reflect social rules regarding the age-ordering of clothes relevant to women and men, typical for the years of their youth, which were the times of the Polish People's Republic (PPR)?

2. Female and male fashion in the Polish People's Republic

The question of clothes cannot be analysed without referring to fashion, after all, it significantly determines what women and men wear. I would like to illustrate this issue in the context of the times of the PPR, which cannot be overlooked. Its impact on numerous areas of Polish people's lives and on their attitude towards various social matters is still noticeable today.

The majority of today's Polish seniors were in their prime during the times of the PPR. According to the statistics, at the end of 2018 the population of Poland totalled 38.4 million people, including over 9.5 million people over sixty (nearly 25%). In the subpopulation of elderly citizens, the most numerous group (nearly 1/3) constitute people between sixty and sixty-four years old (GUS 2019: 4), that is, people born during the post-war baby boom of 1946–1964. Since 2006, these people have been gradually reaching retirement age, which contributes to the ageing of Polish society. Nearly 18% of Polish seniors are people who are at least eighty years old, that is, they were born in the inter-war period or during WW II. Irrespective of which particular subpopulation we are discussing, we can state with complete confidence that they lived a significant part of their lives during the specific and troublesome reality of the PPR times.

The end of the war in May 1945 marked a fresh start for Europe. From Szczecin to Trieste, the Iron Curtain divided the continent into two uneven parts, which for the following years determined economic and political life, as well as the customs (including the fashion trends) of the citizens inhabiting particular countries (Williams, Sołtysiak 2016: 11). In the western part of post-war Europe, a new lifestyle was introduced by the victorious American army, whereas the politics of the Polish authorities sought to enforce the idea of fighting against everything that was American – America became a synonym of a forbidden lifestyle. Consequently, the styles presented at fashion shows in France, London or New York were presented by the Polish propaganda as a manifestation of a moral decay and corruption. Communism declared war against fashion, as it reflected values of the "external world" and the longing of Polish citizens (Szarota 2008: 16). The leitmotif of clothing in the PPR times was egalitarianism and modesty.

Right after the war, the way people dressed was dictated by poverty. Men's fashion was dominated by a military style, and in the early 1950s the rebellious beatnik style emerged. On the other hand, there were Polish women, who were forced to wear berets and headscarves instead of hats, low necklines were unacceptable (until the Khrushchev Thaw) and workers wore controversial trousers. After analysing the PPR fashion, Dorota Williams and Grzegorz Sołtysiak found that, despite the rough conditions "Polish women did not lose what they had been renowned for before the war, and this continued under communist rule: good taste, elegance and the ability to create trendy apparel out of what was at hand" (2016: 19).

The 1960s ushered in the beginning of a sexual and aesthetic revolution. When the contraceptive pill became available for women in the USA, this put them on the road to emancipation. Trousers were considered unfeminine and, thanks to a fashion designer Mary Quant, the miniskirt started its reign (Szarota 2008: 64). Kalina Jędrusik, who by the way was created to be a sex bomb by her husband[1], was the Polish counterpart of Marilyn Monroe – the most celebrated sex bomb of the late fifties and early sixties. Polish society of the PPR was not ready to accept the image of a woman presented by Jędrusik. She was accused of

[1] As indicated before, in the context of a woman's submission to a man's imagination or to patriarchal conceits, the example of Jędrusik is very interesting. The artist's husband was a screenwriter, fascinated with Hollywood. One could say that Jędrusik, who was styled by him, was a carbon copy of men's fantasies and expectations in terms of sexuality.

"vulgar sexuality", and wives complained that she was corrupting their husbands. "The socialistic reality had not prepared them for this kind of sensual temptation" (Szarota 2008: 64). Eroticism was a taboo in the public sphere.

Men's fashion of the sixties was dominated by the style (and the music) of The Beatles. Long hair, flared trousers, turtlenecks and jackets. A man of style could be recognized from his wearing certain types of shoes – trainers, or a pair of jeans – which were officially unavailable on the Polish market (Williams, Sołtysiak 2016: 162–163). In the late 1960s, flower power took over the world. The hippie style enlivened Polish streets, making them more colourful, energizing them with a promise of freedom and liberty. It also "provoked" an orientation towards greater individualism, not only in fashion, but in the daily life of Polish people.

"The beginning of Edward Gierek's era, after the years of suffocation and so called, 'little stabilization' seemed to mark the beginnings of the PPR entering the big world of consumerism" (Williams, Sołtysiak 2016: 203). The 1970s are referred to as colorful. Denim, freedom of dress, flannel shirts and long hair were all the rage at the time. Women's liberation was under way. It was also the time when a beard and moustache were the fashion – the "trademark" of Lech Wałęsa.

The twilight of the PPR times were the joyless 1980s. The streets were grey, or even dark, once again. Women's figures disappeared, as they were dressed in baggy, shapeless clothes. Leggings were fashionable among women, and tracksuits among men. A trend for manifesting opposition to the authorities, by wearing elegant and smart clothes, ties, ironed suits, coats and hats, prevailed. The "common people" preferred jumpers, flannel checked shirts, classic trousers and windcheaters (Szarota 2008: 142–143). This was the situation until the end of the PPR times, i.e. 1989.

In the 1990s, the economic transformation was introduced, and that in turn enabled the gradual domination of the western lifestyle, forbidden for so many years in Poland. It was precisely in consumer culture, which was finally allowed to become a reality in our society after the transformation of '89, that clothing became a way of expressing oneself and one's identity (Twigg 2007: 297). However, do senior citizens view clothing as playing such a role? Felicjan Bylok claims that nowadays elderly consumers have become an attractive target group for producers.

> The development of social security for old age (pension schemes, pension funds and the like), and their children being independent, resulted in the fact that elderly people have more and more money to spend on consumer goods. Previously, there was a common stereotype of elderly people being lonely and poor. Nowadays, this stereotype is fading, presenting a new image of an elderly person as an active consumer, interested in life (Bylok 2013: 124).

Do the behaviour and opinions of senior citizens confirm this, in the context of the goods and services related to appearance (including clothing) they purchase? To what extent does their experience from the communist times, paired with the prevailing ideology of those times regarding clothing, influence modern seniors?

3. Research methodology

The research presented here was conducted in June 2019, among people aged sixty and above. I applied a quantitative strategy, the method of diagnostic survey and the technique chosen was a distributed survey entitled "Our clothes", which comprised fifteen questions.

The participants of a project named *The Academy of the Third Age*, which is being conducted between March 2019 and December 2020 at the University of Białystok, were asked to fill in the abovementioned survey. The project's main idea is to allow senior citizens, especially those who never had such a chance before, to participate in educational activities. The seniors involved in the project attend workshops, lectures and concerts, increasing their knowledge, improving their skills in order to prevent them from being excluded from various spheres of life (www.atw.uwb.edu.pl). During the workshops I conducted, the participants were asked to take part in the research. I view this research as constituting preliminary studies and an introduction to research employing qualitative techniques.

I collected one hundred and thirty-four surveys in total. This was a sample of convenience. Among the respondents, female senior citizens dominated (67.2%), while male senior citizens constituted just under a third (32.8%) of the group. The most numerous group consisted of people between sixty and sixty-nine years of age (49.3%), slightly older respondents (seventy to seventy-nine y/o) numbered 42.5% and people over eighty y/o and above were represented by 8.2% of respondents. The majority of them held a university degree (47%), while 37.3% had completed secondary education. Additionally, 47.8% of the seniors assessed their health state as good, whereas 44.7% described it as average. 7.5% claimed to be in very good health. The primary variable I will consider in my research is the gender of my respondents (W – woman, M – man).

4. Seniors' clothing – reality and preferences

In his analysis of the psychology of clothing distinctive for post-war Polish citizens, Piotr Szarota describes elderly women as follows:

> Women stop looking after their appearance, hygiene and households (…). They can sit by the window all day, listen to the radio or watch television. Going out to the cinema is not for old people, nor is paying attention to their appearance, as a proverb says: *An old person cares about comfort, not fashion.* They pay attention to the practicality of their outfit. It has to be comfortable, warm and, above all, dark-coloured (Szarota 2008: 166–167).

To what extent is this belief still current?

When introducing the topic of the survey to the senior citizens, I asked them what clothes they most frequently buy (Chart 1), and what clothes they would like to wear, what clothes they dream of wearing (Chart 2)?

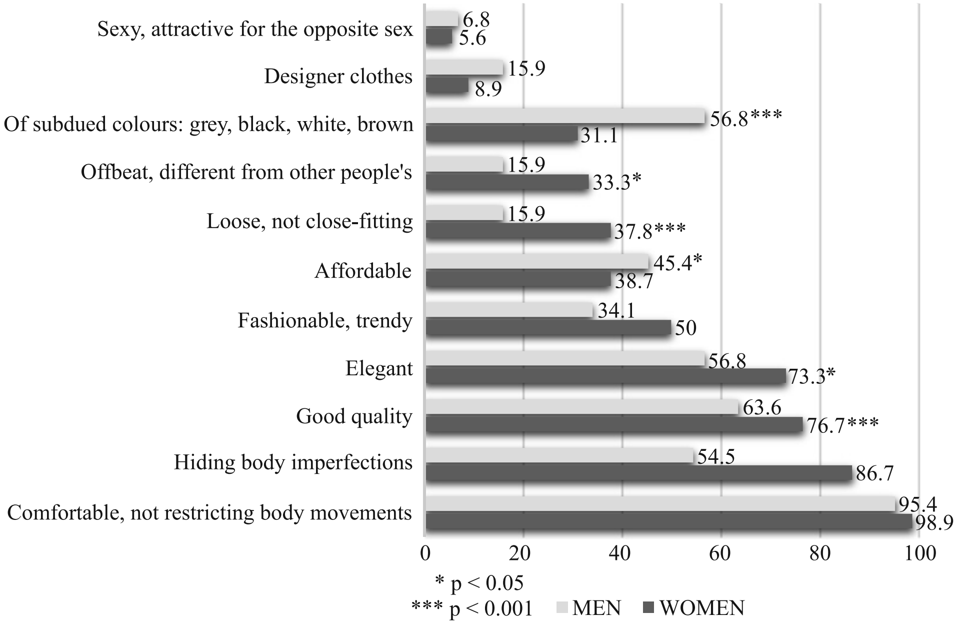

Chart 1. What clothes do you most frequently buy for yourself? (%)
Source: author's own study

Almost all respondents buy comfortable clothes which do not restrict their movements. An important aspect of clothes for the elderly is their good quality, as well as elegance – in both cases, these properties were more often indicated by women, rather than men. The characteristic of attaching importance to the quality of the products bought has been confirmed in a research conducted by Bylok, which was aimed at analysing the consumer habits of the elderly. The author concludes: "it is a surprising finding, considering some common opinions regarding senior citizens, as being interested in cheap, second-hand clothes" (Bylok 2013: 137). Most certainly, a new profile of senior citizens is being shaped, however it is a slow process, as the abovementioned proverb still prevails. Less than a half of respondents claim that they buy fashionable, trendy, clothes – this was more often by women (50%), than men (34.1%); or offbeat clothes, different from what others buy (W: 33.3%; M: 15.9%). In chart 1, two more significant tendencies are distinguishable in the answers. The second most frequent was the answer "hiding body imperfections" – it was more often indicated by women, by far, (86.7%), than men (54.5%). Elderly female respondents responded that they buy loose clothes which are not close-fitting, twice as often as male respondents, while men (56.8%), more often than women (31.1%), stock their wardrobes with clothes of neutral colours: grey, black, white or brown. Seniors' preferences in the matter of clothes are also interesting (Chart 2).

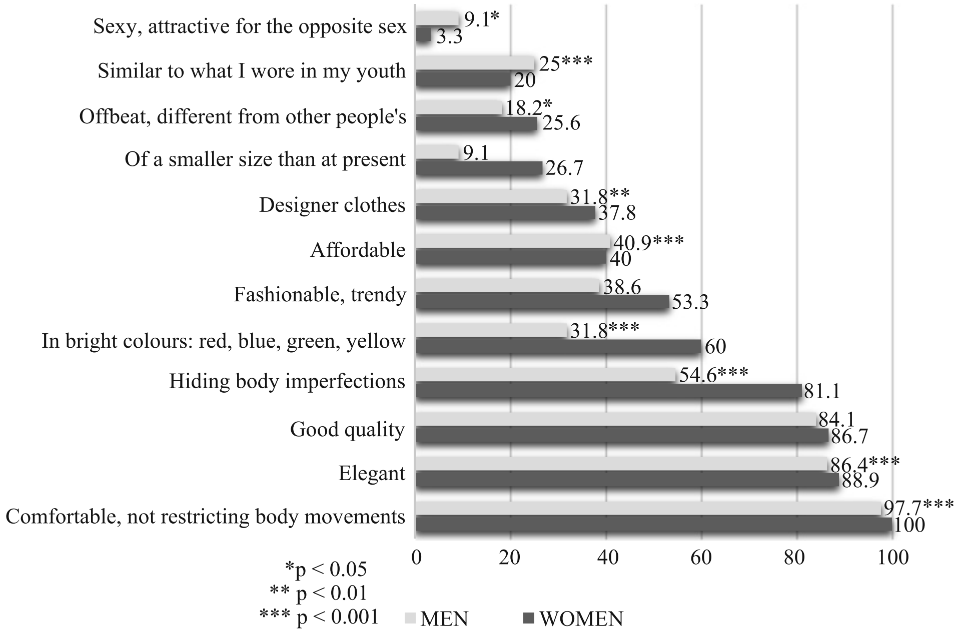

Chart 2. What clothes would you like to wear? What are your desired clothes? (%)
Source: author's own study

The top three features of clothing that senior citizens would most like to wear are: comfort, elegance and good quality. The remaining responses reflect significant divergences in their preferences, and perfectly fit the gender context. Female senior respondents, more frequently than their male counterparts, prefer wearing clothes which enable them to hide body imperfections (W: 81.1%; M: 54.6%), which have bright colours, e.g. red, blue, yellow (W: 60%; M: 31.8%), are trendy (W: 53.3%; M: 38.6%) or which would be of smaller size than they wear at present (W: 26.7%; M: 9.1%). Men in turn (25%), more often than women (20%) would like to wear clothes similar to those they wore in their youth, or sexy apparel, which would help them attract the interest of others (M: 9.1%; W: 3.3%). The fact that men are more inclined to buy clothes of subdued colours may be treated as a manifestation of their more conservative attitude, a nod towards the socially defined age-ordering of clothes and the traditional (patriarchal?) image of a man, who should be characterised by dignity. Subdued colours can be of help in this respect. Female seniors seem to be more open-minded when it comes to the trends suitable for the "youthing society", i.e. colorful, trendy and original clothes – they more often responded that they desire this kind of clothing. At the same time, they are aware of the fact that "women are judged, to a great extent, through the prism of their ability to adapt to widely accepted beliefs regarding their physicality" (Gromkowska-Melosik 2012: 18). After all, they answered that they dream of "wrapping" their bodies, hiding imperfections, or wearing clothes of a smaller size than at present – which could also make them look younger. The responses of both male and female respondents seem to fit into the aforementioned gender framework.

Within the confines of the consumer topic, I also asked the senior citizens if it is easy or difficult for them to find appropriate clothes in terms of size, fashion, taste or price in the shop assortment. It turned out that finding the appropriate size, worn by a female senior (65.6%) or a male senior (56.8%) is relatively easy (answers very easy and easy in total). More than a half of the respondents of both sexes have no problem with finding clothes in their price range or in a suitable fashion appropriate for their figure. The retail offer gives elderly people the opportunity to buy clothes that suit them aesthetically, i.e. clothes that they simply like in every respect, least frequently (41.8%). Females find that sort of clothing more frequently (57.8%) than males (43.2%).

Are women less particular than men? Perhaps, they are more resourceful, as in the times of the PPR they learnt how to create “something nice” out of what was close at hand at that time. It is worth mentioning that Polish seniors do not belong to the groups who spend spare money on clothes or shoes. Based on his own research, Bylok claims that

> in the first instance, elderly consumers spend their spare money on culture (94.7%) or goods and services aimed at improving their health and physical condition (93.2%). The next priorities for spending were rest – travelling for tourist purposes (75.9%) and buying a car (72.1%). Senior respondents rarely expressed a preference for purchasing food (27.3%) or clothes and shoes (25%) (Bylok 2013: 133).

Therefore, the consumption of durable goods, and those connected with leisure time, tends to come first, whereas the consumption of goods and services connected with appearance seems to be of less importance.

5. Respondents’ opinions regarding their peers’ clothing, in the context of the Polish “youthing society”

The fashions of the PPR times described above, which were current when today’s senior citizens were in their prime, revealed a gradual change in the age-ordering of clothes of female and male citizens which was “learned” by today’s seniors. However, for the last thirty years, we have had a democratic system and the consumer culture is gaining ground, influencing the lives of Poles. To what extent, do the past and the nowadays condition the way respondents view the clothing of their peers?

I asked the respondents what they liked and disliked about the way modern female and male seniors dress?

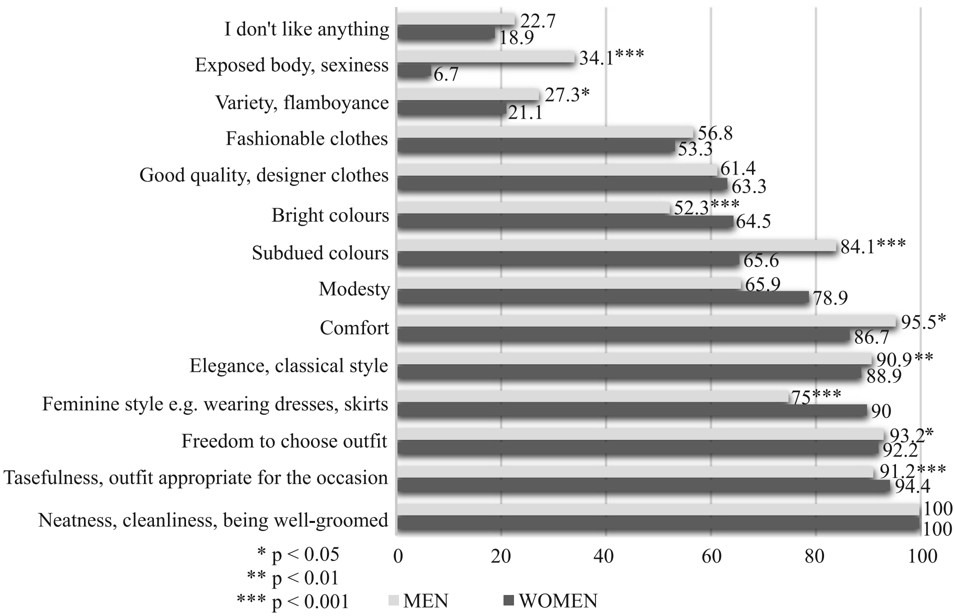

Chart 3. What do you like about the way FEMALE SENIORS dress nowadays?
Source: author's own study

Let us start with female clothing (Chart 3). All the respondents answered that what they like about present-day female senior citizens is their neatness, cleanliness and being well-groomed. A close second were their tastefulness, wearing clothes appropriate for the situation (W: 94.4%; M: 91.2%). Freedom of choosing their outfit came third (M: 93.2%; W: 92.2%). Both men and women gave almost identical responses to "elegance, classic style". However, senior female respondents much more often like it when their peers wear feminine garments, skirts, dresses (W: 90%; M: 75%), a modest style (W: 78.9%; M: 65.9%) and bright colours (W: 64.5%; M: 52.3%). On the other hand, when describing female outfits men more frequently than women indicated that they prefer comfort (M: 95.5%; W: 86.7%), subdued colours (M: 84.1%; W: 65.6%) or even an exposed body, sexy clothes (M: 34%; W: 6.7%). Yet again, two issues appear – the aforementioned colour scheme of clothes and the sexualisation of clothing. What do respondents think when it comes to male seniors nowadays? (Chart 4).

When considering their male peers, male and female respondents view the following in an almost identical way: tastefulness and a choice of clothing that is appropriate for the situation, comfort and a sporty style. Regarding other issues, however, distinct answers were given. When assessing male senior citizens, neatness, cleanliness and being well-groomed are more to women's liking (W: 100%; M: 95.5%), as well as his elegance and a classic style (W: 86.7%; M: 81.8%), wearing suits, shirts and ties (W: 78.9%; M: 70.5%), modesty (W: 74.4%; M: 65.9%), trendy outfits (W: 57.8%; M: 52.3%). Moreover, women (47.8%) are greater supporters of bright colours than men (20.5%).

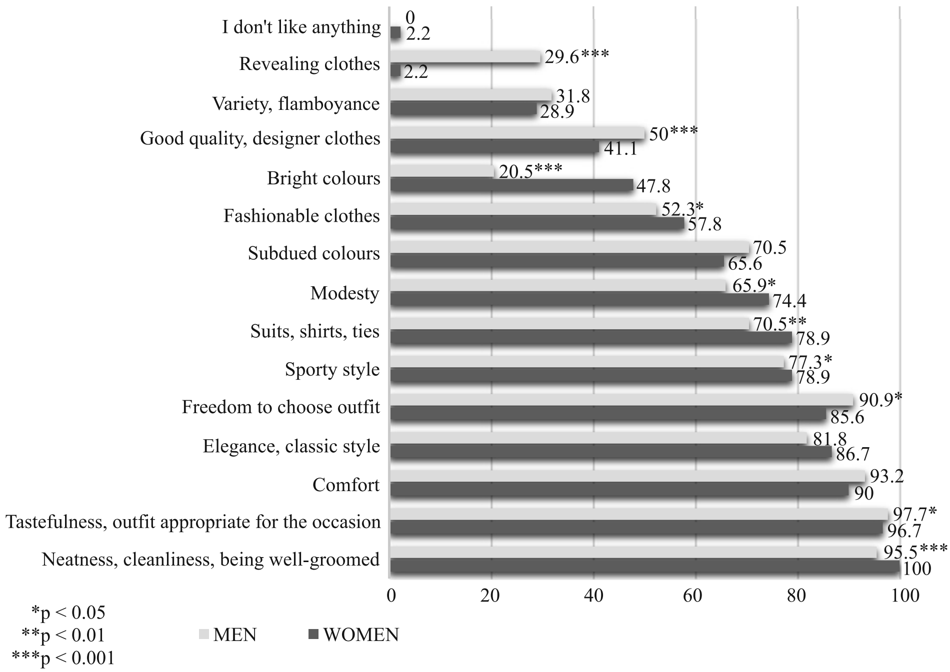

Chart 4. What do you like about the way MALE SENIORS dress nowadays?
Source: author's own study

When it comes to the style of their male peers, male respondents preferred freedom of choosing clothes (M: 90.9%; W: 85.6%) and subdued colours (M: 70.5%; W: 65.6%). Male senior citizens pay attention to the high quality of clothing/ wearing designer clothes (50%) more frequently than female seniors (41.1%), and they claimed that they like outfits that expose the male body (e.g. muscular) almost ten times more often than the female respondents.

Beata Łaciak believes that in the times of the Polish People's Republic such features as beauty, charm and elegance did not fit into personal patterns. Concern for appearance merely meant care for hygiene and daily washing of the whole body (Łaciak 2006: 74). Today's generation of seniors were taught this, and probably it explains their preference for a tidy and clean appearance/ the neat clothing of their peers. The change of the Polish political system in 1989 created the possibility of taking care of one's body and appearance in a variety of ways. Did this opportunity became a must (?), especially considering the female body and looks, regardless of the woman's age?

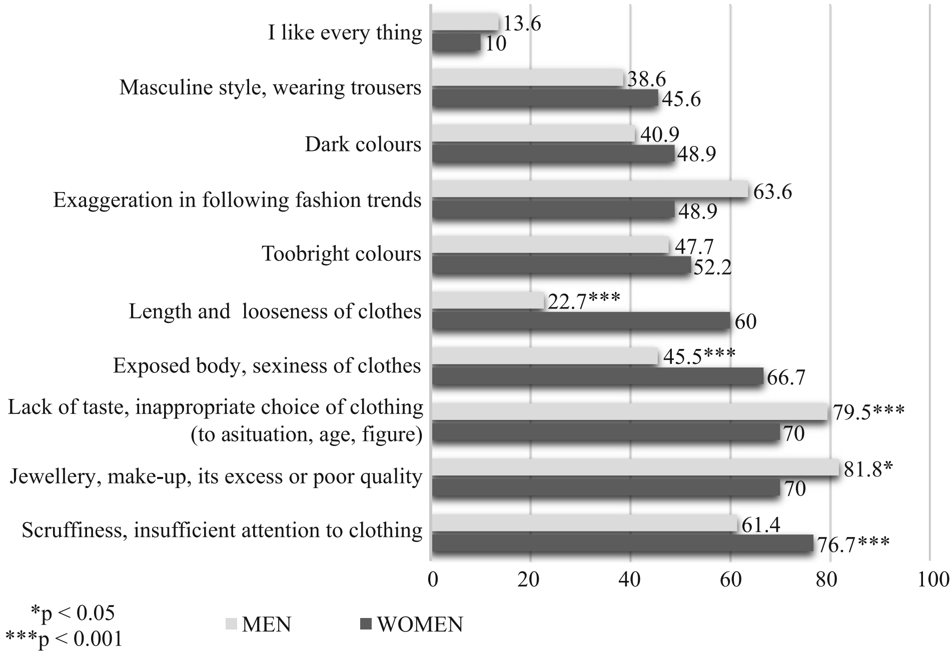

Chart 5. What do you dislike about the way FEMALE SENIORS dress nowadays? (%)
Source: author's own study

I asked the respondents what they dislike about the way female senior citizens dress nowadays. This question brought very disparate answers (Chart 5). Women (76.7%), more frequently than men (61.4%), dislike insufficient attention being paid to clothing, as well as scruffiness. Obviously, everyone should take care of their looks – this is just a fact. However, the answers given by female respondents may reflect certain patriarchal notions functioning in their conscience. A woman is a representative of the fairer sex, therefore, she is supposed look after herself, and the process of getting old, and the difficulties and ailments associated with it, cannot be treated as an excuse for any negligence. After all, the post-transformational Polish reality provides plenty of opportunities in this area. Female seniors (60%) were also much more critical than male seniors (22.7%) of the length and looseness of their peers' clothes, towards exposure of the body and sexy outfits (W: 66.7%; M: 45.5%) or wearing dark colours (W: 48.9%; M: 40.9%). They also did not like the masculine style, meaning a woman wearing trousers (W: 45.6%; M: 38.6%). Answers given by the men suggest that, according to them, the make-up and jewellery (excess or poor quality) worn by elderly ladies, leave much to be desired (M: 81.8%; W: 70%), as do lack of tastefulness and inappropriate choice of clothing regarding age or figure (M: 79.5%; W: 70%) and exaggeration in following fashion trends (M: 63.6%; W: 48.9%).

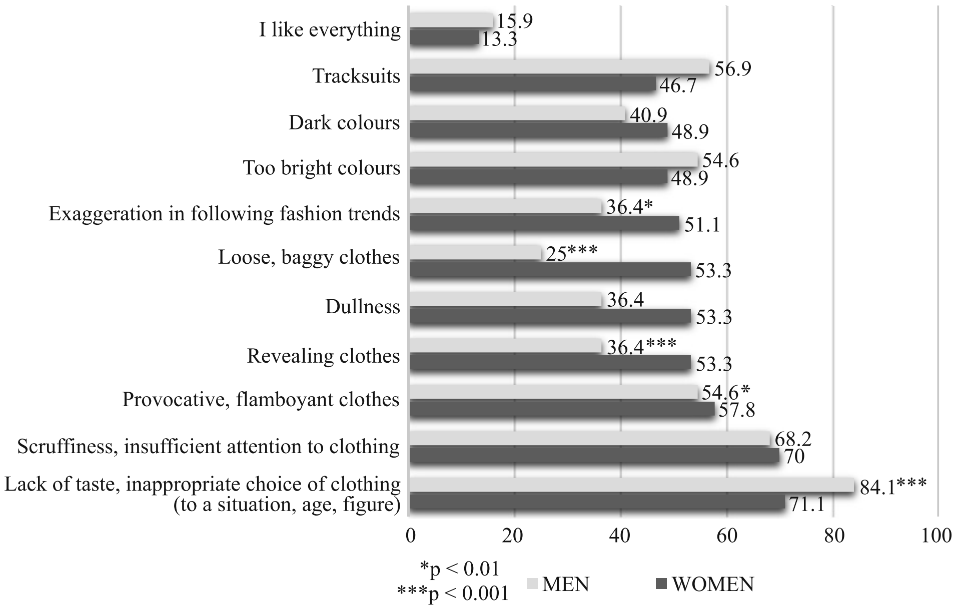

Chart 6. What do you dislike about the way MALE SENIORS dress nowadays? (%)
Source: author's own study

When asked about what they dislike about the way elderly men dress nowadays, all respondents agreed on only one feature – neglecting clothing and looking scruffy. Women are more often bothered by a provocative, flamboyant outfit (W: 57.8%; M: 54.6%) and revealing clothes (W: 53.3%; M: 36.4%). By extension, revealing clothes, which win approval of male seniors, does not appeal to their female peers. Women were also much more critical of their peers' loose clothes (W: 53.3%; M: 25%), their dullness (W: 53.3%; M: 36.4%), wearing dark colours (W: 48.9%; M: 40.9%) and, maybe surprisingly, towards exaggeration in following fashion trends (W: 51.1%; M: 36.4%).

Interestingly enough, all things considered, the respondents claim that their male and female peers' fashion sense appeals to them. However, exaggeration when it comes to fashion raises concerns. Women give a green light to female senior citizens who follow fashion trends, though they are more judgmental when male senior citizens do the same. The findings are identical in case of men: the study suggests that they do not mind when their male peers wear very trendy outfits, yet they disapprove when women do the same. Is exaggeration in following fashion trends understood as adopting a provocative style? As, for instance, Calvin Klein's lingerie campaign, starring the seventy-three year old model Lauren Hutton, or making an eighty-one year old Helena Norowicz the face of the Bohoboco campaign? Or was it following the appeal of an eighty-four year old former-model Dorrie Jacobson, who exhorts people on her blog: "Wear what you want! There is no such thing as inappropriate for women of a certain age. Times have changed. Mature fashionistas do not intend to step out of people's way just because they turned sixty or seventy. They do not want to wear shapeless outfits, in order to perfectly fade into the background" (Jacobson 2019). Observing the Polish reality, one can notice certain examples of various pro-age campaigns (within the area of fashion, cosmetics or cosmetology) which seem to be an answer to Jacobson's appeal. We also have Plus Age bloggers (e.g. Krystyna Bałakier), familiarising the elderly with the secrets of current fashion, and proving that one is able to inspire others at all ages. Are these all examples of what the senior citizens considered going too far when following fashion trends?

Returning to chart 6, the data suggests that, generally speaking, men are less critical than women when it comes to the clothes chosen by their peers (males). They do not like three things: lack of taste, choosing an inappropriate outfit for the situation, age or figure (M: 84.1%; W: 71.1%), excessively bright colours (M: 54.6%; W: 48.9%) and wearing tracksuits (M: 56.8%; W: 46.7%). Grażyna Bokszańska asserts: "A suit symbolizes traditionalism, hierarchy, conformism and, obviously, money. A man wearing a suit signals clearly his position and demands appropriate respect" (2004: 69). Does this opinion explain the disapproval felt when their peers wear tracksuits?

The scholarly literature provides us with examples of certain positive consequences of seniors participating in the rejuvenation of culture (Twigg 2007; 2013; Konieczna-Woźniak 2012). Using rejuvenating strategies, elderly people are able to, among other things, cope with ageing, overcome daily difficulties associated with restricted mobility, or express the youth which is still present in their minds, bringing them closer to young people (Kolibabska 2009: 62). Therefore, I asked the respondents two questions that were to help them solve the following issue: How does functioning in a "youthing" society influence their views on their peers' clothing?

The respondents give positive feedback on the rejuvenation of today's senior citizens through the appropriate choice of clothes. What is more, the opinions of women and men seem to be very similar (Chart 7). Respondents also agree (over 90% of the answers in both groups) that today's female seniors dress better than their peers did thirty years ago. When it comes to men and their dress sense, in comparison to thirty years ago, male respondents (86.4%), more often than female respondents (77.8%), notice a positive change. Twigg arrives at similar conclusions (2007; 2013), as well as Kathleen Slevin (2010) does. The senior citizens who spoke to the authors explained that their interest in fashion is due to the fact that they would like to know what clothes could help them look younger, however they do not treat this as a burden. They confessed that appearance is significant and therefore it requires relentless work, due to the fact that there is no special treatment for anyone of us – everyone fights for a beautiful body. Katarzyna Pawlikowska (2014) states that the historical and economical circumstances (i.e. PPR) enabled Polish men and women to become savvy with the fashion world. The 1990s gave them access to European and global culture. Today we begin to dress in a way which expresses ourselves. It seems that this might also be the experience of the elderly – mostly those who can be called "healthy connoisseurs". They have relatively little experience with old age and when it comes to consumption they behave like young people (Bylok 2013).

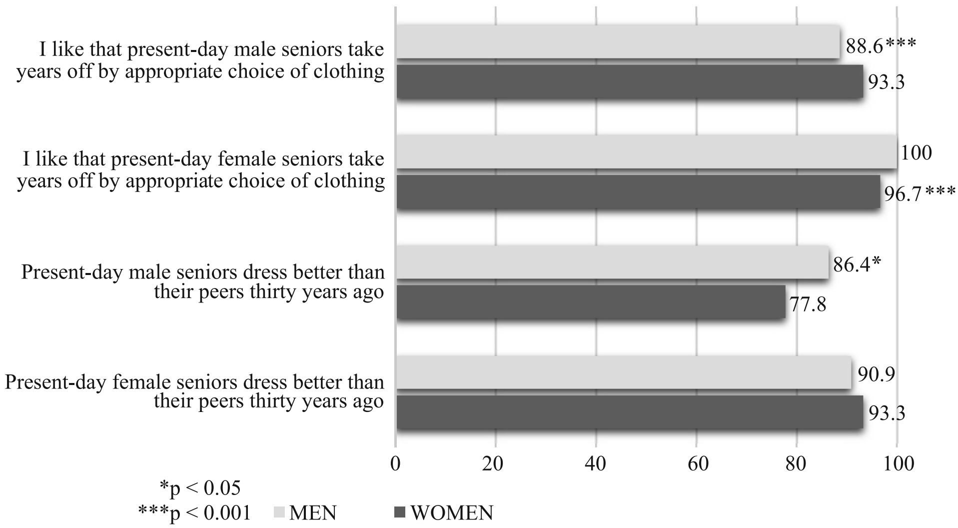

Chart 7. Respondents' opinions regarding the dress sense of senior citizens nowadays (%)
Source: author's own study

Chart 8 features a lot of interesting data.

In his volume *Customs in Poland*, Tadeusz Czekalski describes old age in the 1970s: "The Polish threshold of old age was customarily associated with retirement age, which is, in most cases, in the seventh decade of life. Moral pressure on people in old age, especially in rural and small-town families, only permitted a certain way of dressing and hindered entering into new relationships" (2008: 364). The author, unfortunately, does not specify what ways of dressing were allowed, but one can guess that they had be modest and appropriate. Analysing the answers given by the respondents, included in chart 8, we can reach the conclusion that the old times have not passed. Accepting the rejuvenation of old age seems to be selective, and the patriarchal way of viewing a woman is doing well, at least among the surveyed men.

As we can see in Chart 8, none of the men likes the fact that we can observe elderly women with low necklines in our streets (whereas 13.3% of female respondents have nothing against this), a female senior citizen wearing a miniskirt (8.9% of female seniors have no problem with this) or elderly men with tattoos (8.9% of female respondents are not bothered by this). When it comes to the remaining answers, a certain number of men gave positive responses to, for instance, elderly men with long hair (M: 4.6%; W: 11.1%), or with dyed hair (M: 2.3%; W: 6.7%), although we can observe a disproportion between male and female support of these practices.

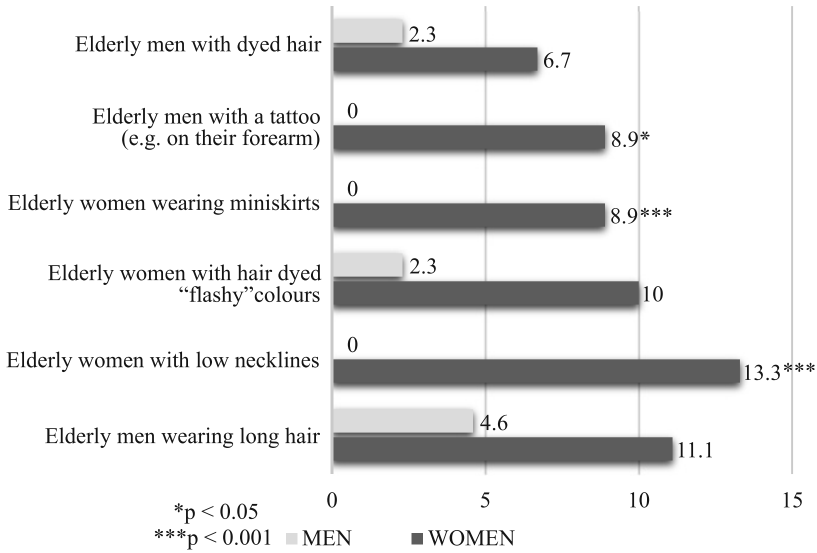

Chart 8. Do you like or dislike the fact that nowadays we can encounter in the street (%)[2]
Source: author's own study

As I mentioned above, in the 1960s a miniskirt became a symbol of profound social changes and the emancipation of women, like K. Jędrusik's deep necklines. It seems that female respondents have less of a "problem" with accepting these "rejuvenating" clothes among their peers than the male respondents. Do the answers from chart 8 given by the male senior citizens reflect a deeply-rooted patriarchal understanding of male-female relationships? According to M. Toussaint-Samat, in patriarchal societies the duty to wear a modest outfit "became almost natural and transformed into a customary law. This modesty, which should be related to shyness, is a sign of the shame which an individual would feel when they exposed (or witnessed) certain parts of the body" (2011: 32). The author adds: "If feeling ashamed later became a duty, it was because of the fact that a man was holding power. In order to retain control over a woman, he appropriated, by virtue of a powerful law, the control over pursuing freedom, controlling a body that he wanted to employ for his pleasure" (Toussaint-Samat 2011: 34). Does this explain the disapproval of female senior citizen's shameful garments? Yet, on the other hand, they also like exposed bodies and sexy outfits, as I mentioned before…

[2] The chart presents only positive answers.

It would also seem that the male respondents' negative attitude towards tattoos and the long hair of elderly men stems from the ideology that prevailed in the times of the PPR. At that time, a tattoo was characteristic for the world of crime. Often found on forearms, tattoos were mainly popular among prisoners and sailors. On the other hand, men wearing long hair led to the saying: *long hair – short brains.* Perhaps, these popular assumptions conditioned the male respondents' opinions towards the tattoos and long hair of their male peers, presented in Chart 8.

6. Conclusion

I consider all the study results discussed in this text to be a preliminary exploration of this subject matter, however they allow us to notice certain regularities. The answers given by the respondents suggest that the trends representative for a "youthing" society, as well as the ideology of Polish People's Republic, are the two dominant factors which seem to precondition the fashion choices of Polish senior citizens nowadays and allow us to analyse this issue considering these two points.

When asked to assess their peers' dress sense, respondents appreciated their neatness and being well-groomed, but also the modesty of their clothing. The idea of female senior citizens wearing dresses and skirts (feminine style) and male seniors – suits, shirts and ties, appealed to them. Rules regarding the age-ordering of clothes, characteristic for "the old days", still exist in the conscience of the elderly. It is reflected by the male respondents' answers, claiming that older people should choose clothes with inconspicuous colour schemes – including grey, black or brown. On the other hand, the women who took part in the study expressed their "attachment" to what is traditional, pointing out more frequently than men that they purchase loose garments which can help them hide the imperfections of their ageing figures. What is more, women, more often than men, would like to wear clothes in a smaller size than they wear at present. After all, patriarchal definitions of femininity assume that a woman's social position depends to a great extent on her appearance. And an attractive figure is a slim figure. Still, the best example of a deeply rooted way to perceive the age-ordering of clothes typical for the PPR times were the respondents' answers expressing the opinion that it is inappropriate for an elderly woman to wear a miniskirt or a low neckline, and an elderly man to have tattoos and long hair. These answers were more frequently given by male respondents, rather than female. Therefore, it seems that the PPR legacy concerning the age-ordering of clothes regarding both men and women still exists in the minds of the people who grew up in those times. The "package" of an ageing body, according to the respondents, should meet certain criteria. What is significant is that this is applied more often to a female body than a male one.

Nonetheless, thirty years of a new democratic system, together with the trends characteristic for a "youthing" society, considerably condition how seniors perceive their own clothing and that of their peers. Female seniors seem to be more open to novelty than the males. They more regularly buy clothes in bright colours (red, yellow, blue), trendy garments or clothes that are offbeat and different from what other people buy. Females prefer to see their peers in fashionable clothes more often than males do, and do not mind the fact that they try to rejuvenate their looks choosing appropriate outfits. However, when it comes to following contemporary trends, female senior citizens are selective, because they do not approve of elderly people exposing their bodies and accenting their sexuality. Men are at variance on this issue.

The way that "youthing" societies perceive clothing contributes to a gradual shift of the bygone age-ordering of clothes concerning elderly people. The female and male respondents' opinions presented above indicate that the changes transpiring today are partial, and some solutions appeal rather to women (bright colours), others to men (revealing clothes). M. Toussaint-Samat argues that: "The physical shape of clothes derives from technical feasibility, but it is also a creation of a human mind – an aesthetical, personal and cultural message" (2011: 310). It seems that the human intellect heads towards empowering senior citizens and rejecting the traditional culture of their marginalisation. Instead, it proposes making them equal members of our society, allowing them to create their own image, including their clothes, according to their individual taste. Functioning in a "youthing" society gives a number of possibilities in terms of defining their appearance and outfit. To what extent do the opinions given by the seniors from Białystok reflect the opinions of other people of the same age? My intention is to explore this issue during a further study, including in-depth interviews, where I will ask senior citizens how they feel in a "youthing" society, what opportunities and dangers of existing in such society they notice, what their approach towards "packaging" their bodies is, and what it means for them. The findings will constitute an excellent complement of the empirical data gathered here.

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Emilia Kramkowska

UBIÓR SENIORÓW FUNKCJONUJĄCYCH W „MŁODNIEJĄCYM" SPOŁECZEŃSTWIE POLSKIM. PERSPEKTYWA KOBIET I MĘŻCZYZN W STARSZYM WIEKU

Abstrakt. Funkcjonowanie w warunkach „młodniejącego" społeczeństwa, jak też spuścizna czasów PRL i panujących wówczas zasad ubioru, mogą warunkować sposób ubierania się współczesnych seniorów. Niniejszy artykuł stanowi analizę tego zagadnienia, osadzonego w kontekście genderowym, gdyż opisywany w tekście porządek ubioru (*the age ordering of clothes*) w odmienny sposób dotyczy kobiet i mężczyzn. Podstawą prowadzonej analizy są wyniki sondażu diagnostycznego przeprowadzonego wśród osób w wieku 60 lat i więcej, opiniujących sposób ubierania się ich samych oraz ich rówieśnic i rówieśników.

Odpowiedzi badanych sugerują, że trendy charakterystyczne dla społeczeństwa „młodniejącego" przyczyniają się do odmładzania sposobu ubierania się polskich seniorów. Ich zdaniem osoby starsze ubierają się dziś modnie, gustownie i kolorowo – częściej był to głos kobiet niż mężczyzn. Wyniki sondażu potwierdzają też obecność zakorzenionych w świadomości seniorów zasad dotyczących sposobu ubierania się właściwych czasom PRL – bardziej odzwierciedlały to opinie mężczyzn niż kobiet.

Opisane w tekście wstępne wyniki badań sygnalizują dokonującą się zmianę sposobu ubierania się osób starszych w Polsce. Wymagają one pogłębienia poprzez zastosowanie technik jakościowych, mogących uzupełnić zgromadzony materiał.

Słowa kluczowe: ubiór, senior, porządek ubioru, Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa, „młodniejące" społeczeństwo.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.04

COPE
Member since 2019
JM14479

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VOICE RECOVERY – PARADIGM SHIFT IN TRANSGENDER RESEARCH

Abstract. The aim of the article is to show how scientific analyses of transsexuality have changed over recent years, and how the two types of discourses on transsexuality/ transgender, i.e. medical and social, clash with each other. The result of this clash is a departure from treating transsexuality as a purely medical phenomenon classified as a deviation from the norm. I will also consistently use a range of terms showing there has been a transformation in the approach to the phenomenon being described – from transsexualism, through transsexuality, to contemporary terms such as trans person/ people with transsexuality. The change in the terminology reflects a perceptible shift in the paradigm.

Keywords: transsexuality, deviation, paradigm, medicine.

> "[s]he who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power"
> (Foucault 1993: 243)

1. Introduction

Sociology only began paying attention the phenomenon of transsexuality quite recently. For years, this specific perception of one's own gender as different from one's biological (registered) sex used to be the domain of predominantly medical interest. However, the history of scientific interest in transsexuality – including medical interest – shows that for a long time this phenomenon simply was not considered within the scientific field. Transsexualism (*transseksulizm*), transsexuality (*transseksualność*) and transgender (*transpłciowość*) are terms that may seem synonymous – they refer to the phenomenon of crossing the binary sex system. These nuances now in use in the Polish language show a significant substantive change in the approach to this issue and are a sign of a departure from the medically determined research discourse on the phenomenon of crossing the binary sex system. It was not until the 1990s that sex, corporeality and sexuality be-

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came “disenchanted” from the stigma of deviation and marginality and subjected to a broader scientific analysis. Gender performance theories or queer theory were particularly ground-breaking here – as Sally Hines shows, transgender issues have always been associated with discussions about sexual minorities (2008). Consequently, transsexuality is usually considered in terms of identity policy.

The aim of the article is to show how scientific analyses of transsexuality have changed over recent years, and how the two types of discourses on transsexuality – medical and social – clash with each other. The result of this clash is a departure from treating transsexuality as a purely medical phenomenon classified as a deviation from the norm. I will also consistently use a range of terms showing a transformation in the approach to the phenomenon being described – from transsexualism, through transsexuality, to contemporary terms such as trans person/ people with transsexuality. The change in the terminology reflects a perceptible change in the paradigm.

2. The dilemma faced by the researcher

A social scientist who wishes to conduct research in the area of transsexuality must resolve a number of dilemmas (cf. Bieńkowska 2011). The first fundamental one is constantly having to justify the need for sociologists to study transsexuality, not just medical practitioners. For years, transsexuality has been a field of mainly medical reflection, hence it is necessary to show that it is also a social phenomenon. However, the most important dilemma concerns the operationalization of the concept of transsexuality. At first sight, the term “transsexuality” seems easy to define, yet when you begin to analyze the available medical, psychological and sociological literature, it turns out that adopting a specific definition embeds the researcher in a certain convention. The first clue is, of course, the adoption of strictly medical definitions and making them binding for the researcher. If the researcher follows this path, then during the course of the study they will collide with a reality that defies medical definitions and classifications. When I started my own search for transsexual people who would agree to participate in the research, the question I often heard from potential interlocutors was: “What do you think transsexualism/ transsexuality is?”. There were also questions about who I think is a transsexual person, and who is not. I used the snowball method to find study participants, I placed ads on a website for transsexual people. But before my advertisement appeared on the mentioned website, I had to undergo some environmental verification – I had to participate in a chat. I was overwhelmed with questions, most of which related to my understanding of transsexuality. Similar questions were also asked in emails from people interested in the research. The questions that were addressed to me made me realize that defining transsexuality is not as easy as it might seem from a medical point of view. The questions concerned whether I am inviting to the study only people who are diagnosed (i.e. they have confirmation from an expert that they are transsexual), or only those who intend to undergo sex reassignment surgery, or also those that do not have this intention. Do I think that someone who is not going to undergo gender reassignment is a transsexual person or not? Do I think that trans people can be non-heterosexual? All these questions prompted me to adopt a very liberal definition of transsexuality in my research – I invited people who felt transsexual, regardless of whether they wanted surgery or not, whether they had a diagnosis from experts, etc. On the one hand, this was a risky move, but on the other hand, it allowed me to capture what was not visible to medical discourse. Medical definitions are categorical, they refer to the decisions "either you are a woman, or you are a man", they discredit people who for any reason do not want to undergo a transition – a procedure of sex reassignment, which also includes body-correcting surgery. Adopting a liberal position has allowed me to see that if the medical perspective is adopted and maintained, it is impossible to see what transsexuality is today. Similar conclusions were drawn by Anna Kłonkowska from her own research (cf. 2017: 178–187).

3. The beginnings. Deviation discourse – breaking the norm

Until recent decades, the body and gender had not been important research topics for sociologists; for years they were something that remained outside the scope and research focus of the social sciences. However, over the past 20–30 years, this situation has changed radically. Nowadays, it is difficult to imagine a reflection on society that would ignore gender issues. Also, the theme of the body has entered the canon of sociology (cf. Schilling 2010; Buczkowski 2005). Human corporeality, social divisions based on gender, and gender roles have increasingly become the subject of scientific reflection. This does not mean, however, that the themes had not appeared in sociological or anthropological works before. It is worth recalling Goffman's reflections on stigma or Garfinkel's work *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, in which he described the history of transsexual Agnes and her role playing/ gender reassignment. In sociology, Garfinkel, whose book was published in 1967, was the first person to pay attention to the transgender phenomenon. In his reflections on what people take for granted in relation to gender, he referred to the work of the team of Robert Stoller, an American psychiatrist who dealt with gender identity and worked with transsexual people. These were the beginnings of scientific attention being devoted to the previously unrecognized phenomenon of sex change (today the term has been replaced by "gender reassignment"). The 1960s and 1970s was a period when the medical world focused on transsexuality, which resulted in the emergence of medical definitions, classifications, etc.

It is difficult to say who was the first trans person, who was the first to have a sex change operation, who was the first person who had their documents changed.

Nevertheless, the first people described in the literature are Lili Elbe and Christine Jorgensen. Their history goes back to the early 20th century. Lili Elbe was born as Einar Wegner in Vejle in 1882, in Denmark. Einar Wegner was a painter, in 1920 he married Gerde Gotlibe, to whom he revealed the secret about who he felt himself to be, how he wanted to live. At the same time, Wegner learnt about the Institute of Sex Research founded in 1919 in Germany, in Berlin, where Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, who coined the term transsexualism, had his practice. After 1930, Elbe underwent four surgical operations, changing his male body into a female one; the first in Berlin, and three more at the City Women's Clinic in Dresden. Unfortunately, as a result of complications following the last operation, Elbe died. Her story was described in two books *Man into Woman* and in *The Danish Girl*[1].

The other person is the trans woman Christine Jorgensen, who was born in 1926 in the United States. During World War II she fought as a soldier in the US Army, after the war she continued her education and worked. In the years 1951–1952 she underwent gender reassignment operations in Copenhagen. Jorgensen became a very famous person, an activist who did not hide her past, her history. She ran her own educational mission to help others. Despite the positive course of surgery and the hormone therapy she underwent, Jorgensen struggled with legal problems related to changing her birth certificate, which made it difficult for her to get married. Jorgensen was a person who did a great deal for others, but her case also had a significant impact on the development of knowledge and research on transsexuality. Along with the doctor Harry Benjamin, she fought for the recognition of trans people's right to treatment. She described her story in an autobiography published in 1967.

4. Medicine

For a long time, transsexuality had been perceived as a deviation from the norm. The norm in terms of sex was what Garfinkel described very well – you could be either a woman or a man, and this was something that was determined at birth, something immutable. And although anthropologists' studies showed that the binary sex system was not the only one, it was still firmly rooted in the social construction of the social world in Western culture. Anyone who broke the established social order in this respect was considered a deviant. Medical attempts to classify transsexuality were a part of a deviant discourse. If someone rejected or denied the sex that was given to them at birth (corresponding to biological sex), this was considered to be something that required correction and restoration to

[1] The bestseller book *The Danish Girl* was translated into Polish and published in 2012 under the title *Dziewczyna z portretu*. There was also a film adaptation of this book. The biographical details of the heroine can be found at: https://www.biography.com/people/lili-elbe-090815 (accessed 20.02.2019).

a socially accepted norm. The goal was to recognize transsexualism as a disease and to create standards and treatment procedures.

The first sex change operations were trailblazers, but they were based on the medical intuition of doctors rather than on well-grounded knowledge. Procedures related to the treatment of transsexual people appeared several dozen years after the first attempts. Harry Benjamin was a pioneer in the world of medicine who sought to set standards of the care for transsexual people. He created the first guidelines for diagnosis and treatment. Transsexuality was considered to be an incongruity of the mind and body. The activities of Harry Benjamin led to the creation of The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, which, in 1979, issued the Standards for the Care of People with Gender Identity Disorders. They were the first medical instructions for dealing with patients diagnosed with transsexuality. A year later, in the third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Handbook* (DSM-III), the American Psychiatric Association recognized that transsexualism was a disease that had its own specificity and required specific treatment (cf. Bem 2000: 106). Thus, from the outset, reflection of this phenomenon defined transsexualism as a deviation from a healthy/ normal/ ordinary state. One could say – referring to Foucault – that transsexuality had been recognized and categorized by the panoptical system of the medicalization of gender. This new category was later inscribed in the procedures defining the treatment of patients.

By 2019, seven more updates of this document had been released. Significantly, the last – seventh – version concerns not only transsexual people but, as the name of the document indicates, also transgender people and those who cannot be conventionally defined. In the seventh edition, its authors emphasize that transsexuality, transgenderism or other forms of crossing gender borders should not be treated as a pathology, as they are an expression of people's cultural diversity.

In her work *Gender Given or Imposed. Strategies for Negotiating (Non) Transgender Identity in Poland*, Anna Kłonkowska critically reviews subsequent editions of the disease classification. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (in short DSM) described the concept of transgender for the first time in 1980. This phenomenon was included into the psychosexual disorder category as Gender Identity Disorder (GID). The term transsexualism appeared as one of the subcategories of GID. In the DSM IV from 1994 and DSM IV-TR from 2000, the term transsexualism was withdrawn.

> In both these editions, the typology of transgender concepts is the same. Within the general category "Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders" there is a subcategory: "Gender Identity Disorders", which includes: "Gender Identity Disorder in Children", "Gender Identity Disorder in Adolescents and Adults" and "Gender Identity Disorder Not Otherwise Specified" (Kłonkowska 2017: 29–30).

The analysis of medical classifications and subsequent editions of documents shows when the concept of transsexual appeared and what transformations and distinctions it underwent. As Kłonkowska notes:

> The classifications of the phenomena associated with transgenderism are controversial. Not only due to the fact that divisions and categories created in relation to transgender will always be arbitrary, simplifying and reducing the whole variety of human experience related to (non) gender identity into accepted patterns (...). However, the very fact of creating nosological categories relating to sexual or gender non-normativeness and their inclusion in disease classifications, such as DSM or ICD, provokes discussion. The question arises of whether transsexuality is a disease or an alternative identity and gender expression. Labelling it with a nosological category can lead to stigmatization, as was the case with homosexuality at the time when it was still in the abovementioned classifications (...). The perception of transsexuality in terms of a nosological unit or disorder also leads to its pathologization in social assessment and has an impact on the self-presentation of transgender persons (2017: 39).

In 2015, a polemical article by Anna Karnat-Napieracz and Zbigniew Liber was published, referring to the book *Transsexualism in Poland. The individual and social dimension of crossing the binary sex system* (2012). This article is written from the perspective of the medical discourse, focusing on the genesis of gender disapproval syndrome, medical definitions, classifications of transsexuality. The tone of this text is harsh, and the content can be reduced to one implicit thesis, namely that transsexuality is not a sociological topic. When describing transsexuality, the authors adhere very rigidly to how medicine sees it and how medicine attempts to fix it. According to Karnat-Napieracz and Libera, transsexuality cannot be considered a social phenomenon because it is a disease entity. What is more, every manifestation of social gender and identity construction is discredited here (see Karnat-Napieracz, Libera 2015). This text epitomizes how medical discourse dissociates itself from knowledge that comes from the social sciences.

When examining people with transsexuality, you can come face-to-face with what I have called the "mask of transsexuality" –

> (...) transsexual people use what I call, the mask, the official mask of a transsexual person. This is a certain facade, behind which lies the real, personal, unique experience of being a transsexual person. However, these people generally have an excellent insight into what stories are expected from them (in their opinion), and therefore they narrate their own experiences so that they will fit in with the transsexual's classic traits. In all likelihood, this mask is created for the purpose of convincing experts (a sexologist, a psychiatrist, a judge) that they are transsexual in order to legitimize this experience as a disease and be able to take further medical and legal steps. If you are aware of such a trap, the use of a nondirective interview remains an ideal research tool (Bieńkowska 2012: 50–51).

To sum up, the medical paradigm boils down to the following assumptions:

- Transsexuality is a deviation from the norm.
- It is something to be fixed.
- The reference point is the explicit binary sex division.
- The narrative of gender reassignment.
- Typology creation (a true trans person versus GID).
- Creating treatment procedures (fixing).
- Giving choice – (hormones and surgery and/ or hormones).

5. I'm GID

In the fifth DSM update from 1998 one can read that the phenomenon of gender identification disorder occurs all over the world, but it is not treated in the same way. In those cultures where there is permission to cross gender boundaries, this behaviour is not stigmatized. The document also emphasizes that the goal of treatment (psychiatric, hormonal or surgical) is to achieve lasting sex-related comfort so as to maximize overall psychological well-being. There is no definitive statement that surgical operations are necessary. This is a kind of breakthrough, because in the early 1990s there was a sharp polemic within the organizations of transsexual people about who has the right to define themselves as transsexual. The environment was then divided into so-called "real transsexuals" and people who referred to themselves as "GID". The "real transsexuals" believed that a transsexual person was only a person who, after being diagnosed, underwent the entire process of sex change and "simply" as a result of surgery became a woman or a man. This was a very radical position and was termed "transsexual fundamentalism". Mitsuhashi lists the features of this fundamentalism, writing that, firstly, it is assumed that one can be either a woman or a man, and these are disjunctive categories, and therefore any temporary or partial transgression of the binary sex system is viewed in a bad light. Secondly, a person should strive for a complete change, and after becoming fully female or male, not come out, that is, reveal their past as a different sex. Thirdly, these people are strongly obsessed with being "normal women/ men" in line with the existing gender social order (Mitsuhashi 2003, cited in: Itani 2011: 291–292). This phenomenon was also reflected in the Polish environment of trans people, who made internal divisions and exclusions, assessing the transsexuality of others on the basis of whether someone changed sex (or intends to change it) or remains in an unchanged body (see Bieńkowska 2012: 132–139).

6. Voice recovery – a paradigm shift

Parallel to the development of medical knowledge in the field of transsexuality, people with transsexuality built their community, formed various associations, support groups, places to acquire knowledge and support, and also places to discuss what was happening around transsexuality. In Poland one can also observe the emergence of a transminority, which started to speak in its own voice, and not only hide within the activities of the LGBT&Q movement (for more detailed discussion of this issue, see Bieńkowska 2012: 181–182; 2013: 171–183). The voice of those interested was increasingly significant, and this was supported by the work of scientists from outside the medical community which revealed a much greater awareness of gender diversity than that demonstrated by medicine. The spell of medical narrative has been lifted from transsexuality, as has been symbolically emphasized in the changes of terminology (no longer transsexualism but transsexuality or transgenderism, or even a person with transsexuality; instead of sex change, gender reassignment).

In 2006 Richard Ekins and Dave King published *The Transgender Phenomenon*, which was the result of their 30-year sociological research on transvestism and transsexuality. In the introduction, the authors note that, during the period they studied, transgender phenomena shifted away from the sociology of deviation and perverse behaviour to innovative theories in the field of culture or gender studies. They could also see a change in attitude towards transsexual people in the non-academic world. The authors mention transsexual people who were popular in the media, such as the transsexual Portuguese Nadia Almada in the British version of Big Brother (Ekins, King 2006: 1–20).

Marcin Rzeczkowski, an activist in the transsexual movement, writes:

> A trans man is not, therefore, humiliated when people see his breasts or that these breasts are disgusting in themselves, but because the breasts are attributed to women and evaluated, and he is not a woman and does not want to be seen as such. In this sense, the concept of transgenderism as the intermediate link between transvestism and transsexualism, which consists of the need to function in society as a person of the biologically opposite sex without reassigning the body, or switching to hormones (and optionally a mastectomy in case of trans men) is simply unnecessary, just like andromimesis (“imitating a man”; I personally find the word dismissive and condescending) and gynemimesis (“imitating a woman”). “Transsexualism” is enough (Rzeczkowski 2012).

Medicine, and initially the social sciences, described transsexuality by focusing on the disapproval of body physicality. It was recognized that transsexual people do not identify with their own body, with their own gender; that they often refer to themselves as imprisoned in a foreign body. An example of such an approach is the definition that Małgorzata Fajkowska-Stanik coined in her work:

> Transsexualism is defined as a phenomenon in which we are dealing with an overlap of an extreme gender identity disorder and sexual deviation. Extremely disturbed gender identification is manifested by a total discrepancy between the sense of gender and body composition, which results in sexual deviation, i.e. sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex. At its base lies the so-called sexual dysphoria (2001: 32).

However, what can be seen from social studies, and what can be heard in statements of people with transsexuality, is that something lies beyond the corrective programmes of medicine. Not all transsexual people seek surgical gender reassignment. According to Sally Hines, the term “[t]ranssexual refers to people who change their anatomical sex through hormones and/ or surgical methods” (2008: 99). Hines’ definition draws attention to the alternative contained in it. Transgender does not necessarily mean radical surgery, which is still emphasized in most definitions of transsexualism. Hines uses the term transgender, emphasizing that it includes transgender people, transsexual people, bigender people, intersex people, transvestites, crossdressers, drag kings and drag queer (cf. 2008: 99)[2].

In the 1990s, there was a breakthrough in the social sciences in the field of gender and sexuality research. Sandy Stone – a trans woman – protested against the anti-transsexual publication *Transsexual Empire* by writing her manifesto *The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto*, published in 1987. This manifesto was recognized as a source for initiating transgender studies focused on the unique situation of trans people. Trans studies focus their attention on everything that goes beyond the interests of medical discourse: they show the history of trans people, literature describing the history of trans people, they move within interdisciplinary critical studies and cultural studies.

Some of the most important researchers who are part of this trend are Judith Butler, Jack (Judith) Halberstam, Viviene Ki Namaste, and Susan Stryker, who edited *The Transgender Studies Reader* (2006). Stephen Whittle describes the way to transgender studies as follows:

> In the 1990s, a new scholarship, informed by community activism, started from the premise that to be trans was not to have a mental or medical disorder. This fundamental shift was built upon within academia, and enabled trans men and women to reclaim the reality of their bodies, to create with them what they would, and to leave the linguistic determination of those bodies open to exploration and invention. To this extent, trans studies is a true linking of feminist and queer theory (Whittle 2006: XII).

[2] Transvestitism (TV) – is considered to be "an extreme form of transgenderity, that is, one that has been diagnosed medically and described in detail. By definition, transvestism (or rather dual-role transvestism) means putting on clothes of the opposite sex, which is accompanied by the pleasure of temporarily feeling that one belongs to that sex. It is not characterized by a desire to reassign gender, especially by surgery. One should avoid confusing dual-role transvestism with fetishistic transvestism (this is the mistake I encounter most often). The second phenomenon mainly focuses on sexual feelings, that is, the aim of putting on clothes of the opposite sex is to look like the opposite sex and get sexually aroused at the same time. It happens, however, that transvestite behaviours (of both types) result from suppressed transsexualism, but this is not the rule. It is often heard that among transvestites the majority are gay – this statement contains in itself two myths. 1. Transvestism is the domain of men, 2. It is characteristic of homosexual men. In order not to overdo with the number of theories, I decided to counter these claims clearly. So, first of all – there are female transvestites (transvestites f/m), however, due to female clothing emancipation, less attention is paid to them, and secondly – the percentage of gay men among transvestites is similar to that in the whole society, and it can even be a lot lower (...)" – Dynarski W., *T like trans*, http://www.innastrona.pl/magazyn/bequeer/transseksualizm-transplciowosc.phtml (accessed 1.06.2012).

Intersexualism – a modern term for hermaphroditism, i.e. a situation when people are born with the external (or/and) internal features of both sexes.

Drag king (women dressing up as men), drag queen (men dressing up as women) – a form of artistic expression, of a performance nature – usually playing the role of a known character, an icon.

Crossdressing – a term referring to people who, mainly through the clothes they wear, violate social norms connected with the division into the feminine and the masculine. It may be – but does not have to be – associated with transvestism, drag king/queen or transsexuality.

In 1997, the first scientific journal focused on the subject of trans was created – "The International Journal of Transgenderism". In 2014, another TSQ scientific journal was established: "Transgender Studies Quarterly". On its website one can read that in the last 20 years transgender has become the subject of cultural analyses and new research approaches. The mission of the journal is to create a scientific space to understand "variability, contingency of gender in time, space and culture".

7. Conclusion

Since the 1990s, a fundamental, qualitative change in the perspective of transsexuality research can be observed. From a strictly medical approach to the problem, which focused on curing the disease and fixing the body so that it matched identity to biological sex, you can see the transition to a deeper knowledge of transsexuality. The medical paradigm begins to take into account the voice of transsexual people and their perception of their own situation. The discourse of disease and its treatment are being abandoned. An important role in changing the way of scientific thinking about transsexuality belongs primarily to the people concerned. Trans activists began to fight for their rights, not only when it concerned medical care itself, but also the issue of legal regulations. They also referred to the scientific community that was undertaking research on the phenomenon of transgender people. Jacob Hale has developed guidelines for non-transgender researchers undertaking transgender research. The Hale list contains several guidelines[3] constituting the ethical backbone of the researcher. What is important is that the researcher is not supposed to behave like someone who knows better, a technocrat ordering the world according to scientific standards. Hale's position also warns against treating trans people as the subject of the study; instead, they should be granted subjectivity and the right to express themselves (Hale 1997).

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[3] The Hale list has 14 or 15 points, depending on the publication date.

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Małgorzata Bieńkowska

ODZYSKIWANIE GŁOSU – ZMIANA PARADYGMATU W BADANIU TRANSPŁCIOWOŚCI

Abstrakt. Celem prezentowanego tekstu jest ukazanie, jak zmieniło się w ciągu ostatnich lat to, jak na gruncie nauki analizuje się transseksualność/ transpłciowość, jak ścierają się ze sobą dwa rodzaje dyskursów – medyczny i społeczny. Efektem tego starcia stało się zmienienie medycznego zawłaszczania transseksualności jako zjawiska wyłącznie medycznego, klasyfikowanego jako odstępstwo od normy. Konsekwentnie też w tekście będą stosowane terminy ukazujące pewną przemianę w podejściu do opisywanego zjawiska – od transseksualizmu, przez transseksualność do współczesnego trans osoby/ osoby z transseksualnością. Ta nomenklatura odzwierciedla bowiem pewną dostrzegalną zmianę paradygmatu.

Słowa kluczowe: transpłciowość, dewiacja, paradygmat, medycyna.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.05

COPE Member since 2019 JM14479

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GENDER INCONGRUENCE IN TRANSGENDER PERSONS: ANALYSIS OF THE AUTHORS' OWN RESEARCH

Abstract. This article presents an analysis of a fragment of a larger study on transgender individuals. In this study, the authors focused exclusively on the experience of gender incongruence; the conflict between gender identity and the gender conferred at birth. In order to clearly explain the scope of this study, the first part of the article presents transgender theories, and those related to identity and gender identity. The second part of the article presents strategies for combatting gender incongruence. These are developed on the basis of the collected empirical material, and through consideration of evidence concerning whether gender incongruence had a significant impact on the formation of the personal and social identity of transgender individuals. The research was based on a qualitative approach, with the main technique employed being a free-form interview. The research was performed throughout the whole of Poland.

Keywords: transgenderism, transsexuality, identity, gender identity, gender incongruence, gender transition.

1. Introduction

The issues of transgender and transsexuality, as well as the issue of strategies for dealing with gender dysphoria (a mismatch between a person's gender identity and their sex assigned at birth), which are the focus of this article, have been addressed by numerous authors. English-language studies on this subject have been published since the 1990s (e.g. Hines; King, Ekins; Stryker; Stone; Wilchins; Whittle; Devor; Feinberg, etc.), while in Poland the issue of gender identity and adopted strategies was discussed, among others, by Małgorzata Bieńkowska and Anna Kłonkowska in their books: *Transseksu-*

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alizm w Polsce. Wymiar indywidualny i społeczny przekraczania binarnego systemu płci [*Transsexualism in Poland: The individual and social dimension of the transgression of the binary gender system*] (Bieńkowska 2012), *Transpłciowość – androgynia. Studia o przekraczaniu płci* [*Transgender – androgyny: Studies on going beyond gender*] (Kłonkowska 2012) or *Płeć: dana czy zadana? Strategie negocjacji (nie)tożsamości transpłciowej w Polsce* [*Gender: A given role or a given task? Strategies for the negotiation of transgender (non-)identity in Poland*] (Kłonkowska 2017).

This article focuses on describing the conflict between the social identity, imposed roles and normativity, and the gender identity of a transgender person; their sense of alienation from their own body as well as social norms, as seen by subjects participating in a previously conducted study. In order to address the issue of gender dysphoria, terms such as transgenderism, identity and gender identity need to be defined first.

2. Transgender, identity, sexual identity: the operationalisation of conceptual notions and processes

The transgender community is characterised by invisibility. The media promote a distorted image of transgender people by publishing images of *drag queens* and *drag kings*[1], who are perceived as controversial by conformist individuals. In the mainstream social perception, the *drag* phenomenon is still mockingly described as "playful dressing up", a performance intended to parody masculinity or femininity. In fact, however, in its artistic form *drag* goes beyond gender dualism, attempting to expose cultural constructs of gender performativity, which has little in common with cabaret (Łojas, Dynarski 2010: 46–48). However, presenting transgender people on the basis of accounts from *drag queen* and *drag king* performances leads to a stereotypical, erroneous definition of transgender, which leads to the prevalence of opinions that are inconsistent with scientific knowledge concerning transgenderism. For those unfamiliar with transgender issues, the need for gender reassignment may seem like a whim or a caprice. In fact, it derives from a deeply experienced conflict between one's gender identity and the gender assigned at birth, which transgender people solve through a long and costly process of gender transition.

The terminology used to describe the phenomenon of gender mismatch, i.e. a conflict between the gender assigned at birth and the actual gender identity, has evolved over the years. The term "transsexualism" appeared for the first time

[1] An artistic performance by a male person (drag queen) or a female person (drag king). In their performance, drag queens depict a woman in heavy make-up, dressed in a spectacular woman's outfit (Mizielińska, Stasińska 2014: 94–97). The opposite of a drag queen is a drag king, which is a male character played by a woman (Majka-Rostek 2010: 7).

in 1980, in the third edition of DSMIII (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*), in the category of gender identity disorders. In the older edition, the terms closely associated with transgender included "transvestitism" as a sexual deviation. However, the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is more widely used, and in June 2018 the ICD-11 announced that transgender would be removed from the list of gender identity disorders, along with the terms "transsexualism" and "sexual dysphoria". Instead, they would be replaced by the term "transsexuality" and "gender incongruence" (WHO 2018).

Another term that is currently used is "transsexuality", which has been replacing "transsexualism", which was commonly used in the past. This is an effect of the activity of LGBT+ organisations and activists[2], who have pointed out that the postfix "-ism" is associated with diseases or disorders. In turn, "transgender" naturally replaces all terms with the prefix "trans" that end with "sexuality" or "sexualism". For example, homosexuality refers to individuals who feel attracted to individuals of the same sex (Boczkowski 2009: 20). This means that "sexuality" is associated with sexual desire and the sex drive, while transgender people do not feel attracted to transgender persons, as potentially suggested by the combination of "trans" and "sexuality". One of the subjects of our study described it this way: *One shouldn't say that because it's a stupid phrase. To me, transsexualism sounds like homosexualism. It's as if I was attracted to trans people. Maybe it sounds different in England, but not necessarily in Poland. The word "sex" means gender, so it should be transgender* (R3).

In the scholarly literature, one can find a distinction indicating that "transgender" is a broader "umbrella term" covering, among others, transsexual persons who strive for gender reassignment, as well as cross-dressers who limit themselves to self-expression through clothing (Kłonkowska 2017: 13). Unlike transvestites, cross-dressers are all those who wear clothes considered to be suitable for the opposite sex: *drag queens* and *drag kings*, transvestites, actors, etc. (Klosow 2019: 34). Moreover, the semantic scope of the term "transgender" includes the whole spectrum of non-binary identities: multi-gender, dual-gender, liquid identities, persons who do not feel either male or female, those who strive for partial or total gender reassignment, or non-binary individuals who do not feel the need to start the transition process (Ziemińska 2018: 131). One example

[2] The first two letters, L and G, stand for lesbian and gay. Gays and lesbians are homosexual persons, which means that they are sexually attracted only to people of the same sex. The next letter in the acronym LGBT+ is B, which stands for bisexual persons. For bisexuals, sex is not relevant in intimate relationships. Such persons may live in a relationship with a man or woman, regardless of their own gender. The acronym ends with the letter T, i.e. transgender persons (Boczkowski 2009: 20). LGBT+ also has a longer, extended version: LGBTQIQAF, where Q stands for queer, I for intersexual (people who are still looking for their sexual orientation and are not sure of it), Q for questioning, A for ally and F for family and friends. Queer is a broader concept and an umbrella term used to describe all the aforementioned groups (Makuchowska 2011: 11).

of a non-binary person is Robert, presented by Sarah Davidmann in her article *Beyond Borders: Lived Experiences of Atypically Gendered Transsexual People*. Robert has removed his breasts and takes testosterone, but has deliberately decided not to perform genital surgery. In a conversation with Davidmann, he described himself as masculine, but for him this is not synonymous with being a man. His non-binary identity goes beyond the dichotomous division into female or male sex (Davidmann 2010: 196–198).

According to the literature, and especially medical terminology, the participants of the study discussed in this article are transsexual persons who define their sex in a binary way: male or female. Despite this fact, the interviewees were not in favour of being described as "transsexual". Taking their preferences into account, the authors of the study decided to use the term "transgender/ism" [Polish: *transpłciowość*], which becomes the only correct term in NGOs working on behalf of transgender minorities and the individuals these terms refer to. For this reason, the authors decided against using the term "transsexuality" in this article.

Transgenderism continues to be referred to as "gender identification disorder", which is manifested by the incompatibility between the gender assigned at birth and biological sex before reassignment and the gender identity felt by the transgender person (Bieńkowska-Ptasznik 2002: 147). A change in appearance, gender transition[3], hormonal therapy[4], full or partial gender reassignment[5] as well as the legal correction of documents and birth records[6] becomes a deeply

[3] Transition/ gender transition is a term used in relation to transgender people and refers to a transition period between one situation and the other. It covers everything that happens from the moment one discovers one is transgender and makes a decision about gender reassignment up to the completion of gender reassignment. Gender transition is a long-term, multi-stage process. It consists of socio-cultural, medical, psychological and diagnostic aspects (Bieńkowska 2012: 151).

[4] In the case of transgender men who make the transition from woman to man, hormone therapy is based on taking the right doses of testosterone. Menstruation usually ceases after four months, followed by the appearance of facial hair, thicker body hair, muscle growth and clitoris expansion. Transgender women receive estrogen and progesterone during hormone therapy. This inhibits the production of testosterone, helps male hair and muscles disappear, and assists the reduction of testicles. There is also a significant increase in adipose tissue around the breast and hips (Fajkowska-Stanik 2001: 57).

[5] Gender reassignment has a narrower meaning than gender transition and consists of two main stages. The first one is the start of hormone therapy, and the second one is surgical gender reassignment. Not all transgender persons decide to undergo a full procedure, for example by forgoing the sex reassignment surgery (SRS), increasingly referred to as gender confirmation surgeries (Breska-Kruszewska, Rachoń 2014: 167–168).

[6] In Poland, legal gender reassignment takes place through court proceedings under Article 189 of the Code of Civil Procedure (CCP). Such cases qualify as cases concerning nonmaterial rights, so the proceedings take place at the regional court. Pursuant to the CCP, the claimant and the defendant must be indicated. In this case, the defendants are the parents of the transgender person on the grounds of wrongful gender assignment of their child at birth. Court proceedings are the only legal way in Poland for an individual to change their birth certificate (Grodzka, Podobińska 2012: 203).

experienced need for transgender individuals because of the experienced gender dysphoria (Jabłońska, Knut 2012: 24). Speaking of transgender (or, more precisely, transsexual) persons, one can distinguish between trans men, or F/M (female-to-male) men with a male gender identity, and trans women, or M/F (male-to-female) women with female gender identity (Kłonkowska 2017: 13–14).

Another concept that needs to be clarified in order to address gender dysphoria is identity. In the light of the existing literature, identity is an individual's self-definition, an image of oneself created as a result of self-perception, self-observation and the accompanying emotions (cf. Bokszański 1989: 5–6; Connell 2013: 178; Bieńkowska-Ptasznik 2002: 148–149; Kryszk, Kłonkowska 2012: 225). Constructed in this way, identity is characterised by continuity, cohesion and distinctiveness, which means that we constantly feel that we are the same person with a unique, well-established living style, despite the changes in our lives (Geron 2002: 168). The subjective sense of existence boils down to the category of personal identity and one's own self, confronted daily with our objective social identity, which consists of our social roles, social norms, a system of values, background, etc. (Waszyńska, Rękoś 2004: 213–214). Personal identity comprises the most specific features of an individual that distinguish that person from others, while social identity is characterised by features that stem from one's belonging to a particular community. When we explore ourselves, we compare our behaviour with that of other people who belong to the same culture and group (Waszyńska, Rękoś 2004: 213–214). Zbigniew Zaborowski distinguished three models of identity, which comprises: social elements (position, background, social roles), anthropological elements (gender, age), cultural and ideological elements (system of values, upbringing). The combination of these three, or the social identity and personal identity described above, make up the full human identity and remain in close connection with one another (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 37).

In the sphere of identity, transgender people do not represent "an exception to the rule". They have the same continuous and coherent identity both before transition and after full gender reassignment. However, because of socialisation and social norms, since their early childhood such people have felt "torn" between their own self and things that are normatively desirable in society (Bieńkowska-Ptasznik 2002: 148–149). Socialisation has a significant impact on shaping identities. Primary socialisation, which takes place within the family, teaches, among other things, the values, norms and rules adopted in the family group, and the child accepts them uncritically. During both primary and secondary socialisation, children learn about the behaviours and customs of society, which helps them to internalise the existing social norms (Nikitorowicz 1999: 271–273). Thus, children who deviate from normativity are often misunderstood and rejected by their social circle, which prevents them from living in harmony with themselves if this calls for the rejection of existing social roles (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 88).

Participants involved in primary and secondary socialisation, i.e. the immediate family and the broader social circle, have a significant impact on how a child's gender identity will develop. Gender identity is the sense of being male or female, usually in harmony with biological sex, which confirms the conscious sense of belonging to a specific sex (Świder, Winiewski 2017: 7). In full families, formed by a woman and a man, the mother and the father are the first role models of femininity and masculinity for the child, as well as a source of gender stereotypes and existing gender roles. When observing their parents, children usually identify their gender with the one who has the same biological sex (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 51–54). The identity of non-schematic and non-typical individuals is shaped in a somewhat different way. This applies, inter alia, to transgender people, whose gender identity does not coincide with that of the assigned gender, and to non-binary people who have the gender identity characteristics of a woman and a man (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 40).

In the standard situation, a person's biological sex, which is observable on the outside, is consistent with their gender identity, i.e. the internal experience of sexuality. Gender, which is characterised by the gender roles adopted in a particular culture, gives an equilibrium to gender identity and the fullness of a male or female *ego* (Ciaputa 2011: 429–431). A child acquires knowledge about gender identity and gender roles in three stages. At the first stage, the child is assigned to a specific gender. Then the child consciously perceives the continuity of their gender and realises that they will be a woman or a man in the future. This leads to the notion of gender constancy, which means that no action, behaviour or clothing will change one's gender identity (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 28).

Schools and peer groups constitute other important environments for children, and both have a significant impact on how the child's social identity develops. The teacher becomes another model of masculinity or femininity and, moreover, teachers have different expectations towards boys and girls, unintentionally instructing students about the gender stereotypes that are socially accepted. Another example includes textbooks that contain explicit and hidden messages about socially desirable beliefs concerning, among others, those related to gender-specific behaviour (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 83–88). A child who deviates from socially defined normativity is often misunderstood and rejected by the surrounding people, who do not allow the child to live in harmony with themselves if this requires the rejection of existing social roles (Rawa-Kochanowska 2011: 88). Moreover, cisgender children, i.e. those whose gender identity is consistent with the gender assigned at birth (Kłonkowska, Dynarski 2017) neither know nor understand what transgender is. They follow their sexual roles and do not accept the different behaviours of their transgender peers, who grow up with a sense of increasing sexual dysphoria, which reaches a critical level with age, especially during puberty, which is associated with the first menstruation and the appearance of facial hair or breasts (Ciaputa 2011: 429–431).

This overview of the selected concepts, positions and approaches described in the first section gives some indication of the complexity of the subject-matter. For this reason, it was essential to clarify them, in order to eliminate any ambiguities that might appear when reading the subsequent sections of the present article.

3. Research methodology

The authors undertook an analysis of the topic of transgenderism in order to demonstrate the importance of the problem, i.e. the internal conflict experienced by trans men and trans women, reinforced by the lack of acceptance in their social environment. An intolerant society and tabooisation force transgender people to develop certain strategies that could make it easier for them to live in a transphobic reality.

The main objective of this part of the study, the results of which are discussed in the present article, was to learn about the strategies used by our interviewees to cope with gender dysphoria, to explore those strategies and reasons why they are adopted, and to find out how the incompatibility between the gender assigned at birth and gender identity shapes the personal and social identity of a transgender person.

Thus, the analysis was limited to answering four main questions: What kinds of strategies did the participants use to cope with gender dysphoria? Which of the strategies were adopted unconsciously and which ones deliberately? Which strategies were aimed at denying the transgender identity of the interviewees, and which ones were aimed at self-expression? What is the impact of being transgender on the personal and social identity of an individual, as seen by the respondents?

The research was qualitative in nature, based on the technique of free-flowing interviews. The interviews were conducted with five M/F women and eleven F/M men from Cracow, Lodz and Warsaw in 2018–2019. The respondents' average age was 25 (ranging between 19 and 53). Purposive sampling was applied, and the criteria used included age (the respondents had to be of legal age) and the experience of either partial or complete gender reassignment. Two out of sixteen respondents did not declare their willingness to undergo a complete gender reassignment (more precisely, a procedure performed on the genital organs). Contacts to potential respondents who might agree to take part in the study were obtained with the help of a member of Trans-Fuzja, a Polish NGO supporting transgender people, and the *Fabryka Równości* association in Lodz. The organisations informed their members about the proposed research and additionally posted a related message on their websites and social media. The recommendation of two LGBT+ organisations significantly contributed to finding individuals who were willing to participate in the study. Throughout the research procedure, every precaution was taken to ensure that the research remained confidential and anonymous, and did not violate the professional ethics of social researchers.

4. Results of the authors' own research analysis: Strategies of coping with gender dysphoria

The analysis of the empirical material obtained during the interviews enabled the authors to identify the strategies used by the respondents to cope with gender dysphoria. Based on the categorised descriptions of the respondents' experiences and opinions, the researchers identified the following four strategies aimed at the expression of personally experienced gender identity: unconscious, purposeful, self-destructive and intuitive.

The first presented strategy involves **intuitive actions towards self-expression** in childhood. **Rationalisation of the perceived gender mismatch through the belief that everyone shares the same experience** is another unconscious action taken by the respondents. **Creating a fictitious identity in imaginary worlds**; computer games, drawings and comic strips revealed the beginnings of the expression of perceived gender identity, but still not fully conscious at that stage. Individuals who realised that their identity was transgender would often undertake **a self-destructive, purposive strategy involving extreme adaptation to the gender role of the gender incompatible with their perceived gender identity**. In the case of F/M men this involved, for instance, the exaggerated use of make-up, while in the case of M/F women this involved weight training in order to achieve a muscular figure. A less oppressive form of behaviour which nevertheless aggravates gender dysphoria involves the **deliberate concealment of one's transgender identity for fear of transphobic reactions in the social environment**. The **start of the transition process** is the last strategy to deal with gender dysphoria, finally used by all research subjects, as presented in the empirical part of the study.

All the participants in the study had already experienced a conflict between their gender identity and gender assigned at birth in their early childhood. This experience initially involved intuitive steps taken in the sphere of self-expression. A transgender child behaved in accordance with the gender identity they experienced, without understanding why they are different from their peers, and this aggravated the sense of being lost. The first experience of gender dysphoria, without being aware of the existence of transgenderism as a phenomenon, put individuals in a situation where they did not have any means of coping with an internal conflict:

> Everyone around thought I was a girl. Everyone around me treated me like a girl. However, (pause) I knew perfectly well that something was wrong, but I didn't know how to call it, which gave rise to an internal conflict and a sense of dissonance – R1.

The aforementioned intuitive actions undertaken in accordance with the perceived gender identity became the first strategy for coping with gender dysphoria. A transgender girl attempted to join a group of girls and a transgender boy tried to join male peers, driven by a strong need. Gender conflicts occurring between children of different sexes became a common barrier in early school years. A transgender child is placed by peers among the gender represented by the child's exterior appearance. With a clear binary gender subdivision in society and at school, characterised by the different ways that boys and girls play, different gender-related expectations, aversion to peers of the opposite sex, a transgender child was placed in a situation where integration with people of the gender compatible with their perceived gender was mostly impossible:

> My first such memory dates back to when I was between six and seven. I remember I started getting envious. It was the start of primary school and I started to envy the girls in my surroundings. I was envious about their life and how they were treated, compared to how I was treated. And also, when I tried to integrate with the girls, for example, it was the time when girls say that boys are "yuck" and boys say that girls are "yuck", and there is this division, which started to feel wrong to me a bit. But I really wanted to, I didn't know why and I didn't understand a thing yet, but I really wanted to belong to that social group perceived as girls and integrate with them, and play together. I also wanted to say that boys are "yuck" and that kind of stuff – R15.

The respondents' non-standard behaviours during their childhood were not approved and caused anxiety in their social circle. As a result, attempts were made to convince and force the children to engage in activities compatible with the gender identity assigned at birth and related gender roles. The vast majority of research subjects stated that for many years they struggled with a situation where their loved ones and people in their social circle made constant efforts to force them to conform with the social norms:

> In my childhood (...) there were some typical boys' games and then my mom tried to redirect me towards the more girly ones. I bought a bullet gun for myself, and she scolded me and said it wasn't for me. Same story with climbing trees, she said it wasn't appropriate. There were many such behaviours. All my relatives would always say: "You dress like a boy, you act like a boy". Lots of things like this were said in a negative tone – R10.

Actions undertaken by people from the social environment, trying to force a transgender individual to change their gender identity, contradict the concept of gender constancy mentioned in the theoretical section, according to which gender identity cannot be changed by any external interference. Transgender children or transgender adults are helpless in the face of such demands, and the conflict between their gender identity and gender assigned at birth is exacerbated because they lack opportunities for self-fulfilment:

> In fact, with me, it started around preschool age, when I began to notice that boys and girls were treated differently and I couldn't come to terms with this because I wanted to have/ play, dress in a typically girly way. Some pink clothes, that kind of stuff, and because of the gender assigned at birth, well, my parents, or the people around me just kept telling me that I couldn't really do it – R8.

Several interviewees mentioned an attempt to rationalise the problem of gender dysphoria. In the case of the following statement, the interviewee's strategy was based on their lack of awareness of them being transgender and of the existence of this phenomenon as such. Within that rationalisation, the interviewee explained to themselves that everyone was struggling with the same problem as experienced by a transgender person and that gender dysphoria was a common experience, affecting a majority of people:

> (...) my main memory, something that was stuck in my head, was wondering if everyone had the same thing (laughing). Does everyone have that? And is that normal? I mean, normal meaning natural. I treated it like this, like something in-between, quite natural, you know. I was just wondering if everyone had the same thing – R13.

Due to a rationalisation or lack of awareness, the perceived conflict seemingly ceases to exist. A fully unrealised suppression of the problem allows a transgender person to temporarily adjust their personal identity to the imagined social identity, which is incompatible with the reality. A problem arises when a transgender person discovers the fact of being transgender, thus gaining a completely new perspective on the situation:

> (...) I mean, after puberty, I kept thinking that all girls were like that. I lived with this belief for a few years. Then my male and female friends made me realise that it was just me, and that everyone, that girls enjoyed it, and so on, and that I was the only weird person among them. This was actually my first conflict, and back then I didn't even realise it was actually a conflict (...) – R7.

One of the interviewees, after discovering their transgender identity, rationalised the perceived gender dysphoria and treated their breasts as a worthless part of the body, without linking the female breasts with their actual intended use and viewing them as being an attribute typical of the female sex. Ultimately, the attempt to rationalise the problem turned out to be futile and the interviewee decided to undergo a breast removal procedure (mastectomy). In view of the costly surgical procedures which, in the case of genital operations, require a completion of the legal procedure of gender reassignment (Grodzka, Podobińska 2012: 202–204), transgender individuals try to survive that difficult period by rationalising the problem:

> Over time, I developed a very serious dysphoria about my breasts. And then I started to treat them just as extra fat. It wasn't so strong anymore/ it wasn't so alien anymore, it was just a bit more fat. Somehow, I got used to it over time – R10.

For the vast majority of respondents, the masculine or feminine sexual characteristics which appear during puberty signalled a strongly aggravating sexual dysphoria. For transgender men, much as for the interviewee mentioned above, the most difficult moment in puberty was the development of breasts, the first menstruation and a feminine voice with an overly high pitch. Transgender women suffered worst because of the awareness of having male genitals, the appearance of facial hair and ever thicker hair all over their body:

> My first period was a horrible thing. I think it was my biggest conflict ever (laughing). (...) During puberty, I got ever more bothered with my unwanted "ballast" because something was already happening here, things started to change, and I got tits and wondered how to get rid of them. That's when the conflict got really worse for me – R12.

Several interviewees, increasingly aware of being transgender, found fulfilment as men or women by creating an *alter ego*, a fictitious identity in the world of imagination or online. In this strategy, the actual reality became secondary:

> (...) I decided to cut myself off from the real world and hide myself in the online world and open up there. Well, you know, it's freedom, you can do just anything, nobody's going to check on you. I just felt safe out there, and I barely existed in the real world, just to be there – R12.

However, despite the growing awareness of being a transgender individual, many interviewees tried to deny their gender identity by attempting to adapt to normative gender roles. Strong pressure from the social circle, which refused to accept these non-normative identities, drove the transgender person to make every effort to internalise the social norms and gender roles adopted as appropriate in their particular culture. In order to prove – to other people and to themselves – that an attempt to match the assigned gender to the expected gender roles may be a chance to overcome the internal conflict, transgender individuals demonstrated their masculinity or femininity in a stereotypical or even exaggerated way:

> (...) I was hiding it, hoping that I could somehow overcome it, somehow suppress this aspect of myself. I made various efforts, very stupid ones, to try and to push myself to extremes, to fit the common stereotypes, and extremes. Well, being almost like a "Sebix" [colloquial Polish: a muscular man with a shaved head, dressed in tracksuit bottoms – A.S.]. Well, maybe not that far but, well, I started doing weight training, for instance, hoping that this would help. Well, it didn't work, and things got even worse. My back got too big as a result, not cool at all – R2.

The strategy of suppressing one's transgender identity, as described here, falls within the category of internalised transphobia. Internalised transphobia is a form of oppression, involving self-destructive behaviour. A person who hates being transgender believes that the mismatch between the sex assigned at birth and their gender identity is an illness, and that an attempt to adapt to societal norms may be an effective method to cure it (Kłonkowska et al. 2015: 85–86):

> Throughout my time in college, I tried very hard to be a woman, in an incredibly exaggerated way. Very heavy make-up, provocative clothes, corsets to emphasise my waist – it was really caricatural, I mean it... From my perspective, when I think about it now, it was very strange and over the top. On the other hand, now I understand what I was trying to do when I tried so hard to suppress being transgender; by the way, my attending physician said it was simply internalised transphobia. And it stayed like this throughout my time in college – R7.

No strategies to cope with gender dysphoria which involved suppressing the fact of being transgender helped any interviewee to resolve the internal conflict. All the respondents felt alienated from themselves, especially before the start of transition. Their personal identity, with transgender identity being a significant element thereof, did not complement their social identity. The decision to start a transition and gradually adjust their exterior appearance to the perceived gender identity was the only effective strategy to overcome the conflict between gender assigned at birth and internally perceived gender identity:

> The actual moment, when I started to use male word endings and bought my first binder [a belt to flatten the breasts – A.S.] was last year. You know, I cut my hair short, let my leg hair grow, threw away all my girly clothes and, most importantly, started looking for a sexologist. Well, these were the first changes, really small, but it felt like a great relief! (laughing) – R4.

5. A conflict between personal and social identity

A cisgender society that does not accept difference does not make it easy for individuals struggling with gender dysphoria to live a normal life. Transgender people hide their true identity before gender reassignment and in the early stages of transition. Only at the expense of concealing their personal identity can trans men and trans women fulfil the expectations associated with the social identity. This strengthens the sense of self-alienation in transgender persons, mentioned by all the respondents in the interviews:

> This was actually said earlier: this was a role that I played, I literally like to compare people to a theatre; it feels as I'm on stage all the time, like a woman in society, but when I finally started to live as a man, I finally felt that I stepped down and came off the stage and finally started living like I would like to live – R7.

The social roles imposed on transgender people, resulting from their gender assigned at birth, lead to a sense of non-unity of the person. Misgendering, i.e. addressing transgender people with names and pronouns that are incompatible with the gender they feel they belong to (Cambridge Dictionary), as well as social expectations inconsistent with gender identity, were experienced by the respondents as unnatural. Unnaturalness and alienation from oneself when playing imposed and unwanted gender roles provides an answer to the question as to whether being transgender leads to a change or modification of personal identity. All the participants in the study unanimously said that they had always felt they were the same person before the transition, and during and after partial or total gender reassignment. Despite the changes, each individual has their own foundation identity, which, in the respondents' opinion, remained unaffected by the transition:

> It is often said that when transgender people come out, when they undergo gender transition, they make a 180-degree change, which is not true, because we are the same person all the time, always. It's not that we suddenly get new character traits or lose some of our interests; we really are the same person all the time, only our external skin changes and we finally feel more comfortable – R7.

> Well, identity (pause), I've always had one identity. These were simply appropriate, achievable steps [gender reassignment – K.S.] to make that identity a reality. Oh, and that was it! That's all there is to it – R13.

In the case of social identity, transgender persons, especially before the start of the transition process, do not have the freedom to express their true self. While fulfilling societal expectations related to the gender roles consistent with the gender assigned at birth, the personal identity of a trans man or a trans woman is constantly camouflaged. From early childhood, transgender persons are allocated to the group of individuals that contradicts their transgender identity. Prior to gender reassignment, the social identity that transgender persons want to identify with is unattainable, which means that the fact of being a transgender person has a significant impact on how their social identity develops.

Hormone therapy, followed by gender reassignment, means that trans men and trans women assume the so-called "passing" (blending), i.e. the appearance that is consistent with the perceived gender. Thanks to the much-wanted "passing", third parties, unaware of the person being transgender, instinctively address that person using pronouns that correspond to his or her gender identity (Kłonkowska 2017: 136–137). After successful gender reassignment, trans men and trans women can fit perfectly into the social model of gender that is in line with their personal identity and thus begin to find fulfilment in the sphere of social identity, often without revealing that they are transgender individuals.

> At the moment I'm living in a kind of mode where nobody knows about me. When I graduated from high school, I changed my name, so my name on various student rosters was changed even though I didn't change my documents, so when there is a roll-call or when I arrange some paperwork at the university, this doesn't out me. Nobody has any suspicions. One female friend knows about me, we went to college together, and that's it. I've never lived openly as a trans person, why would I? I am now a woman now for everyone (pause) and that's what it was all about – R8.

6. Summary

When answering the first two questions presented in the methodological part, it should be pointed out that the authors managed to identify the following strategies: 1. intuitive actions towards self-expression in childhood; 2. rationalisation of the perceived gender mismatch through the belief that everyone experiences it; 3. an escape into the world of imagination by creating a fictitious identity; 4. self-destructive attempts to adapt to social norms; 5. less self-destructive behaviours aimed at concealing one's transgender identity; 6. commencement of the transition process. The first two strategies are characterised by the unawareness of one's own transgender identity. The third one, also used subconsciously, inspired some respondents from our study to undertake the first reflection on their own transgender identity and the phenomenon as such. The last three strategies are adopted by fully aware individuals.

Subsequent questions concerning the strategies of dealing with sexual dysphoria focused on either denying one's transgender identity or expressing one's own self. Internalised transphobia in the fourth and fifth strategy is an attempt to deny one's own transgender identity. In the respondents' opinion, this attempt ultimately proves ineffective due to the growing gender dysphoria and the need to combat it. Transgender persons internalised the social norms of society after experiencing a clear rejection upon their attempts at expressing the gender identity they internally identified with. The intuitive aspiration towards self-expression in the first strategy was inhibited, which could have been a reason why the internally perceived gender identity was pursued in hiding (the third strategy). The last, sixth strategy aims at gender reassignment, i.e. transgender individuals strive for a total, fully conscious expression of their self.

What is the impact of an individual's transgender identity on their personal and social identity, as seen by the respondents? Before gender reassignment, transgender people are often put in a situation where they have to choose whether they can freely reveal their personal identity or sacrifice their own self and follow gender roles that are in line with other people's expectations and the social norms. The analysis of the respondents' statements indicates that gender transition is the only effective method to find self-fulfilment and the only effective way to live in accordance with one's own, unchanged personal identity, despite the internal conflict and many changes in the lives of transgender people.

The fact of being transgender does have an impact on social identity. Societal pressure forces transgender people to fulfil social roles consistent with the gender assigned at birth. Trans men and trans women do not have the possibility to fulfil the gender roles matching the identity they internally identify with. Transgender children, who are forbidden to act intuitively, cannot go through their childhood feeling fully themselves. In an intolerant society, transgenderism is not accepted and transgender people usually receive no support from family or friends. Once they have achieved "passing", trans men and trans women have the opportunity to follow their felt gender roles, but they often conceal their past for fear of being misunderstood.

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NIEZGODNOŚĆ MIĘDZY PŁCIĄ PRZYPISANĄ PRZY URODZENIU A TOŻSAMOŚCIĄ PŁCIOWĄ U OSÓB TRANSPŁCIOWYCH – ANALIZA WYNIKÓW BADAŃ WŁASNYCH

Abstrakt. W artykule zaprezentowane zostały wyniki analizy fragmentu większych badań nad transpłciowością, obejmujących dzieciństwo transpłciowego dziecka, ujawnienie swojej właściwej tożsamości płciowej rodzinie i bliskim, otrzymane wsparcie lub jego brak, przebieg terapii hormonalnej, zabiegów chirurgicznych, procesu sądowego etc. W niniejszym artykule autorki koncentrują się wyłącznie na prezentacji wyników analizy dotyczącej doświadczenia niezgodności płci – konfliktu między tożsamością płciową a płcią przypisaną przy urodzeniu, a zatem przedmiotem analizy uczyniły opinie, wypowiedzi osób transpłciowych doświadczających niezgodności płci. W trosce o czytelność podjętej problematyki w pierwszej części przedstawione zostały stanowiska teoretyczne związane z transpłciowością, tożsamością oraz tożsamością płciową. W drugiej zaś zaprezentowane zostały strategie radzenia sobie z niezgodnością płciową, opracowane przez badaczki na podstawie zgromadzonego materiału empirycznego. Autorki w prezentacji wyników analizy uwzględniły odpowiedzi na pytania, czy niezgodność płciowa miała znaczący wpływ na kształtowanie się tożsamości osobistej i społecznej osób transpłciowych, uczestniczących w badaniu. Metodologia badania, procedura badawcza oraz analiza osadzone zostały w podejściu jakościowym. Główną techniką był wywiad swobodny ukierunkowany. Teren badań obejmował całą Polskę – w badaniu uczestniczyło 16 osób.

Słowa kluczowe: transpłciowość, tożsamość, tożsamość płciowa, niezgodność płciowa, tranzycja płciowa, korekta płci.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.06

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Member since 2019
JM14479

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REFLECTIONS ON THE SITUATION OF NUNS IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH WITH ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES FROM SPANISH-LANGUAGE LITERATURE

Abstract. In 2018 and 2019, the Vatican newspaper "L'Osservatore Romano" published two ground-breaking articles describing the psychological, physical and sexual abuse of nuns by clergymen of the Roman Catholic Church. The aim of this paper is to present the situation of consecrated women and the relationships between priests and nuns. The text will also attempt to discover possible reasons for the clergymen's inappropriate behaviour towards nuns. To achieve this goal, the author refers to the status of women in the Catholic religion and examines documents issued by the Church that relate to the life and the functioning of women's religious communities.

The second part of the paper presents fragments of Spanish-language poetry and prose whose authors or heroines are nuns. The selected texts address the problem of the clergy's discrimination against nuns.

Keywords: gender, Catholic Church, Spanish language literature, gender-based discrimination, clergy, priests, nuns.

1. Introduction: Press reports on the abuse of nuns by clergymen

Nuns (sometimes referred to as "women religious") are women who have chosen to praise God and serve their neighbours as the goal in their lives. To achieve this goal, they have renounced the opportunity to become wives and mothers or achieve professional success. Their lives, shrouded in an aura of mystery and sanctity, and the influence that some of them have had on the political, social and cultural life in many countries, have increased the popularity of nun figures in the literary works of various authors, from different currents and periods in literature.

Over the past two years, nuns have become the protagonists of press articles and films showing the abuses perpetrated by clergymen. The discussion broke out

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in March 2018 after the publication of the article entitled *The (almost) free work of sisters* by Marie-Lucile Kubacki in the Vatican newspaper "L'Osservatore Romano". The article drew the attention of global public opinion to the problems faced by nuns: the nearly slave-like labour for the benefit of male superiors, lack of stability and future prospects, as well as widespread humiliation[1]. In February 2019, the same newspaper published an article by Lucetta Scaraffia entitled *Without any touching*, which described cases of nuns being raped by priests, pregnant nuns forced to undergo abortions, and the years-long conspiracy of silence that allowed abusers to act with impunity. A few days after the publication of this text, Pope Francis officially acknowledged that the sexual exploitation of nuns by priests is a pressing problem of the Church (BBC News World, 2019). Both his words and abridged articles by Kubacki and Scaraffia were translated into many languages and appeared in the press around the world, including "El País", "Le Monde", "Der Spiegel", "The New York Times", "Newsweek" and "China Daily".

2. The subject-matter and purpose of the research

Although it would be possible to study the representations of nuns in fiction from many angles, the aforementioned press reports about the serious abuses of nuns perpetrated by the clergy motivated me to try and analyse poems, novels, and short stories in Spanish where nuns are depicted as protagonists. The aim of this paper is to identify similarities and differences in the images of nuns created by authors from particular periods, and to find references in their works to discrimination against consecrated women among the clergymen in the Catholic Church.

The choice of literature written in the Spanish language as material for analysis was in no way accidental. I decided to look at the works written by Spanish-speaking authors because, firstly, the geographical area where Spanish is used is extremely broad and diverse – ethnically, politically, economically, socially and culturally, which can help to create a reliable and complete study of the topic. Secondly, Latin America and Spain are perceived as areas where *machismo* is still present and traditional gender roles are deeply rooted in the minds of their inhabitants (although changes are taking place much faster in Spain). It is possible that the underlying reason for this state of affairs is the high level of declared religiousness, especially in the case of Latin Americans, who make up as many as 41% of all Roman Catholics in the world (Araujo-Hawkins 2014).

[1] Interestingly, the problem of consecrated women being used for unpaid work and treated disrespectfully by the clergy was raised in Poland in 2004 by the "Więź" monthly in its issue entitled *Zakonnice – rodzaj nijaki?* [*Nuns: A Neuter Gender?*]. A book by Marta Abramowicz (2016) entitled *Zakonnice odchodzą po cichu* [*Nuns Make a Silent Departure*] also evoked considerable media attention.

In order for reflections on a topic to be complete, they cannot be limited to fiction but, instead, should be based on the realities of the lives of nuns in the Catholic Church, which created the image of woman and the relationships between the communities of nuns and clergymen. In order to explore these issues, I looked at publications describing the organisation and functioning of women's religious orders, the duties and rights of nuns and their daily lives. The second category of texts used as a basis for writing this article includes books and studies on the situation of women over the centuries and the treatment of women by the Church. Here, I analysed the Bible, church documents issued by popes and hierarchs, the opinions of important figures in the history of the Catholic religion, especially the Church Fathers, and publications of feminist theologians. The last text type includes online articles on the abuse of nuns by clergymen as well as articles and reportage featuring fragments of interviews conducted with such nuns. In my work, I also invoke the documentary film *Religieuses abusées, l'autre scandale de l'Église* [*Abused nuns: Another scandal of the Catholic Church*] (Marie-Pierre Raimbault, Éric Quintin 2018), which was one of the first publicly available materials to address this serious issue. In the analysed sources, I tried to find references to the relationships that existed between nuns and priests in spheres such as the organisation and financing of monasteries, the supervision of nuns, and their relationship with the confessors who provide spiritual guidance to consecrated women. In addition, I focused on the less official contacts between women's religious communities and clergymen, and the way the two groups see and relate to each other.

3. The mental, physical and sexual abuses of nuns by clergymen

This text does not intend to prove that the abuse of nuns by the clergy, in a broad sense, is a common phenomenon: most consecrated women undoubtedly fulfil their vocation without falling victim to such practices. However, it is worth being vocal about pathological cases that take place in religious institutions, since a significant proportion of the public is not aware of them. This is largely due to the Church's policy of concealing inconvenient facts. The widespread lack of awareness of the problem means that nuns cannot count on intervention and assistance in situations where their rights are violated. While one may be tempted to claim that the image of a woman presented by the Catholic Church is widely known, so any woman who decides to join a convent should be well aware of the realities of life behind its walls, this assumption ignores many important factors. Firstly, nun candidates are mostly young women, who have an idealised image of monastic life, focusing exclusively on its spiritual sphere. Secondly, many are unaware of the degree of women's religious communities' subordination to the clergy and of the way nuns are treated by some clergymen. Thirdly, most novices are not aware of the threats potentially coming from the clergymen, since the abuse scandals have been concealed for years. It is only recently that nuns from all over the world have decided to talk openly about the sexual abuses they suffered from clergymen. The International Union of Superiors General (IUSG) or the Conférence des Religieux et Religieuses en France (CORREF), which are associations of nuns, accuse clergymen of raping and harassing hundreds of nuns. What seems striking in press reports is that nuns are completely unable to defend themselves against the abuse perpetrated by priests, as the latter often consider themselves to be representatives of God on earth and expect women to treat them as such. Bound by the vows of obedience, sisters are taught to be absolutely subordinate to the male representatives of the Church, and, as a result, nuns do not protest or defend themselves when faced with situations of abuse. The dramas that happen behind the walls of convents, parishes and seminaries, highlighted by French journalists Marie-Pierre Raimbault and Éric Quintin in their documentary (2018), result from a system of power concentrated in the hands of men. Male members of the Church make decisions about the lives of nuns, have access to financial resources unavailable to nuns, and often act with a sense of complete impunity. Intimidated and humiliated women rarely decide to denounce their tormentors, fearing that they may be accused of lying or blamed for what happened to them (Scaraffia 2019). Many nuns from poorer countries feel indebted to their congregations that have financially supported their families and improved the living conditions of their loved ones. To them, leaving the congregation seems like treason, a sign of weak character and a token of ingratitude (Kubacki 2018).

Although sexual abuse is probably the most serious threat to nuns from clergymen, even those who do not experience any abuse are not always treated with due respect. The aforementioned article by Marie-Lucile Kubacki (2018) contains excerpts from interviews with nuns who complain about clergymen treating them with contempt and disregard, and about being exploited from dusk till dawn, often without remuneration and below their qualifications.

4. The image of woman in the Catholic religion

It is puzzling why the Catholic Church, which should be a model of love and respect, has allowed discrimination against women. The answer to this question has been sought by feminist theologians, who found one of the reasons in how God was presented in the Scriptures. *If God is male, then the male is God*, as the American writer and philosopher Mary Daly once wrote (1973: 19), drawing attention to the image of the supreme deity in the Bible as an omnipotent, strong and fearless man. Aleksander Gomola (2010) argues that language reflects the way of thinking in a society, while at the same time shaping its mentality. In other words, the biblical vision of God assigns a divine status to patriarchalism (Gomola 2010:

54). Foucault maintains that power is held by those who have gained the right to use discourse (2002: 8). In the Catholic Church, this group includes the Pope, bishops and priests, i.e. only men, many of whom consider the traditional biblical world order to be inviolable. They seem to ignore the fact that the androcentric vision of God presented in the Bible is the outcome of multiple factors, such as the place and the time of its writing. Over the centuries, religious writings were created and translated by men, who reflected the stereotypes rooted in their culture and related to the role, significance and place of different genders in society.

Interestingly, in the early days of Christianity, Israelite women made up a significant part of the Church and performed important religious functions, such as prophets or deacons. In the New Testament, there are also hardly any signs of Jesus discriminating against women. It was only the teaching of St. Paul the Apostle that pushed them into a servant position towards men and deprived them of their voice (Bogucka 2005: 21–22). In the First Letter of St. Paul to Timothy, we read:

> Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control (1 Tim 2: 11–15)[2].

His teaching was continued in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, a 12th century priest and philosopher who proclaimed that women are sinful and prone to fall in moral terms. This became one of the most important reasons why women were pushed to the margins of religious life and their previously acquired position was taken away, thus consolidating the exclusive power of men within the Church. However, justifying the primacy of men over women by drawing on the Bible is not fully justified. The Book of Genesis provides two versions of human creation: the Priestly and the Yahwist. The former claims that both man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God. The latter maintains that the man was made first, while a woman was made from his rib (Bogucka 2005: 19–20). In the Christian tradition, the version indicating the female as secondary, subordinated to man, seems to be more popular. This presumption is confirmed by the teaching of the Church Fathers, who invoke Bible verses to justify the woman's inferior social position. Saint Augustine believes that, given the order of creation, it is man who dominates over woman (cited in: Van Bavel 1994: 7), while Tertullian blames her for the fall of man, saying, *And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age […] You are the devil's gateway: you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree [...]* (cited in: Baron 2011: 24)[3]. The lower position of women in the community of the faithful, without the right to

[2] New King James Version cited in: https://www.biblestudytools.com/ (accessed 20.12.2019).
[3] English version cited in: http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0402.htm (accessed 20.12.2019).

celebrate the Holy Mass and administer the sacraments is not surprising when we realise that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is largely based on the teaching of the Church Fathers.

5. The documents of the Catholic Church concerning women

For many centuries, the clergymen ignored women, as evidenced by the almost complete absence of documents on this social group. The change in this state of affairs did not occur until the last century, when the Church was no longer able to ignore or halt their increasing emancipation, although it did take steps to do so. One such step was *Casti connubii*, an encyclical proclaimed by Pope Pius XI in 1930, where he expresses the belief that equality of rights debases *the womanly character and the dignity of motherhood* (CC: 75)[4]. He also protests against women holding offices and actively participating in the life of society (CC II, 2b). An opposite opinion is expressed by John XXIII in his encyclical *Pacem in terris* of 1963, which states that *the part that women are now playing in political life is everywhere evident* and that women *are demanding both in domestic and in public life the rights and duties which belong to them as human persons* (PiT: 41)[5]. The same Pope was also the initiator of the Second Vatican Council between 1962 and 1965, which was considered to be a revolutionary event in the history of the Church. The Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* states that *every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent* (GS: 29)[6]. Another pope, John Paul II, was the first pontiff in history to write an apostolic letter exclusively on women. *Mulieris dignitatem* maintains Pius XI's view of marriage and motherhood (spiritual motherhood in the case of consecrated women) as the basic tasks of the female personality (MD VI: 17–21). The same Pope strongly rejected the possibility that women might be ordained as priests. In his letter *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*, John Paul II writes: *in virtue of my ministry* […] *I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful* (OS: 4)[7]. This quotation lacks any substantive or theological arguments in support of such a decision, which was based solely on

[4] English version cited in: http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19301231_casti-connubii.html (accessed 20.12.2019).

[5] Both quotes cited in: http://www.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html (accessed 20.12.2019).

[6] English version cited in: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html (accessed 20.12.2019).

[7] English version cited in: http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19940522_ordinatio-sacerdotalis.html (accessed 20.12.2019).

the dogma of papal infallibility (Makowski 2007: 16). An important document on relations between the Church and women was the letter of John Paul II entitled *A ciascuna di voi*. In this letter, the Pope apologises for any harm caused to women by this institution over the centuries (LW: 3). In the *Vita Consecrata* exhortation, the Pope also formulates a call to overcome all discrimination, violence and exploitation against women, and calls men to reconsider the established patterns and roles of the different sexes in *social, political, economic, religious and ecclesial life* (VC: 57–58)[8].

6. Relationships between clergymen and consecrated women

The patriarchal vision of social relations, promoted especially strongly since the Middle Ages, pushed women into two closed spaces: the home or the convent. Those whose ambitions went beyond the roles of wife and mother often decided to devote their lives to God, gaining a certain independence and the possibility to obtain education. It is commonly believed that poor families forced their daughters to join a religious order because they could not afford a dowry. However, convents also required nun candidates to pay a fee to cover the costs of their subsistence (Burns 2002: 68). Dowries for consecrated women, together with proceeds from the sale of handicrafts and donations, were among the main sources of subsistence for women's religious communities. Discrimination on the basis of gender occurred here as well, because patrons were much more likely to support male religious orders. They saw women's communities as less prestigious, less effective in praying for graces and unfit to celebrate popular anniversary masses (Jordan 2012: 63–64, 66). The influence of men on the fate of women's religious congregations can be seen in the manner of organisation. Although generally considered to be typically female communities, where the prioress and the congregation of nuns have the final say in all matters, women's convents are in fact largely dependent on men. Rita Ríos de la Llave (2009: 180) writes:

> The image of female communities as exclusively feminine spaces, tiny enclosed completely autonomous universes where women could live without masculine interference, is completely utopian. The rhythm of nuns' lives was dictated by rules imposed by the authorities of religious orders – always men –, by ecclesiastical authorities – likewise men, – and by Popes – also men.

Although the direct authority over the sisters is exercised by the mother superior, she is not independent in her decisions but subordinated to the bishop who, in turn, must obey the Pope. In 1298, Pope Boniface VIII issued *Periculoso*, a breakthrough decree for women's orders forbidding nuns to leave the walls of monasteries under the threat of excommunication. This decision was confirmed in

[8] English version cited in: http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031996_vita-consecrata.html (accessed 20.12.2019).

1563 by the Council of Trent, and three years later, by virtue of the *Circa pastoralis* bull, Pope Pius V prohibited women's orders from being established without strict enclosure. It is highly significant that this restriction did not apply to men's orders (Radzik 2015: 109). The official justification for issuing *Periculoso* was as follows:

> Wishing to provide for the dangerous and abominable situation of certain nuns, who, casting off the reins of respectability and impudently abandoning nunnish modesty and the natural bashfulness of their sex […] we do firmly decree [...] that nuns […] ought henceforth to remain perpetually cloistered in their monasteries, […] so that occasions for lasciviousness having been removed, may most diligently safeguard their hearts and bodies in complete chastity (cited in: Makowski 1999: 135).

What led Boniface VIII to make a crucial decision for the lives of nuns was not concern for their safety but, rather, the belief that women generally have a greater propensity for promiscuity than men (Adamiak 2016: 208). The decree on confining nuns in a strict enclosure made them dependent on male congregations, which were obliged to provide maintenance for the sisters, who were to live in subordinated convents (the so-called *cura monialium*). In this way, a patriarchal model of the medieval family was transplanted into the sphere of religious life, although women's convents had been an alternative to that model before the papal decision. It seems that after the announcement of *Periculoso*, which brought revolutionary changes for the lives of women's orders, popes' reforming zeal in this sphere dwindled significantly. Another important document on nuns was not published until 1965. Signed by Paul VI, the decree on the renewal of religious life called *Perfectae caritatis*, adapted to modern times, permitted nuns to leave the walls of convents in justified circumstances and ordered them to adapt their religious habits to the needs of health and the ministry performed (PC: 16–17), and, as a result, many congregations completely abandoned habits.

The power of men is not limited to managing the organisation of nuns' lives, but also extends over their consciences. By virtue of the resolutions of the Council of Trent (1545–1563), each nun has an assigned confessor whom she should obey. Sometimes there were disputes between confessors and prioresses as to which of them was more entitled to guide the spiritual growth of nuns, but in the end the Vatican always settled these conflicts in favour of priests (Abramowicz 2016: 190), citing the sisters' vow of obedience. Toquica Clavijo (2001: 159) addresses this issue as follows:

> The violation of this vow, which was fundamental to ecclesiastical control, entailed sacrilege and eternal damnation. A nun was subjected to two superiors: the prioress and the confessor. There was some rivalry between the two but, ultimately, it was the confessor who was their guide as spiritual director, and he decided whether the sisters were making progress in their spiritual life and measured the orthodoxy of their faith because he was entitled to denounce them to the authorities.

The relationship between the nun and her confessor was based on her total obedience, without the right to oppose, since, by the very fact of being a man, the priest was considered to be more competent in matters of faith (de Pazzis Pi Corrales 2010: 33). Although by virtue of the *Pastoralis curae* constitution proclaimed by Pope Benedict XIV in 1948 nuns had the right to choose a confessor, some were not aware of this right or could not find a suitable one. Alejandra Araya Espinoza (2003: 180) cites the example of Saint Rosa of Lima, who, before she came across a perfect confessor, had as many as thirty. Confessors controlled sisters' literary works, and often appropriated them (Franco 1989: 39), published without their knowledge or consent, and sometimes attributed their own authorship to nuns' works. The best-known example of the absolute power exercised by a confessor over a nun's creative work is the fate of Sister Marcela de San Félix, an illegitimate daughter of Lope de Vega: obedient to her confessor's will, she burned her works without even saving her autobiography. Only one of the five volumes she wrote survived, thanks to the fact that the rigorous confessor was succeeded by a more liberal one (Pérez, Ihrie 2002: 542; Trambaioli 2017: 58–59). The clergy's strict supervision over nuns' literary output was justified by invoking the obligation to ensure that their writings were not heading towards heterodoxy. If clergymen saw any traces of this, they were obliged to inform the church authorities, sometimes indirectly condemning the nuns in their charge to death by burning at the stake (Mejías Navarrete 2004: 7). Another reason why a nun could be burned at the stake was the suspicion of being possessed by demons. This accusation was often put forward against women who underwent weeks of fasting, which caused fainting, haemorrhage or hallucinations (Rodríguez Peláez 2007: 681–682). This phenomenon was so common in women's congregations that a special term *anorexia mirabilis* (Rodríguez Peláez 2007: 687) was coined to describe it. Silvia Fendrik (1997) states that from the 16th to the 18th century there was a real *holocaust of women* accused of practicing black magic, depicted in popular culture as bony old women. The borderline between a saint and a witch was very narrow: they both experienced visions, heard voices and lived almost "on fresh air" (Fendrik 1997: 27). Whether they were made saint or burned at the stake was decided by the men in the Church. Women who refused to eat did so largely out of the desire to gain control of their own body – the only thing they owned. The self-mortification practiced by nuns can be considered as a subversive response to the power of the masculinised ecclesiastical hierarchy controlling every element of their lives (Kirk 2009: 145–146). By starving, they renounced their feminine nature, which, according to the Church, was inseparable from matter, impurity and sin (Fendrik 1997: 15). Extreme emaciation caused lack of menstrual periods and deprived the nuns' bodies of typically female features, bringing them closer to the male body that was valued much higher in the Christian tradition.

The duties incumbent on nuns differ greatly from those entrusted to priests or monks. Women in the Church do not fulfil important tasks, do not decide on key issues, do not hold church offices and do not administer the sacraments. Thus, a nun's day is filled with prayer, contemplation and work. The latter, often performed at parsonages or in men's monasteries, is rarely appreciated by clergymen, who are used to treating sisters as servants. In interviews published in the issue of the "Więź" monthly entitled *Zakonnice – rodzaj nijaki?* [*Nuns: A Neuter Gender?*], nuns raise the problem of disregard by clergymen and how nuns react to such inappropriate behaviour. One of them bluntly shows her disagreement with such treatment, saying: *Behold the maidservant of the Lord, but not of a priest* (Kołodziejczyk, Waluś, Pilśniak 2004: 20). Other nuns, however, do not have enough courage to say "No" because they think that following the orders of the clergy is their vocation and their path to holiness. This belief is more common among the elderly nuns who were educated before the Second Vatican Council, a group that includes many prioresses. Their decisions, based on a patriarchal vision of the world, have an impact on the lives and functioning of the nuns they are in charge of. It is the prioresses that send nuns to work in monasteries and parishes or prohibit sisters from embarking on their much desired studies, explaining that this prohibition is in the interest of the congregation (Abramowicz 2016: 19).

7. Examples of clergymen's discrimination against nuns in Spanish-speaking literature

Bishops, priests, monks and nuns have been the protagonists of Spanish literature since its early days. Monk Gonzalo de Berceo wrote about a pregnant prioress as early as in the 13th century in *Milagros de nuestra Señora*, while *The Book of Good Love* written by clergyman Juan Ruiz in the mid-14th century presents an ironic and witty picture of the celibacy of the clergy, ridiculing their weaknesses and vices. The plentiful texts that are critical of the clergy in Spanish-language literature were often written by the clergy themselves, as was the case with Saint Theresa of Ávila or the Mexican sister Juana Inés de la Cruz, the first prominent writer from the New World. However, criticism is not the only perspective adopted by Spanish and Latin American authors when describing the clergy. If we look at how they present consecrated women, we can see that they fit into three patterns.

The first one presents nuns as naive and docile beings, easily persuaded by men or even leading them into temptation. This picture is part of the well-known trend of thinking about woman in the Church as the heiress of Eve: a sinner and traitor causing men to fall. The following passage from *The Book of Good Love* by Juan Ruiz depicts such a vision of a nun:

Juan Ruiz – *The Book of Good Love*

"Accept, dear sir, our shelter" was the Nuns' most fervent proffer.
"Forget, we beg, those others, who no luxury can offer.
Those men are dreary wretches, and their ways show rank confusion.
So have a try at haircloth [in our reticent seclusion]".

[...]
They set most store on cooing [and on billing most frenetic],
They speak with insincerity, display a crude cosmetic.
With come-on looks and actions, and enticements false, and wiggling
They many drive insane, alas, with false, deceptive giggling.

Lord Love, our puissant sovereign, if he'd followed my advice,
The Nuns, sure, would have heeded–bargain that, at any price!
He'd have been with very lavish entertainment thus presented.
In dormitories once installed, he'd never have repented![9]

From the Middle Ages to the 19th century, Spanish-language literature has produced numerous texts where nuns are tempted by men, both the clergy and lay people. The figure of *galán de monjas*, the *seducer of nuns*, gained the greatest popularity in Spanish poetry of the Golden Age, although this motif is present in almost every era. Stories of romance between men and nuns can be found in a collection of didactic anecdotes *Jardín de flores curiosas*, written in 1570 by Antonio de Torquemada, in the picaresque novel *El Buscón* (*Paul the Sharper or The Scavenger)* by Francisco de Quevedo from 1626, in the *Jardín de Venus* poems by Félix María de Samani from 1780, in the poem *LXXVI* (from the collection *Arias tristes* published in 1903) by the Spanish Nobel Prize winner Juan Ramón Jiménez, or in the crime novel *The Last Cato* by the Spanish author Matilde Asensi from 2001. In the following excerpt, the Spanish author of the Romantic era, José Zorilla, depicts a nun who is completely subjected to the will of a man and prefers the joys of the flesh and temptations of the world to staying in the cloister and praising the Lord.

José Zorilla (2019: 12) – *El capitán Montoya* (published 1840)

– Sir, how's the nun?
– And how should she be, Ginés?
Lying at my feet,
softer than a sponge.
[…]
– I don't know yet how,
but I'll get her out of there,
according to what I've seen,
the lovebird prefers
to fly free in Castile
than to be caged with Christ.

[9] English translation in: Juan Ruiz (1975), *The book of the Archpriest of Hita* (*Libro de buen amor*), transl. M. Singleton, Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, Madison, p. 121.

In the second approach, nuns are shown as wise, good and just people who are not afraid of taking up the fight against injustice and evil, even at the price of a severe punishment. The novel *Historia de un otoño* by the Spanish writer José Jiménez Lozano (1971), based on real events, fits perfectly into this pattern. It tells the story of the events preceding the demolition of the French monastery of Port-Royal des-Champs, the culmination of a six decades long dispute between a congregation of nuns, the Jansenists, the French church dignitaries, King Louis XIV and several popes. The nuns refused to renounce their faith in the Jansenist theses and, as a result, were deprived of the right to confession, to receive communion, and even to bury one of the deceased nuns, which finally led to the dissolution of their convent. The author of the novel presents the female protagonists as rational and strong women who stand up against the ecclesiastical and secular power of men in defence of their ideals, despite having no chances of victory. The author writes about them as follows:

> Their NO to Louis XIV, to the Pope, to the bishops, to the universe and to brute force is the first act of a civil conscience in historical modernity [...]. It is the affirmation of the autonomy of conscience in the face of any power, which came from a few women, regardless of consequences. They knew what they were risking and accepted it. They got crushed and trodden, but they kept saying NO (Jiménez Lozano, Galparsoro 1998: 24–25).

However, nuns do not always muster up the courage to oppose their superiors. A situation where a nun follows the orders of a bishop without a word of opposition can be found in the crime novel *La monja que perdió la cabeza* by the contemporary Spanish writers Andreu Martín and Jaime Ribera (2007). The full omnipotence of church hierarchs is best illustrated by the following quote: *...the bishop told her: "You go to the cloister, with your little mouth closed". They discharged her from the Missionaries of the Divine Word, or whatever they call themselves, and turned her into a cloistered nun* (Martín, Ribera 2007: 355–359). The quoted excerpt shows how the female protagonist in the novel is totally subordinated to her superiors. She has no say and no influence on her fate. The bishop treats her like an object that can be freely disposed of.

In the history of Spain and Latin America, there is no shortage of talented nun writers who rebel against the power of the clergy. The two best-known ones, whose writings abound in criticism of the patriarchal reality of their time, are the 16th-century Spanish mystic Saint Teresa of Ávila and the Mexican nun Juana Inés de la Cruz. In their works, we find traces of conflicts between them and their confessors. In her autobiography *The Book of My Life*, St. Teresa speaks about priests as follows: *these others, especially if they are confessors, cause severe disturbance; I have undergone some years of such great trial that I am amazed now at how I was able to suffer it*[10]. (St. Teresa of Avila 2008: 283). Juana

[10] English translation in: St. Teresa of Avila (2008), *The book of her life*, transl. K. Kavanaugh, O. Rodríguez, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis/Cambridge, p. 171.

Inés also had a longstanding dispute with her spiritual director Antonio Núñez de Miranda. He demanded that the nun should abandon writing texts on secular or erotic themes and focus on religious work. Saint Teresa and Juana Inés rebelled against the men who tried to control them under the guise of care and concern. The men treated them with great severity, considering the nuns as beings whose every gesture is streaked with sin. The medieval belief that a woman was *Satan's chamber* and *an instrument of the devil* and the culprit of sexual sins committed by men (Niekielska-Sekuła 2013: 90) persisted for centuries, without losing its power even today. The two nuns mentioned here, although living in different times and on different continents, wrote astonishingly similar texts on how the men of their respective epochs perceived the fair sex. Here are some examples:

Saint Teresa of Jesus – *The Way of Perfection* (published 1566–1582)

> Lord […] for Thou art a righteous Judge, not like judges in the world, who, being, after all, men and sons of Adam, refuse to consider any woman's virtue as above suspicion. [...] when I see what the times are like, I feel it is not right to repel spirits which are virtuous and brave, even though they be the spirits of women[11].

Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Silly, you men...* (published 1698)

> Silly, you men-so very adept
> at wrongly faulting womankind,
> not seeing you're alone to blame
> for faults you plant in woman's mind.
> After you've won by urgent plea
> the right to tarnish her good name,
> you still expect her to behave—
> you, that coaxed her into shame[12].

The nun protagonists who are depicted on the pages of contemporary Spanish-language novels and short stories do notice the androcentric organisation of church life that excludes women from the system of power. The Chilean writer Mario Valdivia Valenzuela (2015: 475) writes the following words in his crime novel *El Padre*:

> The sister does not hear confession, nor does she possess the power to administer the sacraments that might be urgently required. She does not celebrate the Mass, does not consecrate the Host, cannot give the last rites. At night, a nun serves only to pray, a service of too ethereal to be required in the early hours of the morning.

[11] English translation in: St. Teresa of Avila (1999), *The Way of Perfection*, transl. E.A. Peers, Sheed and Ward, London, p. 13.

[12] English translation in: Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Silly, you men...*, [in:] A.S. Trueblood (ed.) (1988), *A Sor Juana anthology*, transl. A.S. Trueblood, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. 111.

The Argentinian writer Patricia Suárez (2012: 690–694) rebels against the monopoly of men in administering sacraments and holding church positions in her short story *Monjas*, where she writes:

> [...]and suddenly we all began to wonder how badly arranged the Catholic religion was since women cannot study to become priests or become pope. We should start a protest, invent a new worship, with Masses full of flowers of all colours, lacy cassocks, beautiful hats with a wide brim instead of bishops' bonnets.

The problem of nuns being used as free labour in churches and parishes was raised by the contemporary Spanish writer Matilde Asensi (2001: 235–239) in her crime novel *The Last Cato*, where she writes:

> I assume that Monsignor Tournier, as well as the rest of the audience, would prefer his own nuns-servants, of whom each one of us must have at least three or four, or some Polish nuns [...] who, dressed in a habit and a canopy veil, were in charge of preparing His Holiness' meals, cleaning his rooms and always keeping his clothes perfectly clean.

In this work, we will find more references to clergymen who treat nuns without respect or who question their professional competence and intellectual capacity solely on grounds of their gender. This is illustrated by the following quote: *While the others remained silent with surprise, a sarcastic grin emerged on his* [prelate Tournier's] *face, which made me suspect him of openly opposing the use of my services before I even entered the office. I could almost hear him speak with contempt: 'A woman...?'* (Asensi 2001: 282–286).

The last way of presenting nuns shows them as women who are morally corrupt, sadistic and without conscience. As hardly accessible and mysterious institutions, convents are the perfect setting for crime stories or horror novels. High walls and bars provoke authors to produce a variety of visions of what might be happening behind them. The image of a nun as a demonic and disturbed figure coincides with the opinion of Tertullian, who saw women as the source of all evil and made them responsible for pain, suffering, sin and corruption in the private and public sphere (cited in: Tavard 1973: 58–59). The vision of monster nuns can be found in many contemporary novels by Spanish-speaking authors, for example in *Las madres negras* (2018) by the Spanish author Patricia Esteban Erlés, in *El beso de la monja* (2015) by the Mexican writer Carmen Solís, or in the science fiction novel *El sueño* by César Aira from Argentina (1998). All these works are linked by a vision of the brutal reality behind the monastic walls and the presence of cruel rituals that novice nuns have to undergo. All three of these works are linked by the theme of the oppressive and absolute power of the prioress and the fanatic devotion to a certain ideology which, when misunderstood, gives rise to violence and suffering for the soul and body. This is perhaps most clearly visible in *El sueño*, where an army of robotic nuns armed with machine guns tries to control the world with weapons and tea with a drug dissolved in it. The liquid calms all the senses one by one, which can be seen as a reference to the control over the body – an obligation of nuns. Fasting and self-mortification are mentioned in *Extramuros* (1988: 12), a novel by the Spanish author Jesús Fernández Santos, who writes of one of the heroines that she *barely ate or drank, and did not take any meal other than the Holy Communion in her mouth, she was constantly awake, almost without sleeping, praying during the hours that other nuns used for sleep*. The author also describes the struggle of the protagonists with the Spanish Inquisition, which carries out an investigation to ensure that the stigmata of one of the nuns are not the work of Satan. The nun knows that if she is found guilty of being possessed, she will face only one possible end: death at the stake.

8. Final considerations

In conclusion, women's monasteries, despite their apparent autonomy, are very much dependent on the male representatives of the Church, many of whom still seem to see women as weaker and inferior. Nuns as protagonists have appeared in Spanish-language literature since its earliest days, and their images presented by authors in different epochs vary greatly: in the Middle Ages, authors depicted femmes fatales preying on male victims, in the Renaissance and Baroque – fiery beings easily succumbing to the temptations of the body. Romanticism painted them as a tempting yet forbidden fruit, while contemporary literature often portrays them as full-blooded women who notice the lack of equality in the Church, who criticise the oppressive treatment by priests and call for change not only in interpersonal relations but also in the fundamental principles of the Catholic religion. It cannot be ruled out that, given the publicity around the abuse of nuns in the Church, there will be more press articles, scientific publications, novels and stories inspired by this topic in the near future. Although I presume that the main goal of the Spanish-speaking authors mentioned in the article was not to fight for the improvement of the situation of nuns, their works nevertheless draw attention to the discrimination of women in the Church structures, making readers reflect on what kind of turn would need to occur within this institution to eliminate the existing inequalities, and highlighting the effort needed to achieve this goal. Despite the obstacles, the resistance of hierarchs and the centuries-old tradition of the Catholic Church which pushed women to the margins, the contemporary Spanish-language texts presented above are filled with the conviction that the equal rights of male and female believers are an important and urgent matter. It cannot be ruled out that talking and writing about the need to introduce changes aimed at this goal will draw public attention to this problem and enforce change sooner than anyone could expect.

List of acronyms:

CC – Pius XI (1930), *Casti connubii*, encyclical.
GS – Second Vatican Council (1965), *Gaudium et spes*, constitution.
LW – John Paul II (1995), *A ciascuna di voi*, letter to women.
MD – John Paul II (1988), *Mulieris dignitatem*, apostolic letter.
OS – John Paul II (1994), *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*, apostolic letter.
PC – Second Vatican Council (1965), *Perfectae caritatis*, decree.
PiT – John XXIII (1963), *Pacem in Terris*, encyclical.
VC – John Paul II (1996), *Vita consecrata*, apostolic exhortation.

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Olga Grzyś

ROZWAŻANIA O SYTUACJI SIÓSTR ZAKONNYCH W KOŚCIELE KATOLICKIM A PRZYKŁADY Z LITERATURY HISZPAŃSKOJĘZYCZNEJ JĄ OBRAZUJĄCE

Abstrakt. W 2018 i 2019 roku na łamach watykańskiej gazety „L'Osservatore Romano" opublikowano dwa przełomowe artykuły opisujące psychiczne, fizyczne i seksualne wykorzystywanie sióstr zakonnych przez duchownych Kościoła katolickiego. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie sytuacji kobiet konsekrowanych oraz zależności występujących pomiędzy nimi a męskimi przedstawicielami Kościoła. W tekście zostanie podjęta próba odpowiedzi na pytanie o przyczyny występowania przypadków nadużyć kleru względem zakonnic i mniszek. Posłuży ku temu przedstawienie kreowanego przez Kościół obrazu kobiety oraz wydanych przez tę instytucję dokumentów traktujących o życiu i funkcjonowaniu żeńskich wspólnot zakonnych.

W drugiej części pracy omówione zostaną wybrane fragmenty z poezji i prozy hiszpańskojęzycznej różnych epok, których autorkami bądź bohaterkami są zakonnice. W tekstach tych porusza się problem dyskryminacji kobiet konsekrowanych przez duchownych.

Słowa kluczowe: gender, Kościół katolicki, literatura hiszpańskojęzyczna, dyskryminacja płciowa, duchowni, kler, zakonnice.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.07

VARIA

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THE MEDICAL SOCIOLOGY AND THE SPORT SOCIOLOGY IN POLAND – THE DISSIMILAR TWINS

Abstract. The article concerns the medical sociology of and the sport sociology in Poland. Despite some similarities (cooperation with institutional fields outside the humanities, partial sharing of the subject of interest and dealing with various dysfunctions in this area, the applicative nature of their research and analysis, emergence at a similar time), an important difference can be noticed in the academic functioning of both sub-disciplines, including their attractiveness for subsequent generations of sociology students. The purpose of the article is to identify the reasons for this situation. The global conditions analysed by the author include greater interest of the classic authors of sociology in the discussion of medicine rather than sport, the depreciation of sport as a subject of sociological reflection, as well as a different level of prestige of the disciplines with which the specific sociologies cooperate. Among the national determinants of the relatively weaker academic establishment of the sport sociology is the fact that – in contrast to the medical sociology – it developed in a certain isolation from the general sociological milieu, and did not manage to avoid ideological entanglements.

Keywords: the medical sociology, the sport sociology, Polish Sociological Association, Polish sociology, sociological sub-disciplines.

1. Introduction

It is a home truth that there are numerous sociological sub-disciplines. Suffice to say that currently (July 2019) there are 21 specialised sections in the Polish Sociological Association. Similarly, 37 Research Networks function in the structures of the European Sociological Association. In turn, 57 Research Committees, 6 Thematic Groups and 2 Working Groups currently exist within the International Sociological Association. The author's proposal is to group the sociology sub-disciplines into the following areas:

1. general sociology and general social theory, social structure, methodology of social research;

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2. sociologies of various areas of social life, functioning independently, based on their own theoretical findings or referring to the theory of general sociology; their achievements may be useful for practitioners of given fields (e.g. sociology of work, rural and urban sociology, sociology of everyday life, gender, civil society, science);
3. sociologies (e.g. sociology of culture, politics, art, religion, economy), whose subject of interest also lies in the domain of other social disciplines or the humanities (indicated in the names of those disciplines); these sociologies can communicate with their "partner" discipline in the humanities owing to the shared canon, that is, a certain body of concepts or notions (e.g. liberalism, "dramatic perspective" or postmodernism) or a similar cognitive model; despite the different perspectives, one science can inspire the other and make use of its intellectual attainments;
4. sociologies dealing with those areas of social reality which used to be colonised – as an object of cognition – by various non-humanities (the medical sociology, sport sociology, military sociology, sociology of industry); the interests of these sociologies oscillate between social research for the needs of these other disciplines and critical, strictly sociological studies[1].

The article focuses on two sociological sub-disciplines associated with the last of the areas listed above: the medical sociology (wherein research and analysis are conducted mainly in the sphere of the medical and health sciences) and the sport sociology (operating in the sphere of the physical culture sciences). Let us precede considerations on what connects these two sub-disciplines by defining the objects of their interests. In the case of the medical sociology it is worth recalling Robert Straus' distinction – in use since 1957 – between the sociology *of* medicine, often having a critical dimension, and applicative sociology *in* medicine, as an auxiliary science of medicine (Ostrowska 2004; Sokołowska 2009: 21–22; Skrzypek 2012: 373). Quoting Antonina Ostrowska, the medical sociology deals with almost every aspect of health, illness and medical care, addressing social issues in such areas as the etiology of diseases, the behaviour of people in good health and in sickness, the functioning of medical institutions, the availability of medical care, as well as research on all the ethical, organisational, political and economic problems associated with them. Therefore, this sub-discipline is often called *the sociology of health, illness and medicine* (Ostrowska 2009: 14), but hereinafter the original name will be used consistently throughout this text: the medical sociology. Then, in terms of the sport sociology (sometimes called physical culture sociology), this discipline deals with the *social contexts, determinants, consequences and manifestations of such phenomena as: sport (in the narrow sense), physical recreation and physical education* (Stempień 2018: 177).

[1] Other criteria for division of sociological subdisciplines are e.g. methodological, subject and pragmatic criteria (Kołodziej 2015).

When thus understood, what do the medical sociology and the sport sociology have in common? The first characteristic is that there is overlap with regard to the subject of interest, namely health, which is considered a key value. It should be noted, however, that in the case of the medical sociology, health is treated in a more complex way (including socio-cultural determinants of the term "health", issues of health damaging behaviour, health promotion). The postulate of integrating the medical sociology and the sport sociology (Rekowski 1995: 116–117) by establishing a new sub-discipline (social health theory or the sociology of health) is even more controversial because it would not fully cover either the interests of the medical sociology (as defined by Ostrowska), or those of the sport sociology (for which healthy oriented physical activity is only one of the fields of interest, alongside e.g. professional sport); thus such a new sub-discipline would merely embrace their "common area". Therefore, social health theory or sociology of health could not replace both the medical sociology and the sport sociology, but could possibly constitute another sub-discipline[2]. Notwithstanding the above reservations, we can speak of a certain relation between the two specific sociologies.

Secondly, a shared feature of the medical sociology and the sport sociology is their practical nature. Both of these branches of sociology fulfil the tasks "ordered" by associated disciplines. Thus, medical sociologists deal with, for example, health promotion – by developing specific programs and conducting research to assess their effectiveness. It is worth recalling here the long-lasting experience of the National Centre for Workplace Health Promotion at the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine in Lodz. Similarly, over the years, sport sociologists have worked as members of multidisciplinary research teams on designing and applying programs and schemes to e.g. combat obesity, improve school physical education curricula and the system of training for physical education teachers, or raise the competencies of sports coaches (Lenartowicz, Dziubiński 2019).

Thirdly – and perhaps paradoxically – it should be noted that both medical and sport sociologies (in the global perspective too, not only in Poland) deal with vast dysfunctions in medicine and sport, alongside demoralisation of professionals-actors in these fields (respectively: physicians and medical staff, athletes and sport activists) – a phenomenon perceived by society and presented in the media. The dysfunctions in the field of medicine include pathologies and organisational drawbacks, corruption, nepotism, the persistence of informal coteries and the abuse of power in the medical establishment (Gałuszka 2003; Gałuszka, Legiędź-Gałuszka 2008: 67–71, 76–81; Piątkowski 2015; 2004: 23–24; Bizoń 1976), while in the field of sport they include doping, corruption, politicisation and ideologisation, commercialisation, mediatisation and the problem of stadium hoo-

[2] The situation would be similar in the case of the sociology of the body, which would only cover some problems and social practices within the area of medical sociology (e.g. the attitude towards one's body after loss of its full ability) and sport sociology (e.g. social pressure to take care of appearance through physical activity).

liganism (and sports fans' aggression) (Krawczyk 2003: 165–166; Lipoński 2009: 48–50).

Despite the significant similarity due to the fact of belonging to the field outside the humanities, the shared applicative nature of investigation, comparable subject (health) and multiple dysfunctions within their spheres of interest, one can speak – especially in the case of Poland – of a key difference between the medical sociology and the sport sociology. This is the difference in their academic status, including their attractiveness to upcoming generations of sociology students. It is easy to notice that although sport is a popular phenomenon, attracting the attention of a wide audience, for sociologists it appears to be an unattractive subject, especially in comparison to medicine. How can this be explained?

Let us start by saying that the Sociology of Sport Section at the Polish Sociological Association had only 25 members at the end of 2018 and was one of the smallest in this organisation. Michał Lenartowicz and Zbigniew Dziubiński (2019), referring to the realities of the sport sociology functioning at universities of physical education, point out the poor condition of the sub-discipline and low level of sociology presence in general. Taking into account all the six academies of physical education in Poland, including their branches, Lenartowicz and Dziubiński counted only 10–12 academics who in 2018 formally dealt with the problems lying within the field of interest of the sport sociology (Lenartowicz, Dziubiński 2019). The situation is no better in the case of sport sociologists working at universities. They function in a kind of "diaspora"; nowhere in the country is there a department or chair of the sport sociology or sociology of physical culture. The agenda of the 17th Polish Sociological Congress in Wroclaw in 2019 included two thematic groups devoted to various aspects of sport. In total, only 10 papers (prepared by 11 participants altogether) were delivered there; there were no papers in printed form for reading and discussion (so-called *laid out papers*). This should, however, be seen as a certain success, as there had been no sport thematic group in the program of the previous congress.

The situation in the case of the medical sociology is substantially different. First of all, the Sociology of Health and Medicine Section of the Polish Sociological Association currently has 81 members (and therefore is a team over three times larger than that of the sport sociology). The sub-discipline is also relatively strongly rooted institutionally: the Department of Sociology of Health, Medicine and Family operates at Marie Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, and various academic units exist at particular medical universities, either directly dedicated to sociology (e.g. sociology departments) or employing sociologists – due to their profile of activity – in addition to doctors and specialists in the field of health sciences (e.g. departments of social medicine, social sciences development, social pathologies, etc.). The agenda of the 17th Polish Sociological Congress included one double socio-medical group, as part of which 10 papers were delivered and 6 papers were submitted for reading and discussion; they were prepared by 26 authors in total.

The above data indicate that the medical sociology, when compared to the sport sociology, is practiced by more researchers. This can be explained – at least in part – by the greater popularity and attractiveness of medicine and health issues in comparison to sport and recreation as a field of sociological investigation. What is the reason for this variance in preferences? The purpose of this article will be to answer this question. In the author's opinion, two types of conditions will be relevant: global-international and specifically Polish ones. In both cases it will be necessary to refer to the history of sociology.

2. Global determinants

In the global perspective, three significant historical differences between the medical sociology and the sport sociology, which led to their different attractiveness for subsequent generations of researchers, can be distinguished. First, there are different levels of interest in medicine and sport when it comes to the classic authors of 20th century sociology. Second, the subjects of reflection are esteemed differently (medicine, health and illness versus sport and physical activity). Third, the disciplines which the sub-sociologies cooperate with (medicine and health sciences versus physical culture sciences) are associated with different levels of prestige, and this is long-established in the academic world.

First of all, it is necessary to mention that the process of the institutionalization of medical sociology[3] was significantly influenced by publication of Talcott Parsons's *The Social System* in 1951, in which the author discussed issues associated with medical care, and with health and illness, from a sociological perspective in order to illustrate the most important theses of structural functionalism (Skrzypek 2012: 371; see also Ostrowska 2004: 33–34). Importantly, considerations on the process of illness and the shaping of the physician-patient relationship have become an attractive and convenient field for testing many concepts of general sociology. This probably grounded and strengthened the status of the medical sociology as a sub-discipline. According to Antonina Ostrowska (2004: 33),

> the patient-doctor relationship has been described and interpreted by representatives of almost all the major theoretical currents in sociology. Thus, works have been created illustrating, with the help of the patient and the doctor, the approach of functional theory, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and social constructivism.

It is worth recalling here, for example, the classic work of Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss regarding the awareness of dying and four awareness contexts, or Eliot Freidson's deliberations on the shape of the doctor-patient relationship in the conflict theory perspective.

[3] The term *the medical sociology* was used for the first time by Charles McIntire in 1894; one may say that the idea of developing social reflection on medicine had a long tradition. Researchers agree that the authorship of this idea should be attributed to medicine (Tobiasz-Adamczyk 2005: 31).

Medicine was, therefore, for the authors of the sociology classics and leaders representing various theoretical orientations, an attractive field for testing and presenting their concepts. On the other hand, sport was for a long time basically denied such recognition. Only in the last quarter of the previous century and later can we find the first uses of sport examples and analogies in a slightly broader dimension in the works of leading sociology theorists (Bourdieu, Elias and Dunning, Baudrillard) (Giulianotti 2004).

As Lenartowicz and Dziubiński remind us, traces of considering sport, games and activities and their relationships with various social phenomena can be found, of course, in the works of Georg Simmel, Max Weber, Thorstein Veblen or William G. Sumner, and later also Lewis Mumford, Johan Huizinga and Florian Znaniecki, among others, but even if they did discuss sport directly, it was most often an occasional and marginal topic of more general considerations for them (Lenartowicz, Dziubiński 2019; see also Malcolm 2014: 9 et seq.). Similarly, Antonio Gramsci or Theodor Adorno (Giulianotti 2004), among others, occasionally wrote about sport, while Helmuth Plessner published the work *Soziologie des Sports* in 1952. Of course, many sociological concepts can be used for analyses in the field of sport (even Marxism), but it will be in the form of an adaptation; it is quite difficult to find examples of direct interest in sports issues in the sociology classics. The indicated disproportion among the leading authors in terms of interest in medicine and sport may be related to the fact that modern sport – born in the mid-19th century – was initially perceived by many sociologists as a phenomenon of questionable social durability, trivial, stemming from the sphere of lower culture (Sage 1980, cited in: Malcolm 2014: 5). This cannot be said for strongly institutionalised medicine, which has centuries-old traditions.

All this resulted in the fact that the process of institutionalizsation of the sport sociology was slightly delayed and not as smooth when compared to the academic establishment and "crystallisation" of the medical sociology[4]. Referring to the approach of Nicolas Mullins, distinguishing four stages in the formation of new scientific disciplines (normal stage, network stage, cluster stage and the stage of development of a new specialty/ sub-discipline or discipline), John W. Loy, Gerald S. Kenyon and Barry D. McPherson (1980: 92–94) argue that the years 1951–1964 encompassed the normal phase of the sport sociology development (research work carried out in separation, without the coordination of activities, or the exchange of experience or any organisation). The first stage ended with the founding (on the Polish initiative of Andrzej Wohl) of the International Sociology of Sport Association (initially as the International Committee for the Sociology of Sport). According to Loy, Kenyon and McPherson, the network phase (for which

[4] The sport sociology is a younger sub-discipline than the sociology of medicine (in 1921 a book by Heinz Risse *Soziologie des Sports* was published where for the first time sport was identified as a separate object of sociological interest).

the functioning of community leaders and their frequent communication is characteristic) occurred in the years 1965–1972.

After 1972, the sport sociology entered the cluster stage, for which educating subsequent generations of researchers is typical, according to the classical model of master-student relationship. This means further stabilization and consolidation of the research community from a given area. However, it turned out to be a problem for the sport sociology to obtain the status of a fully recognized sub-discipline (i.e. the transition to the fourth stage according to Mullins' concept), due to the still narrow group of researchers, low status (prestige) of the field of interest (depreciated by sociologists as trivial and not very serious, and by specialists in the field of physical culture, representing "hard science" paradigm, who considered the sport sociology as not scientific enough) and often poor quality publications (having an essayistic, journalistic character and actually ignoring the theoretical findings and tools of sociology, and thus rarely published by leading scientific periodicals) (Loy, Kenyon, McPherson 1980: 98–106; see also Malcolm 2014: 17 et seq.). It seems that currently the sport sociology is functioning as a "full-fledged" sociological sub-discipline. For example, about 7–8% of presentations during the congress of the British Sociological Association were sociological analyses of various sport-related phenomena (Woźniak 2015: 7).

The last issue is the gap in the prestige between the disciplines with which medical sociology and the sport sociology are related. It must be clearly stated that medicine is an area of professional and scientific activity endowed with particularly high respect, both in society and among the academic community in general. American research by Gillian Stevens and Elizabeth Hoisington shows that healthcare managers, medical scientists and medical lecturers (and even medical technicians) have all enjoyed very high social respect among all professions in historical perspective. This should be compared, for example, with the at most average prestige of physical education teachers (Stevens, Hoisington 1987: 86 et seq.). Loy, Kenyon and McPherson (1980: 102–103) directly claim that physical education faculties are among the least prestigious faculties in American universities and colleges.

3. National determinants

Medical sociology in Poland

In Poland, the medical sociology appeared in the 1960s; one can say that this decade was the golden era of sociological sub-disciplines (Ostrowska, Skrzypek 2015: 19–20). Magdalena Sokołowska, who combined medical, nursing and sociological education, was the founder of Polish medical sociology. It was on her initiative that the Section of Sociology of Medicine was established within the Polish Sociological Association in 1964, and a year later the first socio-medical academic unit in the country (i.e. the Sociology of Medicine Department) was created at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Ostrowska, Skrzypek 2015: 19–24). In the years 1978–1982 Sokołowska was the vice-president of the International Sociological Association; she was also the first president of the European Society of Medical Sociology (currently the European Society for Health and Medical Sociology). Sokołowska was undoubtedly the most important figure in the intellectual community associated with the sub-discipline, giving it shape and form and representing in broader academic world. Sokołowska's role and achievements are documented in commemorative monographic publications (Piątkowski 2004b; 2010; Ostrowska 2009b).

Two characteristic features of the Polish medical sociology appear to be significant. Firstly, its institutional character is notable, not only in the framework of academic sociology[5] but also in the framework of academic institutions connected to health care and medicine. Secondly, pro-Western orientation has long been typical of the Polish medical sociology. Let us start by discussing the first of these features. Although the community of medical sociologists in Poland formed at institutions that were not related to healthcare, the initial studies were conducted within the area of *sociology in medicine* and concerned the rehabilitation of people with disabilities (Ostrowska, Skrzypek 2015: 24). It was only the reorganisation at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in the late 1960s that resulted in including medical sociologists in a broader research team dealing with issues of the class-layer structure of Polish society, which undoubtedly enhanced the process of referring to general sociology by Polish medical sociology (Ostrowska, Skrzypek 2015: 27–28). In this context, one should also mention the unique activity and traditions of medical sociologists in Lublin, primarily associated with Marie Curie-Skłodowska University.

On the other hand, it should be remembered that the scientific activity of medical sociologists employed in healthcare-related academic institutions developed in parallel. Let us mention here the figures and achievements of Zofia Kawczyńska-Butrym (whose scientific career was established at the Medical Academy in Lublin), Marek Latoszek (associated with the Medical Academy of Gdańsk for over 40 years, and later – with the Medical University of Gdańsk), Helena Csorba (working at the Center of Medical Education in Warsaw since 1967), or Andrzej Gniazdowski (working since the 1980s at the Institute of Occupational Medicine in Lodz and conducting studies on health promotion). We cannot overlook the strong and active team of Janusz Indulski, a doctor from the Medical Academy in Lodz, which was already dealing with social medicine in the 1970s (and striving to make the medical sociology part of it) (Kosiński 2010: 172–173). In the mid-

[5] It is important not to forget the long tradition of organizing socio-medical thematic groups at national sociological congresses in Poland. The first such group was included in the program of the 5-th Polish Sociological Congress in Kraków in 1977. About 40 scientists participated in the group's discussions, led by Magdalena Sokołowska and Stanisław Kosiński (Kosiński 2010: 182–185).

seventies, the sociology in medicine crystallized in medical universities into an independent didactic discipline (Latoszek 1998: 351)[6].

Another important feature characterising the development of Polish medical sociology was its pro-Western orientation. In her classic textbook *Socjologia medycyny* [*Sociology of Medicine*] Sokołowska (1986: 93 et seq.) gives a brief but substantive overview of Talcott Parsons' most important theses concerning the physician-patient relationship, complementing it with the model of Marc Hollender and Thomas Szasz and with criticism from Eliot Freidson. Similarly, in the chapter on dying and death, Sokołowska characterizes the concept of the stages of dying, popular in the USA in the 1970s, proposed by Elizabeth Kübler-Ross (Sokołowska 1986: 125–126). Sokołowska also discusses the problem of the excessive medicalisation of society and the process of de-medicalisation, observed in Western countries, especially in the USA (Sokołowska 1986: 224–227). Stanisław Kosiński (2010: 171) states, not without exaggeration, that Sokołowska westernized Polish sociology, especially the medical sociology that she created. In this context, it is worth mentioning the International Conference on the Sociology of Medicine organized by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1973 in Jabłonna, with researchers from the USA and Western and Eastern Europe among the invited speakers. The first session was chaired by Jan Szczepański.

The political transformation in Poland, which started in 1989, has also brought changes for universities in the field of research and didactics (Sowa 2009: 89 et seq.). These transformations significantly affected the functioning of the medical sociology. In Poland during the 1990s, the division into the *sociology of medicine* (activities carried out at universities) and the *sociology in medicine* (research and teaching at medical academies) continued to exist. Marek Latoszek (1998: 351–352) emphasised the dominance of the first mentioned kind of medical sociology. Sociology courses conducted for students of medical academies were being improved within the framework of proprietary programs (departure from the ministerial curricula), while in the area of research and analysis a new phenomenon could be noted in the form of a wider interest of medical sociologists in health issues (in addition to previous studies on the healthcare system, being ill or in the situation of disability, etc.). This process was reflected in the change of the name of the Polish Sociological Association's specialist section from the original: "Section of the Sociology of Medicine" to the following: "The Sociology of Health and Medicine Section"[7].

[6] As calculated by Marek Latoszek (2005: 56–57), in 2001 in five out of 11 medical academies of the time there were units (departments or laboratories) "with sociology in title". In other academies, the sociology-of-medicine-related units (departments, chairs) existed and their employees conducted student courses in the subject of medical sociology.

[7] Latoszek even indicates a threat of marginalization of illness as a subject of research, expertise and theoretical reflection (1998: 352).

Sport sociology in Poland

The founding fathers of the Polish sport sociology were Zbigniew Krawczyk and Andrzej Wohl, who developed the most important textbooks in this field. Both were associated with the University of Physical Education in Warsaw since the 1950s. According to the official biography on the university's website, Krawczyk headed the Department of Philosophy and Sociology (later the Department of Sociology), the Chair of Social Sciences and the Institute of Humanities. During the years 1990–1996 he was the rector of the University of Physical Education. He was also a member and chairman of the Committee on Physical Culture Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Kosiewicz 2006). Krawczyk and Wohl were awarded the honorary membership of ISSA (Wohl was the first president of ISSA, performing this function in the years 1964–1978; for 18 years he also worked as editor-in-chief of "International Review for the Sociology of Sport") (Kosiewicz 2008: 17).

Wohl and Krawczyk established – with Barbara Krawczyk among others – the first institutionalised team of sport sociologists in Poland, the aforementioned Department of Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Physical Education in Warsaw. For some time it was the only academic unit of this type in Poland. It was not until the 1970s that smaller or larger research teams composed of sport sociologists were established in the remaining five universities of physical education in the country (Krawczyk, Krawczyk 1998: 450). In 1979, an international "Sport and Culture" conference was organized on behalf of ISSA in Warsaw.

Two specific features can be identified in the history of the Polish sport sociology, completely different than in the case of the medical sociology. The first is the ideologisation of the sub-discipline; while the second is its disconnection from the general sociological environment and community. Let us start with the first of these features. Mainly due to the Marxist-oriented Wohl, Polish sport sociology, until the period of political transformation after 1989, was generally subordinated to the official state doctrine (Lenartowicz, Dziubiński 2019). Wohl's studies largely focused on the issue of sport in a socialist society (reflections on class sport, works on sports in large industrial plants, etc.). Sport, physical activity and sports achievements were seen as a kind of argument in the rivalry between communist and capitalist blocs (Lenartowicz, Dziubiński 2019). It can be argued that the political transformation in Poland has not completely emancipated the sport sociology from ideological commitments. However, their context changed. Hence the studies devoted to the status of physical activity in the teaching of Pope John Paul II or analyses focused on "The Roman Catholic Church and sport" has been developed.

Over the decades, another important feature of the Polish sport sociology was its separation from the general sociological community in the country. The sport sociology only actually developed at universities of physical education

(Lenartowicz, Dziubiński 2019). Until 2016, there was no specialist section at the Polish Sociological Association dedicated to sport studies, or more broadly: physical culture[8]. Instead, the Polish Society for the Social Sciences of Sport was established in 2009. If we were to refer to Straus' dichotomy and apply it *per analogiam* to the sport sociology, it can be said that from the 1960s *sociology in sport* developed in Poland, not *sociology of sport*. This, of course, had its (institutional) origins as well as some positive consequences. However, the studies carried out were often detached from the canon of sociological theory and sociological methodology, and had little significance from the point of view of generating comprehensive knowledge about society. If we combine this with the theses about the ideologisation of sport sociology in Poland, it vividly resembles the historical findings of Loy, Kenyon and McPherson mentioned above, in terms of problems with the development of sport sociology in an international perspective. One may say that in the case of Poland these problems were characterised by relatively high persistence.

Only for about a decade can we speak of the development of the actual sport sociology, which has to be associated with the activity of the younger generation of researchers who often have university affiliation. Analyses show that since 2009 texts in the field of sport sociology (previously practically unheard of) have become noticeable in the leading Polish sociological periodicals (Stempień 2018). As a whole, however, they are not free from certain weaknesses: works on football and fans of this discipline dominate[9]; original texts (based on the author's own research results) are quite rare and rely on a narrow range of research techniques (mainly qualitative). There is a complete lack of reviews of numerous books published in the field of sport sociology (Stempień 2018).

4. Conclusions

The medical sociology and the sport sociology have a lot in common in the international perspective (cooperation with sciences outside the humanities, sharing the object of interest and focusing on a variety of dysfunctions, an applicative character). Similarities in the national context are not difficult to identify either: both these sub-disciplines began to develop in Poland at a similar time, i.e. in the 1960s. Both the medical sociology and the sport sociology had their charismatic precursors in Poland, which were also well-known abroad. These figures contributed to the development of the two sub-disciplines in their country-specific character and their institutional establishment, wrote the first academic textbooks,

[8] Jarosław Kilias (2016) reminds us that noting Wohl's international organizational achievements in the 1960s, Jan Szczepański wanted to include him in the work of the Polish Sociological Association, which however did not succeed.

[9] Hence the Polish sport sociology is sarcastically called the sociology of football.

educated students and followers. Nevertheless, the relatively high attractiveness of medicine (as well as the topics of health and illness) in Poland as a subject of sociological reflection, as compared to the less popular reflections on sport, physical education and physical recreation, needs to be explicated. These disproportions can be explained by universal and national determinants.

First, in the 20th century medicine was an attractive field for testing and applying numerous canonical sociological theories. This seems to be due, at least in part, to its strong institutionalisation and historical inclusion in the social landscape. The interest of the most famous authors may still be a certain incentive to undertake social studies in the field of medicine, health and disease. Medicine is also a particularly prestigious area of professional and scientific activity, which may also increase the attractiveness of conducting sociological studies in this area. On the other hand, sport belongs to the domain of physical culture sciences, which occupy a low position in the hierarchy of academic esteem. For a long time, sport itself was neglected and overlooked by the authors of the sociology classics as a source of examples to illustrate their theoretical considerations. Not without significance here was the fact that sport was seen as a trivial activity; not serious enough and socially insignificant. Today, all this seems to deter rather than encourage sociologists to conduct research and analysis dedicated to sport. Specifically Polish experiences overlap with universal conditions concerning the different levels of attractiveness of the medical sociology and the sport sociology.

First, in Poland the medical sociology developed from the beginning in two directions, i.e. within the sociological environment as *the sociology of medicine*, and at medical academies and other academic centres related to healthcare as *the sociology in medicine*. The sport sociology developed differently: it was formed primarily outside the university walls, mainly at universities of physical education. Research within the sport sociology was practically oriented and admittedly this sub-discipline has in fact become auxiliary to physical culture sciences (*sociology in sport science*), without sociology-oriented work and the application of sociological theoretical tools (*sociology of sport*). Essayistic or strongly ideological studies and papers cannot be regarded as such.

The above considerations lead to the following conclusion. The medical sociology in Poland has a long and well-established tradition. It was developed both in the current of the *sociology of medicine* (a strong presence in the sociological environment) and in the current of the *sociology in medicine*, related to educating students in medical fields. Once again, its pro-Western character needs to be emphasized. All this means that new adepts of sociology, defining their field of interest as socio-medical, can draw on this output, and design their work as a creative continuation of earlier generations' efforts. Their presence in a sociological environment is somewhat natural. All these characteristics are not obvious in the case of the sport sociology, whose traditions of functioning at Polish universities are quite modest, despite the fact that the traditions of Polish sport sociology itself are quite long and also rich in significant organisational achievements. An important weakness of sport sociology is that for a long time it developed mainly in the form of *sociology in sport*, which can cause its continuing low recognition among all sociologists. The image of the sub-discipline is certainly not improved by either past or recent ideological commitment, indeed they rather support accusations of its non-sociological, unscientific and moralising character (Nosal, Jakubowska 2017: 267), which may discourage researchers from dealing with sport.

Perhaps these differences will lose their importance. Finally, today both sub-disciplines have their representation at the Polish Sociological Association. Both are taught – often in the form of optional courses – at sociological studies. Both also function (not without problems and threat of future problems) at academic institutions dedicated to the non-humanistic sciences with which they are associated. The question remains: What will be the future of the medical sociology and the sport sociology in Poland? How durable will the splitting between the *of* and *in* types be? What impact will the latest legal regulations significantly reorganising the functioning of the world of academia have in this context?

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Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank kindly the boards of the Sociology of Health and Medicine Section and the Sociology of Sport Section of the Polish Sociological Association for providing information on the current number of section members. The author would like to thank sincerely colleagues from the Sport Sociology Section of PSA for their kind and essential comments on the original version of the paper, presented during the 17th Polish Sociological Congress in Wroclaw.

Jakub Ryszard Stempień

SOCJOLOGIA MEDYCYNY I SOCJOLOGIA SPORTU W POLSCE – BLIŹNIACZKI NIEPODOBNE

Abstrakt. Artykuł dotyczy socjologii medycyny i socjologii sportu w Polsce. Pomimo pewnych podobieństw (kooperacja z naukami niehumanistycznymi, częściowe podzielanie przedmiotu zainteresowań i liczne dysfunkcje w jego domenie, aplikacyjny charakter prowadzonych badań i analiz, powstanie w podobnym czasie) odnotować można ważną różnicę w zakresie akademickiego funkcjonowania obu subdyscyplin, w tym w zakresie ich atrakcyjności dla kolejnych pokoleń adeptów socjologii. Celem artykułu jest wskazanie przyczyn takiego stanu rzeczy. Omawiane są uwarunkowania globalne (większe zainteresowanie klasyków socjologii rozważaniami dedykowanymi medycynie niż sportowi, deprecjonowanie sportu jako przedmiotu socjologicznych rozważań, a także na różny prestiż dyscyplin z jakimi kooperują omawiane socjologie szczegółowe). W gronie krajowych uwarunkowań relatywnie słabszego akademickiego zakorzenienia socjologii sportu wskazać można to, że – w przeciwieństwie do socjologii medycyny – rozwijała się ona w pewnej izolacji od ogółu środowiska socjologicznego, nie stroniąc przy tym od ideologicznych zaangażowań.

Słowa kluczowe: socjologia medycyny, socjologia sportu, Polskie Towarzystwo Socjologiczne, socjologia polska, subdyscypliny socjologiczne.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS
FOLIA SOCIOLOGICA 72, 2020

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0208-600X.72.08

C O P E
Member since 2019
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KONTRDYSKURSY ANARCHISTYCZNE PRZYCZYNEK DO ANALIZY MIEJSKIEJ SFERY KONTRPUBLICZNEJ

Abstrakt. Centralnymi kategoriami artykułu są pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej oraz kontrpubliczności. Artykuł ma charakter teoretyczno-empiryczny. Jego celem jest, z jednej strony, analiza historyczna i pojęciowa kategorii sfery kontrpublicznej, z drugiej zaś analiza użyteczności centralnego pojęcia dla analizy „anarchistycznych ruchów miejskich" oraz wskazanie na określone typy praktyk: dyskursywnych i samoorganizacji, niezbędnych dla konstruowania i reprodukcji sfery kontrpublicznej. Przedmiotem analizy są tu kontrdyskursy obecne na łamach wybranych publikacji anarchistycznych, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem „Przeglądu Anarchistycznego".

Słowa kluczowe: sfera publiczna/ sfera kontrpubliczna, kontrpubliczność/ kontrpubliczności, ruchy społeczne, miejskie ruchy społeczne, ruchy anarchistyczne, prawo do miasta.

1. Wstęp

Pojęcie sfery kontrpublicznej (niem. *Gegenöffentlichkeit*; ang. *counterpublics*), jedno z istotnych wkładów teoretycznych późnej teorii krytycznej społeczeństwa (por. Kluge, Negt 1972; 1993), choć nienowe i nigdy niewyznaczające głównego nurtu socjologicznych i socjohistorycznych dociekań przeżywa swój renesans. Okazuje się bowiem konceptem nad wyraz efektywnym do opisu, interpretacji i wyjaśniania zjawisk z zakresu socjologii polityki i socjologii ruchów społecznych, rozmaitych perspektyw sprawiedliwościowych, w tym zagadnień związanych z klasowością i problematyką genderową, wreszcie – jest też istotnym elementem wewnętrznej krytyki w ramach socjologii sfery publicznej, by wymienić te najbardziej oczywiste i najszerzej w literaturze przedmiotu obecne. Warto wspomnieć, że w ciągu ostatnich kilku lat pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej zaczęli używać również polscy badacze: czy to na potrzeby analiz ruchu robotniczego, czy też feministycznego. W efekcie odnaleźć je można w analizie procesów,

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przede wszystkim zaś praktyk publicznego uczestnictwa i konstruowania klasowej podmiotowości w czasie Rewolucji 1905 roku (Marzec, Piskała 2013; Marzec 2016) oraz feministycznie usytuowanej analizie postulatów „pierwszej Solidarności" i „czarnych protestów" (Majewska 2018). W tym ostatnim przypadku pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej oraz kontrpubliczności bywają – szczególnie w bieżących analizach – łączone kategorialnie z pojęciem „słabego oporu", czyli praktyk samoorganizacji nieuprzywilejowanych, „słabych" kategorii, grup, ruchów czy klas społecznych. Ów opór słabych, zakotwiczony w bezpośredniości codziennego doświadczenia, co zresztą mocno podkreślali w swoich analizach również Kluge i Negt, to zespół kwestionujących *staus quo* praktyk, w ramach których „poświęcenie ustępuje miejsca solidarności, heroizm – współpracy, zaś wyjątkowość – zwyczajności" (Majewska 2016).

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest próba wykorzystania konceptu *Gegenöffentlichkeit* do analizy miejskich ruchów społecznych (dalej: MRS), niekiedy określanych też mianem „ruchów prawa do miasta", konkretnie zaś ich skrzydła anarchistycznego. Przyjęta tu perspektywa zakłada zatem, że MRS to podmioty mocno wewnętrznie zróżnicowane: tak organizacyjnie, jak też ideologicznie i strategicznie, na co wskazują już zresztą coraz liczniejsze studia (por. Pluciński 2014b; Nowak, Pluciński 2017), próbujące wykraczać poza ujęcia redukujące fenomen MRS do „ruchów klasy średniej". Co więcej, krytyczna analiza MRS powiązana jest blisko z badaniami nad zjawiskami takimi jak choćby „wywłaszczająca urbanizacja" i krytycznym skrzydłem *urban studies* (Harvey 2012; Purcell 2008). Optyka ta ma więc szersze umocowanie w badaniach europejskich i światowych – by przywołać tu choćby zyskującą coraz szersze uznanie perspektywę „nowej kwestii miejskiej", rozwijaną przez Andy'ego Merrifielda (2016).

Artykuł składa się z dwóch podstawowych części. Pierwsza z nich ma charakter teoretyczno-historyczny i jest rekonstrukcją pojęcia *Gegenöffentlichkeit* oraz podstawowych kierunków szczegółowych dociekań w ramach przywoływanego nurtu badawczego. Część druga skupia się na powiązaniu pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej z badaniami nad anarchistycznymi MRS. Idzie zatem o uzasadnienie argumentu o użyteczności teoretyczno-empirycznej proponowanego rozstrzygnięcia oraz otwarcie pola badawczego do dalszych dociekań. By zrealizować ten cel w analizie wykorzystana została stosunkowo szeroka „baza" wydawnictw anarchistycznych, w tym publikacji „intelektualistów organicznych" ruchu, których punktem wspólnym jest „kwestia miejska". Szczególne miejsce zyskały tu publikacje zawarte w konkretnych numerach „Przeglądu Anarchistycznego", które to pismo w pewnym momencie wyraźnie „zurbanizowało" przedmiot swoich zainteresowań. To drugie zadanie ma charakter do pewnego stopnia „eksploracyjny" – jest próbą zastosowania w analizie anarchistycznych MRS pojęcia, które do tej pory nie było w podobnym kontekście wykorzystywane, co w zamyśle może lub powinno programować przyszłe badania w tym zakresie.

2. Sfera kontrpubliczna – z historii pojęcia

Pojęcie sfery kontrpublicznej jest efektem „sporu w rodzinie”, mianowicie konsekwencją krytyki, z jaką spotkały się tradycyjne rozumienia i pojęcia sfery publicznej, szczególnie zaś najszerzej rozpowszechnione rozumienie Habermasowskie (por. Nowak, Pluciński 2011a; 2011b; Pluciński 2011; Hudzik, Woźniak 2006). Co kluczowe, pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej oraz kontrpubliczności zostały opracowane przez współpracowników samego Habermasa – Oskara Negta oraz Aleksandra Kluge, finalnie wyrażone zaś zostały w ich kanonicznej już pracy, niestety ciągle niedostępnej w polskim przekładzie, zatytułowanej *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung – Zur Organisationsanalyse von bürgerlicher und proletarischer Öffentlichkeit* (1972).

Nie miejsce tu na historyczną egzegezę krytyki wewnętrznej prowadzącej do wypracowania pojęcia *Gegenöffentlichkeit* oraz jej zaplecza instytucjonalnego. Warto jednak krótko wspomnieć o różnym usytuowaniu obu autorów. Oskar Negt, pochodzący z rodziny o socjaldemokratycznych tradycjach, uczeń Adorno i asystent Habermasa na Uniwersytecie we Frankfurcie nad Menem, to autor, któremu publikacja *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* z jednej strony otworzyła drzwi do międzynarodowej kariery akademickiej, z drugiej ugruntowała jego intelektualne zaangażowanie w kwestie społeczno-polityczne Republiki Federalnej Niemiec. Przyjaźniący się z kolei z Adornem Aleksander Kluge związany z akademią był raczej przygodnie. Uznanie zyskał przede wszystkim jako literat i filmowiec, parając się filozofią społeczną – przynajmniej z perspektywy całości jego *œuvres* – raczej incydentalnie, stając się przy tym jednym z czołowych intelektualistów powojennych Niemiec Zachodnich. Owa specyfika warunków powstawania *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* jest zapewne nie do przecenienia. Idzie tu zarówno o fakt, że w trakcie bezpośrednich prac nad książką Negt był asystentem poddawanego krytyce Habermasa, jak też o odmienne usytuowanie autorów, z których tylko jeden to tradycyjnie pojmowany akademik. Pracę można by zatem interpretować również jako produkt swoistej praktyki „współpisania”[1].

Intencją Klugego i Negta było podanie w wątpliwość istotnych przeoczeń obecnych u Habermasa – przede wszystkim pochodnych przekonania o uniwersalnym charakterze mechanizmów i instytucji burżuazyjnej sfery publicznej. Habermas zdecydowanie zmarginalizował niemieszczańskie, szczególnie „plebejskie”, postaci przedparlamentarnego uczestnictwa politycznego, konstruowania podmiotowości i tożsamości zbiorowych oraz formowania woli politycznej. W tym też – elementarnym z perspektywy Marksowskiej, a nawet Mannheimowskiej socjologii wiedzy – sensie jego projekt miał charakter partykularny.

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[1] Innym przykładem doniosłej akademicko praktyki współpisania, silnie związanej z prezentowanym tu paradygmatem „prawa do miasta”, jest kilkuletnia współpraca Henri’ego Lefebvre’a oraz Guy’a Deborda.

Habermasowska konstrukcja skupiała się między innymi na analizie procesu zmian społeczno-politycznych, gospodarczych i technologicznych oraz kulturowych, które sprzyjały konstrukcji swoistego podmiotu – publiczności czytającej, szerzej zaś – uczestniczącej w tych obiegach kultury, które warunkowane były piśmiennością i/lub określoną kompetencją rozumienia kultury symbolicznej. Co więcej – na co Habermas również, być może intencjonalnie, spuszczał zasłonę milczenia – faworyzowała te podmioty, którym bliżej było do, stosując okołomarksowskie metafory, „królestwa wolności” niż „królestwa konieczności”. Wyłączała tym samym wszystkich tych aktorów, którzy z rozmaitych przyczyn – na przykład klasowo lub genderowo warunkowanych – owego przywileju byli pozbawiani (Habermas 2007).

Habermas w swojej idealizacji mieszczańskiej sfery publicznej przeoczył zatem moment, w którym emancypacyjny krok burżuazji, polegający na wystąpieniu przeciwko władzy feudalnej, niejako automatycznie przekształcony został w nową – czerpiącą przede wszystkim z liberalizmów, gospodarczego i politycznego – ideologię panowania. Pojęcie sfery kontrpublicznej miało, zgodnie z intencjami Negta i Klugego, przekraczać powyższe ograniczenia.

Centralny interes poznawczy, jaki pojęcie sfery kontrpublicznej miało i nadal ma realizować to wydobycie na światło dzienne i uczynienie widocznym tych wszystkich głosów i poglądów na życie społeczno-polityczne oraz określonych, towarzyszących im praktyk, które do tej pory były skazywane na nieobecność lub też były obecne, ale bądź to opacznie, bądź też otwarcie fałszywie reprezentowane.

W swojej rekonstrukcji pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej Ewa Majewska stwierdzała, że w odróżnieniu od – przede wszystkim po Habermasowsku pojmowanej – sfery publicznej,

> która jest z zasady ekskluzywna, mieszczańska, zdominowana przez mężczyzn i opiera się na już określonym przez Arystotelesa przywileju wolności od konieczności utrzymywania się przy życiu, kontrpubliczność jest tą formą politycznej sprawczości, która zwraca się przeciw istniejącej władzy, zwłaszcza tej instytucjonalnej, choć czasem też przeciw najogólniejszym regułom danej kultury, jak też przeciw liberalnym, jak byśmy dziś powiedzieli, elitom, tworzącym sferę publiczną (Majewska 2018: 25).

Kategoria sfery kontrpublicznej pojawiając się na początku lat 70., nie od razu zrobiła błyskotliwą pojęciową „karierę”. Niemal dwie dekady przebijała się do analiz coraz bliższych głównemu nurtowi akademickich badań, nigdy jednakowoż mody intelektualnej nie wyznaczając, ustępując w tym względzie zdecydowanie przedmiotowi swojej krytyki, czyli perspektywie Habermasowskiej. Ustępuje jej zresztą w dalszym ciągu. Można tu na przykład zaznaczyć, że jeszcze w 1986 roku, zatem niemal półtorej dekady po publikacji pierwszego wydania pracy Negta i Klugego, w jednym z najistotniejszych opracowań o charakterze monograficznym, poświęconych teorii i historii teorii „szkoły frankfurckiej” (Wiggershaus 2001), problematyka sfery kontrpublicznej jest całkowicie pominięta[2]. Pojęcie *Gegenöffentlichkeit* pojawia się z kolei w monograficznym, częściowo propedeutycznym i popularnym, mocno historyczno-teoretycznie ugruntowanym opracowaniu poświęconym idei sfery publicznej jako takiej (Hohendahl 2000).

Mniej więcej na początku lat 90. minionego stulecia pojęcie kontrpubliczności stopniowo się upowszechnia, ale znów do pewnego stopnia paradoksalnie, bo nie w niemieckiej czy europejskiej kolebce pojęcia, ale przed wszystkim za sprawą akademii północnoamerykańskiej (Warner 2002). Zyskuje na znaczeniu, i to już nie jest paradoks, przede wszystkim za sprawą powiązania go z problematyką ruchów społecznych, szczególnie feministycznych. Fundacyjny jest tu splot kilku publikacji: antyhabermasowsko zorientowanego artykułu Nancy Fraser (1990), faktu udostępnienia przekładu *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* anglojęzycznym czytelnikom (Kluge, Negt 1993) oraz istotnego wstępu do przywołanego tłumaczenia pióra Miriam Hansen (1993). Rozszerzony rys historyczny owej recepcji odnajdziemy u Ewy Majewskiej (2018).

Od lat 90. XX stulecia datuje się ponowny wzrost popularności pojęcia *Gegenöffentlichkeit* również w Europie, szczególnie w Niemczech. Przybiera ono jednak nieco odmienną postać. Przedmiotem zainteresowania stają się na przykład, podobnie jak w Stanach Zjednoczonych, ruchy społeczne – większy nacisk położony jest jednak w tym przypadku na współczesne ruchy autonomiczne, antyautorytarne, antyglobalistyczne czy anarchistyczne. Wyraźniej poszukuje się też w kontekście europejskim źródeł oraz ciągłości między doświadczeniem rewolty roku 1968 a ruchami współczesnymi (Gilcher-Holtey 2000; Scholl 2013).

Silnym nurtem badań nad sferą kontrpubliczną stają się również, właśnie w kontekście europejskim, badania w „paradygmacie komunikacyjnym", rozumianym tu jednak wyraźnie makrostrukturalnie (Scholl 2009). Są to zatem studia nad wytwarzaniem kontrdyskursów, praktykami oddolnego czy też obywatelskiego dziennikarstwa, w tym badania nad wykorzystywaniem w tym celu zarówno tradycyjnych („drukowanych"), jak też nowoczesnych („wirtualnych" czy też sieciowych) środków (Frühbrodt 2017; Oy 1997; Plake, Jansen, Schumacher 2001). Brane są tu wreszcie pod uwagę zarówno szeroko pojmowane ramy instytucjonalne (np. rozmaite „sfery autonomiczne", miejsca czy przestrzenie kształtowania się kontrdyskursów, alternatywne łady aksjonormatywne czy też ramy organizacyjne itp.), jak również same szczegółowe kontrdyskursy. Dokładnie ten nurt, badań nad formowaniem się oraz publicznym uobecnianiem kontrdyskursów, najbliższy jest założeniom prezentowanego artykułu.

[2] W trakcie prac nad artykułem próbowałem dotrzeć do przyczyn takiego stanu rzeczy – nie udało mi się jednak do tej pory dotrzeć do żadnych ustaleń.

3. W stronę miejskiej sfery kontrpublicznej – ramy instytucjonalne

W konsekwencji, dalszym przedmiotem dociekań jest próba zastosowania pojęcia sfery kontrpublicznej w analizie współczesnych anarchistycznych MRS. W tradycyjnych analizach zwykło się traktować anarchizm jako ideologię i ruch o charakterze antypaństwowym. Taka redukcja anarchizmu do jego antypaństwowości zbyt bliska jest jednak – szczególnie w chwili obecnej, gdzie bardzo widoczny w obrębie anarchizmu jest zwrot antykapitalistyczny oraz przestrzenny – jego wtórnej stereotypizacji (por. Pluciński 2020).

Kluczowy dla artykułu zwrot przestrzenny w ruchu anarchistycznym, czy też innymi słowy: zwrot ku miejskości, nie jest *novum*, zarówno w kontekście globalnym, jak i w Polsce. Był na przykład wyraźnie obecny w neoanarchistycznej ideologii wypracowanej przez Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego (RSA), ugrupowanie, które można traktować jako ruch protomiejski, już na przełomie lat 80. i 90. minionego stulecia (Urbański 2009; Pluciński 2016).

W swej dojrzałej już postaci ów zwrot przestrzenny zaznaczył się jako konsekwencja uwiądu ruchu alterglobalistycznego, co miało miejsce mniej więcej dekadę temu (Piotrowski 2017; Pomieciński 2013). To właśnie spuścizną alterglobalizmu jest hasło: „myśl globalnie, działaj lokalnie!”, stanowiące esencję tak zwanego glokalizmu. Przyglądając się zatem spuściźnie alterglobalizmu można wyodrębnić określone tendencje, dzięki którym doszło nie tylko do wzmocnienia nurtów antykapitalistycznych w anarchizmie, ale również przekierowania dyskursów i polityk emancypacyjnych w stronę „mieszkańców miast” (Purcell 2002).

Co zostało już zasygnalizowane, dla wytwarzania sfery kontrpublicznej istotne są ramy materialne i instytucjonalne. Od lat 90. polski ruch anarchistyczny był częściowo związany z aktywnością skłoterską, same zaś skłoty stawały się dzięki temu również alternatywnymi centrami społecznymi, wydawniczymi i intelektualnymi[3]. Ich polityczne, kulturotwórcze oraz ideologiczne znaczenie, szczególnie w okresie poprzedzającym oraz wiodącym do schyłku alterglobalistycznej formy ruchu, jednocześnie prowadzące do „glokalizacji” i „zwrotu przestrzennego” w anarchizmie są nie do przeceniania. Są one przy tym stosunkowo dobrze opisane w literaturze (Antonów 2004; 2012; Piotrowski, Polanska 2015), choć nie za pomocą kategorii sfery kontrpublicznej.

Zagadnienie materialnych i instytucjonalnych warunków wytwarzania miejskiej sfery kontrpublicznej jest przy tym wieloaspektowe. Warto tu przywołać przynajmniej trzy takie konteksty, bezpośrednio związane z ewolucją anarchizmu w Polsce obserwowaną w ciągu ostatnich niemal dwóch dekad. Pierwszy z nich dotyczy podejmowanych aliansów personalnych i strategicznych z innymi – choć podobne rozgraniczenia mają tu charakter raczej czysto analityczny – ruchami

[3] Można wspomnieć w tym kontekście o najdłużej działającym polskim skłocie, poznańskim „Rozbracie”.

społecznymi, na przykład ruchem skłoterskim czy lokatorskim (por. Piotrowski, Polanska 2015). Drugi to szersze otwarcie na otoczenie instytucjonalne, częściowo będące pochodną postępującej pragmatyzacji – najlepszym tego przykładem są coraz głębiej urefleksyjnione relacje z akademią (zarówno w kontekście metodologicznym, optyki „współwytwarzania wiedzy”, jak również wielopozycyjnego usytuowania jako aktywistów i akademików zarazem). Po trzecie wreszcie nie sposób nie wspomnieć o nowych lub też coraz bardziej sprofesjonalizowanych postaciach samoorganizacji – idzie tu zatem o towarzyszącą perspektywie nieformalnej i horyzontalnej komplementarności tych form oddolnych działań, które przyjmują postać „nowej fali spółdzielczości”, profesjonalizujących się oficyn wydawniczych i alternatywnych obiegów kulturowo-politycznych. Dobre przykłady tych ostatnich działań to choćby poznańska spółdzielnia „Ruchomości”, w ramach której działa księgarnia „Zemsta”, łącząca też w sobie funkcje wegańskiego baru oraz centrum dyskusyjnego, zaangażowanego przy tym w animowanie życia lokalnej wspólnoty.

4. Neoliberalny urbanizm i krytyka dyskursywna

Anarchistyczne MRS – dystansujące się tak dyskursywnie, jak też działaniowo, zarówno od „centrystycznego liberalizmu”, jak pojmował dominującą ideologię współczesności Immanuel Wallerstein (2011), jak również od modernizacyjnych dyskursów i aktywizmu tak zwanych „ruchów mieszczańskich” – stanowią istotną kontrpubliczność. Wytwarzają one – między innymi dzięki mobilizacji organicznych intelektualistów oraz aktywistów ruchów – sobie tylko właściwe kontrdyskursy jako swoiste „praktyki teoretyczne” oraz czynią je jednym z warunków możliwości praktyk samoorganizacji.

Istotne z perspektywy metodologicznej jest to, by przywołać w tym miejscu *Zeitgeist*. Opisywany czas to moment swoistego punktu kulminacyjnego monologowo pojmowanej, imitacyjnej transformacji społeczno-gospodarczej. To czas ciągłej dominacji dyskursu i praktyk ortodoksyjnie liberalnych, wykorzystujących stereotypy *homo sovieticus* oraz „bezradności wyuczonej”, promujących ideologię indywidualnej zapobiegliwości, w kontekście miejskim prowadzących zaś do tego, co badacze określają najczęściej mianem „neoliberalnego urbanizmu” (Peck, Theodore, Brenner 2009; Szmytkowska, Sagan 2012). Jego polską odmianę można scharakteryzować przywołując cztery okołotransformacyjne, ale ogniskujące się w miastach procesy, zaś miejski aktywizm jest próbą mierzenia się z problemami systemowymi, jakie wygenerował (Mayer, Thörn, Thörn 2016). Jaki jest zatem bilans transformacji z perspektywy mieszkańców miast?

Po pierwsze, obietnica aktywnej, publicznej polityki mieszkaniowej pozostała niespełniona. Jak wskazują badacze, „została ona pozostawiona wolnemu rynkowi” (Kubicki 2016: 259), czyli kapitałowi deweloperskiemu. Jedno z kluczowych dóbr egzystencjalnych, mieszkanie, zostało poddane radykalnej komodyfikacji (Kostka, Czarnota 2017). Kwestia mieszkaniowa została zdefiniowana nie jako „publiczna", ale raczej jako „prywatna troska". Nie sposób zignorować też w tym kontekście zagadnienia „dzikiej reprywatyzacji" (Ciszewski, Nowak 2016; Siemieniako 2017; Śpiewak 2017), generującego wiele patologii systemowych, między innymi proceder „czyszczenia kamienic" (Czarnota 2014; Pluciński 2014a).

Po drugie, z uwagi na uwarunkowania gospodarcze: stosunkowo niską siłę nabywczą mieszkańców miast oraz wzrastające w efekcie europeizacji rynku nieruchomości ceny gruntów i mieszkań w ich centrach, dominująca stała się perspektywa przedmieść (Kajdanek 2012), czyniąc z miast przestrzeń tranzytu między miejscem pracy a miejscem zamieszkania (Urbański 2011b), czego skutkiem stała się nabrzmiewająca kwestia transportowa.

Po trzecie, napływ kapitału zintensyfikował „chaos przestrzenny". Kult wolnego rynku poskutkował jego wulgarną translacją urbanistyczną – odrzuceniem planowania przestrzennego i społecznej kontroli nad „naturalnym" żywiołem rynku (Jacobsson 2016; Kusiak 2018). Penetracja przestrzeni przez kapitał inwestycyjny poskutkowała też początkowo „punktowym", z czasem zaś coraz szerszym procesem gentryfikacji, nierzadko skrywanym za fasadą „rewitalizacji" (Pobłocki 2014).

Po czwarte, modernizacyjnymi symbolami stały się tak zwane *białe słonie*, czyli spektakularne inwestycje publiczne, oparte na wierze w możliwości powtórzenia efektu Bilbao i mające stać się kołem zamachowym lokalnego rozwoju, kosztem radykalnych cięć wydatków na cele społeczne i kulturalne (Rek-Woźniak 2017). Te przeskalowane inwestycje i tak zwane mega-eventy niemal natychmiast stały się symbolami antyspołecznej, uwikłanej w gigantomanię polityki „rozwoju" (Cope 2010).

To właśnie charakteryzowane tu procesy stały się negatywnymi punktami odniesienia dla aktywnych w swoich miastach i konstruujących wobec nich dyskursywne oraz działaniowe alternatywy anarchistycznych MRS. Poniższa analiza ograniczona zostanie przede wszystkim do warstwy dyskursywnej – wytwarzania kontrnarracji, w których stawką nie jest postępująca prywatyzacja, ale horyzont uspołecznienia. Nie sposób przywołać przy tym całego zakresu obiegu wydawniczego ruchu anarchistycznego. Przedmiotem dalszej analizy są te spośród istotnych dla współczesnego, miejskiego anarchizmu teksty, w których kluczowe jest przesunięcie antykapitalistyczne prowadzące ku idei glokalizacji, animowanie działalności lokatorskiej i postępująca urbanizacja anarchizmu oraz perspektywa horyzontalizacji wiedzy. To one bowiem dawały asumpt do zmian narracji o mieście, przede wszystkim w ujęciu sprawiedliwościowym, jeszcze zanim zrobiły to obecnie dyskursywnie dominujące „ruchy nowych mieszczan".

Przesunięcie o którym mowa można datować – w mniejszym czy większym uproszczeniu – na sam początek XXI wieku, zaś jego intensyfikacja nastąpiła kilka lat później. Najlepszą bodaj egzemplifikacją są tu dwie prace Jarosława Urbańskiego: *Globalizacja a konflikty lokalne* (Urbański 2002) oraz *Odzyskać miasto. Samowolne osadnictwo, skłoting, anarchitektura* (Urbański 2005). W pierwszej z nich Urbański pisał:

> Istotą proponowanego tu ujęcia jest łączenie analizy zjawisk mikrospołecznych z makrospołecznymi. Kierując się przekonaniem, że protest przeciw negatywnym skutkom „globalizacji" nie ogranicza się tylko do walki radykalnej młodzieży skupionej w „nowych ruchach społecznych", która koncentruje swoje niezadowolenie na elitach i przywódcach „państw bogatych". Na poziomie lokalnym trwa on codziennie (Urbański 2002: 13).

Charakterystyczna dla optyki przyjętej przez Urbańskiego jest potrzeba wyjaśniania określonych konfliktów przestrzennych jako lokalnych przykładów „obiektywnych sprzeczności interesów", naturalnie wpisanych w kapitalizm. Urbański pisał:

> (...) konflikty lokalne rzadko przebijają się do mediów krajowych. Dzieje się tak z uwagi na to, że zazwyczaj dotyczą one małej – czasami tylko kilkunastoosobowej – grupy mieszkańców. (…) A ranga problemu wykracza dużo dalej poza obręb jednej, małej gminy czy powiatowego miasta. (...) czasami z dnia na dzień tracą możliwość zarobkowania, dostęp do terenów rekreacyjnych, ich sielskie otoczenie zmienia się w plac budowy, a później na przykład w teren przemysłowy z hałasującym zakładem pracy. Dzieciom „zabiera się" szkołę w imię nie zawsze zrozumiałych reform, zamyka się przedszkola i biblioteki (Urbański 2002: 11).

Wyraźne dyskursywne zorientowanie na kwestię mieszkaniową i walki lokatorskie odnajdziemy nieco później w pracy Veroniki Sinewali, *Gentryfikacja. Lokatorzy w ogniu wojny socjalnej* (Sinewali 2010) oraz w wyraźnym stanowisku Urbańskiego (2012), publikowanym akurat w magazynie „Miasta", kojarzonym raczej ze skrzydłem mieszczańskim MRS. Poza perspektywą lokatorską, warto przywołać też zredagowaną w Gdańsku i silniej zorientowaną na – nieco w duchu psychogeograficznym – doświadczanie przestrzeni i konstruowanie lokalności, publikację *Moje miasto* (Błaut, Mróz, Waluszko 2002).

5. „Przegląd Anarchistyczny" jako forum kontrpubliczne

Kluczowym i systematycznie wydawanym organem wydawniczym, kontynuującym istotne dla urbanizującego się anarchizmu problemy, w tym zatem sensie mającym dla omawianego środowiska charakter reprezentatywny, stał się kontynuujący tradycję wcześniej wydawanego „Biuletynu Federacji Anarchistycznej" i wydawany w Poznaniu „Przegląd Anarchistyczny" (PA).

To na łamach PA wykrystalizował się wyraźny „rytuał dyskursywnego przejścia" w stronę zainteresowania lokalizmem. Potrzeba wyjścia poza zaklęty krąg krytyki państwa i globalnego kapitalizmu wzmagała coraz silniejszą potrzebę realnych alternatyw: jedną z nich był dość oczywisty zwrot w stronę idei samorządności (Król 2010). Punktem odniesienia stały się tu odkrywane na nowo w tamtym czasie idee kooperatyzmu i spółdzielczości, między innymi w wersji Edwarda Abramowskiego. W ramach powyższych poszukiwań zidentyfikować też można zdecydowanie bliższe współczesności translacje idei samorządności obecne w programie „pierwszej Solidarności" (*Trójgłos* 2007/2008). Efekt tych poszukiwań po latach jeden z komentatorów określił mianem „konstruktywnego anarchizmu" (Głaz 2017).

W jego obrębie można wyróżnić cztery główne motywy narracyjne. Pierwsze dwa spośród nich związane są wyraźnie z przyjęciem materialistycznej optyki definiowania kwestii miejskiej (por. Urbański 2011a; Pluciński 2012). Dwa ostatnie z kolei są efektem coraz wyraźniej dokonującego się przejścia kognitywnego i praktyk teoretycznych ruchu, realizowanych w zgodzie ze spostrzeżeniem Kurta Lewina, że „nie ma nic bardziej praktycznego niż dobra teoria". W tym zatem duchu konstruowanie anarchistycznych kontrpubliczności to z jednej strony (re)konstruowanie i/lub upowszechnianie określonych krytycznych teorii społecznych, w tym krytycznych *urban studies* oraz praktyki samokształceniowe.

Pierwszy z kontrdyskursów to wyraźne przesunięcie ku kwestiom, najpierw pracowniczej, następnie zaś mieszkaniowej (zresztą do dziś miejskie ruchy anarchistyczne starają się lokować obie perspektywy we wspólnym planie). To w numerach PA sprzed ponad dekady głos otrzymali sami mieszkańcy oraz aktywiści animujący kwestię lokatorską (Krzyżaniak 2011) i to z ich ust zaczął wydobywać się – nowy i mocno heterodoksyjny, szczególnie zważając na polityczno-ekonomiczny kontekst dominacji neoliberalnego urbanizmu – dyskurs sprawiedliwościowy (Ciszewski 2008/2009; Grzegorczyk 2008/2009; Krzyżaniak 2011; Smosarski 2008/2009). To właśnie tu można identyfikować istotną rolę ruchu anarchistycznego jako facylitatora „oporu słabych" – do tej pory słabo zorganizowanych, przede wszystkim zaś pozbawionych kanałów artykulacji swojego niezadowolenia, przegranych transformacji ustrojowej. To też wyraźne przesunięcie polskiego anarchizmu w stronę kwestii mieszkaniowej dało asumpt do anarchistycznej krytyki procesu gentryfikacji jeszcze w momencie, w którym pojęcie to było słabo dyskursywnie rozpowszechnione (Cope 2010; Gierszon 2010; *Gentryfikacja jako ideologia* 2010; Rudnicki 2010; Smith 2010) i niemal nieobecne nawet w dyskursie akademickim, częściowo zaś maskowane bezkrytycznie i fasadowo pojmowanymi praktykami „rewitalizacji".

Drugi kontrdyskurs to wyraźne i otwarte przesunięcie ku kwestiom własnościowym i holistyczny charakter tego przesunięcia. Nie sprowadziło się ono tylko i wyłącznie do „trywialnej" krytyki instytucji własności prywatnej, ale skupiało na poszukiwaniu wobec niej alternatyw. Poszukiwania te szły w kilku przynajmniej kierunkach – przyjmowały na przykład postać wykuwania „nowego" języka: czy to pracy nad kategoriami dóbr wspólnych czy też renesansu języka kooperatyzmu i własności spółdzielczej. Wreszcie, innym narzędziem poszukiwań miały stać się budżety partycypacyjne, dzięki którym upodmiotowienie ekonomiczne miało zazębiać się z upodmiotowieniem obywatelskim (Legard 2010; Sveingung

2010). Kiedy jednak w ciągu kilku lat budżetowanie, pod postacią plebiscytowego budżetowania obywatelskiego, z całą problematycznością przywołanej metody stało się powszechne, środowiska anarchistyczne stały się zdecydowanymi jego przeciwnikami (Czapka 2010; Sveingung 2010).

Trzecim filarem konstruowania kontrpubliczności stały się praktyki samokształceniowe. To na łamach PA ukazywały się liczne artykuły i przekłady o charakterze *stricte* naukowym. PA często jako pierwszy organ udostępnianiał polskim czytelnikom teksty prominentnych badaczy, reprezentujących rozmaite perspektywy krytyczne i niejednokrotnie opowiadających się za modelami nauki usytuowanej, niekiedy też otwarcie zaangażowanej, którymi polska akademia ani wydawnictwa naukowe przygotowujące przekłady do tamtej pory nie wyrażały zainteresowania. To w PA drukowano pierwsze tłumaczenia prac Richarda Clowarda i Frances Fox Piven (2011), Neila Smitha (2010), Stephena Shutakisa i Davida Graebera (2009) czy Pun Ngai (2008/2009). Tłumaczono też fragmenty niedostępnych do tej pory prac uznanych autorów, takich tak Daniel Guerin, Michel Foucault czy Herbert Marcuse. Według informacji, które uzyskałem bezpośrednio od członków Redakcji PA, przygotowano też przekład ważnego i często przywoływanego artykułu Margit Mayer poświęconego problematyce ideologii pustego znaczącego „prawa do miasta" – tekst ten jednak nie ukazał się, pismo bowiem zawiesiło w tamtym czasie działalność. W PA publikowano też liczne artykuły przedstawicieli polskiej akademii, podzielających sceptycyzm wobec wiary w neutralność akademii i nierzadko zaangażowanych w rozmaite walki społeczne, takich jak: Jan Sowa, Krystian Szadkowski, Oskar Szwabowski, Agata Czarnacka, Piotr Piotrowski, Rafał Jakubowicz.

Da się również na łamach PA zidentyfikować wyraźna, czwarta tendencja do horyzontalnego definiowania relacji między akademią a ruchem oraz postulat „wiedzy aktywistycznie użytecznej". Najpełniej ujęli to chyba globalni intelektualiści ruchu anarchistycznego, Shutakis z Graeberem, formułując postulatywny artykuł: *Praktyka jako forma wiedzy, wiedza jako forma działania* (Shutakis, Graeber 2009). Praktyki samokształceniowe mają wzmagać właśnie proces zintensyfikowanej refleksyjności aktywizmu. Idzie zatem o swoistą pętlę czy też sprzężenie zwrotne między wiedzą akademicko certyfikowaną a wiedzą aktywistycznie użyteczną. Wreszcie, anarchistyczna perspektywa na relacje między akademią a aktywizmem to w pewnym sensie realizacja postulatu socjologii publicznej (Burawoy 2009), w myśl którego wiedza wytwarzana w (domyślnie) publicznych uniwersytetach powinna – jako potencjał krytyczny i uruchamiający refleksyjność – wracać do podmiotów, które są jej dostarczycielami (Burawoy, Szołucha 2013). Wspomnieć tu można też o tym, że perspektywa wiedzy współtworzonej prowadziła też do projektów współbadań (por. Kostka, Czarnota 2017).

6. Zakończenie

W artykule przedstawiono koncepcję sfery kontrpublicznej – zarówno w ujęciu pojęciowym, jak i genetyczno-historycznym. Następnie wskazano na użyteczność kategorii sfery kontrpublicznej w badaniach nad określonymi typami „słabych" aktorów politycznych, w tym przypadku „miejskich ruchów anarchistycznych". Przywołano istotność materialno-instytucjonalnych warunków konstruowania sfery kontrpublicznej. Następie poddano analizie konkretny organ wydawniczy ruchu, „Przegląd Anarchistyczny", wskazując na kluczowe – z perspektywy założeń przyjętych w artykule – zagadnienia konstruowania kontrdyskursów.

Artykuł ma przy tym charakter mocno eksploracyjny. Jest zatem raczej propozycją określonej – w przekonaniu autora efektywnej poznawczo – perspektywy, pozwalającej na badania aktorów społecznych czy też podmiotów polityki niezinstytucjonalizowanej w kontekście respektującym ich podmiotowość i sprawczość. Starającej się zarówno słuchać głosów słabiej obecnych z perspektywy głównego nurtu sfery publicznej, jak również – o ile to nie nazbyt normatywne, w zależności od tego jak zdefiniujemy powinności nauki – wzmacniać te głosy i potrzebę ich zaistnienia. W obrębie perspektywy bliskiej autorowi artykułu coraz wyraźniejsze są bowiem głosy (por. Burawoy, Szołucha 2013; Cox 2014), by wiedza wytwarzana w obrębie akademii nie była wyłącznie wiedzą o ruchach społecznych i publicznościach, ale przede wszystkim – o ile to oczywiście możliwe, należy przy tym przynajmniej urefleksyjniać i wdrażać takie warunki możliwości – dla ruchów i publiczności.

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ANARCHIST COUNTER-DISCOURSES. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF THE URBAN COUNTERPUBLICS

Abstract. The basic categories of the article are the concepts of counter-public sphere and counterpublics. The article has theoretical-empirical character. It offers the analysis in terms of conceptual history as well as the investigation on "anarchist urban movements" with particular emphasis put on specific types of discursive and self-organization practices necessary for the construction and reproduction of anarchist counterpublics. The counter-discourses present in selected anarchist press publications, with particular emphasis on "Przegląd Anarchistyczny" ["Anarchist Review"], were subjected to a detailed study.

Keywords: public sphere/ counter-public sphere, counterpublics, social movements, urban social movements, anarchist movements, the right to the city.

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