

About the Book

The institutional history of sociology discussed here covers 30 years, from 1970 till 2000. It is a follow-up to my last book, *Institutionalisation of Sociology in Poland: 1920–1970*,¹ with this continuation applying the same methodology. I describe how institutions already familiar to the reader have been changing and new ones created, and how those changes paralleled the political transformations in Poland.

I studied the institutionalisation of sociology in Poland, primarily focusing on the development of sociology-practising academic institutions: some of which have been created, eliminated or changed in scope. I have tried to determine what sort of activities these institutions conducted – were they more theoretical or more practical? – and, if the latter was the case, what their nature was.

It was vital to collect and consult a variety of sources to describe the institutionalisation processes: the memoirs of those who shaped Polish sociology at the time, as well as some published or unpublished university and institute archives regarding their social life, e.g. reports of university Senate and faculty proceedings, curricula and lists of faculty fellows, Polish academic information bulletins of 1970s, 80s and 90s such as the Polish Sociological Society's "Informacja Bieżąca," an ad-hoc publication, as well as "Studia Socjologiczne," especially its Academic Chronicles. The institutional development of Polish sociology was the subject of several papers published in this quarterly and of a number of books.

As in my earlier book, while analysing institutionalisation I adopted Pawel Rybicki's understanding of institutions: "An institution is seen as a continuity of actions by individuals or groups endowed with material and immaterial resources."²

The historians of sociology who speak of "institutions" are, among others, Terry N. Clark, Robert K. Merton, Edward Shils,

¹ N. Kraśko, *Instytucjonalizacja socjologii w Polsce 1920–1970*. Warszawa 1996, PWN.

² P. Rybicki, *Struktura społecznego świata*. Warszawa 1978. PWN, p. 519.

Shmuel Eisenstadt, and Miriam Curelaru. Edward Shils offered a definition of institutionalisation in various disciplines:

By institutionalization of an intellectual activity I mean the relatively dense interaction of person who conduct that activity within a social arrangement which boundaries, endurance and a name. The more intense the interaction, the more structure makes place for authority which makes decisions regarding assessment, admission, promotion, allocation; the authority also sets the criteria for the selection of those particular traditions which are to be cultivated in teaching and enquiry. There need not be a formal stipulation of the criteria; they can be usually are simply embodied in the practice of the authorities – in this case, those who are most imposing intellectually. The high degree of institutionalisation of the an intellectual activity entails its teaching and investigation within regulated, scheduled, and systematically administrated organization.³

According to Clark, the institutionalisation of a field contributes to its development. In *The Stages of Scientific Institutionalization*, he specifies three elements essential to develop a new field of interest: (1) a consistent idea, a sort of paradigm; (2) talented individuals evolving the idea; (3) institutionalisation of structures basic to maintain and broaden ideas relating to the field.⁴

Other historians of sociological institutionalisation such as Eisenstadt or Curelaru include sociological theories as a component of institutionalisation.⁵

The differing status of sociology in various countries has given rise to a variety of institutionalisation patterns, some traits present here while absent elsewhere. Sociology has developed with the growing number of local and international contacts in the field; international societies have emerged as well as national ones, with sociologists meeting each other at various international conferences and workshops. With the increase in interactions, in-

³ E. Shils, *The Calling of Sociology and Other Essays on the Pursuit of Learning. Selected Papers of Edward Shils*, t. 3. Chicago 1980, University of Chicago Press, s. 168–169.

⁴ T.N. Clark, *The stages of scientific institutionalization*, “International Social Science Journal” 1972, vol. 24, no 4, p. 658.

⁵ Por. S.N. Eisenstadt, M. Curelaru, *The Form of Sociology. Paradigms and Crises*. New York 1976, A. Wiley Interscience Publication.

stitutionalisation patterns have crossed from the mainstream to the peripheries.

This period I am covering was characterised by many examples of discontinuity in sociological thought. As Raymond Boudon suggested, this discontinuity occurred both at lower and higher institutional profiles. Focus on equity, women, the family, the young and the poor was strongly linked to current social and political issues, yet their analysts scarcely referred to the earlier academic tradition. Such discontinuity was also apparent in other fields such as philosophy, history or political science, but unlike them, sociologists have recognised the non-accumulation of knowledge as a problem demanding and suggesting solution. This view was predominant among sociologists and more influential in sociology's internal development than other disciplines'.

In 1970 when Jonathan H. Turner started working on "The Structure of Sociological Theory" there existed four theoretical approaches: functionalism, conflict theory, social exchange theory and symbolic interaction theory. In the last three decades the situation has undergone a complete change. Multiparadigm sociology is the norm. In his preface to the Polish edition of his book, Turner writes:

Today, at the start of the 21st century, we know that the state of only a few theoretical approaches is long past. (...) Their increasing variety raises fresh doubts concerning the prospects of scientific sociology and theory accumulation.⁶

In the 1970s doubts arose as to whether timeless rules of social structure are discoverable. The importance of political and social actors and their personal preferences were also noticed. The belief that sociology might be of help in solving practical problems (such as fighting social pathology) brought increased interest in sociology. The interest in recognising and defining social problems has risen at the cost of theory development. It has been said that theory is a kind of academic game of ideas, an ideologically grounded critique of modernity and postmodernity.

⁶ J.H. Turner, *Struktura teorii socjologicznej* Wydanie nowe. Warszawa 2004 Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, p. XXI.

While analysing the institutional development of sociology, I accepted that the mode of institutionalisation does not determine the subject of sociological analysis, its scope, nor the theses accepted and rejected according to methodology. It was a sane decision. For while analysing theoretical development and sociological methodology, it became readily visible that Polish sociologists have undertaken the same questions and answers as their western counterparts.

After World War II a social reconstruction was called for and carried out, self-legitimised by Marxist theory. Marxism was proclaimed not only the basis for sociological theory, but also the ideology of the ruling Party. The Party ruled over all areas of the public life: economy, science, culture, social and international policy. It was the Party which suggested the general principles of institutional development, controlled the activities of subservient institutions and influenced their staffing. Every such activity was accorded different validity in different times. The Party influenced science directly – through party members, and indirectly – mainly through legal regulations affecting academic institutions, censorship and political decisions taken by Party executives concerning particular faculties, fields or even individual scholars.

A notable Party public leverage method was the “nomenklatura,” meaning literally the list of people whose nominations should have been accepted by the respective Party executives: i.e., of the Politburo, Central Committee Secretariat, secretary and division CEOs, the voievodship and lower rank executives. The POPs (Basic Party Units) had no “nomenklatura.” Party organisations operated at the university and faculty levels, assessing offhand the situation at their official gatherings, while also accepting (if any) directives from above and trying to execute them at large. Every University and Faculty had its POPs. Their members would gather periodically to assess recent University and Faculty events, and to accept and carry out any respective orders from above. They also conveyed academic intelligence upwards. As Party/faculty heads they had a role in hiring and firing decisions, assessed the work of their subordinates and held forth on achievements in their fields and scientific institutions. Some voievodship Party units adopted a custom of Party and faculty members meeting at respective lev-

els. At the central level, the Party Central Committee's Science & Education Division boasted the Academic Commission. The Commission was divided into sections according to academic fields, e.g., the socio-philosophical division of the Party philosophers and sociologists. At rallies they publicly discussed problems of sociology, structure and societal development, as well as problems in sociological environments. The authorities could if they wish ask them for an opinion in their respective fields. This consultancy I describe in several chapters.

Marxism, although itself a social theory and the ruling Party's ideology, had a relatively minor impact on sociology. From the late 40s through the middle 50s sociology did not exist in Poland; it had been banned by the Stalinist authorities as a nonexistent non-science. It was restored to academia in the late 1950s. At the time Marxist sociology was in vogue as well as those representing this approach. The Marxist-sociologists formally enriched the ideology making use of modern anthropology, sociology, and social psychology.

With time intellectual party members lost their sense of historical mission and their faith in party leadership waned. Errors in the leadership were no longer justified nor was there any attempt at justification, and they became seen as unavoidable. The shedding of ideology meant that the need for propaganda-men dissipated. What was stressed publicly at the time was the relevance of the quality of sociological work as distinguished from political involvement.

The assessments of the USSR and the West also changed. It was no longer believed that the "leadership" of the former was one of goodwill towards the rest of the Eastern bloc. The West began to be recognised as a different social-and-economic model, competing with the socialist states, rather than a place of exploitation of the needy.

The system had become pragmatic, even instrumental. Intellectuals enjoyed more freedom, albeit far from the ideal of unrestrained research and expression. Academics toyed with censorship and even the Party. It can be argued that from the late 1950s an open Marxism dominated in sociology (Hochfeld and his followers: Zygmunt Bauman, Włodzimierz Wesolowski, and Jerzy

J. Wiatr) and in philosophy (Leszek Kolakowski, Bronislaw Baczko and Helena Elstein). Marxism remained the ruling party ideology. Bauman suggested that Marxism in sociology involved knitting together social theory with revolutionary social change:

(...) knowledge on society can reach the level of science if it is determined to remove from practical life all the barriers which result in limiting human thought; and a social programme starts to be a real and not an utopian one, only if it arises from free and critical analysis of actual tendencies in social development.⁷

Things changed after March 1968 when presumed Marxists and revisionists were accused of instigating student riots. By the end of the month six independent scholars were fired from the University: Bronislaw Baczko, Zygmunt Bauman, Włodzimierz Brus, Maria Hirszowicz, Leszek Kolakowski and Stefan Morawski, all of whom, with the exception of Hirszowicz, emigrated, publishing abroad in foreign languages (predominantly English) and in Polish in the émigré press (e.g., in “Aneks” and “Kultura”).

This narrative was seen as a final reckoning with “the last true communists” in Poland,⁸ and the Party which up to the 1968 had taken its cultural mission seriously, discussing philosophy through its public intellectuals, shed its ideological bearings. During the decade of Gierek’s rule “nobody from that group took Marxism seriously any more.”⁹

The loosened ideological bridle allowed for a broadened academic profile in the social sciences and changes in staff. More and more non-Party members were nominated at the time, such as the new director of the PAN Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Jan Szczepanski, a disciple of Florian Znaniecki.

The 1970s saw the emergence of an organised and institutionalised political opposition, accompanied by the nearly simultaneous establishment of cultural, educational, and academic initiatives from without the official structures. Lectures and courses

⁷ Z. Bauman, *Zarys socjologii. Zagadnienia i pojęcia*. Warszawa 1962, PWN, p. 94.

⁸ A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok do królestwa wolności. Dzieje komunistycznej utopii*. Warszawa 1966, p. 496.

⁹ J. Kochanowicz, *Marzec 1968 i życie intelektualne Uniwersytetu w: Marzec 1968. Trzydzieści lat później. Tom I. Referaty*. Warszawa 1998, PWN, p. 133.

were organised outside of the University structure, and the Scientific Course Society was created which also acted as a publisher. The concept of sociology didn't change, but the subjects of study did – being enriched with new and hitherto taboo themes.

After the imposition of martial law in December 1981, or more generally in the 1980s, the institutionalisation of sociology came to a halt – less students in sociology departments, difficulties in hiring young sociological scholars or in creating sociology faculty at newly created Universities, less industrial sociologists. The number of sociological institutions, however, remained the same, their predicament explained as a result of the troublesome economic position of the state.

In the 1990s society was divided, yet most university milieus harboured the political opposition. Uncensored editorship increased. As Agnieszka Iwaszkiewicz stated, in 1976–1990, some 80,300 titles¹⁰ were published in the so called “drugi obieg” – or “second circulation”– the underground-yet-tolerated press. After the April 1989 elections, the proclaimed start of systemic transformation, and since the 1990s, all political and formal obstacles in academic work have been removed. Censorship was abolished (April 1990), and old institutions acquired new roles (in research and teaching) while others were founded such as Council of Higher Education, State Committee for Scientific Research, and The State Accreditation Committee. It has also become possible to establish private universities.

The III Republic is predominantly a marketplace – in science as well. Students who have failed the entrance exams for regular day studies can apply for weekend courses, and the standing of a private university is dependent on the number of applicants for study. The choice of a given school depends on the programs it offers and its faculty. Marxist theory seems more applicable here than it did under “real” socialism.

¹⁰ *Archiwum Opozycji*. [1], *Kolekcja „Solidarność – narodziny ruchu”, czasopisma niezależne 1976–1990, książki wydane poza cenzurą 1976–1990*, A. Iwaszkiewicz. (ed.); co-worked by M. Bartel [et al.]. Warszawa 2006, Ośrodek Karta, p. 226.

Yet the social sciences haven't quite been free from politics. First of all, politics constitutes their subject matter. Electoral campaigning, the function of the legislative and executive branches, coalition forming and dissolution, the social aspects of political programmes, centralisation and de-centralisation of power, civil society, social pathology – all these themes have been topics of scientific study, and also of great interest to opinion polling institutions.

Sociology has entered yet much deeper into politics. Scholarly arguments have more often than not been founded in politics, relating to the qualitative and quantitative presence of the old in the new, as well as to the definitions of new social threats and their remedies. Sociologists have differed also in their assessments of the old regime: was it totalitarianism or an autocracy? were its leaders ruffians or professionals? what are the contributions in the systemic change of, respectively, the apparatchiks and the then dissidents? should democracy be built, and new elites formed, regardless of the roles played under the old regime, or should some categories be eliminated from public/political scene?

Answers have been usually given in the form of political/social journalism, while sociology as science has tried for a long time to portray the real facets of the social reality, so even the books on politics have dealt primarily with public opinion as divided by various social strata¹¹ or focussed on more narrowed topics.¹² It was during the second decade of transformation that the first analyses of the system were offered, such as a synthesis conducted by sociologists from the Institute of Political Studies (Instytut Studiów Politycznych), of the Polish Academy of Sciences, particularly Edmund Wnuk-Lipinski and Marek Ziolkowski.¹³

¹¹ *Sierpień '80 w optyce mieszkańców wsi i małych miast*, M. Latoszek (ed.). Gdańsk 1990, Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe. Komisja Socjologiczna; *Młodzi torunianie wobec zmian społecznych i zagrożeń cywilizacyjnych*, A. Kaleta i G. Zabłocki (ed.). Toruń 1990, UMK.

¹² *Robotnicy – aktorzy aktu pierwszego*. Warszawa 1990, Szkoła Główna Planowania i Statystyki. Instytut Gospodarstwa Społecznego. Centrum Badań Samorządowych; J. Borucka, D. Skrzypiński, *Polityka skuteczna: marketingowa analiza sukcesu wyborczego*. Wrocław 1995, Volumed.

¹³ *Pierwsza dekada niepodległości. Próba socjologicznej syntezy*, E. Wnuk-Lipiński, M. Ziolkowski (ed.). Warszawa 2001, Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN.

In my earlier book on institutionalisation until 1970, I suggested that Polish sociology in the 1970s had reached the level of Established Science and entered what could be called the era of Great Science. What I had in mind was the relatively high number of faculties, the structure of scientific and academic institutions, the existence of a wide range of specialisations in the field, the establishment of sociology as a profession (especially industrial sociology) regulated by requirements regarding academic work and promotion. The passage to Great Science is also testified to by the activities of the Polish Sociological Association (PTS), striving for the sovereignty of the profession. The professional emancipation of sociology had been blocked in the 1980s. And it was only after 1989, as compared to the 1970s under the communist rule, when a return to Great Science could be suggested in terms of the figures of institutions conducting and teaching sociology, as well as the numbers of students and graduates of various sociological denominations.

I have identified three periods, each about decade long, according to political divides. The first was December 1970 in Gdansk, the second was Solidarity of 1980, and the third was marked by the elections of 1989. The former two phases were socialist, while the latter saw the birth of the III Republic establishing a market society dedicated to private ownership. In the first period the Polish United Workers Party ruled, while in the second period numerous parties, or orientations, rivalled for leadership.

I have tried to identify the different ways scientific institutions operated in each decade. Thus every chapter accounts for the respectively different political climates. In the 1970s, for example, relations between the State and the Catholic church gained paramount importance, while dissident movements came into being, focusing especially on the humane and social sciences. I have analysed, by the respective decades, the structural evolution of scientific institutions and the teaching of sociology in both sociological and non-sociological departments. In each decade I have looked closely at the role of the Polish Sociological Association. I have divided the last chapter, discussing the 1990s, into two subchapters: one about private schools, and another about opinion polling.

transl. Sergiusz Kowalski