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## **The time of “crisis” and the “crisis” of time. Prolegomenon to security as the politics of time**

### **Abstract**

The essay faces up to the topic of “crisis” from the perspective of historical and sociological semantics. Troublesomeness of the crisis is a permanent fixture in any philosophy of historical time. The author sees a social reality as flows of social practices with their symbolic and material effects and assumptions, in the same breath. The subject of his considerations are selected representative theories and ideologies of “crisis” with their assumptions pertinent to philosophies of time and time politics. Considerations of the author refer to the semantic struggles in the field of “crisis” sociology. Conclusions are also referred to the epistemic standpoint of the sociology of security and its subjects matter, the vicious circle of fear, anxiety, and secular Providences in political projects of the future time.

**Keywords:** crisis, social time, politics of time, semantic of time, pattern of time, ideology of time, vicious circle of fear and providence.

### **1. Sensemaking of daily and historical time**

We are Temporal Beings living in the rhythm and pace of social and biological flows of time. Time is a trivial fact whose obviousness is impossible to deny or reject. We are living inside intervals of time imposed on us by Newton Cosmos Machine, Einstein’s relativity, and biological cycles. We are looking at other people through days and years, and we can witness them getting increasingly older, slowly perishing away until final death.

Memory comes from the Being as a constantly paid price for the hourglass variability with “sand of days” which have passed. Recollection of the past gives us the sense of contemporary time which, without the remembrance of history, is excluded from the identity. However now, when we scale the heights

of auto-reflection we see that our Being in time is the flow and life of change, shifts, and also clusters of amendments and stability in the same breath. The past and the future are present, in existence, in our contemporaneity, because we are self-creative beings which life is expressed through intentionality. Not only my individual personality, but also the existence of social being is expressed through projects and the human hopes of cultural immortality. We are creatures of the never-fulfilled Being. We are not only Beings inside the existence but also the Creators which create ourselves. Possibility of self-realization, the essence of hope is placed in the future which is waiting for our advent. On the way, there often appears pain and suffering, misery, and distress which we name “wasted”, or “lost time”, whose rhythms, intervals and standing have not brought us desired effects, but only the consciousness of imminent and inevitable end of life. If we throw time away or use its standing for useless actions, we suffer from alienation. Then we are living in a space fulfilled only with movement of the timer with its abstract, meaningless intervals. However now, it appears as if life was running at a slower pace and its intervals and duration have given us only futile senselessness of our hopes, anxiety, and longing. Then once more comes to us consciousness of limitations of time, thanks to modality and fallibility of our bodies. Maybe time is “the gift of God” or the “biological Being” but anyway we are now looking for possibilities of acceleration of our lifetime in society.

Thanks to obviousness of irreversibility and variability of time we cannot get into the same river two times. The crisis of time logic is concurrently the chance for criticism of our existence. The crisis gives us the prospect for critical consciousness. So, we stare down the barrel of necessity of pain and joy, the personal time production because we know that we ought to do something with our life for fruition of well-being in the future.

On the way we are meeting other people who for that matter are Temporal Beings. So that, they also live in time, and we may take assumption that their phenomenology of time is like our gestalt of living in time. Therefore, realization of our hopes, needs and projects seem in diverse degree contingent from their agreement and creation of the symbolic being of intersubjective communication. The subject matter of the communication is the incessant source of human science inspiration. This article falls within sociology. Notwithstanding, the social science

currently is sinking into a crisis, because of the subject matter of this science “society” is undergoing rapid acceleration and the sociology hunts fecklessly behind the rushing of time, burdened by conceptual contradictions and contentions. However, sociology is a science which has grown up on the body of crises of the 18th and the 19th century.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, existence of “the other” and daily observations of rhythms, intervals, and standing their verbal and nonverbal behaviors, gives us both a chance and necessity to exit from the prison of naive phenomenological reflection of time, to criticism of our consciousness of time and space. The way out from subjective experience of time is the crisis of our consciousness because we must now head towards the independent “reality” before us. In that case, the crisis appears as the conflicted world of conceptual and phenomenal contradictions, as the positivity of “objective facts” and as “processes of social construction of reality” in the same breath. Nonetheless, between the two perspectives we have not any serious contradictions because the first look on reality comes from pragmatical standpoint of needs of *homo faber* and the second one from an angle, expectancy of *homo creator*. So, both modalities of the episteme need each other. The “reality” is an object with a sense, and is our accomplishment, which simultaneously becomes independent from its human, social, biological, and natural creators. The reality is a process of events which make sense and order in time and space.

The idea of “social time” is a very good example of unity of contradictions between “I” and “not-I” or the subjectivity and the objectivity.<sup>2</sup> Universal, abstract time and its standardization of pace, rhythm, and an empty meaning along with abstract time duration, and the proper social time must be differentiated

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<sup>1</sup> H-P. Muller, *Krise und Kritik. Klassiker der soziologischen Zeitdiagnose*, Suhrkamp, Verlag Berlin, 2021; K. Wielicki, *Kryzys i socjologia*, Warszawa 2012; M. Tsilimpounidi, *Sociology of Crisis. Visualizing urban austerity*, Routledge, London–New York 2017; R. Cordero, *Crisis, and Critique. On the Fragile Foundations of Social Life*, Routledge, London–New York 2017; V. Kruse, *Soziologie und “Gegenwartskrise”, Die Zeitdiagnosen Franz Oppenheimers und Alfred Webers. Ein Beitrag zur historischen Soziologie der Weimarer Republik*, Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden 1990; J. Kiess et al., *Krisen und Soziologie*, Beltz Juventa, Weinheim Basel 2023.

<sup>2</sup> P. A. Sorokin, R. K. Merton, *Social Time: A Methodological and Functional Analysis*, “American Journal of Sociology” Mar. 1937, Vol. 42, No. 5, pp. 615-629; J. Subrt, *The Sociology of Time. A Critical Overview*, Palgrave Macmillan 2021; B. Adam, *Time and Social Theory*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1990.

from each other thanks to logical and genealogical reasons of time history. This history has cultural, economic, political, and social dimensions. In distinct cultures time was measured differently as well as applied as a tool for resolving economic, ecological, and social problems by foundation of social institutions, which did differ from each other by various orders, pace, timing and standing of collective encounters and actions. So, the social time is a living stream of social events produced in the same breath. However, gradually universalization and standardization of time measure, which had been coming from functional needs of coordination of human actions and mobility in frames of gradual globalization, has eventuated in contemporary “dictature” of abstract time. This fetishism rests upon illusion, that the rushing hands of timer impose on us necessity of many meetings in space, or call for timely fulfillment of some activities. We may save time by intensification of our efforts, or simultaneity of actions and attentions, or in other respects throw time away by leisure of unproductive pleasure, but under control of a hand watch. Colonization of the human culture by abstract time is today almost absolute. Therefore, time appears contemporarily as dictated, imposed, intruded obligations, tyrannies, and simultaneously as individual creations which lead up to emancipation from the time prison to free leisure and atemporality of personality development. Anyway, we must first of all pay tribute to execution of obligations.

We want also to temper and moderate time. Due to the awareness of death we are looking for religious and philosophical transcendences. Both ritual and procedural law gives us the pretense and guise of cyclical perpetual returns. Both mathematics of probability and soothsayers’ predictions or prayers, petitions to God are trials of time breaking. By the use of natural science knowledge, we want to control the future.

However, we can find both commodification and fetishization as social externalizations of time management in forms of political projects of security, which lead up to a defeat of uncertainty in the future. Barbara Adam proposes a sense of time as clusters, beams of tidal attributes with which everyone is involved, entangled in all other features, but relations are not equally important in each case. In her eyes the beam of attributes we call: «timescape». Meaning of “scape” is pertinent to the realist episteme, to the fact that we cannot separate time from space. These circumstances indicate that the sense of time is derived from the

concrete reality context.<sup>3</sup> In turn, “control” is an overarching concept and includes the processes of creation, compression, commodification, and colonization of time. Control over objectified resources leaves no temporal property without a peculiar stigma. All frames of time, timings, temporalities, rhythms, moments of time, corollaries and so on falls within “the control”. Decelerations and accelerations, realignments of sequences and orders, stressing a peak and a decline, variability, and rhythmicity of social life, although they are the basis of our daily phenomenology, and we think of them as “natural patterns of social standing” are subordinated to regulations and disciplinary practices. So finally, the social life is subordinated to conformization, uniformization and falls within cultural patterns. On the road of the socioeconomical technology, transplantation, and transmission, originates the social morphogenesis of time. Then, we can say that inside any society in relations to power and subordination, a clock-time is used for regulation of bodies in space, their pace, positions, speed, and obligations are symmetrical with horizontal and vertical interactive expectations. *Security* is a cluster of contextual anticipations and expectations on “order of objectivity” in flows of an institutional time with the rationalizations, as cultural adaptations to conditions of existence<sup>4</sup>.

In the logic of this article, we return to the starting point, but now with the past of introductory explanations of daily temporal necessities superimposed on us. We are masters and bondsmen in the same breath. Admittedly, we are living in the streams of a subjective time, but its intentionality is finally the moment of social networks of power and subordination in the interactive morphogenesis of social time construction. We are living in relativity of timespaces and inside of social systems relations. Even in the wings of our loneliness we yearn for rare informal and uncompelled human relations, where time is anyway a manifestation of cultural patterns, leisure and an artistic creation or an enjoyment. The social time has plenty of senses and from the viewpoint of sociological perspective we must consider its meanings in micro, mezo, macro and global dimensions. Nonetheless, the social time always has concrete and contextual meanings. Modalities of the hermeneutic sense are ways of appearance of spaces, artifacts, relations, attributes

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<sup>3</sup> B. Adam, *Time*, Polity Press, Cambridge 2004, p. 143. „Timescape” viz „rachnis, backbone of time.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, s. 145.

of human and a natural world in its pulsation and standing. In the human sense we can find a memory of the past, the living present and anticipation of the future. If we want to understand the concept of “security” we must first of all comprehend the processes of social time. The world of humankind is anyway the temporal being of a memory, contemporaneity, and future. Insecurity is also the pattern of time, but such that its structures are in contradiction with our expectations and its properties are falling in the crisis of amorphism. The memory of the past in the face of crisis of time suffers from fears of alienation and the loss of secure world of the past. Then in the human culture we can find the concept of “crisis” which is the name of alienation from the secure learned patterns of time in the world of precarious possibilities and objectivity of time contingency. The time of such crisis badly needs an order. Therefore, so many thinkers are looking painstakingly for the crisis of time sense. But perspectivity their social, political, and philosophical standing gives us only the crisis of scientific descriptions of “crisis”.

Description of “Crisis” in the frames of theoretical reality of man is first of all exactly this phenomenon of some semiotic order in the time of disorder. So, in theoretical works about “crisis” its researchers, in one way or another look at the phenomenon through the prism of three modalities of time, because the semiotic order of “crisis” is anyway the crisis of social time.

Primarily, any crisis theory has at its disposal only the past and the present, in that order, on this foundation, henceforth establishes a little of secure future. When we know whereupon we are waiting, we have far less fears. When we are searching for crisis sense in the present time, in which we cannot distinguish known pulsations of events, we can once more return to the past, where we want to look for genealogy of the slump destruction and arrhythmia of contemporaneity. We finally can say, “Can we live in this way ?”<sup>5</sup> and if answer is “no” we set out for revolution or reform. So, we must conjure up the new way of life in the shape of utopia as the picture of possibility for another world. In the second perspective, the past is sacrosanct, and the present reality should emulate the foretime. However, glory of the past for critics of contemporaneity may also turn political theatre to the road of

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<sup>5</sup> M. Foucault, *Nadzorować i karać. Narodziny więzienia*, Warszawa 1998. Inspiration of Foucault was the crisis of prisoners’ rebellion in France. History of control techniques over bodies in space and its material effects is subject matter of the Foucault’s work.

conservative revolution. Conservation of time by inflation of norms, obligations and rituals is another path of looking for the human security. In the third way we can see, as is so often the case, acceptance, reconciliation, and resignation before the flow of time. “Depression”, “slump”, and “crisis” are the “normal” phenomena of social, political, and economic evolution. The “wit” of evolution with many mutations and “rational selections” has given us “evolutionary cumulative mind” of history. The latter is incessantly driving us to freedom, to liberty. But by the way, in the third modality of social time we need the utopia of “rational observer, spectator” who gives us comfortable seat of “selection mechanism” in the real time of slumps or peaks of crisis. The truth of the matter is that such repeal of tension among contradictions of time (necessity or randomness and contingencies, biological death and need of transcendence, enjoyment and happiness of lifetime and imminence of pain and passing, demise) that is the semantic of “crisis” is fundamental human need, and in the same breath essential dimension of the Anthropocene control which gives its creators illusionary power over nature and world society.

## **2. Semantics of „crisis”**

The term „crisis” (κρίσις) has its origins in antique Greece. Both the reference and the sense of term are pertinent to the necessity of human choice in the span of worst time of diseases, battles, dead ends of life, daily grapples and struggles for well-being and the other depressions und slumps. The “crisis” demands the criticism and reflexivity because in the face of the contingent reality we are badly in want of the sense of amorphous and unexpected variability of time. In the first instance Reinhart Koselleck sends us back to law, medicine, and theology where we must look for senses of “crise”. These spheres of human fields of time, have given us answers to questions, what is right or wrong, gives us redemption or damnation, preserve the life, or bring us to death.

In the early modern period, the medical sense of “crisis” prevailed. From XVII century the concept was used as a metaphor and permeated to politics. However, from XVIII century its sense once more has gained religious and theological connotations. Its application to American and French revolution bestows a secular sense on the apocalyptic meaning of “The Last Judgement”.

Thanks to its metaphorical elasticity the concept has gone finally into everyday discourse. In its application to history, the concept has become an attribute of new sense of contemporaneity which indicated the end of epoch. One way or another it was the layered and polysemic concept. Its ambivalence contained emotions and dreaming, chiliastic hopes, and secular ideologies. Comprehended as “chronical crisis” indicated on the conditions of smaller or greater permanence, the state of short or long transition to “something better vs worse” or completely “distinct”. The term also signified the returning economical event, or kept becoming the dimension of existential psychological analysis or theological eschatology. Above mentioned uses of word “crisis”, according to Koselleck, can be found inside the readings of history.<sup>6</sup> All along the semantics of “crisis” has the stigma of incessant battles over time overlordship, the sense of history, “past”, “present”, and “future”.

Battlegrounds of the modern public discourse have plenty of meanings with little coherence. Processes take place on the arenas of auto-observations of social, economic, and political flows of events, which eventuated thanks to emergence of diffusions, breakdowns, and disintegrations of the social being. On the scene and in the field of social scientific reflection and research we can see the domination of narrative analysis of “crisis. “Crisis” is comprehended as the specific narration. Such a “tool of communication” in its applications gives us not only an analytical knowledge about the dynamics of social reality but also motivational strength. The “crisis” narration yields of the motivational force for public messages, and for practical actions. When we take the reality as “recessionary”, and so wrong, simultaneously, and implicitly we go in the battle against the glory of ideological narrations which “naturalizes” the reality. At the same time in the apology of political and ideological hegemony we can read announces that we do not have any “crisis”, but only the opposition has created the crisis through the destruction of symbolical order. So, the emergence of social time is sinking in ambivalence, thanks to contradictions of the narrative expectations in relations to flows of social practice. We are really living in many narrative realities of expectations for the advent of desired patterns of social practice and social

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<sup>6</sup> R. Koselleck and M. W. Richter, *Crisis*, Journal of the History of Ideas” 2006, Vol. 67, No. 2, p. 358; R. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society*, The MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1988.



time energy pulsations. Finally, the mess of time projects, must be subordinated under the technological minds of administration, organizations management, and proper technology. The language of crises includes both its theories and ideologies. Ultimately, is overburdened by plenty of contradictions which mirror paroxysms and contingencies of time pulsation<sup>7</sup>. Articulates not only diagnostical moments of urgency of situation and pressing needs of decision, but is also the expression of time visions, and logic of interventions in processes of practical affirmation or negation of the projects of future time<sup>8</sup>. “Crisis” generates much of lexical polysemy in fields of the institutional public discourses and language’s creativity of common people. The polysemy deepens and escalates of troubles associated with the control of unpredictability in the arenas and rhythms of social time. The covid-crisis has given us plenty of examples such consequences of incoherences in the battle of public discourse<sup>9</sup>. However, we have many experiences from everydayness of the pandemic where we saw the practical forms of adaptation to public spaces very often distinct from the institutional imperatives. The pandemic betrayed and exposed, so far hidden and subordinated to a social position, an economical interest, and health with its immunological barrier, the inequality of human passing. Destruction of implicit acceptance of the fact and its intrude into the field of public semantic has manufactured diverse narrations, conflicts, and protests. The accelerations of time contained fundamental questions related to the social order and political legitimization<sup>10</sup>.

### **3. Conceptual struggles about “time of crisis” and “crisis of time” in sociological discourse**

As mentioned above, the quickening of social time includes dimensions of incoherence of its conceptualizations. So, because of this phenomenon we

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<sup>7</sup> M. Freeden, *Crisis? How is That a Crisis? Reflections on an Overburdened Word*, “Contributions to the History of Concepts”, Winter 2017, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 12-28.

<sup>8</sup> C. Hay, *Narrating Crisis. The Discursive Construction of the “Winter of Discontent”*, “Sociology”, May 1996, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 253-277.

<sup>9</sup> S. Reboul-Toure, *The Crisis in Discourse, As an Event, a Discursive Semantic and a Culture*, “Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft Linguistik” 2021, 51, pp. 399-420.

<sup>10</sup> A. Tooze, *Welt in Lockdown. Die globale Krise und Ihre Folgen*, München 2021, 45-47.

are faced with the time of crisis and also the crisis of time in the same breath. However, the predicament is also not only the slump of experienced time but simultaneously the crisis of discourse about “proper crisis”. Niklas Luhmann says that the crisis is the phenomenon of auto observation of society, thanks to ontological assumptions about the first and second order observations. The latter is the observation of “proper first order observations” of social and scientific activities in processes of semantics generation. The perceptions of first and second order give us the chance for salvaging a little objectivity in sociology. Luhmann points to the alarmistic pitch of crisis descriptions and says that the emotion is stemming from the uses of crisis language in social sciences and in everydayness simultaneously. The Luhmann’s intention is accentuation of the advantages of theoretical thinking in categories of society as the autopoietic system. In contradistinction to the social evolution theory and the traditional social systems theory, the autopoietic social systems have not any central executive and normative positions or fields and “rational” human super-observers. In terms of the autopoietic description, the functional differentiation of society does not guide us automatically to perfection of the subject matter of sociology. We rather have to expect that the functional variety will lead to the permanence of crisis in social subsystems. This consequence arises from high autonomy, self-organization, and self-reproduction of the subsystems, which are characterized by the prominent level of interrelations and dependencies from their environment.

“Under such conditions, time becomes a scare resource, the future becomes uncertain, and the time dimension in general the most important dimension of the articulation of meaning”<sup>11</sup>.

In Luhmann’s eyes, sociological self-descriptions of society are comprehended as the indispensability of insecurity reduction in systems<sup>12</sup>. Incongruence of such

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<sup>11</sup> N. Luhmann, *The Self-Description of Society: Crisis Fashion and Sociological Theory*, “International Journal of Comparative Sociology” 1984, XXV 1-2, p. 64-65.

<sup>12</sup> The problems of uncertainty and interrelations inside social systems are household words in sociology long since. Interestingly, the beginning of Luhmann career was employment in administration. M. Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, Routledge, London, and New York 2017, 145-174, (Originally published in 1964 by The University of Chicago Press); R. M. Emerson, *Power-Dependence Relations*, “American Sociological Review” 1962, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 31-41.

self-depictions is the part of its functions because each creation of a sense must make a confirmation of «something» through self-distinction from «another something». Therefore, the perception and description of crisis coincides with its emergence and works as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because the self-descriptions are dependent on selective reductions of uncertainty the crisis depictions preserve internal contradictions of the systems. The characterizations start out as ideologies, where variety of social self-knowledge intercorrelates with diverse positions in the systems. Nonetheless, any mobilization of researchers or commentators to “objectivity” is here a hopeless enterprise. The self-reflections and semantic performances are human achievements, which do not lay claim to truth as “cool external description of object”. When we are looking for reasons of the phenomenon, we can finally find causes not in ideology but in reflectiveness of the self-descriptions. These auto characterizations are conditions of existence of their objects<sup>13</sup>.

Within this article there is neither space nor possibility of Luhmann’s oeuvre holistic evaluation<sup>14</sup>. However, except for followers and inspirational strength of his works Luhmann’s sociology draws attention of critics which points out that he has built “social home without doorways and windows”. Luhmann’s theory programmatically isolates itself from any normative and teleological perspectives included in prophetic theories of social evolution or progress and development, which emulates religious providence. The same resignation from messianic teleology can also be found in Marx’s “Capital”, although *prima facie* the fact seems to be contrary to common sense of 20<sup>th</sup> century ideology. In “Capital” we have only the cool and normative criticism of periodic crises but without any hopes for messianic, chiliastic, and teleological providence. The latter was a new, supplemented by political and theoretical epigones of Marx<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p. 66.

<sup>14</sup> Only his book publications encompass over 70 positions. Luhmann’s methodological assumption that language of sociological description must be adequately complicated in relation to its subject matter in the shape of society thanks to complexity of the latter today has beget many explicative works, M. Berghaus, *Luhmann leicht gemacht. Eine Einführung in die Systemtheorie*, Böhlau Verlag, Bohn Weimar Wien 2011; G. Kneer, A. Nassehi, *Niklas Luhmanns Theorie sozialer Systeme. Eine Einführung*, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, München 1993.

<sup>15</sup> A. Steil, *Krisensemantik. Wissenssoziologische Untersuchungen zu einem Topos moderner Zeiterfahrung*, Springer Fachmedien, Wiesbaden 1993, p. 163-174.

Luhmann's adversary Jurgen Habermas took up the issue of crisis once more in the beginning of the seventies. In Habermas' eyes relations between the working class and capitalists are still synonymous with the fundamental contradiction between social processes of production and the private appropriation of surplus. This critical essence of leftist position is complemented by the state which mediates between "capital" and "work". The governmental interventions in processes of distribution of desirable goods are tools for surmounting the fundamental systemic contradiction. Habermas' "crisis of legitimization", much like Luhmann's crisis, rests on the paradigm of general systems theory, differentiation, and complication of the social systems. The state creates conditions of good working for economy, but also the same state depends on taxes. On the other hand, the state must preserve mass loyalty and acceptance of the people. So, the former uses fiscal revenues for distribution of social services, social transfers, and supports "technocratic consciousness". One way or another, functions of the expenditures in processes of legitimization of the contradictory system are undertheorized in Habermas' theory. We can understand the transfers of goods, money, and eligibilities as processes of moral reciprocity creations among gifted segments of social structure and default, implicit "political giver" of handouts<sup>16</sup>. The crisis of legitimization arises when subsystems do not manufacture sufficient quantum of needed goods and services for prosperous life of the social complexity. Then, in the field of economy, we have the economic crisis. In the sphere of politics and administration, we can see the crisis of rationality, and the proper legitimation crisis. On sociocultural planes, in the habitat of Habermas' "Lifeworld", springs out hatching of the motivation crisis. Interrelations among crises come down to the essence of systemic contradiction. For example, the relative overproduction, the blockade of extended reproduction of capital, the slow down or break down of economy are overflowing, finally on the crisis of rationality and the fiscal crisis of the state. The iron law of the surplus value appropriation by private property of capital in time of economic crisis comes down to unemployment and its consequences (migrations of capital and retrenching

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<sup>16</sup> This perspective we can find in Richard Titmuss' books. R. M. Titmuss, *Social Policy. An Introduction*, Pantheon Books, New York 1974, and *The Gift Relationships. From Human Blood to Social Policy*, Vintage Books, New York 1971. Similar perspective we may find in, J. Rossa, *Dar i Wladza. Studium z teorii i praktyki lokalnej polityki społecznej*, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2008.

of human work by technics). In the face of such facts, the state must maintain industrial production by subsidies, and on the other hand amend fallouts of the crisis for realization of collective needs. Therefore now, the structural conditions of social inequalities threaten implicit democratic imperatives of equality of chances and awards for accomplishments. Finally, in this road of crisis inception, we are now in the face of motivation crisis.

Habermas' communicative ethics finds its reasons in ours socialization to fundamental imperatives of deliberative democracy, where we are civilized to norms of reciprocity, provided that people with remote sets of beliefs give us chances for articulation of fundamental questions, and we are doing the same in relation to the former. We are solving problems and contradictions of our existence in processes of free discussions. Then, in Habermas' thought we see a strong belief in the Enlightenment and the strength of human mind. Both discussions and levels of justification are here the reflective modalities of the human reality. Notwithstanding the foregoing, we are really now subjected to commodification, to the mechanical economic growth which is not effective for subjugation and unraveling of predicaments of capitalist society, for the legitimacy of social structure. The colonization of "lifeworld" by administrative interventions is tantamount to universal pressure on legitimization, which arises not on the path of communicative ethics but is forced down on cultural patterns of the human collective life. The never-ending coercion of economic growth and quasi-feudal dependence from the *welfare state* comes down to the commodification of social time and palliative care thanks to the indifference of the governed capitalism to structural inequalities. The political practices of state interventions and pressure on the legitimacy and change modulation is tantamount to manipulations of social world perceptions based on forced acceptance of the "stick and carrot" design. So, in the final score we stare down the barrel of painful distortions of communicative structures. Meanwhile, the history of the latter, according to Habermas, is not only founded upon communicative rationality but also on the freedom of historical time, the free law of all humans to creation of social time, and its materiality, space, and semantics. According to Habermas we are children of the Enlightenment with natural rights to form and cultivate of the social time. So, in Habermas' thought

borders of time are always open, and we need to see the difference between distorted and real legitimization of the social order<sup>17</sup>.

This time, in Habermas' works we have a brush with the committed opposition to the politics of time restraining and curbing, where more rational and moral new practice has not any chances of hatching thanks to the procrustean bed of social form, wherefrom the real possibility of enlightenment is excluded. So, the "crisis" appears as contradictions and tensions between social and system integration. In Habermas' left-wing thinking asserts itself, the belief in "time spring" to freedom. The leap from chains of "system" to the flow of liberty and enlightenment. The liberation, emancipation of human beings from the commodification of time and distortions of cultural forms of communication into the time of communicative ethics and relations of fair reciprocity. But for the meantime, the disease of "crisis" appears in its symptoms of the leaps of time in economic breakdowns and accelerations and slowdowns after the states interventions. The slowdowns of time in human misery, the precipitations of contestations inside social movements and the practices of time curbing by subventions and transfers, and so forth. Anyway, the politics of time rests on the management of never-ending evolution of "system" through its correcting to contemporaneous needs. Such politics of time is grounded on the belief in unending possibilities of change delaying and conservation of the "system" fundamental organizational principle in the shape of the contradiction between social production and private appropriation of surplus<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Sources to Habermas' understanding of crisis are very catholic and interdisciplinary because they are also in relationship to "Frankfurt Schule", M. Pusey *Jurgen Habermas*, Routledge, London–New York 1987, p. 92-105; J. Habermas, *What Does Crisis Mean Today? Legitimation Problems in Late Capitalism*, „Social Research”, winter 1973, Vol. 40, No. 4, pp. 643-667. Habermas shares also Claus Offes beliefs, C. Offe, „*Krisen des Krisenmanagements*”: *Elemente einer Politische Krisentheorie*, [in:] *Herrschaft und Krise. Beiträge zu Politikwissenschaftlichen Krisenforschung*, Hrsg. M. Janicke, Westdeutscher Verlag 1973, p. 199-224; C. Offe, *Contradictions of Welfare State*, Hutchinson, London–Johannesburg 1984. The Topic of the fiscal crisis has been taken up by James O'Connor's *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*, Transactions Publishers, New Brunswick, and London 2009. Place and specificity of such crisis criticism we also can find in: *Kritische Theorie der Krise*, Hrsg. M. Hawel und M. Blanke, Karl Dietz Verlag Berlin 2012.

<sup>18</sup> In this situation, we are in the perspective of social problems sociology and its never-ending amendments of social order, where we have wealth of books and articles. The pragmatic stance differentiates between "worldly social reform" and "worldly utopianism", R. J. Holton, *The idea of crisis in modern society*, „The British Journal of Sociology”, Dec. 1987, Vol. 38, No. 4, pp. 502-520.

However, the same philosophy of open time prompts us to escape from liberty. The incessantly open horizon of time in relation to our existential fears prods us to look for security. In the social order, where “The New” is not searching for legitimation inside tradition but conversely the latter has to answer the question, “Can you face up to challenges?”, we are living among incessant pulsations and paroxysms of social time<sup>19</sup>. One way or another, we desperately need security in the image of low probability of dangerous events. At the other end of the spectrum, in the frames of the supervisory authority of political ideologies over time and their disciplinary executive techniques, the people are continually and increasingly excluded from scraps of their autonomy, wherefrom appears great and incessantly growing popularity of political promises of the time curbing. Notwithstanding, this “political providence” paradoxically rests on the acceptance of never-ending crises, then is at the utmost palliative. The political programs of promises execution do not guide to the Promised Land but to the reproduction of known and new forms of the “time dance”. The empirical reality of any crisis gives us many examples of emotions, interesses, and domination of the latter above any global rationality.

Finally, when we ultimately give up chiliastic and providential ambitions, then the processes of change and the necessity of form adjustment of collective life to its content are inevitable and constant. In this case the politics of time appears as “technical” problem and the expectation of crisis is a permanent phenomenon. Secondly, we can view the politics of time in leftist and conservative perspectives on dialectical relations between form and content of social relations. The left-wing thought looks at the possibility of order in frames of emancipation, manumission, and actual system’s control as chains and blockades. Conservative thinkers discern in the social order the creative dimensions which are not only limits and restrictions but also productive energies of the emergence of order. So, one way or another liberty is, in such philosophy, not only the possibility of an open and autonomic human time but also the necessity of its production in historical forms. Real liberty is anyway the awareness of necessity. The opportunistic politics

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<sup>19</sup> M. Makropoulos, *Über den Begriff der „Krise“*, „INDES“, Zeitschrift für Politik und Gesellschaft 2013-1, p. 13-20. Also, J. Steg, *Was heißt eigentlich Krise?*, „Soziologie“ 2020, 49. JG., Heft 4, p. 423-435, and J. Subrt, *Reflections on the concept “crisis”*, “Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast” 2014, 6 (36), pp. 70-84.

of time wends its way to the political “naturalization” of social time, through the apparent obviousness of its line, as the evolutionary and quasi-organic historical process. This time, the foregoing tautology asserts itself in the biological ability of survival. A population preserves its existence in the face of an incessantly variable environment by adapting to changed conditions. The adjustment to the needs of situations gives the former evolutionary chance for survival. So, we now by default accept premise that we have to, with needed precision to find “objective semantics” of the category, «requirements of environment». We must also recognize that the people included in the population have such abilities, competencies, and motivations, which give them optimal chances for the subjugation of environmental requirements. And now, mechanisms of effective selection of the requested human abilities needed for survival must emulate the natural biological evolution. How could we know that excluded qualities, and features are needless? If we do not want to conjure up the super-rational observational and selective being above the current time of the social world, the only chance for the effective mechanism of selection is the assignment of «selective wit» to history. The worst human abilities are vanishing. These features constitute remnants, bygones. Furthermore, the new capabilities of populations that emerged from «selective wit of history» are liable appropriately to contextual stabilization because the capacities are usable to adaptation in «historical time»<sup>20</sup>. The process of adaptation is looming from variability and mutations. The latter are deviations from hegemonic patterns. Mechanisms of selections from the stock of mutations bring into existence new modalities with higher evolutionary values, and greater possibility of survival. The mutations and selections in social processes are taking place in technological, economic, institutional, cultural, and social dimensions. But now we are at a crossroads before another question. How does the selective mechanism “choose” optimal mutation for survival? We know that cultural diffusion can give birth to mutations but also that new modalities are looming through collective learning. In the situation, we have a brush with the endogenous forms of mutation. The selective mechanism needs both the endogenous capabilities and accomplishments, which are providing internal

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<sup>20</sup> M. Prisching, *Krisen. Eine Soziologische Untersuchung*, Hermann Böhlau Nachf. Wien Köln Graz 1986, p. 64-66.



coherence in relation to the “system”, and the external adaptative adjustments, which ensure optimal utilization of environmental chances. The philosophy of historical time desperately needs mutative capabilities of the population thanks to its politics of time, the never-ending delaying qualitative change in quantitative development. In this way people can maintain chances and capabilities of shaping and cultivation of time inside of living space, to production of hominal artifacts. Anyway, we still do not have any answer wherewith and what «selective wit of history» is. However, we can find it by default in “sanctification” of the liberal market as “naturalized” institution of never-ending evolution. In the foregoing perspective crises are deficits of adaptative capabilities of any population. When we are foregoing of the liberal market, we also have to give up any effective evolution. Subjugation of the crises is dependent from the store of mutative potentiality. The mechanism of selections as “a subject of history” is «choosing» from the mutative pool and «looks for» its roads to cyclical returns of growth and liberty. Such standing of the social time is also dependent on elasticity, infallibility and extend of homogeneity quick-change of environmental conditions. The high speed and variability of situation are tantamount with the pressure of time on adaptative capabilities. Concrete deficits of adaptation in the shape of the growth crisis, the welfare state crisis, the government crisis, the legitimacy, and the identity crisis are not consequences of structural contradictions of «system», but contingent deficits of adaptative capabilities. Notwithstanding, Prisching concedes that institutional mechanisms of selection can disable, and block the processes of time evolution. So, the modalities of selection have also conservative dimensions.<sup>21</sup>

No doubt the mechanisms of selection play the main role in such “naturalization” of time evolution. The modalities of selection, in turn, are also subjected to contingency and evolution so, anyway we have to put a question once more about such politics of time, “Where can we find mechanisms of selectivity of the first order selection?”. Finally, no good conclusive answer is given beside our faith, credit, and confidence in “wit of history”. Secondly, we cannot beforehand know what arrests and what promotes adaptive capabilities. We are winning the knowledge from experience, *post hoc* which in the theory of time evolution relates to analogies of “flourishing flowers” or “dying or dead beings”.

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<sup>21</sup> M. Prisching, *Krisen...*, op. cit., p. 67-73.

Anyway, the evolutionary theory of crisis incorporates much of the politics of time which rests on the liberal, enlightened democracy paradigm with its markets of commodity and currency, intellectual and political freedom. Social practices of the politics of time incorporate flows of social processes of exclusion from, and inclusion into regimes of liberty in the same breath<sup>22</sup>. Such “naturalization” of empirical history which confers the direction and the sense of future advised by white Europeans or North American liberals with big difficulties relates to any explications if we are not going to argue that Stalinist communism and Nazism were: « optimal choices of selection mechanisms from mutations». Behind the guises of “naturality” derived from quasi-Darwinist and Spencer’s interpretation of history we can find the normative model, in which the politics of time is never-ending, cyclical, and mediatized by crises reproduction of the enlightened liberal democracy.

The foregoing three conceptions of time politics rest on diverse and to some degree competing understandings of “crisis”.

Firstly, Luhmann’s second-order observation as programmatic indifference to “crisis” understanding as “crisis of crises” of functionally differentiated systems bereft of Archimedean anchorage which allows for holistic control. In such systems, time is a rare resource, and the future is uncertain and insecure. Descriptions of crises are self-fulfilling prophecies because the depictions are conditions of the crises standing and being.

Secondly, Habermas’ crisis of legitimization is also the outcome of internal processes of differentiations of social systems. The flows of differentiations are a necessary response to the internal contradictions between a form and content of social beings, between “system” and “lifeworld”. Internal conflicts arise thanks to incessantly increasing networks of social cooperation in the reproduction of the social being and the private forms of surplus appropriation by “quasi-Egyptian pyramids” of corporative capital. So, we have at the very most the caricature of “governed democracy” where we have not too much communicative ethics. The horizon of time in such politics is closed by paradoxes of its “naturalization”. Meanwhile, the same ethics of open time horizons is the foundation of the proper legitimation of political power.

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<sup>22</sup> U. S. Mehta, *Liberal Strategies of Exclusion*, “Politics & Society”, December 1990, Vol. 18, Issue 4, pp. 427-454.

Thirdly, the crisis as the adaptative shortage which is the unremovable ingredient of quasi-natural evolution of human populations. Such an understanding draws upon ethnocentrism of liberal democracy imposed on all possible history. In each foregoing perspective, we can find couched *expressis verbis* or *implicite* some comprehending of the time politics.

Conflicted interpretations of “crisis” include not only diagnoses of time’s chaotic rhythms but also emotional tensions and anticipations, and expectations on the advent of a desirable future. Sociology as the self-consciousness of society is looming from the entangling of sociologists in twists and turns of public discourse. The example of Luhmann’s escape from the trap is only the exception that proves the rule. If researchers do not want to affiliate with any stances of opponents anyway, their semantics of observations plunges into a pool of relations and interests, into a variety of their fields of sense. The political practices of time are taking place in spaces of tensions between the sociohistorical experiences and their scientific and common sensual descriptions. In such inevitable temporality of space and time we stare down the barrel of “the crisis topos”. We can find here phenomena of tensions among ideological, and motivational functions of crisis descriptions and the guise of “cool” and “natural” characterizations. We are incessantly beating against incoherences of many diagnoses of contemporaneity<sup>23</sup>.

Reinhart Koselleck in his descriptions of the Enlightenment crisis semantics has developed research methods of the historicity of the human time meanings. The sense patterns of modernity acceleration are forms of troublesomeness of time<sup>24</sup>. We have not here any sociological concept of semantic analysis which is looking for the social genesis of sense. We can find in Koselleck oeuvre influences of Kant, Gadamer, Heidegger and Carl Smith, where congealed in discourses structures of experience indicate «New Time» as the environment of a crisis experience. So, in Koselleck’s writings, we have no considerations about relations between semantic and social structures<sup>25</sup>. The very crisis is expressed not only in its communicative articulations in frames of political discourse but also by

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<sup>23</sup> A. Steil, *Krisensemantik. Wissenssoziologische Untersuchungen...*, op.cit., p. 14-18.

<sup>24</sup> R. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis...*, op. cit., and *Futures past. On the semantic of historical time*, Columbia University Press, New York 2004.

<sup>25</sup> A. Steil, *Krisensemantik...*, op. cit., p. 17, and R. Koselleck, *Futures past...*, op. cit., XVIII.

the objectivity of unexpected structures of social time, by social, political, and economic processes with their pulsations, paces, and accelerations of daily events.

The crisis manifests itself also by a shortage of chances for forecasting the future logic of time. Today, the compulsive neurosis of crisis subjugation throws out increasing reckoning of probability and resorts to the logic of “the worst-case scenario”. Amorphism of late modernity social time prompts also to conclusions about the disintegration of sociological subject matter in the shape of “society”. So, we have no stability of research object in the image of social structures, roles, relations and so on. In this case, we have to resort to social movements research, where the dramatic accelerations of contemporaneous time fall within horizon of observations based on the method of sociological intervention<sup>26</sup>.

In turn, the distinct perspective of crisis sense construction leads up to model building of interrelations among problematic contexts, rational actors and adaptative subjugation of crises. The traditional problem of sociological theory, interrelations, and coherence between macro and micro levels in this case comes down to the trial, the attempt at coherence construction between occasions theory, and theory of political protests. The latter is understood as “rational collective actor”. So, the option wants to find linkages between micro and macro levels in dynamics of social time processes<sup>27</sup>.

The foregoing perspective of “rational actor”, one way or another, falls within the pragmatic approach to social problems subjugation. Problems are disfunctions of systems so we can look for their coherence on borders of organizational principles and human interests. Finally, the institutional and social time is here the never-ending amendments story<sup>28</sup>. Anyway, Touraine’s approach and Opp’s theory falls within the semantics of the social systems differentiation and deficits of adaptation in the theory of social “naturalized” evolution.

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<sup>26</sup> A. Touraine, *An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements*, “Social Research”, Winter 1985, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 749-787, and A. Touraine, *The Voice, and The Eye: On the relationship between Actors and Analysts*, “Political Psychology”, Spring 1980, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 3-14. No doubt Touraine’s book “After the Crisis” is also the trial of the crisis semantic production in the field of sociology, A. Touraine, *Po kryzysie*, Warszawa 2013.

<sup>27</sup> K-D. Opp, *Gesellschaftliche Krisen, Gelegenheitsstrukturen oder rationales Handeln? Ein kritischer Theorienvergleich von Erklärungen politischen Protests*, „Zeitschrift für Soziologie“, Juni 1996, Jg. 25, Heft 3, p. 223-242.

<sup>28</sup> Hence, we have wealth of textbooks in the field of sociology of social problems.

#### 4. Sociology of vicious circle of fear and secular providence

The main thesis of this article is a statement, in the shape of a projective definition, that the field of tensions between uncertainty, insecurity, and security in frames of social relations should be seen from the perspective of temporal dimensions of social processes. Not only contingent on social segmentations and cultural semantics, but also on objective material structures of time with theirs both social, political, and economic dimensions. Humans and nature are sources of social time. But the latter's transformations return to us as “death of the secular providence”, especially “the political providence”<sup>29</sup>. Insecurity is loss of identity with the present time and deprivation of beliefs and expectations on the foreseeable future. Politics is founded on the compulsive neurosis of fulfillment of the secular providence. But in turn, the latter is based on the fear of the identity loss. One way or another, we are in the vicious circle of fear and horizon of Promised Land. In the semantics of the crisis, we can find diagnosis of its arrhythmias and motivational ideology with the immanent politics of the social time.

If nothing else, models of time continuation are included in environmental social movements. We can point to the program of “return to Arcadian world of nature” with its atemporal dimensions, and the other modality of time as never-ending delay of environmental tragedy by the cultivation of industrial growth. The liberal state is here as though the biblical quasi-Katechon which contains the advent of Antichrist and Apocalypse. In turn, the crisis-as-progress is anchored in Hegel's philosophy of history or historical visions of many utilitarians (Kojève, Fukuyama). The crisis calls into being the new forms of universal public authorities. The former is “the tool” by which specific visions of history and the future are realized and are looming in a global scale. The homogenization of human semantics and loss of polysemy in the scale of the Earth are hand in hand with patterns of the “quasi-Providence” of political and social time. The latter is the vehicle of legitimization and universalization of any political actions. Finally, the legitimization conceals real, contextual spaces of interests involved in environmental crisis<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> “Providence” as “precaution” or “foresightedness” but also as “quasi-religious Providence”.

<sup>30</sup> P. Myers, *A Critique of Crisis: Environmentalism and the Politics of Historical Time*, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut April 2013, pp. 61-80, 81-102 and 103-119.

Another analysis openly appeals to state of emergency, sovereignty, or prerogatives of government for application of arbitrary solutions with the aim of the time curbing, compression, and its “sanctification” in visions of Promised Lands. The projections are not only extrapolations of trends, the sample spaces of scientific prognoses but also high-handed “secular Providences”<sup>31</sup>.

One way or another we are staring down the barrel of paradoxes.

Community involvement of sociology in political discourse as the political actor on the stages of contemporaneous crises drama can only lead to subdivisions of threads of the vicious circle tragedy of fear and secular Providences. So, then we are on the same page as Luhmann.

The mask of scientific and “objective” noninvolvement in research of the vicious circles of fears and secular Providences in their ramifications in internal-, and international fields of tensions leads to alienation from living discursive struggles pertinent to time semantics. In this case, the relative autonomy and isolation of social science from political practice leads up to its powerlessness. So, once more we are on the same page as Habermas.

The nirvana of the evolutionary naturalization of time at the end of the day is the never-ending delay of the advent of Apocalypse and Katechon’s institutionalization in the image of the enlightened liberal state. As with any nirvana, it needs a mask of annihilation of contradictions in our consciousness and in worldly practices.

At the same time we desperately need self-knowledge in chains of the vicious circle of time pulsations thanks to pains of insecurity. Nietzsche’s announcement about “death of God” is visionless in the face of the “secular Providence” advent along with its priests in the persons of politicians. Without visions of future any human energy is moribund. So, simultaneously the open time is the premise of any future sense construction of political “Providence”.

It follows from the foregoing considerations that criticism of the vicious circles of dreads and Providences must be positive and critical, affirmative, and negative

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<sup>31</sup> L. Stockdale, *Governing the Future, Mastering Time: Temporality, Sovereignty, and the Pre-emptive Politics of (In)security*, McMaster University July 2013, and P. Raskin, G. Gallopin, P. Gutman, A. Hammond and R. Swart, *Bending the Curve: Toward Global Sustainability*, Stockholm Environment Institute 1998, and *Branch Points: Global Scenarios and Human Choice*. “A Resource Paper of the Global Scenario Group”, Stockholm Environment Institute 1997.

in the same breath. The positive contestation is a challenge to common sense but is looking for the material and symbolic consequences of the time policy practices in their relation to human strategies and philosophies of time creation. This is not a bird's eye view, because sociology of security exists in the fields of vicious circles of fears and Providences. Notwithstanding, sociological analysis must be self-reflective, processual, comprehensive, holistic, and dialectic. We are anyway in networks of pastoral love, exchange of things, eligibilities, information, resources, symbolic and real coercion, in the same breath. Insecurity is the destruction of these networks of reciprocity in the contingency of time. The pulsation of crisis semantics, the struggles among the images of future and anxiety and fear of open time are subjects matter of sociology of security. So, the latter must be paradoxical thanks to its moving subject matter. The time of social reality is closed in temporal returns of order and simultaneously open in social movements, putsches, and demonstrations. We are longing for freedom in open time and looking for relaxation in closed returns of peace and calm. So, we are not coherent beings thanks to temporarily of our existence and dreams about fulfillment of desired sense.

The open time, or otherwise, the closed, perpetual cyclical time is always a question about forms of reciprocity among us in the future. The same modalities of time desperately need both coherence of future projects and open time of public discourse pertaining to the politics of time. However, at the time of the selection, we do not know consequences of the collective decisions. We have only nebulous future of desired providence because fear of open time pushes us to subordination to political power. At the other end of the spectrum, open time is impossible without coherence of our personalities and future time projects. Freedom without necessity is sightless.

We need the self-reflectiveness of sociological research which anyways has its own time politics, too. The politics and practice of social time is a self-contained source of human history but also an ambivalent being in which we can find only dilemmas of security.

Notwithstanding, sociology of security without the courage to tell the truth to political power about incoherences between political practices and their material effects, between semantics of ideology and daily time cultivates only the closed politics of time.

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