

## REVIEWS–REPORTS

Ewa Przybylska (rev.): Heide von Felden, Christiane Hof, Sabine Schmidt-Lauff (eds.), *Erwachsenenbildung und Lernen*, Schneider Verlag Hohengehren GmbH, Baltmannsweiler 2012, pp. 312.

DOI: 10.15804/kie.2014.05.14

“Learning” became a notion to which more and more circles claim rights; learning is discussed no longer only by scientists, but also by politicians, who see in it a chance for development and stabilization of democracy, as well as groups and organizations associated with economy and economics, who highlight its meaning as a factor of economic growth. “Learning” is increasingly popular in social sciences, psychology and humanities. It is always interpreted as a dynamic notion indicating action, change or process as a result of which a person can assimilate, grasp, comprehend, remember, acquire, etc. something that will become his or her “property”<sup>1</sup>. Scientific definitions of the concept of “learning” are not more accurate than the ones that function

in the colloquial language and every time they emphasize its diverse aspects<sup>2</sup>. The demand in relation to the necessity of empirical deepening of the knowledge about how people learn, where they learn, when they learn, and why they learn is found very often in the latest German andragogic literature. Adult education in that country achieved the highest standards of institutionalization; in Germany, institutional infrastructure was developed, providing easy access to the educational offer for rural and urban population. Thus, it is not surprising that the attention of German researchers was focussed in the past mainly on the broad aspects associated with the functioning of institutions, their relations with the surroundings and social partners, the shape of the educational offer, interactions between persons involved in the teaching-learning process, public relations activities or effective management. The learning process itself drew the attention of researchers only when the concept of lifelong learning increased in significance, emphasizing self-organization and self-steering of individuals learning in non-institutional contexts and informal learning. The turn to the issue

---

<sup>1</sup> E. Nuissl, *O uczeniu się osób dorosłych: wyniki badań empirycznych z różnych dyscyplin* [On Adult Learning: Empirical Research Results], “Edukacja ustawiczna dorosłych” [Continuing Adult Education] 2009, No. 2, p. 10.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem.

of learning was also influenced by economy demanding the most efficient use of budget funds invested in adult education. Teachers examined their achievements with severe criticism. Josef Schrader and Frank Berzbach notice: "The distance from generating theoretical research questions truly authorised in pedagogy is striking. If any clear and systematic statements appear, we are constantly dealing with an import from related disciplines, usually psychology"<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, Joachim Ludwig and Katja Müller highlight the elements of pedagogic reflection, which in our times establish the direction of research on adult learning processes<sup>4</sup>. Firstly, teaching, dominated by the activity of planning the didactics of the teaching-learning process, most of all generates questions about the specificity of course participants and the appropriateness of applying particular didactic models. Secondly, the conviction that the learning process as such is not observable, while it is possible only to analyse the action of the teacher understood as his contribution to the learning process and effects of this process achieved by the learners, directs the attention of the researchers to the specificity of participants and the scope of the teacher's pedagogic activity. Thirdly – the authors state – studies on learning conducted in

other fields of study demotivate teachers, who without protest and even with a feeling of relief give ground to them. In conclusion, Ludwig and Müller point to two different directions in the contemporary pedagogic research on learning: research situated in the framework of the "conditioning model" the sources of which lie in psychology and research oscillating around the "justification model", grounded in social psychology, social sciences and pedagogy<sup>5</sup>. The former, as a rule, have a quantitative character; the object of scientific study is success in learning, analysed on the basis of relations between the learning strategy and achieved results or from the point of view of psychological processes, such as memory or other determinants of the learning process, e.g. motivation or feeling of social integration. The research relating to the "justification model" prefers qualitative methods that allow to reconstruct factors influencing taking or abandoning a decision about learning. The learning process in this context is understood above all as an action socially situated in specific realities of individuals' lives. Narrations of the examined allow to study in what way they refer to social conditions, whether and to what degree they use the possibilities offered by the state and the society, and where the barriers and obstacles on the road to learning lie<sup>6</sup>.

In the confusion over the notion of "learning" every now and then new studies devoted to diverse aspects of this process

---

<sup>3</sup> J. Schrader, F. Berzbach, *Lernen Erwachsener – (k)ein Thema für die empirische Weiterbildungsforschung* [in:] *Vom Lernen zum Lehren*, E. Nuißl (ed.), Bielefeld 2006, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> J. Ludwig, K. Müller, *Forschungsstand zu Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung* [in:] *Lernen und Lernberatung*, J. Ludwig (ed.), Bielefeld 2002, pp. 43–66.

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 59–60.

appear on the publishing market. An interesting attempt of a versatile examination of the phenomenon of learning is the joint publication entitled “*Erwachsenenbildung und Lernen*” [Adult Education and Learning] edited by Heide von Felden, Christiane Hof and Sabine Schmidt-Lauff. It is a collection of papers from the cyclic, annual conference of the “Adult Education” Division of the German Educational Research Association, which in 2011 took place at the University of Hamburg. The diversity of takes and positions on the phenomenon of learning represented by authors of particular papers reflects the multitude of contexts in which the discourse on “learning” is led. A look on learning from the political perspective appears, especially from the point of view of lifelong education widely promoted today, and also an extensive reflection on learning in its various dimensions: formal, non-formal and informal. Authors of individual texts do not shy away from creating a theory of learning. In the paper introducing the subject matter of the conference (and the publication) Peter Faulstich and Sabine Schmidt-Lauff explain what the accuracy of scientific theory on learning consists in or, in other words, its relevance to the research subject: “The theory of learning [...] is involved in concepts of human action and distances itself from theories describing transformations of abstract systems. Therefore, the theory of learning is characterized by openness. It fails to meet its object if it makes an attempt of casuistic or even mechanistic modelling. What is more, it must take freedom into

account [as a quality] of human action, in which assimilating something is every time a result of an individual decision of a person. Therefore, specific cases of learning of individuals are always situated in the centre of the theory of learning”<sup>7</sup>.

In the discussed publication, the editors and authors of individual texts point to the necessity of carrying out pedagogic research on the phenomenon of learning, irrespective of the attempts made by psychology, neurosciences or other disciplines. They emphasize that the approach towards the phenomenon of learning setting pedagogy apart from other studies is marked with a “contextual understanding of learning”, reflection on “the social embedding of individual learning processes”, and an aspiration to explore “opportunities and social framework” of lifelong learning<sup>8</sup>.

In the publication, 28 female and male authors take the floor; among them are renowned German adult education experts such as: Peter Faulstich, Jochen Kade, Joachim Ludwig, Christine Zeuner, and Henning Pätzold. The multitude of problems and topics in individual papers does not allow the review to include a compre-

<sup>7</sup> P. Faulstich, S. Schmidt-Lauff, *Erwachsenenbildung und Lernen – Einführung in Thema und Konzeption der Jahrestagung* [in:] *Erwachsenenbildung und Lernen*, H. von Felden, Ch. Hof, S. Schmidt-Lauff (eds.), Baltmannsweiler 2012, p. 4, quoted after: P. Faulstich, A. Grotlüschen, *Lerntheorien aneignen und vermitteln* [in:] *Perspektiven moderner Berufsbildung*, P. Dehnbostel, Z. Dippl, F. Elster, T. Vogel (eds.), Bielefeld 2003, p. 153.

<sup>8</sup> H. von Felden, Ch. Hof, S. Schmidt-Lauff, *Vorwort*, p. IX.

hensive elaboration on each of the outlined perspectives and approaches to the phenomenon of learning. Due to the necessity of selection, I will present only a few theoretical reflections, which – in my opinion – inspire to explore learning, clarify aspects of this process that were omitted or forgotten so far or reveal new research horizons.

Particular attention should be paid to the article by Käte Meyer-Drawe under the controversial and a little bit provoking title “Learning out of Passion”<sup>9</sup>. Its author situates the learning process on the pole opposing “learning *en passant*”, that is “casually” or “in passing”, which means those forms of learning which are generally considered equivalent to unofficial, incidental or non-intentional learning. It is possible to create other variants of naming this phenomenon, e.g. “learning for pleasure”, “learning out of desire”, “learning out of thirst for knowledge”, “learning out of longing” or “yearning”. The essence of “learning out of passion” – as the author explains – results from the need of the learning person to extend his or her horizons, changing oneself and breaking the forces of habit. The “habit” constitutes one of the most important categories in Meyer-Drawe’s deliberations. The author expresses a view that as a “second nature of man” it often thwarts ambition and shatters educational intentions of individuals. Habit anchors in a given social environment which imposes a certain lifestyle and faithfulness to particular principles,

attitudes and customs. It also “weighs one down”, because it animates an individual to ask questions and seek explanations only in cases when in her or his social environment interferences appear that are worrying and destructive to the feeling of harmony. The awareness of the need of learning can be muffled by habits, prejudice and stereotypes, appearing in the individuals’ environments and the so-called common sense, which orders more compliance to customs and norms than achieving new spaces. “Learning is the strict sense begins – as the author claims – when the familiar things become unstable and brittle and when new things are still out of reach; it begins with the feeling of amazement in the space ‘in-between’, on the threshold, which, admittedly, marks the passage, but does not allow synthesis of ‘before’ and ‘after’”<sup>10</sup>. Meyer-Drawe in her article refers to deliberations of social psychologist Jürgen Straub, who made an attempt to connect the theory of learning of Klaus Holzkamp with hermeneutics and phenomenology of learning. German psychologist Klaus Holzkamp emphasized that understanding and studying the learning processes of individuals becomes possible thanks to adopting the learner’s perspective by the researcher, which allows to understand meanings the individual assigns to particular events or emotions, leaving their causes in the background. The analysis of the learning process conducted from the point of view of the learning subject should therefore focus on his or her actions and

<sup>9</sup> K. Meyer-Drawe, *Lernen aus Passion*, pp. 9-20.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 13.

reasons which induced him or her to learn, and not on seeking causalities and interdependences. During the research procedure guided by such a premise – Meyer-Drawe argues – the point of tangency between the scientific discourse, treating the subject as the superior category, and the phenomenological perspective, understood as philosophy of experience, calling for the return to reality emerging from experience, appears. In Holzkamp's theory, learning continuously refers to experience which changes a person, impelling him or her to cross borders and widen horizons. In this case learning is not “*en passant*”; restrictions which stimulate the individual into action in order to overcome them lie at its roots. The individual fully consciously begins the process of learning, pinning his or her hopes on abolishing restrictions and restoring balance in his/her world. “Every intentional learning is preceded by experiencing the world and oneself, which, like having a thorn in one's flesh, triggers a cognitive dissonance and – more or less – destroys emotional balance of a given person”<sup>11</sup>. The author of the article shows emotions as a favourable factor in learning. She directs her attention particularly to “desire” as a source of motivation for learning. In order to learn something, it is necessary to desire something or at least find it interesting. Learning out of passion

assumes sacrificing oneself and the ability to achieve something at the cost of something else but also requires the presence of the other person who shall rescue the individual from the “confines of his home” and inspire to open to new challenges. The author is convinced of the advantages of the concept of learning emerging on the grounds of both critical psychology and phenomenology. She emphasizes that both fields are far from trying to instrumentalize learning and perceiving this process as one of the forms of social adaptation. Most of all, they see a creative act in it, being in the interests of an individual, which he or she can – if he or she is willing – carry out with full commitment accompanied by many positive emotions.

Other aspects of learning are raised in the article “From Lifelong Learning to Learning in Life” by Christiane Hof, who refers to a thesis popular nowadays that the concept of lifelong learning in pedagogic studies forces a turn to learning from a biography<sup>12</sup>. Lifelong learning implies therefore not only participation in the learning process in all the phases of human life, but also the need to understand the dynamic nature of the learning processes, undergoing change depending on the age and stage of life of the learner. The objective of science in the context of lifelong learning – the author concludes – is thorough understanding of the learning processes both in time perspective and in all areas in which individuals learn. Hof as-

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, p. 15, quoted after: J. Straub, *Lerntheoretische Grundlagen* [in:] *Wie lehrt man interkulturelle Kompetenz. Theorien, Methoden und Praxis in der Hochschulausbildung. Ein Handbuch*, A. Weidemann, J. Straub, S. Nothenagel (eds.), Bielefeld 2000, p. 51.

<sup>12</sup> Ch. Hof, *Vom lebenslangen Lernen zum Lernen im Lebenslauf*, pp. 70-79.

signs particular meaning not so much to temporality but to processuality of learning, referring to the entirety of factors influencing learning over the course of the entire life. The author asks a questions: In what way should learning be studied in order to capture its processual character? Hof does not deliver a ready-made theory – research that she is going to carry out is in the design phase – however, she formulates many premises for creating a theory of learning from biography. Above all, the author supports the theoretical perspective treating learning in the context wider than the one allowed by concentration on the processes occurring as part of the teaching-learning relation, dominated by the teacher and the person assimilating knowledge and abilities. The theoretical perspective should, in Hof's view, take into account the entirety of the possibilities and opportunities stimulating learning, the way in which a individual perceives them, and the consequences that these possibilities and opportunities, used or abandoned, have on the subsequent learning processes. Hof emphasizes the relations between the environment of learning and the learning subject, calling for the analysis of the learning process from the point of view of the theory of socialization, although more importance should be ascribed to mutual interactions of the person and of her/his life-world than to acquisition of knowledge, abilities, norms or values by the individual transmitted by the social environment. Studying learning over the course of an individual's life, in this perspective, means perceiving learning not only as a result of inner transformations of

a person, but also as an active process of both processing and creating experiences, leading in consequence both to changes in the area of knowledge and competence of the learner, and transformations within the determinants of the future learning processes, including the factors determining decisions in relation to educational activity and the character of actions taken. In her research project, Hof is going to examine the processual character of learning based on the category which she calls "overcoming social thresholds" and which in adulthood is equal to, for example, change in marital status. The theory of learning would in this particular case take into account the consequences of the family environment created by an individual (choice of a particular family model) for his/her learning processes in the future.

A similar approach to the phenomenon of learning is found in the article by Cornelli Maier-Gutheil, titled "Learning of Professionals – Self-Observation as a Constitutive Feature of Development of Professionalism"<sup>13</sup>. The author looking at learning from the point of view of professionalization in adult education, defines it as "one of the forms of comprehending oneself and the world, essential in acquiring an adaptation of particular aspects of knowledge and abilities by professionally active subjects"<sup>14</sup>. The thesis on the processual character of professionalization is a point of departure for the longitudinal

<sup>13</sup> C. Maier-Gutheil, *Das Lernen Professioneller – Selbstbeobachtung als konstitutives Merkmal von Professionalitätsentwicklung*, pp. 131-142.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 131.

studies presented in the article, which allowed to identify the evolution of patterns of self-observation and self-reflection of teachers in adult education over the course of 25 years. In the analysis of processes of self-observation and self-reflection directed at professional development, Maier-Gutheil concentrated on three aspects: firstly, on indentifying what changes had taken place (from what to what), secondly, in what situations and contexts these changes happened, and, thirdly, by whom or what they were stimulated. The results of the analysis allowed to capture professionalization in adult education as a process manifesting itself with the greatest clarity in pedagogic situations forcing the teacher to take action specifically directed at learners, e.g. selecting teaching methods suitable to abilities and needs of the course participants. Three basic attributes were singled out, which in the framework of self-observation and self-reflection of the studied persons were the most important, contributing to initiation of intensive learning to the largest degree. These are “openness”, “self-evaluation” and “self-determination”. Openness to situations in which the teacher is confronted while performing his work, seems to constitute the fundamental effect of the process of self-observation and self-reflection, as the author states. Annoyance or doubts associated with the need of determining their professional position in relations with the social environment and learners lead to using opportunities to acquire new knowledge. An example of external stimulation is feedback from learners. In contrast, internal

stimulation can result from the feeling of threat or uncertainty and aspiration to restore the state of harmony. Another attribute of professionalization – self-evaluation – allows the teacher to test the adequacy of his pedagogic practice through confrontation with the reaction of the professional environment. It serves to examine what was in the past, nonetheless it is directed at the present or the future of pedagogic work; it stimulates creating a fresh perspective and valuation, and hence it supports developing alternative routes of pedagogic activity. The subsequent attribute of professionalism, “self-determination”, emerging in the process of self-observation and self-reflection, enables independent, conscious and responsible fulfilling of one’s professional assignments. In case of a teacher of adults it means an ability to carefully balance between one’s expectations and goals and the expectations of a critical, collective observer of his pedagogic activity. All three attributes that make up professionalism are a permanent part of the learning processes, accompanying professional careers of those who aspire to improve in their profession. They also allow – according to the author – to examine the nature of the learning processes occurring in the contexts of a professional career.

Yet another aspect of learning is discussed in the article “Learning from Others” by Jörg Dinkelaker<sup>15</sup>. The author explains

---

<sup>15</sup> J. Dinkelaker, *Lernen von Anderen. Praktiken und Dynamiken der Verschränkung von Vermittlung und Aneignung in Veranstaltungen der Erwachsenenbildung*, pp. 229-242.

that he takes up this issue on the account of its continuous great significance in the practice of adult education, even though in the current scientific discussion “learning from others” is treated rather as a sign of an old-fashioned approach to pedagogy or an outmoded tradition, requiring replacement with more modern cultures of learning. The aim of the research conducted by Dinkelaker was the acquisition of knowledge on the interactions occurring between the participants of the teaching-learning processes, both the relations between learners and teacher and within the group of learners. The gathered material, including video recordings documenting the course of over one hundred courses in various institutions of adult education, allowed to observe that intentional acquisition of knowledge and abilities, referring to functioning in the world in general, as well as to specific situations, from persons who want to share their knowledge and abilities, belongs to frequent pedagogic events in the institutional frameworks of the learning processes. Learners are able – out of their own initiative – to take a role of a teacher or learner towards other participants of the course. The author depicted conditions supporting learning from others on the basis of an analysis of a sewing course. The basic factor ensuring the “coordination of the attention” of learners was the proper architecture of the room in which classes took place, especially situating workstations (learning stations) in a way enabling mutual communication and concentration on the teacher or a course participant who

takes over the role of a teacher. “Learning from others” takes place especially when all participants are coping with an identical task and individual persons are ready to accept the division of roles, resulting from having particular competences and experience. The person performing the role of an expert must have the ability to focus the attention of the remaining participants of the teaching-learning process on himself/herself and explaining or demonstrating contents or abilities constituting the object of study. In turn, learners should follow the words or actions of the teaching person and recognize logical connections between successive sentences or actions. Individual persons are able to sew, since they were shown what this activity consists in. Thanks to the instructions of the teaching person they can start sewing and acquire their first experiences in that field. If not for the possibility of exercising and gaining their own experiences, instructions of the teaching person would undoubtedly fall on deaf ears. Learning becomes possible when instruction and demonstration of individual actions made by the teacher intertwine with the learner’s practice. The possibility of exercising, experiencing what sewing is and what it consists in opens for learners – following the progress in learning – new spaces for subsequent experiences. Dinkelaker emphasises that experience is a basic element of “learning from others”, validating this form of expanding knowledge and abilities. “Learning from others” without the possibility of experiencing, however, he perceives as a process that is ineffective and theoretic-



cally unfounded. Assimilating “another person’s knowledge” can even block individuals in their efforts to create their own stores of knowledge<sup>16</sup>. Moreover, knowledge tested in the past or by one or a few persons, can turn out to be out-of-date in new situations or not useful for other persons. Its uncritical “borrowing” may lead to discontinuing own reflection, not noticing situational or cultural differences or other determinants. The analysis of over one hundred learning processes in adulthood recorded on video attest, according to the author, to the need of conducting empirical studies on “learning from others”. It is necessary to research both in what conditions this form of learning works and when it leads to an educational fiasco, as well as to understand the possibilities of supporting it with counseling, modern technologies or integration with other forms of learning.

Many diverse issues associated with the phenomenon of learning appear in the publication; nonetheless, a thorough reading creates an impression that learning in adulthood is still studied and interpreted mainly in the institutional context, most often from the point of view of the teaching-learning process. Considering the participants of this process, however, no longer the traditional division into roles exists; the authors emphasize that learning during courses, trainings or other educational undertakings

always creates an occasion for learning to all involved persons.

Undoubtedly, the criterion that to the largest extent determines the contemporary research approach to the phenomenon of learning constitutes the place in which it occurs. Whether this is an educational institution, a museum or a voluntary organization, researchers look at the learning processes from the point of view of the potential of a given place, or more precisely, theoretically assigned to a given place. There are a lot of references especially to learning in organizations: Anja Mensching writes about the learning processes at credit institutions; Simone Hocke examines the possibilities and limits of learning in works councils, Steffi Robak – in transnational companies<sup>17</sup>. Researchers are convinced that learning processes are every time inspired and conditioned by the specificity of a place. They more and more often study learning as an element of a person’s life strategy. In this approach, the relation between the life-world of an individual and his/her activity in the sphere of learning takes central place. The individual is perceived as a subject involved in learning, irrespective of whether or to what degree he/she is aware and inten-

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 237, quoted after: G. Dohmen, *Das Übergreifende Denken, das praktische Erkunden, das Vernünftige tun*, “Report. Literatur- und Forschungsreport Erwachsenenbildung/ Weiterbildung” 2000, No. 45, pp. 55–72.

<sup>17</sup> A. Mensching, *Implizite Lernprozesse als organisationale Gedächtnispraktiken? – Zur Rekonstruktion organisationalen Lernens am Beispiel eines Kreditinstitutes*, pp. 255–267; S. Hocke, *Konflikt-Lernen – Möglichkeiten und Begrenzungen am Beispiel von Betriebsräten*, pp. 268–280; S. Robak, *Lernformen und Optionen der Bildungspartizipation in transnationalen Unternehmen im Kontext der Expatriierung nach China*, pp. 281–293.

tionally aspires to develop his/her stores of knowledge and abilities. Territorial aspects (place of learning) are complemented in this approach with temporal aspects (learning at particular life stages). The moment in biography, in which learning occurs becomes, alongside the place of learning, the second most often discussed determinant of this process.

A characteristic feature of the contemporary studies on the phenomenon of learning is their experimental character. Adult learning experts, aspiring to develop their own theories of learning, develop innovative research concepts; nonetheless, they extremely often refer to the achievements of related sciences. The closeness of the pedagogic thought to behaviouristic, constructivist and other theories is striking. The planned cognitive approaches to the phenomenon of learning inspire and encourage to make further efforts, revealing the multitude of questions that pedagogy must cope with. One of those issues comes down to: Is it worthwhile to give up the inspiration from other fields of study? Does the ambition to seek own, pedagogic explanations of the phenomenon of learning not contribute to alienating this process from contexts that constitute its immanent quality? After all, a person lives and learns in particular political, cultural, social, and economic conditions and uses the opportunities that her/his life-world brings. Learning is always related also to the development of an individual's personality in the society and for the society. It is difficult to imagine that theories on learning

dealing with this phenomenon in its "bare form", not affected by biographical and situational factors, could be useful in teaching practice. Drawing from the achievements of related sciences does not necessarily equal to a weaknesses of adult education, all the more so since learning in adulthood is closely connected with other areas of social life, e.g. economy, labour market or politics. Another striking thing about the discussed publication is that in the reflection on learning there is little spoken about education, its goals, values and message, and yet it is exactly education in the classical meaning, the aspiration for a comprehensive intellectual development of a person, forming virtues and action competence, stands in the background of the discussion on learning.

The reviewed publication allows for gaining an insight into the current condition of studies on learning and the accomplished research projects, but at the same time inspires researchers to create new theories of learning, whereas practitioners, both teachers and learners – to give some thought to their own subjective theories of learning<sup>18</sup>, which in a creative or a de-

---

<sup>18</sup> Subjective theories of learning are, contrary to scientific theories, not fully aware, but rather a default representation of this process. They are constructed mainly as a result of biographic experiences. They are characterized by ambivalence or incongruity, e.g. on the one hand, a person is convinced that learning is important, while on the other hand, he/she is aware of the negative results, such as: educational activity at the cost of neglecting family, parental or social obligations or investing in education versus guaranteeing basic family needs. Subjective theories rise on the ground of popularization of scien-

structive way influence their educational activity. Theoretical deliberations on learning stimulate not only a reflection over the practice of adult education, but also a close scrutiny of one's own learning processes. Do I treat learning as an obligation or as a pleasure? What are the emotions that accompany my learning? How does my attitude towards learning change depending on the assimilated content, social contexts or time frames? There are probably as many answers as there are learners. In science, full agreement exists in relation to one attribute of learning: it is inconceivable without a person's readiness for changes, without his/her consent to open to new content. The notion of "learning" itself points to a process, movement and inconsistency and falls outside any attempts of a definitive and categorical determination of its essence<sup>19</sup>.

Sabine Schmidt-Lauff writes about the "happiness of learning"<sup>20</sup>. There is probably no exaggeration in saying that positive emotions accompanying learning constitute a value that cannot be overrated in the times, in which people are "doomed" to lifelong learning, or rather, by some miracle

---

tific knowledge (e.g. publicizing the concept of lifelong learning by the media) or general social ideas and their rationalizations under the influence of social or biographical factors (e.g. I am too old to learn). Cf. H. Siebert, *Subjektive Lerntheorien Erwachsener* [in:] *Vom Lernen zum Lehren*, E. Nuissl (ed.), Bielefeld 2006, pp. 43-58.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. P. Faulstich, *Menschliches Lernen. Eine kritisch – pragmatistische Lerntheorie*, Bielefeld 2013, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> S. Schmidt-Lauff, *Vom Glück zum Lernen, "Rocznik Andragogiczny" [Adult Education Yearbook] 2013*, pp. 153-171.

or by a fluke, they have the ability to learn throughout their entire lives which enables them to reveal still new spaces and conquer successive frontiers.

Ewa Przybylska  
UMK

**Marta Chechłowska-Lipińska (rev.):** *Marks. Nowe perspektywy* [Marx. New Perspectives], *Libera Università Metropolitana* (ed.), *Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2014*, pp. 352

DOI: 10.15804/kie.2014.05.15

From the 1930s to the 1980s Marxism was very popular in leftist circles at universities and among union activist workers in Western Europe. After World War II and attempts to build the model of welfare state in developing countries, the majority of social democratic parties rejected Marxism. After the final collapse of the Soviet Union, it would seem that the views and ideas of Marx are gone. But at the turn of the century, new anti-capitalist and alterglobalist movements gained popularity. The international financial crisis that started in 2007 accelerated the emergence of many new movements and led to a discussion of the philosophy of Marx. On January 28, 2009, the American magazine "Times" on the occasion of the World Economic Forum published on the main page the article *Rethinking Marx*<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> P. Gumbel, *Rethinking Marx – World Economic Forum*, "Time" 29.01.2009, <http://>