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SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN KATOWICE REGION

ABSTRACT. The paper concerns selected social problems of Katowice region. Depending of the time period, this region is identified with changing territory of the province (Katowice Voivodeship, Silesia Voivodeship). The discussed problems include dwelling, job market and social pathologies. They are considered as the most significant, representing the most serious problems in the area studied. The starting point is the outline of the hitherto social investigations considered from sociological, demographic and social-geographical perspectives. An attempt was made to compare changes observed in Katowice region with basic conceptions of social development, i.e. modernism, dependent development, endogenic development, and Wallerstein's world system. Non of these conceptions occurred in the area studied in a homogeneous form. Moreover, it is possible, that features typical for several social models may occur in the same time, both in structural and spatial frame.

KEY WORDS: Katowice region, social transformations, dwelling, job market, social pathologies, conceptions of social development.

THE OUTLINE OF THE HITHERTO INVESTIGATIONS OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE REGION

The post-war interest in social problems in the area of both present Silesian Province and former Katowice Province until the 1970s was mainly connected with the activity of Silesian Scientific Institute in Katowice (not existent at present). The sociologists from this institute prepared at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s research programme which included the following problems:

1. Social consequences of urbanisation including:
 - 1.1. General urbanisation trends in Katowice Province
 - 1.2. Transformations in population content of urban settlements
 - 1.3. Internal connections of local communities
2. Social transformations in Silesian working class including:
 - 2.1. Paths of social promotion
 - 2.2. Social mobility versus generation stability of Silesian workmen
 - 2.3. Professional job of women in mining families
3. Processes of social integration including:
 - 3.1. Population differentiation and adaptation in Katowice Province
 - 3.2. Regional community versus national community.

Works published by *Bulletin of Silesian Scientific Institute*, *Upper Silesian Sociological Studies on Region's Economy*, *Silesian Dawn*, or in form of individual books became the basis to recapitulate the output in this range, which for the first time in the post-war period was done by Mrozek (1965). Basing on her own works and works by J. Grabania, J. Jacimirski, W. Knobelsdorf, J. Pietrucha, P. Rybicki, A. Sarapata, A. Stasiak, M. Suboczowa and J. Ziółkowski, the Author proves that the output of sociologists and demographers made it possible to prepare (Mrozek, 1965: 6-7):

- quantitative characteristic of urbanisation transformations in the region, especially social-economic connections with other areas of Poland in job market sphere;
- presentation of population changes in the area of individual towns (e.g. Nowe Tychy, which since the 1950s became an important research field not only for social studies);
- detailed analysis of the structure of social-professional groups, mainly coal miners and metallurgists, and also social mobility of the inhabitants of Katowice region.

Together with the establishment of University of Silesia in Katowice in 1968, which included the Institute of Sociology (Faculty of Social Sciences), a "gravity centre" of social research of Katowice region started to move at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s towards this institution (Jacher, Jałowiecki, Frąckiewicz). Later on similar investigations were carried out by M.S. Szczepański, W. Świątkiewicz, J. and K. Wódz (e.g. Błasiak *et al.*, 1994; Długoborski, 1967; Frąckiewicz, 1996; Frąckiewicz, Zrałek, 2000; Jacher, 1987; Sztumski, Wódz, 1984, 1985; Szczepański, 1993, 1994; Wódz, 1994).

As a result of the conducted analysis, Szpor (1992) stated that after 1945 Katowice region showed different specificity of social-demographic transformations than the whole area of Poland. Szpor (op. cit) noticed that: *...higher than the average migration increase not only balanced lower than average for Poland natural increase but also caused considerably higher than the average dynamic of population increase and further deepening*

of differences which occurred since the end of the war connected with mean population density and percentage of urban population. Transformations of social structure in the province in vertical pattern were smaller than average for Poland, and in horizontal pattern they were larger. Although in the vertical structure, the percentage of population living from agriculture decreased and percentage of educated people increased, and because the percentage of peasants was small from the beginning of the period analysed and percentage of educated people was increasing slower than average for Poland, the place of workmen in the social structure of the province was changing in a considerably smaller rate than the average for Poland. In horizontal structure, the range of the occurrence of half-closed, stabile and homogeneous communities decreased and the number of open communities increased, where spatial mobility occurred as well as diversity in terms of territorial origin and social descent. Over-average increase of the percentage of immigratory population and urban population caused that these transformations were more intensive than the average in Poland...

Despite the extensiveness of the sociological-demographic output in the investigations of social problems of the region, there is a clear insufficiency of spatial studies as well insufficiency in kinds of research problems. This results from relatively late start of geographical studies of social problems (1974 – establishment of Faculty of Earth Sciences with geography and geology studies). The first papers of over regional importance discussing spatial aspects of social problems in Katowice region appeared at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s (Rykiel, 1985, 1989, 1991).

According to the proposition of Rykiel (1989) to define problems of social geography, three basic fields of interest of this discipline may be distinguished. They include: (a) social-spatial structures, (b) social-spatial connections and (c) social hazards. In the case of the first group the following publications should be mentioned: Kantor-Pietraga, 1998; Kantor-Pietraga, Runge, 1997; Kłosowski, 1997, 1999; Runge, 1995; Węclawowicz, 1989. The second group includes works of Runge (1991, 1996) and the third group includes publication of Magda (1997).

Taking into account the conception of urban space of Liszewski (1997) three investigation fields of social geography of Katowice region may be distinguished (Runge, 2000). The first field concerns basic trends of population transformations i.e. attempts to determine the size, dynamics and structural changes of population in the region. The second field concerns investigations of social infrastructure and the third concerns the consciousness (e.g. images and spatial stereotypes of Silesia as a whole; characteristic of ecological hazards in the consciousness of the inhabitants; spatial differentiation of the consciousness of hazards of inhabitants health; investigations of consciousness space of the areas surrounding Silesian region (Teshin Silesia). The results of these investigations may be summarised as follows (Runge, 2000):

- 1) irrespectively of the represented constituent of urban space, in the 1990s, trends of transformations showing features of at least suburbanisation were recorded in the area studied (population dynamics, employment, constituents of natural movement);
- 2) known from the literature model of urbanisation transformations (urbanisation – suburbanisation – desurbanisation – counterurbanisation), in case of complex settlement systems like undoubtedly Katowice region is, does not show total spatial reflection, and, moreover, occurring side by side opposite trends of changes may be recorded in different areas;
- 3) changes of administrative division which occurred in Poland several times including the province studied, only slightly corresponded with regional differentiation of social-demographic features.

The start of political-economic transformations in Poland as well as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, was accompanied with social-demographic changes, which, from the one hand, were their consequences, and from the other hand represented the effect of overlapping of transformations and population changes. Among social problems – not only in the scale of Katowice region – the following aspects became extremely important (Frackiewicz, Zrałek, 2000): *population, health protection, housing, unemployment, education and poverty*. The factors influencing these problems include: natural environment pollution, health condition, overpopulation, job market situation, infrastructural fitting, social pathology. Three of these problems will be discussed in details in the further part of this paper.

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF SILESIAN REGION

Housing problem. In the proposed by Rykiel (1989) research programme of social geography, the housing problem together with pathologies, health hazard, environment pollution, and relations between economic development and social aims was included into the third block of basic problems, i.e. social hazards. As it is underlined by this Author the housing problem in Katowice region is especially important as it represents a kind of a syndrome of social disorganisation. Detailed research topics include (Rykiel, 1989: 14):

- analysis of housing needs and possibilities to fulfil these needs;
- relations between housing problems and family hazards;
- relations between the lack of independent dwellings and such phenomena as divorces, alcoholism, drug habit, delinquency, etc;
- concentrations of lodging-houses for workmen as pathogenic areas;
- social costs of housing crisis.

The lapse of about 15 years and social-economic transformations which took place during this time cause that these topics partially become out-of-date

(liquidation of lodging-houses for workmen) or revealed qualitative changes (permanent decline of collective housing industry in favour of individual house building). Simultaneously, some problems were not noticed at that time but their importance grew and now they represent the most essential problems like closed residential quarters or housing problems versus globalisation (Zborowski, 2001). At present the housing problem is not only a material-spatial dimension, but also social-demographic one. In the first case the following detailed problems may be distinguished:

- fulfilment of housing needs (quantitative, qualitative and spatial aspect),
- maintenance of standards and revitalisation of housing substance,
- housing problem in plans of spatial management and strategies of local (regional) development,
- dwelling contrasts;

whereas in the second case the detailed problems include:

- social-demographic structure of inhabitants and its changes in time and space,
- dwelling conditions and life quality,
- dwelling space in the consciousness of its users,
- semi-closed communities of old and new housing estates.

Paradoxically, these problems are poorly represented in the hitherto publications covering Katowice region (Frąckiewicz, 1983; Frąckiewicz, Zrałek, 2000; Tkocz, 1993). It is even more astonishing taking into account the fact that on average 30% of dwelling resources in the region was built before 1918. These are dwellings of low standard and insufficient municipal facilities. The most commonly such dwellings occur in Bytom, Ruda Śląska, Siemianowice Śląskie, Świętochłowice and Zabrze. Simultaneously, the number of new dwellings completed fell dramatically. In 2003, 14.7 thousand of dwellings were completed in Silesian Province including 12.9 thousand built in individual house building system. As compared to earlier years it is an essential increase (in 2001 – 4.5 thousand of dwellings completed) but still it is much too little to fulfil the needs in this range and also comparing it with housing building from the 1970s. Recently this situation has been slightly saved by individual house building. *Small number of dwellings completed places Poland on one of the last positions in Europe both in terms of the number of dwellings per 1,000 inhabitants (289) and per 1,000 contracted marriages (324)* (Frąckiewicz, Zrałek, 2000: 108). It is also important to maintain the existent dwelling resources. The measures for this purpose come mainly from rent-charges. Simultaneously, a characteristic feature of recent years is the increase of the number of people who fell into arrears with rent-charges. At the end of the 1990s, this concerned 545 thousand of dwellings in the whole Poland including 7.2% of collective dwellings, 14.2% of municipal dwellings and 8% of factory dwellings (Frąckiewicz, Zrałek, 2000: 165). Basing, unfortunately, on small amount of data A. and J. Runge (2006) made an attempt to study spatial aspect of this problem. Taking into account data for the Silesian

Province from the period 1999-2001 they prove that this problem is serious. In 2001, more than a half of dwelling resources was involved in debt in Gliwice (50.1%) and in Myszków county (56.3%). In other 8 counties of Silesian Province the percentage of dwelling resources with tenants falling into arrears with rent-charges was over 40% (Rybnik – 41.2%, Tarnowskie Góry – 41%, Zawiercie – 42.4%, Częstochowa – 40%, Jaworzno – 43.7%, Rybnik – 42.7%, Tychy – 41.4%, Zabrze – 47.4%). The value of annual arrearages in Ruda Śląska was 2,401 zł/person, and in 14 other counties exceeded 1,000 zł (eg. Częstochowa – 1,231 zł/person, Myszków – 1,393 zł/person, Bytom – 1,662 zł/person, Chorzów – 1,280 zł/person, Katowice – 1,294 zł/person).

Generally, the centres of Katowice and Rybnik conurbations and the northern parts of the province show higher rent-charge arrearages than other parts of the province. In large towns, a large percentage of tenants have problems with settling their dwelling charges (Bielsko-Biała, Częstochowa, Gliwice, Rybnik and Rybnik county, Tychy, Zabrze, Tarnowskie Góry), whereas in the peripheries of these towns the group of debtors is smaller, but an average debt per one tenant is very high (counties: Bielsko-Biała, Częstochowa, Gliwice and Wodzisław).

Job market and its constituents. The job market of Katowice region is treated in a special way. For many years, structural and secular changes that occurred here (Długoborski, 1967) caused development of monofunctional path of economic development based on coal mining and connected with it iron metallurgy and metallurgy of non-ferrous metals. According to Gwosdz (2004: 29) any attempt to leave this development path would cause high economic and social expenses.

The start of political-economic transformations in the end of the 1980s gave chance to change the hitherto model of job market in the region. It should be remembered that determinants of this market include (Runge, 1996; Szczepański, 1994):

- 1) social-demographic characteristics of population which represent labour resources;
- 2) number and structure of education institutions;
- 3) economic potential and its spatial-economic differentiation.

The analysis of unemployment as the only feature of the region's job market is extremely incomplete. The following aspects of this problem are stated by J. Runge (2004: 295-296):

- 1) High unemployment rate (over 30 thousand) in Silesian Province results not only from the increasing recently scale of this phenomena, but also from the assumptions of the region restructuring, which assume the liquidation of factories and reduction of employment, practically without any activities creating new job places, especially in service sector. *Such procedure is wrong because, as the results of investigations revealed, the*

assumption of transformation of ineffective economic structures in the region basing only on market regulators does not work, and the experience of high-developed countries proves, that even with considerable support of the state the liquidation of negative results of restructurisation is very difficult (Tkocz, 2001: 251).

- 2) The overlapping of regressive trends of population transformations and characteristics of job market of the region creates highly distressing social-economic situation. A regress of many centuries long significant position of Katowice region on the economic map of Poland, with simultaneous lack of complex perspective economic vision means degradation of this area together with intensification of social differentiations and distress;
- 3) The fact of changes of administrative division of Poland in 1999 paradoxically increased the scale of social-economic problems, which need rapid solution. Both the former Bielsko-Biała Province and Częstochowa Province added such essential problems as unemployment in rural areas of the region or demographic ageing of rural areas;
- 4) The conclusion of this short outline of characteristics of job market of the towns of Silesian Province is statement, that further increase of unfavourable social-economic trends may lead to multi-sided regress of the region, which will have bearing on general situation in Poland.

Social pathology. The problem of social pathology has recently become the subject of large interest not only for sociologists. According to Misztal (1978) pathological phenomena are these which are different than valid standards in a given society “*They are connected with racism, delinquency, negative phenomena occurring in morality sphere, social consciousness and spheres of intellectual activity as a result of living in urban ghettos, or luxurious suburban reservoirs*” (Misztal, 1978: 135.). Undoubtedly, pathogenic phenomena, which widely occur in urban space, include homelessness, drug habit, alcoholism or poverty. These phenomena occur both in old workman dwelling districts and modern dwelling estates.

As it was stated before, Katowice region shows large percentage of old workman dwelling districts because *...not only did they fall into material ruin, but (due to consciously conducted politics of settlement of new dwelling estates with immigratory population) they became a kind of cultural ghettos, populated almost exclusively by indigenous population. This way the policy of post-war authorities contributed in much extend to preservation of the 19th century industrialisation of social-spatial structures of the region's towns...* (Wódz, J. Wódz, K. 1995: 73).

Taking into account multi-generation process of social-professional closing of the inhabitants of old workman districts and also development of specific social order (labour ethos, model of family), the processes of political-economic

changes which started in the end of the 1980s have caused particular distress in this areas. They destroy, preserved for many years, social order causing different social problems connected with unemployment (liquidation of mines and steelworks) and lack of financial measures for family from one hand, and loss of the hitherto social-professional position from the other hand. Therefore the phenomena of social pathology in old workman districts have multi-sided character leading to the decline of the hitherto social order.

In dwelling districts which were built after 1945, and which were, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, settled by thousands of immigrants from the beyond of Katowice region, the feeling of local consciousness and identity was very weak. There were no premises, which could create a specific social order typical for old workman dwelling districts. Such features as anonymity in the scale of large-space district, feeling of temporary stay influenced both significant immigration and emigration of population. As a result, the processes of political-economic transformations more intensively influenced social sphere of these inhabitants, especially young, the percentage of which is here larger than in old dwelling districts. These phenomena have been observed in the investigations of social problems in the group of the so called old (Bytom, Ruda Śląska, Siemianowice Śląskie, Świętochłowice) and new (Dąbrowa Górnicza, Sosnowiec, Tychy) towns of Katowice conurbation. Their differentiation is a consequence of the share of post-war dwelling districts in total dwelling resources of a town. Social pathology is more visible in old districts because there is larger percentage of unemployed, more pathological families, poverty, and dwelling conditions are worse. Substandard character of old workman dwelling districts should be understood wider than only in context of dwelling conditions. It is also connected with ...*the state of cultural and social infrastructure (...) The quality of dwelling environment is closely related not only to attitudes of the inhabitants but also to social structures occurring in this areas as well as ways of activities of social communities...* (Świątkiewicz, 1985: 47).

SOCIAL CHANGES IN TRADITIONAL AREAS – AN ATTEMPT TO GENERALISATION

Briefly discussed in this paper transformations of Katowice region univocally show the end of the hitherto model of social-economic transformations based on traditional industries, immigrational character of demographic development and simultaneous large social-professional stability of the inhabitants. The decline of numerous leading factories, unemployment decapitalisation of dwelling resources and phenomena of social pathology, encourage to search new conceptions of region transformations (e.g. Błasiak et al., 1994). In sociological literature four basic *theories of social development* exist. They include modernisation, dependent

development, endogenic development and the so called Wallerstein's model of world's system (Jelonek, Tyszka, 2001). Their typical features include:

- *modernisation* – the basic assumption is a thesis of linear character of development from the stage of old-fashionedness to the stage of modern society. Development is an immanent feature of any society, however, taking into account different dynamics of transformations, some societies develop faster and other slower. Slowness or disturbances in development are understood as evidences of social crisis. Many researchers treat modernisation as all the social and political transformations which accompany industrialisation. Węgielski (1992: 6) stresses that ...*modernisation is conditioned by economic development, which depends on four processes of transformation: a) in technology sphere – conversion from traditional technology to technology based on conquests of science; b) in agriculture – conversion of subsistence agriculture to commercial farming; c) in industry – conversion from labour based on muscle power of people and animals to industrial production; d) in the sphere of ecological processes – conversion from rural to urban style of settlement...* They result in structural differentiation of society, i.e. increase in social stresses from one hand and the adjustment of social structures to new political and economic reality from the other hand.
- *dependent development* – the criticism of modernisation (acceptation of only one development model without paying attention on regional or cultural differentiation) led to development of the thesis of the influence of worldwide political and economic systems on state and regional development and, consequently influence of the latter on local development. One of the manifestations of the dependent development is concentration of development factors in metropolises and their “washing” from the areas which are politically or economically dependent;
- *endogenic development* – without negation of global development trends and modernity, this theory suggests searching for the own, genuine factors of development. The transformations of a given country or region should take into account their specificity, traditions and even environmental conditions. Therefore the following notions become important: development of local government, idea of “little homelands”, reluctance to globalism;
- *model of world's system* – the acceptance of only one factor of development is a simplification of the reality. Only general, multi-sided vision of problems makes it possible to explain the process of social changes. It is necessary to observe these changes in a long time period, which enables to find general regularities of transformations and not only fragments of these transformations. Moreover, this conception assumes the presence of development cores, half-peripheries and peripheries. Half-peripheries represent a transitional link between the areas of rapid development and peripheries. They take advantages of peripheries, and at the same time, they are the subject of expansion of metropolises.

Taking into account these conceptions it is easy to notice that together with historical transformations of economy in Katowice region, the model of social development was changing. *Modernisation* was typical for Katowice region in the period from the 1750s to the beginning of the 20th century. It is true that symptoms of industrialisation occurred here also in the 1960s and 1970s but this industrialisation took place in the already developed spatial-material structure of the region, developed elements of regional consciousness, presence of institutional base and relative stabilisation of the region (Chojnicki, 1996).

Because of political-economic situation of the area studied (lack of independence, location on the borderland of the invaders, presence of mineral resources important for economy), the modernisational transformations occurred simultaneously in the conditions of the *dependent development*. This dependency was complex and changeable in time.

In the sphere of *political dependence*, in the beginning of the 20th century, a historical termination of the occupation of Polish lands by neighbouring countries was recorded, and the region began to develop as an administrative area, which was a part of an independent Poland. Simultaneously, because of political and economic preferences, Katowice region was treated as a kind of internal colony.

In the sphere of *economic dependency*, an influence of global and European economic situation is visible, but also economic impact of the region on surrounding areas occurs. According to Gorzelak (2003) the following features are important in this sphere – innovationality causing competitive supremacy, proper location of economic activity (geographical distance, institutional distance), size and type of external impulses.

Sphere of *social dependences* may be analysed spatially and structurally. Within spatial analysis there are size and range of territorial influences of permanent migration and commuting, whereas structural analysis includes social stratification of inhabitants. In the area studied, in the post-war period there is a decrease of the role of spatial social influences in favour of the increase of the role of structural dependences (e.g. due to the decrease of the importance of immigration movement in population development and simultaneous increase of social contrasts).

Taking into account the present model of economic development and followed by:

- criteria of location of economic activity,
- generally understood features of the region,
- and external impulses,

Katowice region has lost its competitiveness as a result of changes of development model as well as changes of criteria of economic activity location. Lack of capital inflow, lack of a serious interest in some enterprises in the beginning of transformation period and also too conservative environment of local authorities caused difficult situation of this area (Gorzelak, 2003: 72). Therefore the social

changes in the first phase of transformation resulted in half-closing of the region both in permanent migrations and commuting (1980s).

A question may be asked, whether the region shows symptoms of *endogenic development*. This idea was suitably understood by social geographers, who indicated its importance especially in:

- 1) identification of cultural differentiations and problems of social integration;
- 2) studies of spatial behaviours (Rykiel, 1989).

Simultaneously, according to Chojnicki (1996, 2000: 154) globalism is usually accompanied by the increase of world differentiation in regional and local scale. *In social aspect, this is shown in development of subjectivity and consciousness of regional and local community of interests, not necessarily of ethnic or nationalistic character. Its political manifestation is the increase of the importance of local authorities and certain limitation of the role of the state in favour of over-national and regional organisations. Its economic manifestation is the importance of regional and local conditions for the dynamics of economic development.* Thus, the role of regions in the endogenic model considerably increases, especially in political, cultural and economic life.

A detailed analysis of the hitherto transformations of Katowice region shows, that as far as features of the endogenic model are visible in political and social-cultural range, they rather do not occur in economic range.

The last model of social transformations should be analysed – *Wallerstein's model of world's system*. The differentiation of the area into core areas, half-peripheries and peripheries makes it possible to reflect a true role of different areas in social-economic transformations. Half-peripheries play a role of a stabiliser in the relations between cores and peripheries. Moreover, due to their transitional role, such areas gain new advantages, and, what is more, there is larger support of internal regional factors (Jelonek, Tyszka, 2001: 178).

An attempt to compare the Wallerstein's model to Katowice region is possible if we consider historical perspective of transformation and its spatial dimension. In the first case the processes of leaving the role of core in social-economic processes occur. The conception of economic cycles by Kondratiew should be mentioned here. Katowice region as a classical representative of traditional regions lost its leading role in transformations in the end of the 19th century. In the second case – a spatial dimension of the analysed model of social transformations is shown in the weakening of the role of towns in favour of surrounding rural areas.

Taking into account all the analysed here conceptions of social development, it appears that:

- non of the classical models of social transformations is represented in Katowice region in homogeneous form. In fact, only modernisation (because of its historic aspect) is represented more clear than other models;
- it is possible that features typical for several models of social transformations occur in the same time. This concerns also spatial aspects.

The fragmentation of social-economic reality in different theoretical conceptions and in propositions of restructuring changes results in a narrow range of research problems. It seems therefore that the conceptions of social development prepared by sociological studies may be successfully adopted on the ground of social geography. But the condition is that spatial aspect has to be taken into account. Moreover, there should be possibility of representation of several models at the same time. This results from the spatial scale of the area studied, local differentiations, and overlapping of different political, social, economic or cultural influences in a near or further future. If different phases of urbanisation may occur in the same time in different parts of the region (Zborowski, 2001), this is also possible in relation to models of social transformations.

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