THE SO-CALLED 'POLITICAL HEURISTICS' IN THE LIGHT OF PRAXIOLOGY

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Praxiology is defined as: 'the study of human action and conduct'[1]. However, this definition is too vague. For example, 'human action and conduct' result from numerous factors such as *circumstances, aims, methods* etc. (cf: wrong/incorrect aims – good methods, correct aims – wrong methods; *success* is not identical to *usefulness* or *profitability*). All these problems must be analysed in association with *time*.

The same dictionary defines *heuristic* as: 'providing aid or direction in the solution of a problem but otherwise unjustified or incapable of justification (heuristic techniques) »a heuristic assumption«…; specif: of or relating to exploratory problem-solving techniques that utilize selfeducating techniques (as the evaluation of feedback) to improve performance…'[2].

H*euristic* is derived from *heuriskein:* to find, learn, discover, understand, invent, achieve, obtain, etc.[3]

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[1] Webster's Third New International Dictionary Of The English Language, ed. Ph. Babcock Gove, Cologne 1993, p. 1782.

[2] Ibidem, p. 1064.

[3] Słownik grecko-polski, ed. O. Jurewicz, Warszawa 2000.

Archimedes of Syracuse (287–212 BC), the great Greek – Sicilian inventor and discoverer, used a form of this verb ('heureka': ''I have found it') after having discovered a law of hydrostatics (the Archimedes principle)[4]. This discovery resulted from his perspicacity, intuition (analogy, analogy!, no algorithms) and a vast knowledge.

In the Middle Ages *heuristic* was known as *ars inveniendi*[5]. In the following centuries some scientists tried to link *heuristic* ('problem solving based on knowledge and intuition') to some more traditional sectors of science. For example, in 1837 B. Bolzano, in his *Wissenschaftslehre,* tried to incorporate *heuristic* into *logic*. A chapter in his book bears the proud and promising title: Erfindungskunst (ars inveniendi)[6].

It is symptomatic that scientists with no personal inventions or discoveries whatsoever try to present *heuristic* or *ars inveniendi* as *logic , philosophy* etc. In the 20th century G. Polya tried to present *heuristic* as *solving artificial mathematical puzzle/riddles*[7]. In 2000 Z. Michalewicz and D.B. Fogel tried to present *operational research* (algorithms) as 'modern heuristic'[8].

Psychologists also try to domesticate *heuristic*. A.M. Colman in his Oxford Dictionary of Psychology informs that *heuristic* is: 'a rough – and – ready procedure or rule of thumb for making a decision, forming a judgement, or solving a problem without the application of an algorithm or an exhaustive comparison of all available options (and what about the morphological method of F. Zwicky? – B. Zb. Sz.), and hence without any guarantee of obtaining a correct or optimal result. The concept can be traced to the work of the US economist and decision theorist Herbert

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[4] Cf N. Davies, Europe. A History, London 1997, p. 125.

[5] Cf B. Zb. Szałek, Problem tzw. 'heurystyk politycznych' w kontekście marketingu wyborczego, [forthcoming in:] Problemy marketingu politycznego, ed. J. Jonczek, B. Zb. Szałek.

[6] B. Bolzano, Wissenschaftslehre, Sulzbach 1837.

[7] G. Polya, How To Solve It: A New Aspect of Mathematical Method, Princeton 1945; G. Polya, Methodology or Heuristics, Strategy or Tactics?, "Archives de Philosophie", 1971, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 623–629; cf M. Polanyi, Problem Solving, "The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science", 1957, No. 30, pp. 89–103.

[8] Z. Michalewicz, D.B. Fogel, How to Solve It: Modern Heuristics, Berlin–Heidelberg 2000.

A(lexander) Simon (1916–2001) who first suggested in 1957 that human decision makers with bounded rationality use such procedures when thorough examination of all available options is infeasible. The concept was introduced into psychology in the early 1970s by the Israeli psychologists Amos Tversky (1937–96) and Daniel Kahneman (born 1934), and the most important heuristics initially identified and studied by them were the anchoring and adjustment heuristic, the availability heuristic, and the representativeness heuristic. Also called a cognitive heuristic…'[9].

This dictionary was presented in 2003 as: 'a winner of the American Libraries Association 'Outstanding Reference Source' Award'. In my opinion, a good source should mention such researchers dealing with heuristics as Archimedes, Descartes or F. Zwicky[10]. G. Gigerenzer, in his paper published 10 years earlier, informed that: 'the concept of a 'heuristic' has various meanings and a long history – from Descartes' 21 heuristic rules for the direction of the mind to Duncker's heuristic methods that guide the stepwise reformulation of a problem until it is solved… The cognitive revolution has reintroduced the concept of a heuristic into psychology, in particular in the work of Herbert Simon (1957). Because of limited information-processing abilities, Simon argued, humans have to construct simplified models of the world. Heuristics are a product of these; they are shortcuts that can produce efficient decisions. Simon understood heuristics such as satisficing (i.e., selecting the first option available that meets minimal standards) as adaptive strategies in a complex environment, where alternatives for action are not given but must be sought out'[11].

It is necessary to emphasize here that the definitions presented by A.M. Colman and G. Gigerenzer are *biased*, for in reality they represent

[9] A.M. Colman, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, New York 2003; Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics & Biases, ed. D. Kahneman, A. Tversky, P. Slovic, Cambridge 1982.

[10] R. Descartes, Discours de la méthode, [in:] Essais 1637, Polish ed., Rozprawa o metodzie, Warsaw 1996; Regulae ad directionem ingenii, Polish ed., Reguły kierowania umysłem, Kęty 2002.

[11] G. Gigerenzer, How to make Cognitive Illusions Disappear: Beyond 'Heuristics and Biases', "European Review of Social Psychology", Chichester 1991, 2, pp. 83–115; G. Gigerenzer, P.M. Todd, the ABC Research Group, Simple Heuristics That Make Us Smart, Oxford 1999.

the viewpoint of psychology and not *ars inveniendi*. They suggest/ imply that the psychological approach to heuristics (explication of human behaviour, decision making) is the only one. In reality – it is not true: such researchers as A. Osborn, W. Gordon, F. Zwicky, E. De Bono, G. Prince, V. Nolan, J. Adair and others published in the 20th century numerous books describing practical methods for solving of real problems[12]. In other words, there is a fundamental difference between *explaining* (shortcuts in decision making) and *problem solving* (inventions, discoveries in the spirit of Archimedes).

Of course, the *psychological bias* with regard to *heuristics* appears in *social psychology* as well as in *political psychology*.

For example, F. Schläpfer et al. inform that: 'Research on social psychology and public opinion has identified a number of empirical regularities on how people form preferences in the political and social spheres'[13].

M. Marietta and D.C. Barker, dealing with political psychology, describe *values* as *heuristics*[14].

Let us deal with *political heuristics*. According to A.M. Colman: 'cognitive heuristic' is 'another name for a heuristic'[15]. It is obvious that in *political decision making/problem solving* certain *political knowledge/information* is requied. It is useful to distinguish *real*

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[12] cf A. Osborn, Applied Imagination, New York 1958; W.J.J. Gordon, Synectics: Tthe Development of Creative Capacity, New York 1961; F. Zwicky, Discovery, Invention, Research through Morphological Approach, Mac Millan 1969; A. Kaufman, M. Fustier, A. Drevet, L'inventique, Paris 1970; E. De Bono, The Mechanism of Mind, Mica Management Resources Inc. 1969; E. De Bono, Masterthinker's Handbook, Mc Quaig Group Inc. 1985; E. De Bono, Parallel Thinking, Mc Quaig Group Inc. 1994; G. Prince, The Practice of Creativity, 1970, V. Nolan, The Innovators Handbook, London 1990, J. Adair, The Art of Creative Thinking, Kogan Page ltd 1990.

[13] F. Schläpfer, M. Schmitt, A. Roschewitz, Competitive politics, simplified heuristics, and preferences for public goods, University of Zürich, Working Paper 0712, 2007, p. 2.

[14] M. Marietta, D.C. Barker, Values as Heuristics: Core Beliefs and Voter Sophistication in the 2000 Republican Nomination Contest, "Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties" 2007, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 49–78.

[15] A.M. Colman, Oxford Dictionary…, p. 142.

political knowledge and *illusory political knowledge*, as well as *real political ignorance* and *illusory political ignorance* (of course, in reality/ practice, a mixture of real/illusory political knowledge/ignorance occurs). The problem of political knowledge/ignorance should be analysed with regard to various levels/groups (such as politicians, voters etc.). For example, let us recall here the ignorance of G.W. Bush with regard to the name of the president of India (c. 1 milliard citizens), and the spectacular ignorance (with regard to the Bush Doctrine) of the would-be-vice-president S. Palin in 2008[16]. It is trendy to speak of *ignorant voters*[17]. M. Schudson illustrates 'the appalling ignorance of the American electorate' with examples associated with history (eg the Civil War in the 19th century) and certain contemporary issues (eg the name of the present secretary of the United Nations, where is Nicaragua, who is Russia's leader?)[18]. And M. Schudson asks: 'How can the United States claim to be a model democracy if its citizens know so little about political life?'[19].

In my opinion some kinds of such *political* (?) ignorance are of no real/practical importance whatsoever[20].

School knowledge is not identical to *political knowledge*. Far more important is the following question: what should citizens / politicians know? One thing is certain: they should know as much as possible to make correct decisions. It is tempting to use the expression: 'correct electoral decisions' – but let us look at the problem from a higher level (cf the *rule of 20 : 80*)[21].

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[16] cf B. Zb. Szałek, Metodologiczno-prakseologiczne studium w zakresie: 'heurystyki polityczne' a kampania prezydencka w USA w 2008r., [forthcoming in:] Problemy marketingu politycznego, ed. J. Jonczek, B. Zb. Szałek

[17] cf M. Schudson, America's Ignorant Voters, "The Wilson Quarterly" 2000, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 16–22.

[18] Ibidem, p.16.

[19] Ibidem.

[20] cf the problem: who was the first president of the USA: J. Hanson or G. Washington ?; see A. Richardson, John Hanson: First President of the United States, "OAH Magazine of History" 1991, No. 5, p. 3.

[21] cf B. Zb. Szałek, Some praxiological remarks on the problems of the European Union, "Reality of Politics" 2011, No. 2.

According to J.H. Kuklinski et al.: 'Scholars have documented the deficiencies in political knowledge among American citizens. Another problem, misinformation, has received less attention… Misinformation acts as an obstacle to educating the public with correct facts… widespread misinformation can lead to collective preferences that are far different from those that would exist if the people were correctly informed'[22].

Misinformation can be associated with *spinning* (eg *burying bad news, cherry picking* (selective presentation of facts) etc.), *framing*, think tanks (*groupthink(ing)*, group interests) etc. Some researchers use the terms: *frugal heuristics* and *fast heuristics*[23]. The first term denotes heuristics based on uncertain or/and limited information. The second term is associated with *severely limited time for decision making*.

In 2007 D. Seib (at the annual Meeting of The Midwest Political Association in Chicago) *introduced* the term: *fuzzy heuristics* (cf the term: *fuzzy systems,* known for some decades in the general systems theory).

The above terms are useful with regard to the following definitions and opinions. According to C.R. Sunstein: '…heuristics play a pervasive role in moral, political, and legal judgment…'[24]. P.M. Sniderman et al. are very optimistic with regard to *political heuristics*. According to them, heuristics are: 'judgmental shortcuts, efficient ways to organize and simplify political choices, efficient in the double sense of requiring relatively little information to execute, yet yielding dependable answers even to complex problems of choice'[25].

For some analysts the efficiency of *heuristics* is a problem. According to M. Marietta and D.C. Barker: 'A substantial body of research demonstrates that voters routinely employ cognitive shortcuts, or heuristics, to

[22]   J.H. Kuklinski, P.J. Quirk, J. Jerit, D. Schwieder, R.F. Rich, Misinformation and the currency of Democratic Citizenship, "The Journal of Politics" 2000, No. 62, p. 790.

[23]   cf J. Shanteau, P. Rickey, Fast and Frugal Heuristics: What About Unfriendly Environments, "Behavioral and Brain Sciences" 2000, Vol. 23, No. 5, p. 762–763; G. Gigerenzer, J. Czerlinski, L. Martignon, How good are fast and frugal heuristics?, [in:] Common Sense, Reasoning and Rationality, ed. R. Elio, New York 2002, pp. 149–173.

[24]   C.R. Sunstein, Moral heuristics, "Behavioral and Brain Sciences" 2005, No. 28, p. 531.

[25]   P. Sniderman, R. Brody, Ph. Tetlock, Reasoning and Choice: Explorations in Political Psychology, Cambridge 1991, p. 19.

help them navigate a complex and confusing political world… But the central theoretical question underlying studies of heuristic decision-making is whether and under what conditions it actually leads to accurate judgments that result in meaningful democratic representation'[26].

Before dealing with more detailed problems it seems to be useful to recall here the obvious (?) fact that *citizens, voters* and *politicians* are not homogeneous[27]. Some authors seem to ignore it. This problem can be illustrated by means of a quotation from a paper by J. Gastil et al.: 'In a provocative 1987 article, Aaron Wildavsky asserted that culture operates as the fundamental orienting force in the generation of mass public opinion. The meanings and interpersonal associations that inhere in discrete ways of life, he argued, shape the heuristic processes by which politically unsophisticated individuals, in particular, choose what policies and candidates to support'[28].

Culture is associated, to some extent, with *propinquity* (cf the problem of *likability* (eg: in 2008 B. Obama described H. Clinton as 'likable enough')).

This aspect can be illustrated by means of *the black utility heuristic*. According to M.C. Dawson, it is: 'a mechanism enabling one to specify the conditions under which African American group interests become stronger or weaker relative to individual interests'[29].

P*ropinquity* is associated with *common values* resulting from religion, ethics, morals etc.[30] For example, C.R. Sunstein defines *moral heuristics* as:' 1) those that involve morality and risk regulation, 2) those that involve punishment, 3) those that involve 'playing god', particularly in the domains

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[26] F. Schläpfer, M. Schmitt, A. Roschewitz, Competitive politics…, p. 50.

[27] cf F. Schläpfer et al., op.cit., p. 18, emphasize: 'the interactive effects of information context, policy characteristic, and individual characteristic in decisions about public goods'.

[28] J. Gastil, D. Braman, D.M. Kahan, P. Slovic, The 'Wildavsky Heuristic': The Cultural Orientation of Mass Political Opinion, Yale, "Public Law Working Paper" 2007, No. 107, p. 1.

[29] M.C. Dawson, Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African American Politics, Princeton, 1994, p.61.

[30] cf M.B. Petersen, Public opinion and evolved heuristics: The role of category-based inference, "Journal of Cognition and Culture" 2009, Vol. 9, No. 3, p. 367–389.

of reproduction and sex, 4) those that involve the act – omission distinction'.[31] And C.R. Sunstein adds: 'Often moral heuristics represent generalizations from a range of problems for which they are indeed well-suited, and hence, most of the time, such heuristics work well. The problem comes when the generalities are wrenched out of context and treated as freestanding or universal principles, applicable to situations in which their primitive functions no longer operate'[32]. According to this researcher, moral shortcuts: 'lead to mistaken and even absurd moral judgments. These judgments are highly relevant not only to morality, but to law and politics as well'[33].

The above mentioned problem of *moral heuristics* can be illustrated with some practical examples[34]:

1) 'morality and risk regulation': 'cost-benefit analysis' in the case of ransoms / or antiterrorist operations; 'emissions trading' ('moral wrongdoing for a fee')

2) 'morality and punishment': who should be punished: corporations (organizations) or individuals (eg chairmen).

*C*ommon values may result from *political systems* (some researchers seem to forget that they only deal with *democratic systems*; cf *political decision making* (eg voting) in such countries as North Korea). M. Marietta and D.C. Barker emphasize this problem: 'In sum, our basic position is that in an electoral democracy (especially in the context of a primary election), individual voters employ values as a heuristic to choose the candidate whose predispositions are closest to their own, regardless of their level of political sophistication'[35].

In the light of the above quotations the following opinion of M. Schläpfer et al. seems to be highly enigmatic: 'The results experimentally confirm

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[31] C.R. Sunstein, Moral heuristics, "Behavioral and Brain Sciences" 2005, No. 28, p. 536.
[32] Ibidem, p. 531.
[33] Ibidem.
[34] Ibidem, p. 537.
[35] M. Marietta, D.C. Barker, Values as Heuristics…, p. 52.

the earlier suggestion by political scientists that voters use simplified heuristics to make decisions in line with their interests and values'[36].

The above examples and opinions suggest the necessity to analyse the relationship between: *national heuristics, moral heuristics, ethnic heuristics, simple heuristics* (cf 'hard versus easy', 'simple heuristics that make us good / smart'), etc.[37]

Some political scientists try to present *electoral heuristics* as *(general) political heuristics*[38]. For example, in 1998 J.H. Kuklinski and P.J. Quirk mentioned the following set of *political heuristics:* 'political party', 'personal character', 'candidate's demographics or those of his supporters', 'using evidence about personal character to make inferences about political character', 'assuming that the president controls the economy', 'using return in early presidential primaries as evidence on the candidate's merit', 'endorsements', 'likability'.

Such sets (varying in size) could be understood as variants of an *electoral heuristic mix* (cf the 'marketing mix' (eg '4 P': product, price, place, promotion) and its variants in business).

One could regard such an *electoral heuristic mix* as a tool for *voters*, as well as for *candidates.*

In 2001 R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk presented a set of '5 common cognitive heuristics employed by voters': party affiliation, candidate's ideology, endorsements, horse race information ('viability information') and appearance[39].

Before dealing with these *heuristics* I would like to add that, for example, M. Marietta and D.C. Barker discussed such *political heuristics* as: party identification, political ideology, personal qualities of the candidate,

[36] F. Schläpfer, M. Schmitt, A. Roschewitz, Competitive politics…, p. 3.

[37] cf C.R. Sunstein, op.cit., p. 535.

[38] cf J.H. Kuklinski, P.J. Quirk, Reconsidering the Rational Public: Cognition, Heuristics, and Mass Opinion, [in:] Elements of Political Reason, ed. A. Lupia, M. Mc Cubbins, P. Popkin, New York 1999.

[39] R.R. Lau, D.P. Redlawsk, Advantages and disadvantages of cognitive heuristics in political decision making, "American Journal of Political Science" 2001, No. 45, pp. 951––971.

candidate's relative viability, electability and momentum.[40] According to them (and (first of all) A.I. Abramowitz)[41]: 'Viability refers to perceptions of a candidate's likelihood of winning the nomination contest…, while electability refers to the odds of winning the general election to follow… Momentum refers to a candidate's recent performance or the direction their campaign seems to be going…'.

In 2011, M.C. Nisbet enumerated the following 'heuristics and mental shortcuts': values, identity, trust, turning to trusted media sources, turning to trusted political leaders, conversations with friends and co-workers[42].

Let us return to the set of '5 political heuristics' presented by R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk.

These researchers define 'correct voting' as: 'the extent to which people vote in accordance with their own values and priorities'[43]. Their set of '5 political heuristics' is headed by 'party affiliation'. Other researchers also emphasize the role of this heuristic. For example, C.V. Hunt et al. describe 'party affiliation' as 'one of the most important political heuristics'[44].

According to M. Marietta and D.C. Barker: 'One of the most powerful political heuristics in general elections appears to be party identification… Political ideology also serves as a powerful cue, but its utility appears to be restricted to sophisticated voters…'[45]. F. Schläpfer et al. present similar opinions: 'Political scientists have suggested that voters in public referenda

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[40] M. Marietta, D.C. Barker, Values as Heuristics…, pp. 50–51.

[41] Ibidem, p. 70; A.I. Abramowitz, Viability, electability, and candidate choice in a presidential primary election: a test of competing models, "Journal of Politics" 1989, No. 51, pp. 977–992.

[42] M.C. Nisbet, UnPolitical America: A Crisis of Political Illiteracy?, "Farsight 2011", http: // bigthink. Com / ideas / 22786 (updated: 15.02.2011

[43] R.R. Lau, D.P. Redlawsk, Voting Correctly, "American Political Science Review" 1997, No. 91, p. 395; cf R.R. Lau, D.J. Andersen, D.P. Redlawsk, An Exploration of Correct Voting in recent U.P. Presidential Elections, "American Journal of Political Science" 2008, Vol. 52, No. 2, pp. 395–411.

[44] C.V. Hunt, D. Ergun, C.M. Federico, The Relationship between affective states and the structure of political attitudes, "Psicologia Politica" 2008, No. 37, p. 9; cf R.R. Lau, D.P. Redlawsk, How Voters Decide: Information Processing in Election Campaigns, New York 2006.

[45] M. Marietta, D.C. Barker, Values as Heuristics.., p. 50–51.

may rationally use information shortcuts such as party positions to 'vote their interests' in spite of limited factual knowledge about the propositions'[46].

However, is 'party affiliation/identification' an efficient heuristic (psychological explication – praxiological doubts)? Let us recall here political systems based on two parties and the illusion of *freshness.*

The second heuristic is named 'candidate's ideology'. According to F. Schläpfer et al.: 'Political scientists have suggested that voters use simplified heuristics based on the positions of familiar parties to infer how a proposed policy will affect them and to cast a vote in line with their interests and values'[47].

This opinion should be analysed in the light of such terms as 'the Overton Window of Political Possibilities' (unthinkable >< real policy).

The next *political heuristic* is named 'endorsements' (eg by 'authorities'). In reality, 'endorsements' tend to turn into 'pseudoendorsements' (by movie stars etc.).

'Horse race information' (or 'viability information') should be analysed in the light of such terms as 'the Bradley (or Wilder) Effect'[48].

R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk regard the final political heuristic ('appearance'; H. Brody and P. Sniderman use the term: 'likability heuristic'[49]) as: 'possibly the most important (or at least most frequently employed)…'[50]. In reality, this *heuristic* is associated with all kinds of *political make up* (cf the Ottinger's Effect (image versus facts), the 'lipstick on a pig' (B. Obama 2008)).

According to R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk: 'political heuristics are particularly efficacious for politically sophisticated voters – at least when the candidates conform to the expected norms of their parties… In fact, heavy reliance on political heuristics actually made decision making less accurate

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[46] F. Schläpfer, M. Schmitt, A. Roschewitz, Competitive politics…, p. 16.

[47] Ibidem, p.1.

[48] Cf P. Morrisson, The 'Bradley Effect' in 2008, "Los Angeles Times" 02.10.2008.

[49] H. Brody, P. Sniderman, Attitude Attribution: A Group Basis for Political Reasoning, "American Political Science Review" 1985, No. 79, pp. 1061–1078.

[50] R.R. Lau, D.P. Redlawsk, ‚Advantages and disadvantages…, p. 7.

among those low in political sophistication. Only relative experts appear to be generally helped in their decision making by using heuristics'[51].

C. Boudreau and A. Lupia describe the results of the study by R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk in the following way: '(they) find that although heuristics significantly increase the ability to vote correctly among subjects who score high on their political knowledge and political interest index, they decrease less knowledgeable and less interested subjects' ability to vote correctly'[52].

In general, researchers differ in their opinions with regard to such *political heuristics*. For example, J. Mondak presents a positive opinion (as for the advantages of various heuristics)[53], but J.H. Kuklinski and P.J. Quirk describe the benefits of these heuristics as 'in fact debatable'[54].

In 2008 R.R. Lau, D.P. Redlawsk and D.J. Andersen presented the *political heuristics* in a wider context: 'We hypothesize that differences in cognitive capacity, political motivation, the availability of political heuristics, and macrolevel factors that effect the difficulty of the choice confronting citizens, including the nature of the political information environment, should all affect the probability of a correct vote. We find significant support for seven prognosed hypotheses across three levels of analysis, which places the responsibility for incorrect votes on both the individual and our electoral system'[55].

The final fragment is interesting: '…which places the responsibility for incorrect votes on both the individual and our electoral system'. In other words, it is possible that *incorrect voting* (see above) can partly result from *faulty electoral system* (cf the indirect electoral (electors) system in the

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[51]　Ibidem, p. 26–27.

[52]　C. Boudreau, A. Lupia, Political Knowledge, [in:] The Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science, ed. J.N. Druckman, D.P. Green, J.H. Kuklinsky, A. Lupia, Cambridge 2011, p. 19.

[53]　J. Mondak, Cognitive Heuristics, Heuristic Processing, and Efficiency in Political Decision-Making, [in:] Research in Micropolitics, ed.: M. Delli Carpini, L. Huddy, R.Y. Shapiro, Greenwich 1994, p. 4.

[54]　J.H. Kuklinski, P.J. Quirk, Reconsidering the Rational Public…, p. 10–11.

[55]　R.R. Lau, D.J. Andersen, D.P. Redlawsk, An Exploration of Correct Voting in Recent U.P. Presidential Elections, "American Journal of Political Science" 2008, Vol. 52, No. 2, p. 395.

USA; more or less sophisticated voters use *electoral political heuristics* based on selected information / misinformation – moreover, the indirect electoral system (Level 2) can deform the faulty electoral decisions from Level 1.

Is *correct voting* possible in an *incorrect voting system*?

SOME FINAL REMARKS

For over 50 years numerous North American researchers in psychology and political psychology try to persuade political scientists in other countries that *political heuristics* = *cognitive* heuristics = *heuristics*. In fact, their *political heuristics* (such as 'endorsements', 'appearance') are *political pseudoheuristics*, as they do not help 'solving political problems': they only help 'getting rid of certain electoral problems'. Of course, the above sets of such *political heuristics* could be regarded as variants of *political / electoral marketing mix* (sellers versus customers, political candidates versus voters).

Let us ask two questions. First question: is it possible to choose the best candidate on the basis of information and misinformation (eg political correctness, burying of certain facts) filtered by means of a set of *political heuristics*? Second question: is it possible to correctly vote (cf the term beloved by R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk: 'correct voting') in a faulty electoral; system? In other words: is it possible to choose the best (from the viewpoint of all citizens) person (not: candidate) in a faulty/unfriendly system /environment ?[56].

It is obvious that the entire discussion (emerging from numerous books and papers) about the so-called *political heuristics* does not lead to the 'best solution/choice'. Are the *political heuristics* useful from the viewpoint of a candidate/politician? In fact, the set of *heuristics* presented by R.R. Lau and D.P. Redlawsk can be of use to/for political manipulators (cf an *elec-*

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[56] Cf H. Kriesi, How citizens decide in direct-democratic votes: experiences from Switzerland, "Portuguese Journal of Social Science" 2004, Vol. 3, No. 1, p.1: 'citizens can make meaningful decisions, because their choices are simplified and pre-structured by the institutional setting and by the heuristic cues and the arguments provided by the political elites'.

toral heuristic mix offered by a manipulator). A serious candidate/politician must not forget such problems as *financing* and *organizing*.

These North American *political heuristics* suggest that *politics/political activity = elections.* Of course, this equation is not true: *electoral campaign* is just a stage, a part of a more or less sinusoidal *political cycle* (it is tempting to use the term: *stages heuristic*; however, we must not forget that in the USA *stages heuristic* is interpreted (by such researchers as H.D. Lasswell, M. Howlett, M. Ramesh) as a 'theory regarding policy process' (4–7 stages; according to H.D. Lasswell: intelligence, promotion, prescription, invocation, application, termination, appraisal; according to M. Howlett and M. Ramesh: agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, implementation, evaluation)[57]. Electoral victory implies new, real problems – such as unemployment, security (military, energy, health): can they be solved by means of the so-called *political heuristics*, discussed by R.R. Lau, D.P. Redlawsk and others?

In other words, the problem is not to explain the behaviour of foolish/ignorant voters in a faulty system: the problem is to get the best president, the best government and to achieve the best level of life in the country – for as long as possible.

The so-called *political heuristics* can lead to a more or less spectacular electoral victory, but what about the next stage of the political cycle (for example, the problem of a significant improvement of the situation in the country). This is hardly acceptable from the viewpoint of praxiology.

It is symptomatic that the believers in the *political pseudoheuristics* do not mention in their works such researchers in the field of *real problem solving* as W. Gordon (analogies, synectics), A. Osborn (brainstorming), F. Zwicky (morphological analysis), E. De Bono (lateral thinking, parallel thinking)[58].

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[57] H.D. Lasswell, A Preview of Policy Sciences, New York 1971; M. Howlett, M. Ramesh, Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystema, New York 1995.

[58] Cf such brainstorming-like forms of problem solving as: Citizen Consensus Conferences, Citizen Technology Panels, etc.

Abstract

The aim of this article is to describe the concept of political heuristics. It is most often understood as : party identification, political ideology, personal qualities of the candidate, candidate's relative viability, electability and momentum. In author's opinion, it is obvious that the so-called political heuristics do not lead to the best solution / choice. Moreover, this concept suggests that politics / political activity = elections. Political heuristics, as described in this article, are political pseudoheuristics, as they do not help solving political problems: they only help 'getting rid' of certain electoral problems. Sets of such political heuristics could be regarded as variants of political / electoral marketing mix.