

Summing up, while the reading of individual units presents a more in-depth picture of the analyzed country, the message of the book is better understood when perceived as a whole. The picture of political science as a discipline in the region comprised of states transitioning from a communist system to liberal democracy depicts interesting tendencies. On the one hand, successful attempts have been made to increase the quality of research and

teaching, and re-orient political science towards contemporary affairs and policy-oriented analysis. On the other hand, the overhang of Marxist ideology, has slowed down, or in some cases it even eliminated the development of critical theories, which can have a negative effect on both academic and public debates. Consequently, the book emerges as a critical reflection on both achievements and challenges that characterize political science in our region.

A review of the book:

Syndrome of a Peacock and a Parrot. 20 years of Political Transformation in Poland [Syndrom pawia i papugi. 20 lat transformacji ustrojowej Polski], ed. Marek Sokołowski, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2010, pp. 264

by Małgorzata Kamola-Cieślik

In Poland's most recent history, year 2009 was a time to celebrate a special anniversary. Twenty years ago, events that started a political transformation in Poland took place. They were connected with the Round Table Talks, elections to the so-called Contract Sejm and the fact that Tadeusz Mazowiecki became the Prime Minister. In 2009 Poland also celebrated 70th anniversary of II World War, 10th anniversary of its admission to NATO and 5th anniversary of joining the European Union. The celebrations of these

events involved exhibitions, conferences and scientific seminars. Articles were written and television networks broadcast interviews and documentaries about the recent historical events that happened in Poland's history.

The 20th anniversary of the collapse of communism coincided with publications trying to assess the political transformation in Poland.¹ One of them was the book

¹ G.W. Kołodko, J. Tomkiewicz (eds.), *20 lat transformacji. Osiągnięcia, problemy, perspektywy*,

entitled *Syndrome of a Peacock and a Parrot. 20 years of Political Transformation in Poland* edited by Marek Sokołowski, a professor at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. It was published in a series "Social Life Space" by the publishing house Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek from Toruń. The book was the fruit of a seminar organized by the Chair of Sociology of The University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn in October 2009. The publication is a collection of articles divided, according to their topics, into three chapters, the first of which is entitled "Cheap staff"? *Hopes and Disappointments of 1989–2009*. Its first article is Wojciech Muszyński's "Communism, Come Back!" *Nostalgia for communism in the public opinion after 1989*. The article shows political, economic and social changes that took place in the past twenty years, as well as the feeling of disappointment and social dissatisfaction about the political transformation in Poland. A feeling of "longing" for communism lingering in the Polish society is presented in the article.

Elżbieta Szul, in her article *Social Assessment of Privatization. Fulfilled Expectations or Great Disappointment?*, presented a varied assessment of the Polish society and inhabitants of podkarpackie

province of the privatization that took place between 1990 and 2006. The author shows reasons why Poles' reactions to privatization varied so much. The fact that the Polish society disapproved of the privatization was caused by the lack of clear rules of how state-owned companies should be sold and negative consequences of this.

The authors of the next article, Ewa Nowak and Rafał Riedel, analyzed (on the basis of opinion pools conducted by CBOS – Centre for Public Opinion Research) the attitude of Poles to political institutions in Poland and abroad in years 1998–2008. According to the conducted surveys, Poles have more trust in European institutions, such as European Parliament, because its activities are undertaken while honoring European values. The limited trust expressed by the Polish society towards Polish state institutions was due to the way and extend to which citizens expectations were realized by organs of governmental administration.

Adam Grabowski, the author of the next article, described attitudes of Poles towards politicians from SLD (Democratic Left Alliance), PiS (Law and Justice) and PO (Civic Platform) between 2008 and 2009. According to the author, an increase in support for PO (Civic Platform) after 2007 went against the rules that previously governed Polish political life. Between 1989 and 2007 it took approximately 100 days for any Council of Ministers to bring it to a point where the ruling party had smaller

Warszawa 2009; K. Żukrowska (ed.), *Transformacja systemowa w Polsce*, Warszawa 2010; S. Pangsyk, G. Szczodrowski (eds.), *Gospodarka Polska po 20 latach transformacji. Osiągnięcia, problemy i wyzwania*, Warszawa 2009.

social support than before it took power. The article presents circumstances that led to this change.

Zofia Chyra – Rolicz's article is concerned with the activities of government, parliament, social organizations and trade unions about changing the structure of Polish cooperatives, which eventually resulted in marginalization of cooperatives in economic, social and cultural life in Poland in the described period.

The transformation in Poland's political, economic and social life after 1989 led to changes in functioning and management of schools and higher education. These issues are discussed by Danuta Dzich, who compared the priorities of Poland's educational system to those in Germany, Belgium and Holland after 1989. At the same time, the author discusses in depth one of the goals of Polish educational system concerning training of didactic staff.

Changes in social life during the period of political transformation in Poland were the subject of the next two articles. Daria Irena Zabłocka focused on changes in the structure and functioning of the Polish family. According to the author, most Polish families started to live in a relationship based on partnership where partners enjoy increasing personal freedom. This tendency was accompanied with many other factors, such as disappearance of families with many children and extended families, rising professional aspirations of women, the rise of the position of a child in family,

conscientious motherhood. Stanisław Suchaczaow compared the attitude of Polish and Ukrainian societies towards work as a criterion of effectiveness of the political transformations in Poland and in Ukraine. The author mentions negative developments on the job market which, to a varying extent, were to be seen in these two countries. The changes also concerned the economic black market, migration of workers, rising unemployment among young people with high education.

The second part of *The Peacock of Nations.* "Lost Identity? Towards Multiculturalism" starts with Dorota Utracka's article, in which she shows the process of social changes described as the existential revolution triggered by political and economic changes that happened in the late 1980s. The notion of cultural normality was defined as the goal towards which the Polish society strived and which was known in the countries of Western Europe.

Małgorzata Przybysz-Zaremba, the author of the next article, explains the meaning of globalization and presents its many dimensions. The article characterizes economic, medial, informative, cultural and ecological globalization while at the same time showing its negative consequences for the society, such as dependence of man on the economy, the formulation of rules governing the information society only by the richest countries, domination of one culture over other cultures.

Samanta Kowalska in her article *Cultural legacy – is it national or communal?* presents the legal status of cultural heritage protection in the Polish People's Republic and in the last two decades. According to the author Poland should have a system of protecting its national heritage that would not have to follow suit of systems adopted by other countries. This solution would protect Polish heritage and it would also guarantee its original character in comparison with other cultures.

The authors of the next article, Marek Ejsmond and Beata Kosmala, presented four models of how the Polish society could react to cultural differences. They analyzed this phenomenon taking into examination Poland's most popular television series. According to the authors such shows began to play an educational and socializing role as far as education of multicultural society is concerned. The implementation of this task turned out to be to a much lesser degree than that presented in the media and particularly in television.

Another phenomenon which came to light during the political transformation of Poland was the globalization of the Polish language. The reasons that triggered the process were connected with consumer culture and the fact that Poland joined the European Union. Dorota Suska showed how the English language affected young people's slang and how its influence affected such spheres as economics, technology and media.

The last chapter entitled *The Illusion or Reality? Sociological portraits of Poles* contains five articles. The first of them, written by Jan Kłos, is a reflection over the political changes which began in 1989. The article presents the ideology of the totalitarian system, the enslavement of the man having to live in the communist system and the directions in which the free society can develop.

The results of real socialism in a free society were the topic of interest for Bożena Kuśmierczyk and Danuta Ciukszo. The authors made a list of Polish national vices in the legal sphere. On the basis of conducted research it was concluded that the Polish society is not a civil society and that an average Pole abuses the legal system for its own good.

Magdalena Szpunar attempted to answer the following question: what factors influence the increase of Internet users in Poland? The author showed regional diversity in the Internet access in Poland. The reasons for no Internet access are not economic. It is a lack of interest among Poles and limited computer literacy.

The following article is about Polish ecumenism during the political transformation in Poland. Its author, Wiesław Romanowicz, on the basis of conducted research came to the conclusion that ecumenical movement did not depend on political activity. It was rather influenced by clergymen. However, the rest of the

society was not involved in any activity connected with ecumenism.

Grażyna Pietruszewska – Kobiela's article closes this collection. It focuses on the vision of femininity in the artistic work of Urszula Małgorzata Benka in 1990s. The author shows differences between the vision of femininity in the feminist literature and the way feminine role are perceived by the Polish society.

The authors of the articles showed the directions of the system transformation in Poland and the expectations of the society in the face of new changes. While presenting political, economic and social transformation they also pointed out to phenomena which accompanied the process of transformation, such as increasing unemployment, financial diversity of the society, limited social trust in the state institutions. At the same time attempts were made to assess the

past two decades in terms of successes and failures of Polish political elites. The authors also tried to find an answer to the question whether or not the Polish changes which began in 1989 are still going on or are they a period historically closed.

The publication in question does not present all the problems connected with the political transformation in Poland. What is missing, is the discussion about Polish foreign and economic policy in Poland's legislature and governments in the described period. Regretfully, no references are given, which could prove to be very useful for those concerned with researching the investigated events in Poland's recent history. However, it must be admitted that a collection of such diverse articles trying to assess the past twenty years is noteworthy.

A review of the book:

Łukasz Dominiak *The value of community. Political philosophy of communitarism*, [Wartość wspólnoty. O filozofii politycznej komunitaryzmu] Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2010, pp. 351

by Danuta Karnowska

The most important ideologies of the XIX and the first half of the XX century took a stand on communities. This was expressed not only in the liberal criticism

of the communal lifestyle but also in the socialist commendation; in the conservative hierarchy or communist absolute equality. Invariably a community constituted one